

Diverse Learning in 2020 and Beyond

Diverse Learning in 2020 and Beyond

Edited by

Pamela R. Cook

**Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing**



Diverse Learning in 2020 and Beyond

Edited by Pamela R. Cook, PhD

This book first published 2022

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

Copyright © 2022 by Pamela R. Cook, PhD and contributors

All rights for this book reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright owner.

ISBN (10): 1-5275-7589-6

ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-7589-9

I wish to dedicate this textbook to my Aunt Carol and Uncle Bob VeltKamp of Newaygo, Michigan, United States. For so many years, they have continued to support my writing in countless and limitless ways.

I also wish to dedicate this textbook to my dear friend Rosemary Duff of Longs, South Carolina, United States. It was her excitement for learning (e.g., arts, cinema, literature, music); including her continued support for my hosting the international symposium on education in Belize, that has kept my interest in learning and writing.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments x

Introduction 1
The Historical Significance of an International Educational Symposium
Conducted in Belize: A Narrative
Pamela R. Cook, PhD

Chapter One **The Education of Diverse Learning**

Differentiated Instruction and Diverse Learners: How Early-childhood
Practitioners Promote Inclusive Classrooms 18
Fawzia Reza, EdD

Chapter Two **Educational Teacher Development**

A Meeting of Minds and Screens: Collaborating in Transnational
Teacher Development..... 34
Jean Kirshner, PhD, Debbie Blair, MEd, and William Castillo

Chapter Three **Education in Remote Learning**

Supporting Teachers' Need to Successfully Transition to Remote
Learning..... 56
Kara Smith, PhD, Gareth Davies, PhD, Tim Dolighan (ABD),
and Stuart Clyde MEd, GT

Chapter Four **Educational Learning through a Pandemic Crisis**

Teaching and Research During a Pandemic 72
Melissa Garcia, EdD, CCC-SLP

Chapter Five

Education in Self-Regulation

| | |
|--|----|
| Why Schools Should Focus on Self-regulation Skills | 92 |
| Jerry Woodbridge, PhD | |

Chapter Six

The Education of Online Instruction

| | |
|--|-----|
| From F2F to the Cyber Classroom: A Case Study on Primary-school Teachers' Experiences and Challenges of Transitioning to Online Education and Delivering Quality Education | 118 |
| Alberto L. August, EdD | |

Chapter Seven

Educational Challenges

| | |
|--|-----|
| Grace Period, Meeting the Challenges of Online Teaching in Times of Crisis: A Narrative | 133 |
| Tommye Hutson, EdD and Kimberly Hefty (ABD) | |

Chapter Eight

The Education of Diversity and Inclusion

| | |
|--|-----|
| Fostering Diversity and Inclusion: Academic Collaborations on Campus and Abroad | 147 |
| Judith L. McConnell-Farmer (Mikkelson), EdD, and Tina L. Williams, Med | |

Chapter Nine

Educational Literacy Experiences

| | |
|--|-----|
| Family Literacy: Imagination Library | 165 |
| Ann Harvey, PhD | |

Chapter Ten

The Education of Strategic Planning

| | |
|---|-----|
| Strategic Planning and Communications for Diverse Audiences | 197 |
| Pamela Malone, PhD | |

Chapter Eleven
Education in Creative Storytelling

Scientific Concepts through Storytelling: The Archimedes Principal 212
Jerry Woodbridge, PhD

Chapter Twelve
Educational Learning in the Art of Dance

Tapping to Togetherness Across Populations: Using Tap Dance
to Bring Diverse Populations Together through a Research-based
Interdisciplinary Program 227
Julie L. Pentz, MFA

Contributing Authors 241

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In this textbook, I wish to offer a heartfelt acknowledgment of grateful admiration to all the contributing authors. You have sincerely helped make this book a remarkable resource of information for so many administrators, educators, teachers, and students. Your countless hours of research, study, and cooperation have not been forgotten and are greatly appreciated. This has definitely been an incredible journey and I wish many blessings to you and yours as you continue researching and writing.

INTRODUCTION

DIVERSE LEARNING IN 2020 AND BEYOND

THE HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF AN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATIONAL SYMPOSIUM CONDUCTED IN BELIZE: A NARRATIVE

PAMELA R. COOK, PHD

PRC EDUCATIONAL SERVICES, CEO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR,
FOUNDER, SAND LAKE, MICHIGAN, UNITED STATES

Introduction

I thought it best to begin this textbook with how the International Symposium on Education (ISED), the Belizean International Symposium on Education (BISE), and the Study Abroad-Student Symposium (SASS) originated and thus, became a reality. Actually, it all began with a small group of about ten professors at the launch of the International Symposium in 2009. Later-on, it grew to become a much larger event hosting around one hundred participants (e.g., school administrators, educators, students, and teachers).

It initially began with the premise to provide opportunities to present educational research to many countries in the world. As it was pre-2020, I was able to attend national and international academic conferences easily. In those days, I was given the privilege to visit various preschools and orphanage schools in places such as Belize in Central America, Budapest in Hungary, Prague in Czech Republic, London and Oxford in England, Reggio Emilia in Italy, Yash in Romania, and Volgograd in Russia.

The one orphanage and school that stood out the most to me was in a small rural village in Belize. That orphanage was built in 2004, with the

school following in 2005, and was approved by the Belizean Ministry of Education (MoE) for operation in January 2006 (Cook 2010; 2017).

In February 2006 I was invited to conduct a small teacher-training seminar in early-childhood education by a colleague who was the director of the only Montessorian-based preschool in Belize. Myself and another friend from my alma mater – the University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada – decided to take the journey to Belize.

My Visit to Belize

On this first and initial visit, I made new friends and learned many new things about the Belizean peoples and their culture. It was at that point in my academic career where the eyes of my intellectual self met those of my personal (inner) self and professional (outer) self which embraced; causing my soul to change my way of thinking in terms of research (Freire 1970). Essentially, I was becoming a “reflexive inquirer”; and as an outsider to the country it was my desire to know and learn more about the Belizean culture that later became a driving force for a research agenda (Freire 1970; Smith 1999; 2017; Cook 2017). With keeping that mindset at the forefront, it was the beginning of a life changing decision that would literally change my life forever.

The Orphanage School in Belize

During my visit to the orphanage school, I stood in the doorway of this unusual octagon-shaped open-school concept facility. It was a modern type of structured school, nestled within an orphanage campus (e.g., dining, dormitories, garden, greenhouse, maintenance, and staff living quarters), conducive to an environmental setting.

My thoughts began to race back to my childhood background, with issues of my own personal identity and the way I understood order and social behaviours (Madison 2005; Cook 2010; 2017). I began to look culturally and intentionally at my own personal background of being a child of an orphan, and my professional career as an early childhood educationalist. I wondered about my family roots and the type of disconnect or uncertainty that haunted me both personally and professionally (Cook 2010; 2016; 2017).

Like so many of the Belizean children that were orphaned--I too, carried unanswered questions: Where did I originate from? Where did my family come from, and where do they live? What type of jobs do they have? Will I ever meet my biological grandparents? I had so many unanswered inquiries.

It was at that initial visit that a second invitation presented itself to me from the orphanage administration to return to Belize and begin conducting a research study at the school. To me, this was both an honour and a responsibility. Essentially, this would be an extraordinary opportunity to see a diverse culture as a returning visitor, with my background as a professional early childhood educationalist to immerse myself within the culture.

Moreover, this would be a formal organised exploration and an investigative research study that would help me gain a much clearer perspective and better understanding of the Belizean culture and its educational ways of learning. Insights would be made into the Belizean community and the culture may become part of a vital working point. There would be new experiences obtained through the opportunities offered in this method of research – an exploration of the non-traditional learning of early learning methods (Montessori) implemented into an orphanage preschool curriculum along with the approved Belizean MoE national curriculum (MoE 2000; 2010; 2017). This would become an amazing experience and study!

However, I began to question the study and, more importantly, question myself in wondering how I might fit all these inquiries into a research study? This type of research would be coming from a non-traditional method of early childhood programming, placed into this type of learning environment (Montessori) and setting. Essentially, would this type of research really work in this context? I began ask myself – what has given me the right to invade this country and take knowledge from the Belizean culture?

The desire for this research stirred within my inner most soul which became an enormous reality, giving me a much clearer perspective of how to gain knowledge in the understanding of the Belizean culture and its educational learning. Thus, I began to look through the lens of an “awareness” for ways to empathise and sympathise with those of similar backgrounds (Cook 2010; 2017).

Nonetheless, I again asked myself, “How can I so unobtrusively enter another culture and genuinely create friendships and establish new relationships?” I realised that I could not change what had already been developed, and I certainly could not change who I was. However, I *could* embrace this community and culture with a critical and reflective perspective. I *could* make inquiries that would help me gain a much clearer perspective and better understanding of the Belizean culture and their different ways of teaching and valuing children within an institutionalised setting (Smith 1999; Cook 2010; 2017; 2019; Smith 2017).

Essentially, it was through these experiences on this journey in Belize and through this research study that would literally offer a way to open up spaces for the silent and the voiceless. It would provide an opportunity for

students, teachers, and staff to articulate their personal thoughts and ideas about their own lived experiences. It would also provide ways to offer suggestions to offset various layered issues within the culture and its educational learning nestled within an institutionalised setting (Cook 2010; 2017).

The Research Project in Belize

Belize, like many developing countries in a postcolonial context, has an educational system characterised through a structured and instructional style of teaching pedagogy. In essence, it has used mostly “traditional ways” (Cook 2010; 2017) of teaching for many years. Thus, I became intrigued by this orphanage school’s “non-traditional,” Montessorian approach to early learning. These diverse experiences allowed me to gain a much clearer perspective and better understanding of a “non-traditional” early learning environment within an orphanage school context and institutionalised setting. It was becoming an utterly amazing research study!

I reminded myself, that even though I had encountered many opportunities to observe children in different and diverse ways, I did not have a knowledge base of the Belizean culture, curriculum, or learning environment of an orphanage campus and school, especially within an institutionalised setting.

In essence, this type of research study was referred to as a “reflexive ethnography,” which is considered a way of “turning back on ... [the] self for research paradigms, and provides a moral responsibility relative to interpretation and representation” (Ellis and Bochner 2000; Madison 2005; Cook 2010; 2017). Cooper (2004) acknowledges that it is only by raising awareness and radically altering the contexts that genuine care takes place to improve the personal, social, moral, and academic development for the future.

The Executive Director of UNICEF claims, “The state of the world’s youngest children, citizens with the same rights as all other – will only get better when we alter current priorities and accept the sound economic, social, and political sense it makes to prioritise the world’s youngest” (Bellamy 2000, 4; Cook 2010; 2017). With this in mind, the countless conversations with the children were gratifying to me. These dialogues certainly allowed me to feel as though I was connecting and fitting in. I wondered if this was due to the way the children viewed their own past, as I continued to reflect and position myself within the culture, the Montessorian philosophy, and the study (Denzin and Lincoln 2000; Ellis and Bochner 2005; Cook 2010; 2017; 2019).

I wanted to care – to learn – and more importantly I wanted to share the knowledge of this culture that I was learning about. True relationships were being established which created real meaning for the knowledge I shared. I will never forget my first experiences as a visitor to Belize and the invitation to return (Cook 2010; 2017). Little did I know at that time that I would literally return to Belize for so many years to come!

The Belizean International Symposium on Education (BISE)

Profoundly, it was because of the research study conducted at the orphanage school in the rural part of Belize that provided an idea, which turned into a plan and later-on put into motion. As suggested then by a few professors from the University of Belize, an event of this nature would bring educational opportunities and professional development to administrators, educators, teachers, and students. Thus, the work of several professors, international professors and myself which inspired a way to adapt this type of professional venue and offer ‘continuous professional development’ (CPD) opportunities to the Belizeans and internationalists.

Essentially, the Belizean International Symposium on Education (BISE), essentially was formulated from a very small idea which became an on-going educational and professional venue started in Belize and is still running today. The international symposium literally became a reality and was officially launched in 2009, founded by Pamela R. Cook, PhD, hosted at the Princess Hotel (currently the Ramada Hotel and Princess Casino) in Belize City. This venue allowed international academics an opportunity to passionately share their love of current research studies of specific topics with fellow academics in a new array of discussion events.

The difference between a conference and a symposium is that, in the latter, (1) every attendee can hear all the presentations during the whole symposium, and (2) all the attendees are able to ask a wide variety of questions, which offers an interactive on-going discussion. Essentially, this is what contributes to an extraordinary learning experience for both attending parties.

The symposium hosted in Belize in 2009, was based on a framework designed for Belizean school administrators, educators, teachers, students, university professors, and internationalists visiting from around the world. The framework was an enriched educational opportunity that would offer ways to exchange knowledge located in the Caribbean, bringing a cross-cultural and diverse experience to learning.

Additionally, those attending the international symposium were given a way to obtain Continuing Professional Development (CPD) hours of educational requirements. The yearly international symposium became a scholarly event for hundreds of educational professionals from the Caribbean, bordering countries, and from around the world (Belizean International Symposium on Education 2009).

Pre-2020 and Post-Pandemic Thoughts

Prior to the pandemic of 2020, traveling for me as a visitor to many parts of the world was educational, personal, and, for the most part, just... inspirational. For many living and breathing within the walls of academia, there are pertinent requirements set for researching and writing. It is important for academics to become engaged in rigorous patterns of attending lectures, conferences, roundtables, seminars, and a symposium. Academics must meet the demands of their own professional contribution to their community and those abroad through presentations of their research to fellow colleagues which professionalises their own university profile. In essence, has always been an array of academic duties in the field which require study, research, and, of course, writing.

With that being said, the pandemic of 2020 turned the lives of an academic around the world upside down. For example, the luxury of attending conferences completely stopped as travel was banned and departmental budgets were cut-off. The effects of the pandemic for every person were memories engrained with the strain placed on children, teens, the young, and old alike. Literally everyone throughout the world was dealing with immense emotions while learning to adjust to the changes and illnesses or even death which was catastrophic. People from all walks of life were just trying to adjust and survive in the mix of all the events that life had shoved at them; they were all just finding ways to cope.

However, while living in the trenches and coming out into the post-pandemic era, meeting those university requirements have completely changed. For many, many of those past experiences of traveling were replaced with online and virtual learning spaces. Some educators began using virtual platforms such as Blackboard, Google Classroom, Google Meet, Social Webinars, Virtual Conferencing, and ZOOM.

Of course, many of the online features are really not the same as those in an onsite session as networking virtually has become the norm. Regular onsite meetings have been replaced with a different way of attending a meeting, including chatting with colleagues by connecting to a “group

shared space” based on a computer screen. Technology changed the typical learning process into something different with a diverse style and climate change. However, educators have discovered that learning differently through the management and navigation of the computer can allow new ways to be – to grow, to live, and to learn.

Reading, writing, and navigating on the computer have become the basic features as the constant use of technology is a natural way to begin the daily workday. Adjustments to routines and schedules have been changed, rearranged, and rescheduled. The working climate and environment have become a cyberspace of “isolation and seclusion.” For most, the academia of “bricks and mortar” turned into a futuristic world of “computers and technology.”

Therefore, through all of these changes, is my deepest desire to bring an enriched study and opportunity to offer a writing experience for educationalists who have attended the most current and previous events of the international symposium.

The International Symposium on Education (ISED)

It was after the twelfth annual Symposium which was conducted virtually and during the covid-19 pandemic in January 2020, the symposium advisory council made the decision to put (BISE) into a hiatus state and begin an additional international symposium that would meet the needs of attendees throughout the United States and abroad. Hence, the International Symposium on Education (ISED) began planning stages for another symposium to be held in San Juan, Puerto Rico located in the Caribbean Sea which is a Territory of the United States. This event is to be conducted in March 2022 (see below ISED website information).

The Mission Statement

The main thrust of the Belizean International Symposium on Education (BISE) and the International Symposium on Education (ISED) is to exchange knowledge between academics, educationalists, university groups studying abroad, and all educational personnel from a variety of educational institutions and organisations. Many of the participants that attend and present their research believe in providing encouragement, valuable resources, and volunteering of their time to schools and organisations working with children and families (BISE 2009; ISED 2021).

The Study Abroad-Student Symposium (SASS)

After the first year of launching the international symposium in 2009, several universities were interested in bringing groups of students to Belize for cross-cultural learning experiences, service work, and volunteering within a study abroad context. Later-on, many of these programmes became yearly events which involved professors bringing student groups to assist and help within local orphanages, schools, and several organisations working with children and families in the Belize City area, neighbouring communities, and outside districts of the country.

There was one study-abroad programme from Washburn University, Topeka, Kansas, United States that attended BISE for ten consecutive years. That group was directed by Dr Judith L. McConnell-Farmer (Mikkelson), Washburn University professor, and Tina L. Williams, Washburn University international coordinator. Washburn University group of students volunteered at local and private schools, assisted teachers, and prepared student-led activities to children and caregivers at local school and orphanages. They also included service work of painting the school at one primary school in Belize City.

Another university study-abroad programme attending the symposium for over five years was Texas International University, Laredo, Texas, United States. This group was directed by Dr Melissa Garcia. With her background in speech pathology, she arranged students to volunteer in schools within a wide variety of locations in several parts of the six Belizean districts. Dr Garcia brought students from the communication sciences and disorders (CSD) program which is a specialty area that provides valuable resources in the health-sciences related fields to many schools throughout the country of Belize.

Several additional university programmes also attended the symposium, sharing some of their own research and/or college coursework assignments by using power point and poster session presentations to the attendees. These included many schools within the surrounding Belize City areas and other districts which consisted of their own school administrators, staff, and personnel, educators, teachers, and professors.

Many of the study-abroad groups offered volunteer services before or after the international symposium to several schools in Belize City and other districts. They also included private schools on the islands of Caye Caulker and San Pedro; located in the Ambergris Caye area of Belize.

Additional university groups from the United States and students from the University of Belize and Galen University, Belmopan (the capital of Belize), joined BISE over the years while bringing their own agenda to

showcase learning at the symposium. The SASS from BISE continues to grow while bringing many diverse learning programmes to Belize from abroad. There will be a student led gallery of poster research studies showcased at ISED in March 2022 (see website below).

The ‘Educational Trends’ Textbook Series

The success of the international symposium for a few years contributed to the publication of the first ‘Educational Trends’ textbook. It was written by a group of educators attending the symposium and edited by Dr Pamela R. Cook, executive director, and founder of the international symposium (Cook 2009; 2014). In 2014, volume one was published through Cambridge Scholars Publishing (CSP) and has become an excellent resource of information for educators and students.

Additional volumes of the ‘Educational Trends’ series include ‘An Exploration of Educational Trends’ (Cook 2017) and ‘Discovering New Educational Trends’ (Cook 2019). All of the textbooks are resourceful which provide exceptional information to educators, professors, teachers, and students, as they research diverse and valuable resources for college and university coursework.

In volume one, ‘Educational Trends: A Symposium in Belize, Central America’; the contributors discuss a variety of topics pertaining to the educational trends of diverse learning in Belize and other locations. These articles consist of topics relating to the Belizean educational system, including preschool education, historical literature, the Belizean language of Kriol, reading specifics, methods of constructivism, preparing quality teachers, virtual learning, and study-abroad responses from participating university students.

In volume two, ‘An Exploration of Educational Trends’, addresses several different perspectives taken from diverse educational trends are discussed: culture and diversity, the educational and historical perspectives of Belize, childhood holocaust art, national educational research and political trends, stem research, the educational effects of incarceration, bilingual majors, communication including reading and writing, building peace, new school initiatives, and study-abroad responses from universities.

In volume three, ‘Discovering New Educational Trends’, provides additional viewpoints that were written to encompass a wide variety of educational trends that address: diverse cultures, health and nutritional sciences, innovative teaching techniques, philosophies in mathematics, social and emotional perspectives, technology, effects of terrorism towards

education, and a chapter providing trendy responses from university students to their own cross-cultural learning experiences.

Diverse Learning in 2020 and Beyond

The most recent textbook of 2022 publication, ‘Diverse Learning in 2020 and Beyond’. The purpose of this book is to allow many of our contributing authors yet another opportunity to share their experiences from the year of 2020 regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and other additional thoughts and ideas that will be moving forward into the future of educational learning.

This current volume offers an exploration of the “teaching and learning” experiences from a technological hybrid virtual-learning perspective. Educationalists have shared an assortment of their own personal experiences of teaching mostly from an online standpoint regarding student’s and teacher’s involvements to virtual learning.

The chapters of this text have been written from several different schools in diverse locations of the world. The contributing authors have shared their own positive ways of teaching children from a post-pandemic lifestyle in 2020 and beyond into the future of learning.

As a ‘helping aid’ to educators, professors, and teachers there have been an ‘Additional Assignments’ section added with three extra activities provided after each chapter to further student discussions, provide knowledge building exercises while strengthening the learning process.

Conclusion

For personal reasons, I anticipate the opportunity to travel once again as it allows for me to “fall back in love with learning,” so to speak, as I become more intrigued in diverse cultures and different places of the world. I am amazed to see ways that I can share my life with one culture and then share something different with someone else from another culture. I am forever thankful for the many opportunities that have come my way where I have been able to meet people from all walks of life. As they say in Iceland, “takk,” which means “thank-you” in English, which is how I feel.

As for college and university educators, professors, and students that read this textbook, my hope is that you will glean a variety of information from the articles and narratives to assist you with helping each other in your own personal educational careers. I also trust you will continue to stimulate your own thinking and become energised about new learning experiences in research and study projects.

My desire for our audience of readers is to use this current textbook of updated educational topics as a valuable resource. I encourage each of you to enjoy the contents of this textbook so it can be of benefit to furthering your own educational learning and knowledge base. Using these resources written by a diverse group of professionals, is the most up to date way to enrich yourself from a culturally diverse and technological perspective.

Throughout this textbook, several sociocultural learning experiences were addressed which have been derived from a diverse setting. These experiences have shown me, and hopefully others, that simply offering opportunities to the silent and voiceless (Cook 2010; 2017) will bring many diverse ways to share knowledge from within other cultures.

It is my humble desire that we must all continue to open up ways to those who have not had the opportunity to be heard; this may be the only way to give hope to the people we encounter. It feels right to have had the chance to help someone find their own voice and be heard. Perhaps others will find their own experiences of hope through the inspirations of reading this text and by supporting the international symposium in other cultures and locations. These all may be ways to shed some light on a path to help others find ways to be encouraged in their own educational careers and lives.

As I close this recollection of my journey and the discussion of my personal, professional, and intellectual ways of learning, I want to ask myself again, “Who am I?” “I can only say that I am the child of an orphan, and so I wonder, for it is still good – and it is healthy – and it allows for changes to occur within myself” (Cook 2010; 2017).

Let us all continue to learn from each other as we grow to become better people through our exchange of knowledge, thoughts, and ideas.

Fig. 1. Dr Pamela R. Cook, orphanage school, Belize



Source: submitted by P. Cook (2021).

I believe that – “A true ethnographic study begins with ‘humility’, the ‘meeting’ of the eyes and, the ‘embracing’ of the souls” (Cook 2010; 2017). For more information on the International Symposium of Education (ISED) or any of the textbooks, kindly use the information provided below.

With many kind thoughts and words,

Dr Pamela R. Cook

Pamela R. Cook, PhD
 PRC Educational Services, CEO, Executive Director, Founder
 Belizean International Symposium on Education (BISE)
 International Symposium on Education (ISED)
 Study Abroad-Student Symposium (SASS)
 Textbook Editor

Emails: internationalsymposiumonedu@gmail.com
prcook12@gmail.com

Websites:

<http://sites.google.com/view/internationalsymposiumoneducat/home/>
<http://sites.google.com/site/belizesymposium>

References

- Bellamy, C. (2000). UNICEF Executive Director Message posted to news: UNICEF Press Release (December 12).
- Belizean International Symposium on Education (2009). <http://sites.google.com/site/belizesymposium>.
- Cook, P. (2019). *Educational Trends* Volume 3 “Discovering New Educational Trends: A Symposium in Belize, Central America.” Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- . (2017). *Guide to Early Childhood Education: Development-design-diversity*. Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- . (2017). *Educational Trends* Volume 2 “An Exploration of Educational Trends: A Symposium in Belize, Central America.” Newcastle Upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- . (2014). *Educational Trends: A Symposium in Belize, Central America*. Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- . (2010). “Emergent Voices from an Orphanage School in Belize, Central America.” University of Windsor. Fall 2010.

- <http://winspace.uwindsor.ca/wintheses/results?creator=Cook%2C+Pamela>.
- Cooper, B. (2004). "Empathy, Interaction and Caring: Teachers' Roles in a Constrained Environment." *Pastoral Care in Education* 22, no. 3.
- Denzin, N.K., Lincoln, Y.S., & Smith, L. T. (2008). *Handbook of critical and indigenous methodologies*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ellis, C. & Bochner, A. (2000) Auto-ethnography, personal narrative, reflexivity. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*, 733-768. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. Cambridge, MA: Westview Press.
- International Symposium on Education (2021). <http://sites.google.com/view/internationalsymposiumoneducat/home/>
- Madison, S. (2005). *Critical Ethnography: Method, ethics, and performance*. London: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Martin, C. L., and R. Fabes. (2006). *Discovering Child Development*. Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Ministry of Education (2000–21). Belize. www.moe.gov.bz.
- Morrison, G. (2007). *Early Childhood Education Today*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Romanian Children Orphanage, Iasi, Romania. (2000). Personal communication.
- Silber, K. (1965). *Pestalozzi: The Man and His Work*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. Dunedin, New Zealand: Zed.
- Smith, M. K. (2017). "Johann-Heinrich Pestalozzi: Pedagogy, Education and Social Justice." http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Johann_Heinrich_Pestalozzi.jpg.

Additional Assignments

#1. What was learning like for you in 2020? What are your personal thoughts of your own learning experiences? What will learning be like for you beyond 2021? Write a one to two page response report of your own personal experiences and share these with other class members (Online or onsite).

CHAPTER ONE

THE EDUCATION OF DIVERSE LEARNING

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION AND DIVERSE LEARNERS: HOW EARLY-CHILDHOOD PRACTITIONERS PROMOTE INCLUSIVE CLASSROOMS

FAWZIA REZA, ED.D.

AMERICAN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION, INDIANAPOLIS,
INDIANA, UNITED STATES

Introduction

Diverse learners are defined as students who may be different from their peers in terms of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, learning modalities, abilities, and cognitive, linguistic, social, and emotional development. Many preschool classrooms in the United States include diverse learners, especially as immigrants and refugee families attempt to integrate into their new country. Given the waves of immigration to the United States over the years, schools have always been rich in diversity, but “only in the past fifty years have there been any concerted efforts to provide teaching that is tailored to the learning needs of each student in a classroom” (Yatvin 2004, 5). Rapidly changing demographics in early childhood classrooms require educators to become more responsive to the needs of their diverse students. This study explores strategies early-childhood educators utilise to meet the needs of diverse students via ‘Differentiated Instruction’.

Differentiated Instruction and Culturally Responsive Teaching

Differentiated Instruction (DI) can be best defined as “a toolbox of instructional practices, which allows teachers to appropriately cater to students’ specific learning requirements and ensure successful learning for all students within a diverse and inclusive classroom” (Pozas, Letzel, and Schneider 2019, 218). It creates a systemic framework to provide multiple

learning opportunities to students so they can learn new concepts in a manner which complements their unique capabilities. DI can be used to adapt the following three educational or instructional components: (1) the content, (2) the process, and (3) the product (Tomlinson and Strickland 2005).

Classrooms based on DI are student or child-centred, with concepts taught in an engaging, relevant, and developmentally appropriate manner. A one-size-fits-all teaching pedagogy is not practiced; instead, “students have multiple options for taking in information, making sense of ideas, and expressing what they learn” (Tomlinson 2001, 1).

Essentially, DI is supported by a combination of different educational theories, including Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory and Gardner’s theory of Multiple Intelligences (MI) (Vygotsky 1978; Adlam 2007). Both theorists have explained how DI can be utilised in classrooms to address the needs of diverse students. Vygotsky’s theory of sociocultural development is based on the premise that cognition develops as children interact with other members of their community, including parents, teachers, peers, and siblings. A key to the social-constructivist concept from Vygotsky is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), based on a “child’s actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and his potential development as determined through problem solving under an adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky 1978, 86).

This concept emphasises the importance of adults and peers working together in the growth and development of the child. The role of the teacher is particularly important because their job is to “scaffold” learning by building connections with previously acquired knowledge and then elaborating or building on those ideas. Once students demonstrate they can build knowledge and develop their own skills, the elements of the framework are dismantled; instead of being dependent learners, they become independent learners. Eventually, the initial scaffolding is removed altogether because the students no longer need it (Adlam 2007).

Gardner recognised that humans have several types of intelligences. Initially, he proposed that humans possess seven kinds of intelligence: linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetics, intrapersonal, and interpersonal. Later, he added another type, called the “naturalist” intelligence (Adlam 2007). Gardner’s theory significantly influenced educational practices in recognising that children learn differently and through many avenues. He stressed that educators need to be aware of these intelligences so that they can create an environment to help children grow and develop to their maximum potential (Adlam 2007).

Differentiated Instruction essentially provides academic instruction to children with special needs who are mainstreamed into general education classrooms (Tomlinson 2000). A related concept, Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT), is an assortment of best practices in education that help educators foster cognitive, emotional, and social development of their students who are culturally indifferent in classroom settings (Gay 2000; Ladson-Billings 2001). Both approaches are designed to provide support for marginalised and under-represented students. Ladson-Billings (2009) stresses the importance of a culturally relevant and sensitive pedagogy and defines CRT as a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, and emotionally. Pang expands the idea of CRT as, “an approach to instruction that responds to the sociocultural context and seeks to integrate the cultural content of the learner in shaping an effective learning environment” (2005, 336). Promoting students’ critical consciousness is one of the main premises in the conceptualisation of culturally relevant pedagogy. Chan (2006) suggests that schools should provide a supportive environment to students of different races and ethnicities.

One way this can be achieved is through capitalising on developing stronger connections between home and school cultures. This may require teachers to communicate with parents in a manner that is easily understandable to parents whose native language is not English. Inviting parents to school events and classroom activities can help to cement stronger parent-teacher relationships. When parents are involved, students score better, and when they score better they feel good about themselves and develop a greater and more positive self-esteem.

Teachers have a pivotal role when ensuring successful educational outcomes for students with diverse needs (Delpit 2006; Howard 2010; Ravitch 2010). Ladson-Billings (2009) describes how African American teachers used an out-of-school environment to understand the cultural background of their students. Moll et al. (1992) suggest that when teachers themselves are put in the learner’s position they are better able to understand and appreciate the rich resources that students bring into their classroom. Understanding teacher perceptions regarding DI and how they can adapt or modify their teaching style to meet the needs of diverse students is particularly critical.

Butler and Van Lowe (2010) conducted a study with thirty-nine undergraduate students who were enrolled in two sections of the Concepts of Math for Teachers research study. Twenty students received DI and nineteen did not. The results demonstrated that those students who received DI out-performed students in the controlled instruction section on their final culminating assessment.