



Gale, T. , Mills, C. and Cross, R. (2017) Socially inclusive teaching: belief, design, action as pedagogic work. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 68(3), pp. 345-356. (doi:[10.1177/0022487116685754](https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487116685754))

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Deposited on: 07 April 2017

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## **Socially inclusive teaching: Belief, design, action as pedagogic work**

### **Abstract**

Like other western nations such as the US and UK, Australia's record of education outcomes for marginalized groups is troubling, whether the comparisons are made within the nation or with other OECD nations. While recent Australian Governments have sought to overhaul funding for schools and universities, on its own, better resources for educational institutions is not enough to redress problems of disadvantage and to achieve social justice. Also required is a focus on the pedagogic work of teachers and, by implication, their teacher educators. Central to this paper is the argument that pedagogy is the most strategic place to begin this work because of its location as a central message system in education, and advance a conceptualization of the pedagogic work required to achieve this aim, comprising the dimensions of *belief*, *design* and *action*. From these are derived three principles on which to build a socially inclusive pedagogy that creates opportunities for all students, whatever their circumstances, to participate more fully in education. Our focus on advancing a conceptual understanding of socially inclusive pedagogy is informed by a theory and politics of transformation, which seek to engage with the deep structures that generate injustice within schools and teacher education.

### **Introduction**

This is a theoretical paper. It provides a conceptual framework for thinking about pedagogy and foregrounds its use by teachers and teacher educators in redressing educational disadvantage. Central to our conception of pedagogy are three interrelated elements: belief, design and action. These we derive from Bourdieu and Passeron's (1990) conception of pedagogic work, requiring pedagogic authority--which authorizes teachers' actions and what they aim to produce in students (e.g. particular study/learning habits)--and pedagogic actions:

not ‘discontinuous and extraordinary actions’ (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, p. 31), but a series or system of activity. In our articulation of pedagogic work as belief, design and action we provide a meta-level understanding of other conceptual framings of pedagogy (e.g. direct instruction, inquiry learning, etc.), which tend to focus on pedagogical action and to a lesser extent on pedagogical *design*, but rarely or rarely explicitly engage with pedagogical *belief*. That is, an explicit account of the authorizing of pedagogy is rarely evident in pedagogical frameworks. Given the implications beliefs carry with respect to what is valued and legitimated, we see this as a significant omission in pedagogies with a specific focus on social inclusion.

While the primary focus of the paper is on the secondary ‘pedagogic work’ (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) of schools, we see implications for teacher education as well, for at least two reasons. First, teacher educators are also engaged in secondary pedagogic work. What we propose in relation to teachers’ pedagogy and their work with students, is also relevant to teacher educators’ pedagogy and their students. Second, education policy within many advanced knowledge-based economies, such as the coalition of market-driven democracies which comprise the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) including Australia, the US, the UK, and much of Western Europe, now position teachers as singularly responsible for their students’ educational attainment, and teacher education as similarly responsible for the quality of their teaching. The common ideology all such countries share is that of neoliberal accountability (El Bouhali, 2015), and the linear, causal relationship now imagined between teacher educator and school teacher, and school teacher and school student (Gale & Parker, 2017, in press), such that it is teacher educators who are now increasingly positioned as ultimately responsible for students’ performances on

standardized assessments such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) (Zhao, 2010).

Much has been written on socially inclusive pedagogy, and the importance of developing instructional practices that are culturally responsive, engaging, and sensitive (Banks & Banks, 2009; Gay, 2010; Hattam & Zipin, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Smyth, 2011). These themes have been pervasive within the literature on socially just education, and the identification of strategies (e.g. see Dei, James, Karumanchery, James-Wilson, & Zine, 2000; Gale & Densmore, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 2006; Smyth, Down, & McInerney, 2014; Zipin, 2009) to achieve more equitable outcomes for those at the margins of our education systems. Yet, despite such efforts, the gap in educational attainment due to social disadvantage has only continued to widen, and at an alarming rate across OECD nations despite their growth in overall levels of wealth in aggregate terms (OECD, 2013, 2015). The distance between rich and poor within these nation states has not only increased in the last 20-30 years, but has now begun to increase at the expense of the middle and professional classes (Gale, Molla & Parker, 2017, in press), not only those who have always been historically positioned as the traditional underclass and least advantaged. Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) show that these differences have become most pronounced in some of the wealthiest advanced market-driven democracies, such as the US, the UK and Australia.

To arrest fissures in social inequality that we now see emerging within (and as a result of) education systems (Dorling, 2011; Piketty, 2014), we argue for a new framing of socially just practice that specifically tackles *economic* inequality, as the central site to intervene. We also challenge a tendency in much of the extant literature to focus on more obvious markers of ‘difference’ — gender, race, and cultural or linguistic background — as the primary basis to

recognize ‘need’ (and then, in turn, establish appropriate forms of ‘response’). This, we argue, has too often resulted in the ‘problem’ being located with ‘the other’, with elites left questioning what is it about *them* that needs to be the focus of pedagogic (and bureaucratic) intervention in order to move them from being ‘less marginalized’, to ‘more mainstream’?

Socioeconomic inequality — a source of disadvantage that cuts across all student groups, irrespective of gender, race, or linguistic background — can be very challenging for teachers and teacher educators, if they recognize it at all. For the most part, attempts to redress ongoing patterns of low educational attainment by ‘the poor’ have been less about how to equip teachers and teacher educators with pedagogic interventions to better engage with this difference, and more about wider, systemic responses that simply aim to provide ‘more places’ for those who fall within certain income brackets: for example, charter schools for low-income students in the US (Kahlenberg & Potter, 2015; Rotberg, 2014), low-income student quotas at Australian and UK universities (Bradley, Noonan, Nugent, & Scales 2008; Watson, 2006).

Rather than attempting to name pedagogies for particular student sub-groups or domains, or suggest that education can be socially inclusive through provision, access, or resourcing alone, in this paper we argue for socially inclusive pedagogy developed from the social justice dispositions of teachers and teacher educators. Our argument is less about providing more places in educational institutions for those who might otherwise be at risk of exclusion, than the teacher’s role in creating opportunities for marginalized students informed by two overlapping transformational intents (Fraser, 1997). The first can be described as theoretical-political with the intent of ‘epistemological equity’ (Dei, 2008): the recognition of marginalized groups as legitimate authors of knowledge (Harding, 2004), by ‘paying due

attention' (Dei, 2008, p. 8) to what they advance as their own *knowledge claims*. This is in contrast to the current relegation of such knowledge to the academic periphery, or its appropriation by European/northern theorists (Connell, 2007; Dei, 2008; Said, 2000). The second transformational intent is political-theoretical, concerned with recognizing and legitimating other *ways* of knowing; particularly, those that open up rather than close down opportunities for students to engage with knowledge claims central to schooling, and which invite contribution to these learning interactions from their own knowledge base. This is in contrast to the learning experiences of most marginalized students, in which their knowledge is often positioned as being 'at odds' with that required and 'expected of them' to move from the margins to the mainstream.

In short, our intention is that the educational experiences of marginalised students will be transformed through socially inclusive pedagogies. We see this intention working at two levels, one we characterise as being theoretical-political and the other we characterise as being political-theoretical. Our intention is the enactment of pedagogy that recognises (1) other knowledges and (2) other ways of knowing. We see these as transformational in Fraser's (1997) sense of restructuring the frameworks that generate inequalities (see below).

We take up these transformational intents in the context of pedagogy. Lingard et al. (2003) suggest that pedagogy functions as education's central message system. More than curriculum or assessment – the other two message systems of education (Bernstein, 1971) – pedagogy is particularly suited to creating opportunities for social inclusion within educational institutions, given its interest in the organization of social relations. Moreover, as Hall and Murphy (2008, p. x) argue:

Curriculum can be thought of as being at three levels: curriculum as specified (the social order, the policy), curriculum as enacted, and curriculum as experienced (the experienced world). Pedagogy, from a sociocultural perspective, has to be concerned with these three interrelational aspects of curriculum. In this sense, it is concerned with the relationship between practice and the cultural, institutional, and historical contexts in which the practice occurs (Wertsch, 1998). What is fundamental is the relationship, how the social world, the individual as agent, and the practice are interconnected. People's ways of knowing, their histories of participation (Holland et al., 1998) and the ways in which these mediate ongoing activity in education and workplace settings are facets of a sociocultural perspective that are highlighted in this view on pedagogy.

As the 'enterprise par excellence where the line between subject matter and method grows necessarily indistinct' (Bruner, 1966, p. 72), pedagogy is thus the most strategic place to begin the work of creating socially inclusive contexts in schooling and teacher education alike. It is the site where it is most appropriate to ask: 'How are forms of experience, identity and relation evoked, maintained and changed by the formal transmission of educational knowledge and sensitivities?' (Bernstein, 2003, p. 85).

Drawing on Bourdieu and Passeron's (1990) concept of 'pedagogic work' (PW), we frame the creation of socially inclusive contexts for marginalized students in terms of *belief*, *design*, and *action*. We identify three principles (one from each) as illustrative of and with which to conceive of a socially inclusive pedagogy: (i) a *belief* that all students bring something of value to the learning environment; (ii) a *design* that values difference while also providing access to and enabling engagement with dominance; and (iii) *actions* that work with students and their communities.

We begin with a brief account of the current policy context for Australian schooling and recent developments around its social inclusion agenda as an example of how education systems are attempting to respond to disadvantage, and the limitations of these approaches. While there are clear differences between nations and their education systems, Wilkinson and Pickett (2009) show that there are similarities in the effects of economic inequalities on student outcomes in Australia, the US and the UK. Our focus on Australia provides one situated account of these effects. This is followed by an overview of ‘pedagogic work’ (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) – including the belief, design and actions that inform this work – within which a socially inclusive pedagogy can be conceived. We conclude that creating opportunities for marginalized groups through a socially inclusive pedagogy, cognizant of its constitutive elements, is required if schools and teacher education are to be transformed and not simply affirm existing arrangements.

### **Socially inclusive education in Australian schooling**

As in the US and the UK and other nations within the OECD that share neoliberal frameworks of governance, education in Australia currently endures an unprecedented level of political and public scrutiny of its governance, quality and ability to deliver economic and social outcomes (Lingard & Sellar, 2013). This is grounded in a complex set of high stakes testing and the use of student and school achievement data in an increased accountability attached to funding and student and school results (Lingard, 2010). It is a context in which the rhetoric of ‘improvement’ reflects the implicit economic goals that governments place on schooling, whereby students who are literate and numerate can contribute productively to society. In this current historical and political moment in Australia, social inclusion in schools and higher



education has been primarily focused on creating more places rather than opportunities for disadvantaged students.

For example, the blueprint for education in Australian schools, the *Melbourne Declaration on Educational Goals for Young Australians* (MCEETYA, 2008), frames a broad commitment to equity that is inclusive of people experiencing socioeconomic disadvantage and Indigenous peoples, but stops short of detailing how that might be achieved beyond an exhortation to ‘support all young Australians to achieve not only equality of opportunity but also more equitable outcomes’ (p. 15). The ‘commitment to action’ for meeting this goal is informed by one strategy only – ‘Strengthening accountability and transparency’ – with the elaboration: ‘Schools need reliable, rich data on the performance of their students because they have the primary accountability for improving student outcomes’ (p. 16). This stance reflects a similar orientation within the OECD’s (2008, p. 2) policy brief on educational equity, foregrounding the two dimensions of *fairness* (‘making sure that personal and social circumstances ... should not be an obstacle to achieving educational potential’) and *inclusion* (‘ensuring a basic minimum standard of education for all’). Both emphasize access rather than transforming the contexts themselves in ways that are more responsive – and genuinely inclusive – from the inside out.

The most tangible evidence of responding to the problem in this way in recent Australian history has been the *Gonski Review of Funding for Schooling* (Gonski et al., 2011). Described as a ‘fairer’ model of education by allocating funding on the basis of need, the goals of the Gonski recommendations aimed to provide better-equipped and well-resourced schools to those most socioeconomically disadvantaged. As the Gonski Review saw it, ‘equity ... means that all students must have access to an acceptable international standard of education,

regardless of where they live or the school they attend' (p. 105). Again, the focus here remains on the provision of more places within schools and the redistribution of resources around greater access and opportunity to those places, with little to no attention given to problems within the contexts themselves that contribute to exclusion. It reflects what Raffo and Gunter (2008) describe as a *functionalist* approach to social inclusion. In a general sense:

social inclusion can be viewed as the extent to which various practices/activities/mechanisms promote or limit cultural and economic integration and the meaningful participatory access of social groups and individuals into mainstream society. (Raffo & Gunter, 2008, p. 399)

But:

The 'functionalist' position takes it for granted that social inclusion is an important part in the proper functioning of society that brings benefits both to society as a whole and to individuals within that society. The major gains of increased levels of inclusion are exemplified by improved economic development, social cohesion and enhanced life chances for individuals. The problem is that these benefits often do not materialise in the case of individuals and groups from disadvantaged backgrounds. (Raffo & Gunter, 2008, p. 400)

A functionalist approach to social inclusion in education foregrounds student *places* – opportunity, access, participation, progression, completion and so on – whereas a relational understanding of social inclusion emphasizes the creation of contexts in which the interests of the least advantaged are recognized and served. Raewyn Connell (2007) writes of these ideas

in terms of power relations in the realm of knowledge. She argues that despite claims to universality, the social theories of the global north that dominate our social, political and economic systems fail to account for voices and knowledges from non-dominant peoples – the global south. While they are specific places, ‘north’ and ‘south’ are used by Connell as place markers for the centre and the periphery in knowledge relations, in a similar way as ‘east’ and ‘west’ are critiqued by Said in *Orientalism* (1978).

In advocating for the remediation of these social relations, Nancy Fraser (1997) draws attention to two different kinds of action required to make social contexts more socially inclusive. As she explains:

By affirmative remedies for injustice I mean remedies aimed at correcting inequitable outcomes of social arrangements *without disturbing the underlying framework that generates them*. By transformative remedies, in contrast, I mean remedies aimed at correcting inequitable outcomes precisely by *restructuring the underlying generative framework*. The crux of the contrast is end-state outcomes versus the processes that produce them. (Fraser, 1997, p. 23; emphasis added)

In other words, the very education with which students engage needs to be restructured and in ways that take account of not just different ‘bodies’ but also, and importantly, the social, cultural and economic differences (and similarities) they embody. These intentions, closely connected to the second of Fraser’s (1997) two remedies, challenge us to pursue a theory and politics of transformation by engaging with the deep structures that generate students’ exclusion.

## **Pedagogic work and the creation of socially inclusive contexts for marginalized groups**

The transformative work required in educational institutions to achieve social inclusion need not be confined to one area of an institution or system or to one set of processes within them, although – because of their centrality – some have more transformative potency than others. For this reason we focus our attention on the ‘pedagogic work’ – as conceived by Bourdieu and Passeron (1990) – of teachers and teacher educators, i.e. the central message system of education systems (Bernstein, 1971; Lingard et al., 2003).

Our argument is prefaced by two introductory remarks. First, pedagogic work (PW) is more often implicated in closing down opportunities than in opening them up; that is, in the reproduction of inequalities. In part, this is because ‘the man [sic] who deliberates on his culture is already cultivated and the questions of the man who thinks he is questioning the principles of his upbringing still have their roots in his upbringing’ (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, p. 37). In other words, even the pedagogies we invent to ‘liberate’, imagine liberation *within* a particular frame and of a particular kind. Yet this should not leave us hamstrung: damned if we do and damned if we don’t. In the roots of critical social science there are socially inclusive dispositions from which we can draw and it is from these that we are able to identify at least three principles for socially inclusive pedagogy that we explore below. Our observations in relation to particular equity groups are illustrative. Our intention is to advocate a general disposition on which to build a socially inclusive pedagogy, rather than to name pedagogies for particular equity groups or educational domains.

Second, our focus is on *secondary* PW; namely, pedagogy in the context of formal education. Primary PW occurs in the earliest phase of one’s upbringing, as a primary cultivator of the habitus; that is, one’s inclinations, tendencies, or unthinking-ness in actions. This is not to say

that there is no relationship between primary and secondary PW. On the contrary, ‘the success of all school education, and more generally of all secondary PW, depends fundamentally on the education previously accomplished in the earliest years of life’ (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990, p. 43). That is to say, success in educational institutions has less to do with how well students learn in them and more to do with the extent to which those educational institutions recognize their *a priori* knowledge and skills.

We discuss this secondary PW below in terms of the belief, design and action of teachers and teacher educators. Drawing on these three dimensions, we identify three principles (one from each dimension) on which to build a socially inclusive pedagogy: (i) a belief that all students bring something of value to the learning environment; (ii) a design that values difference while also providing access to and enabling engagement with dominance; and (iii) actions that work *with* students and their communities. Emphasis is given to the principle in each of these constitutive elements for building a socially inclusive pedagogy in classrooms and which has the potential to generate opportunities for currently marginalized groups. These three constitutive elements of socially inclusive pedagogy are represented by the diagram below and discussed in the sections that follow.

[Insert Figure 1 about here]

### **Elements of pedagogic work: belief, design, action**

While these three elements variously appear in the pedagogies literature (especially those that have emphasised social and cultural responsiveness (e.g., Gay, 2010; Jackson, 1993; Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2007; Sapon-Shevin, 2003)), less clear is how they are related. Significantly, we also note that while some approaches to pedagogy focus on action and

design at the expense of belief (and increasingly so with the rising prominence of ‘clinical’ based models of teaching (McLean Davies et al., 2013), our contention is that all three elements – belief, design, and action – need to be pursued by educators if pedagogy is to deliver socially inclusive outcomes.

*Belief – in students’ assets rather than their deficits*

By *belief* we refer to the ideas or principles that *name* and *frame* good teaching, which are not always explicitly articulated by practitioners but are influential in their pedagogy nonetheless. It is these beliefs about teaching that inform pedagogic design and action. There is considerable debate on these issues in the literature and in contexts of practice, most recently and comprehensively represented in what have become known in school systems as ‘authentic’ (Newman et al., 1996) and ‘productive’ (Lingard et al., 1998) pedagogies.

Attempts to define ‘good’ teaching as the basis to evaluate and improve the professional standards of teachers has gained traction across OECD nations, particularly in the UK (e.g., UK Department of Education, 2011), Canada (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2010), and Australia (Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership, 2012). While each is different, all frameworks share common principles that are consistent in the ways they frame and describe the essential qualities of effective practice. Our reading of these principles suggests their similarities to be: (a) there is a diversity of learners and ways of learning, which need to be taken into account when designing pedagogy; (b) learners learn best when learning activities require them to be actively engaged; and (c) assessment should have a pedagogical intent, making a contribution to students’ learning and not just serving an institutional purpose of allocating grades. These are beliefs about pedagogy that many would share, although they are not necessarily orientated towards achieving social inclusion.

We do not seek to argue that high status ‘educational knowledge’ or ‘school knowledge’ should be replaced. Indeed, the value of such knowledge is not only based in its historical accumulation of cultural value and prestige, but also in its scientific validity as abstract and collective disciplinary knowledge that provides access to epistemic communities beyond the concrete, everyday and immediate lifeworlds that we inhabit. This is precisely Vygotsky’s (1987) own point on the need for formal instruction in the mediation and transformation of everyday experience to scientific (cultural) knowledge as the basis for human learning and development. However, to have a more transformative effect in schools and teacher education, pedagogies need to be informed by the belief that all students bring something of value to the learning environment. That is, students and families should be regarded as vibrant and richly resourced, rather than bundles of pathologies to be remedied or rectified (Smyth, 2012). This is the first principle on which to build a socially inclusive pedagogy. Currently, many education systems and the educators who act within them, tend to define students from under-represented groups in terms of their deficits rather than their assets. Unsettling deficit views as a ‘pedagogical intent’ (Hickey-Moody et al., 2010, p. 232) requires strategies based on positive understandings of historically marginalized students within educational institutions and their communities. Instead of lamenting their deficits, teachers and teacher educators need to refocus on students’ assets, especially their particular knowledges and skills (Gale, 2012) Luis Moll and his colleagues (1992; Moll & Greenberg, 1990) refer to these assets as ‘funds of knowledge’, which are ‘historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being’ (Moll et al., 1992, p. 133). The term ‘virtual school bag’ (Thomson, 2002) similarly points to ‘the importance of understanding community-based, popular, and extended cultural

knowledges ... as assets that are normally discounted' (Wrigley, Lingard & Thomson, 2012, p. 99). The proposition that these other knowledges need to be mobilized:

runs counter to standard educational processes whereby working-class and Indigenous cultures are misrecognised and excluded, and only professional and higher class cultures and knowledges are ratified and become 'cultural, social and symbolic capital' that advantages some and disadvantages others (Bourdieu 2004). (Wrigley et al., 2012, p. 99)

That is, while making the case for focusing on students' assets, we simultaneously acknowledge and recognise that education is driven by political interests that seek to legitimate particular ways of life (Giroux, 1990) by regulating the selection, organisation and distribution of school knowledge, and in this process it is the values, experiences and perspectives of privileged groups that parade as universal in schools. This cultural imperialism renders the perspectives of non-dominant groups invisible and blocks their opportunities to exercise their capabilities in socially recognised ways (Young, 1990). In this way, the 'competitive academic curriculum' (Connell, 1994) functions to name and privilege particular histories and experiences and to marginalise or silence the voices of 'othered' groups. When certain knowledge is selected and legitimated as *the* school curriculum, the dominant succeed in displacing other knowledges and experiences by ensuring that it is this 'real' knowledge that determines academic success in the education system (Connell, Ashenden, Kessler & Dowsett, 1982) and which is rewarded by society at large. The result is that 'what meanings are considered the most important, what experiences are deemed the most legitimate, and what forms of writing and reading matter are largely determined by those



groups who control the economic and cultural apparatuses of a given society' (Giroux, 1990, p. 85).

The benefits for all students of recognizing and valuing 'non-dominant' knowledges are well illustrated in research from the USA on the effects of the racial and ethnic diversification of university student populations – the sector of education that tends to be the most exclusive. In 'a multidisciplinary analysis of the research literature', Jeffery Milem (2003, p. 129) has found that heterogeneous university student populations exhibit higher levels of academic achievement than homogenous university student populations and that the greatest gains are by 'majority students who have previously lacked significant direct exposure to minorities' (Milem, 2003, pp. 131-132). Yet it is not the sheer presence of different students that generates this effect. The educational benefits for *all* students in more diverse cohorts include: 'greater relative gains in critical and active thinking ... greater intellectual engagement and academic motivation ... [and] greater relative gains in intellectual and social self-concept' (Milem, 2003, p. 142). In fact, institutions and their staff who fail to engage with the diversity of their students also fail to see this academic improvement (Association of American Universities, 1997). In short, creating opportunity for and valuing 'diversity in colleges and universities is not only a matter of social justice but also a matter of promoting educational excellence' (Milem, 2003, p. 126).

#### *Design – of 'two-ways' pedagogy*

A second element of PW involves the *design* of Pedagogical Action (PA) or, more specifically, the design of the planned course of PA: the processes by which intent and content are to be communicated. As Bourdieu and Passeron (1990, p. 45) note, 'secondary PW is that much more productive when ... it creates more fully the social conditions for

communication by methodically organizing [teaching-learning] exercises'. At one level, we could regard design as the grammar of pedagogy, determining its schematic structure: its *ordering* and *timing* of PA, its inclusion of some exercises and the exclusion of others, and the arrangement of environments and conditions within which the PA takes place.

Pedagogic design is informed by particular beliefs: a belief that all students bring something of value to the learning environment calls for a pedagogic design that includes and draws on these funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). The ways in which these are included are also important. Students from marginalized groups enter classrooms not only with different knowledges to offer but also different ways of knowing (Comber & Hill, 2000; Thomson, 2002; Gale, 2012). It is almost self-evident that PA can be designed or *composed* in a number of ways, but not all of these are legitimated or even recognized. Yet, as Zipin observes, 'cultures of people in given historic times and social spaces ... comprise not just knowledge contents – accumulated artefacts, skills and lore – but also inter-subjective ways of knowing and transacting knowledge – what I call “funds of pedagogy”' (Zipin, 2009, p. 324).

This raises design questions around 'epistemological equity' (Dei, 2010, p. 98). PA can be designed in ways that *privilege* some knowledges and ways of knowing over others, even when these are included. Drawing on Connell's southern theory critique, Hickey-Moody et al. (2010, pp. 231-232; emphasis original) suggest that in much current PA, 'a form of theoretical and methodological Empire operates, whereby the particular theoretical perspectives and knowledges of the powerful global elite masquerade as *the only* theoretical perspectives and knowledges of any consequence'. Epistemological equity, then, is also concerned with *recognition*. As Dei explains:

the question of how to create *spaces* where multiple knowledges can co-exist in the Western academy is central, especially so since Eurocentric knowledge subsumes and appropriates other knowledges without crediting sources. (2010, p. 98; emphasis added)

These three design concerns – with composition, privilege, and recognition – are addressed to some extent by strategically employing what Stephen Kemmis (1997, p. 12), drawing on Lisa Delpit’s (1993) work, has referred to as a ‘two-ways’ or ‘both-ways’ approach to designing pedagogy. ‘The point must not be to eliminate students’ home languages [that speak of different knowledges], but rather to add other voices and Discourses to their repertoires’ (Delpit, 1992, p. 301). This is the second principle on which to build a socially inclusive pedagogy: to value difference. However, this must be done while also providing access to and enabling critical engagement with dominance. In other words, rather than naïvely attempting to replace one discourse with another, the aim instead becomes that of developing a counter-hegemonic (Connell, 1993) pedagogy that accounts for both dominance and difference.

Drawing on Delpit (2006), such a pedagogy would involve:

- Acknowledging and validating students’ ways of expressing their knowledge of the world, and adding to this other ways of knowing and expressing this knowledge;
- Acknowledging that official knowledge can require students to choose between an allegiance to ‘them’ or ‘us’, and finding ways in which to saturate dominant forms of knowledge with new meaning so that there is space for students to retain a sense of themselves; and
- Openly acknowledging that education systems produce inequitable outcomes, based not on merit but on sponsorship (Turner, 1971; Gale, 1999), and then providing students with the resources to manipulate the system.

In their work on schooling in disadvantaged communities, Mills and Gale (2010) articulate this pedagogical challenge as one of transforming the capital that counts: equipping students with academic skills and competencies that make up the cultural capital valued by dominant groups while contesting the disempowering effects of the hegemonic curriculum by embracing the notion of multiple knowledges that are equally valid. This dual imperative – the meeting of community funds of knowledge (respecting students’ existing knowledges) with valorized cultural capital (high-status knowledges traditionally valued in educational systems) – is described by Wrigley et al. (2012) as a commitment to epistemological inclusion. This focus should be underwritten by a simultaneous engagement with the deep structures that generate exclusion.

*Action – ‘working with’ rather than ‘acting on’ students and their communities*

A third element of PW concerns specific actions or practice. This element of PW could be described as tactics that seek to not simply identify students’ prior knowledge, interests, or needs, but to engage students’ own senses in their ‘sense-making’ of the world, in practice; it is pedagogic work that attends to ‘what actual bodies do in classrooms’ (Probyn, 2004, p. 22). Pedagogic action typically ‘take[s] the form of bodily movements’ (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 92) that contribute to students’ mental formation, whether this is intended or not. It includes but is not limited to: whether to sit or stand, where to sit or stand, for how long, what to say, what to write, who to ask, who to listen to, when to finish, when to start, when to try again. Of course, these pedagogic actions are exercised in relation to the actions of students and in fact are directed at monitoring and shaping student practice (Shilling, 2003, pp. 21-22; Gale & Densmore, 2000).

Practice (i.e. purposeful action) is best described as a kind of bodily know-how or a bodily logic, which is distinguishable from the logic of theory. As Pierre Bourdieu explains, ‘practice has a logic which is not that of logic’ (Bourdieu, 1998, p. 82) or rather ‘not that of the logician’ (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 86) who employs ‘a mode of thought that works by making explicit the work of thought’ (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 91). This is then applied to the empirical world, as interpretation and/or proposition. It is not that practice defies logic – although to some extent that is true – but rather it has a logic of its own. It is a logic of the moment. It is ‘caught up in “the matter in hand”, totally present in the present and in potentialities’ (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 92). In fact, it is this anticipation – understanding (the codes particular to) the field so completely as to know what is best to do now, in relation to what will happen in the future – that defines good practice or what Bourdieu refers to as a *feel for the game* and elsewhere as the habitus. This “feel” (sens) for the game is the sense of the imminent future of the game, the sense of the direction (sens) of the history of the game that gives the game its sense’ (Bourdieu, 1990, p. 82). The habitus, which embodies this feel for the game, is productive of individuals’ practices.

Deborah Youdell (2010) provides a useful example of what this practice looks like in the context of PW. In the following excerpt she shows how pedagogic actions that *work with* rather than *act on* students can create opportunities for ‘difficult’ elementary school students who are ‘becoming-student, becoming-learner, becoming-boy’ (Youdell, 2010, p. 322; see also Gale & Parker, 2014), in ways that enable and encourage them to understand these in positive terms and make sense of the world. In Youdell’s analysis of events:

The boys move from Google Earth images of the nature reserve to Google Earth images of their own neighbourhoods, from discussion about geological features to

ribbing and banter about the low-class areas other boys live in. From nature reserves and mammals to Sid and Nancy and car racing.

The student-subject and the learner-subject here, then, is not predicated on an abiding and fixed identity, rather *it is the very fluidity of identifications that is the moving ground on which recognition takes place*. The expectation of conformity, singularity, consistency is set aside. Miss Groves does not delineate a universal acceptable and unacceptable student – she offers recognition across the boys’ subjectivating practices: ‘cool boy’, ‘angry boy’, ‘good student’, ‘reluctant student’ are all valid and viable.

These boys are subjectivated student and learner in the present, they are becoming student and learner in each moment, without requiring prior or abiding constitutions or requiring these constitutions to persist into the next moment. It is in the letting go of insisting that the boys act the student consistently that Miss Groves opens up space for them to be students. (Youdell, 2010, pp. 320-321; emphasis added)

Like Bourdieu’s player, Miss Groves enacts a feel for the game. She is able to anticipate how her students would react if she were to insist that they conform singularly and consistently with the legitimated student identity. She lets go. It is a tactical move, executed on the run, in response to the moves of her students. It involves recognition of the power relations in social contexts such as classrooms and of her students’ previous experiences of being put in their place, albeit with some difficulty.

This, then, is the third principle on which to build a socially inclusive pedagogy: to *work with* rather than *act on* students and their communities.

### **Implications for teacher education**

Implications of what we have argued here for preparing future teachers whose stances and practices are more socially inclusive must begin with the practices of teacher education itself; that is, a consideration of how our own teacher education programs create and, no less importantly, model socially inclusive spaces that engage with the diversity and difference our student teachers bring to their own professional preparation and learning. The critical question, we contend, is the need to ask: What messages do our courses send to future teachers about:

- the beliefs they each bring to the learning environment as being a valued part of their learning process?
- the design of coursework that enables a recognition of such difference while still enabling critical engagement with other forms of knowledge? and,
- the actions we use to create inclusive opportunities for engaging with course material that works with their diverse knowledges, experiences, and perspectives, rather than simply imposing alternative, dominant perspectives as being taken-for-granted?

This sustained, whole-of-course perspective on developing a more socially just stance to future practice recognises the difficulty of influencing long-held beliefs and attitudes within the limits of a single course (McDiarmid, 1990). As Pohan (1996) further asserts, attention to diversity issues over several semesters offers the best hope for moving preservice teachers toward greater effectiveness in culturally diverse classrooms.

In the same way, we would also suggest the need to build into teacher education programs ongoing opportunities for student teachers themselves to use the use the framework for explicit, critical reflection on their own growth as teachers and practices that they take into classrooms. In other words, we are advocating here for the development of their skills to use the framework as an heuristic to ask the same questions being modelled by their teacher educators, but in relation to themselves within the settings that they undertake professional practice, such as microteaching, clinical rounds, or the practicum.

On another practical level, we would also take the above suggestions one step further in recommending coursework tasks that encourage student teachers to critically interrogate their own trajectories into higher education (and the teaching profession), and audit forms of capital that they possess which they see as having potential to make them more effective practitioners, but have not yet been recognised as part of their teacher learning and development. Such tasks would be of benefit to both student teacher and teacher educator. For the student teacher, these would provide an opportunity to develop a critical awareness of their own pathways of “success” through schooling in terms of what forms of capital are valued at the expense of others and the implications of this for their beliefs, design, and actions when working with their own students. For teacher educators, these are an opportunity to gain feedback on the extent to which their own programs are addressing the principles set out by the framework, and inform future cycles of course improvement.

Such suggestions respond to what Allard and Santoro (2004) see as the need to offer student teachers educational experiences that enable them to understand and examine their own positionings.



## **Conclusion**

Regrettably, schools and teacher education as they currently stand, are not socially inclusive for all students. Positive developments such as the Gonski review of school funding in Australia were aimed at overhauling the funding of education to better direct resources to schools most in need. The Gonski recommendations have been abandoned by the current Australian Government. Yet even if its initiatives had been implemented and proven successful at providing greater access to schooling, not everyone who enters these schools would have been well positioned. At a fundamental level, there is still some distance to go in reconfiguring educational institutions to make them more socially inclusive. As important as this work is, the bigger question for social inclusion is what kind of education is involved? Creating more places for students from diverse backgrounds is one thing. Creating opportunities for recognizing and valuing diverse knowledges and ways of knowing is another.

Our intention in this article has been to advocate a general disposition on which to build a socially inclusive pedagogy, rather than to name pedagogies for particular equity groups or educational domains, or suggest that education can be socially inclusive through provision, access, or resourcing alone. From our perspective, there are three principles on which to develop such pedagogy: a belief that all students bring things of value to the learning environment; a design that values difference while also providing access to and enabling engagement with dominance; and actions or practice that work *with* students and their communities.

Pedagogy informed by these principles has great potential to open up opportunities for marginalized groups within schools and teacher education. It engenders education that is genuinely transformative in (re)shaping social structures that better recognize, value, and engage with social difference and inequity. Merely permitting access to formal education puts the onus on the ‘outsider’ to find legitimacy within established systems of order and valuing of knowledge. However, pedagogy attentive to the dynamics of belief, design, and action as outlined above, enables a different approach to the teaching/learning relationship that fosters a critical engagement with the knowledge, values, and voices of all students within those settings.

Emphasizing participation over the creation of more places for marginalized students provides the basis for a relational understanding of social inclusion necessary for transforming schooling and the education field more broadly. It is an emphasis grounded in a theory and politics of transformation that engages with the deep structures that generate and perpetuate exclusion by failing to recognize and value how those on the margins might find opportunities to belong within the very same systems that are designed to include them. The intent is to restructure the very education, and educational experience, of what it means to be a student.

What we have proposed in this article in relation to teachers’ pedagogy and their work with students, is also relevant to teacher educators’ pedagogy and their work with pre-service teachers. Indeed, socially inclusive teaching begins with teacher education and its attempts to redress ongoing patterns of low educational attainment by equipping pre-service teachers with pedagogic interventions to better engage with difference. Courses within pre-service teacher education programs with an explicit focus on pedagogy are particularly suited to working with teachers to help them to create opportunities for social inclusion within schools. We

believe that it is through the creation of opportunities for marginalized groups by means of a socially inclusive pedagogy – cognizant of all three of its constitutive elements of belief, design, and action – that schools and teacher education can ultimately be transformed.

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