

The limits of pedagogy: *diaculturalist pedagogy* as paradigm shift in the education of adult immigrants

Katherine E. Entigar

5 Urban Education, The Graduate Center of City University of New York, New York, NY, USA

ABSTRACT

Pedagogical theory develops through the interventions of scholars who believe injustice should not be normalised. This conceptual paper suggests that in the United States, such interventions nonetheless operate under monoculturalist, paternalistic assumptions constructed within the US social and academic narrative. The top-down paradigm of 'designing pedagogy' is inappropriate for the education of adult immigrants, whose *cultural ways of being and knowing* differ from other learners. Even in the case of pedagogies designed with explicit political agendas, the US academy's ideological and philosophical tradition restricts its theoretical potential by invisible-izing adult immigrant learners. This conceptual paper draws from sociocultural theory, psychology and philosophy to contextualise this problem within the sociohistorical narrative of the United States, established academic conventions, and current educational practice. It proposes *diaculturalist pedagogy*, which prioritises the dialogic creation of pedagogy vis-à-vis adult immigrants' dynamic *cultural ways of being and knowing* as a necessary ontological distinction. *Diaculturalist pedagogy* challenges the reification of monoculturalism, which premises its authority on US cultural categories or attributions of 'pre-/'post-' status. This shift in educational scholarship disrupts traditional perceptions of adult immigrant learners while interrogating the theoretical myopia and paternalism of pedagogical prescription, evoking new potential for what education for, about, and with adult immigrants might mean.

KEYWORDS

Pedagogy; paternalism; monoculturalism; adult education; immigrant; nonprofit



Introduction

30 The Educational tradition in the United States espouses democratic commitments to equity of treatment, access, and quality of schooling for all students (U.S. Department of Education 2011), a prospect which over time has been bounded by systemic problems of disparate opportunity and embedded injustices. Non-White students, students who do not speak Standard American English as a primary language, poor students, students of non-standard literacies and abilities, students isolated from opportunities due to geographical location, non-US-born students, and students from other marginalised social spaces have perennially experienced a different form of education than students in the dominant White, middle-/upper-class, L1 (first language)-English-speaking group (Anyon 1997; Au 2009; Bowles and Gintis 1976; Katznelson and Weir 1985). While federal decisions like *Brown v. Board of Education* and *Lau v. Nichols* have historically responded to such injustices, it is often the case that theorists, researchers, and practitioners must pick up where legal and social mandate leave off. Theories about

teaching and learning, commonly referred to as *pedagogy*, develop through the passionate, committed interventions of educational scholars who believe that injustice should not be normalised within an unfair system. This conceptual paper, while motivated by similar commitments, suggests that in the United States, such interventions nonetheless operate under a set of monoculturalist, paternalistic assumptions constructed within the academic and social tradition in the United States. This conceptual paper argues that the time-honoured top-down paradigm of 'designing pedagogy' as it takes place now is not appropriate for the education of adult immigrants, whose dynamic, fluid, iterative *cultural ways of being and knowing* distinguish them from other learners (Alfred 2002; Baumgartner 2003; Guo 2015; Knowles, Holton, and Swanson 2005). Even in the case of pedagogies designed with explicit political agendas for radical social change at their core, the US academy's ideological and philosophical tradition restricts its theoretical potential by invisible-izing the cultural lived experiences of adult immigrant learners and their participation in educational practice.

This proposition is first and foremost ideological and philosophical in nature, though it carries practical consequences as well. The US academy has been unopposed in viewing the resolution of classroom-based inequity via pedagogical theory through a monoculturalist lens. This conceptual paper defines 'monoculturalism' in the United States as a worldview built on a set of US-centric cultural formulas 'White,' 'Black,' 'illiterate,' 'bilingual,' etc. defined through this country's social history. The term 'monoculturalism' has alternately been defined as a social orthodoxy which positions the strength of the White, middle-class, monolingual Protestant identity as source of national unity over the course of US history (see Pinder 2010 for further discussion). Such a monolithic worldview perceives immigrant students as in transition, moving from one culture pre-emigration to another post-emigration in a cultural narrative based on physical movement across national boundaries. The monoculturalist ideological tradition subsumes adult immigrants' *cultural ways of being and knowing* under the homogenising concepts of *multiculturalism*, *diversity*, and/or *cultural difference*, which denies the iterative existential dynamism of their cultural lived experiences. The truly fluid, recursive identity of adult immigrant learners, who maintain a simultaneous, diachronic and dialogic connection between their roots and receiving home, is abstracted or even invisible-ized by this doctrine. In philosophical terms, this monoculturalist orthodoxy deeply affects the ontological and epistemological potential of which the US academy is capable. Because adult immigrant learners are perceived through such a lens, the way educational theory develops vis-à-vis their ways of being, becoming, relating, and existing – that is, their ontological condition – is powerfully biased. Such limitations contribute to a theoretical 'blind spot' in the unidirectional construction of pedagogy vis-à-vis adult immigrant learners.

This conceptual paper will employ a sociocultural orientation with some caveats, drawing from the realms of psychology and philosophy to address this problem in the context of the the sociohistorical narrative of the United States, as well as its established academic conventions and current educational practice, particularly non-profit adult education. It will then propose the concept of *diaculturalist pedagogy*, a novel approach to the education of adult immigrants that prioritises a dialogic way of creating pedagogy vis-à-vis their dynamic, fluid, iterative *cultural ways of being and knowing* as a necessary ontological distinction that has historically been overlooked. *Diaculturalist pedagogy*, further, issues a challenge to the reification of a monoculturalist worldview, which premises its authority on pre-defined US cultural categories or attributions of 'pre-/'post-' chronological, geographical, and/or legal status. While sociocultural scholars like Alfred (2005), Guo (2013), and Sparks (2002) have considered the ontological question of the complex transnational/transcultural existence of adult immigrants, they have generally stopped short of addressing the ideological, philosophical and theoretical barriers in academia to developing appropriate pedagogy for these learners. It is time to interrogate the philosophical and applied consequences of these barriers. This critique addresses the ontological and epistemological implications of an academic tradition that reifies monoculturalist definitions of culture, embedded even in the most politically committed pedagogical design, that obscure and marginalise adult immigrant learner existence, experience, and complex goals for education. It signals that the canonical monoculturalist authority of the academy, which does not generally recognise the different ways that

adult immigrants experience learning and transformation through education, must be compelled to acknowledge and interrogate its enshrined assumption of expertise.

This conceptual paper will suggest that scholars and practitioners must seek a better understanding of the experience of education for adult immigrants and its implications in the creation of educational theory. A closer critical look will inspire a challenge to the top-down, prescriptive nature of pedagogy for its unidirectional, monoculturalist authority over learners who have for too long been invisible-ized in academe. Such an ideological and philosophical shift in educational scholarship can open up a new space to challenge traditional perceptions of adult learners while interrogating the theoretical myopia and paternalism of pedagogical prescription. A decentralisation of the established authority of unidirectional monoculturalist academic thinking will evoke new potential for what more appropriate education for, about, and with adult immigrants might mean. At a historical moment when the contemporary discourse about migrants, national borders, and the right to a dignified life is shifting in response to various sociopolitical, economic, and environmental crises across the world, such a provocation could not be more timely.

Educating adult immigrants in America: a tradition of paternalism

Non-profit adult education has historically served the purpose of finding a middle ground between nativistic worries about the 'negative' influence of poor immigrants on US society and the economic demand for cheap labour (Bowles and Gintis 1976; Dinnerstein and Reimers 1999; Fry 2007; Immigration Restriction League U.S., & United States 1903). In the mid-nineteenth century, concerned educational thinkers developed new theories aimed at ameliorating the struggles of urban poor immigrants while alleviating conservative anxieties about social unrest. In *The history of adult education*, Hudson (1851) defined 'adult education' as the intellectual and moral development of the working and poor classes, which would produce a more 'rational' and unified society (55). Progressive social reformers took up this humanitarian project in the late 1800s and early 1900s by developing settlement houses and other community-based programming that provided classes in English, health and child care, and other subjects for city dwellers living in poverty, including adult immigrants. It is generally believed that the work done by these educational activists had great merit, a point which many modern scholars tout as committed educational work for social justice (Fine 2013). This fact notwithstanding, closer examination reveals that these humanitarian crusaders also viewed urban-dwelling labourers from a paternalistic, monoculturalist perspective. Educational reformers referred to poor adult immigrants as 'primitive' in their social relations and lacking in the sort of moral character that US-born, wealthier US citizens had (Addams 1899; Hudson 1851). It would be through education, these well-intentioned public intellectuals believed, that these newcomers could be 'saved' from their poverty and cultural ignorance by learning the skills, behaviours, and values that would help them become like their US-born counterparts.

Today, many adult learners, both US-born and immigrant, approach non-profit organisations – the descendants of settlement houses – for various forms of academic and job programming because of the relatively low cost and workable schedule of such opportunities. The moral saviorism underlying the philanthropic work of social reformers in the nineteenth century has been replaced in contemporary non-profit adult education by an ideology of service reflected in terms like 'empowerment,' 'help,' and 'advocacy.' However, educational research in Canada, Australia, Scandinavia and the United States about such organisations, which provide job training, citizenship courses, English as a Second Language ESL programmes, and other programming, has nonetheless found a modern version of the same top-down, monoculturalist discourse that invisible-ized adult immigrant learners' cultural lived experiences a century ago (Atkinson 2014; Ayers and Carlone 2007; Carlson and Jacobsson 2013; Pashby, Ingram, and Joshee 2014). The normalisation of this paternalistic orthodoxy in the tradition of educating adult immigrants, it seems, has yet to be fully problematized.

Challenging tradition in pedagogical design in the United States: exploring ontology and epistemology

Progressive US scholars have traditionally created theories of teaching and learning, viz. *pedagogy*, as one way to counteract historically normalised injustices that take place in US schooling in order to contribute to a more egalitarian vision of society. Pedagogies built through the lens of sociocultural theory, for example, which originated in the work of Lev Vygotsky and has come into US educational scholarship via thinkers like John Dewey, have explored the interaction between individual, interactional, and cultural-historical constituent forces in education (Dewey 1916; Tudge and Scrimsher 2003). Sociocultural theory, in response to cognitivist views of a learner independent of his/her context which lays a learner's success or failure solely on his/her shoulders, has spurred scholars toward the development of pedagogies that view social and cultural knowledge as instrumental in the learning process (Glassman 2001). This theoretical orientation has given rise to culturally responsive pedagogy (Ladson-Billings 1995) and other asset pedagogies as well as later responses like culturally sustaining pedagogy, which links 'sustaining pluralism through education to challenges of social justice' (Paris and Alim 2014, 88). Critical scholars like Paulo Freire, Henry Giroux, Peter McLaren, Antonia Darder, and others have likewise protested the social status quo by illuminating the historically hidden power differences in education and creating 'liberatory,' 'critical,' 'engaged,' 'transformative,' or other pedagogies (Darder and Mirón 2006; Freire 1998, 2000; Giroux 1997, 2005; Hooks 1994; McLaren and Jaramillo 2006; Shor 1992). AQ2

In spite of these good intentions it remains the case that much of US educational theory has generally prioritised a normative model of young and US-born learners, 'diverse' though they might be, and has overlooked adult immigrants. Adult learners are on the whole usually subsumed under more generic approaches to teaching because their education is seen as 'unproblematic' and nonideological (Pratt and Nesbit 2000, 117). Sociocultural scholar Alfred (2002) states that educational theory related to the cultural ways of being of adult learners is lacking because such students are viewed from a cognitivist perspective, under which learning becomes 'an individual endeavour with little regard for the socio-cultural environment' (3–4). Most conventional thinking in the US academy about adult education has not fully examined how older learners learn through, and as a constituent process in, their lived cultural experiences. In the case of adult immigrant learners, Sutton and Chaney assert that such individuals exist *transnationally*, maintaining a 'dual-place orientation' (as quoted in Alfred 2005, n.p.) and mediating their learning experience through a dynamic, complex and iterative cultural existence. In contrast to the accepted set of discrete cultural categories including racial/ethnic, linguistic, literacy-based, academic experience, etc. currently taken as given in educational theory in the United States, adult immigrants exist and know differently. As a result of their kinetic, iterative cultural lived experiences, they contribute differently to the 'interactional dynamics' (Alfred 2005, n.p.) of education compared to US-born and younger students, because adult immigrants learn through multiple, multi-sited, simultaneous existences and understandings. AQ3

Sociocultural theorists like Alfred have suggested that in order to provide better educational opportunities for adult immigrant learners, more inclusive approaches must be considered. This is made possible by incorporating the cultural tools and assets, i.e. knowledge, of these learners into the classroom. Various asset pedagogies, like culturally responsive pedagogy or pedagogy based on funds of knowledge (Moll et al. 1992), advocate the valuation of learners' home knowledge, community learning, and other cultural understandings as contributions to the educational process. Implicit within these epistemological considerations is an assumption that learner identity, an ontological conceit, has already been accounted for and properly understood. Because the inclusion of cultural tools and skills i.e. knowledge implies that learner identity is concomitant, appropriate pedagogy by this definition means better and more just forms of teaching by attending to epistemological matters. However, this philosophical/theoretical assumption is deeply problematic when learners come from outside the US-centric monoculturalist determination of 'cultural difference.' Adult immigrants' identities differ from the mainstream dominant White, middle-class, L1-Standard American English-speaking identity in the United States and fall under the heading of historically marginalised groups vis-à-vis race/ethnicity

'Black,' 'Latino/a,' etc. ethnolinguistic identity 'L1/non-L1 speaker of certain forms of English,' different forms of literacy, and/or definitions of 'legitimate' educational experience (i.e. formal schooling; see Lave 1996). Thus, such learners are culturally invisible-ized and homogenised.

5 This way of doing pedagogy glosses over a major philosophical gap in thinking, originating in the monoculturalist paradigm in the US academy, about adult immigrant learners and their *cultural ways of being and knowing*. The issue, at its heart, is ontological, as a necessary complement to the epistemological dimensions of the creation of pedagogical theory. Psychologists Packer and Goicoechea (2000) address the important connection between *being* and *knowing* in learning, a point which unites cognivist and sociocultural perspectives as a 'nondualist' ontological challenge to the 'division of knower and known' (228), in viewing learning. They state that '[b]eing is not essentially mind or matter, but varies with the historical and societal context...Not just our knowledge but we ourselves, and the objects we know, are constructed: What counts as real varies culturally and changes historically' (232). They hold that approaches to teaching and learning must distinguish socioculturalism's prioritisation of ontology, which involves 'the consideration of being: what is, what exists, what it means for something

10 – or somebody – to be' (227) from the prominence cognitivism gives to epistemological questions i.e. relating to the process of knowing. For adult immigrants, reality is plural, simultaneous, dialogic, and in a constant state of iteration (Bhatia 2002; Ryder, Alden, and Paulhus 2000), which has a powerful influence on their experience in education. Their *cultural ways of being and knowing* do not align with the static repertoire of discrete US cultural categories upon which educational theory has heretofore

15 been developed. The lack of inquiry as to the ontological primacy of adult immigrant learners' cultural lived experiences, consequently, sets the stage for epistemological concerns to monopolise pedagogical strategy, curtailing the philosophical latitude and theoretical depth necessary for the production of well-reasoned pedagogy.

Sociocultural scholarship about adult immigrants as learners, social justice-motivated though it may

25 be, illustrates this ideological limitation and its philosophical and theoretical repercussions. Alfred (2005) and Lee and Sheard (2002) discuss the influence of cultural models and other inclusive approaches in adult education that emphasise learners' cultural knowledge, prior learning experiences, and understandings of community. While a student's 'social personal history' is welcomed as a nod to the value of identity to appropriate education (Lee and Sheard 2002), such thinking is nonetheless epistemologically driven and does not critically address the core theoretical neglect of ontological inquiry vis-à-vis

30 adult immigrants. With like-minded intentions but similar oversight, Guo (2015) posits the concept of *recognitive adult education* for adult immigrant learners as a 'paradigm shift in building inclusive and socially just educational environments' (14). While he espouses social inclusion as a radical commitment, his emphasis on adult immigrants' 'cultural difference and diversity as positive and desirable assets' (15)

35 leaves ontological considerations of how adult immigrant identity relates to the creation of pedagogy unanswered. Even with great commitments to inclusion and social justice, the examples above illustrate the ideologically-based silencing of ontological curiosity by monoculturalist, unidirectional academic thinking in pedagogical theory.

Such oversights may indeed be reinforced by accepted pedagogical dogma, which has been institutionalised and operationalized over the course of academic tradition in culturally 'diverse' – a term which subsumes varied non-dominant cultural ways of being under one generic term – classrooms in the United States. Culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally sustaining pedagogy, pedagogy based on funds of knowledge, and other approaches incorporate unproblematized, top-down homogenising assumptions developed with the US-centric monoculturalist definitions of 'identity,' 'community,' and

45 'culture' in mind (González, Moll, and Amanti 2005; Ladson-Billings 1995; Moll et al. 1992; Paris and Alim 2014). Likewise problematic is the fact that such pedagogies have tended to assume a monolingual approach, defaulting to a position in which English is reified as a lingua franca, which marginalises the different linguistic practices of adult immigrants. (An exception is the philosophy and pedagogical stance of translanguaging developed by García and Kleyn [2016]). Such approaches leave out the recursive cultural lived experiences of adult immigrants, who connect to diachronically multiple sources

50 of social reality and validity, and elide ontological divergence as embodied in the adult immigrant

5 learner. What are 'identity,' 'community,' or 'culture' for an adult immigrant who is not 'post-transition' but rather experiences life in mutual membership, in peripatetic, flexible zones of contact, creativity and transformation? A correlative problem exists in critical pedagogy, which strives in postmodern fashion to create a 'discourse of possibility' (Kincheloe 2004, 48) yet tends to value metanarratives of 'liberation' and 'democracy' over local efforts and individual instances of new forms of education. Jackson (1997) warns that even the great Paulo Freire's quest for a 'humanising education' for all (Freire & Frei Betto 1985, as quoted in Jackson 1997, 9) obscures the different ontological positions within the social power structure that individual students may have (Jackson 1997, 4–5). Even if a critical educator is aware that context and situated power relationships are factors in how pedagogy is enacted (Giroux 2005), the monocolonialist ideology of academia a priori neglects the importance of ontological inquiry as to the interrelationship of belonging and departure, of oppression and liberation, simultaneously enacted in the cultural lived experiences of adult immigrant learners. What is the 'liberation' of a learner who has 'liberated him/herself' from a difficult economic, social or political situation to come to this country, the land of opportunity? Additional concerns related to critical pedagogy's stem from its expressed commitment to 'calling into question the relationship of knowledge to power' (Jackson 1997, 2–3). Such a focus, similar to asset-based pedagogies, emphasises epistemological priorities as driving concerns in learning, a move which universalizes and homogenises adult immigrants' cultural lived experiences as a given in the struggle against subordination. As a result, paternalistic assumptions about adult immigrant learners' *cultural ways of being and knowing* are embedded, normalised, and left unproblematized in the creation and application of this pedagogy.

AQ5



Diaculturalist pedagogy as paradigm shift in the US academy

25 This conceptual paper humbly submits the concept of *diaculturalist pedagogy*, which encapsulates these concerns and their potential for resolution in the right hands. Terms like *transculturalism*, *trans-culturation*, *biculturalism*, *cross-culturalism*, and many others have been proposed over the years to address the complexity of movement and existence between cultures (see Berry and Epstein 1999; Ortiz and De 1947, for examples) as an ontological supposition in pedagogical theory. Because many of these notions derive from the dominant monocolonialist emphasis on one-place, one-culture i.e. transition, however, a direct challenge to the academic tradition in the United States at the ideological, philosophical and theoretical levels is overdue. *Diaculturalist pedagogy* seeks to provide this challenge.

30 The prefix *dia-* is similar to the those in the cultural terms above, yet it differs in that it can also imply continuousness, a movement 'through' which, in the case of terms like *diachronic*, *dialogue*, or *dialectical*, connotes a relationally-based ontological condition which is congruous, dynamic and iterative. Diachronic, dialogic, always moving and shifting, in development and always dialectical is the adult immigrant's lived cultural narrative – *who I am I am now, who I was I am now, who I will be I was and am now*. Alfred (2005), Ryder, Alden, and Paulhus (2000), Bhatia (2002), and Bhatia and Ram (2009) provide innovative approaches to exploring adult immigrants' cultural lived experiences, a valuable first step. Taking on such inquiry urges an abandonment of pedagogical orthodoxy as unidirectional monocolonialist prescription, tasking the US academy to walk the ideological, philosophical, and theoretical walk when considering its commitments to social justice and democratic educational practice for all learners, even adult immigrants.

AQ6



40 *Diaculturalist pedagogy* is dialogic, anti-universalistic and non-normative in nature. Such a term intends to compel theorists to perceive adult immigrants' cultural realities neither from a 'pre-' versus 'post-' perspective which falls along the lines of national boundary, nor from a 'before' vs. 'after' conceptualisation of education derived from transition- and assimilation-minded traditions. Instead, scholars might begin with *who and what the learner is, has been, is coming to be, may be in the future, is hoping to be, and has always been*, and what voice and story s/he uses in constructing this story through cultural spaces and times. This set of diverse meanings evoked here implies simultaneity, mutuality, ambiguity, constant change and movement, and is powerfully polyvalent in terms of the political significance for the potential of educational theory. *Diaculturalist pedagogy* invokes the primacy of inquiry and the

decentralisation of monoculturalist ideological authority. It seeks guidance as can only be provided as theorists locate the polysemy of cultural lived experience of adult immigrant learners as an ontological position of departure in designing pedagogy. Because this distinction of ontology from epistemology has not been made in the creation of pedagogical theory for adult immigrants – or perhaps for any culturally non-dominant groups in America – this necessitates an exploration of not one, but many ways of thinking about theory, about teaching and learning, and about education.

Diaculturalist pedagogy acts in dialogue with itself, embracing internal contradiction and creating new complicated and fertile territory for pedagogical theorists who have been inured to a certain way of doing things. As anti-establishment, *diaculturalist pedagogy* invites challenge to academic privilege and the benefits that ideological myopia may confer. Unlike critical pedagogy, which interrogates the authority of the teacher (Kincheloe 2004), *diaculturalist pedagogy* exposes the monoculturalist orthodoxy of academe and its paternalistic arrogation of expertise. Important to this idea, it must be said, is an admonition to avoid swapping one set of definitions for another. The search for cultural categories of the type upon which US monoculturalism has structured its approach to educational theory is anathema to the postmodern premise of *diaculturalist pedagogy*, which is to pursue an anti-category positionality while articulating itself, oxymoronically, as a form of anti-pedagogy. *Diaculturalist pedagogy* is a disruption, a reversal, an anti-prescription. It takes to task a US-centric worldview that privileges the academy with the power to speak for the *cultural ways of being and knowing* of individuals it has ontologically invisible-ized, yet whose education it undertakes, paternalistically, as its rightful charge and ward.

Conclusion: *diaculturalist pedagogy* as paradigm shift

The US narrative has historically invisible-ized and homogenised adult immigrant learners' *cultural ways of being and knowing*, a social ignorance that has informed educational theory and practice in the United States. The US academy and perhaps many academic 'ivory towers' the world over have reified an ideological tradition that unwittingly reinforces a normalisation of transition and assimilation in spite of its deepest-held commitments to social and educational justice. It is time, then, to break new ground. The ontological limitations and theoretical nearsightedness of the US academy, concretized in how pedagogy comes to be and how education takes place for adult immigrants, must take centre stage if a true commitment to democracy through schooling is to be made. Theorists and practitioners alike must interrogate the position of privilege they have enjoyed vis-à-vis the ideology of monoculturalism and its implications in educational practice in the education of adult immigrants. Powerful repercussions exist for reconceiving these learners as more than individuals moving across national borders and through universally shared, temporally- and geographically-bounded stages of transition from home culture to receiving culture. Interesting work has been done by Alfred, Bhatia and others about 'the diasporic self' (Bhatia 2002, 73), and new typologies and discourses in emerging fields like diaspora studies and citizenship studies are coming into the academic conversation (Alfred 2015).

However, tensions remain between the ambitions of theoretical papers like this one and the neoliberal, market-centric realities that have come to characterise education in modern America. This is particularly the case in relation to the education of adult immigrants, particularly in non-profit organisations, which emphasise speed of delivery, efficiency, and concrete skill development. This form of education, seeing learning as a process of workforce skill development, strips away cultural concerns and isolates learning as an individual pursuit while focusing increasingly on 'pathways to valued postsecondary credentials, employment, and career advancement' for adult learners (Adult Education and Workforce Development Organizations 2009, 2), who often benefit from low-cost, speedy non-profit educational opportunities. The wide variability of the cultural ways of being of adult immigrant learners in terms of literacy, age, ability, cultural background, and other lived experiences creates challenges for unprepared or simply typically prepared practitioners in non-profit organisations that provide educational programming for these students. Faced with this reality, assimilationist, monoculturalist approaches to teaching and learning often seem to become the default vision of how education should take place (Martin 1993), and suggestions like *diaculturalist pedagogy* might appear esoteric and inapplicable.

Because of such societal pressures, it is all the more imperative that practitioners and theorists committed to more just versions of education for adult immigrants work in concert to return to the beginning, to the ontological fundamentals of the creation of pedagogy. Theorists must embrace their own ignorance about adult immigrants' cultural lived experiences and consider intellectual heterodoxy as an ethical alternative to paternalism. Practitioners must interrogate their experience as teachers of adult immigrants and ask questions unarticulated before now under the assumed right of monoculturalist, paternalistic educational theory and practice. Being unable to anticipate next steps in theory or practice will be uncomfortable, even threatening, and yet this mindset is necessary to affirm the value of uncertainty, of un-knowing, in the search for frameworks and approaches that could improve on the extant and unsatisfactory ones. Most important is the opening up of possibility to inquire after new, heretofore misunderstood cultural vantage points. For those of us who have had the power to define education for others, our role is to become students to our students' *cultural ways of being and knowing*, and to begin to learn what we didn't know we didn't know.

Diaculturalist pedagogy, thus, is a first step toward this ambiguous and yet fecund terrain. For scholars of pedagogy holding deep commitments to social justice, radical and risky in their scholarly efforts, the lived cultural world of adult immigrants and the ways in which they participate in and contribute to education stands to guide and provide new insights. This has powerful implications for how pedagogy is created, as well as how it might be selected for different educational organisations. With the starting point of inquiry about students' ontological contributions to and potential for transformation within the experience of learning, what would education look like? What is possible in teacher education? Like non-profit education, teacher education programmes also struggle with concerns about the bottom line determined by accountability measures due to policy over the last two decades. While possibilities exist for a fertile new territory to spring up in the realm of pedagogy, the issue remains its timeliness; these programmes in last decade have increasingly curtailed the study of theory in favour of content knowledge for speedy qualification and certification (Michelli and Keiser 2005). Moreover, practitioners who identify as critical and/or culturally responsive/sustaining pedagogues, whose teaching philosophies centre on values of social justice, may default to a monoculturalist, paternalistic, transition-oriented pedagogy in the event of a classroom of many unique adult immigrants with a plurality of cultural lived experiences and approaches to and goals for education.

Yet the presence of dehumanisation and atomization in education, prevalent in many studies about the education of adult immigrants, is precisely the reason why a *diaculturalist pedagogy* must come into the picture. The opportunities created by *diacultural pedagogy* as a philosophically balanced, theoretically rigorous and ethically demanding approach to the development of theory for the education of adult immigrants are timely and socially significant. The way pedagogy is produced within the academy is a philosophically flawed and theoretically incomplete process. Yet we fetishize pedagogy much in the way Bartolomé (1994) suggested two decades ago that educators fetishize methods themselves, rather than critique them for their implicit biases. *Diaculturalist pedagogy* is a challenge to the comforting monoculturalist, US-centric, paternalistic social and academic tradition of telling adult immigrant learners who they are, what they know, and how they learn via the creation of ill-fitting and invisible-izing pedagogies. Offering up this challenge constitutes an epistemological and ontological rupture in the realm of educational theory and in academia itself, as well as a political commitment that educational theorists, researchers, and practitioners must be willing to make.

Acknowledgement

The author gratefully acknowledges the generous support of Dr. Anna Stetsenko for her insights and guidance in refining this document.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author.

References

- Adams, J. 1899. *Jane Addams on the Problems of Charity*. The Social Welfare History Project. Accessed April 17, 2015. <http://www.socialwelfarehistory.com/organizations/jane-addams-on-the-problems-of-charity-1899/>
- Adult Education and Workforce Development Organizations. 2009. *Workforce and Education Strategies for Achieving National Economic Priorities – Recommendations for the U.S. Department of Education*. The Council for Adult & Experiential Learning. Accessed June 1, 2015. <http://www.cael.org/pdfs/recs-to-ed-from-workforce-and-adult-ed-orgs-final>
- Alfred, M. V. 2002. "The Promise of Sociocultural Theory in Democratizing Adult Education." *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 96: 3–14. AQ8
- Alfred, M. V. 2005. "Overlooked in Academe: What Do We Know about Immigrant Students in Adult and Higher Education?" *New Horizons in Adult Education and Human Resource Development* 19: 4–14. doi:10.1002/nha3.10203.
- Alfred, M. V. 2015. "Diaspora, Migration, and Globalization: Expanding the Discourse of Adult Education." *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 146: 87–97.
- Anyon, J. 1997. *Ghetto Schooling: A Political Economy of Urban Educational Reform*. New York: Teachers College Press, Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Atkinson, M. 2014. "Reframing Literacy in Adult ESL Programs: Making the Case for the Inclusion of Identity." *Literacy and Numeracy Studies LNS* 22: 4176. doi:10.5130/lms.v22i1.4176.
- Au, W. 2009. *Unequal by Design: High-stakes Testing and the Standardization of Inequality*. New York: Routledge.
- Ayers, D. F., and D. Carlone. 2007. "Manifestations of Neoliberal Discourses within a Local Job-training Program." *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 26 (4): 461–479. AQ9
- Bartolomé, L. I. 1994. "Beyond the Methods Fetish: Toward a Humanizing Pedagogy." *Harvard Educational Review* 64 (2): 173–195.
- Baumgartner, L. 2003. *Adult Learning Theory: A Primer*. Columbus, OH: Center on Education and Training for Employment, College of Education, Ohio State University.
- Berry, E. E., and M. Epstein. 1999. *Transcultural Experiments: Russian and American Models of Creative Communication*. New York: St. Martin's Press. Accessed October 12, 2015. http://www.emory.edu/INTELNET/tc_1.html
- Bhatia, S. 2002. "Acculturation, Dialogical Voices and the Construction of the Diasporic Self." *Theory & Psychology* Feb. 12 (1): 55–77.
- Bhatia, S., and A. Ram. 2009. "Theorizing Identity in Transnational and Diaspora Cultures: A Critical Approach to Acculturation." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 33 (2): 140–149.
- Bowles, S., and H. Gintis. 1976. *Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational Reform and the Contradictions of Economic Life*. New York: Basic Books.
- Carlson, M., and B. Jacobsson. 2013. "'Work Orientation' and/or 'Democratic Education' in Language Courses for Immigrants – Teachers between Organisation and Profession." Conference Paper. European Educational Research Association. Berlin, Germany.
- Darder, A., and L. Mirón. 2006. "Critical Pedagogy in a Time of Uncertainty: A Call to Action." *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies* 6 (1): 5–20.
- Dewey, J. 1916. *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education*. New York: Macmillan.
- Dinnerstein, L., and D. M. Reimers. 1999. *Ethnic Americans: A History of Immigration*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Fine, M. 2013. "Youth Participatory Action Research – Cultivating Diverse Knowledge and Collective Action for Organizational Change." Lecture presented at Big Ideas Fest 2013, Half Moon Bay, CA.
- Freire, P. 1998. *Pedagogy of Freedom: Ethics, Democracy, and Civic Courage*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Freire, P. 2000. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Fry, B. N. 2007. *Nativism and Immigration: Regulating the American Dream*. New York: LFB Scholarly Pub.
- García, O., and T. Kleyn, eds. 2016. *Translanguaging with Multilingual Students: Learning from Classroom Moments*. New York: Routledge.
- Giroux, H. A. 1997. *Pedagogy and the Politics of Hope: Theory, Culture, and Schooling: A Critical Reader*. Boulder, CO: WestviewPress.
- Giroux, H. A. 2005. "Critical Pedagogy and the Postmodern/Modern Divide: Towards a Pedagogy of Democratization." *Teacher Education Quarterly* 31 (1): 31–47.
- Glassman, M. 2001. "Dewey and Vygotsky: Society, Experience, and Inquiry in Educational Practice." *Educational Researcher* 30 (4): 3–14.
- González, N., L. C. Moll, and C. Amanti. 2005. *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practice in Households, Communities, and Classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: L. Erlbaum Associates.
- Guo, S. 2013. *Transnational Migration and Lifelong Learning: Global Issues and Perspectives*. London: Routledge.
- Guo, S. 2015. "The Changing Nature of Adult Education in the Age of Transnational Migration." In *Transnational Migration, Social Inclusion, and Adult Education*, edited by Shibao Guo and Elizabeth Lange, 7–17. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Hooks, B. 1994. *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*. New York: Routledge.
- Hudson, J. W. 1851. *The History of Adult Education: In Which is Comprised a Full and Complete History of the Mechanics' and Literary Institutions, Athenæums, Philosophical, Mental and Christian Improvement Societies, Literary Unions, Schools of Design, Etc., of Great Britain, Ireland, America, Etc., Etc.* London: Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans.

- Immigration Restriction League U.S., & United States. 1903. *Extracts from the Report of the Commissioner-general of Immigration for the Year Ending June 30*. Boston, MA: Immigration Restriction League.
- Jackson, S. 1997. "Crossing Borders and Changing Pedagogies: From Giroux and Freire to Feminist Theories of Education." *Gender and Education* 9 (4): 457–468.
- 5 Katznelson, I., and M. Weir. 1985. *Schooling for All: Class, Race, and the Decline of the Democratic Ideal*. New York: Basic Books.
- Kincheloe, J. L. 2004. *Critical Pedagogy Primer*. New York: P. Lang.
- Knowles, M. S., E. F. Holton, and R. A. Swanson. 2005. *The Adult Learner: The Definitive Classic in Adult Education and Human Resource Development*. Amsterdam: Elsevier.
- 10 Ladson-Billings, G. 1995. "Toward a Theory of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy." *American Educational Research Journal* 32 (3): 465–491.
- Lave, J. 1996. "Teaching, as Learning, in Practice." *Mind, Culture, and Activity* 3 (3): 149–164.
- Lee, M.-Y., and V. Sheared. 2002. "Socialization and Immigrant Students' Learning in Adult Education Programs." *ACE New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 96: 27–36.
- Martin, L. G. 1993. "Cultural Diversity: Fracture Lines in Adult Education Practice." *Paace Journal of Lifelong Learning* 2: 21–26.
- 15 McLaren, P., and N. Jaramillo. 2006. "Critical Pedagogy, Latino/a Education, and the Politics of Class Struggle." *Cultural Studies – Critical Methodologies* 6 (1): 73–93.
- Michelli, N. M., and D. L. Keiser. 2005. "Education for Democracy: What Can It Be?" In *Teacher Education for Democracy and Social Justice*, edited by Nicholas Michelli and David Keiser, 3–30. New York: Routledge Falmer.
- Moll, L. C., C. Amanti, D. Neff, and N. Gonzalez. 1992. "Funds of Knowledge for Teaching: Using a Qualitative Approach to Connect Homes and Classrooms." *Theory into Practice* 31 (2): 132–141.
- 20 Ortiz, F., and O. H. De. 1947. *Cuban Counterpoint: Tobacco and Sugar*. New York: A.A. Knopf.
- Packer, M. J., and J. Goicoechea. 2000. "Sociocultural and Constructivist Theories of Learning: Ontology, Not Just Epistemology." *Educational Psychologist* 35 (4): 227–241.
- Paris, D., and H. S. Alim. 2014. "What Are We Seeking to Sustain through Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy? A Loving Critique Forward." *Harvard Educational Review* 84 (1): 85–100.
- 25 Pashby, K., L. A. Ingram, and R. Joshee. 2014. "Discovering, Recovering, and Covering-up Canada: Tracing Historical Citizenship Discourses in K-12 and Adult Immigrant Citizenship Education." *Canadian Journal of Education/Revue Canadienne De L'éducation* 37: 2.
- Pinder, S. O. 2010. *The politics of race and Ethnicity in the United States: Americanization, De-Americanization, and Racialized Ethnic Groups*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- 30 Pratt, D. D., and T. Nesbit. 2000. "Discourses and Cultures of Teaching." In *Handbook of Adult and Continuing Education*, edited by Arthur Wilson and Elizabeth Hayes, 117–131. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ryder, A. G., L. E. Alden, and D. L. Paulhus. 2000. "Is Acculturation Unidimensional or Bidimensional? A Head-to-Head Comparison in the Prediction of Personality, Self-identity, and Adjustment." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 79 (1): 49–65.
- 35 Shor, I. 1992. *Empowering Education: Critical Teaching for Social Change*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Sparks, B. 2002. "Adult Literacy as Cultural Practice." *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education* 96: 59.
- Tudge, J. R. H., and S. Scrimsher. 2003. "Lev S. Vygotsky on Education: A Cultural-historical, Interpersonal, and Individual Approach to Development." In *Educational Psychology: A Century of Contributions*, edited by Barry Zimmerman and Dale Schunk, 207–228. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- 40 U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights. 2011. *Ensuring Equal Access to High-quality Education*. Washington, DC. Accessed October 27, 2015. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/ensure03.pdf>

AQ10



AQ11

