

Exploring Diverse Educational Landscapes: A Relational and Responsive Lens

T. Ford, M. Berryman, A. Younis, M. Spadoni, & A. Nevin

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Our goal in this session is to open up new pathways for addressing the seemingly immutable educational disparities, often brought about by historical power imbalances and traditional transmission pedagogies in classrooms and schools that continue to value and perpetuate a view of knowledge and learning maintained by the dominant group. In contexts such as these, the increasing ethnic, cultural, and language diversity that is shifting the composition of the dominant face of society and education across the world is often being theorized as the problem, or at least needing to be made more the same. In turn, these beliefs and understandings are reinforced as the fabric of society (see chapter 6) so that how our professionals theorize and provide their services, such as education (see chapters 9) or health care for example (see chapter 12); or what policies are developed to support inclusion (see chapter 10) and how these have changed over time (see chapter 10); or how parents are included in conversation about their children's learning (see chapter 14 and 15); or whose language (see chapters 8 and 11) counts continues to be mandated and maintained by the dominant group. Our authors warn that once we begin these conversations without these groups, we risk fortifying the power of our own biases, conjecture and assumptions. It is in the ways that we seek to relate with, work with and achieve together that our most important learnings have emerged.

Creating responsive dialogic spaces

In chapter 10, the author Therese Ford and a teacher with whom she worked describe a situation such as this. They use the term *whanaungatanga* (also discussed in chapter 1) to describe the family-like relationships that emerged amongst herself, the teacher, and the mainly Māori parents and grandparents who were supporting students with an innovative home-school writing program. These relationships began with an invitation to *whānau* (family) to ask if they would like to contribute to their children's writing. For those who chose to participate, it continued with regular, two-way sharing of information around the combined agenda that was to see their children becoming more confident and successful writers.

Modeling cultural and relational responses to belonging and inclusion

Chapter 10 is amongst a number of chapters in this book that provide powerful examples of practitioners beginning the work by seeking to engage from within responsive dialogic spaces to encourage the development of relationships of mutual trust and respect before participating in evaluative discussions, programming and other such decision-making. Working interdependently over an agenda that has been genuinely shared, requires ongoing responsive dialogic encounters to ensure all participants remain together in a respectful and ongoing manner. Processes that seek to make connections amongst all parties.

Reference

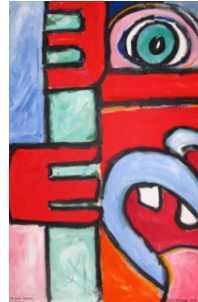
*Berryman, M., Ford, T., Nevin, A., & SooHoo, S. (Eds.) (2015). *Relational and Responsive: Contexts for Becoming and Belonging* Vol. 1: Inclusion and Teacher Education Series. New York, NY: Peter Lang Publishers. ISBN-13: 978-1433128509

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Overview

1. The challenge (Te Wero)
2. Improved literacy outcomes for Māori students and their home communities
3. Attitudinal shifts for teachers working with students with disabilities
4. Muslim American youth in educational settings post 9/11
5. Transformations in nursing faculty working with First Nations peoples
6. Conclusion



The Challenge: Our long-standing inability to include particular groups within all of our communities thus engendering a sense of their not able to fully belong.

Improved literacy outcomes for Māori students and their home communities^A

Policy to Practice

Productive partnerships starts with the understanding that Māori children and students are connected to whānau and should not be viewed or treated as separate, isolated or disconnected. Parents and whānau must be involved in conversations about their children and their learning. They need accessible, evidence-based information on how to support their children's learning and success.

Unrecognized potential

Seeking partnership



Listening and learning within the responsive dialogic space

^AExcerpted from Berryman, M., & Weller, P. (2015). Cultural and relational contexts for becoming and belonging. In M. Berryman, A. Nevin, S. Sotho, & T. Ford (Eds.), *Relational and responsive inclusion: Context for becoming and belonging* (pp. 163-182). New York, NY: Peter Lang.

Realising Agency to Promote Opportunity

Responsive Written Feedback



Quantity increase: 70 – 94 words

Accuracy increase: 6.7 – 9.4 words per minute

The academic learning is purposeful and natural.

The students improve! Some more than others for some it's just putting pen to paper that's the achievement.

Then there are the children whose writing skills really improve, especially the content and adding detail.

Recognising the Potential of Partnership

Being a responder allowed whānau to contribute to take an active role in the learning of their child and their learning community. We have a good relationship with more trust, where the parents are comfortable coming into class and comfortable to talk to me about more sensitive issues.

What really blew me away was the response from the whānau community. They felt valued and were able to assist learning. The relationship between teachers and whānau became closer too. One of my responders asked if I would be a referee for a job she was applying for. This was very humbling.



Shifts in teacher attitude

I believed some one came in as a minder and the minder's job was to look after that kid. I would teach them [the minder] the skills they needed to know and then leave them all to it.

I was thinking of one girl in particular, she was blind. I taught her in junior workshop and I knew who she was and I knew a little bit about her, but because she had a minder, I never spent much time actually talking to her as an individual. Instructions would go to her and the minder and I would leave the minder to look after the girl.

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Teachers new ways of thinking

Every teacher came to his IEP...

We shared some information about the issues for [student with autism], what his preferences were in terms of what he felt comfortable doing, things that would calm him, things that would cause him anxiety.

...often there had been an issue with off task behaviour.

In Julie's class he had placed himself right at the very front of the class. ...he knew he was going to get the most science done.

His whole demeanour, his whole body language, everything about him was absolutely totally engaged in whatever was going on in the science class.

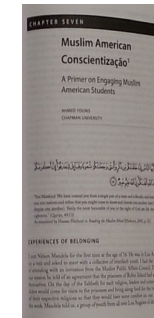
Student with severe global delay

Like if they think I can't do something and actually I can. They're assuming that I can't do it. It gets kind of frustrating. And kind of not talking to me about it... some of the things I can't do like the other kids and some of the things I can do.

You could read me out the questions and stuff. Kind of help me to understand it. Talk to me about the things I have to do and they say we will do it now or something like that.

It's been pretty good. When I first started it was bit - not too sure. But then I liked it.

Muslim American youth in educational settings post 9-11



Ahmed Younis
Chapman University

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qm62GGaURXs>

Nursing Faculty—reflecting on people and place, history and ancestry... inclusion of Indigenous world views into nursing curricula

Nursing curriculum is a living thing



Response- able processes for coming to grips with what it is we don't know...

- *Relational Inquiry*
- *Indigenous knowledge*
- *Curriculum and policy imagined through a critical eye—utilizes scrutinizing, questioning, and engaging*

How is the past in-forming and shaping current stories and experiences?



How do governing structures and social relationships shape nursing practice and worldviews?

Our concern is that Indigenous knowledge practices and philosophy will just become 'content' inserted into nursing courses, rather than an affirmation of Indigenous knowledge as a holistic paradigm rooted in a rich history of Indigenous languages, worldviews, teaching and experiences (paraphrased p. 232, Chapter 12).

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In-between the living world and nursing curricula

Relational Consciousness--- highlights who, where, and how we are relating in our teaching-learning and practice lives (Hartrick Doane, 2014), and what that is conveying to 'others' (students, colleagues, patients and families).

Relational consciousness...

Helps one remember to look with fresh eyes and, attend to the in-between of inclusive and exclusive, to enlist difference in moments of knowing and unknowing with students. Relational consciousness is a means for students and teachers to critically consider how social relationships, historical biases, positivist shadows of fact and truth are shaping the 'doing, being, and knowing' of nursing practice

(paraphrased, p. 239, Chapter 12)

Conclusions

We created responsive dialogical spaces.

We modeled cultural and relational responses to belonging and inclusion.

We engaged with others from different cultural backgrounds and allowed each other to gain insights into each other's rich funds of knowledge.

In essence, we gained a sense of belonging to a group of allies who explored new territories *with* each other.



Listening and learning within the responsive dialogic space