



**UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE**

Faculty of Education



Supporting the Participation of All Learners

ESRC Seminar Series:

**Teacher Education for the Changing Demographics of Schooling: policy,
practice and research**

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Teacher Practices for Educating All Students

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Outline of the presentation

1. Setting the context
2. The Framework for Participation
3. Supporting '*teacher practices for the education of all students*'
4. Reflections and questions

1. Setting the context

- Experiences of student and recently qualified teachers
- Contribution of teacher education
- Participation, diversity and classroom learning

Experiences of student and recently qualified teachers

- supportive of the principles of inclusion
- anxious about working with an increasingly diverse range of children
- believe they lack specialist skills and knowledge to meet needs of certain learners
- lack confidence in their developing professional judgement

'Although knowledge about human differences is important (a student who is an English language learner is different from a student who has been diagnosed as having autism; a six year old is different from a 10 year old, and so on), whatever can be known about a particular category of learners will be limited in the educational purposes it can serve, because the variations between members of a group make it difficult to predict or evaluate provision for each of the individuals within a group.'

(Florian 2014: 5)

- *‘disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs*
- *those with protected characteristics, including Gypsy, Roma and Traveller children, as defined by the Equality Act 2010*
- *boys*
- *girls*
- *the highest and lowest attainers*
- *disadvantaged pupils, including:*
 - *looked after children*
 - *pupils known to be eligible for free school meals – a school is unlikely to be judged outstanding if these pupils are not making at least good progress*
- *those attending alternative provision.’*

(Ofsted School Inspection Handbook 2014: 35-6)

'It is important to remember that focusing on single dimensions of difference [...] cannot take into account the complex experiences and interactions which are the reality of children's lives.'

Or, how *'inequalities are interlinked'*

(Alexander 2010, 116)

Contribution of teacher education

Prepare teachers to

- be competent and confident professionals
- be responsive to changing demographics
- recognise the complexity of children's lives, avoiding
 - simplistic, reductionist, responses
 - being overwhelmed

‘What kind of teachers are needed for an inclusive society in a 21st century school?’

EADSNE (2012) identified four core values and areas of competence:

1. *‘Valuing learner diversity’*
2. *‘Supporting all learners’*
3. *‘Working with others’*
4. *‘Personal professional development’*

Participation, diversity and classroom learning

- Definitions
- Research themes
 1. The experiences of marginalised individuals and groups
 2. Decision making and having choices
 3. Social and collective aspects of teaching and learning
 4. Achievement and inclusion

Definitions: Participation as complex and interactional

‘Participation is an essential condition of inclusion, which is best understood in the context of a complex series of interactions between individuals, groups and the environment in which children and young people learn, live and grow. Schools are a crucial part of this environment.’

(EADSNE 2011: 8)

Definitions: Participation as ‘metaphor’

Useful for educationalists because it
*‘promotes an interest in people in
action, rather than in people “as
such”’.*

(Sfard, 1998: 8)

RT1: Experiences of marginalised individuals and groups

- concerned with the learning of everyone in a class
- especially vigilant about recognising and responding to those most vulnerable to processes of exclusion
- taking account of children's complex lives and how 'inequalities are interlinked' (Alexander 2010)

(E.g. Gillborn and Youdell, 2000 - interplay between poverty, class, ethnicity, and gender; Artiles *et al*, 2006; Youdell, 2006.)

RT2: Decision making and having choices

- Relates closely to research on student voice

Learners making:

- choices about how and what they learn
- genuine contributions to communal decisions about learning undertaken as a class

(E.g. Bath 2009; Pedder & McIntyre 2004; Hart, Dixon, Drummond & McIntyre 2004; Rogoff, Turkanis & Barlett 2001; Rudduck 2002; Rudduck & Flutter 2004)

RT3: Social and collective aspects of teaching and learning

- Challenges mechanistic understandings of teaching as *'tools and techniques'* (Lave, 1996: 157)
- Participation as *'learning to collaborate, with appropriate demeanor and responsibility, as well as learning information and skills, [and] to be responsible contributors belonging in the community'* (Rogoff 2007: 412).
- Importance of classroom relationships: amongst children, amongst adults, and between adults and children) (Black-Hawkins, Florian & Rouse 2007; Kershner 2009; Urquhart 2009)

RT4: Achievement and Inclusion in Schools

- Examined schools with high levels of inclusion and high levels of learners' achievement
 - Staff understood inclusion as finding ways to recognise, support and reward the achievements of all learners
- Participation = bringing together, understanding and re-defining the relationship between the concepts of inclusion and achievement.

(Black-Hawkins, Florian & Rouse 2007)

2. The Framework for Participation

- Purposes
- Principles
- Sections
- Elements
- Who? What? Why?

Purposes of the Framework

- flexible research/professional development tool
- collect, analyse and present evidence about current classroom practices
- explore not only what teachers are doing, but also, more importantly, how and why
- prompt systematic reflection
- inform future actions and decision making

Principles of the Framework

- Participation concerns all members of a class and all aspects of classroom life
- Participation, and barriers to participation, are interconnected and continual processes
- Participation is concerned with responses to learner diversity
- Participation requires learning to be active and collaborative
- Participation is based on relationships of mutual recognition and acceptance

(Black-Hawkins 2014)

Sections of the Framework

1. Participation and **access**: *being there*
2. Participation and **collaboration**: *learning and working together*
3. Participation and **achievement**: *supporting everyone's learning*
4. Participation and **diversity**: *recognising and accepting difference*

Who? What? Why? of participation

- **WHO** does and does not participate?
And, **WHO** decides?
- **WHAT** classroom practices promote participation?
WHAT classroom practices reinforce barriers to participation?
- **WHY** do practices that promote participation take place (classroom community's values and beliefs)?
WHY do practices that are barriers to participation take (classroom community's values and beliefs)?

3. Using the Framework to support *‘teacher practices for the education of all students’*

Through research findings – e.g.

- Relationship between achievement and inclusion in schools
- Exploring inclusive pedagogy in classrooms

As a professional development tool – e.g.

- Reflecting on classroom teaching and learning in Initial Teacher Education
- Supporting practitioner research (e.g. Masters students)

4. Reflections and questions

- Supporting the Participation of All Learners
- Teacher Practices for Educating All Students

What are the barriers to learners' participation?

*'Such barriers might be a consequence of a range of factors, including the **legislative context**, the **curriculum**, the **skills** and knowledge of the workforce in schools, **teaching methods**, systems of **assessment**, organisational **structures**, **attitudes** to difference and diversity, as well as problems with **accessibility** of buildings. Taken together these factors affect the capacity of an educational system to educate all children.'*

(EADSNE 2011: 8-9)

What are the challenges to ‘teacher practices for educating all students’?

*“The key challenge facing teachers who wish to become more inclusive in their classroom practices is how **to respect as well as respond to human differences** in ways that include learners in, rather than exclude them from, what is ordinarily available in the daily life of the classroom.”*

(Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011)

What can research contribute?

- broader understandings of **diversity**, and multi-faceted ways educational experiences can '**reify social inequalities**' (Kozleski & Waitoller, 2010)
- multi-dimensional, taking account of **complex interactions** of classroom teaching and learning (Artiles et al. 2006)
- '*approaches to inclusive practice which are about **all children***' (Allan, 2010: 206).
- 'fold around a range of matters concerning **learning, community, identity and belonging**' (Thomas 2012: 2)

Final thoughts

Bridge the 'theory-practice gap' by adopting

*'an open and exploratory approach
based on a deep respect for the work
that teachers do'*

(McIntyre 2009)

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Sections, Elements and Questions of the Framework For Participation

1. Participation and access: being there

- Joining the class
- Staying in the class
- Accessing spaces and places in the class
- Accessing the curriculum
 - ~ Who is given access and who is denied access? By whom?
 - ~ What classroom practices promote access? What classroom practices reinforce barriers to access?
 - ~ Why within the values and beliefs of the classroom community is greater access afforded to some individuals/groups? And, why is access withheld from some?

2. Participation and collaboration: learning and working together

- Children learning together in the class
- Members of staff learning together in the class
- Members of staff learning with others from beyond the class
 - ~ Who learns together and who does not learn together?
 - ~ What classroom practices promote collaboration? What classroom practices reinforce barriers to collaboration?
 - ~ Why within the values and beliefs of the classroom community do some individuals/groups learn together? And, why are there barriers to some learning together?

3. Participation and achievement: supporting everyone's learning

- Regarding progress in learning as an everyday expectation
- Valuing and rewarding a range of achievements
- Focusing on what learners can do rather than what they can not
- Using formative assessment to support learning
 - ~ Who achieves? Who does not achieve?
 - ~ What classroom practices promote achievement for all? What classroom practices reinforce barriers to achievement?
 - ~ Why within the values and beliefs of the classroom community do some individuals/groups achieve? And, why are there barriers to the achievement of some?

4. Participation and diversity: recognising and accepting difference

- Recognising and accepting children, by staff
- Recognising and accepting staff, by staff
- Recognising and accepting children, by children
 - ~ Who is recognised and accepted as a person and by whom? Who is not recognised and accepted as a person and by whom?
 - ~ What practices promote recognition and acceptance? What practices form barriers to recognition and acceptance?
 - ~ Why within the values and beliefs of the classroom community are some individuals/groups recognised and accepted? And, why are there barriers to the recognition and acceptance of some?

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