

Education 250: Teaching, Learning, and Schooling in a Diverse Society Summer 2008

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Overview of Course

The purpose of this course is to provide a framework for thinking about learning, teaching, curriculum, and community in a diverse, multicultural society. It is said that there is nothing so practical as a good theory and so we shall compare several theories in terms of their utility as tools for planning for and reflecting on the varied and complex classroom situations with which teachers have to deal on a daily basis. The emphasis, however, will be on Cultural Historical Activity Theory (CHAT), since it offers a comprehensive account of the relationship between learning and development and the part that teaching plays in this. Unlike many other theories, CHAT does not envisage a unidirectional top-down relationship in which theory is implemented in practice. On the contrary, the theory has developed out of practice and has as its aim to explain and to transform practice. In this course, therefore, drawing on CHAT and other relevant theories, we shall attempt to build a reciprocal relationship between practice and theory, using each to illuminate the other. We shall also consider what guidance this theory provides for schooling in a diverse society.

The course will be concerned with three major themes: 1) the relationship among activity, development, learning, and teaching; 2) teaching as 'situated knowing in action'; 3) the role of inquiry in learning and teaching. Together, these themes should enable us to construct principles for effective teaching based on your experiences and those of other teachers, as well as on the ideas of CHAT researchers and writers. For the first two, we shall discuss a variety of 'critical incidents', captured in a permanent medium such as video or field notes, that will provide the basis for analysis, discussion and orientation for action. Work on this material will form one component of each week's program. The second main component will involve engaging with and responding to the ideas of those who are developing the CHAT framework and its implications for practice, which will be achieved through readings, short lectures and discussion. Third, we shall engage in practical inquiry about topics that may later be appropriate for inclusion in the design of curriculum.

To an extent, the way in which the course proceeds will depend on what you find useful and feasible; thus, the following schedule of activities, readings and assignments will be open to negotiation. However, attendance at all classes is mandatory, as is completing the agreed-upon assignments by the due date; you will also be expected to carry out the readings and other activities for each class and be prepared to take an active part in discussion, including the use of the Web Knowledge Forum and other internet resources. If you have any uncertainties or problems, please consult with me immediately.

Assignments

1. Write a learning autobiography, identifying and reflecting on critical moments and persons – helpful or unhelpful – that have influenced who you have become and your preferred/dispreferred ways of learning. This assignment will be due by the second section meeting of the first week.
2. Participate in the online discussion of the weekly readings and other activities through contributing to the Knowledge Forum (KF).
3. In groups of 3 or 4, select and buy one of the books on the Supporting Reading List and prepare a review of it to be presented to the class and published on the WKF. (Other books may be chosen for review if negotiated with me in advance.) To be completed by the Wednesday of the third week.
4. In groups of 3 to 5, plan and carry out an inquiry under the general theme of “Ecological Challenges.” Each group will present their work to the rest of the class and put a version of it on the Web Knowledge Forum. (Date to be negotiated)
5. In groups of 3 to 5, plan and document a curriculum unit suitable for a grade of your choice, K-6, that: a) draws on the grade-appropriate California Curriculum Standards; b) utilizes the results of your inquiries in (4); c) makes connections among at least two subject areas and includes work in literacy; d) contains a substantial element of inquiry. The final version of the unit should be posted on the Web Knowledge Forum. (Date to be negotiated)
6. Write a reflective review of the course, explaining ways in which the course readings, assignments and other activities have helped you to think about learning and teaching in a diverse society and to set objectives for your future career as a teacher. This will be due by 12 noon on the Tuesday following the last class.

A portfolio containing all these assignments and any other work you wish to include should be handed in for evaluation by 12 noon on the Tuesday following the last class.

Online Discussion

Instructions for using the Web Knowledge Forum program will be distributed separately. To log in, go to: <http://knowledgeforum.ucsc.edu:8080/> and select ED250_SUM08 from the database menu. If you do not yet have a username, login as: visitor; password: guest

Set Texts

1. Course Reader.

2. G. Wells (Ed.) *Action, talk and text: Learning and teaching through inquiry*. Teachers College Press, 2001

These as well as the books starred in the following list are available for purchase at the Bay Tree Bookstore.

Supporting Reading List

*Cadwell, L.B. *Bringing learning to life: The Reggio approach to early childhood education*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2002.

*Dixon-Krauss, L. *Vygotsky in the classroom*. Longman

*Drummond, M.J. *Learning to see: Assessment through observation*. York, MA: Stenhouse Press, 1994.

*Duckworth, E. (Ed.) *Tell me more: Listening to learners explain*. New York: Teachers College Press, 2001.

Forman, E., Minick, N. & Stone, (Eds.) *Contexts for learning: Sociocultural dynamics in children's development*. Oxford University Press, 1993.

*Gallas, K. *The languages of learning: How children talk, write, dance, draw, and sing their understanding of the world*. Teachers College Press, 1994.

*Gallas, K. *Imagination and literacy*. Teachers College Press, 2003.

Hubbard, R.S. & Power, B.M. *The art of classroom inquiry*. Heinemann, 1993.

*Kendall, F.E. *Diversity in the classroom: New approaches to the education of young children*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1995.

Lee, C. & Smagorinsky, P. (Eds.) *Vygotskian perspectives on literacy research*. Cambridge University Press, 2000.

McMahon, S.I. & Raphael, T.E. (Eds.) *The Book Club connection: Literacy learning and classroom talk*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1997.

*Mercer, N. *The guided construction of knowledge*. Multilingual Matters, 1996.

Moll, L. (Ed.) *Vygotsky and education: Instructional implications and applications of sociohistorical psychology*. Cambridge University Press, 1990.

Nystrand, M. *Opening dialogue*. New York: Teachers College Press, 1997.

*Oakes, J. & Lipton, M. *Teaching to change the world* (2nd ed.) New York: McGraw Hill, 2003.

*Parker, D. *Planning for inquiry: It's NOT an oxymoron*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English, 2007.

Rogoff, B. *The cultural nature of human development*. New York: Oxford University Press. 2003.

Schechter, S.R. & Cummins, J. (Eds,) *Bilingual education in practice*. Heinemann, 2003.

Tharp, R. & Gallimore, R. *Rousing minds to life*. Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Wegerif, R. & Scrimshaw, P. (Eds.) *Computers and talk in the primary classroom*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 1997.

*Wells, G. *The meaning makers: Children learning to talk and talking to learn*. Heinemann, 1986.

Wells, G. *Dialogic inquiry: Towards a sociocultural practice and theory of education*. Cambridge University Press, 1999.

*Wells, G. & Chang, G.L. *Constructing knowledge together: Classrooms as centers of inquiry and literacy*. Heinemann, 1992.

Wells, G. & Claxton, G. (Eds.) *Learning for life in the C21st: Sociocultural perspectives on the future of education*. Blackwell, 2002.

Weekly Topics and Readings

** Indicates the reading that will be the focus for discussion on Monday. You must read this article before class and come prepared to discuss it.

Week 1. Knowledge, Knowing and Understanding: Theories of the Relationship Between Students, Teachers and the Curriculum [Standards 3a, 3b and 11b]

Questions: What does it mean to know? - to understand? How do we come to know?

Duckworth, E. (1987) '*The having of wonderful ideas*' and other essays on teaching and learning. New York: Teachers College Press. Chap. 1. The having of wonderful ideas.

Lemke, J.L. (2002) Becoming the village: Education across lives. In Wells, G. & Claxton, G. *Learning for life in the C21st: Sociocultural perspectives on the future of education*. Oxford: Blackwell.

**Brooks, J.G. and Brooks, M.G. (1993) *In search of understanding: The case for constructivist classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. Chap. 1. Honoring the learning process; and Chap. 9. Becoming a constructivist teacher.

Week 2. Human Development: Cognitive, Affective and Social. Comparison of Key Ideas of Behaviorist, Cognitivist, and Cultural Historical Activity Theories.[Standard 3a, 3c and 12a]

Questions. How is individual development related to the culture of which the individual is becoming a member? What are the roles of the school in promoting development?

Oakes, J. and Lipton, M. (2003) Contemporary learning theories: Problem solving, understanding and participation. Chap. 3 of *Teaching to Change the World* (2nd edition), McGraw-Hill, (pp. 69-103).

Galbraith, B., Van Tassell, M.A. & Wells, G. (1999) On learning with and from our students. In Wells, G. *Dialogic inquiry: Towards a sociocultural practice and theory of education*. New York: Cambridge University Press, (pp. 293-312).

**Case, R. (1996). Changing views of knowledge and their impact on educational research and practice. In D.R. Olson & N. Torrance (Eds.) *The handbook of education and human development*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, (pp. 75-99).

See also the brief overviews of a wide variety of theories of learning and development at: http://www.funderstanding.com/about_learning.cfm (included in Reader)

Week 3. The Roles of Language in Learning and Teaching.[Standards 3b and 12c]

Questions: How is language involved in learning? How can we build bridges between everyday language and the language and concepts of the subject disciplines?

Wells, G. (2008) The social context of language and literacy development. In *The Handbook of Developmental Science and Early Schooling: Translating basic research into Practice*. O.A. Barbarin, P. Frome, & D. Marie-Winn (Eds.) New York: Guilford.

Hume, K. (2001) Seeing shades of grey: Developing a knowledge building community through science. In Wells, G. (Ed.) *Action, talk, and text: Learning and teaching through inquiry*. New York: Teachers College Press.

**Mercer, N. (2002) Developing dialogues. In Wells, G. & Claxton, G. *Learning for life in the C21st: Sociocultural perspectives on the future of education*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Week 4. Group Activities for Collaborative Inquiry: Students and Teachers [Standards 3c, 3d and 5e]

Questions: Why is a collaborative inquiry approach so successful in promoting learning? How can inquiry-oriented group activities be organized in relation to the prescribed curriculum? Why be a teacher researcher?

Parker, D. (2007) Teaching for inquiry. In *Planning for inquiry: It's not an oxymoron*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.

Natriello, G. (2007) Imagining, seeking, inventing: the future of learning and the emerging discovery networks. *Learning Inquiry*, 1: 7–18.

Kowal, M. (2001) Knowledge building: Learning about native issues outside in and inside out. In Wells, G. (Ed.) *Action, talk, and text: Learning and teaching through inquiry*. New York: Teachers College Press.

**Wells, G. (2001) The case for dialogic inquiry. In Wells, G. (Ed.) *Action, talk, and text: Learning and teaching through inquiry*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Gallas, K. (1994) On becoming an aboriginal. In *The languages of learning: How children talk, write, dance, draw, and sing their understanding of the world*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Week 5. The Complexity of Teaching: Being Responsive as Well as Taking the Lead
[Standards 3d, 5b, 12b and TPE 11]

Questions: How can we take account of differences in individual/cultural learning styles while still helping all students to 'meet the standards'?

Van Tassell, M. A. (2001). Student inquiry in science: Asking questions, building foundations, and making connections. In Wells, G. (Ed.) *Action, talk, and text: Learning and teaching through inquiry*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Collins, J. (2006) Differential instruction in reading groups. In J. Cook-Gumperz (Ed.) *The social construction of literacy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Gipps, C. (2002) Sociocultural perspectives on assessment. In Wells, G. & Claxton, G. *Learning for life in the C21st: Sociocultural perspectives on the future of education*. Oxford: Blackwell.

**Dalton, S. S. & Tharp, R. G.(2002) Standards for pedagogy: Research, theory and practice. In Wells, G. & Claxton, G. *Learning for life in the C21st: Sociocultural perspectives on the future of education*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Week 6. Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners: Connecting Learning to Students' Lives and Interests [Standards 5a, 5b and TPE 11]

Questions: How can we find out about students' lives and the knowledge and practices valued in their communities? What is meant by 'culturally responsive teaching'?

Turkanis, C.G. (2001) Creating curriculum with children. And Various Teachers, Teachers learning about teaching children in a community. In B. Rogoff, C.G. Turkanis, & L. Bartlett (Eds.) *Learning together*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Donoahue, Z. (2001) An examination of the development of classroom community through class meetings. In Wells, G. (Ed.) *Action, talk, and text: Learning and teaching through inquiry*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Roseberry, A.S., Warren, B. & Conant, F.R. (1992) *Appropriating scientific discourse: Findings from language minority classrooms*. National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning.

Hume, K. (2001) Co-researching with students: Exploring the value of class discussions. In Wells, G. (Ed.) *Action, talk, and text: Learning and teaching through inquiry*. New York: Teachers College Press.

** Briscoe, F., Arriaza, G. & Henze, R.C (in press) *The power of language*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. Chap. 1. The power of language: a medium for promoting social justice and equity.

