

CHICANO PEDAGOGY: CONFLUENCE, KNOWLEDGE, AND TRANSFORMATION

Raymond V. Padilla

When the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo¹ ended hostilities between the United States and Mexico in the middle of the nineteenth century, a new relationship was created between the two countries that has had profound implications down to the present day. The United States and Mexico agreed to a new border, a new *frontera*, that physically, economically, culturally, politically, and symbolically both linked and separated the two countries. In the ensuing decades, economic and political forces in both countries gradually chipped away at the neatly arrayed concrete markers that demarcate the border and hold apart two quite different *modos de vida* (ways of living). What followed were large influxes of Mexican workers,² first into the rapidly developing southwestern states and, by the first quarter of the twentieth century, into the very center of the industrial heartland in the Midwest.³ The large immigrant flows added to the historic Mexican settlements in the Southwest that had been originally established by Spanish settlers and missionaries.⁴ The unique *mestizaje* (race mixture) of Latin America⁵ thus came into direct contact with the North American melting pot, and the resulting pottage has yet to be digested by the “Colossus of the North.”

The presence of a large Mexican American population in the United States has redefined the reality of the U.S.-Mexico border. An obvious asset in the economic arena,⁶ this population also has experienced a variety of dislocations and challenges.⁷ One such challenge is in education, where Chicanos have fared poorly in relation to other groups for decades.⁸ While important initiatives have been launched to reduce or eliminate this educational attainment gap—through efforts such as Headstart, migrant education, and bilingual and English as a Second Language instruction—progress has been slow and the gap has persisted. The thesis presented here is that the Chicano educational attainment gap cannot be eradicated unless a Chicano pedagogy is created that takes into account the historical and cultural realities of the Chicano population along with the North

American context in which those realities must be reassessed and transformed. Four themes will be presented: 1) the border as a confluential region, 2) epistemology in a Chicano context, 3) the inadequacy of reformist education, and 4) a proposal for Chicano education based on the philosophy of transformational education. Collectively, these themes define the major components of a proposed Chicano pedagogy that will be able to eliminate the historic educational gap.

The Border: Un Lugar Confluyente

The border can be regarded as a place of confluence, *un lugar confluyente*. It is at the border that different peoples, cultures, economies, histories, traditions, aspirations, and ambitions, along with practices, challenges, and claims come together. Sometimes they come together smoothly, like a tart margarita that seems to know no borders, and sometimes they clash dramatically as when the dream of *el Norte* runs head on into *la migra* (the U.S. Border Patrol). Sometimes they blend together with great subtlety, like tejano music, or cowboy chili, where the source of the ingredients may no longer be recognized. And sometimes they don't even take account of one another, each following its own patterns as if the other did not exist nearby. Nevertheless, the central feature of border life is its confluential nature, something that makes it distinctive and attractive. Like two great rivers, each an aggregation of numerous streams and *arroyos*, the cultures of the United States and Mexico come together at the border in a torrential encounter. Once they do so, it is impossible for the resulting great river of culture not to become reconfigured, re-energized, and transformed in its flow.

So, the border can be seen positively as an additive region. This perspective may be at odds with an earlier view of the border as a place of alienation,⁹ as well as with the more contemporary view of the border as a place that accentuates the Other, and that leads to the metaphorical *mundo zurdo* (left handed, i.e. absurd world) of social-cultural alienation in its many guises.¹⁰ But the border is not only a place of subtraction, divergence, and marginalization. It is also one of congregation, synthesis, and convergence. *Juntos pero no revueltos* (together but not blended) is not a significant ontological possibility at the border, at least in the long run. *Juntos y revueltos* (together and blended) is the inevitable ontological result of the confluence of cultures. To keep cultures completely separated at the border would imply the construction of a hermetic border that is difficult to

conceive and even more difficult to engineer and maintain. The better choice, it would seem, is to accept the ontological proposition that the border region is confluential in nature, primarily additive in its effects, and transformational in its character. If we accept this proposition, then the Chicano pedagogy that we seek should include this perspective.

The Problem of Knowing

Another theme that is important to the present discussion relates to the foundations of Western thought, which appear less certain now as a result of postmodernist critiques.¹¹ Postmodernism challenges all knowledge claims based on universalist assumptions of objectivity and realism, which are typically embodied in positivist science. For the postmodernist, no current knowledge claims can be warranted absolutely; all knowledge is produced and is embedded within a matrix of race, gender, and class which binds such knowledge to a specific perspective or position. As Scheurich states: “. . . even though we researchers think or assume we are doing good works or creating useful knowledge or helping people or critiquing the status quo or opposing injustice, we are unknowingly enacting or being enacted by ‘deep’ civilizational or cultural biases, biases that are damaging to other cultures and to other people who are unable to make us hear them because they do not ‘speak’ in our cultural ‘languages’.”¹²

Under these conditions, it is tempting to declare the end of knowing for Western culture, at least the end for the kind of knowing that claims to be objective and universal. And if this kind of knowing is at an end, or seriously undermined, how can one begin to fashion a Chicano pedagogy, or any pedagogy, which necessarily must take epistemology into account?

One solution is to think confluentially. The current epistemological impasse can not be effectively addressed strictly in terms of the English language because in English to know is to know is to know. In fact, to know is to know positively and absolutely. But if we switch to Spanish we are able to open epistemological spaces that are difficult to think about in English alone. This point can be illustrated with an example.

Suppose that you were looking for someone named Juan García in one of the neighborhoods of Juárez and you did not know where he lived. You might get to the neighborhood, meet a vendor on the street, and ask: “¿Dónde vive Juan García?” (Where does Juan García live?) The answer might come back: “*Se de él*

pero no lo conozco.” Now what are we to make of this response if we translate it into English? Surely it would not be an accurate translation to say: “I know him but I do not know him.” What’s the problem here? The problem appears to be that in Spanish we recognize two quite different ways of knowing which are distinguished by the words *saber* and *conocer*. *Saber* is accurately translated into English by the verb “to know,” but what about *conocer*?

Conocer implies a more personal and interactive kind of knowing, a situated kind of knowing that depends on personal experience. To observe someone or something is to know (in the sense of *saber*) about the person or the thing, but it is not *conocer*. To know people or places interactively involves *conocer*. *Conocer* implies a contextualization or mutuality of knowing, a knowing that is achieved in a relationship that is reciprocal between the knowing parties. Thus, *conocer* can not be absolute knowing because it is premised on a relationship between the knower and the known and the relationship cannot be one of objectivity, rather, it must be one of interconnectivity and interactivity. *Conocer* thus opens a new epistemological space that is outside the postmodern critique of universal knowledge because *conocer*-type knowledge makes no claim to universality or to objectivist foundations. Universal (nomothetic) knowledge is outside the scope of *conocer*. Yet knowledge acquired through *conocer*-type knowing may be used to validate knowledge derived through *saber*-type knowing as in the expression: *Se donde vive porque lo conozco.* (I know where he lives because I am acquainted with him.)

The contemporary epistemological crisis thus acquires a different character when considered across languages and cultures. The border region need not be viewed as epistemologically determined strictly within the English “to know”. The presence of the Spanish language opens a bifurcated epistemological space: One should be able to know abstractly (*saber*) as well as to know relationally (*conocer*). This epistemological bifurcation, which English fails to make conceptually, has implications for creating a Chicano pedagogy. For surely it would not be wise to create a Chicano pedagogy that only attends to *saber* and that neglects *conocer*. A Chicano pedagogy that is responsive to its own cultural context should pay attention to both knowing in the abstract (*saber*) and to knowing relationally (*conocer*).

In summary, the situation along the border is conditioned by a confluential ontology and a bifurcated epistemology. This situation calls for a transforma-

tional education that seeks to promote individual and collective transformation through engagement in dialogue to promote conocer-type knowing, through technological development that is driven by saber-type knowing, and through the discovery and use of new possibilities that result from the confluence of cultures in border regions. Before presenting the details of the transformational education approach, a brief critique of contemporary efforts to reform Chicano education is given below.

The Limits of Affirmation and Reform

Starting in the 1960s, efforts at educational change and improvement, especially those related to Chicano education, were premised on what may be called *affirmational* and *reformational* education. Affirmational education was a response to the history of educational neglect of Chicano students and others by the public schools.¹³ Affirmational education is characterized by the “education of the disadvantaged” that was the hallmark of the Johnson Administration’s War on Poverty that later, during the seventies and beyond, was transformed into multicultural education. The prime objective of affirmational education is to reinforce ego and self-image in the learner. Its primary technique is the presentation of role models which the learner can emulate and imitate. In practice, this approach examines the target community for cultural heroes and personalities who will be presented to the students as positive role models.¹⁴

The selection of ethnic heroes is heavily affected by political bias, regardless of who makes the choices. Selections made according to middle-class values usually result in a stellar list of ethnic athletes, entertainers, businessmen and women, jurists, teachers, diplomats, inventors, minor historical figures, and accepted community activists. On the other hand, if ethnically conscious individuals make the selections, the list will be just as extensive, but include a diverse collection of ethnic anti-heroes, political dissidents, indigenous mythical figures, acclaimed activists, and a variety of international characters of greater or lesser fame. The first list finds its way into those public schools that are inclined toward affirmational education for Chicanos and other minority groups; the selections of the second group are promoted through Chicana/o Studies, campus activists, and certain Chicano intellectuals.

The fundamental strategy of affirmational education is to discover or invent charismatic ethnic figures in order to develop “ethnic pride” and “self-acceptance”

in a learner who presumably suffers from psychological disequilibrium. In this sense, affirmational education is an educational field strategy premised on psychological determinism. This viewpoint assumes that the basic educational problem of the Chicano and other minorities is his or her mental confusion and disorientation.

Placed within a historical framework, psychological determinism is a lineal descendent of other pathologic views of the Chicano, including the genetic determinism of the 1920s and the cultural determinism of the 1930s. In turn, these are lineal descendants of the racist attitudes characteristic of mid-19th century America during a period of westward expansion and "Manifest Destiny."¹⁵

Since affirmational education is based on a pathologic model of the Chicano, it is not surprising that its basic approach is therapeutic and remedial. To the extent that ethnic groups have a need to remedy their self identification and pride because of oppressive social conditions and attitudes, affirmational education may serve a useful therapeutic purpose. But, like all remedies, affirmational education has multiple effects, some undesirable; therefore, great caution should be exercised in its use.

For example, affirmational education is implicitly elitist. By using a form of hero worship, it promotes *caciquismo* (loyalty to a local chieftain or strong man) and personalism. Young learners are not encouraged to look toward their own parents and family or neighbors for worthy role models. Many Chicano parents have endured great (often dramatic) hardships in order to provide better opportunities for their children. But these unknown Chicanas and Chicanos are seldom considered for inclusion on the "hero" list. Interestingly, various Chicano writers, poets, and dramatists have concentrated on the "common Chicano." In contrast, most Chicano educators and many political activists have adopted the hero worship approach.

For the advocates of hero worship, ordinary Chicanas and Chicanos exist as an indistinguishable *lumpen Chicanada*, unattractive to those who certify cultural heroes. Because of its elitist bias, affirmational education seeks to promote the notion of the ethnic *jefe* (boss) and to reinforce the social phenomenon of personalism.

Affirmational education also tends to create a narrow cultural nationalism, often with conservative tendencies. The temptation is to look backward in both time and geography. The game of substitution is encouraged. The Fourth of

July becomes *el dieciséis de septiembre*; May Day becomes *el cinco de mayo*; *tacos* and *frijoles* replace hamburgers and French fries; *huaraches* replace sandals; and *tequila* stands side-by-side with whiskey. The danger of an overly narrow cultural nationalism is that it puts more forward-looking activism into reverse gear. For this reason alone, it is necessary to go beyond affirmational education, media-certified heroes, and *caciquismo*.

In contrast to affirmational education, reformational education is a political strategy accenting public school structure, mainstreaming of previously marked populations, and economics. Much of the recent educational activism of minorities that is not affirmational is reformational or a combination of the two. As a political strategy, reformational education emphasizes the "increased representation of ethnic minorities" in all aspects of conventional educational institutions. In this sense, reformational education has shifted the pathologic assumption of affirmational education from the self to the environment, and more specifically to social institutions.

To improve the educational environment of school systems, minority faculty are hired, ethnic counselors are brought in, children are bused to promote integration, college admissions criteria are modified, support services are instituted, ethnic studies are incorporated into the curriculum, and bilingual education is introduced. In its positive aspects, reformational education tends to provide ethnic groups with greater access to educational institutions. For this very reason, however, reformational education should be viewed basically as a strategy for accommodating excluded groups. The objective of reformational education is to "make the system work" for those who otherwise are unable or not allowed to work the system. In this approach, the political and economic mainstreaming of the target group gains precedence over the group's strictly educational needs (hence, the conservative counter-critique of "political correctness").

Because reformational education focuses on organizational structures, practitioners of this strategy view the educational needs of the disenfranchised in a mechanistic way. The assumption is that if a Chicano or other ethnic counselor or teacher is hired by a barrio school the students corresponding to that ethnic group will learn more effectively whatever is being taught. Having learned more in school, the disenfranchised students will attend colleges and universities in ever-growing numbers. If more such students attend more colleges, there will be less poverty and less alienation in the minority communities.

The general idea is that when more minority personnel are hired by conventional schools, more minority students will be able to learn more of the conventional materials presented in such places. Hence, this approach sidesteps the most important concern of authentic education: What should be learned and how should it be taught? This is a question that reformatory education often disregards or passes over lightly.

Reformatory education is a truncated approach to the improvement of Chicano education, as well as to the improvement of education for other racial and ethnic minorities. It begins and ends with political exigencies and economic needs. Because of its emphasis on structure, reformatory education can easily reach a premature saturation point. When conventional educational institutions have hired their informal (but nevertheless rigid) quotas of minorities, or admitted a more or less token number of minority students, they will no longer respond to the efforts of reformatory educators for additional concessions. In fact, minorities will have their hands full responding to an institutional backlash premised on "reverse discrimination." Similarly, once minor curricular changes have been implemented, the tolerance for further and more basic changes is extremely small. In effect, this means that reformatory education not only has a weak defense against co-optation by conventional educational institutions, but it also can be dismantled at will by those who favor the status quo.¹⁶ For these reasons, reformatory education is self-limiting and can leave serious change agents stuck in first gear on the edge of the middle American mainstream. Even if successful, the presumed benefits of middle-class status would be enjoyed only by the privileged few minorities who were fortunate enough to gain access to the higher levels of the educational system. It is also worthwhile to note that during the eighties and nineties there has been a strong conservative reaction in the U.S. against the modest advances achieved by reformatory educators. In fact, the very language of reformatory education has been co-opted by the conservative right (for example, the progressive concept of empowerment is now used by conservatives to support parental choice) in pursuit of a program to further disenfranchise minorities and immigrants. The progressive notion of educational reform has turned into anti-reform in the hands of conservatives.¹⁷

Transformational Education

Finally we get to the proposal for transformational education. The starting premise

is that on one side of the border Chicana/os need to evolve beyond the mendicant status of “disadvantaged” or the politically marginal category of “minority.” On the other side of the border, Mexicans need to evolve beyond the chauvinistic designations of “developing,” “underdeveloped,” and “Third World.” To achieve this goal, each person has to undertake an analysis of the *yo y mis circunstancias* (I and my circumstances) in order to achieve what Paulo Freire has called conscientization.¹⁸

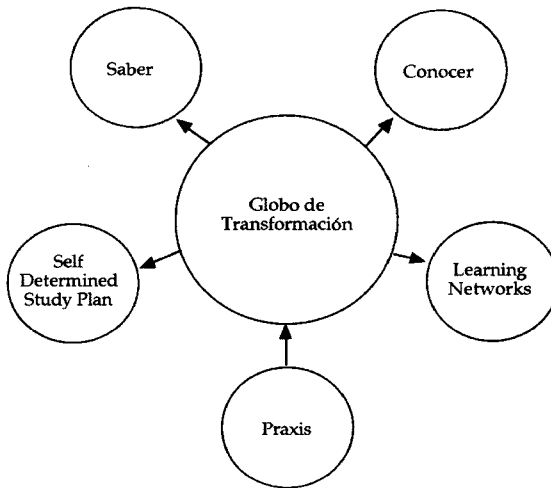
An effective Chicano pedagogy will encourage personal and social transformation as the individual gains an ever-growing awareness of self and the environment. The transformation will be manifested by the ways in which Chicanas and Chicanos deal with the problems they experience and by the kinds of alternatives they create for themselves. At the collective level, Chicanas and Chicanos must address the issue of *nosotros y nuestra condición* (us and our conditions). Whatever the individual’s understanding of the *yo y mis circunstancias*, there can be transformative social (i.e., collective) change only as the individual finds the means for transformation through the group. The group itself is strongly conditioned by environmental forces that have to be analyzed and understood by individuals acting in mutual agreement and within a common historical experience. The historical experience defines *nuestra condición* (our conditions, i.e., situation) and creates the generative themes that Chicanas and Chicanos must elaborate, master, and translate into skilled and concerted action. Confluence, knowing, reconfiguration, and transformation are some of the themes that need to receive attention from those who have gained critical consciousness of themselves and their conditions.¹⁹ As these themes gain ascendancy in the border region and elsewhere, the groundwork will be laid for the objective transformation of the Chicano community through skilled collective action. Transformational education is a tool that can be used to lay that groundwork.

Components of Transformational Education

Only the general features of transformational education will be described here. Besides the ideas related to confluence and knowing that have been presented already, a central feature of transformational education is the idea of *self-determination*. Self-determination refers to a group of people individually and collectively exercising their fundamental right to construct their own lives, their own communities, and their own world view. This principle presupposes the

extrojection of superimposed and alienating cultural elements that reduce a group to a manipulated object.²⁰ For Chicana/os, it also implies the need to transform those alienating social structures that pre-define their reality. At the same time, the principle of self-determination allows for self-directed and group-directed change. Self-determination is therefore a creative principle that per-

Figure 1
Components of Transformational Education



mits individual growth and that fosters social reconfiguration.

All of the ideas presented thus far, and a few yet to be mentioned, can be combined into a general model of transformational education as shown in Figure 1. The model is especially germane to the postsecondary level, but with appropriate modifications, it is also applicable to the K-12 level. The major components of this model are:

1. An epistemological perspective
2. *El globo de transformación* (the sphere of transformation)
3. The self-determined study plan which guides student learning
4. Technology networks which encompass entire communities
5. Praxis, the joining of theory and practice

These interlocking components promote an essentially self-directed learn-

ing process. They create a learning structure that serves to guide the learner into higher levels of awareness and skilled action. Further details of each component are given below.

El Globo de Transformación

The centerpiece of transformational education is the *globo de transformación* (Figure 2). This component provides a process and a structure within which Chicana/os can collectively analyze and implement solutions to common problems and take advantage of unique opportunities. The *globo de transformación* engages the individual learner in a process of self-determined learning. The two functions harmonize collective needs with individual preferences. The *globo de transformación* is characterized by the following processes and structures:

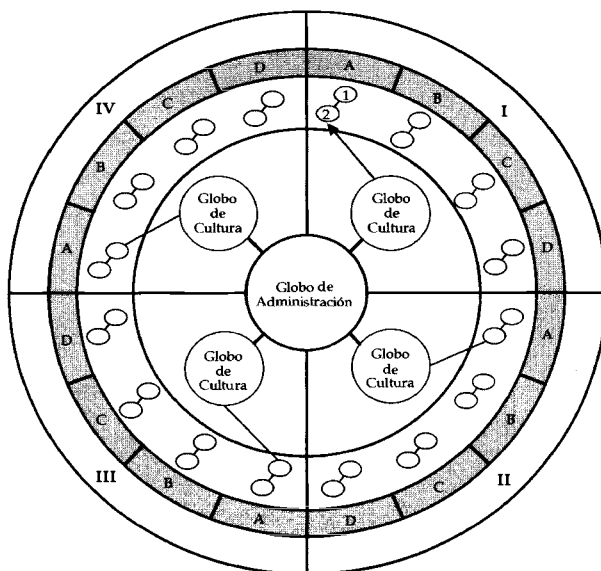
1. *Los ciclos de trabajo* (cycles of work)
2. *Los subciclos de trabajo* (subcycles of work)
3. *La tarea* (the task)
4. Praxis in learning
5. *Documentación* (documentation)
6. *El globo de cultura* (the sphere of culture)

Los Ciclos de Trabajo

These are specific competencies or learning experiences important to a Chicano community that seeks to be self-determined. At the same time, *los ciclos de trabajo* provide a well-defined learning context within which individual learning preferences can be exercised. The specific competencies and learning experiences expressed by *los ciclos de trabajo* include: a) *comunicación* (communication), b) *descubrimiento* (discovery), c) *acción* (action), and d) *transformación* (transformation).

Comunicación. As used here, communication acquires a more general and comprehensive meaning best expressed by the Spanish translation of the indigenous expression: *Rostro y corazón*.²¹ This translated idea alludes to the public presentation of the self in a holistic way—the intellectual and the emotional, the “head and the heart.” Communication thus mediates between a unique individual reality and a shared, but constantly negotiated, community reality. Communication implies the basic exchange of information, but just as importantly, the exchange of feeling and insight that occurs in human interaction. Learners

Figure 2
El Globo de Transformación



Legend:

Los ciclos de trabajo
I - Comunicación
II - Descubrimiento
III - Acción
IV - Transformación

Los subciclos de trabajo
A - Preparación
B - Siembra
C - Cultivo
D - Cosecha

① Círculo analítico
② Círculo práctico

are expected to achieve progressively higher levels of communication skills.

Descubrimiento. A learner who has experience and mastered communication as described above is ready for descubrimiento—an act of skill in discovering social reality through reflection and critical analysis. It entails problem setting and problem solving. Through problematizing of the world, specifically its social, political, and economic structures, the learner is able to unveil solutions to difficulties confronting him or her.²² Through the simultaneous problematizing of a specific area of knowledge, the learner is able to master technical information. The result is a comprehensive understanding of human knowledge and technology as well as social organization.

Acción. The knowledge and technology critically acquired in descubrimiento prepare the student to engage the social world through “skillful

action.” The learner’s skillful action occurs within a problem-solving context that links the individual’s need to master a particular technology or activity with the group’s need to contend with oppressive social structures or hostile environments. Skillful action based on *descubrimiento* is therefore action for liberation: At the social level, it is liberation from manipulation; at the technological level, it is liberation from ignorance and want. *Acción* is decisive self and group expression.

Transformación. Action upon the external environment implies the transformation of the world. Through *comunicación*, *descubrimiento*, and *acción*, the learner is able to transform his or her consciousness of the world and to contribute to a higher group consciousness as well. Hence, *transformación* entails both the replacement of oppressive social structures with more humanized and democratic ones and the enhancement of technical skills over the life span of the individual. On another level, *transformación* both derives from and ultimately results in an act of communication as the skilled learner interacts with other learners to share the transformational pedagogy. Thus, *transformación* requires from everyone a pedagogical commitment to learners who are engaged in the various stages of *el globo de transformación*; those who have successfully engaged *el globo de transformación* have the responsibility to assist others to do the same. All of this implies an ethic of caring for other human beings and taking action on their behalf.

Los Subciclos de Trabajo

Each *ciclo de trabajo* is divided into four subcycles of work. The purpose of the subcycles is to organize the major work cycles into smaller units of time or activity that provide well-defined learning structures and focused learning activities. The *subciclos de trabajo* include: a) *preparación* (preparation), b) *siembra* (planting), c) *cultivo* (cultivation), and d) *cosecha* (harvest).

Preparación. This subcycle includes the important idea of self-evaluation. It could also be understood as pre-planning. At the beginning of each major work cycle the student must assess his or her own goals, attitudes, experiences, and resources with respect to the major work cycle under consideration and the student’s individual study plan. This is a pre-planning phase that will permit the student to determine what the study plan might be and whether the student should proceed into the next subcycle of work or skip to the next major work

cycle. The subcycle of preparation is contemplative and exploratory as well as evaluative.

Siembra. This word means “planting” in English. This subcycle is concerned with planning activity. Specific plans are developed by the student with assistance from the *globo de cultura* (see below) to complete the task of a major work cycle and a given phase of the student’s individual study plan. Siembra involves developing tactics for dealing with specific problems the student experiences.

Cultivo. This is the subcycle of cultivation. Cultivation means action, the execution of plans made during siembra (although the plans are subject to continuous adjustment as new information or skills are acquired). It means care, attention, and critical, skillful action.

Cosecha. The harvest subcycle occurs at the end of each major work cycle. Cosecha, like preparación, includes the idea of self-evaluation. The student assesses what has been accomplished and what still needs to be done. Cosecha relates past performance (or nonperformance) to future expectations. Cosecha is a joyful subcycle. It allows the student to experience satisfaction with tasks well done and to contemplate future possibilities and accomplishments.

As presented here, the subciclos de trabajo have a strong ecological orientation because they relate the human learning process to the natural environment, especially as that environment is perceived by the agriculturalist. However, the labels that mark the subcycles of work may be changed to reflect other contexts, for example an urban environment. This approach encompasses a holistic and critical posture toward learning.

La Tarea. Tareas are specific learning tasks or projects that the learner undertakes within a subcycle of work. A tarea can be as short and simple as writing a paragraph or as long and complicated as organizing an agricultural cooperative. In principle, however, the tarea is a relatively short-term project that achieves a specific learning objective or that is a part of a larger project.

Praxis in Learning. The learning objectives presented by los ciclos and los subciclos de trabajo, as well as the Individual Self-Determined Study Plan, are meaningfully engaged by the student through the dialectical processes of critical analysis and skillful action. This dialectic constitutes “praxis” in transformational education. The learner achieves praxis by entering simultaneously into a *círculo analítico* (analytic circle) and a *círculo práctico* (circle of practice). These círculos are an outgrowth of the student’s *globo de cultura* (see below).

Through the *círculo analítico*, the student defines and critically analyzes a problem and synthesizes information to reach a conclusion. Through the *círculo práctico*, the student again defines the problem, diagnoses it, and undertakes skillful action to solve it. Hence, the *círculo analítico* and the *círculo práctico* represent two distinct but complementary processes that lead the student to praxis. Because of the dialectical relationship between the two *círculos*, the student is able to critically confront the problems that are posed by the individual or the group. At the same time, the student is able to master a specific, but individually selected, technology.

Documentación. Both the learning experiences the student undergoes by engaging el *globo de transformación* and the specific technologies each student masters are documented by means of a student portfolio. The portfolio is a learning biography that each student presents to the world in support of the claim that the student has acquired specific skills or competencies. In a larger sense, the portfolio is a composite record of the student's learning experience as developed jointly by the student and his or her *globo de cultura*. Therefore, the portfolio is extremely important for evaluating the quality of both teaching and learning.

El Globo de Cultura. This is the focal structure for the student. It is within the *globo de cultura* that the student enjoys a dialogical learning experience. Members of the *globo de cultura* counsel and guide the student through the *globo de transformación*, the student's chosen technology network, and other aspects of learning. In a real sense, the *globo de cultura* is a tool the student uses to unveil the world and to understand his or her relationships within that world. In this respect, the *globo de cultura* has an important instrumental function. The *globo de cultura* includes the student, a *guía principal* (staff resource person), another student, and one or more *guías auxiliares* (ad hoc resource persons). The latter provide the expertise in the student's chosen technological field. The *globo de cultura* is a very important mechanism for evaluation and quality control in transformational education.

The Self-Determined Study Plan. One may look at the *globo de transformación* as a means through which the Chicano community can seek and carry out its own transformation—achieving self-determined growth and development. The specific components of the *globo de transformación*, however, represent only one possible configuration of elements that put into practice the

concept of self-determination. As the transformational education process is engaged, changes in specific components might be needed. In such cases, the new set of components, as well as their configuration, would have to be discovered by a collective transformational process. For the present, the *globo de transformación* represents one possible mechanism for the collective evolution of the Chicano community. As individual students engage the *globo de transformación*, they become links that can carry the transformational perspective to other communities on both sides of the international border.

The transformational view of self-determination is not limited to its collective expression. Individual self-determination is also very important. Indeed, the former implies the latter as a necessary, if insufficient, condition for its realization. In the context of transformational education, individual self-determination includes the belief that each learner has the right and the responsibility to choose the particular skills and competencies he or she wishes to acquire. Once these have been clearly stated, the learner, with the guidance of the *globo de cultura*, designs a plan for achieving the desired competencies. Clearly, the student's plan is subject to revision as the student gains new skills, insights, or information. This critically revised student plan is called the "Individually Self-Determined Study Plan". Since the self-determined study plan is developed and implemented through the *globo de cultura* (which, in turn is part of the *globo de transformación*), transformational education allows for individual preferences to be expressed within the context of collective self-determination.

Technology Networks. While the student may develop competence in any existing technology through the Individually Self-Determined Study Plan, those who formally practice transformational education need to develop their own technology networks. These networks will define those areas of know-how that are important for achieving self-determination for the Chicano community within a given historical moment. Examples of possible technology networks at the postsecondary and secondary levels include:

- agricultural technology network
- communications and arts technology network
- early childhood education technology network
- basic education technology network
- transformational education technology network

Other networks could be developed for grades K-8—for example, networks related to reading, science, and mathematics. The creation of technology networks, as opposed to traditional departments, is consistent with the indigenous philosophy of *el todo*—the holistic approach.²³ By using technology networks, transformational education emphasizes the wholeness of human knowledge while focusing on the particular technology needs of the Chicano community. In general, technology networks have these features:

Laboratorios (laboratories) relevant to a specific technology. For example, the early childhood education technology network could operate one or more child care centers that would function as laboratories for students in early childhood education. The agricultural technology network would include basic science labs. Laboratories need not be campus-based, but should incorporate community resources whenever possible; it may even be desirable to develop such resources in the community at large rather than just on campus.

Exploratorios (explorations) in the appropriate subject areas. Exploratorios consist of all organized learning activities supported by a given educational program or institution. They include lectures, seminars, discussion groups, field trips, demonstrations, student and faculty projects, readings, performances, and internet sites.

Utilization of available resources from the community at large, especially skilled personnel, but also including physical facilities, technical assistance, funding, and so forth.

Provision of direct services to the surrounding community served by a given program or institution. Thus, the agricultural technology network should support agricultural cooperatives organized by farmers and farm workers, and the early childhood education technology network should provide child care to the community. Clearly, the extent of direct services provided to the community through the technology networks will be determined by the availability of resources.

Summary

Both affirmational and reformatational education are inadequate approaches for developing an effective Chicano pedagogy. Affirmational education carries with it the discredited assumptions of an outmoded social science that viewed Chicanos and other minorities in a pathologic light. Image building and ego integration

are concepts that may deserve attention in an educational enterprise, but they can not be taken as the sole basis for a Chicano pedagogy. A truly effective Chicano pedagogy has to provide the community with more than simple psychological remedies.

The basic problem with reformatinal education—and the hostile reaction that it has engendered—is that it tends to concentrate on institutional structures at the expense of educational processes and self-determined learning goals. This approach has its roots in the American melting pot myth and its attendant folklore of legalistic equality, mechanical integration, and cultural assimilation. Reformatinal education takes its cues from the conventional educational system instead of responding to the exigencies of Chicano communities struggling to manage creatively the confluence of multiple cultural currents. Reformatinal education seeks primarily to achieve token mainstreaming even when what is needed is to redefine and reconfigure the mainstream.

Transformational education is a broad pedagogical strategy that attempts to go beyond simple psychological cures and the now debunked social science that viewed minorities within genetic, cultural, and psychological determinisms. Transformational education takes its cues from the realities of border life that argue for physical reconstruction, technological enhancement, cultural reconfiguration, and spiritual renewal. It is an educational approach that serves the needs of Chicano communities in the process of redevelopment and self definition. In fact, one could view transformational education as a significant tool for community development. As such, transformational education expands the boundaries of *nosotros y nuestra condición* (us and our conditions) and ultimately is concerned with *la condición humana* (the human condition).

NOTES

- ¹ For the terms of the treaty, see B. Tate, *Guadalupe Hidalgo, Treaty of Peace 1848 and The Gadsden Treaty with Mexico 1853* (Truchas, New Mexico, Tate Gallery, 1970).
- ² Carey McWilliams, *North from Mexico, The Spanish-Speaking People of the United States* (New York, J. B. Lippincott Company, 1949).
- ³ Zaragosa Vargas, *Proletarians of the North, A History of Mexican Industrial Workers in Detroit and the Midwest, 1917-1933* (Berkeley, University of California Press, 1993).
- ⁴ Gilbert R. Cruz, *Let There be Towns, Spanish Municipal Origins in the American Southwest, 1610 - 1810* (College Station, Texas A&M University Press, 1988).
- ⁵ Magnus Morner, *Race Mixture in the History of Latin America* (Boston, Little, Brown, 1967).

- ⁶ Tomás Rivera Center, *Why They Count: Immigrant Contributions to the Golden State* (Claremont, CA, Tomás Rivera Center, 1996).
- ⁷ Rodolfo Acuña, *Occupied America. The Chicano's Struggle Toward Liberation* (San Francisco, Canfield Press, 1972).
- ⁸ For an account of the transformation in identity from Mexican American to Chicano, see F. Arturo Rosales, *Chicano! The History of the Mexican American Civil Rights Movement* (Houston, Arte Público Press, 1996). For educational attainment see Richard P. Durán, *Hispanics' Education and Background, Predictors of College Achievement* (New York, College Entrance Examination Board, 1983). A more recent synoptic treatment of issues related to educational attainment appears in *Reaching the Top, A Report of the National Task Force on Minority High Achievement* (New York, College Entrance Examination Board, 1999).
- ⁹ Octavio Paz, *The Labyrinth of Solitude*. (New York, Grove Press, 1961).
- ¹⁰ For a feminist account of the *mundo zurdo*, see C. Moraga and Gloria Anzaldúa, *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (New York, Kitchen Table, Women of Color Press, 1983). On the "Chicana/o Other," see José E. Limón, *Dancing with the Devil, Society and Cultural Poetics in Mexican-American South Texas* (Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, 1994); Alberto L. Hurtado, *Intimate Frontiers, Sex, Gender, and Culture in Old California* (Albuquerque, University of New Mexico Press, 1999); and Angela Valenzuela, *Subtractive Schooling, U.S.-Mexican Youth and the Politics of Caring* (Washington, D.C., Falmer Press, 1999).
- ¹¹ James J. Scheurich, *Research Method in the Postmodern* (Washington, D.C., The Falmer Press, 1997). For a feminist perspective, see Patti Lather, *Getting Smart: Feminist Research and Pedagogy Within the Postmodern* (New York, Routledge, 1991). For other perspectives, see C. J. Fox and H. T. Miller, *Postmodern Public Administration, Toward a Discourse* (Thousand Oaks, California, Sage Publications, 1995) and B. S. Turner, *Theories of Modernity and Postmodernity* (Thousand Oaks, California, Sage Publications, 1990).
- ¹² James J. Scheurich, *op. cit.*, p. 1.
- ¹³ Thomas P. Carter, *Mexican Americans in School: A History of Educational Neglect* (New York, College Entrance Examination Board, 1970).
- ¹⁴ For a demurrer on role models for Chicanos, see Adalberto Aguirre, Jr., "A Chicano Farmworker in Academe," in Raymond V. Padilla and Rudolfo Chávez Chávez, eds., *The Leaning Ivory Tower, Latino Professors in American Universities* (Albany, State University of New York Press, 1995), pp. 17-27.
- ¹⁵ For a general critique of deficit models of Chicano students, see Richard R. Valencia, ed., *The Evolution of Deficit Thinking, Educational Thought and Practice* (Washington, D.C., The Falmer Press, 1997). For an early critique, see Octavio I. Romano-V., "The Anthropology and Sociology of the Mexican-Americans: The Distortions of Mexican-American History," in Octavio I. Romano-V., ed., *Voices, Readings from El Grito* (Berkeley, California, Quinto Sol Publications, 1971), pp. 26-39.
- ¹⁶ The recent spate of anti-minority education propositions in California and other states would seem to confirm this point. See, for example, Gary Orfield, "Politics Matters: Educational Policy and Chicano Students," in José F. Moreno, ed., *The Elusive Quest for Equality, 150 Years of Chicano Education* (Cambridge, MA, Harvard Educational Review, 1999), pp. 111-121.
- ¹⁷ A critique of the conservative educational agenda can be found in C. Newfield and R. Strickland, eds., *After Political Correctness: The Humanities and Society in the 1990s* (Boul-

der, Westview Press, 1995).

¹⁸ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* [Myra Bergman Ramos, trans.] (New York, Herder and Herder, 1970).

¹⁹ For a discussion of critical consciousness and generative themes, see Paulo Freire, *supra*.

²⁰ Paulo Freire, *op. cit.* In Freire's thought, the oppressed internalize the ideas, language, and culture of the oppressor, thus perpetuating the domination and control of the oppressor. Such oppressive cultural baggage must be expelled, or extrojected, from the oppressed as a step in gaining a more critical consciousness that can lead to liberation.

²¹ Fernando Díaz Infante, *La educación de los Aztecas, cómo se formó el carácter del pueblo mexicana* (Mexico, Panorama Editorial, S. A., 1983).

²² See Paulo Freire, *op. cit.*, for a discussion of problematizing social situations as an act of learning.

²³ See Fernando Díaz Infante, *op. cit.*, for Aztec approaches to education.