

## Practicing a Pedagogy That Engages Diversity

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ANY COURSE CAN ENGAGE STUDENTS IN INTERACTIONS that stimulate the cognitive and relational work that is fundamental to the development of intercultural competences. However, as any experienced instructor will observe, even the most careful course design is only the prologue to a messy classroom reality.

For example, you enter the classroom well prepared. As soon as you invite students into the discussion, a few of the regulars speak up, students who are confident expressing their opinions, comfortable extroverts who have educational histories of being affirmed for ready participation and rich contributions. A few others join in with slightly different perspectives. Then, a student who only occasionally speaks during discussion and who is visibly hesitant and anxious provides a radically different analysis of the reading. As this student is talking, you can see and feel the anxiety of some other students. As soon as the student is finished, other students immediately launch into what may be perceived as harsh dismissals or rebuttals to what was just articulated. Taken aback, you respond in ways that are perhaps more passive, hesitant, or silencing than you intend. You find yourself puzzling over how to better facilitate or structure dialogue toward your purposes the next time and wondering how to support students' ability to engage cognitive dissonance and multiple perspectives.

This scenario is not just reserved for novice instructors or disciplines that address overtly contentious topics. Every classroom has complex opportunities, acknowledged or not, to promote or thwart the contributions of students. Any course can engage students in interactions that stimulate the cognitive

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and relational work that is fundamental to the development of intercultural competence. Yet as we have argued throughout the monograph, the failure to utilize the opportunities present in our classrooms is detrimental to the goal of deepening our own and our students' capacity to listen and contribute in conversations that feature diverse ideas or communication styles. However, it is one thing to design a course based on the theory of intercultural development; it is another thing to be able to facilitate purposeful, substantive interactions in the midst of complex, unpredictable, and fluid dynamics in the classroom. Yet as Hurtado (2001) concluded from her research on climate and diversity, it is critical to consider how and whether our pedagogical practice promotes "the type of interaction necessary to create equal status conditions and, thus, learning in diverse environments" (p. 189). Therefore, this chapter shifts out of the course design stage to focus on a discussion of facilitative practices that support the development of intercultural skills in "real-time" learning environments with students present.

## **Applying Intercultural Pedagogical Principles to Classroom Facilitation**

Drawing on the intercultural theory presented in earlier chapters, the following sections highlight specific pedagogical practices that are constructive for the development of intercultural learning outcomes. The selection of the practices that follow was guided by their solid grounding in both intercultural principles and research on teaching and learning. We illustrate each practice with excerpts from student learning reflections to emphasize how learning-centered perspectives can inform reflection and refinement of pedagogical practice. In order to model the balance between reflection and practical tools for teaching and learning, we also embed each suggested practice within a broader context that shapes the possibilities and constraints present in today's college classrooms.

### ***Acknowledge Anxiety and Offer Support***

Any classroom setting, but especially a diverse one, involves group interactions that are inherently anxiety producing (Gudykunst and Shapiro, 1996; Ickes, 1984). Despite the discomfort it provokes, disequilibrium is known to inspire

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significant learning (Weinstein and Obear, 1992). A well-facilitated classroom can also offer students a safe context in which to develop productive ways of managing their anxiety by actively experimenting with new ways to deal with the unfamiliar. As we established in the third chapter, the goal is not to eliminate anxiety or discomfort, but to support students' capacity to manage them, as the ability to manage uncertainty or anxiety is crucial to intercultural learning.

**Be Mindful of Different Thresholds of Anxiety.** Gudykunst (2005) claimed that each person has a maximum and minimum threshold for uncertainty and anxiety. The maximum is defined as "the highest amount of uncertainty [one] can have and think [one] can predict strangers' behavior sufficiently to feel comfortable interacting with them" (Gudykunst, 2005, p. 286). That class events will sometimes elicit anxiety from both students and instructors is a given, and there are many occasions when our discomfort is warranted. When the anxiety passes a certain threshold, however, it begins to interfere with the learning process.

For example, this student identifies a language barrier as a significant source of anxiety in cooperative learning:

*One moment when I felt really frustrated in class was within a group with two other girls. We were talking about a question [related to] the reading. I was trying to get across how I thought this question was logically answered in the text. They could not grasp my thoughts. Although there was a bit of a language barrier between us, it was as if they just dismissed my thought completely and moved on to their own beliefs. I felt misunderstood and unimportant to my other two group members.*

This student notes that the other two group members were multilingual and she spoke only English. She subsequently shuts down and does not make further attempts to be heard by or listen to her group.

Given the inevitability of such tension or anxiety in interactions across diversity, our job as instructors is to provide mechanisms to normalize the anxious response, but also to challenge and support students' ability to move beyond it or through it. In the preceding example, the instructor might

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respond by acknowledging the tension, reiterating that the voices of all group members are important, and gently encouraging the more outspoken students to make sure others feel heard before inserting their own opinions into the conversation.

Excessive anxiety can be activated in a variety of ways, but one of its most profound triggers concerns individual and group identity. Whether or not identity is the explicit focus of a discussion or activity, anxiety can be triggered by perceptions students bring into the classroom about their own and others' group membership. Anxiety can be especially at issue for students who do not represent the majority group in a classroom. They are more likely to fear negative consequences of classroom interactions, such as being discriminated against or negatively evaluated by members of other groups and those from their own group. All these fears are directly related to identity, and research literature highlights them as significant anxiety risks (Stephan and Stephan, 1985). When students perceive themselves to be in the "outgroup," they may often feel stereotyped or judged, regardless of whether they are part of a minority or majority group (Gonzales and others, 1983; Gudykunst, 2002; Ting-Toomey, 2005). When that occurs, anxiety becomes a significant barrier to learning.

**Affirms Students' Self-Identity.** Research suggests that an individual's anxiety can be decreased by the affirmation of their self-esteem and increased empathy that comes when they learn to introduce more nuance into their categorization of strangers (Gudykunst, 2005, p. 300). When students experience anxiety in the learning process, it is important for instructors to validate their identities as expressed in the classroom and to invite them to look deeper into the identities of others. Deardorff (2009b) argues that "the degree to which an individual feels secure in his or her identity" (p. 266) is a critical part of effectively engaging diverse perspectives and communicating effectively. Our role as instructors is to mediate the "tug of war" between comfort and frustration (Goodman, 2008).

An example of a classroom space that decreased anxiety by providing an opportunity for students to proactively assert their identities comes from a learning journal written by a student who noted that her family had immigrated to

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the United States and that she was the first in her family to go to college. She described herself as being shy, tending to prefer to listen to others, and often being the last to speak up in class. She experienced something of a turning point when required to present to the class on a biographical object and its significance:

*We had to write about a biographical object and to talk about it. During this time, not knowing everyone, I was really shy. . . . Many classes that I had before did not give us the chance to know one another. I think when students are able to interact and know more about one another, I believe it creates a better learning atmosphere. No one would feel left out. I was able to get to know my classmates better and they were able to get to know me better. Another reason why I chose this event was because I got to tell the class who I was. Many times people can judge me wrongly, and so by telling the class who I was really eliminates the stereotyping towards me. It showed them who I really was.*

Activities such as this one help instructors to understand and affirm students' unique backgrounds, gain a sense of their possible anxiety thresholds, and scaffold activities that engage the range of identities within the classroom.

**Model Tolerance for Ambiguity.** If students are to learn how to tolerate ambiguity and manage their anxiety with the unfamiliar, they need the instructor to act as a constructive role model. Research by Weinstein and Obeir (1992) shows that fear of experiencing intense emotions and losing control in the classroom is one of the top barriers faced by faculty in successfully engaging diversity in classrooms. Yet the level of anxiety in the classroom will increase exponentially if the instructor himself or herself appears uncomfortable with the content or student responses, and students will usually notice our anxiety even if not expressed.

Contrary to popular assumption, managing our own anxiety does not require that we always hide it behind a calm veneer. Experienced faculty know when their own or a student's emotional response begins to get in the way of the course. When that happens, it is helpful to pause the activity and notice the anxiety out loud. Weinstein and Obeir (1992) point out that sometimes voicing

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our own ambivalence about stirring up feelings can be a good preventative practice in the classroom. Addressing anxiety directly in a way that communicates respect frees students to put a name to their own feelings, and removes the affective barrier that prevents genuine learning and engagement.

For example, racial identity, race relations, and racism are often an anxiety-producing topic in formal curricula across a broad range of humanities and social science courses. As discussed in the third chapter, racial tensions are also present in our classrooms due to the vastly different lived experiences of our students. Discussing the historic privileging of some populations and their differential access to systems of power can stir feelings of anxiety, uncertainty, and other emotional responses. In such cases, what often emerges in classrooms is a challenging and disorienting mix of emotions about race, ranging from guilt or depression to anger that the faculty member is pushing the class into material that is too difficult to deal with. Instructors may be inclined to try and avoid discussion and focus on presentation of the formal content in order to avoid conflict or unpredictability. Students may frustrate each other by debating differences between prejudice and racism and confusing their meanings as defined by scholars. At such times, the classroom can move rapidly from being placid to loud with competing emotions or, conversely, to silence as students and faculty retreat to safer and neater emotional places. These can be effective opportunities for faculty to share that they, too, wrestle with the anxiety, and to acknowledge that given the history of the United States, it is natural for persons to have vastly different experiences and interpretations. Conversations that name the anxiety present in the room, when authentic and given adequate time and space, can open expressions of trust and confidence that students can handle the dissonance productively. They also communicate to students that it is natural to feel discomfort when presented with material that challenges prior experiences, orientations, or social beliefs. For example, an instructor might say: “Let’s take a time-out for a second: I’m not sure if you feel this as well, but discussing this topic is making me uncomfortable. Is anybody else feeling this as well? Why do you think we get uncomfortable when this topic comes up?” What can follow is a frank discussion in which the class is allowed to unpack the present anxiety and remove the affective barriers to learning by directly naming them.

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Acknowledging the affective domain in the classroom counteracts the harmful perception that learning is exclusively an affair of the mind and engages powerful sources of student motivation. Students will stay up late in the night exploring issues that they feel strongly about, and they often decide to pursue career paths paved by affective motivations. A classroom climate where dissonance is expected, ambiguity is tolerated, and anxiety is respectfully acknowledged enables students to maintain a healthy curiosity in the course content as well as the diverse identities and perspectives of their classmates. How students view peers in class and the ease they feel in contributing, critiquing, and considering ideas with each other have direct implications for their level of engagement with diversity and their development of both cognitive and affective diversity competencies.

### ***Disrupt Social Relations in the Classroom***

As noted in earlier chapters, the mere presence of diversity in the classroom does not guarantee constructive interaction or skill development—without proper conditions it can, in fact, lead to the perpetuation of inequality and stereotype (Hurtado, 2001; Pettigrew and Tropp, 2006; Saenz, 2010). As Deardorff and Hunter (2006) observe, “too often, students remain segregated by their cultural backgrounds and institutions miss amazing opportunities to make the most of these resources in developing students’ intercultural and global competencies” (p. 81). While this kind of segregation may occur broadly on college and university campuses, each classroom offers opportunities to productively and ethically interrupt segregation within classrooms so as to support students’ substantive interactions with others (Arkoudis and others, 2010; Goodman, 2008; Hanson, 2010; Van Gyn, Schuerholz-Lehr, Caws, and Preece, 2009).

**Respond to Triggers and Biased Comments.** One specific question often asked by faculty with regard to promoting positive peer communication and relations in the classroom has to do with responding to biased comments made by students. In a paper devoted to such triggers in the classroom, Weinstein and Obear (1992) note that biased comments that touch on the identity of others, such as “I don’t see race as an issue,” “homosexuals are abnormal,” or

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“Jews aren’t the only ones that suffered” (p. 45), often generate defensiveness on the part of the person or group being referenced, and they end in frustration or unproductive debates. If the instructor does not respond to these comments, targeted students feel threatened and unsupported. Simply remaining silent sends a message to those students who feel objectified or reduced by the comment. However, Weinstein and Obear (1992) point out that addressing them immediately in the moment can generate aggression or shut down discussion. Therefore, Weinstein and Obear (1992) advise a multipronged approach for dealing with such triggers. First, set a context and prepare by talking about them early on in the class; this should include establishing a way of handling them when they do arise. They suggest that instructors elicit examples of triggers from students at the outset of the class so that the concept is clear. Subsequently, when a trigger occurs, the student writes the phrase or comment and pastes it on the board or to the course Web site, so it can be analyzed and addressed. Weinstein and Obear suggest that suspending the discussion of the trigger enables some reflective distance to develop “between the person who gave the trigger and analysis of the trigger itself. The focus can then be on understanding the concept rather than dealing with the defenses of individuals” (p. 46).

**Challenge Self-Grouping Habits.** We were recently reminded of the importance of paying attention to obvious cues, such as who sits where, and whom they sit next to. For instance, at a recent college event related to our Common Read for first-year students, the guest lecturer noted to the 450 students present:

*It is interesting that you are asking me how to make a difference for refugee students in my community, thousands of miles away, and yet when I look around this auditorium, I can't help noticing where you all chose to sit. Look around. Who are you sitting next to? Who are you not sitting next to? There is a lot of diversity in this room. We are here to talk about working together across differences to support one another. But for the most part, all of you are sitting with people who look like you. How do you expect to do anything if you don't even get to know one another?*

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One of the essential principles for teaching and learning in multicultural contexts is the necessity to actively disrupt the status quo by creating salient groups in which members have an incentive and structure to work cooperatively toward a tangible common goal (Banks and others, 2001). Hurtado (2001) noted that, “. . . without attention to the structure of peer groups in diverse classrooms and to learning activities that promote interaction on an equal status basis, peer status can actually reproduce inequality and undermine the potential learning that can occur among diverse peers” (p. 190). When forming groups for collaborative learning activities, many instructors seek to support intercultural development outcomes by intentionally assembling groups in ways that will disrupt students’ habits of self-grouping. Instructors should also be mindful of research that indicates students may feel more secure and comfortable if the group they are assigned to includes at least one other person whom they perceive as belonging to the same social group (Gudykunst, 2005). That said, it is important to keep in mind that not all forms of cultural and experiential diversity are visible, nor are they made public by students. Attention to both visible and invisible forms of diversity will enhance the design of purposeful collaborative activities and mechanisms for facilitating the development of effective group dynamics.

**Facilitate Purposeful Small Groups.** Ultimately, instructors are well served by investing time and attention in the design and implementation of group activities, and particularly in ensuring the intended learning and development outcomes are being achieved. One student’s learning reflection on the first four weeks of class illustrates the gap that may emerge between thoughtful design and implementation. She was frustrated by the instructor’s decision to form different groups in each class in order to promote more interactions across the large number of students. To facilitate that process, groups engaged in ice-breaker activities. For this student, the rationale was both unclear and unachieved: “Forcing people to socialize just makes it more awkward and the students feel they are being forced. Real connections can’t be made if we are constantly forced to change our seating.” From this student’s perspective, there was an absence of meaningful, relevant opportunities to interact and potentially form “real connections”; whereas, from the instructors’ standpoint, it is likely

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the shifting of groups and icebreakers were intended to support interaction and connection. This example reinforces the importance of both structuring opportunities for frequent interaction and repeatedly assessing how groups are functioning.

Many instructors have found it helpful to assign students to the same peer group for the initial few weeks of the semester so that students can begin to feel confident among their peers, and mixing up the opportunities for broader interaction once the level of anxiety is somewhat decreased. Assessing the functioning of small groups is another crucial aspect of successful classroom management across time. When students are working in small groups during class, it is not sufficient for the instructor to assign the task and stay in the front of the room—checking in on students as they work in small groups allows the instructor to monitor what is happening and interrupt the activity when it is not functioning as intended. Many instructors have also found it useful to gather periodic written feedback from students on how the small-group work is helping or not helping their learning.

A particularly successful example of a staggered small-group experience comes from a recent public speaking and communications class. At the beginning of the semester, students were placed into groups of three. In these groups, they worked on small-group communication exercises that incorporated topics that were being discussed in their course. At one point, as they were discussing how different cultural groups form associations with certain behaviors as normal or abnormal and react accordingly, the groups were asked to come up with a norm-breaking activity. As a small group, they had to go to a public space and together break a social norm. Each member of the small group then had to reflect upon the experience. Together, the course content, group nature of activity, and subsequent required reflection enabled a deeper exploration of course concepts, while also providing a common experience that lowered their social inhibitions and helped them get to know one another.

**Assign Collaborative Tasks.** Research also suggests that relations between different groups of students in our classrooms will be more equal and positive if there is an explicitly collaborative dimension to learning activities or assignments (Hurtado, 2001; Wong, 2006). The positive interaction inherent in collaboration

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stems from shared goals and a visible alignment of interests: when one member of the group gains, so do the other members. It is important to make the benefits and outcomes of collaborative learning tangible and visible and to reinforce them in practice. During the initial phases of interaction in the classroom, collaboration may lead to considerable anxiety due to the close contact and coordination required. Overall, however, collaborative learning has demonstrated value in enhancing the academic achievement of students across racial and ethnic groups and in reducing prejudice. Social relations in the classroom can be restructured in positive ways as students practice and improve their interaction skills with students from different backgrounds (Hurtado, 2001; Slavin, 1995). Crossing of racial and cultural boundaries occurs more easily in “a supportive environment with structures that encourage investigation and reflection in conjunction with opportunities for meaningful, sustained, face-to-face interaction among people who are different from one another” (Wong, 2006, p. 1).

One example of how an instructor incorporated collaborative projects into the course comes from a civil engineering course for upper-level engineering students. The main focus of the course was transportation planning (that is, traffic flow principles, geometric and pavement design). The professor had recently worked on a project with several colleagues in India, and she developed several problem-based scenarios based on her own experiences working on this international collaborative project. She selected groups for the project based on previous knowledge of students’ experiences (both with the course information and international context) and gave each group the same goal of developing an innovative solution to a specific planning problem. She asked each group to begin by discussing the strengths each member of the group brings in relation to the given scenario. Next, students were asked to consider additional information they may need to gather to more fully understand the transportation problem, such as technical data and local context, and to think about the most effective way to present the solution to coworkers in India. In this example, students all had a core base of knowledge from the course and previous coursework in the major. But they were given the task of working collaboratively on applying this knowledge in a unique context in a foreign country. Some groups sought information from friends who had grown up in

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India; some even connected with students studying engineering at a local university in the area whose transportation issue they were trying to solve. At the end of the project, the instructor asked each member of the group to reflect upon what they learned about their group members, about the process of applying their knowledge in a unique context, and about themselves. Although this assignment involved higher stakes than other collaborative exercises described in this book, it allowed the instructor to incorporate students' diverse knowledge into the application of course content while at the same time facilitating productive understanding among diverse peers.

***Model the Balance Between Suspending Judgment and Constructive Critique***

In the second and third chapters, we argued that the ability to suspend judgment is a critical skill in relating to people of other cultures and backgrounds. Research suggests that it is not uncommon for students to enter college with a sincere but shallow conviction that everyone has the right to their own culture and opinion, underscored by an untested or passive-aggressive tolerance that does not amount to a mature suspension of judgment. While in college, many students pass through a stage described in the research literature as multiplicity (Perry, 1999), when they assume all cultures and perspectives to be equal without fully owning their own commitments or acknowledging the hard work involved in communicating or accomplishing goals in the presence of difference. We hear many of our students expressing a narrative common in our society that we term *happy diversity*, where everyone gets along and difference brings richness, not conflict or competing interests. For instance, in a learning reflection, one of our student shifts within the space of a few sentences from describing being “dismissed” and “misunderstood” by peers who were from a different cultural identity group than she to describing the class as “a community full of different ethnicities, backgrounds and beliefs . . . a large social group whose diversities can be incorporated into one big family.”

The “performance” of a positive attitude toward diversity is well rehearsed and reiterated in schools and culture at large. This is one of the reasons why it takes time and multiple opportunities for individuals to reach a more mature stage in their development, where they can embrace their commitments and

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values, practice critical responses to their own and others' perspectives, and remain open to new information (King and Baxter Magolda, 2005).

In the past, some instructors may have considered suspending judgment as a major barrier in making room for intercultural competence in their classrooms. It is a common misconception that recognizing and inviting multiple perspectives precludes constructive critique, and that such an approach will make our courses less rigorous (Yershova, DeJeaghère, and Mestenhauser, 2000). Yet suspending judgment is in fact a prerequisite for critical thinking, since effective critique depends on a comprehensive understanding of a problem or issue within a context. Suggestive evidence that this is true comes up in case studies of student assessments of various types of classroom interaction (Lee, Williams, and Kilaberia, 2011). For instance, one student described how cooperative learning activities developed both her openness to diverse perspectives and her sense that she became more adept at engaging complex ideas in her writing:

*. . . getting the opportunity to work with people I usually would not work with . . . throughout the time in this class has opened my eyes to all different perspectives. . . . I have had to learn to be more open to other opinions, and more willing to express my thoughts. . . . I think having more than one opinion on something helps tons more when writing or explaining something later on. . . . Being able to write our thoughts about a specific subject, and have someone else break it down and revise it, helps me to write better. . . . I feel like three people's ideas are better than one person because we all see the issues differently.*

Since many different courses assign peer review of assignments or papers, we will use it as an example to elaborate on how to incorporate constructive critique into intercultural classrooms. Peer review can be implemented in a traditional way that positions it as a one-way transaction: the reader performs peer review *for* the writer, who is the beneficiary if the review is helpful, or the victim in the case it is shallow. In situations where student writers have different writing styles or levels of awareness of the discourse conventions, peer review can reinforce discomfort between reviewers. In the absence of clear

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guidance and induction into peer review skills and outcomes by the instructor, it is not unusual for students to focus on mechanical elements of grammar, for instance, and to elide altogether issues of substance, perspective, or interpretation because they do not want to “criticize.”

There are multiple levels of potential benefits, however, when peer review is structured and implemented as a mutually beneficial and cooperative interaction. Instructors can make clear to all students the value of critically engaging a piece of in-process writing through the act of close reading, paying attention to how it is composed, noticing and articulating which elements are effective and where attention is needed. We can do that by communicating to students that completing a peer review is not only for the writer of the text reviewed but for the peer reviewer, who can incorporate the fruits of this reflection on someone else’s text-in-process when they return to their own. Modeling for students how to probe a piece of writing is beneficial to many of the outcomes related to intercultural competence if students can see firsthand how to pose questions about the logic, interpretations, or substantiation of claims in a piece of writing in ways that do not target the writing but critically engage it.

Additionally, many students are uncomfortable providing peer review because they do not perceive that they are “experts” in the subject matter or in writing generally. Guiding students in how to provide effective review, as well as in what is to be gained from it by all participants, can help to build confidence in their ability to participate effectively by taking the spotlight off of their “performance” as a reviewer and creating an understanding that peer review is truly a cooperative endeavor that, when done well, will facilitate positive outcomes for all participants. This excerpt provides an illustration of how effectively facilitated peer review can support both writing skills and outcomes related to intercultural competence. The student cited above notes his initial interpretation of encountering difference, which he identifies simultaneously in cultural background and writing style: “working with a classmate . . . from a very different cultural background than me was a definite learning experience. The biggest struggle I had was when it came to language because she had a very different writing style than I was used to so it took me some time to be able to grasp what it was that she was trying to say.”

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His reflection illustrates an ability to suspend judgment of his awareness of the difference and to remain open to the potential benefits of interaction. He concludes with the observation that, ultimately, “working and getting to know people who have very different cultural backgrounds . . . really helped me develop as a writer.”

We can also model the balance of developing critical thinking skills and suspending judgment by seeking to evaluate the claims or perspectives heard in class only when they have been thoroughly observed and understood. For instance, before providing critique, an instructor might say, “Let me see if I understood you correctly. So you’re saying that . . .” Sometimes, hearing their own statement repeated back in different words will prompt the student to clarify a potential misunderstanding or recognize why it might raise objections. In any case, verifying comprehension before providing a critique will model a mature suspension of judgment to the class.

The final point on the place of critique in classrooms that aim to develop intercultural outcomes is the recognition that critique must not elicit shame. Shame has devastating effects on motivation and academic learning (Turner and Schallert, 2001). When students are shamed, they come up against affective barriers to learning even more disruptive than those built up by anxiety. Educational psychologists claim that shame is a “master emotion” (Goldberg, 1991) in that “no other emotion plays such a central role in affective, cognitive, motivational, and behavioral experiences” (Turner and Schallert, 2001, p. 320). Lewis (1992) claimed that shame acts as an authoritative “interrupt signal” that lets the individual know that their actions have failed, and shuts down or disrupts engagement in these actions. When students experience shame while participating in positive activities such as collaborative work or dialogue across diversity, they internalize the message that these actions have failed, and they are less likely to attempt them again. Instructors can avoid shaming by making a point to distinguish between a behavior or belief and the person (Goodman, 1995), and validating identity while evaluating statements or behaviors. When providing such validating critique, an instructor might say, “I see what you mean, and many very intelligent people reach a similar conclusion. How would it affect your opinion if you learned that . . .” or “How do you think you would see this problem differently if you were a

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[member of a different social group]?” Validating the person and focusing on the issue minimizes defensive barriers and opens up a space where students feel safe to put themselves in the shoes of others and explore new ideas.

### ***Facilitate Conditions to Support Inclusive Dialogue***

Our role as instructors is to support and structure an environment where students can develop more mindful behaviors. One of the main ways to facilitate students’ development is to create interactions in which students are heard, feel comfortable, and trust one another to explore and engage across cultures and various disciplinary content arenas.

**Manage the Stages of Interaction.** It is especially helpful to incorporate activities where, in the first stage, students cannot express evaluative judgments about the other person’s views—the emphasis is on listening and interpreting. Keeping students in the same groups for several similar exercises within a short space of interactive class time helps them to practice listening and interpretive skills with a stranger whose language, perspectives, and interpretations they can observe several times. This process provides space for skill development as students recognize that their views and interpretations are not necessarily those of others, and that there can be value in actively listening to an alternative perspective and being accountable to represent it accurately without first interjecting a dissonant point of view. The following student reflection illustrates the interpersonal group process when people are given the time to get to know each other before accomplishing concrete tasks:

*When we first sat down next to each other, we did not start talking until we were instructed to. After receiving the instructions to talk to each other, we all started making small talk about what classes we were taking and where we were from. I think we were all just trying to feel each other out to see if we would work well with each other. Although I thought it would be a really awkward situation, we all started laughing with each other once our comfort levels were established. I realized that maybe I could be friends with these two girls and it would not just have to be a project where three random people were put in a group and were forced to work with*

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*each other. We all discovered that we had the same goal of doing well in the class and once this was established . . . we realized that working together might not be half bad.*

Kumagai and Lypson (2009) also suggest that effective group discussions require instructors to facilitate but not preside over the conversation. When students connect and engage in dialogue with each other, the classroom gains a sense of community that is not present when all main avenues of communication lead back to the instructor. Such sense of community has been demonstrated to have significant educational benefits. McKinney, McKinney, Franiuk, and Schweitzer (2006), for instance, found that “the sense of community has shown to relate not only to students’ perception of their performance and their satisfaction with the course but also the measure of their actual performance” (p. 283).

**Welcome Different Styles of Communication.** For all students to engage in genuine dialogue, the facilitator must attend to the communication styles of diverse groups. For instance, introverts and students from some cultural backgrounds are acculturated to the need to allow silence before speaking. Goodman (2008) suggests that these students will benefit from incorporating intentional periods of silence into every class. Different communication styles will also be normalized for students if at least some class activities require everyone to think for a brief period of time before responding or providing answers. Margaret Montoya, a professor at the University of New Mexico, introduces silence in her classroom in the following way:

*I explain that some students are prepared to answer quite rapidly while others are slower in preparing a response. Despite the conventional wisdom that overvalues quickness, I announce that I will wait for those who do not think aloud and who need more time to collect their thoughts before speaking. My purpose is to give those who need more time the opportunity to pause and process their thoughts without having to fear that they will be interrupted by those who are quicker to speak (the “crowders”). I want to help the students hear each others [sic] silences and defeat the tendency to*

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*reach negative conclusions about pauses and hesitancy [Montoya, 2000, pp. 297–298].*

By the same token, when students are engaged in large-group discussion, students from some groups will be more likely to provide ready answers or raise their hands to volunteer information. If the instructor selects only volunteers, the voices of those representing different communication patterns are likely to be excluded. A practical solution that works well for some instructors is to invite students to self-score on the participation grade based on the idea that extroverts may need to focus on listening, while introverts need to focus on speaking in class. Around midsemester, each student reflects on his or her own performance, and makes suggestions for earning the remaining participation points in the coming weeks. Students are then graded based on their own goals selected at the midterm point, such as: I need to listen more, I need to speak up more, etc.<sup>2</sup>

## Conclusion

This chapter has presented pedagogical practices and reflective practices that support faculty's ability to facilitate *engaged* diversity in their classes. Developing intercultural competence rests on knowledge acquisition in conjunction with building the capacity to implement that knowledge across diverse contexts; in other words, it requires *knowing about* and *knowing about how to do*. Developing the capacity to *do* requires multiple and longitudinal opportunities to acquire knowledge, as well as to apply and refine it.

Barker and Crichton (2010) describe the potential of classrooms to serve as authentic sites of intercultural interactions, or engaging diversity, concepts that refer to, "opportunities provided in courses and taken by students and instructors to participate in and to thereby negotiate and develop new cultural understandings of themselves and others" (Barker and Crichton, 2010, p. 31). In order to utilize these opportunities, faculty need to recognize them, design pedagogy to realize them, and facilitate students' learning and development while they are taking place.

As we have established throughout this monograph, developing intercultural pedagogy is a continuous, interactive process that takes place over time.

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Those who have attended workshops related to teaching development, whether on implementing learning technologies or incorporating active learning, may be familiar with the experience of being exposed to new knowledge and possibilities. Handouts and notes present extensive content, and one often leaves with a sense of eagerness to implement some new tools. Yet, given that it is unlikely that the localized factors and nuances of one's classroom will be accounted for in a workshop, participants often express feeling challenged, after attending a workshop, to find the time, support, and space needed *to reflect* on how to integrate and implement new ideas or tools into their specific teaching contexts. The same is likely to be true for the readers of this monograph. Resources such as this book are just the beginning as far as developing intercultural pedagogy—knowledge, reflection, experimentation, and interaction with others are all critical to our ability to implement the new tools. Instructors need authentic contexts in which to develop effective intercultural pedagogy and to reflect on our practice with the goal of refinement. Similarly, students need authentic sites of intercultural interaction and opportunity to practice, reflect, and refine intercultural skills, attitudes, and behaviors. Instructors reading this monograph will need to find time, space, and support (perhaps from colleagues or professional communities) to *develop* effective intercultural pedagogy that is informed by and responsive to authentic contexts of practice, and to continuously assess practice with the goal of refinement.