



From Remediation to Imagination: The Case for Humanizing Pedagogies in the Community College Classroom

CYNTHIA MILONAS CUMMINGS

Professor, English Language Learning Department
Professor of American Culture, English Department
Bunker Hill Community College

CONTENTS

Abstract

Introduction

Framing Student Reflections, Process Writing, and Peer Review

One Size Does Not Fit All: Skill and Drill

Fighting Back at Remedial English with Funds of Knowledge and Cultural Wealth

Anyon: classism, remediation, and the hidden curriculum of work

Remediation and the community college student

The U-shaped curve, cultural wealth

Differentiating instruction and English language learners

About the author

Self-check

References

ABSTRACT

This paper explains how traditional Eurocentric curricula and teacher centered learning environments diminish the educational experiences of both the ELL student and the culturally and economically underrepresented native speaker. It argues that remedial programming based on student scores on standardized assessments and the prerequisite model is not effective and acts as a barrier between underperforming learners and content studies. This paper also maintains that a curriculum centered on humanizing pedagogies can empower students, build academic literacy skills and teach metacognitive strategies. It contends that when properly executed with differentiated instruction, humanizing pedagogies foster learner engagement and promote student acceleration. This paper will conclude with a self-check or audit to assess how educators and staff may unwittingly act as gatekeepers by guiding learners to remedial programs based on standardized test scores or bias. Rationale for high-stakes testing, remedial learning and teacher centered pedagogies will be debunked with discussion and examples of humanizing pedagogies, integrating learners' cultural wealth, the U-shaped curve, and data demonstrating effective asset-based approaches. Anyon (1980), Bartolome (1994, 2004, 2006, 2017), Delpit (1988), Freire (1968, 2005), Moll et al (2005) and Yosso (2005) are referenced.

INTRODUCTION

Although the United States' college student population has grown increasingly diverse since 1997, the current call for equity will fall short if faculty and staff perpetuate academic traditions which elevate "the right" teaching and learning methods and sideline the cultural capital of working class, minority, and limited English proficient (LEP) students (Association of American Colleges and Universities News, 2019; Bartolome, 1994, p. 174). This article argues that educators of all races and ethnicities unwittingly obstruct advancements in equity by blindly following what Maria de la Luz Reyes (1993) refers to as one-size-fits-all methodologies (Bartolome L., 1994, p. 175). To promote equity, stop the deficit view of working class, minority, and limited English proficient (LEP) learners as well as meet the needs of all students - educators must evolve. Humanizing pedagogies which value learners' cultural wealth and integrate their funds into the curriculum need to be rooted in the community college classrooms so that all students can imagine the possibilities (Bunker Hill Community College, 2018).

The need for humanizing pedagogies cannot be underestimated as the face of U.S. public education has changed; 2017-2018 was the

first time white students did not represent the majority of undergraduates at public colleges and universities (Miller, 2020). This picture is complex as the United States is experiencing both an upsurge in Latinx college students and declining numbers of both Black and White undergraduates (Miller, 2020). Likewise, Bunker Hill Community College is experiencing changes in its enrollment. In 2015, 24% of BHCC students identified as Black/African American, 25% as White and 24% as Hispanic/Latino of any race. By 2018, the percentage of white students attending BHCC decreased 4 percent, Black/African American increased 1 percent and Hispanic/Latino students increased 3 percent (Boudreau-George, 2021). To meet the needs of the new college student demographic, Bunker Hill Community College pivoted. Today, inclusive programming and increasingly diverse faculty and staff mirror recent U.S. immigration trends as non-native English speakers and their children account for over half of the nation's population growth and more than a third of school enrollment (Crawford, 2014, p. 3). In 2018, BHCC earned a 78.2 score in the diversity scale, and the Chronicle of Higher Education named it the ninth most diverse school in the country (Bunker Hill Community College, 2018).

Accolades notwithstanding, rebranding the BHCC community (or any other for that matter) to lean into diversity can only go so far if faculty of all races and ethnicities were trained to teach in monolingual, Eurocentric classrooms and implement pedagogies of the privileged. Acting (or teaching) as if one culture, language, dialect, accent is superior to others labels educators as uninformed and having “little experience with people different from themselves” (Bartolome L., 2004, p. 97; Aaronsohn, Carter & Howell, 1995 as cited in Nieto, 2009, p. 495). This potential disconnect between educators and learners is problematic because culture influences how one frames the world, makes references, and processes information (Huber, 2009). Moreover, given that the “way we speak and are spoken to help(s) shape us into the people we become,” miscommunication or a power struggle between teacher and student can contribute to false perceptions and create barriers that further marginalize students who are minorities, LEP, or suffering from housing and food insecurity (Shor, 2009).

Ultimately, all teachers must recognize that education is political as “schools are socializing institutions that mirror the greater society’s culture” (Bartolome L., 1994, p. 178; Freire, 2005). Measures such as opposition to standardized/high stakes tests as the sole guide for placement and progress, and the adoption of Open

Educational Resources are well meaning gestures to create inclusive learning environments. Yet, they fall short if educators act as gatekeepers by preserving the status quo (Bartolome L., 1994). For example, academic English should not be framed as the sole language of power; western philosophy and history should not be presented as the foundation of the civilized world. To stay on the path of finding a solution rather than being part of the problem, educators must be mindful. Even a simple written reflection assigned so learners have a vehicle to integrate their culture into coursework can go awry if it is added as an afterthought. Rather than integrating learners’ traditions as an add-on, teachers should first familiarize students with theories of cultural wealth. Both Moll (1992) and Yosso (2005) provide models of cultural capital or funds of knowledge that allow learners to examine their backgrounds with a critical lens. By viewing everyday experiences common to college students such as developing academic literacy, maintaining communication with multiple social groups, and navigating difficult situations as both capital/funds and the foundation for academic or professional growth, students who would have previously been marked as unsuited for intellectual pursuits will be empowered by their personal history.

FRAMING STUDENT REFLECTIONS, PROCESS WRITING, AND PEER REVIEW

In *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently*, Richard Nisbett (2003) argues that one’s cultural framing, or the mental structures that guide individuals to reference their past to formulate opinions, is formed by both geographic and sociopolitical factors (Lakoff, 2006 as cited in Huber, 2009, pp. 706-707). He suggests that Asians view the world in terms of relationships while Americans compartmentalize people, places and things on perceived similarities and differences (Nisbett, 2003 as cited in Lynch, 2011). As a result, many Americans unconsciously frame others based on racial, cultural, and religious contrasts (Huber, 2009). Because unconscious framing leads to generalizations, there is a potential for any educator who has adopted a Eurocentric view of those in power to view others in terms of weaknesses rather than what they can contribute to the classroom. Such framing can lead to a rift between the learner and the teacher. Consequently, if the learner’s home culture emphasizes relationships rather than differences, students may need additional support to meet learning goals in assignments with hidden bias towards Western learning norms such as the compari-

son essay or process writings.

Lisa Delpit (1988) argues process writing, a mainstay of White liberal education, may not deliver positive results with Black students. Delpit notes one student’s impressions about her white instructor:

I didn’t feel she was teaching us anything. She wanted us to correct each other’s papers and we were there to learn from her. She didn’t teach us anything, absolutely nothing.... Now my buddy was in a Black teacher’s class. And that lady was very good. She went through and explained each part of the structure. This [White] teacher didn’t get along with the Black teacher. She said she didn’t agree with her methods. But I don’t think the White teacher had any methods”
(Bartolome L., 1994, p. 175)

Although the White educator appears to be using more student-centered approaches in the classroom, it is ineffective if the student believes it is the teacher’s or text’s job to impart knowledge and the student’s job to





mechanically bank information (Anyon, 1980; Freire, 2005). When lesson planning, one size does not fit all. To increase the possibility of effective instruction, activities such as peer review should be preceded and followed by humanizing pedagogies that impart a global view of cultural wealth and learners' assets. It is also the responsibility of educators to address the link between academic and professional growth to critical thinking and decision making. "According to Freire, the teacher has authority but does not become an authoritarian. He intervenes in order to help the learner

reflect on aspects of his/her cultural, social and gender constructs" (Ruget, 2013). If the educator, learning environment and participants do not understand or appreciate the cultural capital of all students, or they do not acknowledge skills beyond what is measured in the classroom, students are apt to view their (own) culture as inferior (a deficit) and their ideas not suitable for exchange in an academic or professional setting. Unknowingly the educator is becoming a gatekeeper who teaches these learners that they have a deficiency that needs to be repaired (Alfaro, 2017).

ONE SIZE DOES NOT FIT ALL: SKILL AND DRILL

Further complicating matters, educators are often presented with effective strategies to bridge the gap in the form of prepackaged curricula stressing remediation or maintenance of basic facts through skill and drill. One-size-fits-all-methodologies, and skill and drill curricula, even those that promise high returns, are dangerous for a variety of reasons. First, the notion of any instructional method as suitable for all learners of any category is not only preposterous, but it dehumanizes participants through supporting the idea that learning and teaching are technical issues that can be resolved by a specific methodology (Bartolome L., 1994, p. 174). Second, skill and drill methodologies define learning as memorizing and banking knowledge rather than understanding and analyzing; thus, it turns learning into passive exercise (Freire, 2005; Ruget & Osman, 2013). Consequently, when students are faced with tasks that demand the creation of original thought such as answering open ended questions or making predictions, they become paralyzed and produce a summary of their findings. Third, one-size-fits-all methodologies measure students' control of the content through standardized high stakes or semi high stakes assessments. Because the language used during standardized tests cannot be easily decoded through context, it evaluates learners from a deficit perspective

rather than to the degree they are bridging the gap between their control of the content and institutional goals.

Furthermore, prepackaged curricula, skill and drill and other one-size-fits-all methods emphasizing learners' ability to bank knowledge over critical thinking exercises such as interpreting data deskills the profession because it ignores the partnership between teacher and students. One should not put the teacher, the text, or the curriculum on a pedestal as it debases how student to student and student to teacher interaction provides natural scaffolding and additional input. One-size-fits-all methods, based on the student's ability to follow the procedure, also absolve educators from their role guiding the classroom. In other words, the school is fine; the teacher is fine; the method is fine. If students do not meet the course or program objectives, it is due to linguistic and/or cultural deficiencies (Bartolome L., 1994). So, where should teachers turn to for guidance? Ultimately, it is "important that educators not blindly reject teaching methods across the board, but that they reject uncritical appropriation of methods, materials, curricula, etc." (Bartolome L., 1994, p. 177).

FIGHTING BACK AT REMEDIAL ENGLISH WITH FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE AND CULTURAL WEALTH

What happens when students' language or dialect is not valued in the classroom? The deficit theory argues that when academic and professional English is presented as the language of power, students are given the message that academic and professional success can be achieved only at the expense of (subtracting) native language and culture (Crawford, 2014, p. 201). Hence, students must be remediated by completing developmental coursework. The viewpoint that remedial programs give underperforming students

the opportunity to catch up to their more successful peers by completing academic boot camps requiring students to bank knowledge is far from new as Anyon (1980), Gorski (2010), Hanford (2016) and others trace deficit pedagogy to British and American imperialism. Centuries later, deficit programs remain populated by underperforming students whose failure to demonstrate control over academic English or Algebraic equations relegates them to noncredit coursework. It is estimated that 250 independent studies

demonstrate that remedial methods such as “stand alone” grammar classes requiring students to perform tasks such as identifying a verb in a sentence are not effective (Cleary, 2014). The most effective way to teach learners how to recognize grammatically appropriate language is by reading and writing. Grammar should only be addressed in context of the assignment (Hillocks, 1984 as cited in Cleary, 2014). While educators fail to move past the nostalgia of activities such as diagramming sentences, students drown in a sea of developmental coursework. Of those who begin their college careers playing catch up, it is estimated that only 36% will graduate (Hanford, 2016). Yosso (2005) suggests that the permanency of deficit ideology is demonstrated by its ability to shift, adapt, and negate the cultural capital of both native and immigrant speakers of nonstandard English.

Louis Moll suggests that an asset-based learning environment can be created for all learners by integrating community realia for “meaning centered” activities (Moll et al, 1992). With realia, learners can use their funds of knowledge to make connections between their lives and the content and become active participants in the classroom. For example, utility bills can be used to discuss energy or finance, and the current health crisis can open the door to a discussion about individual rights and the role of the local government. In addition to building content and literacy skills, using realia gives students the opportunity to see beyond the stereotypes and appreciate other’s cultural wealth (Moll et al, 1992). In their experiences and roles as

family advocates, many ELLs develop strategies that later serve as the foundation for academic critical thinking skills. Integrating these “funds of knowledge” into the curriculum by creating cross disciplinary ties and practical applications will promote engagement and generate interest (Moll et al, 1992). For instance, acting as a language and culture broker by helping family members pay bills or advocating for their health care requires organization and higher order thinking that can be transferred to work in healthcare management or as an interpreter (Orellana et al, 2003, p. 507). Educators should encourage all learners to reflect and draw on their unique funds when completing class activities.

Similarly, Yosso’s (2005) model of cultural wealth is another resource to offset the deficit view of working class, minority, and limited English proficient (LEP) learners. In this model, cultural wealth is divided into 6 types: aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, navigational, and resistance. Each category is linked to an asset that can be used as background knowledge for academic or professional gains. For example, skills learned through resistance wealth such as participating in movements or challenging inequalities can be shifted to community organizing. Familial capital lends itself to collaborative or project-based fields. Harnessing these skills democratizes the learning environment by expanding the definition of cultural wealth and tapping into learners’ assets. Thus, it sends the message that sameness is not necessary for a productive learning environment (Kalantzis, 2021).

ANYON: CLASSISM, REMEDIATION, AND THE HIDDEN CURRICULUM OF WORK

Jean Anyon’s (1980) study of schools from five socioeconomic levels, *The Hidden Curriculum of Work*, brings to light how passive/skill-based teaching methods used in low-income communities are complicit in remedial learning programs’ failed promises to swiftly transition matriculated students into more “competitive” curriculums or occupations. Instruction at working-class schools, one of the first two tiers, is skill-based; students are rewarded on their ability to follow the correct procedure. With teacher centered pedagogies and limited attention given to accessing one’s background knowledge (cultural capital), metacognitive strategies are not emphasized. Likewise, the instruction at middle-class schools also emphasizes getting the correct answer over higher order thinking. With critical thinking exercises earmarked as supplementary or extra credit, working class and middle-class students are given limited opportunities to create a library of academic funds to be retrieved for

assignments requiring learners to go beyond recall and demonstrate understanding through creating knowledge (Shapiro, 2011). Granted, the ability to blindly follow orders is a valuable skill for semi-skilled occupations such as wait staff, and salesclerks: getting it right and getting it right quickly is also needed in “middle class” professions such as fire safety. However, emphasizing accuracy compromises long term outcomes as taking risks, making mistakes, and recovering builds a grown mindset needed for academic growth.

When low income, minority and ELL learners fail to transition from remedial programs to real college classes on schedule (or at all), it is blamed on lack of motivation, time on task, or their home language as a deficit (Shapiro, 2011). This is ludicrous. “Remedial” learners at affluent and/or professional schools are taught that their ideas are valued. The steps the





affluent student takes to solve the problem are viewed as equally important as the outcome. For example, in math classrooms for the affluent, the answers are (often) not in the back of the book, and they may be debated by the learners. Thus, the curriculum is not designed to be a series of mindless sets of skill and drill; it is a method to develop one's analytical skills

(Anyon, 1980). If teachers do not take steps to foster a growth mindset for all through incorporating learners' cultural wealth into the curriculum, students will only have a shallow reservoir of visible academic funds or experiences to draw upon for assignments requiring them to create knowledge such as interpreting data or crafting a thesis statement.

REMEDICATION AND THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE STUDENT

Based solely on the result of standardized tests such as the Accuplacer, remedial programming is expensive, time consuming and often not credit-bearing. ELLs, working-class students, and first-generation college students are directed to remedial coursework more often than students who are White, privileged and have a family history of completing post-secondary study (Scott-Clayton, 2018; Hanford, 2016). "According to a study of students at public colleges in Ohio, fifty percent of those with family incomes under \$18,000 a year are sent to remedial classes while 18 percent of those with incomes over \$100,000 a year end up in remediation" (Bettinger and Long, 2007 as cited in Hanford, 2016). In 2008, 19.9% of Whites, 30.2% of Blacks, 29% of Latinx, 22.8% Asian American and Pacific Islanders and 27.5% of students of two or more races were enrolled in undergraduate remedial coursework nationwide (Ramirez, 2013). Three years later, 47.3% of Blacks, 45.1% of Latinx, and 43.9% of Native Americans were required to take remedial coursework: and 37% of these remedial learners were first generation college students (Ramirez, 2013). According to the United States Department of Education, by 2016, 40% of community college students and 68% of first-generation college students were enrolled in some type of remedial coursework (Emblom-Callahan et al, 2019, p. 2).

The figures are sobering. In 2018 half of all community college students were first-generation or grew up in families from low socioeconomic backgrounds (as measured by parents' occupations, income, and education); only 14 percent earn an associate degree (National Center of Education Statistics as cited in Soria, 2018). This is not to suggest that learner language or family income are the sole reasons why many community college students fail to earn degrees, but student ability to master the Accuplacer should not be the sole criteria in establishing placement as mastering academic (testing) English or Algebra is not the only determining indicator of a student's ability to understand complex concepts or think critically. Educators must ask themselves if it is more important to identify a verb in a sentence on the Accuplacer or complete

tasks requiring higher order thinking (Hanford, 2016).

Further complicating matters, more than 20 states have abolished remedial coursework at 4-year schools, leaving the burden of preparing students for "real" college coursework to community and junior colleges (Ramirez, 2013). In Massachusetts, this shift in responsibility to remediate underperforming students has changed the face of the remedial learner. Developmental programs based on the prerequisite model have become a "brick wall" to public college students from all economic groups as 45% of remedial students come from middle and upper income families (Barrington, 2019). Since remedial studies can take one year or more and do not count for college credit, the likelihood of student debt increases, and the chances to close the racial wage gap (RGP) is reduced (Ramirez, 2013). In 2013, Massachusetts State Commissioner of Higher Education Dr. Carlos Santiago noted 12,000 students had been placed into remedial education, but only 2,000 "progressed to complete a credit-bearing course" and "80% of these students left school entirely" (Barrington, 2019). With sweeping budget cuts in public education and a fragile post-pandemic economy, educators must focus on the big picture. Rather than holding students hostage with developmental programs based on the prerequisite model, co-requisite models that allow students to complete developmental courses with credit bearing offerings should be considered. A study by Belfield, Jenkins and Lahr (2016) determined that the cost of remedial education using the co-requisite model was 50% less than similar programming using the prerequisite model; and in 2018 the California Acceleration Project reported that completion rates of developmental coursework under the co-requisite model doubled (Emblom-Callahan et al, 2019, pp. 4,6).

THE U-SHAPED CURVE, CULTURAL WEALTH

Re-envisioning learning to take place on a U-shaped curve rather than as a linear progression can help teachers move from standardized and deficit-based approaches to teaching to accelerate. The U-shaped curve is a 3-step developmental progression: learning the skill in the target, forgetting the skill in the target, learning the skill once again. In most cases, no amount of drilling can alter this trajectory. Although the U-shaped curve is accepted by developmental psychologists it is often ignored in the college classroom. Pinker and Prince's (1988) analysis of students learning past tense forms in English confirmed this curve, finding that in the beginning of the U-shaped flight, learners' control over the target skill seems to be tied to learning the rule. However, the learners' mastery of the target was short-lived. Learners overcompensated and communicated using statements such as "I cutted" before self-correcting and climbing back to the top of the U (Pauls, Mache, & Petermann, 2013, p. 3; Carlucci & Case, 2013). For this reason, assessments based on the prerequisite model, because they come too late or too early, provide an incomplete picture of learner growth. Disregarding the U-shaped curve is especially damaging for English language learners and students who speak non-standard English dialects at home as overcorrection of learners who are developmentally at the bottom of the curve damages self-confidence and stops them from taking risks. Risk taking in the form of making mistakes is necessary as focusing on accuracy stymies the creation of more complex academic language. Carlucci and Case (2012) note: "If U-shapes are forbidden, strictly fewer classes of language are learnable" consequently "U-shapes are necessary for full learning power" (Carlucci, 2013, p. 58). For these reasons, learners should not be pressed to choose between the language of their community and the language of the school (Delpit, 1988).

DIFFERENTIATING INSTRUCTION AND ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

To gain a basic understanding of learner funds, instructors should use a well-constructed needs assessment to get to know the learners, their backgrounds, and their unique skill sets. Using data from the assessments enables teachers to create student groups with members possessing different strengths and abilities such as background knowledge of the content, fluency in academic English or willingness to communicate. Balanced groups will allow learners to tackle academic tasks while simultaneously sharing skills and information. To minimize status problems within

Integrating learners' cultural wealth and non-standard dialects of English in coursework is one method to encourage risk taking in the classroom, build background knowledge, gain a more accurate picture of student growth, and accelerate learners. In addition to English language learners, remedial students who speak dialects such as African American Vernacular English (AAVE) or Appalachian English (AE) may also benefit as standardized assessments like the Accuplacer are not user friendly to individuals whose dialects do not conjugate the verb to be and drop the ly on some adverbs. To create a curriculum that neither bores learners to tears by excessive remediation or rushes students into "real" college work before they tackle cognitively demanding texts, a cross linguistic reservoir must be created by integrating learners' backgrounds into the coursework (Cummins, 2009). This can be achieved by adding reflections and personal narratives to lesson plans as both put students in the position to be an authority on the subject and encourage them to take the risks needed to develop academic discourse. To encourage learners to develop their written work and use evidence to support their claims, essays should be evaluated on content before form. Oral exercises are another vehicle for students to notice the differences between the natural break in the speech and academic text. Additionally, student generated bidialectal dictionaries also defer to cultural wealth while building academic skills. In seeing their language and culture honored in the classroom, learners will develop awareness of the features that differentiate their speech from standard English and acquire the ability to alternate between the two (Crouteau, 2007, pp. 29,31).

the groups and prevent one or more individuals from dominating, assignments will center around clearly written and measurable tasks that account for growth in content, academic literacy, and critical thinking. Each member of the group will have a specific job. Clear objectives and roles for each group member assures that everyone is engaged. Thus, the age-old practice of teaching to the middle, otherwise known as institutionalized sameness, will be abandoned. The more skilled learner will accelerate, and the developing learner will be brought into the fold (Kalantzis, 2021).





Differentiating instruction accepts student variance, supports individual learners and creates a classroom community (Subban, 2006). For example, while emerging learners work on short content comprehension exercises, more advanced learners have the option to forgo scaffolding and/or expand upon the course theme. The more skilled group would then explain critical thinking points to developing learners who in turn paraphrase the information. Learning through teaching not only forces a “skilled” group member to refine his or her academic language use for clarity, but the retrieval process boosts both academic literacy and knowledge in the content. Moreover, when students are engaged, interest is elevated and motivation is awakened (Dosch & Zidon, 2014). Curriculum can also be differentiated by allowing learners to choose between readings, paper topics, or projects. Although integrating learner funds and differentiating instruction requires a shift in preparation and classroom protocol, it is tailor made for the 21-century learner who is accustomed to both multitasking and receiving instantaneous feedback via technology. It is only impossible to implement if educators are resistant to change (Subban, 2006, p. 943).

Another approach to differentiated instruction is sustained content language teaching (SCLT). SCLT integrates academic content with the language learning skills associated with the discipline (Bunch et al, 2001). Although SCLT may be confused with the developmental English for Academic Purposes coursework, the former is more rigorous. With SCLT, students are expected to demonstrate comprehension, answer open ended questions, and interpret data. With SCLT, English language learners are exposed to a wide variety of input that bolsters both speaking and listening skills because they are integrated with native speakers. Additionally, SCLT can be adapted to most content classes that are student-centered, but not lecture based (Bunch et al, 2001). However, solely using language in the content will not create a learning environment whereby students can cross the bridge from basic communication skills to academic fluency. “As Bartolomé (1998) puts it, teachers actively need to ‘apprentice their linguistic-minority students into more academic ways of communicating’” (Bunch et al, 2001, p. 31). Guided annotations or teacher generated outlines support the organization of the material, prevent the watering down of content and support language growth through collaboration whereby students share ideas and create knowledge. Because of its ability to be integrated into a wide range of academic tasks and disciplines, SCLT with guided annotations is suitable for native speakers and English language learners at various levels (Valdes, 1998, 2001 as cited

in Bunch et al, 2001). Since the homogeneous classroom is both unrealistic and no longer a requirement for learning, “every learner does not have to be on the same page at the same time, nor complete the task at the same pace; nor do they even need to be doing the same task” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2021).

Although there are few studies on differentiated learning in the college classroom, Dosch and Zidon’s (2014) work on differentiated instruction with undergraduates makes a connection between differentiation, engagement, and learner outcomes. Their synopsis of Ernst and Ernst’s (2005) study of an undergraduate political science course taught with various differentiated methods showed that a majority of the 35 students in the course believed that the personalized instruction and open-ended questions helped them reach their learning goals. Similarly, their analysis of Livingston’s (2005) study of an undergraduate education course indicates that the 33 enrolled learners appreciated being able to complete course assignments according to their learning styles and to reflect on their progress. Finally, the data regarding Chamberlin and Powers’ (2010) study of seven college math courses proved to be the most interesting. Three professors differentiated their instruction while seven taught with traditional methods. “On average, the treatment group participants scored 1.7 higher on math scores from pretest to posttest compared to an average gain of .3 items scored higher for the control group” (Dosch & Zidon, 2014, p. 345)

Differentiated instruction is not foolproof. However, it may be the difference between student engagement and apathy. By implementing differentiation alongside other asset-based methods of instruction, the issue will no longer be what to do about any type or category of learner as the gains of all students will be valued. Creating a learning environment that incorporates student cultural wealth into the curriculum heightens student interest and helps them move forward by measuring outcomes by what has been achieved rather than against a norm referenced test (Subban, 2006, p. 941). Ultimately, when teachers share power, students become invested in their own learning (Bartolome L., 1994, p. 186).

SELF-CHECK:

Directions – Answer each question ‘Yes’ or ‘No’

1. Do you think that standardized/high stakes tests should be the sole guide for placement and progress?
2. Do you believe that students can demonstrate knowledge if they are properly taught or if they study hard enough?
3. Should students’ control over Academic English guide their community college experience?
4. Do your classroom strategies emphasize memorizing important facts in the discipline or developing students’ metacognitive strategies?
5. Does your classroom approach view students’ home language and culture as unconnected to academic success?
6. Does your curriculum address global awareness and cultural wealth as an add-on to the more important objectives?

SELF-CHECK:

Answers

- If you answered ‘YES’ to 5-6 questions, your classroom strategies are inclusive and meet the needs of a wide variety of students.
- If you answered ‘YES’ to 4 out of 6 questions, you are on your way!
- If you answered ‘YES’ to 3 or more questions, don’t despair. Perform one or more (detailed) audits to further uncover your hidden bias and revise your curriculum.
- Visit <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/> for more information on hidden bias.





REFERENCES

- Alfaro, C. & Bartolomé, L. (2017). Preparing ideologically clear bilingual teachers: Honoring working-class non-standard language use in the bilingual education classroom. *Issues in Teacher Education*, 26(2), 11-34. Retrieved from Semantic scholar: <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1148247.pdf>
- Anyon, J. (1980). Social class and the hidden curriculum of work. *Journal of Education* 162, 67-92.
- Association of American Colleges and Universities News (2019, March). *College students are more diverse than ever. Faculty and administrators are not.* <https://www.aacu.org/aacu-news/newsletter/2019/march/facts-figures>
- Barrington, K. (2019, August 5). *How community colleges are changing remedial education.* Community College Review. <https://www.communitycollegereview.com/blog/how-community-colleges-are-changing-remedial-education>
- Bartolomé, L. (1994). Beyond the methods fetish: Toward a humanizing pedagogy. *Harvard Educational Review*, 64, 173-195.
- Bartolome, L. (2004). Critical pedagogy: Revitalizing and democratizing teacher education. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 97-122.
- Bartolome, L., & Leistyna, P. (2006). Naming and interrogating our English-only legacy. *The Radical Teacher*, 75, 2-9.
- Boudreau-George, A. (2021, May 19). *Bunker Hill Community College.* Retrieved from Office of Institutional Effectiveness: <https://www.bhcc.edu/about/institutionaleffectiveness/>
- Bunch, G.C., Abram, P.L., Lotan, R., & Valdés, G. (2001). Beyond Sheltered Instruction: Rethinking Conditions for Academic Language Development. *TESOL Journal*, 10, 28-33.
- Bunker Hill Community College. (2018, Sept 11). *College ranks ninth in the nation for racial and ethnic diversity.* <https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2018/09/11/1569380/0/en/Bunker-Hill-Community-College-Ranks-Ninth-in-the-Nation-for-Racial-and-Ethnic-Diversity.html>
- Carhill-Poza, A. (2017). Re-examining English language teaching and learning for adolescents through technology. *System*, 67, 111-120.
- Carlucci, L. C. (2013). On the necessity of U-shaped learning. *Topics in Cognitive Science*, 5, 56-88.
- Case, J. (n/d). Theory of U-Shaped Learning - *The University of Delaware.* <https://www.eecis.udel.edu/~case/slides/nugget-ushape.pdf>
- Cleary, M. N. (2014, February 25). The wrong way to teach grammar. *The Atlantic.* <https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2014/02/the-wrong-way-to-teach-grammar/284014/>
- Cope, B., & Kalantzis M. (2021). *Affordance 7: Differentiated Learning.* Works and Days. <https://newlearningonline.com/e-learning/affordance-7-differentiated-learning>
- Crawford, J. (2014). *Educating English language learners.* Los Angeles: Bilingual Educational Services.
- Croutteau, M. (2007). Honoring dialect and culture: Pathways to student success. *English journal*, 96, 27-32.
- Cummins, J. (2009). Fundamental psycholinguistic and sociological principles underlying educational success for linguistic minority students. In T. P. Skutnabb-Kangas, *Social Justice Through Multilingual Education* (pp. 19-35). Toronto: Multilingual Matters.

- Delpit, L. (1988). Language diversity and learning. In S. R. Hynds, *Perspective on Talk and Learning* (pp. 247-266). Urbana, IL: National council of the teachers of English.
- Dosch, M., & Zidon M. (2014). "The course fits us": Differentiated instruction in the college classroom. *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*, 26 (3), 343-358.
- Emblom-Callahan, M., Burgess-Palm, N., Davis, S., Decker, A., Diritto, H., Dix, S., Parker, C., & Styles, E. (2019). Accelerating Student Success: The Case for Corequisite Instruction. *Inquiry: The Journal of the Virginia Community Colleges*, 22.
- Fitts, S. (2006). Reconstructing the status quo: Linguistic interaction in a dual-language school. *Bilingual research journal*, 337-365.
- Freire, P. (2005). *Pedagogy of the oppressed: 30th anniversary edition*. New York: Continuum.
- Gorski, P. (2010, December). *Unlearning deficit ideology and the scornful glaze: Thoughts on authenticating the class discourse in education*. <http://www.edchange.org/publications/deficit-ideology-scornful-gaze.pdf>
- Hanford, E. (2016, August 18). *Stuck at square one - College students increasingly caught in the remedial education trap*. APM Reports. <https://www.eecis.udel.edu/~case/slides/nugget-ushape.pdf>
- Harvard University*. (2011). Project implicit. <https://implicit.harvard.edu/implicit/>
- Huber, L. (2009). Challenging the racist nativist framing: Acknowledging the community cultural wealth of undocumented Chicana college students to reframe the immigration debate. *Harvard Educational review*, 704-729.
- Lynch, M. (n.d.). *Examining the impact of culture on academic performance*. Huffington post. http://www.huffingtonpost.com/matthew-lynch-edd/education-culture_b_1034197.html
- McCarty, T., & Lee, T.S. (2014). Critical culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy and indigenous education sovereignty. *Harvard Educational Review*, 84, 101-124.
- Miller, B. (2020, September 28). *It's time to worry about college enrollment declines among Black students*. The Center for American Progress. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/education-postsecondary/reports/2020/09/28/490838/time-worry-college-enrollment-declines-among-black-students/>
- Moll, L., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory Into Practice*, 31(2), 132-141.
- Nieto, S. (2009). Bringing bilingual education out of the basement. In A. Darder, *The Critical Pedagogy Reader* (pp. 469-482). New York: Routledge.
- Orellana, M.F, Dorner, L., & Pulido, L. (2003). Accessing assets: Immigrant youth's work as family translators or "para-phrasers". *Social Problems*, 50, 505-524.
- Pauls, F. M. (2013, May 27). U-shaped development: an old but unsolved problem. *Frontiers in psychology*, pp. 2-7.
- Pauls, F., Macha, T., & Petermann, F. (2013). U-Shaped development: An old but unsolved problem. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 4, 2-7.
- Ramirez, R. (2013). Fewer students report taking remedial courses; Minority numbers still worrisome. *The Atlantic*. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/01/fewer-students-report-taking-remedial-courses-minority-numbers-still-worrisome/429795/>



Rucker, N. W. (2019, December 10). *Getting started with culturally responsive teaching*. Edutopia. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/getting-started-culturally-responsive-teaching>

Rugut, E. J., & Osman, A. A. (2013). Reflection on Paulo Freire and classroom relevance. *American International Journal of Social Science*, 2(2), 23-28.

Scott-Clayton, J. (2018, March 29). *Evidence based reforms in college are gaining steam*. Brookings. <https://www.brookings.edu/research/evidence-based-reforms-in-college-remediation-are-gaining-steam-and-so-far-living-up-to-the-hype/>

Shapiro, S. (2011). Stuck in the remedial rut: Confronting resistance to ESL curriculum reform. *Journal of Basic Writing*, 30(2), 24-52.

Shor, I. (2009). What is critical literacy? In A. B. Darder, *The critical pedagogy reader* (pp. 282-304). New York: Routledge.

Soria, K. (2018). Bridging the divide: Addressing social class disparities in higher education. *Diversity & Democracy*, 21(4). <https://www.aacu.org/diversitydemocracy/2018/fall/soria#:~:text=Students%20from%20higher%20socioeconomic%20backgrounds,Center%20for%20Education%20Statistics%202015>.

Subban, P. (2006). Differentiated instruction: A research basis. *International Education Journal*, 7, 935-947.

Yosso, T.J. (2005). Whose culture has capital?: A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 8 (1), 69-91.