

Reflections on the Possibilities and Challenges of Multiculturalism and Education

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Keynote 2 - Multiculturalism and Education: What Next?

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Aims

- Multiculturalism and Education – Definition and Advocacy (Race, 2024a; 2024b).
- The Dimensions of Multicultural Education (Banks, 2016; Hall and Salinas, 2023).
- Multicultural Education and Teacher Education in a time of Crisis in the USA (Nieto, 2000 in McDonagh et al, 2023).
- Multicultural Education Practice, CPD with Diversity and Awareness Training (Race, 2024a).
- Dead or Alive? Evolving Multicultural Debates and Dialogues within Education (Race, 2024a; 2024b).
- Fundamental British Values. Decolonising Curriculum and Pedagogy – Anti-Racist Pedagogy.

Multiculturalism Definition – Opportunities, Challenges and Advocacy

Let us reassert the Canadian government's multiculturalism policy (from 1988) that promotes equal rights and discourages discrimination; agree with Banks and Banks (2007) that multiculturalism cannot be thought of as a single concept which is socially isolated; and also agree with Parekh (2000) and his claim that multiculturalism is both plural and fluid, which recognizes how cultural diversity is constantly changing

(Race, 2024a: 5)

My advocacy is in the opportunities and challenges of multicultural education, anti-racist pedagogy and decolonising curriculum and pedagogy. We need to continue to advocate a move from mono to multicultural national curriculum(s).

Banks – The Dimensions of Multicultural Education (1)

- **Content Integration** deals with the extent to which teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline. The infusion of ethnic and cultural content into the subject area should be logical, not contrived ...
- **The Knowledge construction** process consists of the methods, activities, and questions teachers use to help students to understand, investigate, and determine how implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways in which knowledge is constructed ... *Positionality* is the term used to describe the ways in which race, social class, gender, and other personal and cultural characteristics of knowers influence the knowledge they construct or produce.

Banks – The Dimensions of Multicultural Education (2)

- **Knowledge Construction and the Transformative Curriculum.** The curriculum in the schools must be transformed in order to help students develop the skills needed to participate in the knowledge construction process ... to help students to develop higher-level thinking skills and empathy for the peoples who have been victimized by the expansion and growth of the United States. When diverse and conflicting perspectives are juxtaposed, students are required to compare, contrast, weigh evidence, and make reflective decisions.
- The **prejudice reduction** dimensions of multicultural education describe the characteristics of students' racial attitudes and strategies that can be used to help them develop more democratic attitudes and values ... Research indicates that curriculum interventions such as plays, folk dances, music, role playing, exclusion from a group, discussion of dyads, and interracial contact can also have positive effects on the racial attitudes of students.

Banks – The Dimensions of Multicultural Education (3)

- An **equity pedagogy** exists when teachers modify their teaching in ways that will facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse, racial, cultural, ethnic, language and gender groups ... Research indicates that teachers can increase the classroom participation and academic achievement of students from different ethnic and cultural groups by modifying their instruction so that it draws on their cultural and language strengths.
- **An empowering School Culture and Social Structure.** This dimension of multicultural education involves restructuring the culture and organization of the school so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and gender groups will experience equality.

Banks, 2016: 8-16.

Sonia Nieto - “Placing Equity Front and Center” for Teacher Education in a Time of Crisis

... despite recent attempts in teacher education programs across the country to include multicultural issues, many programs have been steeped in negative assumptions about diverse populations based on deficit theories. These theories include the perspective that students from nondominant groups are genetically or culturally inferior, or that they bring little of value to their education. In addition, teacher preparation programs have been characterized by a conservative ideology that emphasizes assimilation and the maintenance of the status quo. Placing the blame for student failure primarily on students and their families has freed schools of education from considering how their own policies and practices in teacher education have colluded to perpetuate academic failure for those students who differ from the majority (Nieto, 2000: 181, in McDonough et al, 2023).

Multicultural Education Practice needs to embrace ...

- Method – how practice allows students to talk, think and reflect.
- Depth – practice needs to avoid the tokenistic. Stereotyping needs to be avoided at all costs.
- Reach – practice needs to be international rather than national.

Race, 2024a: 83

CPD, Diversity and Awareness Training

... we need to continue advocating for more diversity training for all professional practitioners through wider continuing professional development that goes beyond a compulsory training programme ... Moreover, face-to-face forums are required for all staff in education institutions to discuss issues that concern both themselves and their students, including institutional racism, the death of George Floyd in Minneapolis in May 2020 and the death of Tyre Nicols in the same city in January 2023. White academics need to understand how a notion such as 'All Lives Matter' can alienate Black people within a wider decolonising curriculum context.

Race, 2024a: 137.

Dead or Alive? Evolving Multicultural Debates and Dialogues within Education

- Multiculturalism vs Interculturalism (Integration and Education Policy-Making).
- Prevent
- Fundamental British Values
- Decolonising the Curriculum and Transformative Pedagogy.

Race, 2024a: 121-138,

Fundamental British Values (FBV)

- What is Britain in May 2024?
- Britain contains four unique countries with four unique systems of education – education history, education policy and professional practice.
- Is FBV about England and not about England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland?
- Within British contexts, political realities of devolution in 1997 and the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. Brexit – 2016-2020.
- FBV is about democratic processes, freedom to hold faiths and beliefs, identifying and combating discrimination. Extremism has been “redefined” in England (March 2024) around beliefs not values.

Race, 2024: 133-135

Decolonising Curriculum and Pedagogy

The importance of decolonising curriculum and pedagogy. A developing 100+ x 1,000 word methodology. The (hand)book proposal opens with an Introduction, which focuses on:

- Justification for the Project; Voices Methodology and Ethical Considerations of the 100 (129) X 1000-word entries:
- Intersectional Voices;
- Blackness and Whiteness;
- Race and Racism;
- Critical Race Theory;
- Decolonising Curriculum; and,
- Decolonising Pedagogy.

This is followed by the 129 entries and then a provocation coming out of these entries. The aims of the (hand)book is to increase coverage and knowledge of the subject and also increase capacity – the entries in this project range from Masters and Doctoral candidates, through to Professors, including teachers and colleagues working in other subject areas outside of education i.e., it's a multidisciplinary project with voices / contributors from 19 countries.

What are the opportunities and challenges of multiculturalism and multicultural education? Issues for Debate / Questions and Answers.

- How contemporary and relevant is multiculturalism and multicultural education in May 2024?
- How are we applying multiculturalism within our education work and practice in May 2024?
- How does the English government's recent definition of Extremism affect cultural diversity and multiculturalism? Is FBV applicable in England, let alone all 4 home nations?
- How important to other countries, is the anti-racist state policy and new national curriculum in Wales, introduced in July and August 2022?

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