Transformative learning and teaching through inclusiveness, power-sharing and critical enquiry

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Presentation Overview

• Introduction
• Theoretical underpinnings
• Research project
• Intercultural Education Program model
• Significant findings
• Conclusion
Introduction

Brief background

• Settlement requires knowledge and skills

• Lacuna of programs with focus on rights, inclusiveness, power-sharing, critical enquiry, intercultural exchange

• Model developed and piloted

• Participants newly-settled refugees from Burma/Myanmar
Theoretical underpinnings – Interculturalism

- **Liddicoat (2002):** culture as highly variable and constantly changing phenomenon; **dynamic approach.**
- **Alred, Byram and Fleming (2006):** analysing the intercultural experience and **acting upon this; taking on other’s perspective; ethical issues (own assumptions etc.).**
- **Bennett (2009, p.52):** ‘… increased awareness of subjective cultural context (**worldview**), including one’s own, and developing greater ability to interact sensitively and completely across cultural contexts as both **an immediate and long-term effect of exchange**’
- **May and Sleeter (2010):** The concept that culture is **concrete** is extremely outdated.
- **Perry and Southwell (2011, p. 454):** ‘…move to intercultural competence, which builds on intercultural understanding by including behaviour and communication’
Theoretical underpinnings - Critical Pedagogy

• Ager and Strang (2008): Integration is two-way and non-conformity-oriented; Intercultural skills required
• May and Sleeter (2010): CP: Voice, dialogue, power, social class.
• McPherson (2010, p.550): Integration can ‘reflect a view that social cohesion is best achieved through greater levels of conformance by newcomers’.
• Byram, Holmes and Savvides (2013, p.251): ‘Teachers and learners now need to be ‘aware’ of other people’s ‘cultures’ as well as their own’.
The Research Project

Aim: To document implementation and effectiveness of program

Methods: Audio-taped observations, focus group discussions, facilitator reflections

Participant profile:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Time in NZ</th>
<th>Reason for sampling this group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>20 (regular)</td>
<td>16 (males)</td>
<td>25–45</td>
<td>2 months</td>
<td>–newly settled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 (less reg.)</td>
<td>4 (females, regular)</td>
<td></td>
<td>– 2 years</td>
<td>–identified by refugee social service agency as a group that would benefit from this type of program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 (females, less regular)</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Intercultural Programme Model

Aims:
• Enhance settlement and integration
• Impart knowledge alongside intercultural skills
• Incorporate sharing of culture, opinions, ideas
• Encourage and develop critical enquiry skills

Program: 20 sessions (6 months)

Topics: family and gender roles, making friends, discrimination, bullying, nutrition, gardening, alcohol & drug abuse …
The Intercultural Programme Model

• Based on a model by Hayward (2007)
• Designed to support re-instatement of *power (agency) and equality* (Bennett, 2009; Byram & Feng, 2004)
• ‘*Rights-based* approach’ (right to safety, freedom of speech and belief, gender equality, respect; right to healthcare and education entitlement (United Nations General Assembly, 1948)
• *Inclusiveness, critical reflection, empowered decision-making*
• *Facilitator* – specific skills, attributes
The Intercultural Programme Model for New Settlers
(Hayward & U-Mackey, 2013, p. 432)

Figure 1. Intercultural Programme Model for New Settlers
Sample Lesson Plan

- Introduce topic
- Elicit existing knowledge and identify gaps
- Present new information to fill gaps
- Compare and contrast
- Elicit possible reasons for differences
- Ask how individuals think they will manage the changes or differences – which ones will they have no choice about (e.g. legal)
- What about social, behavioural differences? Will they adapt or not? How? What are the consequences for both pathways/choices?
Old Age Care
(Sample delivery)

Eliciting existing knowledge and identifying gaps:

• What is old age care?
• How do people care for the elderly population in your countries?
• In NZ? (create a table reflecting different models)
• What are the advantages and disadvantages of each item on the list?
• Enquire about any changes in thinking during this process
Significant Findings

**Inclusiveness:**
- Selection, prioritization and duration of topics by participants
- Equality of input across genders and ages

**Power-sharing:**
- Choices, decisions shared
- Opinions, ideas, criticisms invited

**Critical Enquiry:**
- Disparities between social practices/laws highlighted
- Interrogation about possible rationale, positives and negatives
- Critical reflection required by all
Significant Findings

Intercultural knowledge and skills:

- Cultural knowledge exchanged and gained
- Cultural identity acknowledged
- Awareness of intercultural differences and similarities
- Understanding of others’ perspectives, values and beliefs
- Questioning/Criticality of own values and beliefs
- Transformation of behavior, attitudes, interactions
## Sample Participant Quotes

### Inclusiveness
- ‘They include us in the class discussions; NZ teachers are different because they ask us for opinions’
- ‘The teachers encourage us to tell them about our culture which they don’t know’
- ‘I’m not scared to talk here. We can talk and ask questions just like friends’

### Power-sharing
- ‘We have not had power or rights before’
- ‘I can tell my family about many things. I feel important. I also have knowledge like my children’
- ‘The teachers listen to us and ask us about ourselves’

### Critical enquiry
- New Zealanders ‘don’t love their elderly population because they put them in retirement homes without their families’
- ‘Before this course, I thought women have too many rights in New Zealand and don’t listen to the men, but now I understand more and I help my wife in the house’
- ‘Our husbands are now more understanding and so, of course, we love them more’
Conclusion

- Programme design validated
- Responsive to/inclusive of participants
- Interculturalism enhanced through participation and exchange
- Critical pedagogy supported process and skills development
- Transformative learning experiences/effect on participants
- Flexible programme model can be applied to other courses according to learners’ needs and ability levels
Thank you for your interest and participation.

Any questions?
References


