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| What is meant by a construct?  What is meant by “Educational Context?”  What is meant by ‘social constructivist perspective?’  From SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIVIST PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING AND LEARNING  Annual Review of Psychology  Vol. 49: 345-375 (Volume publication date February 1998)  DOI: 10.1146/annurev.psych.49.1.345  A. Sullivan Palincsar  Social constructivist perspectives focus on the interdependence of social and individual processes in the co-construction of knowledge | Culture determines what is customary and normal.  Culture is the socially inherited body of past human accomplishments that serves as the resources for the current life of a specific social group. (D’Andrate, 1996)  Cultural systems can be seen as products AND as conditioning elements of further action.  In the past, literacy assumed that culture was far-reaching. That everyone within a society conformed to the same set of cultural beliefs.  It did not account for variables and inconsistencies.  For example, just because individuals may share ethnicity does not mean they share culture.  Rather, culture is based on the individual’s experience. Also, culture may shift within the individual based on time and place.  RESEARCH AND THEORY ON CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES  ***Changes in the Educational Context***  Some factors that affect reading research based on culture   * National demographic changes   + School aged children coming from home where English is not the primary language has increased from 9 – 20% in the years 1979 to 2005 * National education policy initiatives such as NCLB   + Accountability in NCLB puts pressure on schools to pass the test resulting in far less attention spent on culture * Evidence-based approaches   + While it is sometimes difficult to measure, observations (qualitative) of the setting would provide more accurate information for research than more quantitative approaches   + For example, when deciding on changes in policy, nonbiased field work might provide better supporting evidence for a particular group than generalized reports |
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Chapter 5: Cultural Perspective in Reading Theory and Research- Robert Rueda

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| What is meant by a construct?  How can a model work in a broad spectrum of the subject of reading? | Reading & literacy- cultural invention constructed to more effectively record:   * Events * Facilitate commerce * Broaden communication   Culture as a **construct**  Overview of culture in reading  Review of and critique of research  Proposal for a research agenda for the field  Model for examining cultural factors in literacy research as a means of guiding this agenda  Literacy and reading: differences  Reading is “the use of the products and principles of the writing system to get at the meaning of a written text.” *National Research Council* (Snow, Burns, & Griffing, 1998)  Decoding and comprehending a text  Literacy is broader and looks at beliefs and attitudes in addition to the decoding. It requires prior knowledge of a group, for example.  Reading is universal while literacy depends on cultural background.  Home and community settings’s cultural principles are **acquired**, school’s cultural practices are thought to be **learned**.  Reading is a pedagogy. Literacy is policy.  Culture as a construct.  Culture reflects a broad sense of development in terms of art, science, etc. and groups may be ranked according to their level of achievement along that scale.  OR look at the individual groups and their achievements according to their history. |
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| What was the Kamahemeha Early Education Project (KEEP) by Au 2000? | THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS  Sociolinguistic studies in classroom have approached language and communication from a wide variety of perspectives:   * Psychologist looking at individual difference in language use * Linguistic communicative functions * Sociologist studying social organization * Educators examining the organization of lessons, * Speech and language researchers looking at language disabilities * Education anthropologist looking at verbal and nonverbal communication within and between cultural groups.   Ethnographic studies compare classroom with home  Social constructivist theorists argue that learning, including reading and literacy, is a function of the activity, context and culture in which it occurs.  Social interaction is a critical aspect of situated learning as learner move from novice to expert in a specific ‘community of practice’ which embodies certain beliefs and behaviors to be acquired, such as those surrounding reading and literacy in school settings. (88)  Not the only approach. Other approaches include   1. Ethnomethodology and conversational analysis 2. Interactional sociolinguistic 3. Ethnography of speaking 4. Sociohistorical psychology 5. Situated cognition 6. Cultural models theory 7. Cognitive linguistics 8. The new science and technology studies 9. Modern composition theory 10. Sociocultural literacy studies 11. Connectionism 12. Modern sociology 13. Poststructuralist or postmodernist work   Mounting convergences include   * Cognitive vs. context * Skills vs. meaning * Formal language structures vs. communicative functions * Individual vs. social | | |
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| In Goldenberg, where did study take place?  How conducted?  In regards to conclusion from report on the impact of efforts to accommodate cultural differences in the classroom—  What are ‘Proximal measures of achievement’?  i.e. engagement  Rather than direct measure of reading or literacy acquisition? | RESEARCH ON CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE INSTRUCITON AND CULTURAL ACCOMMODATIONS  Historically, clear differences were noted for students in the acquisition of school-based literacy depending on racial, ethnic, and cultural groups especially when compared to the mainstream Anglo America students and teachers  These differences create obstacles in learning. These differences may be mis-diagnosed as learning difficulties and therefore students may be incorrectly placed in special ed classes, for example, and create a very negative experience.  Gay (2000) advises to teach to the strengths of children from culturally different backgrounds   1. Acknowledges the legitimacy of cultural heritage of different ethnic groups. 2. Creates bond between home and school 3. Uses a variety of instruction styles 4. Students learn to be proud of their heritage 5. Creates diverse school environments that are a blending of cultures   Sociocultural factors could address the following:   1. How does immigration effect literacy? 2. How do different cultures communicate and how are they different from the norm? 3. How do other groups influence each other? 4. How are students impacted by forces outside the classroom, particularly parents and family? 5. How do policies in schools, towns, districts take these influences in account? 6. Are status and prestige viewed differently in terms of cultural background?   (Goldenberg 2006b) specified broad categories to measure student outcomes.   * Observational indicators * Ethnographic descriptions * Examples or analyses of student products * Motivational measures * Participation or engagement measures * Self- or teacher reports * Standardized or quantitative measures | | |
| *Currently, I am feeling empathetic toward this cultural disconnect as I am feeling out of sorts with my peers who seem to have a larger and longer connection to the realm of education—by profession and education—than I have.* | | | |
| \*What is triangulation?  **Process of reading according to RAND Reading Study Group** | Many studies on accommodating cultural differences in classroom have methodological issues including the following:   1. Little data on setting of research 2. Little data on techniques used to gather information and to analyze that info 3. Data not overtly aligned with the author’s POV 4. No background on choice of settings 5. Can results be repeated? 6. Were opposing viewpoints considered? How? 7. ‘Triangulation\*’ not apparent 8. Final assumptions not necessarily proven by results   Students do better when they are reading ABOUT topics that are of interest to them, culturally, and in a familiar language. (91)  Lack of evidence should not be confused with negative evidence.  Culture is difficult to define in terms of being able to measure with hard data.  Culture is dynamic, contextually variable and unevenly expressed. (Erickson, 2004)  More emphasis on description than on effects of.  Perhaps the reason is a lack of models.  ***What ties cultural factors to reading and literacy outcomes?***  Some possibilities for models are explained.  *Reading comprehension is the process of extracting and constructing meaning through the interaction and involvement with written language.* (RAND Reading Study Group (2002)  Includes: the reader, the text, the activity or purpose of reading.  Phenomenon! Reading comprehension.  Reader brings to this their own personal history.  Cognitive capacities include:   * Attention, memory, critical analysis * Motivation- purpose for reading, interest in content * Knowledge- vocabulary, domain, topic * Experiences   Students from different cultural backgrounds may experience breakdowns in this process.  All of these may affect interactions with peer and teachers and therefore may complicate further experiences in reading. # | |
| # A downward spiral of low/ misguided expectation and low motivation.  A disconnect may occur from within (low self-motivation) and from without (low expectation) | | |
| If schemas help to lighten the load, how can more instruction, teaching be taught in blocks?  Rather, how can the student learn to use schema?  Define ***germane***- suitably related to something, especially something being discussed  Robert Rueda termed this process as facilitative encoding.  Define ***heuristic***: education relating to or using a method of teaching that encourages learners to discover solutions for themselves  What is: Expectancy X value theory? | *Primary intrapersonal Effects—Cognitive Processes*  Race, class, gender and culture and ethnic affiliations impact prior knowledge of student  Understanding what types of instruction will provide the best outcomes are dependent on the ‘working memory’ of a student.  Schema allow organization to help deal with and understand problem by categorizing the elements into one block more easily dealt with.  Being able to do this automatically make the whole process much easier and less taxing for the individual.  *Categories of cognitive load*  Intrinsic cognitive load  Working memory—where all conscious cognitive processing is thought to occur—can only handle 2 or 3 novel interacting elements at a time.  Long term memory is made up of schema that helps to organize the elements and make them much easier to organize and deal with.  Extraneous or ineffective cognitive load such as reading a complex text  Germane of effective cognitive load enhances learning and is influenced by instructional design.  Motivation can increase these and ease learning.  *Applications to cultural accommodations and reading comprehension instruction.*  Culture can be thought of as an automated schema that helps the individual deal with their environment.  Also helps focus.  Reading about things (settings, topics, etc. ) that are familiar to an individual may help simplify the process of comprehension and therefore other factors- language, vocabulary- may be increased. Discussions, activities, that are unfamiliar can negatively impact learning.  When culturally responsive instruction is introduced, students can access their relevant schemas or ‘funds of knowledge’ in such a way that extraneous cognitive load is reduced.  Comprehensible input is important instructional principle for second language learners.  *Primary Intrapersonal Effectors—motivational processes*  Active choice, persistence and mental effort all impact achievement  Expectancy X value theory: | |
| Being in a comfortable environment puts the individual at ease and make learning much easier. Compare the first time that a person enters an airport and has to deal with sensory overload as opposed to the seasoned traveler who easily maneuvers through the various obstacles.  Similarly, the first day of class is probably not the best day to review the syllabus. | | |
| Define: ***self-efficacy***  somebody's personality, or an aspect of somebody's personality, especially as perceived by others  Define: causal attribution  *No quick definition found* | A social-cognitive expectancy value perspective on motivation. (95)  Expectancy X value theory: focus on 2 key components of motivation   * Expectancy- how well the individual expects to do on a task * Value- how much does the individual value the task   **VALUE**  Answer the question: Why should I do this task?  The answer lies in the following:   * Task value * Interest * Importance * Utility * Cost   **EXPECTANCY**  Answers the question: Am I able to do this task?   * Self-efficacy * Perceived task difficulty * Causal attribution   Culture influences one’s choice of activities, effort and persistence  One can feed off the other. In other words, if you value the task your expectancy to successfully complete the task increases.  Students need to understand why they are being asked to do the task and how this activity can transfer to other areas.  Important that the effort to complete the task is not unreasonable.  Pintrich (2003) outlined key motivation generalizations )96)   1. Adaptive self-efficacy and competence beliefs motive students 2. Adaptive attributions and control beliefs motivate students 3. Higher levels of interest and intrinsic motivation motivate students 4. Higher levels of value motivate students 5. Goals motivate and direct students [p. 672]   Raising levels and interest in engagement is important for success.  Secondary interpersonal effects—social processes  The culture of the classroom can impact students’ levels of interest, their participation and ultimately their ability and level of learning.  Everything teachers do impact their ability to teach and for students, therefore, to learn | |
| How often do students in writing classes ask: Why should I do this task? | | |
| \* Based on the experience in these settings, what types of cultural models have individuals developed?  This question is the crux of the matter, I think.  How can empirical validation be tested, implemented? | IMPLICATIONS FOR THEORY, PRACTIVE, POICY, AND FUTURE RESEARCH  ***Research and Theoretical Concerns***  “There is a need to more systematically examine the impact of cultural factors, to privde better guidance to teachers and schools.” (97)  To do this, there must be a way to reduce or eliminate cognitive-cultural divide  Models that are ‘testable’ need to be constructed and then tested in order to better understand best practices in terms of bridging the gap that cultural chasm can create  Questions to consider include:   1. In terms of high load learning, do teachers take into account the cultural impact on their students’ learning process? 2. How can the cognitive load be reduced most efficiently for these students? 3. The concepts of value and expectancy help students achieve higher levels of success when the student is more comfortable. 4. If cultural accommodations are recognized, does this ease the learning process? 5. How can these factors- environment and student interest- be optimized by recognizing students’ challenges as they come from a different culture than that one often present in the classroom?   ***Instructional Considerations***  Learning and achievement are the result of the interaction between the student and the environment.  Questions that need to be explored further include:   1. What is the range and nature of cultural settings that a learner has had experience with? 2. Who are/ were the participants? 3. What is the range and nature of things people do or did in those settings? 4. Based on the experience in these settings, what types of cultural models have individuals developed?\*   In the classroom, also consider:   1. What are typical and characteristic activity settings? Howa re they structured? 2. How and when do they occur? 3. Who participates? 4. What are the cultural models that characterize this classroom or school?   Avoid the following:   1. Making sweeping judgments about groups and not individuals 2. Focusing on surface features of culture 3. Focusing on presumed culturally related variables that have failed to show a relationship to learning such as learning styles 4. Treating culture as a deficit rather than a resource in learning 5. Equating group labels, especially racial and ethnic group labels, with cultural characteristics 6. Assuming cultural influences operate rigidly in all settings 7. Relying on presumed characteristic without considering empirical validation. |
| *This is the final observation in the chapter. I feel that it is an important way to look at this issue. I hope that retain this tidbit of information and hold it close as I continue to work with a very culturally diverse community in Navitas. But in many ways, this group is NOT all that diverse as they share a common bond in their drive for higher education.*  **Are cultural differences treated as a boundary or a border?**  Boundaries are simply a reflection of the presence of cultural differences.  Borders, on the other hand, are social constructs, political in origin, involving the arbitrary exercise of power or authority of one group over another. (99) | |