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University of San Francisco

Intergroup Dialogue with High School Participants

A Field Project Proposal Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
International and Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in International and Multicultural Education

By
Meaghan Kachadoorian
May 2020

Intergroup Dialogue with High School Participants

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

in

INTERNATIONAL AND MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

by

Meaghan Kachadoorian

May 2020

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this field project (or thesis) has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

Approved:

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Date

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ABSTRACT

Liberatory education facilitates identity expression, promotes empathy and understanding across difference, and builds capacity for recognizing and resisting oppressive social structures. However, many students' educational experiences lack intentional practices that subvert societal intolerance. Without these practices, education can perpetuate social group divide without empowering students to create social change. The practice of dialogue, specifically critical intergroup dialogue, brings together participants from various social group identities in facilitated conversations in pursuit of social transformation. This project is an exploration of intergroup dialogue with high school students. For the research, I carried out a phenomenological study by co-facilitating a dialogue group with seven youth from six countries. The analysis of the study data, namely of the students' insights, informed the curriculum presented in this field project. The curriculum is meant for practitioners to adapt to their community contexts. In order to build a more peaceful world and to respond to violence against marginalized communities, it is imperative to continue to develop critical peace education interventions that respond to racial, class, sociopolitical, gender, national and religious conflict. This study and corresponding curriculum respond to this need by making critical intergroup dialogue more accessible to high school students.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

As youth express their knowledge and identities in education spaces, they are subjected to the dominant norms and values of society. The wealth of ethnic, linguistic, racial, and national diversity across U.S. public schools continues to flourish, while official state policy and a ‘hidden curriculum’ fail to honor students’ experiences or attempt to erase them outright. In 2018, over 400 languages were spoken at home among U.S. public school students, with 50 languages appearing on at least one state’s top five list (Office of English Language Acquisition, 2018). Smith (2012) expresses that the way that difference is represented in educational texts and practices reveals problematic societal beliefs that impact indigenous students and students from other minority ethnic groups (p. 12). Despite social marginalization and violence, students persevere in their pursuit of education; an estimated 65,000 undocumented students graduate from U.S. high schools every year (U.S. Department of Education, 2015).

Students experience social division and inequity outside and within school walls, and the need for multicultural and culturally relevant education is well documented (Nieto, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Students are subjected to overlapping injustice based on their intersectional identities. LGBTQ youth, for example, are consistently targeted in hate crimes perpetrated in both school and public settings (Dessel, 2010). And, as Meyer (2012) demonstrates, experiences of anti-queer violence invariably depend on victims’ multiple social group identities of race and class (Meyer, 2012). There exists the need both for the affirmation of students’ multiple and intersectional identities through culturally responsive pedagogy as well as

education that recognizes sociopolitical context and challenges inequitable educational and social realities (Nieto, 2005, p. 56-7).

The need for building understanding across social group identity difference and education for social transformation is immediate: xenophobia and prejudicial attitudes are socially encoded, normalized, and amplified by the state. Policies such as (a) the February 2017 executive order effectively banning Muslims from entering the United States; (b) the September 2017 rescinding of DACA; (c) the April 2019 disallowing of transgender military members; (d) repeated acquittals of police for the murder of people of color are examples of this. As youth come of age in this environment of heightened conflict and prejudice, they are in the process of extraordinary development: they are at a crucial stage of social identity formation, discovery of political values, and encoding of attitudes toward ‘the other’ (Hjerm et al., 2018).

As Dessel (2010) describes in her work on prejudice in schools, many youth lack consistent opportunities for meaningful exchange with out-group peers in their educational environments. Youth are coming of age in societies, globally, that perpetuate cross-group intolerance and violence by the centralized state against marginalized communities. Without intentional conversation across social group identity division, the capacity for responding to social injustice and creating liberatory alternatives is stunted.

Dialogue, in a broad sense, confronts ingrained, inherited, and/or perceived narratives of the self and others that are perceived as wholly true and unfaltering. The process of sharing and listening in a facilitated group conversation known as intergroup dialogue can confront stereotypes, bring about trusting relationships, make commonality more visible, and foster dedication to social justice (Dessel, 2010, p. 562). Curriculum and facilitation of dialogue intentionally recognizes how social power and injustice have shaped participants’ lived

experiences, and is a critical intervention responding to social marginalization (Dessel, 2010, p. 562).

Background and Need

In the field of intergroup dialogue, there is a need for research dedicated to high school participants. In particular, there is a need for work that centralizes the insights of high school-aged youth. In the literature, findings on intergroup dialogue such as best practices in facilitation are most heavily focused on university settings (Moss et al., 2017); in particular, the multi-year university study analyzed by Nagda, Gurin, and Zuniga in *Dialogue Across Difference: Practice, Theory, and Research on Intergroup Dialogue* (2013) is an important study dedicated to university student participants (Moss et al., 2017, p. 235). Even so, research indicates that critical dialogue which includes the exploration and analysis of marginalization and privilege among participants with different social identities takes place across formal and informal cultural contexts and educational spaces (Laman et al., 2012, p. 198).

As Moss et al. (2017) articulate, there is a need for further research on the impacts of intergroup dialogue to fields and contexts outside of higher education such as communities, the field of counseling, and high schools. Studies focused on the effectiveness of intergroup dialogue in reducing prejudice among high school students include Wayne (2008) and Griffin et al. (2012). Two additional notable studies that address this need are by Fisher and Checkoway (2011), who carried out an intergroup dialogue program with high schoolers in the Metropolitan Detroit area and discussed best practices, and Ungerleider (2012), who chronicled the practice of dialogue on peacebuilding youth exchange programs. Using their work as a model and guide may allow this study to contribute to a more robust body of best practices of intergroup dialogue for high school students.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to explore the process of intergroup dialogue (namely social group identity, storytelling, and youth political development) in order to compile best practices of intergroup dialogue for high school students in a curriculum guide for practitioners. The research will be generated by co-facilitating a remote dialogue group with youth participants in order to compile insights on how dialogue can be applied with empowering, culturally relevant, and trauma-sensitive practices. I intend to use participants' insights and my analysis of our dialogue to create a curriculum that guides a high school group through the four stages of dialogue. The intended audience is youth practitioners to adapt and implement the guide to their community contexts as well as for organizations, schools, or funders to gain support for their projects.

Researcher Positionality

My journey into the work of facilitating educational experiences for peace and understanding comes from my family history. My great-grandparents were Armenian genocide survivors, and I value my last name as a source of resilience possessed by people everywhere. In high school, as I was shaping my own identity and values, I came to understand the power of story in relating across cultures as I found strength in resisting oppressive human migration restrictions, unjust capitalistic economic structures following colonial order, and racism and xenophobia. Since then, I have worked with students from over a dozen countries in regions including Latin America, the Caribbean and the U.S. in peacebuilding education spaces that build resistance through youth led community action projects. It is in that context I was trained in dialogue facilitation and came to appreciate the process as a critical peace education project.

Through my work as a dialogue facilitator on various exchange programs over the past three years, I have had the immense privilege of listening to students' stories of resilience, compassion, and vulnerability. I have observed the process of intergroup dialogue to facilitate the following processes: (a) relationship building across social group difference and understanding of the 'other' side; (b) the confrontation of racism, classism, sexism, homophobia, religiophobia, nation-supremacy, and all forms of discrimination by complicating simplistic narratives and stereotypes perpetuated by society, media, and conventional education; (c) reducing isolation among participants to know that while their experiences are unique, they are not alone in their struggles; (d) the practice of and building capacity for conflict resolution both within and between social identity groups; (e) building capacity for social transformation by collective imagination of more equitable and peaceful world; (f) the contestation of hegemonic knowledge construction as students are recognized as experts through their lived experiences.

Theoretical Framework: Critical Pedagogy

Rooted in work by theorist and educator Paulo Freire (1970), critical pedagogy is a framework and theory-informed set of practices in pursuit of collective liberation. In the practice of critical pedagogy, education seeks social transformation in both process and outcome. This section includes a brief history of critical pedagogy and dialogic education theory, including Freire's (1970) original scholarship and the continuation by Freire and Macedo (1995), the work of Freire and Shor (1987) which outlines dialogic education, and the work of Luna (2011) that explains the significance of epistemology in critical pedagogy and liberatory education. This progression of scholarship is important because it illustrates that critical pedagogy and dialogic education are effective frames to understand the liberatory education practice of critical dialogue among high school students.

In considering the Freirean idea of liberation as a *childbirth*, it is salient that youth are central to the metaphor (Freire, 1970, p. 49). In a liberatory education project, participants are respected as experts in their own lives rather than as peripheral observers of ‘the real world’. In a critical pedagogy framework, this requires a commitment by educators to engage with the experiences of youth as truths learned by people who are highly subjected to the rules, regulations, and norms of society. According to Freire, as youth become active participants in the mediation of their education (i.e. knowledge of self and of self in the world), their educational process grows in relevance and power. By centering students’ sharing of experiences in the learning process, critical pedagogy confronts social injustice. As Freire and Macedo (1995) write, learning is ‘to perceive social, political, and economic contradictions and to take action against the oppressive elements of reality’ (p. 381).

An important extension to critical pedagogy is dialogic education as articulated by Freire and Shor (1987). Dialogic education contests conventional educational practices that quell students’ analysis of society and their contributions to social change. Freire and Shor theorize that dialogue is a social process that, in its most liberatory form, illuminates social realities in order to reshape them. In particular, Freire and Shor support the idea that knowledge, the object of learning, is situated in the space between the subjects of knowing (i.e. the facilitator and the student) (Freire & Shor, 1987, p. 99). The subjects then meet in dialogue for collective inquiry (p. 99). This development in the field of critical pedagogy is important because it informs the way educators and students interact with and generate knowledge collectively.

Another development in the field of critical pedagogy is articulated by Luna (2011), and addresses epistemology, or the study of ways of knowing. Luna writes, “Giving epistemic privilege to a group that has been historically oppressed or underrepresented actually gives

everyone a broader view of the whole and an understanding of the most marginalized perspectives” (Luna, 2011, p. 45). In this frame, to treat and respect young people, especially students of color and those from outside places of epistemic privilege as experts in social reality requires a deep epistemological democratization. In this way, dialogic education and critical dialogue in particular contest hegemonic power structure in their contestation of who is ‘expert’. This relates to Freire and Shor’s articulation of *collective inquiry* in the acknowledgement that the power to understand social forces, theorize, and generate new knowledge lies between the facilitator and the student (Freire & Shor, 1987, p. 99).

In summary, the critical pedagogy framework first articulated by Freire (1970) shines a light on education for collective liberation. The theoretical underpinnings of critical pedagogy and social transformation (Freire, 1970; Freire & Macedo, 1995), work of Freire and Shor (1987) on dialogic education, and articulation of epistemological justice by Luna (2011) collectively serve as a frame through which to understand further research on critical dialogue with youth participants.

Methodology

Phenomenology and Dialogue

I used phenomenology to explore the shared and divergent experiences of youth participants ages 16-20 in a four-stage dialogue held on the online Zoom platform. Phenomenological research constitutes the “study of lived or experiential meaning and attempts to describe and interpret these meanings in the ways that they emerge” (Adams & van Manen, 2008, p. 2). In other words, research is conducted with the grounding that truth is found through lived experience (LeVasseur, 2003, p. 408). As a facilitator-researcher, I actively participated in the research process with attention to the student experience as they expressed key elements of

each phase of dialogue. After data collection, I reviewed, transcribed, and coded data by watching recordings of the dialogue sessions. I used a data explication table to distill units of meaning and themes related to each research area. During the research design, data collection, and coding processes, I sought to bracket, or suspend previously held beliefs about the dialogue process in order to allow participants' experiences to emerge more clearly (LeVasseur, 2003, p. 408). Finally, I chose to invite participants to choose their own pseudonyms, honoring "the meanings or links associated with those names" while maintaining anonymity (Allen & Wiles, 2015).

Four stages of dialogue

Freire's foundational theories on dialogue have been translated to many contexts. They include the formalized practice of Intergroup Dialogue (IGD) developed principally for university students which is designed to bring participants from multiple social identity groups together in facilitated dialogue about identity and critical issues on college campuses (P. Gurin, B. A. Nagda, & X. Zúñiga, 2013). Another context in which dialogue has been developed is on cross-cultural short-term youth exchange programs like Seeds of Peace and World Learning/SIT Youth Programs. Dialogue for intercultural understanding and leadership seeks to increase capacities for reflection, cross cultural connections, generate knowledge on issues facing youth in various cultural contexts, including groups in conflict (Ungerleider, 2012).

For this project, I have developed a model for the stages of dialogue that integrates my experience as a dialogue facilitator with the existing aforementioned models. First, the participants engage in *group forming*, where they build familiarity with one another and set community agreements to uphold; next, they practice interpersonal and intercultural sharing to explore *social group identity*, commonalities and differences; third, they engage in *dialogue*

about social issues facing them (e.g. race, religion, national identity, etc.) that is grounded in their and their peers' lived experiences; lastly, they set collective and individual intentions to create social change in their communities in the *moving forward for social change* stage.

Significance of the Project

This field project may hold significance for facilitators and teachers, youth, and community educators. It may of benefit to practitioners in various capacities who are interested in starting their own dialogue groups with youth. High schoolers may also find power in the practice and access the curriculum to begin a peer-facilitated group. It is also my hope that programs already carrying out dialogue curriculum with high school students find this to be a resource for them to consider any connection and applicability of my findings to their sociocultural contexts. Finally, I humbly hope that this work may continue to widen the field of intergroup dialogue for youth and be in conversation with other research on liberatory education practices.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Reflecting on one's own lived experience and coming together with others to seek understanding is a key method of conducting social analysis and pursuing equitable alternatives to socially encoded and normalized xenophobia. This is particularly true for youth, who experience social division and inequity in and outside of school (Nieto, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995) and are in the midst of forming political values and attitudes about the self and others (Hjerm et al., 2018, p. 1). The education system's *hidden curriculum* subjects students to paradigmatic narratives of *the other*, thus perpetuating cross-group intolerance and violence that targets marginalized communities. Students often lack opportunities for meaningful exchange, especially across social groups defined by race, nationality, religion, gender, class, language, indigeneity, citizenship, and ability. This lack of opportunity hinders the ability of youth to connect with each other and create cross-cultural, collectively generated understandings of the world around them. For this reason, critical intergroup dialogue is an important tool for educators who work with youth.

The claim for this literature review is that critical intergroup dialogue with high school students is a powerful educational practice with liberatory potential. Three sets of evidence support this claim, which is understood through the theoretical frame of critical pedagogy and the subframe of dialogic education. This reasons include (a) the practice of intergroup dialogue, which aims to transform conflict and spark social change, can be understood as a form of critical peace education; (b) critical dialogue not only strives to create social transformation, but is also carried out with a collective and liberatory process; (c) due to the importance of adolescent

development of political values and ideologies, dialogue with high school students warrants further research. Side by Side reasoning is used to connect these pieces of evidence because the literature includes different authors, theorists, and studies. Taken together, the three sets of evidence support the claim that dialogue with high school students has liberatory potential and warrants further research. A visual representation of the logic equation is as follows: $R_1, R_2, R_3 \therefore C$ (Machi & McEvoy, 2012, p. 97) The following sections demonstrate that critical dialogue is a practical application of critical pedagogy and dialogic education. They serve to justify the claim that critical IGD is a powerful educational process with liberatory potential.

Dialogue as Critical Peace Education

Freire's foundational theories on dialogue have been translated to many contexts, including the practice of intergroup dialogue (Gurin, Nagda, & Zúñiga, 2013). This section demonstrates how dialogue can be understood as a practice of critical peace education. Scholarship that supports this claim includes (a) work by Bajaj and Hantzopoulos (2016) on critical peace education in both process and function; (b) an analysis of peace education by Bekerman (2007) on the importance of questioning normative conceptions of peace, conflict, and identity; (c) an illustration of the peacebuilding potential of storytelling in dialogue (Bar-On, 2010; Ungerleider, 2012). At the core of critical dialogue is the pursuit of understanding among conflicting perspectives and a collective birthing of a new order that subverts hegemonic structures of power. Intergroup dialogue's purpose of conflict transformation suggests the liberatory potential of the practice.

Bajaj and Hantzopoulos (2016) describe the process and objectives of critical peace education. They write, "While educational spaces can be used to foster values like war, violence, competition, militarism and hatred, [education] can also be used to develop capacities for peace,

nonviolence, justice, dignity, and respect for difference" (p. 2). According to the authors, critical peace education goes beyond teaching *about* peace (i.e. learning about ways of building peace) to educate *for* peace (i.e. building the capacity for enacting those possibilities) in pursuit of justice and collective liberation (Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, p. 2). Critical peace education questions the systems of power that create and sustain conflict and seeks to subvert unjust structures of social power to build capacity for an equitable global order. Critical dialogue provides the opportunity to learn about these structures of social power (specifically in the second phase, *social group identity exploration* and the third phase, *understanding social issues through personal perspectives*) and builds the capacity of participants to enact social change (specifically in the fourth phase, *moving forward for social change*). Therefore, following the definition of peace education by Bajaj and Hantzopoulos, critical dialogue can be understood as a practice of peace education.

Importantly, critical peace education centers on localized conceptions of peace and conflict, contesting the notion that peace can be universally implemented (Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016, p. 4). As critical dialogue engages youth in reflecting on, analyzing, and sharing their lived experiences, it generates and respects localized knowledge about social issues and how they can be addressed so that peace is achieved. In this way, critical dialogue follows Bajaj and Hantzopoulos's conceptual understanding of critical peace education practices as ones that resist normative and Eurocentric conceptions and processes for peacebuilding.

Bekerman (2007) offers several insights on intergroup dialogue as a critical peacebuilding project that are important to consider. Similar to Bajaj and Hantzopoulos's emphasis on localized conceptions of peace, the author expresses the need for dialogue to question normative conceptions of peace as the absence of conflict. Secondly, the author

cautions against the assumption of a unified identity in intergroup dialogue which oversimplifies the multilayered and intersecting identities of participants (Bekerman, 2007, p. 27). To frame a dialogue as between ‘two conflicting sides’ stems from nation-state ideology and perpetuates the notion that identity markers translate seamlessly to a unified lived experience. He warns that intergroup dialogue curricula that present identity as a “unitary and autonomous construct” can “risk consolidating that same reality they intended to overcome” (Bekerman, 2007, p. 27). In critical dialogue, social group identity formation, reformation, and expression are central vehicles for examining conceptions of the self and others. In this way, critical dialogue adopts a post-nationalist position by actively validating the intersectionality and fluidity of participants’ identities. Specifically, it is important to consider the way that race, religion, indigeneity, gender, sexuality, and class inform what it means to be of a certain national identity and to recognize the danger in facilitation which assumes a participants’ lived experience based on one social group identifier. For these reasons, critical dialogue can be seen as a critical peace education project in line with Bekerman’s conceptual understanding because it problematizes normative conceptions of peace, conflict, and identity.

In the field of critical peace education, dialogue is a method of conflict transformation. In his work with dialogue participants from Palestine and Israel as well as with German and Jewish participants, Bar-On (2010) demonstrates that personal storytelling has the potential to break through the narratives formulated in conflict. Personal storytelling can also introduce, or reintroduce, a sense of commonality and mutual respect between participants. The process of sharing stories can “facilitate[s] the development of positive feelings of empathy and openness among participants from the ‘other side,’ thereby breaking through the stalemate created by the opposing paradigmatic narratives” (Bar-On, 2010, p. 200). Because critical dialogue relies on

reflection and storytelling as the process of generating knowledge, it can be a project of conflict resolution within the field of critical peace education.

Relatedly, Ungerleider (2012) supports the claim that youth dialogue with high school students from various international contexts including those in deeply rooted conflict can, through facilitated interactions across social group identity difference, support peacebuilding and leadership for social change. Notable examples include Greek and Turkish Cypriot, and Iraqi and American students. The objective of dialogue strays from the traditional debate of viewpoints and instead seeks to bolster understanding and empathy (Ungerleider, 2012, p. 385). He writes,

For young people to feel empowered to address social problems in their communities and conflicts facing their world, they need to engage not only with the issues, but with each other... For future leaders, dialogue groups create a place and time to envision one's own potential leadership for social change. (382)

As articulated above, the highly interpersonal nature of the method affords radical potential for social change efforts which are rooted in and sparked by the individual and collective experiences of participants. For this reason, dialogue can, as a critical peace education project, both transform conflict and support collaborative social change efforts.

In summary, research demonstrates that dialogue can be understood as a practice of critical peace education. Scholarship identifies aspects of critical peace education enacted in critical dialogue including (a) localized conceptions of peace (Bajaj & Hantzopoulos, 2016); (b) the contestation of normative frameworks on national identity and peacebuilding (Bekerman, 2007); (c) the power of storytelling in conflict transformation (Bar-On, 2010 and Ungerleider, 2012). Taken together, this body of research works to justify the claim that dialogue, particularly with youth, is a project of critical peace education with liberatory potential.

Dialogue's Collective and Liberatory Process

Research demonstrates that critical intergroup dialogue's potential relies on its attention to a collective and liberatory process. This includes (a) work by Beale and Schoem (2001) that articulate the need for a balance of content and process; (b) *testimonio* as a form of dialogical confrontation (Cruz, 2012); (c) creative facilitation methods that disorient normative conceptions of conflict resolution (Days and Kuflinec, 2012). This body of scholarship serves to justify the claim that dialogue with high school students is a powerful educational practice with liberatory potential. Researchers in the field argue that the emphasis on content and process should be balanced; in other words, theoretical framings and knowledge about social issues should be balanced with methods which encourage personal narratives and relationship building within intergroup dialogue (Beale & Schoem, 2001, p. 266-7). Facilitation requires adequate training and commitment to fostering interpersonal processes such as creative conflict resolution. To do so, facilitators must be able to create an empathetic space for deep listening and authentic sharing. At the same time, facilitators must demonstrate a deep knowledge of historical and contemporary social issues in order to maintain a safe and productive dialogue space (p. 266-7).

Another important element of dialogue is generating new knowledge through the dialogic process. By refuting dogmatic ways of learning about the world and instead seeking understanding through lived experiences, the dialogic process relies on participation and co-creation of knowledge in a collective liberatory process. Storytelling is the core method of critical intergroup dialogue. It validates the expertise of students as they experience and analyze the world around them. In her work on *testimonio*, Cindy Cruz posits storytelling as a dialogical confrontation with global systems that maintain inequality and violence. In conversation with Yudice's (1985) work on *testimonio*, Cruz explains that as participants express their experiences

through story, *testimonios* make sense of oppressive structures and make them visible to the teller and listeners. *Testimonio* does not fill an empty room. As participants form relationships with one another and express their lived experiences, other participants act as “faithful witness” who share in the teller’s story (Cruz, 2012, p 461). In this way, the medium of storytelling is relational and collective, and refutes the isolation of the self in the learning process; it is a key aspect of the collective and liberatory process of dialogue.

A third element of dialogue that supports a collective and liberatory process is creative facilitation that disrupts traditional conflict resolution methods. Drawing from their experiences with Seeds of Peace, a peacebuilding program centered on intergroup dialogue among students from the Middle East and other regions held at a summer camp in Maine, Days Jr. and Kuflinec (2012) trace the roots of traditional conflict resolution to Cold War conceptions of difference.

...it’s a model that’s still equated with American imperialism as a distraction from root problems of justice and land for subjugated peoples. The word ‘resolution’ implies that violent conflict would end and normal political, economic relations would begin without necessarily addressing access to power and structural violence (p. 89).

The pedagogy described by the authors draws on facilitation which disorients students’ conceptions of perceived dichotomies such as ‘self and other’ and ‘peace and conflict.’ Days Jr.’s process of facilitation has its lineage in Afro-Brazilian Candomblé and Capoeira and allows for the “energies of conflict to find new forms and understandings” (Days Jr. & Kuflinec, 2012, p. 88). In this way, the process is liberated from a preconceived form of resolved conflict. Importantly, relinquishing strict identity-based narratives of conflict factors into the ability for dialogue to transcend traditional conflict resolution (p. 90). By enacting facilitation which is liberated from “paradigmatic narratives” (Bar-On, 2009, p. 200), the authors suggest that dialogue

can extend understanding beyond the “implicit ‘script’ of the conflict” (Days Jr. & Kuflinec, 2012, p. 90).

In summary, this body of scholarship demonstrates key considerations of dialogue that ground the process in collective and liberatory practices. These include (a) the balance of content and process (Beale and Schoem, 2001); (b) *testimonio* as dialogical confrontation with oppressive systems (Cruz, 2012); (c) creative facilitation that transcends traditional notions of conflict resolution. Together, this research helps to justify the claim that dialogue with high school students is a powerful educational practice with liberatory potential. The subsequent body of research demonstrates the need and potential for dialogue with high school students, in particular.

Review of the Population: High School Students

Research demonstrates that while adolescence is an important period of political value and ideological formation, high school students are underrepresented in the literature on critical and intergroup dialogue (Hjerm et al., 2018; Moss et al., 2017). The authors argue that the method should be studied with greater breath in fields and contexts outside of higher education such as communities, high schools, and in the field of counseling (Moss et al., 2017). This section reviews a body of scholarship that demonstrates the rationale for a project focused on this population. This includes (a) scholarship on adolescent development of political values and ideological formation (Hjerm et al., 2018); (b) dialogue curricula that provides youth with opportunities to recognize and potentially part from the sources of their socialization (Fisher & Checkoway, 2011). This body of scholarship is important because it adds a final justification for the claim that dialogue with high school students is a powerful educational practice with liberatory potential.

Hjerm, Eger, and Danell (2018) confirm that adolescence is a critical period when youth form political values, attitudes about the self and others (p. 1). In particular, it is a time in which prejudicial attitudes are developed. The authors' research demonstrates that social influence, namely the belief systems held by peers, affects youth's perspectives and prejudices. Importantly for increasing understanding and reducing prejudice, they highlight that adolescence is the time when attitudes are most capable of changing (p. 9). It follows that the development of adolescent, peer-based educational practices which encourage cross-cultural tolerance and understanding is an important area of research. There is some important research specific to high school-aged students in dialogue (for example Wayne, 2008 and Griffin et al., 2012). A notable example is Fisher and Checkoway's (2011) study that adapts the four-stage intergroup dialogue model to a summer community project.

In their work, Fisher and Checkoway compile best practices of adolescent intergroup dialogue facilitation as learned in the Summer Youth Dialogues on Race and Ethnicity (SYD) in Metro Detroit. The program goals were:

- a) promote youths' understanding of their own racial and ethnic identity and that of others;
- b) to familiarize youth with the historic and contemporary issues of racial relations racial inequalities, and social justice in metro Detroit; and
- c) to strengthen the desire, commitment, and competency to work in groups and coalitions to affect positive community change (p. 134)

The authors claim that recognizing and parting from the sources of their socialization is a core experience for adolescents who participate in dialogue (p. 137). Compared to university students, high schoolers may struggle with budding beliefs that conflict with family values or beliefs from their upbringing (p. 137). This emotional process deserves care and

acknowledgement by dialogue facilitators. As high school students wrestle with questions of identity, social injustice, and socialization, they require a high level of emotional support. In dialogue, this comes from a high level of trust in both the facilitator as well as from fellow participants who provide social support and acceptance (p. 137). The research by Fisher and Checkoway suggests attention toward (a) dynamics such as the way youth engage with family beliefs in dialogue; (b) the development of participants' social group identities, value systems, and political beliefs; (c) facilitation based on care and emotional support. This is important scholarship because it represents high school youth and corresponding best practices in the literature on critical intergroup dialogue.

In summary, there is great potential in furthering the study of dialogue with adolescents, in particular. This is first demonstrated by research on adolescence as a time of political value, identity, and prejudice formation (Hjerm et al., 2011). Secondly, the study by Fisher and Checkoway (2011) of high school students in dialogue reveals considerations such as the recognition and parting of their sources of socialization, suggesting that further research can illuminate other considerations that are specific to this population. This body of scholarship is important because, along with previous sections of this literature review, justifies the claim that critical dialogue with high school students is a powerful educational practice with liberatory potential.

Summary

This literature review claims that intergroup dialogue process is an enactment of critical pedagogy practices, and that it is a liberatory and collective process with potential for critical peacebuilding. This claim, framed by critical pedagogy and dialogic education, is evidenced by research which states that (a) intergroup dialogue, which aims to transform conflict, can be

considered a form of critical peace education; (b) dialogue is a collective and liberatory process; (c) dialogue with high school students warrants further research. This claim, and the literature that supports it, addresses social violence and division resulting from intolerance, xenophobia, classism, and racism that permeates global societies. In dialogue, participants relate to themselves, express their lived experiences, and generate new knowledge about difference, relationships, and justice. Critical intergroup dialogue is an educational process that builds capacity for a more just and peaceful world. With my project, I propose to articulate best practices in intergroup dialogue by carrying out dialogue with high school students from different cultural contexts and offering a curriculum that reflects the learning from this process. I carry out and analyze this phenomenological through the theoretical framework of critical pedagogy and dialogic education.

CHAPTER III

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

Cross-group intolerance and violence against marginalized communities permeates the global order, as evidenced by nationalistic immigration policies and discriminatory social practices. Young people, at a critical stage of adolescent development, deserve learning spaces that allow them to develop self-reflection skills, build connections across differences, and counter social injustice. Critical intergroup dialogue with high school students serves to build capacity for creating a more equitable world through reflection, conversation, and relationship-building. Facilitated dialogue among youth can confront stereotypes, unveil social ordering based on identity, and uplift resiliency among participants. Intergroup dialogue research and resources have been dedicated most heavily to college students, though high school aged participants benefit greatly from the method as well. This liberatory education project offers an alternative to deepening intolerance and xenophobia.

Phenomenology Results

The following research areas guided a phenomenological study that informs this field project:

1. What important themes emerge for youth participants in the *Group Forming* stage of dialogue?
2. What important themes emerge for youth participants in the Social Group Identity Exploration stage of dialogue?
3. What important themes emerge for youth participants in the Social Issues through Personal Perspectives stage of dialogue?
4. What important themes emerge for youth participants in the Moving Forward for Social Justice stage of dialogue?

Data for this phenomenological study was gathered by conducting a four-session dialogue group. The group consisted of seven participants and two co-facilitators, including the researcher. The participants, ages 16-20, came from six countries (Brazil, Guyana, Suriname, Iraq, Bolivia, and Peru) and represented diverse racial, ethnic, language, gender, and sexual identities. All participants had previously participated in various exchange programs led by one or both of the co-facilitators. On the exchange programs, they all participated in dialogue groups that explored social issues and youth leadership. This contributed to participants' familiarity with the process and with the facilitators themselves. The group met four times weekly on the online Zoom platform in February 2020. Data analysis was conducted for each session by transcribing and coding participant and facilitator quotes, post-session participant narrative reflections, and the researcher's post-session notes. I used the process of data explication and winnowing with a data explication table. The following sections present the results of this phenomenological study.

Research Area One: Group Forming

The data gathered in response to the first research question, "What important considerations emerged for youth participants in the Group Forming stage?" can be organized into two themes: (a) self-expression; (b) intercultural learning. First, the self-expression section presents findings related to the participant experience of dialogue as a space of safe self-expression and their analyses of speaking and listening in dialogue. Second, results that illustrate cross-cultural relationship-building through learning about commonality and difference are presented under the heading of intercultural learning.

Theme 1: Self-expression

In the group forming stage of dialogue, participants expressed a strong desire for and trust in dialogue as a safe space in which they could express themselves without judgement and

to speak about what they know. Several participants noted the feeling of courage they experienced that contributed to them feeling safe enough to express ideas and emotions with vulnerability. In the first session, participants were invited to share their past experiences with dialogue and why they chose to join the group. T, from Iraq noted, “The best thing that I remember from dialogue with Kavi was the peace talking. We have a safe space to talk on everything that we want.”

Similarly, Eufemia, from Peru, expressed:

I remember that it was a free space when all of us can share our fears and also our hopes so we can listen and feel comfortable with the others and everybody helps us to be comfortable in that space... it was a very, very safe space for us to share things.

The ability to freely and safely express themselves was a driving factor for students to re-enter the dialogue space with new people after having experienced it once before. In addition, participants were highly aware of their self-expression and the expression of their peers. They sought a balanced and authentic exchange of speaking and listening. In the anonymous hopes and fears exercise, one participant noted, “My fear is not necessarily a fear but I’m wary that while I can speak freely, I don’t abuse that freedom by not being conscious of exactly what I say and how it may affect others.” Stella, from Guyana, reflected on the balance of stepping up and stepping back after the first session:

I noticed that many of the other participants were similarly cognizant of when to step back or step down and did so in almost natural ways. It did not feel like we were speaking with each other for the first time.

In all, self-expression was an essential element in the group forming stage of the dialogue process. As expressed above, participants sought a space in which they felt comfortable to

express their ideas, emotions, and fears without peer judgement. This idea of self-expression, while in community with others, relates to the participants' desire to form relationships with their peers from around the world with various lived experiences and social group identities.

Theme 2: Intercultural Learning

In the group forming stage, participants expressed the desire to build authentic relationships across cultural differences and to find commonality across different social group identities. In particular, participants sought to redefine normative conceptions of identity such as nationality as they found connections with others. For example, when sharing what she remembered from her past dialogue group and why she wanted to join another group, Priya from Guyana explained:

What I remember from dialogue is that all of us, even though we were scattered all over the Caribbean and we are different, we're still the same. We could relate to each other and we used to talk about a lot of things from the different countries. And what I remember is sharing our experiences in our own country and see that we're not really different from each other is amazing.

Related to this memory of finding commonality, Cheryl expressed her hope for the dialogue experience:

I hope that it would be a great experience, learning about everyone's culture since we are all from different parts of the world. I am also excited to discover how much we might all have in common along with our differences.

Finally, Oliveira reflected on a small group activity from the first session:

It was a great opportunity to foster relations with foreign people and realize how many things we may have in common - like the same concept of "home" that Priya (from Guyana), Malzi (from Bolivia) and I (from Brazil) believe in.

In conclusion, the first research area of *group forming* elicited responses according to two themes including (a) self-expression and (b) intercultural learning. The desire for intercultural learning and relationship building was a primary motive in how they engaged in dialogue. The next session is dedicated to findings that address the second research area of social group identity.

Research Area Two: Social Group Identity

The data gathered in response to the second research question, “what important themes emerge for youth participants in the social group identity stage of dialogue?” can be organized according to the following themes: (a) participants’ complex understanding of their social group identities and (b) reflections on self. The first theme expands upon the act of naming identities, participants’ lived experiences of social power and/or marginalization, and pride in pluralistic identity. Results that articulate the process of self-knowing are expressed under the second theme of *reflections on self*.

Theme 1: Participants’ Complex Understanding of their Social Group Identities

As participants named their social group identities in the identity flower activity (see curriculum page 10), they expressed various insights including ease with identifying the parts of one’s self, difficulty in naming identities which overlapped or were dependent on other identities, and the experience of deriving pride from naming pluralistic identities. The students demonstrated various insights on the process of naming identities. Stella from Guyana expressed the difficulty in isolating and naming each of her identities:

One thing for me though, specifically when it came to culture, nationality, ethnicity, religion, there was a bit of – for lack of a better word – challenge in isolating myself into these specific labels because there is this overlap in them for me. So like, my culture is dependent on my ethnicity which is dependent on my or relates to my nationality and my religion and all of that... I think it was like culture. Like how do I define my culture especially when I live in a plural society and how do I isolate a specific culture, what do I call it then?

Kavi, a facilitator, echoed this sentiment that much is left unexpressed after naming her various identities:

I was born here but my parents were born elsewhere, and our ancestors were born elsewhere. And so our culture is 3 different places and generations and languages and so that was a hard one and on my flower I even hyphenated, like Indian-Fijian-American, you know and it still felt wrong. There's so many things that aren't added in those 3 words.

In response to the reflection question, “what is an aspect of your identity you hadn't thought about before this session?,” Malzi explained how the identity flower illuminated her understanding of her ethnic identity and furthermore supported pride in being Quechua:

Mine was my culture. Because in my country we have 30 ethnic states. In my city it's not common to say, what ethnic[ity] are you, are you Quechua or Guaraní? So in this dialogue I could think about what ethnic[ity] I am. And I am Quechua, and so I have to be proud of that. And it's new for me to say that I am part of that.

Participants found the exercise of creating a power flower and ordering social group identities from closer to social power to more marginalized (see curriculum page 10) to be a powerful tool

in understanding their own social realities of power and marginalization based on their identities. Stella reflected, “one thing that will stick with me is definitely the concept of social power and how I fit into that and just understanding the reality that I live in.” Oliveira similarly explained the relevance of the framework to his lived experience:

So I’m part of the LGBT community. However, when we think about discrimination and prejudice and homophobia for example, I don’t see myself as a person who suffers a lot. When I think about it, I think about the privilege I have. When I compare myself with other people that are part of the LGBT community, I see that they suffer a lot more. For example, I am a man and that is something that counts. And second of all, my skin color is not really dark and people who are part of the LGBT community and they are black and gay for example, they have more ways to suffer like from racism, from homophobia. When I was thinking about myself being part of this community, I see myself as closer to the center of the power because I have more privileges.

Finally, participants expressed pride in their various pluralistic identities. Eufemia valued the integration of culture, nationality, and indigeneity that make up the traditions of her city. She described, “I’m really proud of my nationality and my traditions because...in Cuzco, we have a lot of traditions from the Incas and things like that, so it’s part of the history of my city. I’m really proud of that.” Also describing pride in her pluralistic identities, Stella brought up how cultural plurality interacts with her national identity:

I’ll speak a bit on nationality. Again it seems to be my theme today, speaking about the cultural pluralism that I live in. I’m particularly proud to be Guyanese but also I wrote an arrow here, Caribbean-Guyanese. We share so much with the other Caribbean nations so while Guyanese is my nationality, it also relates to Trinidadian culture, or Barbadian

culture. Maybe not Jamaican culture, but you get my idea? I'm particularly proud to have my national identity but wider regional identity, so to speak? That's pretty cool.

In summary, participants experienced the complex process of naming their intersectional identities in close relation to their lived experiences of social power and/or marginalization. Their insights demonstrate that youth participants engage in the reflective practice of naming with nuance and creativity. Participants expressed their multilayered, hybrid, and self-defined identities as they processed the realities of their societies.

Theme 2: Reflections on Self

As participants explored social group identity, social power, and marginalization together, they sustained deep reflection about themselves and their family/upbringings. Their insights indicate how the social group identity session facilitated opportunities for greater self-knowing. Participants expressed seeing themselves with more clarity after exploring social group identity together. Eufemia reflected, "*I never thought a lot of my identity. And now I realize that all these pieces together makes myself.*" Speaking to the identity flower activity, Oliveira expressed,

And after this exercise doing our flowers I kind of came up with new reflections on who I am. I really think I could use this power flower and this identity flower in other situations and just take a moment to reflect on myself.

In the closing reflection of session two, Stella synthesized the process of self-identifying as uplifting. She shared,

One thing I didn't give much thought to before this dialogue was the intersectionality of the different tenets of what constitutes my identity and how these overlap. And perhaps

they overlap in a way that creates a better output or, much cooler Vishy because she has all these tenets (thumbs up).

In summary, the second research area, *social group identity* elicited responses organized according to two themes. These include (a) participants' complex understanding of their social group identities and (b) reflections on self. The next research area will explore the participant experience of dialogue about social issues through personal perspectives.

Research Area Three: Social issues through Personal Perspectives

The data gathered in response to the third research question can be organized according to the following themes: (a) social analysis (b) family and upbringing (c) conflict. The first theme of *social analysis* discusses the experience of imagining an equitable society, youth activism, and the interplay of social group identity and lived experiences. Results that articulate participants' views on generationality and maintaining relationships are expressed under the second theme of *family and upbringing*. The third theme of *conflict* analyzes how participants process opposing viewpoints and conflicts within their communities as well as their views on dialogue as a viable method for conflict transformation.

Theme 1: Social Analysis

Participants demonstrated complex social analysis in dialogue, with strong recognition of the lived experience of marginalization based on social group identities as well as a desire for safety and security for themselves and those they are allies to. As they reflected, processed, and expressed this analysis, they experienced complex emotions of guilt for not doing "enough" and disappointment in institutionalized governments. When imagining an equitable society, multiple students identified safety and security as the central element for themselves and the marginalized groups with which they ally. Oliveira shared, "I come up with an idea of a place that is secure,

that is safe, and I can be myself and not be judged by the people I walk around. (Stella signals “me too”).

Priya added the importance of the ability to express her opinions in an ideal society: For me, it’s like [Oliveira] said, for me home is like having good people around you, somewhere you feel safe, where you can voice your opinion without getting a lot of hate for it. Just somewhere you can be free, express yourself. Your opinion should be respected. That’s it, spread a lot of love.

Later in the session, Priya expanded on her belief that all people should be able to express who they are without judgement and discrimination:

This relates to what I was talking about earlier, but the LGBTQ community, I feel such strong connection towards them. I would love to take someone who hates on them to lunch, someone who is anti-LGBT, I would really love to look at things from their point of view. First of all, why do you hate on them so much. Some people aren’t even religious and still hate on them. I have so many questions.

As they processed their own experiences as youth activists working for change, students experienced guilt at not doing enough to combat the injustices they see in their communities, overwhelm at the human rights violations in their communities, and disappointment in institutionalized government. Dialogue offered a space to wrestle with those feelings of isolation or insufficiency that participants had experienced. Here, two participants expressed their experiences as youth activists and similar feelings of not doing enough. Stella reflected on her experience with session three’s opening activity, a guided visualization for justice exercise,

I think, more towards the end when you started talking about injustice and inequality and my country...so that was pretty loaded because right now we’re preparing for elections

back home. And I'm kind of deeply involved in the affairs of my country. And there are certain projects and things we've been pushing for like youth involvement, and Guyana is characterized by heavy racialized politics. My friends and I, we've been trying to push for a lot of things to try and move away from these systems but I don't know, it's just kind of loaded because I feel sort of responsible not being home not actively pushing for things because I'm not there. So yea, that's what I was thinking about.

Priya echoed the sentiment of not doing enough to combat injustice in her community:

I will talk about my country as a whole. We're also preparing for elections, which means there's a lot of hate going around right now. This is just fighting in general and really bullying others to vote for one group. Everyone's just fighting and there's corruption everywhere. It's just a big mess. I'm just waiting for the elections to be over. I feel like I'm not doing enough. I am, I feel like I am doing enough but...mixed feelings basically.

When engaging with assigned content, students identified social group identities especially as they represented differences in lived experiences. Oliveira integrated learnings from session two as he analyzed a video that told the story of two conflicting life experiences:

I think that besides religion and the place where you were born, the social class is also a huge difference. And sometimes we see people fleeing from war in their countries. Some people are living in war zones where food is scarce, where life is tough, the streets are full of rubble, and the social security system is not working as it's supposed to, so they have to rush into moving to another country because it's safer. And on the other hand, Maggie who probably hasn't been through this kind of stuff. So besides race and ethnicity, the social system based on the communities they live in is different and it's also a difference.

In summary, dialogue through participants' personal perspectives, storytelling, and sharing of lived experiences supported social analysis in a way that was relevant for students. They became active agents in the construction of their understanding of the world around them as they integrated dialogue materials (e.g. video) with their own knowledge of their communities. The process engaged participants' emotions as they analyzed the world around them, affording them space to hold multiple feelings at once (e.g. inspiration to make change and feelings of insufficiency or powerlessness).

Theme 2: Family and Upbringing

Participants were highly aware of differences of political views between them and their family members, and expressed their experiences of standing behind their opinions while preserving their relationships with family. Participants viewed their generation as more progressive as older generations because of their greater access to ideas from outside their immediate surroundings. Participants attributed more progressive attitudes to engagement with social media, which they believed enabled greater social justice for marginalized groups and broke down some social divisions. Priya explained,

I think social media... You can make friends online, and friends influence your opinions in some way. If you have friends that are maybe gay or in the LGBTQ community, you tend to sympathize with them, you tend to feel what they feel, and you just think, why was I even judging in the first place? You see that love is love, and I think social media has a very big influence.

Stella reflected on how generational difference plays out in her family:

I think, bouncing off of that, for me personally, it's a wider or more broader access to information and ideas. Like my family, my parents for example, they weren't really

exposed to certain ideas so they would be more polarized as opposed to someone like me, I've been in varying contexts, I'm going to school with different people, they never had those experiences. They never had the opportunity to learn from persons like I would have. So it's just that ability that we have now that while we are still very segregated, there are some ways in which we have been able to move past some of those sections of segregation. And it's been particularly true with school and education. That's why I'd say young people are in a better position, at the same time not because there are still something inherent within us.

Dialogue about generationality brought out the difficulties of expressing views about social justice within their families. Facilitator Kavi shared about the nuances of marginalization and oppression within her family:

I think for me, there's actually a lot of people in my more immediate family, aunts and uncles, grandparents, I call them immediate family because we're very close that I would like to take out. This is something I've come to realize is, even within your own marginalized communities, you can still perpetuate stereotypes, racism, misunderstanding among other marginalized communities. My family, we're POC, but I've still seen my family perpetuating stereotypes against other POC. And I think the more and more I do work like this, the more I ask questions that give me these responses where I'm like, woah I didn't even know this about my family. And I want to know where they're coming from because they experience marginalization already in many ways, so what makes them want to perpetuate marginalization and assumptions against other communities? That's something I have been thinking about. How can I do that and not offend anyone or ruin relationships between people I really care about?

Priya echoed the difficulty of expressing her beliefs with family members who disagree with her in the interest of maintaining personal relationships:

I have a lot of aunts that disagree [laughs] with me and my points of view. But I always stop at a certain point because I know they're just going to get angry and relationships are going to get ruined [Stella does "me too" signal] so I just stay out of it, but it's mostly about religion and the LGBTQ community. Those two are the top topics that we disagree on a lot.

In summary, dialogue afforded participants the space to process family and generationality as they relate to their beliefs about social change. Participants expressed the delicacy and emotional challenge of standing behind their politics while preserving family relationships. They collectively arrived at an analysis of their generation, in their various cultural contexts, as more progressive as the previous generation. This relates to the topic of social conflict which the youth participants expressed as bringing forth difficult emotions like anger and sadness.

Theme 3: Conflict

Participants experienced complex emotions such as sadness and anger as they analyzed their societies, namely the discrimination and injustice they see around them. They identified overcoming polarized viewpoints as important to the process of creating a more equitable and just society. Oliveira told how his society suffers from ensuing division and violence as a result of slavery and colonization:

My community in Brazil – my country is divided since the 16th century when the Europeans arrived in our lands that were already inhabited by native people and the colonization process started at this time. And slavery was adopted since the beginning of

the colonization process and it ruined the social relation of production over three centuries... There are debates about immigration, the people come from Venezuela to Brazil. Debates about gun ownership, like in the US. Debates about homosexual marriage. About abortion. It divides opinions in my country and it's really hard to handle. It shows how people are divided on opposite sides. You know, like even in political affairs. Just like in the US you have the democrats and republicans in the US, in Brazil we have the conservative parties that tend to favor the status quo and are opposite and against radical changes and we have community, communist parties who believe in a classless society. So how do we live with such opposing labels and opinions? It's a really hard issue to talk about. There are a lot of things involved. In my country things are like this.

He expressed the emotional challenge of coexistence with those on the other side of political and social issues. For Oliveira, the enduring conflict is overwhelming in both its scope and longevity. Similarly, Priya shared her emotions of anger and sadness at the discrimination she witnesses toward the LGBTQ community which energizes her to change her society:

People from the LGBTQ community are not being respected. There are a lot of different opinions and it makes me angry to read comments on Facebook and stuff. Just random people sending such hateful things to people from the LGBTQ community. They're like, oh the bible says love is between a man and a woman and other people that say, love is love, what does it matter, don't judge others. And it's really heartbreaking to see that people are so narrow minded. It really hurts my feelings and I'm not even from that community. And I really want to do something about that but I think the new generation is going to be more open minded. The younger people here are really open minded and

they want to make change, they want the new generation to accept...it shouldn't even matter. So that's something I really want to fight for.

In conclusion, the third research area, *social issues through personal perspectives* brought forth ideas that can be organized according to three themes. These include the first theme of *social analysis*, which describes participants' visions of an equitable society, youth activism, and how social group identity relates to lived experiences. The second theme of *family and upbringing* illustrates how generationality shapes participants' engagement with social issues, including the way they preserve relationships with family members who do not agree with them. Finally, the third theme of *conflict* articulates the complexity of emotions experienced by participants as they process conflict in their communities.

Research Area Four: Moving Forward for Social Change

The data gathered in response to the fourth research area can be organized into two themes: (a) sharing knowledge (b) speaking up for justice. The first theme presents findings related to the participants' collective generation of knowledge about social change by asking questions to one another and of the facilitators. Results that articulate the challenges and importance of speaking up about social injustice and of contesting unjust narratives are presented under the second theme.

Theme 1: Sharing Knowledge

Generating knowledge in dialogue is a collective process; both participants and facilitators came to appreciate and honor one another's stories and experiences as they thought about how they would move forward in seeking social justice. Participants drove the process by asking questions of one another to seek best practices, and also asked questions of facilitators.

Participants generated meaningful strategies for making social change by asking questions of one another, respecting and honoring the knowledge of their group mates. Evidence of this can be seen in the sequential dialogue below:

Stella: I want to ally with other young people because as I mentioned in a previous dialogue session, we're kind of more open to having certain conversations and stuff.

Oliveira: I agree with Stella. I think about volunteer work. I will definitely ally with other young people, and also I would add NGOs, like organizations in my city. I think it's a good way to establish partnerships and achieve our goals faster.

Malzi: If you do that, would you prefer to work with your friends, or with people who have a lot of specialties?

Oliveira: Could you please repeat that?

Malzi: I don't know how to say this, people who knows about the problems.

Oliveira: Like previous experience in the area?

Malzi: Yes, yes.

Oliveira: I think anyone who wants to contribute. I mean, it's good to have people with previous experience, but even if you have not I think it's ok to participate. So everyone who truly loves the issue and wants to fix it somehow.

When talking about actions toward social change, participants appreciated the opinions, experiences, and stories offered by the facilitators.

Oliveira: If anyone can give a real example of a real situation [about when to offer help to others] that would be awesome.

Meaghan, facilitator: Stella, did you have one in mind when you asked, 'how do you know when to step in'?

Stella: So last year when I was working full time there was this incident with a wife, a domestic violence case. And that was something way beyond what I knew how to deal with so I was really wary of what I was getting myself into. Her family member reached out to me, and said this guy is abusing this woman and she left home, she wants some help getting in contact with the authorities, or publish an article, or something. I said ok, I don't really know about this but I will see... I visited her, and she agreed that she would go to an NGO for domestic violence. I put her in contact with those people. I wasn't able to write anything about it but she did go to Help and Shelter the very next day, on the Wednesday. On Saturday I got a call that the man went to take her. She called her sister and said that she went home willingly. And I was like, why would you willingly go back into a situation where you would be abused? Like I don't know if it was my place to talk to her, I really didn't know.

Kavi, facilitator: Going off of that, it is really important if you want to offer and are asked to offer help but you don't know if you can, also voicing that. And saying, I really want to help and I really want to write an article, but I don't know if that's my place or I don't know about this – and using that uncertainty to find resources. And saying, I don't know, but I heard about this shelter that might know, or if you look online, you can find this. It goes back to where it can be very hard to balance when you're going home, like in your instance Stella, and you're like did I enough, did I say the right thing? And as much as we want to help, it goes back to making sure that our safety and wellness are at the forefront of what we do. We are taking care of ourselves so that we can take care of other people.

Meaghan, facilitator: Another thing that comes up for me with that story Stella is about always recognizing people's resiliency. I've definitely been in situations where young people come to me and tell me about things going on in their lives and it takes over my entire experience like being constantly worried about them or scared that they're not getting the support they need at home or something like that. And I remember that people are resilient. And if people have been dealing with something for a long time, they have developed a lot of strength and capacity – knowing their situation better than anyone else – to get through it. So I think as we support people, offer resources, listen to people as we're there for them, we also remember, this is a strong person and I'm gonna help build up their capacity for making change in their own lives and be an ally to them.

Theme 2: Speaking Up for Justice

In the dialogue stage of building social change, participants understood speaking up as a major strategy in disrupting oppression they themselves and others experience. They viewed the contestation of unjust narratives in their societies as a key strategy to build support for social change among other youth. Cheryl shared her experience in school speaking out against injustice:

I would like to share something that happened to me. I have actually had a problem in school as it relates to me seeing things – well in essence, social injustice – and me speaking up and I would be victimized about saying something about it. And that actually prevented me from achieving a prefect badge. And what I did is that I wrote a letter to our principal at that point in time and I voiced my complaints. And I spoke about my situation with persons in school. And for me, one reason I believe you should speak up is because people tend to understand what you're going through and you also meet persons

who are going through situations just like what you may have experienced and you start to realize how many persons actually feel the same way you do. And together you can work toward changing that social injustice, if you understand what I'm saying. And after I wrote that letter I actually received my prefect badge this year, after speaking up about the problem and the social injustice that I faced. So I really honestly believe that it's important for us to speak up because you kind of find some – what should I say? Not clarity, but... the word isn't coming to me. Like pleasure, in talking about happened to you and also finding persons that may have faced a similar thing as you and you know just dealing with it. So it's very important to speak up and spread awareness about certain things.

Relatedly, Oliveira expressed why speaking up is meaningful to him and how it has prompted his community engagement with other youth in Brazil:

Whenever I see injustice around me, it touches me somehow and I feel the need to do something about it and speak up. In practical terms, one of things I have been doing is visiting schools in my community and talking to the teenagers about their rights in terms of public education because it's something that really catches my attention, like how in Brazil a basic right like quality education is denied. And when rights are denied you have a lot of problems as outcomes. So I have been visiting schools, talking to teenagers and volunteering with them, I used to teach drawings and English to high school students and this is a way I have found to speak up and report social injustice. And I use my social media to share news about it.

Participants recognized that if they kept silent, unjust narratives would continue to permeate their communities and hinder social justice. Stella told her story of reclaiming the history of Guyana:

That's something I thought about this week. The conversation I was having was about the history of Guyana as we're celebrating our 50th republic today, and why it's important to reclaim our history and all of that and that involves speaking up. And I'm paraphrasing here because I don't remember it correct, but it says "the hunter will continue to write the story until the lion learns to speak," or something like that. Involves a hunter and a lion and owning your story. So what I got from that is that you need to be at the forefront of the narrative that you want out there. And if you don't speak, the narrative may be something else, it might be something that you don't want out there, it might be something bad. So yea it's important to speak up, to channel that narrative.

Finally, Oliveira related the concept of inertia to the societal tendency to keep quiet despite recognizing injustice:

And also speaking of, I was thinking about inertia like in physics. Does anyone know what is inertia? It's a kind of resistance of a physical object to don't move. So if you want this object to move you have to put a force and so this is going to be against the tendency to [keep] quiet. Like it's important to speak because this is how we make things go, if that makes any sense.

In summary, the fourth research area *moving forward for social change* elicited responses that can be organized according to three themes. The first theme of *sharing knowledge* describes the collective generation of knowledge within dialogue whereby participants ask questions of one another and of facilitators to glean strategies for making social change in their own communities. The second theme, *speaking up for justice*, illustrates participants' belief in the power of speaking up about social injustice and the importance of disrupting unjust narratives.

Discussion

The results from the dialogue research group influenced the development of this curriculum in multiple ways. Firstly, the key themes derived from participants' observations influenced the activities, guiding questions, and structure of the curriculum. Secondly, the key themes influenced recommendations for facilitation that supports high school students. In this section, I will discuss the impact of the study in four categories: (a) validation; (b) openness; (c) facilitator relationship; (d) accessibility through learning tools.

Validation

In the group forming stage and throughout the entire process, validation of participants' experiences was important for their emotional safety and the development of trust in their peers and co-facilitators. Fostering a space in which participants' ideas, feelings, and observations are validated laid the groundwork for authentic dialogue in future sessions. In the data, the importance of validation is evidenced by various observations that describe dialogue as a safe space to express one's self. Evidence of this can be seen in the risks that students made to express new ideas with vulnerability.

In the curriculum guide, this translates to activities and guiding questions which validate the complexity of participants' experiences. For example, in the hopes/fears exercise (see session 1, curriculum page 8) participants anonymously record their hopes and fears for their time in dialogue. These hopes and fear are read aloud by other members, at random. The activity serves to validate the range of emotional responses to the dialogue process and frames all worries and excitement as important. Validation should permeate all facilitation and facilitator-participant interactions, including but not limited to facilitators' responses to students' observations, and the formulation of dialogue guiding questions. Facilitation should not question the validity of

students' responses, ideas, emotions, comforts/discomforts, or expertise of students, but rather, should uplift their expression, their social group identities and the knowledge that they hold.

Openness

Prompts, activities, and guiding questions should serve as a frame for participants rather than as a directive. For the method to honor the dialogic process and the co-creation of the experience jointly by the participants and facilitators, maintaining openness is imperative. The curriculum itself should be in service of setting the dialogue container, and maintaining and facilitating participants' collective knowledge generation. The curriculum exists as a guide to this process, rather than as a prescriptive roadmap. The data from this study demonstrates that participants steered conversation to the topics that were most relevant to them. Presenting guiding questions without precise ongoing conversational oversight allows participants to explore, relate to one another, sit together in silence, and build relationships authentically. They cannot achieve these objectives in an overly scripted environment. When fostering the formation of the group in the first stage (see session 1, curriculum page 8), it is important for facilitators to listen for and be responsive to the group's desires for the experience they hope to create collectively. Every dialogue group should develop with respect to the unique participants and their social context.

Facilitator Relationship

In this research project, the co-facilitators had been in a close working and personal relationship for three years. They had generated knowledge of one another's identities, stories, backgrounds, triggers, passions, fears, and facilitation styles over time and with sustained effort. They share certain social group identities (including gender and physical ability) and many divergent ones: namely, religion, language backgrounds, ethno-cultural background, and

sexuality. They had engaged in ongoing personal exploration and professional training, separately and together, on how social power operates for them as educators. Both are committed to equitable facilitation practices that are responsive to the identities and various forms of social power and marginalization that they hold.

The facilitators modeled an equitable and trusting intergroup relationship for participants by checking in with one another often during the sessions, deferring at times to the other facilitator, and demonstrating alignment in their pursuit of justice. The impact of this on the dialogue group dynamics may have affected the exchanges between participants as seen in the data. Because of this, facilitators should exhibit the genuine desire to get to know one another and the participants and actively create the group alongside the students. Facilitators challenged one another as they challenged students to reflect deeply and express fully. They engaged in the process of self-exploration alongside participants which surfaced differently based on their different perspectives, identities, and lived experiences. This process is evidenced by the dialogue between Kavi and Priya about balancing family relationships with one's own political expression in session three. After facilitator Kavi shared openly about her challenge with close relatives whose views conflicted with her own, participant Priya added on how she also experienced this challenge albeit in a different cultural context surrounding different social issues. When participants and facilitators come together, they revolve around the nexus of shared and divergent perspectives and experiences to listen, empathize, and imagine a more just world together.

By extension, this data supports the efficacy of *near-peer* facilitators, as articulated by Fisher and Checkoway (2011, See literature review section "Review of the Population: High School Students). Facilitators 3-7 years older than participants, as both Kavi and I are, can

“leverage their own experiences transitioning from adolescent to young adults and their resulting growing awareness” (Fisher and Checkoway, 2011, p. 137). Near-peer facilitators maintain the identity of a trusted adult while encouraging participants to “relate to them as someone who personally understands their adolescent experiences” (Fisher and Checkoway, 2011, p. 137). In the data, this is especially evident in session four when participants asked direct questions about their own experiences and strategies for social change.

Accessibility

In dialogue as in life, every participant (and facilitator) reflects, processes, and expresses themselves uniquely. This is evident in data from every session, as indicated by participants’ widely varying responses (or non-responses) to prompts and engagement (or non-engagement) with activities. It is important to employ accessible facilitation methods that support various learning preferences, verbal and non-verbal language abilities, and levels of comfort within the group (for example, solo writing time, small group discussions and pair-shares, and including video content with closed captions). Evidence of the importance of this can be seen in session four, when pausing discussion to encourage students to write down their thoughts for the five fingers prompts gave way to more robust input from multiple participants.

Data from this study, including the several participant reflections in session two that they were naming their own identities in a formal learning context for the first time, indicates that any dialogue curriculum should be responsive to participants’ incoming familiarity with curriculum elements like identifying social group identities and sharing personal stories. For example, facilitation of the social group identity exploration phase should draw on the language that participants use to describe themselves. A shared key terms tool is a group resource for shared language and definitions that the group can utilize as they move forward in conversation.

The identity flower (curriculum page 8) is an accessible and personalized activity that offers a shared and leveling experience. Data from session two such as the length of responses and number of participants speaking after completing their identity flowers suggests that the reflective tool enables youth to contribute to dialogue with greater depth. Participants had time to reflect and write out their identities with freedom to choose the areas that feel most salient for them. They were told that they did not have to share out every petal and were able to write for themselves. Importantly, this activity offered space for participants' complex understanding of their social group identities. By maintaining open guiding questions, participants chose which petal they wanted to share more about and are not limited to one aspect of their identities. By extension, the prompts intentionally invited students to express about the process of naming which brings about discussions on intersectionality.

Description of the Project

This is a curriculum for diverse groups of high school students from various national and cultural backgrounds. It focuses on cross-cultural relationship building and social analysis in pursuit of social justice. It was created with a great degree of flexibility embedded in the facilitation options; the guide can be carried out as is but is meant to be adapted based on the sociocultural context of the students, the experience of the facilitators, and the expressed desires of the participants. By building up students' facilities for reflection, listening, and speaking, the guide sustains the arc of four stages of dialogue: group forming, social group identity exploration, social issues through personal perspectives, and moving forward for social justice.

The guide begins with facilitation notes that include considerations for the co-facilitator relationship and the set-up of the group, including where to hold the group. Though ideally held in person, this curriculum can be carried out online as well, as it was with my research group.

The guide is presented in four sections, each including (a) learning objectives for participants and facilitators (b) 75-minute session curriculum. If possible, facilitators may elect to hold multiple sessions per module that build on one another, though these four sessions stood alone for my research group and were a comprehensive experience for students.

Project Development

This project builds on my experience facilitating dialogue between 2017 – 2019 on various exchange programs run by World Learning, including Youth Ambassadors: Caribbean, Youth Ambassadors: Brazil, Jóvenes en Acción, and Youth Ambassadors: Bolivia and Peru (see Ungerleider, 2012 for history and overview of programs). Many of the ideas in this curriculum guide have been developed collaboratively with the inspirational co-leaders I have worked with on these programs. This curriculum was developed with considerable input from my co-facilitator on the research project, Sonal Lal. I first developed a draft of the curriculum guide in advance of the research with attention to the theoretical framework of critical pedagogy and dialogic education (see Chapter One section “Theoretical Framework: Critical Pedagogy”). I then analyzed and integrated themes from the research data into the curriculum. I developed the initial curriculum with input from my co-facilitator and, after the research, integrated key themes from the data to modify the curriculum.

Presentation of the Project

See Appendix A.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As high school students undergo social identity formation, discovery of political values, and encoding of attitudes toward ‘the other,’ education which promotes empathy across difference is especially important (Hjerm et al., 2018). Facilitated conversation about social group identity, marginalization, and social power are lacking in society at large, including in education. Intergroup dialogue offers reflective and interactive learning which fosters dedication among youth to confront social injustice (Dessel, 2010).

This chapter includes sections titled (a) conclusions; (b) recommendations; (c) summary. The conclusions section summarizes the purpose statement from Chapter One and discusses how this field project met that purpose. The recommendations section of this chapter includes evidence-based recommendations related to the implementation, evaluation, and further development of this field project. This chapter ends with a brief summary of the purpose and importance of the field project as a whole.

Conclusions

Summary of Purpose Statement

The purpose of this field project was to study the intergroup dialogue process with high school students and use key learnings from the research to inform a four-session dialogue curriculum guide. Using research generated by facilitating and analyzing a dialogue group with youth from six countries, I designed a curriculum meant to be adapted by educators to their local contexts. I sought to employ key tenets of critical pedagogy and dialogic education in the making of the curriculum. This purpose statement was based on the findings of the existing literature on intergroup dialogue, reviewed in Chapter Two.

The claim made in the literature review was that critical intergroup dialogue with youth is a powerful educational process with liberatory potential. The evidence used to support that claim included (a) the practice of intergroup dialogue, which aims to transform conflict and spark social change, can be understood as a form of critical peace education; (b) critical dialogue not only strives to create social transformation, but is also carried out with a collective and liberatory process; (c) due to the importance of adolescent development of political values and ideologies, dialogue with high school students warrants further research. By conducting research and creating a dialogue curriculum dedicated to high school students, I add to existing literature in the field. Further, this curriculum expands access to critical dialogue for high school students, widening the reach of critical pedagogy and dialogic education.

Meeting the Purpose

The findings of my study were used in this field project to address the purpose in an evidenced-based way. Firstly, the findings shaped the guidance on facilitation offered in the curriculum. Secondly, they influenced curriculum elements such as activities and guiding questions. This field project meets the expectations of the purpose statement by applying best practices in youth dialogue, as gleaned from my research, to a curriculum that is accessible to educators.

Recommendations

In this section, I make evidence-based recommendations related to the implementation, evaluation, and further development of this field project. Recommendations for the implementation of this field project include the adaptation of the curriculum by educators with localized knowledge of the youth in their communities. By extension, recommendations for the evaluation of this field project include studies on localized implementation of this curriculum.

Recommendations for the further development of this field project include (a) research focused on near-peer facilitation; (b) facilitation training for education practitioners working with high school students; (c) an exploration of high school youth as peer-facilitators; (d) attention to communication disability. Following this, the chapter ends with a brief summary of this field project as a whole.

Recommendations for the Implementation of This Field Project

Recommendations for the implementation of this field project include the adaptation of the curriculum by educators with localized knowledge of the youth in their communities. The local sociopolitical context and participants' shared and divergent lived experiences should always inform dialogue in process and content. This includes facilitation considerations, session content, guiding questions, topics chosen by facilitators, and acknowledgement and responsiveness to cultural norms around sharing. With this field project, I attempt to offer a form that can be shifted, adapted, and changed based on these realities. As such, I recommend it is implemented with considerable personalization. In addition to this recommendation, the following section describes a recommendation for the evaluation of this field project.

Recommendations for the Evaluation of This Field Project

Recommendations for the evaluation of this field project include studies on localized implementation and adaptations of this field project. It is important to explore whether the form offered in this field project is useful in contexts outside my own. Comparative case studies or other phenomenological studies may prove useful in this exploration. These methodologies might be used to provide an important critique of the design of this field project by assessing the adaptability of the curriculum. Inquiry that explores the use of dialogue as conceived of here in different cultural contexts is an important one. I would be particularly interested in learning how

local educators suggest adapting this guide for the populations they work with. In addition to this recommendation, the next section describes recommendations for the further development of this field project.

Recommendations for the Further Development of This Field Project

Recommendations for the further development of this field project include (a) a research group focused on near-peer facilitation; (b) dedicated facilitation guide/training for education practitioners; (c) exploration of peer-facilitation by high school youth; (d) attention to communication disability. Firstly, the concept of near-peer facilitation did seem to be significant in this research project (see Chapter Three discussion section “Facilitator relationship”), but it was outside the scope of this project to analyze that specific phenomenon and make related facilitation guidance and implementation recommendations. This project would be further strengthened by analyzing this phenomenon with greater specificity. Related to near-peer facilitation, I recommend the development of a guide and training for education practitioners facilitating dialogue with high school students. This would also serve to collectively generate best practice from the wealth of experience of other facilitators already engaged with high school students. Related to facilitation training, I recommend an exploration of the possibility of peer-led critical dialogue with high school student facilitators. These further developments may extend the existing literature on dialogue with youth participants by offering insight on near-peer and peer facilitation. These recommendations could prompt scholarship on intergroup dialogue to explore youth-led projects.

Finally, it is my hope that scholars and educators take up the important task of dedicating research on intergroup dialogue for youth with communication disabilities whose ways of communicating transcend normative conceptions of speaking and listening. I acknowledge the

shortcoming of this dialogue curriculum to offer insight on the dialogue process for youth who neither speak nor listen in the ways presented here. I recommend this field project is further developed by centering youth in responsive and uplifting research that, as I seek to do in this study, treats them as experts in their own lives.

Summary

In summary, this field project is dedicated to the experience of high school youth in intergroup dialogue. I respond to the research on adolescent development which states the importance of this developmental stage in the formation of political values, understandings of ‘the other,’ and encoding or contestation of prejudice (Hjerm et al., 2018). In doing so, I center an understudied population in the literature on intergroup dialogue which is focused primarily on higher education (Moss et al., 2017). In this project, I value the insights of seven youth participants from Brazil, Guyana, Suriname, Iraq, Bolivia, and Peru. This phenomenological study seeks understanding of their experiences of reflection, listening, and sharing about social group identity, conflict, and social change in a dialogue setting. Their words constitute the data that shape this dialogue curriculum – one that I hope will find its way to educators in many contexts who are seeking to hold space for youth who believe that a more just world is possible.

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APPENDIX A

Intergroup Dialogue with High School Participants

Intergroup Dialogue with Youth:
Curriculum Designed for High School Students

Meaghan Kachadoorian

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Introduction

Overview of Learning Objectives

- foster empathy
- introduce or re-introduce intergroup understanding
- build capacity for social change
- create space for personal reflection on and formation of values, political ideals, and social group identities
- link personal experience to structural analysis
- uplift knowledge that participants and their communities hold
- generate new collective knowledge among young people
- build relationships across social group identities

Pedagogy

This curriculum draws on key tenets from critical pedagogy, dialogic education, and critical peace education.

- Critical pedagogy: student-centered; reciprocal learning between facilitator and learner; develops critical consciousness; values participants' knowledge from lived experience, culture, histories, and language; education as a catalyst for social transformation.
- Dialogic education: participants create knowledge by reflecting, sharing, and listening. They come to understanding over time and their understanding is built in relation with others.
- Critical peace education: education which builds up participants' capacity to make change in the world. The education respects students' own ideas about how to make their communities safer and more equitable.

Intended Audience

This curriculum is for anyone who works with high school-aged youth, is interested in intergroup dialogue, or wants to start a dialogue group. It is meant to serve as a guide. Please adapt, modify, cut, paste, and shift to bring it to your community context.

Arc of Dialogue

This curriculum has a sample lesson from each of these four modules:

- Group forming
- Social group identity exploration
- Social issues through personal perspectives
- Moving forward for social change

You may choose to build out more sessions for each module. This will allow students to build comfort with one another, explore ideas with greater depth, and build out relationships within the

group. Included here are four sessions that can stand alone for students to experience an abridged dialogue experience.

The sessions follow this general flow: check-in questions – community agreements – activity & dialogue – check-out question.

Summary of Sessions

Session One: Group forming – this session lays the groundwork for dialogue in future sessions. Students and participants build name familiarity. They set community agreements to return to in each future session which they will hold themselves and one another accountable to. Importantly, they start to build comfort in the physical/virtual dialogue space. To that end, they express their hopes and fears for their experience in dialogue. They practice skills in deep listening and authentic sharing that prepare them for future sessions.

Session Two: Social group identity – this session supports participants in naming their various social group identities. They do social analysis by reflecting on and sharing their lived experiences. As they build comfort with one another, they begin to understand (in)visible identities among their peers. Facilitators offer theoretical frameworks of social power and marginalization, commonality and difference.

Session Three: Social issues through personal perspectives – students dialogue about social issues facing them and their communities. This session follows the interest of the participants, and can center on intergroup conflict, marginalization, or injustice in the community. Participants have the space to express how they have personally been affected by marginalization through storytelling.

Session Four: Moving forward for social change – this session leads students through an activity to share and generate strategies for social change. They build up their peer group as a resource and support for them as they move forward. They set individual and collective intentions for creative community change.

Preparing for Dialogue

Notes on Facilitation

Faciliate, to make easier

The role of the facilitator is to:

- Establish trust with participants
- Hold the container of the group, support participants in upholding community agreements, maintain a trauma-sensitive learning environment
- Keep the pulse of the group and shift curriculum accordingly during sessions
- Demonstrate equitable co-facilitation: seek understanding of your own blindspots, model an intergroup relationship for participants, collaborate, and trust
- Increasingly step back from verbal instruction throughout the dialogue process. The goal is for a steady presence and less talking done by facilitators so that participants can be sharing with the benefit of facilitators' support
- Dedicate effort to gaining knowledge in areas of social group identity, conflict, and community change

Knowing Yourself

Knowing yourself as a facilitator makes you more likely to recognize your blind spots, work equitably with your co-facilitator, and build a safe and empowering environment for participants. As you prepare for dialogue, consider reflecting on and writing your “introduction & social justice origin story” (activity shared with permission from Dr. Colette Cann, USF). You can include whatever elements of your story and of your self that have led up to you seeking to create a more just world as a facilitator of high schoolers. This is a great way to get to know your co-facilitator and to build understanding of one another. You might also modify or share your story as your introduction to participants in the first session.

Facilitators bring themselves to a dialogue circle with passion, awareness, courage, knowledge, and practices of care for themselves (PACKS activity adapted and shared with permission from Dr. Colette Cann, USF). This reflective tool enables self-knowing and commitment to your personal/professional development as a dialogue facilitator. It can spark important conversations with co-facilitators as you develop understanding of one another. This activity can also be returned to as you work with a particular group and reflect on the process afterward.

Directions: Under each PACK resource below, think about where you stand at this point in time and check the box that most aligns.	I do not have this resource	I have some of this resource but need more	I feel comfortable with the level of this resource that I have	I am strong in this area or have an abundance of this resource	I can be a resource for others in this regard
(P) PASSION					
Energy for this work					
Can lead with my heart					
Deep personal reason(s) for doing this work					
Commitment on personal/professional levels					
(A) PERSONAL AWARENESS					
Clarity about my identity(ies)					
Clarity about my values					
Internal emotional balance					
Awareness of my privileged social identities					
Awareness of my disadvantaged social identities					
Non-defensively acknowledging things I am not aware of					
Awareness of the impact of my personal style on others					
Awareness of the impact of my social identity group memberships on myself					
Awareness of the impact of my social identity group memberships on others					
Awareness of my triggers					
(C) COURAGE					
Ability to work with people different from myself					
Ability to work with people from different groups					
Ability to take risks					
Ability to surface, face and use conflict					
Ability to face closeness and affection					
Ability to face disappointment					
Ability to stand silence					
Ability to stick with uncomfortable situations					
Ability to discuss difficult issues					
Ability to accept other's leadership					
Ability to utilize other's support					
Ability to give and receive feedback					

(K) KNOWLEDGE		KNOWLEDGE			
Informed about issues of difference, prejudice, discrimination, oppression and group histories					
Knowledge of content related to facilitation about difference					
(S) SELF-CARE/COMMUNITY CARE		SELF-CARE/COMMUNITY CARE			
Ability to set time aside for yourself to reflect					
Ability to set boundaries					
Knowledge of self-care practices					

Passion

- What areas of justice work are you drawn to and why?
- Where does your passion for these areas originate?
- What do you do to sustain your passion for these areas?
- How have you attempted to transform your passion for these areas of social justice work into action?
- In what way would you like to grow in these areas and how might you do this?

Awareness

- What do you know about your family background and its impact on who you are?
- Which social identities are most salient for you and what may be their potential impact on others?
- How do the social identities of others affect you?
- Describe your personal journey in learning about issues of oppression and privilege generally (or your focus area more specifically)? What were key formative experiences in your learning? What are continuing issues of social identity, oppression, and privilege you want to address or work through?
- In what way would you like to grow in this area and how might you do this?

Courage

- What is your communication style? How do you express your thoughts and feelings?
- How likely are you to try to take in the perspective of others? How likely are you to try to reflect on what you or others have said or done?
- How difficult is it for you to communicate disagreement?
- What experience do you have working closely with others different than yourself?
- How comfortable are you with working with your own emotions? The emotions of others?
- In your opinion, what does it take to be a good ally in social justice work?
- Are there times when you do not challenge oppression? What holds you back?
- In what way would you like to grow in this area and how might you do this?

Knowledge

- How much knowledge do you have about issues of social justice (privilege, discrimination, oppression, isms, power, and its impact on society)? How well do you understand the nuances among these concepts?
- What level of knowledge do you have about different social group histories (yours and others)? How do you work to learn more?
- How much knowledge do you have about high school students, identity development, and conflict? How can you learn more?
- In what way would you like to grow in this area and how might you do this?

Care of self

- List your favorite practices for relaxation and enjoyment. How often do you engage in these activities?
- How often do you get a full night's sleep? What prevents/enables you from doing so?

Logistics

- Identify and evaluate physical space options, looking for a private, comfortable, quiet, accessible space that participants can get to (in neighborhood, by public transit, etc.) or an online platform. Be conscious of the potential psychological effects and ideological underpinnings of holding dialogue in each space. For example, how might holding the dialogue in a school/religious center/etc. affect participants given their lived experiences?
- Participant recruitment – participants who want to engage with their peers will likely derive the most meaning from the experience. The group makeup can look very different depending on the social context but should be a group with a balance of both non-dominant and dominant social group identities, some of which should be known to facilitators in recruitment. Facilitators understand that many other identities of the participants will not be visible or known to them during recruitment.
- Co-facilitation – two facilitators is preferable to one. One can be available for step-outs if participants need support during a session away from the group. Supporting one another translates to much more holistic support for participants.
- Facilitator toolkits: pens x # of participants; several markers; two colors of paper/post-its; large sheet of paper for community agreements; ball of yarn; talking piece if wanted (experiment and decide in community agreements)
- Room set up – depends on participants’ needs and comfort. Facilitators create a space in which participants can comfortably engage with one another. This often looks like a circle of chairs facing one another but must be inclusive and actively responsive to the needs of participants. Water/food and accessible gender neutral bathrooms are important.

Trauma sensitivity

As student-centered education, dialogue prioritizes students’ well-being. By understanding the ways that students experience direct, secondary or vicarious, historical or inherited, and collective identity or systemic trauma, educators can become more responsive to the complexities of participants’ lived experiences. Dialogue engages participants in personal conversations about structural injustice and experiences of oppression and resistance. Students are invited to bring their whole and true selves to the group. There is a large range of emotions, experiences, and reactions that students may experience. Facilitators should foster learning spaces of holistic care that prioritize well-being. This calls for a deep recognition of the traumas – inherited, direct, historic, etc. – that students may (or may not) have been exposed to. The curriculum structure and facilitation methods must have an active commitment to *not retraumatizing* students or introducing *secondary trauma* to the facilitators and participants in the space. This understanding has direct influence on many aspects of the curriculum.

Recommended resources:

- Cities of Peace <http://www.citiesofpeaceyouth.org/>
- hooks, bell. (1994). *Teaching to transgress: Education as the practice of freedom*. New York: Routledge.

- Kirmayer, L. J., Gone, J. P., & Moses, J. (2014). Rethinking Historical Trauma. *Transcultural Psychiatry*, 51(3), 299–319. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1363461514536358>

The practice of sharing and uplifting stories of resistance and resilience demonstrates the potential of people – especially young people – to change the conditions of society. Given the shared sense of disillusionment and overwhelm expressed by participants in the research, this is a critical piece of the curriculum and facilitation presented in this field project. By sharing resources and asking guiding questions that invite stories of resistance, the learning space centers on the idea that society is not unchangeable. For young people coming into adulthood, this can invite genuine hopefulness in the midst of despair over structural injustice.

In this dialogue curriculum, guiding questions and check-out questions are particularly attentive to fostering hope and resiliency. Other trauma-sensitive facilitation techniques include consistently offering choice to share out with the group, modeling low- and mid-risk responses to discussion prompts unless intentionally inviting more difficult stories, making step-outs available, demonstrating genuine care, and expressing ongoing availability for participant support.

Session 1: Setting the Container

The most powerful thing about the circle forming is that it exists.

- John Wesley Days, Jr.

Learning objectives

- for participants to build comfort in physical space; learn what to expect from dialogue; learn others' names; practice speaking on low-risk questions; practice active listening; build familiarity with facilitators; create community agreements

- for facilitators to get pulse of the group's comfort level, common language level; learn participant names; familiarize with personalities in the group; hear areas of interest from the group; assess physical space accessibility; offer additional community agreements; build trust with participants

Facilitator intros

Participant welcome & sharing names

- All say names & why you wanted to join
 - Facilitators share format of dialogue groups: check in, activity and discussion, check out.
 - Participant care (do not have to speak about anything they don't want to, can raise questions or concerns with facilitators at any point during the process, if mandated reporters, explain).
-

Hopes and fears

- Distribute one color paper to write a hope they have for dialogue, different color paper to write a fear they have about dialogue (anonymous)
 - Collect in hat; pass around circle
 - Participants select one hope and one fear at random, read aloud to group
 - Guiding questions: What did you notice about the hopes and fears? Were there commonalities?
-

Check in question (explain – this is how we will start dialogue each time. Everyone has the chance to share). Sample check-ins on page 15.

Create community agreements: *how can we create an environment that is safe for learning, sharing, challenging, and imagining*

- Facilitators can each give a sample community agreement, then hands it over to the group. Record agreements on large paper to put up for each session. Encourage participants to delve into the agreements by providing examples and explanations. All members, participants and facilitators sign the agreements.

- Sample agreements
 - Active listening
 - Remember the signs (facilitators can introduce non-verbal signs that all can use like “confused coyote” if participants do not understand a prompt, or a gesture for agreeing with someone, etc.)
 - Confidentiality (what is said here stays here, what is learned here leaves here)
 - Treat each other with kindness
 - Be respectful with different points of view and different experiences
 - Seek understanding
 - Try to feel what that person is feeling
 - Feel free to express yourself
 - Offer a smile
 - Help each other
 - Ask for what you need
 - Move up / move up (values active listening as well as authentic sharing: invite yourself to move up to share as well as to move up to listen; be conscious of your balance of speaking and listening in the group)
 - One voice at a time (some facilitators choose to utilize a talking piece; others encourage participants to wait a beat after someone speaks to fill the silence)
-

Deep listening activity

- What is deep listening? Create shared definition through discussion: examples - listening to listen, to not respond; seeking understanding; being fully present; use body language that shows you are listening; don’t interrupt; try not to insert your personal opinions
 - Practice in pairs: In groups of two, spend 2 minutes each answering the prompt and practicing deep listening. Switch.
 - Sample prompts: where do you feel most at home? What does home look like for you?
 - Share out: how did it feel to deeply listen? How did it feel to be deeply listened to?
-

Exit ticket: Students have time to reflect on and share potential topics on social issues they want to explore in future sessions. Can write on pieces of paper and throw into the center so all can see other ideas but contribute anonymously.

Check out question (sample questions on page 15)

Journal/reflection questions (facilitators can share reflection questions with students to journal between sessions)

- What stood out to you from dialogue today?
- What is a moment you felt comfortable? What is a moment you felt less comfortable?

Session 2: Social Group Identity

One thing I didn't give much thought to before this dialogue was the intersectionality of the different tenets of what constitutes my identity and how these overlap. And perhaps they overlap in a way that creates a better output or, much cooler Stella because she has all these tenets.

- Stella, *youth participant*

Learning objectives

- for participants to build comfort with flow of dialogue; reflect on self and name various overlapping identities; do social analysis; learn frameworks of social power and marginalization; reduce feelings of isolation; experience validation
 - for facilitators to better understand identities of group participants; demonstrate care and support; model safe risk-taking by sharing their stories
-

Check-in (samples page 15)

Revisit community agreements: read over, let your eyes rest on the community agreement you most want to focus on today

Identity flower activity

- Explain: today, we are exploring identity. Generate examples of different social group identities, eg – racial group, national identity, ethno-cultural background, gender, age, sexuality, physical ability, etc. Record terms on shared key terms list.
 - Show blank identity flower. Explain: each petal represents a different identity. Can add as many petals as you'd like and fill out how you identify within that petal. Facilitators can show their examples. You do not need to share your flower with anyone, but you will have space to share whatever you'd like.
 - Give ample time for participants to spread out in the room, reflect and fill out their flowers.
 - Come back together. How did it feel to fill out your flower? Was it comfortable/easy? Uncomfortable/challenging?
 - Was there any particular petal that was difficult to name?
-

Dialogue on identity and social power.

- Explain: You can use the same flower tool as a 'power flower.' The center is the power in society, which can often be tied up with the word privilege. Identity groups that are near the center of the flower are ones that have a lot of privilege in society (eg - who can migrate safely and have the option to do that, who has more security, or more wealth, or a healthier environment?) Move through an example of identities on one petal from center to the margin that makes sense for your context. Explain, margin is where we get the word marginalization. Record terms on shared key terms list.

- Small group story circles (groups of 3): what is a time that you realized one of those identities and its closeness/distance to power? Remind of deep listening.
 - Facilitators model level of risk by sharing a low-mid risk story.
 - Come back together. Any reflections from that activity? What is something you never gave much thought to before this?
-

Group I Am poem activity: who we are is also between the petals, -- daughter, or writer, or activist, etc. Everyone fills out I Am poem:

First Stanza

I am (two special characteristics about person)

I wonder

I hear

I see

I want

I am (first line of the poem repeated)

Second Stanza

I am (two special characteristics about person)

I pretend

I feel

I touch

I worry

I cry

I am (first line of poem repeated)

Third Stanza

I am (two special characteristics about person)

I understand

I say

I dream

I try

I am (first line of poem repeated)

- Come back together. Group read – go around the circle, each person reads their line when it comes to them. If group chooses, they can swap poems so everyone is reading someone else's.
-

Check-out (samples page 15)

Journal/reflection questions: ---

- What is something from today's dialogue session that you had never given much thought to before? (could be an identity you named, a new concept, even who you are in relation to social power?)
- Going off of that, what is something that will stick with you as you go forward? Something that will shape or frame the way that you interact with yourself, or different people, or see different

Session 3: Social Issues through Personal Perspectives: Conflict Transformation

My country is divided since the 16th century when the Europeans arrived in our lands that were already inhabited by native people and the colonization process started at this time... Just like in the U.S. where you have the Democrats and Republicans, in Brazil we have the conservative parties that tend to favor the status quo and are opposite and against radical changes and we have community, communist parties who believe in a classless society. So how do we live with such opposing labels and opinions? It's a really hard issue to talk about.

- Oliveira, *youth participant*

Learning objectives

- for participants to apply concept of social group identity to analysis of identity-based social conflicts; practice self-guided dialogue; share stories to build understanding; recognize social divides and learn skills to overcome them; process and express emotions surrounding conflict in their communities
- for facilitators to better understand particularities of participants' communities and experiences; demonstrate care and support; provide hopeful examples of bridging divide and overcoming conflict; validate difficult emotions that come with sharing and listening about conflict; offer skills such as intergroup conversation as a way to bridge social divide and counter injustice

Pre-session content: watch 2 videos

- “Bnyad Sharef and Maggie Anderson on Being Unlikely Friends” (at least the first 5 minutes to understand the story). The transcript is below the video. You can also change the video speed to watch it more slowly.

<http://www.pbs.org/wnet/amanpour-and-company/video/bnyad-sharef-maggie-anderson-on-being-unlikely-friends/>

- “Take “the Other” to Lunch” by Elizabeth Lesser. You can change the video speed to watch it more slowly. <https://youtu.be/AsSd2nmoKNA?t=275>

Check in (samples page 15)

Community norms: which do you want to focus on today?

Opening activity: a better world visualization reflection [sample page -----]

Group share: what came up for you during the reflection activity? what was going through your mind when your eyes were closed?

Small group conversations: guiding question: what social group identities showed up in the interview between Bnyad and Maggie?” (this builds off identity flower/power flower from session 2. eg. race, religion, gender, nationality, politics, citizenship)

- Come together. Small groups share out. Facilitators encourage students to respond to one another, ask questions for further understanding. Facilitators remind they will continue to step back.

Group dialogue: guiding question: what social divides do you see in your community?

- How can we work to transform those conflicts?
-

Check out (samples page 15)

- Can be a good session for “I am proud of myself for...” because participants tend to be more vulnerable in this session.
like the biggest challenge to overcome?
-

Journal/reflection questions:

- What is one idea that you are taking away from the session about identity and overcoming conflict?
- When you think about transforming conflict in your community, what personally feels like the biggest challenge to overcome?
- Do you think dialogue would be a useful tool to help transform conflict in your community?

Session 4: Planning for Social Justice, Closing, & Reflections

Music can make us laugh, make us cry, make us march into war. I want to make music to make us realize peace.

- Rahim AlHaj

Learning objectives

- for participants to share knowledge of social change strategies; apply lessons learned from dialogue to further social change in their communities; continue to establish supportive network of peers from other participants; be uplifted
 - for facilitators to – be in conversation with participants about social change; demonstrate care and support; uplift participants’ capacity to create change in their communities; offer strategies for creating and sustaining change
-

Check in (samples page 15)

Guiding question: What are the ways in which you contribute to or enable social justice in your communities?

5 fingers dialogue:

- Explain flow of the dialogue: there are 5 short prompts. Can guide students in making a visual by tracing their hands and adding their answers in writing to their five fingers. Encourage participants to challenge and support each other by asking questions if they don’t understand or want to know more. For example, if someone says “I will speak up about LGBTQ rights,” you might ask, how do you think that will go in your school?
 - *In the future I hope to see ...*
 - *I will remember ... as I go forward*
 - *I will speak up about ...*
 - *I will ask for help when ... / I will offer help when ...*
 - *I will ally with ...*
-

Gratitude web

- Choose someone to give gratitude to (who made you think, made you laugh, challenged you, inspired you, etc.
 - Closing: re-read hopes from first session
 - Motivation note – participants write motivational words to self
-

Check out (samples page 15)

Reflection question topics

- how has this dialogue influenced your beliefs, especially as becoming active agents in questioning global world order and confronting injustice?

SAMPLE CHECK INS

- How is your head (mental state), how is your heart (emotional state)?
- Story of your name
- Favorite family recipe
- Favorite dessert
- Typical weekend
- Someone who makes you laugh
- Highlight from past week

SAMPLE CHECK OUTS

verbal

- Something you hadn't given much thought to before today
- Something that will stay with you from today's session
- Something you're looking forward to this week
- Someone you want to show gratitude for
- Something you noticed about yourself today
- Rose/bud/thorn [something beautiful/great about the session/something you hope for in future sessions/something difficult about the session]

Activity-based

- that's not a ---, it's a ---- [take any small, passable object like a pencil. First person starts – 'that's not a pencil, it's a (uses it in different way, like hat)' passes it to next person. 'that's not a hat, it's a violin' etc.]
- Deep breathing together
- Movement/stretching/dancing
- 4 stones meditation: --
- Rainstorm hand drumming
- Appreciation web
- I am poem group reading
- Journaling time

VISUALIZATION

[adapted from Sonal Lal, co-facilitator]

If you're comfortable, close your eyes. If you're not comfortable, you can look up at me. I want you to close your eyes and think about what your home looks like. What do you smell, who's there, what is the temperature, is it warm, is it cold. Think about what makes your home feel like home. What sounds do you hear, who's next to you? I want you to think about your happiness. What makes you happy? What makes you smile? What makes you laugh? Who do you see, who's making you feel these emotions? Is it one person, is it family, are they videos, pictures? When you think about your happiness, where are you? Are you at home, are you with friends, are you out in the community? Now I want you to think about your community – your country, your family, your culture, your nationality? What makes that unique for you? Do you see acceptance and love, maybe a little more misunderstanding and frustration? Do you see a mix of emotions, or do you see one emotion that takes over? In that community of yours, or in that home of yours, where do you see injustice? Is it between genders, between races, or between different ages, what does injustice look like? Is it a lack of education, lack of accessibility, lack of communication? What does inequality look like, abuse and corruption look like? Now take a

moment to think about where you want your community to be. Where you want your country, your family, and your friends to be? What would it take in order to change that inequality to equality and equity? That injustice to justice? Miscommunication to understanding, and indifference to empathy? What can you personally do to better your community? What are you already doing? And lastly, I want you to think about, is it possible to achieve your goal of what justice and equality looks like?

When you're ready, you can open your eyes. So I just want to hear out, what are some of the things that were going through your mind when your eyes were closed?