Frameworks for Describing Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Pedagogies

The practices and dispositions associated with Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Pedagogies were derived from what researchers saw successful teachers doing and subsequent theorizing about pedagogy. Some of those actions and behaviors are described below.

What Do Culturally Responsive and Sustaining Pedagogies Look Like?

I. Duncan-Andrade (2007) identifies five pillars or characteristics of inclusive and responsive educators. These are educators who:

   a. Possess a critically conscious purpose. Recognize and resist oppression; believe their students are the most likely to change the world, and tell their students that building bridges to dominant knowledge is a path to freedom.
   b. Possess a sense of duty. Consider it a privilege to live in and work with historically underserved communities.
   c. Focus on preparation. Spend a tremendous amount of time preparing for their classes.
   d. Strike a balance between confidence in their ability as teachers, frequent self-critique, and being open to critique from the community, particularly parents/caregivers and families.
   e. Work constantly to earn trust of students and communities historically underserved and repressed by institutions.

II. Ladson-Billings (1995) describes culturally relevant teaching practices and beliefs in three thematic categories:

   a. Conception of Self and Others
      i. Belief that all students can succeed.
      ii. See educators as members of the community.
      iii. See teaching as a way to work with, learn from, and improve the community.
      iv. Value students’ existing assets and uses them to construct knowledge.

   b. Social Relations
      i. Maintain fluid, reciprocal student-teacher relationships.
      ii. Demonstrate connectedness with all students.
      iii. Develop a community of learners.
iv. Encourage students to learn collaboratively and be responsible for each other.

c. Conceptions of Knowledge
   i. Belief that knowledge is shared and constructed.
   ii. Belief that given knowledge must be viewed critically.
   iii. Be passionate about knowledge and learning.
   iv. Scaffold, or build bridges to facilitate learning.
   v. Assess by allowing and valuing multiple forms of excellence and demonstration of knowledge.

III. Paris (2012) and Paris and Alim (2014) argue that culturally sustaining pedagogy should be sustaining in several ways:
   a. Base curriculum on the cultural-linguistic realities of students, and view those realities as assets.
   b. Perpetuate and foster linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism by sustaining in-group cultural practices and cross-group cultural practices. Paris (2012) calls this “linguistic and cultural dexterity and plurality” (p. 95).
   c. Reflect and support communities’ language and cultural practices in ways both traditional and evolving.
   d. Address the fact that what it means to have an identity (e.g., Female, Transgender, African American) shifts in time and space as culture shifts.
REFERENCES


