Chapter 2
Transformative Multicultural Engagement on a Web 2.0 Interface:
Forging a Multicultural Education 2.0

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ABSTRACT

This chapter discusses theoretical underpinnings, contradictions, opportunities, and challenges of pursuing online critical multicultural education engagement through Web 2.0 interface (MCE 2.0). Conceptualized within the social constructivist paradigm, critical MCE 2.0 is always in-the-making (emergent and discursive) phenomenon/endeavor that incorporates critical pedagogy, critical media/ digital literacies, and Web 2.0 affordances as a praxis for transformative multicultural education while critically examining the pressing socio-cultural issues including cultural reproduction, power differentials, racial hierarchies, ideological social discourses, and class dominance. As cultural prosumers, teachers and students can forge emerging Web 2.0 affordances for collaboratively creating, sharing/publishing, and discoursing in a diverse reality with multicultural materials, narratives/stories, and resources in culturally responsive and multiculturally competent ways. Thus, this chapter offers afresh a viewing of technology use as a meditational means from a situated perspective (activity theory) for proactive technology-native learners and teachers who renew their agency as critical constructivist cultural actors.

INTRODUCTION: MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION ENGAGEMENT ON A WEB 2.0 INTERFACE

This chapter proffers a theoretical framework for pursuing a critical multicultural engagement on the online learning space through Web 2.0 interface; heretofore, Multicultural Education Engagement (MCE) 2.0. The foundational precepts are based on a critical multicultural education that constantly interrogates power and privilege (Kanpol & McLaren, 1995; Chávez & O'Donnell, 1998). Moreover, with the advent of Web 2.0 we attempt to reconceptualize online multicultural

education which has the potential to provide great opportunity for teachers and students to acquire a renewed agency as "prosumers." López (2008) melds this notion from "consumer-as-producer" (p. 11) who as a creative audience can harness a "collective intelligence" in producing networked knowledge and artifacts (O'Reilly, 2005; Solomon & Schrum, 2007) whilst bringing historical, cross-cultural interpretations of realities into the educational enterprise. While concurring with López, however, we further the notion of prosumers as cultural prosumers. Cultural prosumers are collaboratively involved in the production of an array of multicultural materials, contextual narratives seeped with cultural cues, as well as resources in the varied contents and forms of expression: text, images, audio, video, multimedia, art, and cultural activism in virtual and actual life-worlds. Provided that the Web 2.0 affordances—an ecology of Web 2.0 dynamics and their functionalities (described below)—and scaffolded by a critical constructivist pedagogy, teachers and students, we prospect, will collaboratively center their epistemic and cultural knowledge bases with three interlocking nonlinear modes or stages of production/construction on the Web 2.0:

1. *Creating* digital multicultural materials, narratives and stories, and resources;
2. *Publishing* and *sharing* multicultural materials, narratives and stories, and resources; and,
3. *Discoursing* on the shared multicultural resources.

We theorize that an MCE 2.0 can be reconstructed for transformative praxis when teachers and learners are mutually engaged within a Web 2.0 interface online design and delivery supported by a critical pedagogy (Freire, 2001; Moss, 2001), critical media/digital literacies (Kellner & Share, 2007; López, 2008; Lankshear & Knobel, 2008b; Luke, 2000), fostered within the ambient of libratory and artful living (Greene, 1992, 1993; Kroll,

2008) and guided by social constructivist learning theories (Brooks & Brooks, 1993; Bruner, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978).

INTERROGATING WEB 2.0 STATUS-QUO KNOWLEDGES AS *THE* DOMINANT CULTURAL ARBITRARY

Overlaying an MCE 2.0 space informed by and immersed in a Web 2.0 space has the potential for multicultural, cross-cultural, and transformative spaces to emerge both interrogating and disrupting monolithic, hegemonic naturalization of knowledge thus denouncing the status quo of cultural reproduction (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2000). A cautionary note has to be made. Bourdieu and Passeron have profoundly articulated that cultural reproduction is perpetuated through "pedagogic action." Pedagogic action legitimates power differentials and places the dominant class or group in privileged positions by concealing the objective truth/reality. In so much that pedagogic action is the imposition of symbolic, indirect, and arbitrary actions on student learning by the dominant culture. The dominant culture and its attendant teachers and accepted curriculum unconsciously promote "all pedagogic action [that] is, objectively, symbolic violence insofar as it is the imposition of a cultural arbitrary by an arbitrary power" (Bourdieu & Passeron, 2000, p. 5). Consequently, without actually following any specific theory or principle, an arbitrary power—that is, teachers indoctrinated by the dominant class—manifests, at the discretion of an individual level, symbolic effects such as deficit thinking, indifference, lowering the expectations, labeling and tagging of failure to the students of color, to name a few examples (see Valencia, 1997; Trifonas, 2003; Frakas, 2003; Hursh, 2007). This continues to maintain the hierarchical power relations and privileges, and thus, cultural reproduction becomes normative.

The dominant group/class on the Web 2.0 environment potentially can exert such cultural

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