

CREATING A CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE ONLINE ENVIRONMENT

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OVERVIEW



Culturally Responsive Instruction

- Definition
- Standards



Online Learning Environment

- Online vs. Face-to-face
- Challenges



Learner Diversity

- Culture, Language, Gender
- Learning Styles



Pedagogical Implications

- Power Distance Issue
- Communication Preferences



CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE INSTRUCTION

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING: WHAT IS IT? (GAY, 2002)

- ⦿ Using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate
- ⦿ Legitimizing cultural heritages
- ⦿ Using a wide variety of instructional strategies
- ⦿ Not one-size-fits-all

CREDE: 5 STANDARDS FOR EFFECTIVE PEDAGOGY & LEARNING

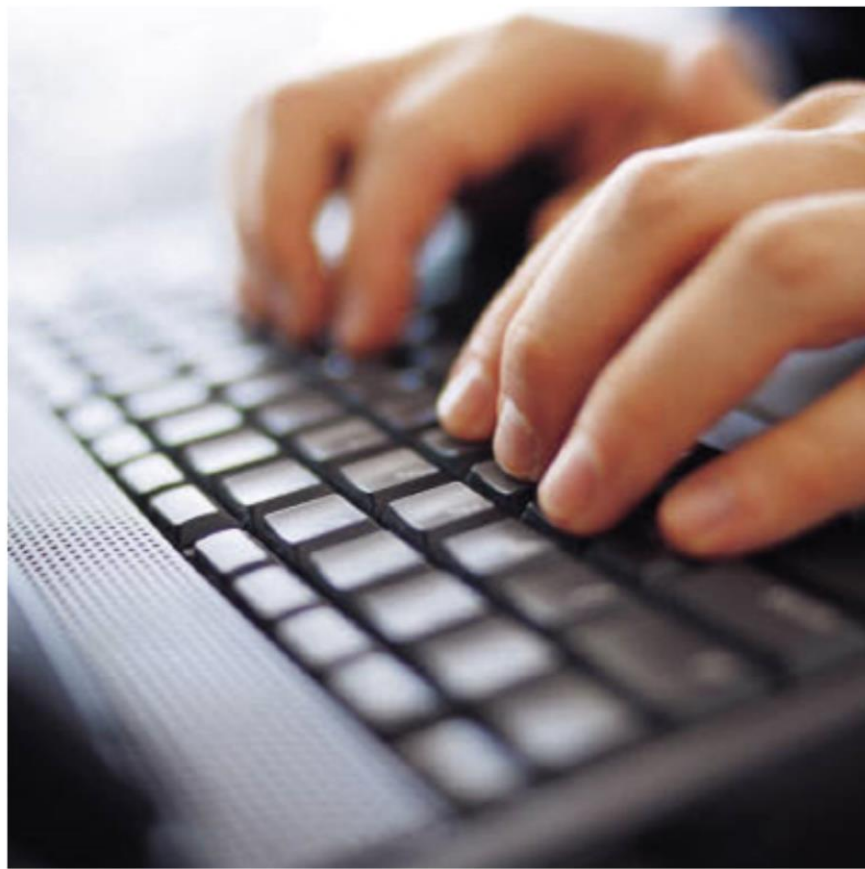
- ◎ Joint Productive Activity
 - Teacher and students producing together
- ◎ Language Development
 - Developing language and literacy across the curriculum
- ◎ Contextualization
 - Making meaning: Connecting school to students' lives
- ◎ Challenging Activities
 - Teaching complex thinking
- ◎ Instructional Conversation
 - Teaching through conversation

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR QUALITY ONLINE TEACHING (NACOL: NATIONAL AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR ONLINE LEARNING)

- ◉ The teacher plans, designs and incorporates strategies to encourage active learning, interaction, participation and collaboration in the online environment.
 - Demonstrates knowledge and responds appropriately to the **cultural background and learning needs of non-native English speakers.**
 - **Differentiates instruction based on students' learning styles and needs** and assists students in assimilating information to gain understanding and knowledge.

NATIONAL STANDARDS FOR QUALITY ONLINE TEACHING (NACOL: NATIONAL AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR ONLINE LEARNING)

- ◉ The teacher provides online leadership in a manner that promotes student success through regular feedback, prompt response and clear expectations.
 - Encourages interaction and cooperation among students, encourages active learning, provides prompt feedback, communicates high expectations and **respects diverse talents and learning styles.**



ONLINE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

ONLINE VS. FACE-TO-FACE

- ⦿ Instructor and students separated by time and space
- ⦿ Instructor role is coach or facilitator
- ⦿ Learners more active and self-directed
- ⦿ Flexible options for accessing content
- ⦿ More varied, community-based, and continuous assessment

Boettcher & Conrad (2010)

SYNCHRONOUS VS. ASYNCHRONOUS INSTRUCTION

- ⦿ Takes place in “real” time—students and instructor log in at a set time
- ⦿ Chats, videoconferencing, live discussion threads
- ⦿ Fosters connections and mimics some of the F2F environment
- ⦿ Students and instructor log in and work in course at different times
- ⦿ Bulletin boards, discussion groups, emails, linked to reference materials
- ⦿ Enables students to work at their own pace

Synchronous

Asynchronous

CHALLENGES FOR ENGAGING STUDENTS ONLINE

- ◉ Communication written rather than oral
 - Face-to-face oral communication is rare
 - Instructor-learner, learner-learner
- ◉ Reduced communicative context
 - No paralinguistic cues (e.g., gestures, facial expressions, body language)
 - Typically, no access to multiple communication modes
 - Feedback not received immediately



LEARNER DIVERSITY

LEARNER'S BACKGROUND

◎ Culture

- Nationality, origin, geographic region
- Lived experiences
- Ethnicity
- Class

◎ Language

- English proficiency
- Academic language proficiency (written and oral)
- Culturally-based communication preferences

GENDER DIFFERENCES (ARBAUGH, 2000)

- ◉ More comfortable in face-to-face setting where their “voices” are more evident and credible
- ◉ Tend to be more confrontational and autonomous
- ◉ Tend to be more competitive
- ◉ More comfortable in online community building and free-flowing critical reflection and analysis
- ◉ Tend to be more empathetic and cooperative
- ◉ Require a focused, civil discourse

Males

Females

TRUE COLORS IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING (BLUE AND GOLD) CREWS, SHETH, & HORNE, 2014

◎ Blue

- Sensitive to other's needs, encourages others, enjoys friends
- Re online learning:
 - Needs to communicate with peers, work cooperatively, and help others

◎ Gold

- Planner, loyal, precise, determined
- Re online learning:
 - Need rules, procedures, and deadlines that are enforced for all students

TRUE COLORS IMPLICATIONS FOR LEARNING (GREEN AND ORANGE) CREWS, SHETH, & HORNE, 2014

◎ Green

- Perfectionist, intellectual, abstract, always asking “why”
- Re online learning:
 - Must be challenged and know purpose of assignments

◎ Orange

- Risk taker, entertainer, laid back, playful, nonconformist
- Re online learning:
 - Must have structure but not be pushed too hard; seeks entertainment and creativity



PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR ONLINE INSTRUCTION

INFUSING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: VALUES, TRADITIONS, RELATIONSHIPS

Pedagogical Implications

⦿ Power distance issue:

- Establish position of “equal” or co-learner
- Respond positively to student contributions
- Provide both synchronous and asynchronous tools

⦿ Building teamwork:

- Building some teamwork into course
- Set guidelines for successful teamwork conduct
- Remain informal member
- Encourage initiative and active participation
- Create meaningful opportunities for creative exploration

DIVERSE CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS

(WANG, 2007)

◎ Participation in Online Discussions

- **Asynchronous tools** (discussion board, email, listserv, blogging) **were preferred by majority of students** over synchronous tools (live chat, webcast, instant messaging, videoconferencing, conference call)
- **Asian** students preferred asynchronous tools
 - Wanted to think more before speaking and talk less
 - Wanted to work at own pace in a non-interactive environment
 - Couldn't compose thoughts fast enough in live meetings and wondered if there were "rules and rituals" to follow
 - Enjoyed opportunity to practice English in discussion boards
 - Concerned about public nature of discussion posts
- **Western** students preferred synchronous tools
 - Wanted to communicate with people at other end of a broadcast

INFUSING CULTURAL DIFFERENCES: VALUES, TRADITIONS, RELATIONSHIPS NORMS

Pedagogical Implications

- ◎ **Communication preferences**
 - Many students prefer orally-based communication
 - Discussion questions that critically engage students in relevant conversation (Fox, 2005)
 - Socratic facilitation techniques (Fox, 2005)
 - Offer alternative response modes (audio or video upload for response)

ONLINE INSTRUCTOR'S ROLE OF GUIDE, COACH, CO-LEARNER

Guide on the Side

- ◉ Provides an introduction (beyond credentials) early in course
- ◉ Forfeits center stage
- ◉ Values student comments/input
- ◉ Include real life stories/humor in communication
- ◉ Supports individual students
- ◉ Responds to questions and graded assignments in a timely manner

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE

BEHAVIOR (NACOL: NATIONAL AMERICAN COUNCIL FOR ONLINE LEARNING)

- Regular Feedback
- Prompt Response
- Clear Expectations
- Interaction & Cooperation
- Active Learning
- High Expectations
- Respect for Diverse Talents and Learning Style

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