NAVIGATING THE INTERSECTION OF PLACE-BASED PEDAGOGY AND BORDER PEDAGOGY:
RESITUATING OUR POSITIONS THROUGH CRITICAL BORDER DIALOGISM

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Abstract

This article explicates the intersection of place-based and border pedagogies, including how transnational, comparative studies and issues-centered pedagogies are central to understanding one's own situatedness. Place-based and border pedagogies provide a platform for effectively crossing borders inherent to larger research, intellectual knowledge, appreciation, and learning. *Critical border dialogism* engages educators, cultural workers, and policy makers in a multiplicity of discourses and interchange that follows on the concepts of heteroglossia, meliorism, critical cosmopolitanism, nepantla, dialogic feminism, and pragmatic hope. Voices, in turn, represent positionalities embedded in place-based and border discourses. Critical border dialogism (Cashman, 2015) is a process that resituates teachers, students, cultural workers, decision makers, policymakers, and the larger community. In this manner common assumptions, practices, and judgments are challenged.

>   *Keywords*: critical border dialogism, critical border praxis, place-based pedagogies, border pedagogy, transnational education

INTRODUCTION

A *critical border dialogism* considers the interconnectness of place-based and border pedagogies as part of contemplating one's own positionality in the context of larger research, intellectual knowledge, appreciation, and learning (Cashman, 2015). According to Apple (2004), we are living at a time when critical education is discouraged. Given this current educational climate the oppression educators feel is real, systemic, and structural (Apple, 2004). The power of that oppression is intensely felt in educational institutions and in educators' daily lives. According to Apple (2004) society must consider how to educate "future teachers so they are prepared to go forth and continue the process of building an education that resists incorporation into dominant forms" (p. 166) of oppression.

The disenfranchisement and powerlessness of students, family members, educators, and cultural workers serves to confirm a sense of urgency for a critical border dialogism of teaching and learning. The concepts of heteroglossia (Abraham, 2014; Bakhtin, 1975/1981; Clark & Holquist, 1984; Holquist, 2002), meliorism (James, 1906; Kliebard, 2004; Koopman, 2006), critical cosmopolitanism (Mignolo, 2000a; Nouzeilles & Mignolo, 2003), nepantla (Abraham, 2014; Anzaldua, 2002; Maffie, 2007; Mignolo, 2000b), dialogic feminism (Puigvert, 2012; Yaeger, 1991), and pragmatic hope (Koopman, 2006; Nolan & Stitzlein, 2011; Rorty, 1999; Shade, 2001) form the basis of the conditions for a critical border dialogic understanding of teaching and learning.

Critical border dialogism offers hope for the reconstructionist approaches that are needed to address the structural inequities in our present day schools. Specifically, as noted by Bowles and Gintis (1976) the internal organization of schools corresponds to the internal organization of a capitalist society's workforce in its structures, norms, and values according to the correspondence principle. In this manner hierarchal control in schools reflects the structure of the market economy. Bowles and Gintis (2011) call for change based on the goals of economic democracy, as other methods of educational reform merely reproduce the old power relationships in new forms. Accordingly, di-

verse students of lower socioeconomic status have been systematically subjugated by the dominant class. Fragmented forms of consciousness are the result of this subjugation. In the United States, this fragmentation of consciousness and lack of unity is facilitated by racial, ethnic, sexual, gender, and socioeconomic antagonisms and exasperated by the dominant class as a form of dividing and conquering (Bowles & Gintis, 2011). This work is an explication of how critical border dialogism offers possibilities for challenging power relationships by underscoring its theoretical underpinnings in heteroglossia, meliorism, critical cosmopolitanism, nepantla, dialogic feminism, and pragmatic hope. Before conducting this explication, I offer a definition of critical border dialogism, exploring its intersections with place-based and border pedagogies and its philosophical underpinnings.

PEDAGOGICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL UNDERPIN-NINGS OF CRITICAL BORDER DIALOGISM

Pedagogy is comprised of teaching and theories and debates related to teaching and learning, including analyses of the purposes of education, the nature of childhood and learning, and how knowledge is developed. Pedagogy engages educators in discourses interdependent to the act of teaching and the process of making sense of one's teaching (Alexander, 2009). Place-based and border pedagogical traditions, along with a reconstructionist philosophy of education form the foundation of critical border dialogism.

PLACE-BASED PEDAGOGIES

Place-based pedagogies provide opportunities for students of various backgrounds to reflect on their positionalities and situatedness. Gruenewald (2003) argues that a pedagogy of place promotes understandings of social and ecological places. By incorporating critical approaches into place-based pedagogies, "we challenge the assumptions, practices, and outcomes taken for granted in dominant culture and in conventional education" (Gruenewald, 2003, p. 3). Gruenewald's critical pedagogy of place, therefore, links pedagogy of place with critical theory. A critical pedagogy of place stands in contrast with the survival-of-the-fittest educational philosophy that currently prevails in much of the US. In the present educational environment, local considerations

are eclipsed by discourses of accountability and economic competiveness (Gruenewald, 2003).

BORDER PEDAGOGY

Border pedagogy, like a critical pedagogy of place, includes a concern for illuminating the spaces we occupy. Border pedagogy builds upon critical understandings of place and attempts to connect those understandings with larger contexts. According to Giroux (2005), there are three components of border pedagogy that indicate a respect for differences: (a) a recognition of margins, (b) the need for border crossers, and (c) a recognition of the historically and socially-constructed strengths and limitations of places and borders. Borders are considered boundaries of entities, while the act of crossing borders involves going beyond existing boundaries and broadening one's perspectives of others in locales near or afar.

Border pedagogy seeks to develop democratic education that respects the notion of difference as part of a common struggle to extend the quality of public life. It takes into consideration an "acknowledgement of shifting borders that both undermine and reterritorialize different configurations of culture, power, and knowledge" (Giroux, 2005, p. 20). Border pedagogy serves as a reconceptualization of existing ideologies and offers opportunities for students to engage the multiple references that constitute different cultural codes, experiences, and languages (Giroux, 2005). Border crossing educators contemplate their own belief systems, including understandings of their own pedagogy, biases, and limits (Giroux, 2005). Through border pedagogy it is possible to recognize and contemplate the historical contexts of our differences.

The concept of border pedagogy reveals diverse cultural histories and spaces to educators and their students. As stakeholders in educational processes, teachers and students traverse languages, experiences, and voices and undergo changes in their own personal identities (Giroux, 2005). Border pedagogy facilitates these transformations as students, teachers, administrators, and other cultural workers begin to recognize the multilayered and contradictory ideologies that construct their own identities. By acknowledging what comprises their individu-

alities, educators and their students are better positioned to critically reflect on how theory is resituated in practice.

A RECONSTRUCTIONIST PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

The intersection of a critical pedagogy of place and border pedagogy serves to further the goals of reconstructionist education. According to Ornstein (2011), the philosophical base for reconstructionism is pragmatism. The instructional objective of both pragmatism and meliorism is to improve and reconstruct society. The knowledge base for reconstructionism includes skills and subjects need to identify and ameliorate problems of society (Ornstein, 2011). A reconstructionist believes in education for change and social reform. Learning is active and concerned with contemporary and future society. The teacher serves as an agent of change and reform. The teacher's role is also to act as a facilitator and research leader. Educators provide an environment for students become aware of problems confronting humankind. The curriculum is designed to promote equality of education, cultural pluralism, understandings of international education, and futurism. There is an emphasis on individual growth and development. The individual has the opportunity to serve as a change agent, or one who has the ability to modify, even reconstruct the social environment (Ornstein, 2011). The attributes of a reconstructionist philosophy support critical pedagogy of place and border pedagogy in that reconstructionist philosophical approaches are dynamic, pragmatic, melioristic, and critical processes for examining and re-examining places and border spaces. Reconstructionism places an emphasis on the whole child, and students are actively engaged in their learning and develop meaning for their personal experiences and prior histories (Ornstein, 2011). Critical place-based pedagogies and border pedagogy follow on reconstructionist ideals as both pedagogical approaches provide spaces for learners to examine larger questions and issues. The traditional roles of teachers and students are overturned as all become one in the learning processes. Through this engagement in critical dialogism, participants reconstruct their own personal models of a just society and worldwide humanity.

Critical border dialogism is the intersection of critical place-based pedagogies and border pedagogies. Critical border dialogism follows pragmatic, reconstructionist tenets that society can be deconstructed, improved, and reconstructed through effective dialogue. In the field of education, critical border dialogism informs those who seek to teach and learn as border crossers and problem solvers. Critical border dialogism works to develop broader visions and worldviews that resituate teachers, students, cultural workers, decision makers, policymakers, and the larger community and, in turn, clarifies a critical border praxis. The following section explicates the key theoretical precepts of critical border dialogism.

THE THEORETICAL UNDERPINNINGS OF CRITICAL BORDER DIALOGISM

Dynamic, reconstructionist curricula can be designed and facilitated by educators informed through critical border dialogism. Both critical border dialogism and critical border praxis, or the implementation of critical border dialogism, are extensions of border pedagogy and pedagogy of place with theoretical foundations based on (1) heteroglossia, (2) meliorism, (3) critical cosmopolitanism, (4) nepantla, (5) dialogic feminism, and (6) pragmatic hope. Through a critical border dialogism educators and cultural workers engage in complicated conversations of how to deconstruct, reconstruct, and ultimately further educational and societal goals. Under the following six subheadings, I explicate the theoretical backgrounds of heteroglossia, meliorism, critical cosmopolitanism, nepantla, dialogic feminism, and pragmatic hope.

HETEROGLOSSIA

Critical border dialogism, specifically its dialogic nature, is influenced by Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of heteroglossia, or multiple voices and utterances in a given context, as heteroglossia counters any sort of unilateral and unidirectional voices. Bakhtin argued for an interaction between the mind and world (Holquist, 2002) and was influenced by his understandings of Kant. Kant's ideas fused sensibility and understanding as a form of knowledge. Bakhtin's ideas shifted to an emphasis on particularity and situatedness. Holquist (2002)

maintained, these positions, along with Bakhtin's underscoring the importance of understanding more abstract questions of selfhood, should be considered within the context of location and place, including positionality. Bakhtin positioned dialogism as an epistemology. For Bakhtin, the key to understanding dualisms between the self and the other involved a simultaneous considering of same and different with relation to time and space. Accordingly, separateness and simultaneity are intrinsic to dialogue (Holquist, 2002).

In *The Dialogic Imagination,* Bakhtin (1975/1981) articulated the concept of heteroglossia as "the base condition governing the operation of meaning in any utterance" (p. 263). The context of an utterance takes preeminence over the actual words uttered. As words uttered in a particular place and time have meanings different than under any other conditions; all utterances are "heteroglot" (p. 263). According to Bakhtin (1975/1981) the world is dominated by heteroglossia, and dialogism is a key characteristic of heteroglossia.

According to Bakhtin, individual voices connect with other voices through dialogue (Clark & Holquist, 1984), and there is a constant interaction among meanings. All meanings have the potential to influence other meanings. People in positions of power over others seek to enforce a unitary language. Gramsci also critiqued the social norms and social structures that established and reinforced a unitary language (Gramsci, Hoare, & Nowell-Smith, 1971). Gramsci's theory of cultural hegemony held that social, political, and economic dominance is preserved through systemic control and influence. Although Bakhtin's and Gramsci's positions differed on particular issues, both took issue with positivist social science and linguistics and developed their own anti-positivist theories (Brandist, 2006).

In *Toward a Philosophy of the Act,* Bakhtin (1993) argues that we, as individuals, occupy places as a "being." No other person has occupied that same space simultaneously, and what is done by that person "can never be done by anyone else" (p.40). This singularity of being provides for unique perspectives and positionality that cannot be claimed by another person.

Bakhtin's work has driven the creation of a dialogic pedagogy

(Matusov, 2009). A key aspect of that dialogic pedagogy is ideological becoming, or how a person becomes a unique individual. Thoughts form the foundation for our being and doing. Thoughts, in turn, are based on our discursive exchanges (Abraham, 2014).

The focal point of ideological becoming is the meeting place between authoritative discourses and heteroglossia. Bakhtin (1975/1981) defined authoritative discourse as a discourse that "demands that we acknowledge it, that we make it our own; it binds us, quite independent of any power it might have to persuade us internally; we encounter it with its authority already fused to it" (p. 342). Authoritative discourse seeks to establish the hegemony of one ideology. An authoritative discourse "remains sharply demarcated, compact and inert; it deems, so to speak, not only quotation marks but a demarcation even more magisterial, a special script, for instance" (p. 343). On the other hand, heteroglot voices "pull against this centralization of thought and normalized ideology and only one way to mean" (Abraham, 2014, p.11). Heteroglossia, moreover, serves as a complex mixture of languages, communications, and world views that is always "dialogized, as each language is viewed from the perspective of the others" (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006, p.51).

Dialogue is inherently heteroglot and juxtaposes ideas from various sources and time periods. Bakhtin (1975/1981) called heteroglossia the place where "real language lives" (p. 292) and also said that it is positioned uncompromisingly to counter official discourses. More specifically, heteroglossia includes languages that disturb others, languages that are deemed incorrect, and languages that are disregarded.

Individuals are influenced by both authoritative discourses and heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1975/1981). Authoritative discourses and heteroglossia are ever present in our lives through informal discussions, pop culture, the mainstream media, literary works, creative performances, film, and other forms of communication. Bakhtin calls for an awareness of the internally persuasive discourses that develop from both authoritative discourses and heteroglossia. Subliminally, these discourses have become embedded in a person's way of thinking. Discourse is not simply "information, directions, rules, models, and so forth-but strives rather to determine the very bases of our ideological interrelations with

the world, the very basis of our behavior; it performs here as authoritative discourse, and an internally persuasive discourse" (p. 342)

In Bakhtin's *Toward a Philosophy of the Act*, the concept of "being" is described as occupying a place that is "unique and never-repeatable, a place that cannot be taken by anyone else and is impenetrable for anyone else" (Bakhtin, 1993, p. 40). From this state of being emerges the individual voice, the voice that contributes to discourse. Heteroglossia is a concept that denounces authoritative, unilateral ideologies. Clark and Holquist (1984) maintain that Bakhtin's heteroglossia represents an ideal condition that safeguards against the hegemony of one-dimensional languages of truth or official positions in education and society.

MELIORISM

If heteroglossia serves as the basis for dialogic principles, then social meliorism is key to the contemplation of why critical border dialogism is a requisite in an age of never-ending wars and conflict. Social meliorism combines pluralism with humanism and serves as the thesis that we are capable of creating better worlds and selves. Moreover, social meliorists believe education is a tool to restructure society and promote social change. This socialization goal is based on the power of the individual's intelligence and the ability to improve on intelligence through education (Kliebard, 2004). An individual's future is not predetermined by gender, race, socio-economic status, heredity, or any other factors. Meliorism is the thesis that we are capable of improving the human condition. Confidence and exerted efforts are integral to meliorism (James, 1906). Melioristic confidence offers a genuine alternative to the dualistic natures of pessimism and optimism (Koopman, 2006).

Social meliorism provides constructs for educational researchers, teachers, students, and cultural workers so they can deliberate on how to improve societal conditions. Social meliorism enhances educational systems by incorporating models, practices, innovations, and attributes of other educational systems in the context of comparative, international, and transnational investigations (Wilson, 2003). In summation, social meliorism is central to effective pedagogies and at the core of all

critical border dialogism.

CRITICAL COSMOPOLITANISM

Critical cosmopolitanism incorporates elements of social meliorism as it is an argument bettering society. The important role of critical cosmopolitanism as part of critical border dialogism is that it provides voices from the populous and serves as a defense of globalization from below. Critical cosmopolitanism also argues for the geopolitical diversal. Critical cosmopolitanism differs from cosmopolitanism as critical cosmopolitan social theory explicates the multiple ways in which the social world is constructed (Delanty, 2006). Mignolo (2000a) reasoned that cosmopolitanism was conceived from those with local histories positioned to devise and enact global designs. Other local histories, in turn, were influenced by those global designs. For that reason, cosmopolitanism today has to become critical, border-thinking, and dialogic and from the perspective of those local histories affected by global designs (Mignolo, 2000a). Diversity is considered a universal and cosmopolitan project and is the focus of critical and dialogic cosmopolitanism. In this manner, authoritative discourses are replaced by diversality. According to Kincheloe (2008), "diversality connotes the dire need for different perspectives" and "for multiple forms of knowledge" (p. 3). Kincheloe asserted that European heritage, Christianity, and western philosophical approaches take precedence over other cultures, and other forms of knowledge, including indigenous knowledge, are not placed on equal footing. Kincheloe referred to diversal knowledges as insights from different locales and representations of a variety of worldviews. All of these worldviews add to our understanding of world dynamics, including human suffering. These diversal knowledges augment "our ability to imagine new ways of seeing and being and interacting with other people and the physical world" (p.5).

Mignolo (2000a) also argued for diversality as a universal project and for border thinking as a necessary epistemology upon which critical cosmopolitanism shall be articulated in a postnational world order governed by global capitalism and new forms of coloniality. Mignolo argued for a bottom-up approach to cosmopolitanism, as opposed to the current top-down hierarchy. Accordingly, "it is an argument for

globalization from below; at the same time, it is an argument for the geopolitically diversal" (p. 744).

Critical cosmopolitanism is seen as a medium of societal transformation that is based on the principle of world interconnectedness. Critical cosmopolitanism also promotes societal change by encouraging self-reflection and self-transformation, in the hopes of developing new cultural forms and new discourses. Critical cosmopolitanism has a "critical role to play in opening up discursive spaces of world openness and thus in resisting both globalization and nationalism" (p. 44).

Critical cosmopolitanism provides us with a viable option to the ever-present neo-positivism that surrounds educational systems in the twenty-first century. This neo-positivism is characterized by reduction; reduction is undertaken through an analysis of meanings and subsequent diminution to their simplest statements. In a time of test-driven curricula, critical cosmopolitanism is an educational approach that questions neo-positivism, reductionism, dualism, and paternalism. Thus, critical cosmopolitanism serves as an essential component of critical border dialogism. Movement along the path of diversality and empowerment from below are crucial cogs in the wheels of critical border praxis, or the follow-up and execution of principles intrinsic to critical border dialogism.

NEPANTLA

Critical border dialogism is influenced by indigenous knowledge that crosses multiple conditions of borders. "Nepantla", as a form of indigenous knowledge, is a key part of the dialogue indispensable for critical border praxis. Nepantla is a word that originated in the Nahuatl language, the lingua franca of the indigenous Nahua in Mexico and Central America (Anzaldúa, 1987; Maffie, 2007). Nepantla serves a form of indigenous knowledge that places people and things within surroundings characterized by dynamism, fluidity, and the possibilities for social transformation. Anzaldúa, (1987) defined nepantla as bridges that cross liminal spaces to connect worlds. Abraham (2014) maintained that the Nahua held perspectives of a world characterized by elements of disorder, the process of becoming, and flexibility or transitions. Maffie (2007) stated that historically, nepantla was the part

of how the Nahua envisioned the world and is rooted in a belief system that places people and cultural objects within "a dynamic zone of mutual transaction, confluence, unstable and diffuse identity, and transformation" (p. 16). Mignolo (2000b) argued that the Nahua developed nepantla as a consciousness in response to their encounter and subsequent ideological and physical domination by Spanish conquistadors, invaders, and missionaries.

Maffie (2007) spoke of nepantla as being a process that is "dialectical, transitional, and oscillating; centering as well as destabilizing; and abundant with mutuality and reciprocity" (p. 11). Nepantla is simultaneously destructive and creative, it is also "transformative" (p. 11). Abraham (2014) linked Anzaldúa's nepantla to Bakhtin's ideological becoming. Nepantla leads us to question physical, linguistic, social, and cultural borders. Both nepantla and the notion of becoming are theoretical stances that put forth that we, as humans, are in a continual process of forming ideas and that those ideas are influenced by historical and current discourses (Abraham, 2014).

Educators may be applying the worldviews espoused in nepantla in today's classrooms through red pedagogy (Grande, 2004). Red pedagogy is based, in part, on the following argument for decolonized education:

> The ongoing injustices of the world call educators-as-students-as-activists to work together—to be in solidarity as we work to change the history of empire and struggle in the common project of decolonization. To do so requires courage, humility, and love. (Grande, 2004, p. 175)

Red pedagogy brings a realization and consideration for sovereignty and living out active presences and "survivances." Grande (2004) described survivances as native renunciations of dominance, tragedy, and victimry. The survivance narratives contemplate the "struggles of indigenous peoples and the lived reality of colonization as a complexity that extends far beyond the parameters of economic capitalist oppression" (p. 175). Grande (2004) put forth that scholars, educators, and students "must exercise critical consciousness" and create a new meeting place for "indigenous and nonindigenous peoples will work in

solidarity to envision a way of life and replete with spirit" (p. 176).

Critical border dialogism provides spaces for crossing the borders that were determined by dominant groups and offers opportunities for dialectical approaches to "otherness". Nepantla and red pedagogy provide educational systems and policymakers with counter-narratives in an age of high-stakes assessments, funding shortfalls for public education, and the creeping privatization of public education. Indigenous pedagogies that correspond with nepantla and red pedagogy challenge the neo-positivist beliefs of our current materialistic, consumerist society. Nepantla and red pedagogy offer hope for the repositioning of educators and cultural workers, so that they become empowered and better equipped to challenge dominant educational discourses.

DIALOGIC FEMINISM

Dialogic feminism is a necessary component of critical border dialogism as it upholds renunciation, resistance, and counter-hegemonic actions to patriarchy and gender violence in its many forms. Dialogic feminism uncovers the "complex, contorted play of hegemonic forms and female speech" and "explore the ways in which women from a variety of temporalities, ethnicities, races, and classes initiate dialogues with their oppressions" (Yaeger, 1991, p. 240). Through intersections of feminist practices and dialogic voices, the practice of dialogic feminism provides society with compelling narratives of power struggles. Moreover, feminist dialogics allow us to pinpoint and describe the dynamic changes within feminism itself (Yaeger, 1991).

Emancipation is central to the process of becoming, and feminist dialogics, like nepantla, coincide with Bakhtin's concepts of ideological becoming. A movement toward dialogic understandings of societies and education has significance for the understanding of social groups, for the advancement of theory related to social groups, and for "how social sciences can inform the struggles of these groups and thus make a contribution to their own emancipation" (Puigvert, 2012, p. 89). When we, as educators and cultural workers, dismiss the role of dialogue in the analysis of societies and the possibility to transform them, "it means dismissing the capacity of citizens to reflect on society, analyze it, decide on it, and transform it" (Puigvert, 2012, p. 93).

Critical dialogism seeks to challenge and eliminate the patriarchy that still plagues public discourses on education, cross-border knowledge, and conflict resolution. Dialogic feminism, as an integral part of critical border dialogism, provides dialectal approaches within counter-hegemony. At the same time, dialogic feminism offers fresh analyses and courses of action within feminism. Yaeger (1991) cautions against normalizing categories, routines, and ideologies. Feminist dialogics can help us pinpoint and describe the dynamic changes within feminism itself (Yaeger, 1991). A dialogic feminism provides dynamic renunciation, resistance, and counter-hegemonic actions to patriarchy and other barriers in the feminist struggle. Dialogue in the public and private spheres can lead to a recognition and transformation of violence and aggression into dialogue and consensus. Dialogic relations are constructed through social consensus, which works in favor of reducing gender violence. Transformations in society, including our educational institutions, transpire when social agents intervene in existing unequal structures (Puigvert, 2012). Dialogic feminism provides us with opportunities for analyzing the contexts of dialogue and the subsequent redefining of social contexts (Puigvert, 2012).

Productive discourses in educational settings are part of critical border dialogism, as critical border dialogism seeks to better address and problem-solve the roots of current conflicts. Conflict resolution emerges as a priority. Dialogue in the public and private spheres can lead to a recognition and transformation of violence and aggression. If, indeed, patriarchy is associated with various forms of violence, a dialogic feminism provides us with pragmatic hope for a society with members who are empowered to overcome patriarchy and its inherent violence. Through dialogic feminism we can better envision an educational system where the struggle for transformative knowledge takes precedence over competiveness. In this manner, formal education can move in the direction of struggle, solidarity, and community as central foci. These approaches stand in contrast to the survival-of-the-fittest tactics currently advocated and employed by policymakers such as high stakes assessments. Rather, dialogic processes play a key role in more inclusive educational processes, and educational policies and discourses are less dominated by patriarchal voices.

PRAGMATIC HOPE

Critical border dialogism is also comprised of pragmatic hope, as it encourages educators and cultural workers to confront the problems facing our educational systems through collective action. When we hope pragmatically we recognize the conflict embedded in social contexts and approach such struggles with thoughtful action (Shade, 2001). Pragmatism involves a willingness to live "without assurances or guarantees" (James, 1906, p. 124). True beliefs are sustained through actions taken by humans. Pragmatic hope, in turn, offers that we can make necessary changes in our society (Koopman, 2006).

In the early 20th century, James and Dewey replaced predestiny with hope in their writing and thinking (Rorty, 1999). Koopman (2006) connected pragmatic hope with democratic principles and argued that democratic hope is furthered through pragmatism. In the field of education, pragmatic hope provides educators with a greater sense of optimism. Through pragmatic hope teachers and administrators feel their voices can be heard and their efforts can be valued. Pragmatic hope re-energizes teachers, school administrators, and cultural workers. What emerges is a new conviction and a sensing of the possibilities for meaningful changes and improvement of conditions in our educational systems (Shade, 2001).

Pragmatic hope, as it provides underlying support for the principles of critical border dialogism, opens up discourses on possible forms of responsible assessment. Given the current educational policies, including the current system of punishment and rewards based on the results of standardized tests, critical border dialogism and its pragmatic hope offers a mechanism for the examination of optional forms of appraisal (Nolan & Stitzlein, 2011). The current US educational climate is characterized by increased anxiety and lowered morale among educators. In this context, pragmatic hope offers teachers, administrators, and cultural workers reasons for continuing their struggles. Ultimately, it is in the best interests of our society that educators are re-positioned as professionals who can imagine and take action toward improved alternatives. Conceptual tools should model and develop hope in preservice educators, classroom teachers, and future scholars.

Critical border dialogism, with pragmatic hope as its bulwark, calls for a confrontation of today's problems with reflection and collective action. As a short term solution it offers possibilities for a transcendence of some of the limitations currently imposed on schools. For the longer term, pragmatic hope offers opportunities for the reconceptualization of schooling and reallocation of resources in public education. Although hope is tempered by anxiety and low morale under present schooling conditions, pragmatic hope can provide long-term approaches needed for a reconceptualization of what it is to teach and learn (Nolan & Stitzlein, 2011, p. 9).

THE CALL FOR A CRITICAL BORDER DIALOGISM

As noted by Bowles and Gintis' (1976) in their correspondence principle and Bourdieu's (1977) social reproduction theory, social conditions have been created by self-serving hierarchal, corporate, and military-industrial-congressional complex interests in our present-day educational institutions. Critical border dialogism offers the conviction that societal woes can, indeed, be addressed and ameliorated through quality educational experiences, we can draw upon successful models that exist beyond our own political, geographic, historical, and philosophical borders. We can build upon our existing knowledges of place and understandings of borders. Through dialectal approaches to education, we contemplate the multiplicity of voices, including the counter-hegemonic spaces of nepantla and dialogic feminism. Pragmatic hope offers a vision for the struggles that lay ahead for individuals and educational institutions that bridge local understandings with global interconnectedness. Critical border dialogism must consider the historical contexts of borders, border conflicts, the present and future development of transborder relations and regions, and current border and transborder policies.

Educators and cultural workers need to engage in dialogue on the impact of the historical contexts of border conflicts for societies. There must be a deliberation on the economic, cultural, and political ramifications of transborder migrations and interactions. The resultant formation and development of new border identities and regions needs

special attention. Furthermore, the various features of border policies must be closely investigated for efficacy and sources of conflict. In terms of schools and the school curriculum, critical border dialogism and critical border praxis must engage professional educators and cultural workers in key roles of determining what gets included or omitted from curricula. This stands in contrast to present conditions where lobbyists, textbook publishers, corporate sponsors, and policymakers are responsible for key decisions regarding curricula.

Critical border dialogism is the culmination of all of the concepts noted; moreover, it positions educators and cultural workers to engage in multidirectional discourses from (a) student to teacher, b) teacher to student, c) student to student, d) teacher to teacher, e) teacher to administrator, f) administrator to teacher, g) educator to policy maker, and h) cultural worker to policy maker. Communication and decision making follow a more bottom-up pattern than a top-down, hierarchal policymaking model. Through critical border dialogism students, family members, educators, cultural workers, and policy makers serve as stakeholders. Critical border dialogism equips us with the tools to challenge common assumptions, practices, and judgments. Moreover, individuals are empowered to question and counter hegemonic systems that dictate teaching and learning within our societies (See Figure 1).
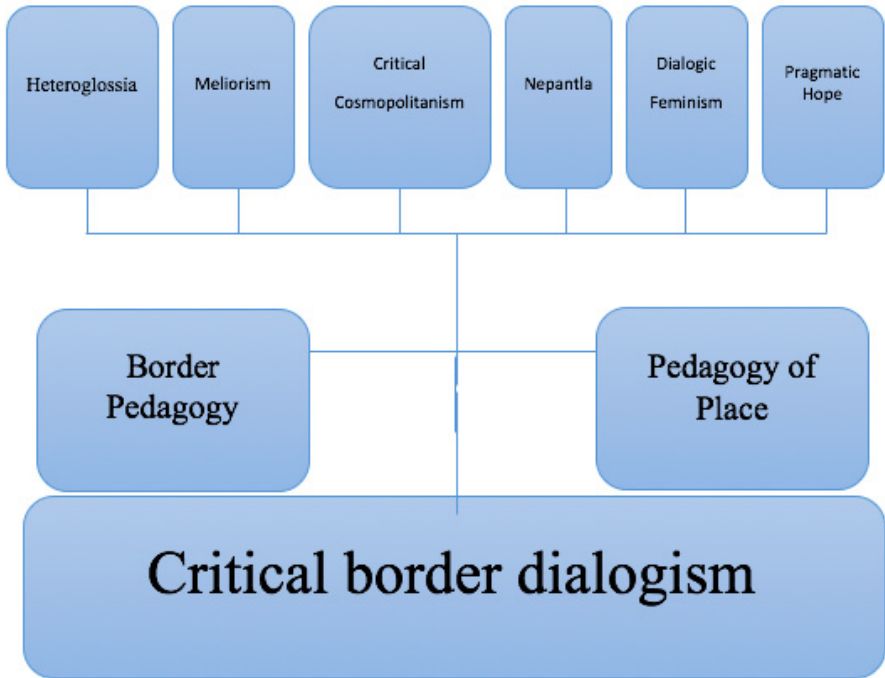
Figure 1. Theoretical underpinnings of a critical border dialogism

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