Appendix B

Five standpoints for surfacing cultural diversity

Table 1. *Five standpoints for surfacing cultural diversity* (Adapted from a draft prepared for DEECD Intercultural Understanding Field Trial 2011 by ICU Evaluation Team and Sleeter, C. & Grant, C. A. (2003). *Making choices for multicultural education: Five approaches to race, class, and gender.* N.Y.: John Wiley & Sons, and the Centre for Equity and Innovation and Early Childhood Development, The University of Melbourne.

Standpoints	Description and strengths	Limitations	Who needs to change?
Cultural integration	• Aims to assist students from different cultural backgrounds to integrate into the mainstream culture of the school. • Helping students adapt to mainstream Australian society has advantages in promoting successful adaptation.	• Tends to treat diversity as a problem, rather than a contribution • Portrays individuals from different cultures as 'others' who need to simply learn to fit in to mainstream norms and ways of life. • At an extreme, it can become a pure assimilation standpoint	The different 'others'
Tourist	• This approach acknowledges and attempts to show respect for different cultures • It mainly engages with different cultures by focusing on material aspects noticeably different from mainstream culture, such as traditional food, clothing, crafts or holidays.	• Mostly surface differences are noted. • The standpoint can reinforce stereotypes, since not all individuals from a particular culture look and act the same. • On its own it can ignore diverse aspects of cultures as they exist in the current world.	Mainstream needs to learn about the different 'others'
Human relations	• Focuses on finding ways for individuals from diverse cultures to get along better. Attempts to change negative attitudes or feelings toward people who are perceived as being different from oneself. • Reduces stereotypes, teaches cooperative ways to manage interpersonal tensions and reduce conflict • Building a sense of one's own and others' identities is considered important.	• While diversity and a sense of community is valued from this standpoint, a criticism is that it does not critically address social inequalities and discrimination. • There is a risk of 'colour blindness', approaching humans as if they were all the same and assuming all have the same opportunities, which is often not the case.	We all need to learn to get along better

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From: Freeman, E., Smith, K., Wertheim, E., Trinder, M., Gurr. M., & Antcliffe, A. (2012). *Enhancing Relationships in School Communities: Talking Culture: Building on the Challenges and Successes of Culturally Diverse Schools. Research Report.* Appendix B. University of Melbourne and La Trobe University.

The Enhancing Relationships in School Communities Project (ERIS)

Multiculturalism	• Values cultural diversity for its positive contribution to society, promotes cultural pluralism, equality and respect. • Students acquire attitudes and skills to promote respect for people from diverse cultures while recognising that *all* people have a culture and developing self regard for their own culture.	• Does not always examine social inequalities and discrimination • May advocate 'tolerating' cultural differences as long as they do not disrupt the position of mainstream culture.	All members of the community participate
Transformative	• Seeks to understand and challenge structural inequalities, addressing social injustices and challenging racism, prejudice and other forms of discrimination. • Draws attention to changes that need to happen at an institutional and societal, not just individual, level. • Develops skills to understand inequality and actively work to build a fairer society. • Individuals examine their own position in society and consider the ways in which their experiences have shaped their beliefs and values, and how others may view their culture. • Students learn to think reflexively and critically about their thoughts and actions in relation to other people. Building on this knowledge and awareness, they learn ways of taking action to address inequalities.	• Can be somewhat challenging for members of mainstream or more dominant groups in a particular society, such as those who have more access to resources, decision making, and opportunities.	Members of more dominant or mainstream groups, in particular

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Summary descriptions of the 5 Standpoints

Adapted for the DEECD Intercultural Understanding Field Trial from Sleeter, C.E. and Grant, C. A. (1988; 2009). *Making choices for multicultural education: Five approaches to race, class, and gender.* 6th Ed. N.Y.: John Wiley.

Cultural Integration

This standpoint acknowledges that students have diverse backgrounds and aims to help students who are 'different' integrate into the mainstream culture of the school. This can be a useful approach to provide students with the necessary support and skills to be able to succeed in school and mainstream society. Overall, one of the criticisms of this approach is that it tends to treat diversity as a problem rather than an asset. This can lead to teachers having lower expectations of particular groups of students based on a 'deficiency perspective, which in turn has a negative impact on students' sense of self-worth and ability (Sleeter & Grant, 2009 p. 49). It is also often focused more on how 'other' students, such as immigrants, need to change rather than the attitudes and skills of all students.

Tourist

This standpoint mainly engages with different cultures by focusing on material aspects that are noticeably different to the mainstream culture. This approach introduces students to people and cultures by looking at surface level cultural content such as food, traditional clothing and major holidays. One advantage is that it takes a positive approach to cultural difference by celebrating it. It can also provide a first step toward awareness of cultural differences. However, a criticism of this kind of approach is that it can reinforce stereotypes (Sleeter & Grant, 2009 p. 105). Often this approach does not go beyond material and surface level cultural content to build more dynamic and contemporary understandings of culture among students.

Human Relations

This standpoint takes the position that in a diverse world with increasing tensions between people, students need to be able to get along with each other. The focus is on changing individuals' negative attitudes or feelings toward people that are perceived as being different from oneself. An important first step is reducing stereotypes that people have of each other. This needs to happen alongside building a strong sense of identity and belonging within groups while also recognising and accepting the identities and cultures of other people (Sleeter & Grant, 2009 p. 88). The focus is on creating harmony within the school by valuing diversity and emphasising commonalities. One of the criticisms of this approach is that it does not critically address social inequalities and discrimination (Sleeter & Grant, 2009 p. 113).

Multicultural

This standpoint values cultural diversity for its positive contribution to society and encourages students to acquire attitudes and skills that promote respect for people from diverse cultures (Sleeter & Grant, 2009 pp. 174-175). Importantly, this standpoint recognises that all students have a culture, which includes those from the mainstream culture. Cultures are seen to shape and be shaped by particular behaviours, values, beliefs and social practices, which are learned within particular contexts such as family and school (Sleeter & Grant, 2009 p. 172). This approach looks at differences as well as commonalities within and across cultures. Students learn to reflect on their own culture in a way that develops a positive self-concept without demeaning or patronising people from different backgrounds. The focus is on cultural pluralism and seeking ways to promote equality and respect. However, as with the standpoints above this approach does not always examine social inequalities and discrimination and may take the view that cultural differences can be 'tolerated' as long as they do not disrupt the position of mainstream culture.

Transformative

This standpoint seeks to understand and challenge structural inequalities. It involves addressing social injustices and challenging racism, prejudice and other forms of discrimination (Sleeter & Grant, 2009 p. 197). This approach draws attention to changes that need to happen at an institutional and societal level, not just at an individual level.

For individuals, the focus is on developing skills to understand inequality and actively work to build a fairer society. Students learn to examine their own position in society and consider the ways in which their experiences have shaped their beliefs and values. This enables them to question what they perceive as 'normal' and helps them to understand how their culture influences the way they view the world and the way they view people from cultures different to their own. Additionally, this reflexive process involves understanding how others might perceive one's culture, which includes how others that may not identify with the dominant culture view and experience it. It is important to this approach that students become self-aware in a positive way – simply, triggering guilt or defensiveness may in fact serve only to reinforce prejudices.

Based on this positive self-awareness, students can learn how to examine inequalities and the direct and indirect effects these have on people from different societal and cultural groups. Students learn to think reflexively and critically about their thoughts and actions in relation to other people. Importantly, building on this knowledge and awareness, they can then learn ways of taking action to address inequalities.

From: Freeman, E., Smith, K., Wertheim, E., Trinder, M., Gurr. M., & Antcliffe, A. (2012). *Enhancing Relationships in School Communities: Talking Culture: Building on the Challenges and Successes of Culturally Diverse Schools. Research Report.* Appendix B. University of Melbourne and La Trobe University.