Decolonising, Africanising, indigenising, and internationalising curriculum studies: Opportunities to (re)imagine the field

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Abstract

In recent years the terms internationalisation, indigenising, decolonising, and Africanising have circulated in discourses on curriculum both internationally and in South Africa. Recent student protests in South Africa have precipitated a particular interest in the decolonising of the university curriculum. As a consequence, we are witnessing contestations on the topic in scholarly journals and books, and in the popular media. The concept, decolonisation of the curriculum, has also been bandied around loosely by some students, eliciting criticism on the lack of clarity about this. The field of curriculum studies in South Africa has been characterised by a focus on banal matters related to the national curriculum: the merits and demerits of outcomes-based education; findings of standardised tests; assessment; continuity and progression; classroom pedagogy; and so forth. The upshot of this is that the field has become hackneyed, unimaginative, and unable to address bigger questions such as the ones raised in the Call for Papers of this special issue. I argue in this article that the concepts internationalising, indigenising, decolonising, and Africanising could be the impetus for the renewal of the field of curriculum studies in South Africa. In the article I clarify what is meant by the internationalising, indigenising, decolonising, and Africanising of the curriculum. I discuss the ways in which the concepts are disparate and explore the conceptual connections between and among them. My exploration opens up alternative ways of thinking curriculum through viewing it as a "complicated conversation" (Pinar, 2004a, p. xiv) that could have potentially transformative effects on the field of curriculum studies in South Africa. My main aim here is to register the possibility of such complicated conversations happening in South African curriculum studies.

Keywords: Africanisation, decolonisation, indigenisation, internationalisation, curriculum as conversation

Introduction

The academic study of curriculum in South Africa, as is the case in many countries, has focused on matters of national interest. Both editions of *The international handbook of curriculum research* (Pinar 2003, 2014) attested to the fact that the academic field of

curriculum studies[1] is embedded in national culture. As Pinar (2006) made clear, what is studied in the field includes the political present (which is different for each nation) and the cultural questions represented in different curricula and in public debates and policies on curriculum. The first attempt to document the intellectual history of the field and its present circumstances in South Africa was as recent as eight years ago (Pinar, 2010). This 2010 edited collection of South African contributors (with comments from an international panel) along with the chapter on South African curriculum studies (le Grange, 2014a) published in the most recent edition of *The international handbook of curriculum research* (Pinar, 2014), show that the field in post-apartheid South Africa is fragmented and still in its infancy; it remains divided along colonial and apartheid lines characterised by what Hoadley (2010) termed different "tribes and territories" (p. 128). As I have pointed out elsewhere (le Grange, 2014), "complicated conversations on curriculum matters between South Africans rarely occur (at home) . . . I have observed some of the more difficult and heated conversations between South African education scholars occurring on foreign soil" (p. 466). This means that the current state of the field is actually thwarting its advancement despite the fact that much has been (and continues to be) written on matters relating to curriculum by South African academics in scholarly books and in local and international journals.

The South African Education Research Association (SAERA), which was established in 2013, promises to be a forum in which all South Africans scholars can engage in conversations about research, including curriculum research. In its short history, SAERA has been successful in provided a platform for South African scholars to engage with one another but much needs still to be done to make complicated conversations happen so as to advance education as a field of study generally and curriculum studies more specifically. A curriculum studies special interest group (SIG) was established at the SAERA conference in 2014, and this might be one important space in which to have complicated conversations and provide an impetus for advancing the field. This special issue on internationalising, indigenising, decolonising, and Africanising curriculum is an outcome of conversations that occurred in meetings of the curriculum studies SIG of SAERA.

Decolonisation has become a buzzword in South African higher education in the wake of the student protests of 2015 and 2016. It is a topic of conversations in universities, at national conferences, and in a burgeoning body of literature, both popular and academic. In such conversations, terms such as internationalisation, indigenisation and Africanising are sometimes invoked. In the many contributions to the decolonisation debate that I have made as a speaker and panelist across the country, I have often been asked how these terms relate to decolonisation. In order to respond to this perennial question, I explore in this article the points of intersection between and among these terms and the senses in which they are disparate. Furthermore, I explore how points of intersection among and between the concepts serve as a basis for advancing the field of curriculum studies in South Africa through engagement in complicated conversations.

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[1]   Curriculum studies "is a distinctive field of study, with a unique history, a complex present, an uncertain future" (Pinar, 2004a, p. 2). It is the only field in education that is authentically interdisciplinary because it draws on a range of disciplines compared to other fields in education such as educational psychology, philosophy of education, and sociology of education that draw primarily on one discipline.

In this article, I discuss first what the notion of curriculum as complicated conversation entails. Then I explore the points of intersection between internationalising, indigenising, decolonizing, and Africanising. Third, I synthesise these ideas and use the synthesis to explore how the field of curriculum studies might be (re)imagined in South Africa. I end the article with a call to scholars to commit to the complicated conversations that are essential if we are to advance the field of curriculum studies in South Africa.

Curriculum as complicated conversation

The concept of curriculum as "complicated conversation" was proposed by curriculum scholar William Pinar, following his engagement with Richard Rorty's theorisation of conversation and Michael Oakeshott's (1959) book on conversation (Pinar, 2004a, p. xiv). The context of Pinar's notion of complicated conversation is the academic field of education in the US that was under attack by politicians, and this meant that there was a need for scholars of curriculum to maintain their professional dignity by reasserting their commitment to the intellectual life of the field (Pinar, 2004). The relevance of complicated conversation to South Africa is twofold: first, as mentioned above, the field remains divided and in its infancy; second, the marriage between the field and the school curriculum has made the field unimaginative. Much of the curriculum work done by scholars in post-apartheid South Africa is (and has been) aligned to the school curriculum, policy formulation in relation to it, and implementation thereof, whether through critique or in support of the curriculum. The fragmented state of the field (see le Grange, 2010, 2014) has curtailed its advancement and the field's submergence in present circumstances (school curriculum reform) has resulted in amnesia about the past (colonialism and its delinquent cousin apartheid), and to date no one seems able to imagine a different future for the field.

But, what is meant by a conversation? Aoki (2004) has averred that conversation is not "chit-chat," nor is it a simple exchange of information because none of these requires "true human presence" (p. 180), Moreover, in conversations, language is not the only tool through which thoughts are recoded into words. Curriculum as conversation is therefore not an exchange of "representational knowledge," but "a matter of attunement, an auditory rather than visual conception, in which the sound of music . . . being improvised is an apt example" (Pinar, 2004, p. 189). Conversations, therefore, do not conform to predetermined outcomes, but, as in the case of improvisational jazz, produce something new and transform those engaged in the conversation. For Oakeshott (1959) difference structures and stimulates complicated conversation. He wrote that "[conversation] is impossible in the absence of a diversity of voices: in it different universes of discourse meet, acknowledge each other and enjoy an oblique relationship which neither requires nor forecasts their being assimilated into one another" (p. 11).

Curriculum becomes a complicated conversation when, as pedagogues, we complicate students' understanding of the subject they are studying (particularly postgraduate students working in the field). Pinar (2004) suggested that such complicated conversations occur when we do not devise "airtight" arguments but provide spaces for students to find their own voices

so that they "construct their own understanding of what it means to teach, to study, to become educated" (p. 2). Conversations also become complicated when scholars of curriculum engage with their peers (particularly with those with different histories, beliefs, and ideas), and listen respectfully to them so as to interrogate their own understandings of self and of the field. Pinar (2004) suggested that complicated conversations are premised on a commitment of scholars of curriculum to engage in such conversations with their peers, their students and with themselves, and that such a commitment is accompanied by "frank and ongoing self-criticism" (p. 9). Frank and ongoing self-criticism is an important dimension of complicated conversations because it mitigates against hierarchical power relations that could impede productive conversations from happening. Power relations are always present when humans engage in educational exchanges. However, complicated conversations are constructed to lessen hierarchical power relations and their colonising effects. When this *potestas* (negative power) is moderated through self-criticism and respect, the positive power of the *potentia* can flourish and productive curriculum work can be performed in new knowledge spaces. *Potentia* is not a power that is external, hierarchical, or imposed, but is an immanent power that connects to life's creative force (see le Grange, 2018). When *potentia* is released in exchanges between scholars of seemingly disparate knowledge systems all knowledges are decentred so that different knowledges are equitably compared and can coexist and unlikely fidelities can be formed. *Potentia* can, of course, become *postestas* (and vice versa), and so, to prevent this, scholars engaged in complicated conversations are committed to the act of self-criticism, to respectful engagement with the other, and to a sense of belonging to something bigger than self, i.e. the field of curriculum studies. Moreover, complicated conversations are learning spaces in which power can be negotiated and actualised in productive ways.

Decolonisation, Africanisation, indigenisation, and internationalisation

Volumes of work have been produced on each of these terms over many decades. I cannot do justice to the body of scholarship produced on each of these terms in this article. What I can do is to give a brief description of each term and show some of the ways in which these terms could be linked to one another conceptually. It is important to note that the concepts decolonisation, Africanisation, indigenisation, and internationalisation are vital concepts; they could be subjected to philosophical speculation and are not concepts of recognition such as table, flower, dog, and so forth. Vital concepts are contested, have different meanings in different discourses, and do not have fixity (they are in-becoming). For Deleuze and Guattari (1994) central to philosophy is the creation of vital concepts and not the analysis of concepts that suggest fixity. Moreover, there are no limits to the lines of connection that can be invigorated among and between different concepts. I say this so that the connections that I make among and between the concepts are understood to be only a few of many possible ones.

The key reason for the brief elucidation of these concepts is that they are of interest in current discourses on decolonisation in South Africa and so, too, are the conceptual connections among and between them. These concepts could therefore be central themes in complicated curriculum conversations and could also be subjected to revision in and through such conversations.

Put simply, decolonisation is the undoing of colonisation. First generation colonialism was the conquering of the physical spaces and bodies of the colonised, and second generation colonialism was the colonisation of peoples' minds through disciplines such as education, science, economics, and law. The term neo-colonialism was coined by the first President of independent Ghana, Kwame Nkrumah (1965). It relates to the achievement of technical independence by a country that is still under the influence of ex-colonial or newly developed superpowers. Such superpowers could be international monetary bodies, multinational corporations, or cartels as well as education and cultural institutions (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Triffin, 2003). As these scholars have pointed out, Nkrumah argued that neo-colonialism is a more insidious form of colonialism because it is more difficult to detect. Consequently, it is more difficult to undo.

Chilisa (2012) outlined five phases in the process of decolonisation: rediscovery and recovery; mourning; dreaming; commitment and action. Rediscovery and recovery is the process whereby colonised peoples rediscover and recover their own history, culture, language, and identity. Mourning refers to the process of lamenting the continued assault on the world's colonised and oppressed peoples' identities and social realities. It is an important part of healing that leads to dreaming. In the process of dreaming colonised peoples invoke their histories, worldviews, and indigenous knowledge systems to theorise and imagine alternative possibilities, in this instance, a reimagined academic field. Smith (1999) identified the following elements of decolonisation: deconstruction and reconstruction; self-determination and social justice; ethics; language; internationalisation of indigenous experiences; history; and critique. Deconstruction and reconstruction concerns discarding what has been wrongly written, and "interrogating distortions of people's life experiences, negative labelling, deficit theorizing, genetically deficient or culturally deficient models that pathologized the colonised . . . and retelling the stories of the past and envisioning the future" (Chilisa, 2012, p. 17). The element of self-determination and social justice relates to the struggle by those who have been marginalised by the Western academy and is about seeking legitimacy for knowledge that is embedded in their own histories, experiences, and ways of viewing reality. Ethics has to do with the formulation, legislation, and dissemination of ethical issues related to the protection of indigenous knowledge systems. Language concerns the importance of teaching and learning in indigenous languages as part of the anti-imperialist struggle. Internationalization of indigenous experiences relates to international scholars sharing the common experiences, issues, and struggles of colonised peoples in global and local spaces. History, in this instance, involves a study of the past to recover the history, culture, and languages of colonised people and to use it to inform the present. Critique concerns a critical appraisal of the imperial model of the academy that "continues to deny the colonised and historically marginalised other space to communicate from their own frames of

reference" (Chilisa, 2012, p.19). Some of the dimensions of decolonisation mentioned are relevant to curriculum studies to which I will return, but it would be apposite at this juncture first to discuss briefly what is meant by decoloniality.

Decoloniality is a construct that has been produced by a group of Latin American scholars and is a critique or an analytic of coloniality. The work of these scholars mainly focuses on the "coloniality of knowledge" and the "coloniality of being" (Mignolo, 2007, pp. 156–157). These scholarly deliberations are complex, and I shall not explore them in detail here but will provide a broad understanding of coloniality and decoloniality so that we can apply it to our discussion of the academic field of curriculum studies. Decolonial scholars argue that although former European colonies attained independence and although, in this sense, we live in postcolonial times, the logic of coloniality remains with us. In other words, the systems of power that classify (also known as othering), denigrate, and subjugate remain prevalent, and, in a contemporary globalising world, are more insidious than previous more naked forms of colonisation were. Quijano (2007) describes the colonial matrix of power as having four interlocking domains: control of economy (land appropriation, exploitation of labour, and control of natural resources); control of authority (institutions, and the army); control of gender and sexuality (family and education) and control of subjectivity and knowledge (epistemology, education, and identity formation). In relation to curriculum studies, decoloniality could involve asking critical questions such as: Who controls the field internationally and in South Africa? Who controls the institutions and organisations of the field? Who produces knowledge in and of the field (including its histories)? How are identities (per)formed or constructed through and in discourses on curriculum studies? Decoloniality, therefore, concerns a critical awareness of the logic of coloniality (the colonial matrix of power); it is a critique of coloniality, it resists expressions of coloniality, and takes actions to overcome coloniality. Applied to South Africa, the coloniality/decoloniality lens enables one to understand that apartheid was a particular manifestation of coloniality rather than a period distinct from colonialism, as Jansen (2017) has suggested.

How might we understand Africanisation? At the end of the Algerian war Fanon was disillusioned and claimed that no meaningful liberation had taken place because there had been no decolonisation. He lamented that independence was simply the Africanisation of colonialism (see Hansen, 1977; Pinar, 2011; Sekyi-Otu, 1996). Fanon's claim suggests that decolonisation and Africanisation are not synonymous and that Africanisation could in fact be an impediment to decolonisation. To appreciate what Fanon was getting at it is useful to distinguish between Africanisation and Africanism. For Prah (2004) Africanisation involves the systematic and deliberate deployment of Africans in positions that enable them to gain control of society; African majorities need to be demographically represented in all areas of social life. Although Africanisation may serve as the basis for Africanism, the latter concerns more than just demographic representation and, in addition, is concerned with making African culture the centre of Africa's development or, as Prah (2004) succinctly put it, "African culture should occupy a central position in the overall social activity of Africans" (p. 105). Fanon's point was that Africanisation had taken place in Algeria, but not Africanism. However, I use the term Africanising to incorporate both Prah's notion of

Africanisation and Africanism (le Grange, 2014b). Likewise, in this article I use the term Africanising to incorporate both of Prah's (2004) notions and propose that Africanisation is a necessary condition for Africanising but not a sufficient one. Africanising requires both Prah's notions of Africanisation and Africanism. The project of Africanising is, therefore, a decolonising/decolonial one because it involves the undoing of colonialism (in all its forms) in Africa[2] so that matters concerning the African condition are discussed, debated, and (re)solved by Africans (and those who work in the interest of Africa) and on terms set by Africans. Moreover, the very invocation of Africanising deconstructs and decentres colonial and imperial knowledge in the sense that Europe is no longer the centre of knowledge. Put differently, Africanising could be viewed as synonymous with decolonising processes taking place on the African continent, but decolonisation and decoloniality have much wider application around the globe.

Indigenising concerns the inclusion of indigenous ways of knowing and being in social and education processes. It also involves the (re)discovery of indigenous cultures, including indigenous ways of knowing, and is about seeking social and cognitive justice for indigenous peoples (see le Grange, 2016). But what is indigenous knowledge? Sillitoe, Dixon, & Barr (2005) suggest that indigenous knowledge is unique, local, traditional knowledge developed around specific conditions of people in a particular geographical area. They point out that it is also knowledge that has been developed over time and continues to be developed, and is knowledge based on experiences that have been tested over centuries. However, recently some indigenous scholars have challenged the idea of indigenous being only that which is home-grown and argue for inserting the capital "I" in the term Indigenous so that the term has political implications. As Wilson (2008) has written,

> The first peoples of the world have gained greater understanding of the similarities that we share. Terms such as Indian, Metis, Aborigine or Torres Strait Islander do nothing to reflect either the distinctiveness of our cultures or the commonalities of our underlying worldviews. Indigenous is inclusive of all first peoples unique in our own cultures but common in our experiences of colonialism and our understanding of the world. When using the term Indigenous research, I am referring specifically to research done by or for Indigenous peoples. (pp. 15–16)

The brief discussion on indigenising manifests several links to the discussion on decolonisation and decoloniality. I shall mention just a few. Indigenising relates to that discovery and rediscovery that Chilisa mentions as the first phase of decolonisation. The uniqueness of the culture, languages, and knowledges of peoples who have inhabited certain geographical areas (and that inhabits them) over long periods of time, as mentioned by Sillitoe et al. (2005), relate to the discussion on decolonisation in the sense that indigenous peoples have a right to self-determination, to preserve their languages and their knowledges, etc. Wilson (2008) also hints at the importance of the internationalisation of indigenous

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[2]   I acknowledge that Africa is a continent comprised of more than 50 countries, is culturally diverse and not monolithic. However, given that most of Africa was colonised over the past 300 years, Africanising is a unifying concept that involves the undoing of colonialism on the continent, but manifests in nuanced ways in different countries or regions.

knowledge that Smith (1999) views as an important element of decolonisation. Internationalisation in this context relates to indigenous scholars using the spaces that globalisation affords for building solidarities among Indigenous peoples across the globe. Wilson's (2008) expression is also a critique of coloniality in the sense that the invocation of Indigenous has political implications transnationally. Indigenising intersects with the idea of Africanising in the sense that Africanising could and should involve the inclusion of African indigenous knowledge in social and education processes. But, here again, indigenous knowledge is not a concept confined to Africa.

As with the other concepts discussed, there are different understandings of what the internationalising of education means. However, what has become evident is the ubiquity of strategies of internationalising administration, curricula, and student demographics in universities around the globe. Many universities (including those on the African continent) have international offices and/or centres for international or global studies. As Rizvi and Walsh (1998) have noted, the internationalisation of higher education aims to broaden the university's international footprint, to provide students with vocational skills needed in a globalising world, and to promote diversity among staff and students but these scholars are suspicious of the liberal idea of celebrating diversity, arguing that it masks the illusion of pluralistic harmony because diversity is tolerated only as long as it does not challenge the dominant cultural norms and social order. They argue, instead, that an ethic of difference is attentive to the fact that difference is dynamic, and the product of history, culture, power, and ideology. For them, attentiveness to the politics of difference makes possible the "creation of new learning spaces in which the politics of difference in relation to histories of knowledge and power can be explored, in which the dominant values and other competing values can be interrogated and in which new patterns of identity formation, meaning and representation can be negotiated" (1998, p. 10). I wish to suggest two ways of understanding internationalising. The first is solidarity among those who share common experiences of colonisation and oppression around the world. I have already referred to the internationalisation of indigenous knowledge and have mentioned that in Smith's (1999) view, it is a key dimension of decolonisation. The second view involves recognising different knowledge traditions and reframing one's own view in the light of the views of others. As Gough (2003) has said,

> Internationalising curriculum inquiry might best be understood as a process of creating transnational 'spaces' in which scholars from different localities collaborate in reframing and decentring their own knowledge traditions and negotiate trust in each other's contributions to their collective work. For those of us who work in Western knowledge traditions, a first step must be to represent and perform our distinctive approaches to curriculum inquiry in ways that authentically demonstrate their localness. This may include drawing attention to the characteristic ways in which Western genres of academic textual production invite readers to interpret local knowledge as universal discourse. (p. 68)

Transnational spaces in which the localness of all knowledge is recognised, where all knowledges are reframed and decentred, and where the social organisation of trust is

negotiated, are necessarily decolonising spaces. Complicated conversations create such new knowledge spaces and therefore could be the impetus for the advancement of the field of curriculum studies in South Africa.

In summary, I have highlighted some of the points of intersection between the concepts of decolonising, Africanising, indigenising, and internationalising. I now explore briefly how points of intersection between and among the concepts can be enhanced to reimagine the field of curriculum studies through the lens of curriculum as complicated conversation.

Reimagining curriculum studies in South Africa

As mentioned above, the fragmented nature of the field and the submergence of curriculum research in present circumstances is thwarting its advancement in South Africa. Pinar (2011) refers to the close alignment between the work curriculum scholars do and their own national interests (such as in a national school curriculum) as the problem of proximity. Proximity also results from a failure to distance oneself from the work of the tribe (to use Hoadley's (2010) term) to which one belongs. Advancing the field of curriculum studies in South Africa requires complicated conversations on at least three levels; complicated conversations with students we teach; complicated conversations among South African curriculum scholars; and complicated conversations among South African scholars and international scholars of the field. I have suggested that the time might now be ripe for such complicated conversations in the wake of recent student protests, and some of these conversations are taking place already. There now is a space in South African universities to have public conversations about issues (un)intentionally silenced in post-apartheid South Africa, which the #RhodesMustFall and the #FeesMustFall campaigns have laid bare. Conversations on decolonisation, Africanisation, indigenisation, and internationalisation are not new and not new in South Africa. Presently, we are witnessing conversations occurring in university classrooms across the country, in departmental meetings, in institutions, and at conferences on decolonisation and decoloniality. Moreover, we are seeing a burgeoning literature on decolonisation and decoloniality and related concepts. Put differently, we are witnessing *blank spots* shifting to mainstream conversations and *blind spots* shifting to become *blank spots*.[3] However, for such conversations to produce decolonising, Africanising, indigenising effects, they must necessarily be complicated conversations.

My specific interest lies in exploring the idea of complicated conversations in the context of the field of curriculum studies, although the thoughts generated might be more widely appropriated. As I have suggested, clarion calls by students for the decolonisation of the university (curriculum) have been the impetus for what we might call new conversations in South African higher education. However, even if we reach as far as to claim that students' calls have been a catalyst for new conversations, such a catalyst would not be a sufficient condition for these conversations to be complicated. Complicated conversations require

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[3]   Wagner (1993) distinguishes between the constructs *blank spots* and *blind spots*. For him, *blank spots* are what scientists know enough about to question but do not answer, and *blind spots* are what they do not know enough about or care about.

commitment and labour. An academic field such as curriculum studies is a "form of collective belonging" (Eribon, 2004, p. 123), whose members are loyal even in disagreement (Pinar 2006). Complicated conversations require a commitment to the intellectual life of the field of curriculum studies. It is a commitment that needs to be cultivated among students and embraced by scholars of the field in South Africa, irrespective of the tribe to which they belong (or whether they are tribeless) and embraced by scholars internationally so as to advance the internationalisation of the field.

Complicated conversations also require scholars of the field (in the presence of others) to distance themselves from their own understandings of curriculum, distance themselves from their tribes (in South Africa's case) and distance themselves from national and regional settings, akin to Said's (2000) depiction of the intellectual in exile (Pinar, 2006). It requires the teacher of curriculum to pause, slow down pedagogy, suspend his or her own understanding(s) of the field and understanding(s) of self (particularly academics socialised in Western traditions) and listen respectfully to the voices of students, particularly those of marginalised students (African students, women students, students of the LGBTQ community, etc.). Slowing pedagogy engenders pedagogical moments that are decolonising (and in the South African context, also Africanising) because it decentres Western knowledge by placing it on an immanent plane, alongside other knowledges. In the context of South African curriculum studies, members of each tribe should separate themselves from their tribes and through relations of reciprocity respectfully listen to the other who engenders self-criticism[4] and criticism of their views on curriculum (studies). The recognition of difference is central here, and not the celebration of diversity. Similarly, in transnational spaces, scholars of the field should distance themselves from their own national cultures and politics and listen respectfully to others, thus creating "a global public space for dissension, debate, and on occasion solidarity" Pinar (2006, p. 178). The notion of complicated as described here aligns with Gough's (2003) perspective on internationalising curriculum inquiry where all knowledge traditions are decentred and collective work is performed through negotiating trust. By decentring Western knowledge traditions in such global public spaces, collective work performed becomes decolonising/indigenising and in instances where African scholars are engaged in such spaces, Africanising (since Africans are given voice). Complicated conversations, therefore, as Pinar (2004b) has reminded us, are spaces in which both separation and belonging exist in creative tension. He observed that Aoki (1990) privileged the gerund "belonging" over the adverb "together", and elaborated, "'Belonging' takes precedence over 'together,' he [Aoki] explains, thereby revealing the 'being' of 'belonging.' In his subtle and sophisticated conceptualization, 'being' vibrates like a violin string, and in its sound, honours the complexity and integrity of individual identity and social relationality." (p. 84). Curriculum studies becomes decolonising in the sense that no knowledge tradition dominates the other. Moreover, the sense of belonging that is characteristic of complicated

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4   Self-criticism also involves the reconstruction of subjectivity that Fanon (1967) argued is central to decolonisation. In fact, Goldie (1999) goes as far as to say that for Fanon, "true liberation is the achievement of subjectivity" (p. 79). Reconstruction of self involves remembering the past, one's interpellation into colonial/imperial discourses that links to Chilisa's (2012) first phase of decolonisation, discovery and recovery, leading to her second phase of decolonisation, mourning. The reconstruction of subjectivity becomes the basis for collective action to make possible a different future, in this instance a reimagined field of curriculum studies.

conversations makes possible the celebration of the values and traditions of Indigenous peoples and, in the context of Africa, African values and beliefs. In other words, curriculum studies becomes indigenising/Africanising.

The creative tension between separation and belonging is the source of newness that complicated conversations could produce. Inspired by the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze, Aoki (1990) argued that conversations produce improvised lines of movement that tell a new language, in his case, a poststructural language. In the context of this article I would add a decolonised, indigenised, Africanised, and/or internationalised language or, perhaps, a radically new language that is a cacophony of different languages—indigenous, Western, African, decolonial—an assemblage of languages that, as in the case of improvisational jazz, is a meshwork of interactions that do not enable us to identify any distinctive language. In the context of our discussion, the upshot is a reimagined field of curriculum studies in South Africa and internationally. When all knowledge traditions are placed on an immanent plane then lines of connection and movement could be galvanised to produce something new or unforeseen. In the world of music, Blues and well as Jazz emerged from the intersection of the struggles of marginalised communities in the USA and the use of Western musical instruments to create new musical genres (le Grange, 2019, in press). In relation to knowledge production, Aborigines in Australia's Northern Territory have for many years through their own performative modes mapped their country by identifying every tree and every significant feature of their territory. Today some Aborigines are doing the same using the latest in satellites, remote sensing, and Geographical Information Systems. By representing their local knowledge on digital maps, they are able to make their ways of knowing visible in Western terms, thus creating "a new knowledge space which will have transformative effects for all Australians" (Turnbull, 1997, p. 560). Similarly, in South Africa San trackers are being equipped with digital devices (as part of the CyberTracker programme) to record animal sightings, a local example of traditional African ways of knowing working together with sophisticated Western technologies (see le Grange, 2001, 2007). In the context of South African curriculum studies where the field remains fragmented, the SAERA conference provides a new space for complicated conversations to occur among those working with and in different knowledge traditions. Internationally, the conference of the International Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (IAACS) is a transnational space in which South Africans of different epistemological orientations can engage in complicated conversations with fellow South African and international scholars. Through self-criticism, respectful listening, and the negotiation of trust in such knowledge spaces, dominant knowledges can be decentred, and all knowledges can be equitably compared and be performed together. The upshot of this is transformed knowledge spaces and the production of new knowledge that becomes a child of disparate knowledge traditions. Recognising the potential of such knowledge spaces might be an important step in advancing the academic field of curriculum studies in South Africa. Furthermore, in such knowledge spaces, and when academics engage in intellectual exchanges with students, Western pedagogies could be suspended and alternative pedagogies such as African talking circles could be introduced. Talking circles are known to many indigenous peoples around the globe. In such talking circles, a talking symbol such as a

talking stick is passed in a clockwise direction and whoever holds the stick has the right to speak uninterrupted. In this way respectful listening is ensured.

And, as mentioned earlier, complicated conversations are not chit-chats. Complicated conversations within nations and in transnational spaces involve contestation and negotiation to the extent that the very knowledge produced in such conversations could be troubled. As Pinar (2006) wrote,

> What is at stake here is the democratic negotiation of internationalization and globalization. To contest cultural imperialism and neo-colonialism, the very concepts and occasions structuring the study can themselves become objects of critique, even contestation; curricular language itself becomes negotiable in the complicated conversation that is the internationalization of curriculum studies. (p. 167)

Some parting thoughts

I have suggested in this article that as an academic field, curriculum studies in South Africa is fragmented because of the legacies of colonialism and apartheid that produced different "tribes and territories" (Hoadley, 2010, p. 128). This, together with the problem of proximity, is thwarting the advancement of curriculum studies in the country. I have argued that a renewed interest in decolonisation, Africanisation, indigenisation, and internationalisation in the country creates opportunities to reimagine the field. I have explored points of resonance between and among decolonising, Africanising, indigenizing, and internationalising and how lines of movement along these notions and lines of connection between and among them can be invigorated through complicated conversations. Moreover, I have registered the possibility of complicated conversations producing new languages, including a radical new language/sound that is a cacophony and assemblage of different knowledge traditions; the upshot is an outcome in which individual traditions become imperceptible so that no tradition dominates any other; the plane is an immanent one where Western knowledge is stripped of its onto-epistemological privilege. In knowledge spaces where such complicated conversations occur transnationally, the field of curriculum studies can, potentially, become internationalised, decolonised and in some instances indigenised (if indigenous peoples are engaged in such conversations). In South African knowledge spaces in which complicated conversations occur, the field can, potentially, become decolonised, indigenized, and Africanised.

I do not wish to sum up by dumping an airtight argument in a nutshell for the reader. I have added to an ongoing conversation on decolonisation, indigenisation, Africanisation, and internationalisation, and hope that I have in some way complicated the conversation. My exploration was done so as to register the possibility of reimagining the field of curriculum studies both internationally and in South Africa. To move from the possible to the probable, it is incumbent on curriculum scholars to reassert their commitment to the intellectual life of the field; the advancement of the field is dependent on the commitment of scholars to engage in complicated conversations.

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