



## Innovative Pedagogic Practices for Inclusive Schools

### KEYWORDS

Audio Taped Class Sessions, Classrooms, Laptop Computer, Schools

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**ABSTRACT** *We, as educators need to value difference. We need to take another look at the way we currently teach and try a more innovative approach to the way we perceive and interpret disability and diversity in our education system. An evaluation of our current educational practice reveals many flaws. We should really take a look in a different way at the teaching situation we have at the moment in most schools and educational institutions. We can look at this new approach as 'valuing difference'. We can create real change. Professional Development for educators through hands on simulations and experiential learning really helps as a change agent that promotes real awareness of key disability areas. Equipped with this new knowledge and new perspectives, teachers are able to adjust their classroom curriculum and pedagogy to value all.*

### INTRODUCTION

This article describes practices in inclusive education in schools and classrooms. In discussing the changes that schools have made in order to be inclusive and responsive to student diversity,. With respect to the changes that need to be made to classrooms, the author highlights the work of researchers and authors and their descriptions of teachers' pedagogical practices of differentiated instruction and Universal Design for Learning that are consistent with delivering inclusive education. Differentiated instruction comprises modifications to the curriculum, teaching structures, and teaching practices in combination that take into account the individual differences and needs of students. Universal Design for Learning is defined here as the conscious and deliberate planning of units and lessons so that all students have access to, and can participate in, the curricula, and can grow in their achievement of learning outcomes.

In Crozier et al. (2010) the project team explore the differences in the structure of pedagogy within the different types of institution based on descriptions offered by the working class students in their study. 'The structure of pedagogy had a strong impact on students' ability to make sense of and navigate their way through the learning process and to acquire in Bernstein's (1996) terms the 'realisation and recognition rules' (Crozier et al 2010: 70). Using Bernstein's (1996) concepts of 'strong' and 'weak framing', they conclude that while 'strong framing' is associated with tight control over the learning experiences, it gives working class students who feel unprepared for university clarity of expectation and confident learner identities and behaviours that lead to success. By contrast 'weak framing' is characterised by relaxed rules of attendance, flexibility on assignment submission, fairly slow pacing and a strong move towards on-line learning. While this is intended to liberate the student and encourage independence, it had confused or frustrated some students in their study and/or encouraged them to crave tutor contact. While student-centred pedagogies, with their emphasis on collaborative learning, are generally accepted as effective in encouraging students from different backgrounds to engage in learning in higher education (Bamber and Tett 2001).

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within their lesson planning this will help all students. Access to technology and high quality clear, printed resources will again help all participants. Typical accommodations that can be used in discussions and group work to maximize participation of students with health impairments are:

- i. Options for electronic discussion.
- ii. Note takers
- iii. Audio taped class sessions.
- iv. Laptop computer for note taking.
- v. Flexible attendance requirements.

Physical access to the discussion location may pose a challenge for a student with mobility impairment. You need a well laid out room with access for everybody to enter the room( a ramp will help everybody, not just a person who uses a wheelchair, but mothers with prams, grandma's with walking frames and other people with various other needs), to access all areas of the room and to use all facilities within the room. A student who has difficulty using their hands will have difficulty taking written notes. Classroom planning needs to acknowledge this and take it into consideration. Typical accommodations that can be used in discussions and group work to facilitate maximum participation of students with mobility impairments are things such as:

- i. Preferential and accessible seating.
- ii. Note takers.
- iii. Audiotaped class sessions.
- iv. Laptop computer for notetaking.

These types of adjustments can also be helpful to students with health issues. Students with various health conditions may have difficulty attending class regularly. They may fatigue easily and/or have difficulty taking notes due to physical problems. Medication side effects may impact endurance, memory, and attention. If an instructor uses clear instructions and a good structure within their lesson planning this will help all students. Access to technology and high quality clear, printed resources will again help all participants. Typical accommodations that can be used in discussions and group work to maximize participation of students with health impairments are:

- i. Options for electronic discussion.
- ii. Notetakers
- iii. Audiotaped class sessions.
- iv. Laptop computer for notetaking.
- v. Flexible attendance requirements.

These accommodations can be flexible and adapted to suit all the participants' needs. This is the idea of Universal Design. It is a strategy to help create real inclusion.

#### VALUES FOR SCHOOLING

1. Care and Compassion Care for self and others
2. Doing Your Best Seek to accomplish something worthy and admirable, try hard, pursue excellence
3. Fair Go Pursue and protect the common good where all people are treated fairly for a just society
4. Freedom Enjoy all the rights and privileges of Australian citizenship free from unnecessary interference or control, and stand up for the rights of others
5. Honesty and Trustworthiness Be honest, sincere and seek the truth
6. Integrity Act in accordance with principles of moral and ethical conduct, ensure consistency between words and deeds
7. Respect Treat others with consideration and regard, respect another person's point of view. Responsibility. Be accountable for one's own actions, resolve differences in constructive, non-violent and peaceful ways, contribute to society and to civic life, take care of the environment
8. Understanding, Tolerance and Inclusion Be aware of others and their cultures, accept diversity within a democratic society, being included and including others

#### IMPLICATIONS

1. The need to see students as individuals, to learn about and value their differences and to maintain high expectations of all students.
2. The need for teachers to create safe learning environments in which students can express their ideas, beliefs, requirements and identities freely in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect, empathy and open mindedness.
3. The need to establish at the outset clear rules of what is expected from students with tight control and close monitoring in order to develop confident learner identities and behaviours.
4. The need for teachers to create student-focused 'universal' programmes, modules and lessons that engage all students meaningfully by encouraging them to draw on and apply their own and others' knowledge.

5. The need for teachers to anticipate, recognise and provide for individuals' specific physical, cultural, academic and pastoral needs, particularly at critical periods (e.g. transitions, examinations).
6. The need for shifts in negative beliefs about, and attitudes towards, student diversity that currently inhibit the development of inclusive learning and teaching.
7. The need to challenge and change policies, practices, systems and standards that inhibit the participation of students in any subject or constrain teachers' capacity to engage all their students.
8. The need for greater involvement of students in the negotiation of the curriculum, assessment and in the development of teachers.
9. The need for adequate time, resources and a safe environment in which staff at all levels can develop a shared understanding and commitment to student diversity and inclusive practice. Such understanding and commitment should be a key component of staff recruitment, training, development and reward.
10. The need for adequate and relevant central services to support students and staff; integrating strategies for teaching and learning, widening participation and disability; and co-ordinating the efforts of academics and specialist support staff in central service centres.
11. The need for collection and analysis of institutional, quantitative and qualitative data for the evaluation and improvement of inclusive learning and teaching strategies, policies and practices.

#### CONCLUSION

Education is a must for all. Innovate pedagogic practices for inclusive schools are dire essential. Equipped with this new knowledge and new perspectives, teachers are able to adjust their classroom curriculum and pedagogy to value all. Typical accommodations that can be used in discussions and group work to maximize participation of students with health impairments are Options for electronic discussion, Note takers, Audio taped class sessions, Laptop computer for note taking, Flexible attendance requirements. There is a need for teachers to create student-focused 'universal' programmes, modules and lessons that engage all students meaningfully by encouraging them to draw on and apply their own and others' knowledge. The need for teachers to anticipate, recognise and provide for individuals' specific physical, cultural, academic and pastoral needs, particularly at critical periods (e.g. transitions, examinations).

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