

Learning the Same Language in a Multicultural Classroom - Bridging the Gaps...

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- *Working with Black Adult Learners: A Practical Guide* (NIACE, 1993)
- *RaceTracks* (LB Greenwich, 1993)
- *Blood Sweat & Tears* (NYA, 1996)
- *Toolkit for Tackling Racism in Schools* (Trentham Books, 2000)
- *Equality & Diversity in Adult & Community Learning* (NIACE/ LSDA, 2002)
- *Trial & Error: Teaching about Racism in Citizenship Education* (S.Dadzie/ DfES, 2003)

Today's Aims

- To explore some of the challenges of teaching and learning in multi-cultural classrooms
- To consider the UK experience of working with diverse adult learners from a range of national, religious and ethnic backgrounds
- To identify the components of a 'shared language' with a focus on issues of inclusion, integration and mutual respect

Some key questions...

- What are the key challenges of teaching and learning in a multi-cultural classroom?
- How have these challenges been addressed in the UK?
- What do we mean by a 'shared language'?
- How can teachers foster an ethos of inclusion, integration and mutual respect?
- What approaches or activities can be used to encourage mutual understanding and 'bridge the gaps'?

Discussion Guidelines

- Mobile phones OFF or SILENT, please
- An ethos of **MUTUAL RESPECT**
- Keep the **EQUALITY** – everyone has a right to speak, listen and be heard
- **LEARN** from different views, beliefs or experiences – and if necessary, agree to differ
- Avoid interruptions, 'speech-making' and dialogues that exclude others

Question 1

- What are the key challenges of teaching and learning in a multi-cultural classroom?



A Tutor's Perspective...

“The primary aim was to help the assimilation and integration of recent immigrants, many of whom did not speak English. Often the teaching approaches ...had little bearing on the lives of the people involved...”

Adult ESOL Learners in Britain: A Cross-Cultural Study

A.Khanna et al. (Multi-Lingual Matters, 1998)

Challenges for Tutors

- Language barriers
- Prior education
- Cultural and religious differences
- Social diversity (class, caste, upbringing)
- Trauma, low self-esteem, disaffection
- Poverty, racism, social exclusion
- Frustrated aspirations

Question 2

- How have these challenges been addressed in the UK?



Race Equality Laws...

Schools and colleges have a **POSITIVE DUTY** to have due regard to the need to...

- **ELIMINATE** unlawful racial discrimination
- **PROMOTE** equality of opportunity
- **PROMOTE** good race relations between people from different racial groups

They also have a non-statutory duty to **PROMOTE** community cohesion

Equality & Diversity Policies...

- Equally favourable treatment
- Equal opportunity
- Equal access to services
- Equal treatment
- Equal representation
- Equal share
- Positive Action to create a 'level playing field'
- Equal in the eyes of the law
- Equal - *but not the same*
- Differences are respected and valued
- Service provision is flexible and fit for purpose
- Positive role models
- Workforce diversity
- Diversity is seen as natural, beneficial, something to be celebrated

Targeted Strategies...

The law encourages education providers to

- Address special educational, training or welfare needs
- Target jobs at under-represented groups
- Tailor educational provision
- Develop capacity building initiatives
- Offer special encouragement
- 'Level the playing-field'

Question 3

What do we mean by a 'shared' language?



A Shared Language

A language that...

- Brings individuals together
- Enables them to express ideas, concepts and emotions
- Identifies 'common ground'
- Empowers individuals and groups
- Ensures access to jobs, services and civil society

Question 4

- How can teachers foster an ethos of inclusion, integration and mutual respect?

An Inclusive Ethos

- Equality & Diversity are 'mainstreamed'
- Rules and expectations are explicit
- Messages and sanctions are consistent
- Peer support is encouraged
- Incidents are recorded and monitored
- Behaviour is respectful
- Language is non-confrontational
- Good practice is 'modelled'

An Inclusive Curriculum

Teaching and communication that

- Develops practical and technical language
- Reflects different learning styles
- Acknowledges diverse cultures and histories
- Draws from students' life experiences
- Highlights commonalities
- Explores different perspectives
- Encourages communication
- Values individual contributions
- Promotes achievement

A Multi-Cultural Approach

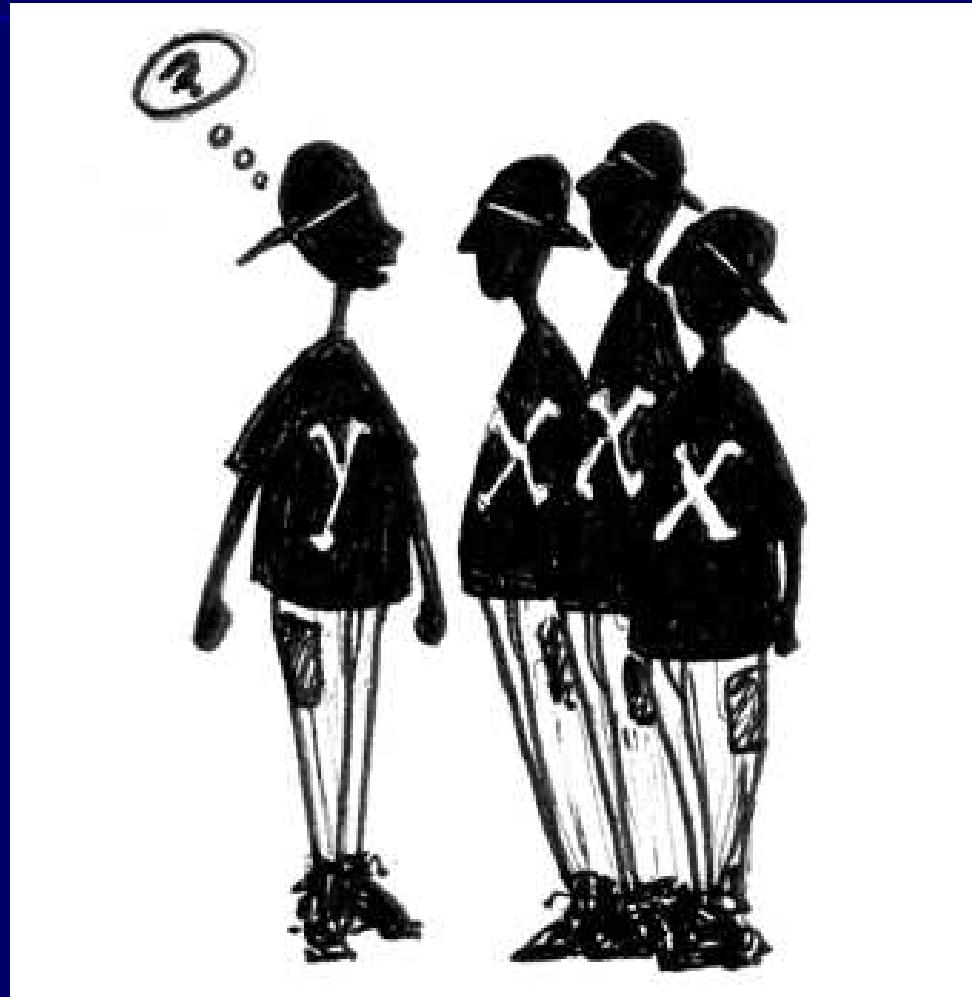
An approach that...

- Promotes the benefits of multi-culturalism
- Avoids euro-centric assumptions
- Questions popular stereotypes
- Includes positive role models
- Discourages discriminatory attitudes
- Challenges inappropriate language

Question 5

- What approaches or activities can be used to encourage mutual understanding and 'bridge the gaps'?

Example 1



Example 2

- Who are these people?
- Where do they live?
- What work do they do?
- What food do they eat?
- What beliefs do they have?

