

Towards shared understandings:

An exploration of the literature on inclusive teaching and its implication for building

Inclusive Excellence at UBC

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Abstract

This literature review explores the concepts of inclusive education and inclusive teaching within the scholarly literature from several different approaches and perspectives to help contribute to building a foundational understanding of what it means to engage in inclusive teaching in a university setting, and more specifically, to help create a shared understanding of what inclusive teaching could mean for the larger project of Inclusive Excellence (IE) at UBC. The review is organized as follows: firstly, I provide an overview of the current context in Canadian higher education to set the context for IE across Canada and at UBC. Next, I offer ways we can define inclusive education, towards which inclusive teaching is oriented. Then, I outline approaches to inclusive teaching found in the scholarly literature; I discuss the strengths and limitations of each approach and I also explain how each approach connects to the definitions of inclusive education I outline at the beginning of the review. Next, I discuss the notion of inclusive teaching with regards to indigenous initiatives; I place scholars working within Critical Indigenous Studies in conversation with notions of inclusion in education and the broader calls for equity, inclusion, and diversity in higher education and discuss the tensions present. Then, in the final section I attempt to bring the conversation together, by exploring points of connection between the principles of Inclusive Excellence at UBC and common principles of inclusive teaching, to illustrate how inclusive classroom teaching practices constitute an essential role in the larger project of building IE at UBC. Finally, I conclude with challenging questions that I think are important to ask with regards to furthering the work of building IE at UBC.

Challenges to inclusion in Canadian higher education

Although the student bodies at Canadian universities have become increasingly more diverse, there still remain significant barriers to access, meaningful participation, academic success, and achieving an overall sense of well-being and belonging for many students, especially those from historically marginalized and underserved communities, including Indigenous and First Nations students, racialized students, queer and trans students¹, students from low-income families, students with immigrant status, students with dis/abilities², first-generation students, and students living in rural areas (Bailey, 2016; Corkum, 2015; Michalski, Cunningham, & Henry, 2017; Pidgeon, 2014). Moreover, students from historically marginalized and underserved communities who do access postsecondary education often experience racism and racially motivated microaggressions, scarcity of social and academic support, social isolation, a lack of meaningful representation in their departments or programs of study, and other forms of exclusion, discrimination, and marginalization on their university campuses (Bailey, 2016; Michalski et al., 2017).

As recent studies from the Canadian higher education context have illustrated, this is particularly the case for Indigenous students who experience multiple forms of discrimination and racial microaggressions throughout their university studies, which include: an assumption

¹ In this review, I use the terminology ‘queer and trans’ in an effort to be as inclusive as possible of the diversity of ways in which people can express their gender identities and sexual orientations.

² Drawing on Davis (2013) and Waitoller & King-Thorius (2016), I employ dis/ability with a slash to underscore the importance of understanding dis/ability in relation to larger cultural, economic and political contexts and practices, rather than as an objective physical trait of an individual. As Waitoller & King-Thorius (2016) argue, understanding dis/ability in this way “does not deny biological and psychological differences, but it emphasizes that such differences gain meaning, often with severe negative consequences (e.g., segregation), through human activities informed by norms” (see also Davis, 2013). The slash also signifies that notions of ‘ability’ are created alongside other markers of identity, such as class, race, gender, etc... (see also Erevelles, 2011).

that their cultures are ‘primitive’, the misrepresentation or total elimination of Indigenous culture(s) and ways of knowing in the curriculum, probing by non-indigenous students of their identities in voyeuristic ways, and social and cultural isolation on campus (Bailey, 2016; Canel-Çınarbaş & Yohani, 2018; Clark, Kleiman, Spanierman, Isaac, & Poolokasingham, 2014; Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018). Furthermore, as higher education embraces ‘internationalization’, recent studies have indicated that international students also face challenges integrating into Canadian university life and culture (Guo & Chase, 2011). Moreover, in addition to students, racialized and Indigenous faculty and staff also regularly experience isolation, loneliness, discrimination, under-representation, and tokenism in Canadian higher education, as recent research illustrates (see Henry & Tator, 2012).

‘Inclusive Excellence’ to embed equity, diversity and inclusion into the academic enterprise

Confronting this reality, in 2017 Universities Canada adopted 7 principles of ‘Inclusive Excellence’ as part of its mission to prioritize and advance the values of inclusion, equity and diversity on university and college campuses (<https://www.univcan.ca/media-room/media-releases/universities-canada-principles-equity-diversity-inclusion/>). Although adopted by Universities Canada, the concept of Inclusive Excellence (IE) emerged within the United States context and was created by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)³. One of the fundamental ideas of IE is that diversity, inclusion, and equity initiatives are “central [to the] work of achieving academic excellence” (Clayton-Pedersen, O’Neill, & Musil, 2013, p.

³ Programs and policies enacted to work towards equity, inclusion, and representation of people of color, women, and historically marginalized communities within key institutions of US society have been challenged in recent years by right-wing conservative organizations and think tanks (Williams, Berger & McClendon, 2005). ‘Inclusive Excellence’ was created as a response to several important court cases that challenged the legitimacy of diversity efforts of universities (Clayton-Pedersen, O’Neill, & Musil, 2013); Considine, Mihalick, Mogi-Hein, Penick-Parks, & Auken, 2017).

9). Within an IE framework, diversity and inclusion are conceptualized as a “process toward better learning rather than as an outcome” (Williams, 2005, p. iv). In other words, foundational to the notion of Inclusive Excellence is the idea that diversity, equity and inclusion are integral to the educational experience and success (academic, social, personal) of all students and to the higher education enterprise at large (Considine, Mihalick, Mogi- Hein, Penick- Parks, & Auken, 2017).

Inclusive Excellence at UBC

UBC has adopted Inclusive Excellence (IE) as a “framework and practice for addressing diversity and inclusion” at UBC (Student Diversity Initiative UBC Partner Factsheet, 2018). IE at UBC takes a systems-based approach to change and seeks to embed diversity, equity, and inclusion into the core operations, policies, and practices of the university. The IE framework at UBC is guided by the following principles: Cultural and social differences of learners enrich and enhance the University; Excellence cannot be achieved without inclusion; Inclusion is more than just numbers; Systems-change must be prioritized; Collaboration and partnerships are key to success (Student Diversity Initiative UBC Partner Factsheet, 2018). Furthermore, working towards Inclusive Excellence at UBC strives for the following: equitable experience and success of all students, an inclusive culture, an enhanced experience due to engagement with diversity, and a diverse campus (‘Inclusive Excellence at UBC’ factsheet).

Working towards implementing an IE framework at UBC: Some contextual considerations

While the IE framework, with its systems-based approach to understanding how diversity and inclusion are integral to academic excellence in higher education, can provide a helpful orientation for Canadian universities seeking to embed equity, diversity and inclusion into all

aspects of their work, adopting a model from another context also presents particular challenges to consider. Therefore, rather than adopting predefined conceptual maps of IE, it's important to explore the historical as well as current social and political context in which universities and equity and inclusion offices are seeking to build IE at Canadian universities and particularly at UBC. Such contextual variation will need to guide conceptual theorization, as well as practice in implementing IE.

The backdrop of multiculturalism within context of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples

Foundational to understanding the context in which UBC and other universities in Canada are working towards Inclusive Excellence or equity, diversity and inclusion work more broadly, is the central role that multiculturalism has played in Canadian society. Multiculturalism as official policy has shaped and influenced the public conversation in Canada around topics of race, ethnicity, inclusion and relationships with First Nations, and continues to do so in the present (St. Denis, 2011). The notion of multiculturalism embraced within official Canadian policy and discourse assumes “a story of integration into a tolerant, equal, and liberal society, where immigrants are not melted into an amalgam, but are encouraged to celebrate their distinctiveness, while also integrating themselves into a country with a high level of civic tolerance and respect” (MacDonald, 2014, p. 70). However, as many critical scholars and Indigenous scholars, as well as people from marginalized and underserved communities have pointed out, this narrative of Canada (more accurately referred to as “colonial multiculturalism” (MacDonald, 2014)), is more fantasy than reality, as discrimination, marginalization and oppression are experienced by many groups and communities within Canadian society. As Bailey (2016) has succinctly pointed out, “although Canada has built an international reputation

for multiculturalism and inclusion, it also has a long history of colonialism and exclusion” (p. 1263). This ‘long history of colonialism and exclusion’ that Bailey (2016) refers to still persists within our present day and informs every aspect of the current work towards equity, inclusion as well as decolonization in higher education.

Goals of inclusion within a larger multicultural framework have often meant assimilation into the dominant social and political arrangement⁴. This is particularly important to understand as universities work towards equity and inclusion in higher education within the larger context of Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples, since, as Bailey (2016) also argues, “policy for higher education in Canada often still presumes assimilation” (p. 1263; see also Wilson & Battiste, 2011). Furthermore, as many critical and Indigenous scholars have noted, Canada’s embrace of multiculturalism has in many ways served to obfuscate honest discussion around racism, oppression, exclusion, and First Nation sovereignty, since the national cultural narrative of being an open and multicultural society can mask over the experiences of racism, oppression, exclusion that many Indigenous communities and other marginalized and underserved communities in Canada face (Bailey, 2016; Battiste, 2013; St. Denis, 2011). Moreover, as will be discussed in more detail below, multicultural frameworks, as well as many social justice frameworks, fail to understand “the particularities of settler colonialism and Native elimination” that First Nations and Indigenous communities have and continue to experience (Grande, 2018, p.51; see also Tuck & Yang, 2012).

The brief discussion above of the larger national context in which equity and inclusion work is taking place at UBC and at universities throughout Canada provides a foundation to be

⁴ Although it’s important to note that, as discussed below, certain critical trends within the field of multicultural education have argued for culturally sustaining approaches, not assimilation.

able to critically discuss the concepts of inclusive education and inclusive teaching, which will be the remaining focus of this literature review. Key themes mentioned above, such as the tensions that Indigenous Peoples and other marginalized groups experience towards calls for inclusion within a multicultural framework, will be discussed in more detail in the review below, specifically as they relate to inclusion in education and inclusive teaching. The remainder of this review will explore the concepts of inclusive education and inclusive teaching within the scholarly literature from several different approaches and perspectives to work towards building a foundational understanding of what it means to engage in inclusive teaching in a university setting, and more specifically, to help create a shared understanding of what inclusive teaching could mean for the larger project of IE at UBC.

Inclusive Excellence and the educational experience: Exploring notions of inclusive education

As an educational institution, teaching is a key function of any university. Thus, working towards making universities more equitable, diverse and inclusive for all students requires an examination of teaching practice. Before getting in to a discussion around inclusive teaching, it is important to first ask what is meant by inclusion in education, towards which inclusive teaching practices are oriented? While the topic of inclusive education has been the subject of much scholarly attention, the majority of literature that engages in discussions on inclusion in education does not articulately define what is actually meant by inclusive education (Artiles et. al, 2008; Thorius, 2016). Nevertheless, discussions and questions of inclusive education and inclusive teaching have been explored primarily by scholars working within the academic fields of special education and multicultural education (Lawrie et. al, 2017). As with the literature around inclusive teaching that will be discussed below, the literature on inclusive education is

primarily focused on the K-12 context, but many of the concepts can be applied or adapted to a postsecondary setting.

For some scholars, inclusion in educational processes and settings refers to increased participation particularly for special needs students in the activities- educational, cultural, and social- that the school/ university offers (Bradley & Miller, 2010; Fuller, Bradley, & Healey, 2004). Others conceptualize inclusion from the perspective of accessibility for students with special learning needs into ‘mainstream’ programs and classes (Artiles et al, 2008; Grant & Ladson- Billings, 1997). Embodying aspects of each of these two ideas, Grant & Ladson- Billings (1997) define inclusive education as “a value-based practice that attempts to bring all students, including those with disabilities into full membership within their local school [in the case of higher education, university] community” (p. 141).

Working within a critical multicultural framework, many scholars have raised concern around the lack of diversity in school curriculum and the absence of voices and perspectives representing Indigenous Peoples, people of color, queer and trans people, and women, among other perspectives often left out. These scholars have called for an education that helps develop a sense of cultural affirmation in students and thus, inclusive education is conceptualized as the inclusion of previously silenced and marginalized voices and perspectives into the curriculum and overall educational experience (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2014). With slight variations, the vast majority of definitions of inclusive education in both fields of literature emphasize including students with dis/abilities and students from underserved and marginalized communities into the mainstream classroom as is, thus resulting in students needing to adapt to an already pre-figured conceptualization of education, which, as critical scholars have signaled,

ultimately works to reinforce- not challenge- the status quo of schooling and society more broadly (Artiles, Kozleski, Dorn, & Christensen, 2008; Thorius & Waitoller, 2017).

More recently, scholars within the fields of both critical dis/ability studies and critical educational studies (i.e., Erevelles, 2011; Thorius, 2016; Thorius & Waitoller, 2016, 2017; Waitoller & Kozleski 2013, among others) have worked to challenge the tendency towards accommodation and reinforcement of the status quo in discussions around inclusion in education. This more recent emerging critical scholarly work seeks to decenter and denaturalize harmful practices and ideologies in educational philosophy and attempts to theorize a form of education from an emancipatory lens that can truly be inclusive of all.

Exploring possible ways to think about inclusive education with regards to embedding equity, diversity and inclusion at UBC, engaging with this emerging critical scholarship on inclusive education can perhaps serve to inform change in practice in university teaching. For example, take these two articulations of inclusive education embodying a critical approach:

Inclusive education is a continuous struggle toward (a) the redistribution of quality opportunities to learn and participate in educational programs [redistribution dimension], (b) the recognition and value of differences as reflected in content, pedagogy, and assessment tools [the recognition dimension], and (c) the opportunities for marginalised groups to represent themselves in decision-making processes that advance and define claims of exclusion and the respective solutions that affect their children's educational futures [the representation dimension]... (Waitoller and Kozleski 2013, p. 35)

inclusive” education is a constant invitation to denaturalize whiteness, normalcy, and the legacies of colonization; it is a zone of convergence for various efforts that aim to reform exclusionary notions and practices that reify ideologies expressed in “regular” education and the construction of the “normal child” (Baglieri et al., 2011). Thus, we conceptualize “inclusive” education as an endless project that demands strategic coalitions... (Thorius & Waitoller, 2017, p. 253)

The above articulations of inclusive education are helpful because together they form an approach that conceptualizes inclusive education as a collaborative and continual process and struggle, not as a predefined destination. The first definition provides concrete dimensions to articulate a vision of inclusion in education that attends to both equity and inclusion in ways that seek to transform current systems and structures (i.e. white supremacy, colonization, the ableist notion of ‘normalcy’, etc...). Moreover, both are conceptualizations of inclusive education that may provide a possibility of meaningfully engaging with and operating in tandem with other equity work on campuses that takes an anti-racist and decolonizing approach and that challenges ableism at large in higher education. Furthermore, the definition of inclusive education articulated in the definitions above appear to closely align with the systems-change principle of IE. As such, it is possible that they can perhaps inform the work of the SDI towards creating shared understandings of inclusion in education as well as provide guidance around some paths and strategies that can be employed to engage with faculty, departments and units on campus around transforming teaching practice to embrace inclusion and equity.

While the above definitions may provide valuable points of reference for larger conversations around inclusive education at UBC, it is important to keep in mind the reality of the differences between K-12 and higher education settings. Here one finds that notions of

inclusive education theorized with K-12 settings in mind are not entirely adaptable to the higher education context because post-secondary education is at its core ultimately exclusionary. In other words, the reality of post-secondary education being exclusionary in terms of who gets admitted and who doesn't is in tension with calls for inclusion within these very institutions. This brings to the forefront some of the complexity around the question of what inclusion means for institutions of post-secondary education specifically. For example, would this require a radical re-imagining of how university admissions processes work? Or does inclusion in the higher education context mean that it is primarily focused on supporting an environment of inclusion for admitted students, thereby working towards inclusion for some, but ultimately acknowledging that others will never be granted inclusion? To what extent can one work towards inclusion within an institution that is at its core based on exclusion? Is the notion of inclusion, particularly as outlined above (which focuses on the K-12 context) possible within higher education?

Exploring the field: Approaches to inclusive teaching

The following section will now turn to exploring the various approaches to inclusive teaching discussed throughout the scholarly literature. This section will not only present an overview of key ideas and trends in the field of education on the topic of inclusive teaching, but it will also explore and seek to identify aspects within each approach that speak to and can inform practice towards any or all parts of the definition of inclusive education provided.

As mentioned above, questions around inclusion in teaching practices, and in education more broadly, have been primarily dealt with in the fields of multicultural and special education. In special education, inclusive teaching practices have centered on pedagogical techniques and strategies to teach in ways that incorporate all students into the classroom; such strategies seek to maximize the participation of all students into the 'mainstream' classroom and provide all

students with opportunities for successful academic achievement (Artiles et al, 2008). Inclusive teaching from a special education lens also seeks to foster acceptance among other students and staff of all students, especially those students with dis/abilities (Artiles et al, 2008).

The development of inclusive teaching theories within the field of multicultural education has underpinned larger diversity, equity and inclusion efforts in education more broadly, and thus, will embody a larger portion of this review. Moreover, as discussed above with particular relevance in the Canadian context, multicultural perspectives are most prominent in current discussions on equity and inclusion within higher education. It is helpful to think about the various conceptualizations of inclusive teaching that I will discuss as a continuum rather than as stark contrasts to one another. This will allow one to see connections and threads, as well as differences, throughout the many conceptualizations of the concept.

Intercultural Competence

An interest with intercultural dialogue and achieving social harmony amongst different groups and cultures underpins a rather prevalent conceptualization of inclusive teaching found within the literature on diversity in higher education and teacher professional training, that of ‘intercultural teaching’. This perspective is also referred to as ‘intercultural teaching competence’ (Dimitrov & Haque, 2016), and ‘intercultural competence’ (Deardoff, 2016; Hammer, 2011). The goal of intercultural teaching is to develop instructors’ abilities to teach across cultures and facilitate students’ abilities to work across difference (Arkoudis et. al, 2013; Deardoff, 2006; Dimitrov & Haque, 2016; Guo & Jamal, 2007; Reid & Garson, 2017). The intercultural approach argues that experiences with cultural diversity are beneficial to students’ personal and social development and learning (Reid & Garson, 2017). Classrooms and workplaces are “complex landscapes” of various cultures and identities (Dimitrov & Haque,

2016); fostering instructors' abilities to develop students' intercultural competencies is not only necessary to create a safe, open and welcoming classroom environment, it is also needed to prepare students to engage and succeed in a globalized world (Dimitrov & Haque, 2016; Tinkler & Tinkler, 2016). The goal of inclusive teaching from an intercultural approach is to promote 'unity, tolerance, and acceptance within the existing social structure' (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p. 173). This goal most closely aligns with dimension b (the recognition and value of differences as reflected in content, pedagogy, and assessment tools [the recognition dimension]) in the definition of inclusive education discussed above, where there is recognition of differences and an understanding that difference and diversity are important for students' intellectual, social and emotional development.

The various models around developing intercultural teaching competence focus on not only providing students with opportunities to interact with others who have had different life experiences than their own, but it also asks both students and instructors to examine and reflect on their individual identities and biases they may have as a way to assist them in recognizing how one's own positionality informs how one engages with others (Dimitrov & Haque, 2016; Tinkler & Tinkler, 2016). This approach emphasizes developing students' attitudes and cultural competence skills through curriculum and pedagogical activities, such as working collaboratively in groups with others from different cultural and social backgrounds and reflecting on that experience either verbally in class or through written reflections, engaging in reflective exercises to examine one's own bias and assumptions through in class journaling, to name just a few (Arkoudis et. al, 2013; Dimitrov & Haque, 2016; Reid & Garson, 2017). Fundamentally, the intercultural approach to inclusive teaching is concerned with changing individual attitudes and beliefs; it assumes that "having enough information about cultural

groups [will help] avoid prejudice and bias and promote respect and acceptance” among people (Guo & Jamal, 2007b, p.33-34). In other words, according to intercultural competence theorists, prejudice, racism, xenophobia, bigotry, homophobia, transphobia, and other ways and forms people discriminate against others are most often the result of not having information or not knowing enough about the group that one may feel prejudice towards. Such positive experiences with cultural diversity, it is assumed, will lead to less bias and prejudice and more social harmony, on campus (an improved campus climate) and beyond the campus as well.

Going beyond cultural competence

Scholars working within a critical multicultural perspective have raised important critiques of the intercultural approach. One prevalent critique that critical scholars raise about an intercultural approach is the absence of meaningful engagement with the larger social and political context outside the classroom; ideas and perspectives that people hold are presented as if they are solely of the individual, irrespective of any context and disconnected from any larger system or structure (Burgess, 2017; Grande & Anderson, 2017). The lack of acknowledgement of any systemic power imbalance or structural oppression in society and presenting issues of class, race, and gender as simply “dimensions of difference” (see Dimitrov & Haque, 2016 for this tendency) means that educators who adopt this approach will not be able to meaningfully engage students in any deeper level analysis of how structural oppression works and how their personal beliefs and values are related to larger social contexts (Burgess, 2017).

Moreover, scholars have raised important critiques around the way culture is conceptualized within the intercultural approach, which is in a way that essentializes and reifies culture, presenting culture as a ‘thing’ that is static, “neatly framed” and “reduced as noticeable patterns of behavior”, rather than understanding culture as “contextual and fluid” (Burgess

(2017, p. 2; see also Gorski, 2016; Kumagai & Lypson, 2009; Pon, 2009 for similar critiques).

This often results in the objectification of others who are considered ‘different’ from the dominant culture in society and can lead to overly simplistic understandings of people and groups based on problematic simplistic notions of ‘culture’ (Kumagai & Lypson, 2009; Pon 2009).

Culturally Relevant/ Responsive/Sustaining Pedagogy

Taking a more critical approach to conceptualizing inclusive teaching, the notions of ‘culturally relevant pedagogy’ (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014) and ‘culturally responsive teaching’ (Gay, 2010, 2013) seek to theorize a pedagogy that is related, supportive and empowering to students, especially students from marginalized and underserved communities. In contrast with the intercultural approach, the culturally relevant/responsive approaches acknowledge sociopolitical context, power and the unique experience of ethnically diverse students in the classroom. Culturally relevant/responsive pedagogy is centered around three dimensions: ensuring student academic achievement, the development of cultural competence⁵, and a socio-political critique that fosters a broader understanding of problems outside of the classroom and encourages students to question the existing social structure of our society (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 2014). The notion of cultural competence in this approach is not a depoliticized notion of cultural appreciation, nor does it seek to assimilate

⁵ Within the educational literature, there are slight variations in the meanings of the term ‘competence’ in relation to culture; the notion of intercultural competence, as described above, refers to the ability to ‘work across difference’, to gain knowledge and develop the capacity to engage with others from different cultural backgrounds (Dimitrov & Haque, 2016; Knott, Mak & Neill, 2013). Within the culturally responsive/ relevant approach, as Ladson-Billings (2014) explains, “cultural competence refers to the ability to help students appreciate and celebrate their cultures of origin while gaining knowledge of and fluency in at least one other culture” (p. 75). These conceptualizations differ a bit from the notion of ‘cultural competence’ in the field of healthcare, which refers to the ability of healthcare organizations and practitioners to “meet the needs of diverse groups of patients”, through strategies such as language assistance, training on culturally appropriate ways of delivering care, etc... (Saha, et.al, 2008).

students into the dominant culture in schools and society. Rather, it seeks to develop a sense of cultural affirmation in students (particularly from marginalized communities) by supporting students in retaining and cultivating their cultural practices and “filter curriculum content and teaching strategies” through those students’ ‘cultural frames of reference’ so that they can achieve academic success and personally meaningful educational experiences (Gay, 2010, p.27; Paris, 2012). In other words, a culturally relevant approach understands that students enter into classrooms with a diverse range of backgrounds and needs and argues that curriculum and teaching must reflect and validate students’ cultural, linguistic and ethnic diversity; teaching content and strategies should draw on students’ prior experiences and cultural practices to create a sense of community amongst students and engender in them a sense of agency and empowerment (Gay, 2013; Guo & Jamal, 2007a; Ladson-Billings, 2014; Paris, 2012).

For the past 25 years, scholars and educators have been reflecting on and expanding the notions of culturally relevant/responsive pedagogy⁶. As these concepts have become more prevalent throughout the academic and educational community, some scholars have raised concern about the ‘taming’ of the powerful potential that culturally relevant/responsive teaching may hold. For example, Paris (2012) argues that the terms “relevant” and “responsive” don’t go “far enough in their orientation to the languages and literacies and other cultural practices of communities marginalized by systemic inequalities to ensure the valuing and maintenance of our multiethnic and multilingual society” (p. 93). As such, Paris proposes the notion of “culturally sustaining pedagogy” as a way to theorize a pedagogical approach that makes supporting- and more importantly fostering- the linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism of students

⁶ Taken together, the notions of culturally relevant, culturally responsive, culturally sustaining, culturally affirming pedagogies are also referred to more broadly as ‘asset pedagogies’ or ‘resource pedagogies’ (Waitoller & King Thorius, 2016)

marginalized by systemic inequalities an *explicit* goal of education (Paris, 2012). All approaches- culturally relevant, culturally responsive and culturally sustaining pedagogy- incorporate most of the dimensions a, b, and c in the conceptualization of inclusive teaching discussed above. However, they do not question the theoretical separation between multicultural education (as part of ‘general education’), and special education. Furthermore, Indigenous perspectives and a serious and sustained engagement with the legacies of colonization are almost absent from the culturally responsive/relevant/sustaining literature, although some recent work has begun to address this silence in the literature (see McCarty & Lee, 2014; Ragoonaden & Mueller, 2017 for examples).

Challenging the centrality of culture in multicultural approaches to inclusive teaching: Towards an intersectional approach to inclusive teaching

More recent scholarship has emerged from scholars working at the intersections of special education studies, critical race studies and critical dis/ability studies that argues for an intersectional approach to inclusive teaching (Annamma et al., 2013; Artiles, 2013; Sullivan & Thorius, 2010; Waitoller & Thorius, 2016, to name a few). Such an approach does not treat race, gender, social class, sexuality, age or ‘dis/ability’ as separate, mutually exclusive categories, but rather, understands that they are “mutually constructing features of social organization” (Artiles, 2013, p.336). Scholars taking an intersectional approach seek to understand how students experience multiple forms of oppression in their day to day interactions within educational systems (Artiles, 2013; Gillborn, 2015; Sullivan & Thorius, 2010; among others). Scholars advocating an intersectional approach to understanding equity and inclusion argue that within multicultural approaches, even those that are more critical, there is an overemphasis on culture, race, and ethnicity which can often downplay or even make invisible other types of oppression

based on other identity markers that students, especially from marginalized and underserved communities, can experience (Artiles, 2013; Gorksi, 2016). Taking an intersectional approach not only acknowledges the complexity of students' identities, but it also works to bridge the gap that has remained quite consistent in the literature, where 'special education' and 'multicultural education (as part of 'general education') are theorized separately and little (if any) dialogue is taking place between scholars in both fields (Sullivan & Thorius, 2016). Such a divide in scholarly work reifies an artificial distinction and divide between 'special' and 'general' education.

Universal Design for Learning and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

Examples of an intersectional approach towards connecting both fields of special education and critical multicultural education can be seen in recent scholarship around Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP), advanced primarily by Waitoller & King (2016). The idea of bridging fields of research appears to be gaining some momentum (albeit perhaps slowly), as other scholars have adopted this idea of connecting culturally sustaining pedagogy and UDL (see Hanesworth et. al (2018) with regards to CSP and UDL in assessment). Advocating what they call 'cross-pollination' between the concepts of culturally sustaining pedagogy discussed above and UDL, Waitoller & King (2016) argue for an intersectional approach to inclusive teaching that addresses the ways racism and ableism intersect and also works to foster and affirm students' multiple identities, while at the same time adopts the "goals, materials, instructional methods, and assessment" that are key characteristics of a UDL framework (p. 377).

Universal design for learning (UDL) is a pedagogical theorization of the concept of universal design in the field of architecture (Parker, 2012). The underlying idea of the universal

design approach is that spaces and buildings should be designed and constructed to allow for all individuals to access and use them with ease and comfort “to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation or specialized design”

(https://projects.ncsu.edu/design/cud/about_ud/about_ud.htm). In addition to being grounded in the principles of universally accessible architecture, UDL scholars also draw from neuroscience research and technology research to create a well-rounded robust theory of teaching and learning for all learners (Parker, 2012; Rose & Strangman, 2007). In the field of education, the universal design concept is referred to in several ways throughout the literature, which include: Universal Design for Learning, Universal Design for Instruction, Universal Design in Education, Universal Core Design, and Universal Instructional Design. Although different terminology is used, the foundational idea to any of the UD approaches is that the classroom learning environment and course curriculum should be designed in ways that are accessible to all students to the greatest degree possible without requiring additional accommodations (Behling & Hart, 2008; Hanesworth et. al, 2018; Parker, 2012; Rose & Strangman, 2007).

With specific regards to curriculum design, UDL is based on three key principles: instructors must provide multiple ways to (re)present information, instructors must provide a variety of ways for students to express what they learn and lastly, instructors must provide various ways and methods for students to engage with the topics being taught or discussed (Hanesworth et. al, 2018; Parker, 2012; Rose & Strangman, 2007). UDL scholars advocate the use of information technology to assist with these three principles; for example, presenting a topic in ways other than simply text and print-based formats (i.e. through multimedia presentation, such as video, animation, and images, or embedding text-based sources with hyperlinks to vocabulary definitions) not only “improves access to information”, but it also

allows “new pathways for constructing meaning to all students” (Rose & Strangman, 2007, p. 386). With regards to learning environment, UDL emphasizes creating a welcoming classroom environment, professors giving students clear instructions along with meaningful and timely feedback, and the inclusion of “natural supports for learning” (Parker, 2012, p. 119). In short, as Parker (2012) explains, “there is no ‘sink or swim’ mentality in the concept of UDL” (p. 126).

UDL provides important guidelines and principles that all instructors should take into account when designing a course and teaching it; there is a growing body of research that not only indicates how UDL is a promising approach, but that also provides practical guidance on how to transform course design and classroom teaching according to UDL principles (see Hall, Meyer & Rose, 2012; Parker, 2012, among others). However, as Waitoller & Thorius (2016) have argued, both UDL and culturally sustaining pedagogy (CSP) can be extended and could be improved by connecting the two theories together in practice. For example, Waitoller & King-Thorius (2016) argue that CSP can be extended, drawing on the ideas of UDL to add ‘ability pluralism’ as an educational goal alongside CSP’s stated goals of fostering and sustaining students’ linguistic, cultural and ethnic pluralism. UDL approaches, on the other hand, have not adequately theorized the ways that power and privilege are intertwined with access to education and successful academic achievement for students, especially students from underserved communities. UDL can be greatly extended and enhanced by incorporating culturally sustaining pedagogy’s larger socio-political critique as well as its concern with providing a pedagogy that is supportive and empowering to students, especially students from marginalized and underserved communities.

Silences within the literature: IE and Indigenous perspectives

While the bridging between the two concepts and fields (UDL and CSP) extends critical scholarship and provides important insight into understanding how an intersectional analysis can inform theory and practice on inclusive teaching, it's necessary to recognize and point out that the scholarship around intersectional approaches to inclusion does not meaningfully engage with or incorporate Indigenous perspectives. This silence on Indigenous perspectives is notable in both the literature around inclusion in the K-12 context, as well as in most perspectives on inclusion in higher education. More specifically, the Inclusive Excellence framework and literature on it do not explicitly engage with questions around Indigeneity and inclusion. To explore this topic in more detail, the next section will place scholars working within Critical Indigenous Studies in conversation with notions of inclusion in education and the broader calls for equity, inclusion, and diversity in higher education.

As mentioned above, a “colonial multiculturalism” has informed much of the policy and discourse on diversity, equity and inclusion within Canadian society at large, and within Canadian education more specifically (Mac Donald, 2014; see also Coulthard, 2007; Pidgeon, 2016; St. Denis, 2011). At both the K-12 and university levels, efforts to decolonize⁷ and Indigenize⁸ education have often come up against the reality that multicultural perspectives most often frame such debates. As St. Denis (2011) has illustrated, advocating for the meaningful

⁷ Decolonization can be defined as “the process of deconstructing colonial ideologies of the superiority and privilege of Western thought and approaches” (Cull, Hancock, McKeown, Pidgeon, Vedan, 2018, p. 6). Decolonization involves both the breaking down of harmful colonial structures, systems, practices, and settler perspectives, as well as the rebuilding and revitalization of Indigenous ways of being (Cull et. al., 2018)

⁸ Indigenization can be defined as “the meaningful inclusion of Indigenous knowledge(s), in the everyday fabric of the institution from policies to practices across all levels, not just in curriculum” (Pidgeon, 2014, p. 79),

inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in the curriculum has often been met by others, informed by a depoliticized multicultural perspective, who argue that the Indigenous peoples' experience and struggle is just one among many other equity-seeking groups in society. As Indigenous scholars have argued, such a perspective fails to understand the particularities of settler colonialism as a process, as well as the historical and ongoing process of native elimination; it flattens the Indigenous struggle for sovereignty by subsuming into all other struggles as simply one among many others, which reinforces and perpetuates settler colonial violence and the ongoing colonization of Indigenous Peoples (Grande, 2018; Grande & Anderson, 2017; St. Denis, 2011). Furthermore, as Lawrence and Dua (2005) illustrate, the erasure of Indigenous Peoples and a failure to explicitly address colonialism (past and present) and Indigenous sovereignty are also pressing problems in much critical scholarship (i.e., critical race theory, postcolonial studies) as well.

As universities have embraced calls for diversity and inclusion, critical Indigenous scholars have illustrated how most calls for inclusion have been premised on the acceptance of the dominant university framework within a settler colonial state. In their article entitled "Mapping out interpretations of decolonization in the context of higher education", de Oliveira Andreotti et. al (2015) explain that one of the most common approaches to decolonization within the higher education context is a "soft reform approach", which focuses on inclusion through institutional transformation. This approach, however, rests upon a problematic premise, which assumes that

... difference can and should be neatly incorporated on the terms of those doing the including, without any social conflict or significant change in structure, subjectivities, or power relations. It is also assumed that any disagreements that do arise can be addressed

through rational dialogue oriented towards (a predefined) consensus. No acknowledgement is given that the debate is skewed from the outset on the side of those who determine the terms of the conversation: who speaks, when, and what is intelligible, comfortable, and desirable (p. 26).

Similar to de Oliveira Andreotti et. al's (2015) critiques of inclusion approaches, Grande (2018) in her article entitled "Refusing the University", critically examines the political discourses and structures that underpin most calls for inclusion within higher education today. Arguing that the university and academy more broadly are "arms of the settler state", Grande critiques the "discourses of recognition" that drive most efforts at inclusion. Within discourses of recognition, Grande explains, emphasis is placed on understanding and respecting, acknowledging and recognizing particular groups and communities, and at times past historical oppressions and wrongdoings against those communities, but there is usually never any sustained or systemic critique of power, structural oppression and its relation to ongoing colonization and ways those systems can be overcome (see also Coulthard, 2007, 2014 for a similar critique). While recognition is important and has its place and role within broader efforts towards cultural and systemic change, as Grande (2018) and others argue, it often becomes the end-point, rather than thought of as one important reform within a larger project of challenging settler colonialism. Drawing on Coulthard (2014), Grande (2018) explains the limitations to such an approach:

while recognition draws attention to the role of misrecognition in reinforcing colonial domination, the breadth of power at play in colonial systems cannot be transcended through the mere institutionalizing of a liberal regime of mutual recognition (p. 54)

Connections and tensions: Bringing the conversations together

This final section seeks to explore how the various literature discussed in this review can connect to and inform the work of the Student Diversity Initiative (SDI) and EIO and their efforts in building Inclusive Excellence at UBC. Returning to the literature discussed above on approaches to inclusive teaching, one can tease out common threads and guiding principles, even amongst varying approaches. Below, I briefly summarize those common threads, which are listed in bold. Then, in the section that follows, I show how the common principles of inclusive teaching connect with the principles of Inclusive Excellence at UBC, identified in the beginning of this review, to illustrate how inclusive teaching is a central component of building IE at UBC.

Common threads amongst inclusive teaching approaches

Inclusive teaching seeks to create a sense of community and belonging amongst all people involved in the educational experience

Inclusive teaching is about building relationships, connections, and support. It's about building a sense of community and belonging amongst faculty and students at all levels; these include amongst faculty in learning communities, between faculty and students in and out of class, and between students in class and throughout the campus (Considine et al., 2014; Dallalfar, Kingston-Mann, & Sieber, 2011; Gannon, 2018; Linder et al., 2015)

Inclusive teaching approaches are grounded in valuing students' experiences

Often called 'validation theory', inclusive professors validate students and their experiences and where they're coming from (Rendon, 1994; Linder et al., 2015). As Linder et al. (2015) emphasize, "Students need their experiences acknowledged as legitimate and recognized as part of the curriculum of the program. This acknowledgement requires faculty to incorporate a

variety of materials in their courses and to recognize the variations in students' experiences" (p. 190).

Inclusive teaching practices are affirming of students' multiple identities

Inclusive teaching practices acknowledge and affirms students' multiple identities and seek to create classroom activities and course content that acknowledges the complexity of student identities. Inclusive teaching *does not* embody a 'deficit approach' (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997; Sullivan & Thorius, 2010; Waitoller & Thorius, 2016)

Inclusive classroom design and course content reflect the diversity of student identities and perspectives, especially those of students from marginalized and underserved communities

An important thread, particularly among more critical perspectives is that course design (curriculum, overall design and layout of course) must include and reflect a broad array of identities and perspectives, especially from people not often included, such as Indigenous and First Nations peoples, people of color, queer and trans people, women, immigrants, among others. As emphasized in culturally relevant approaches discussed above, inclusive teaching is not simply adding a few 'diversity' components to a course already set in place, but rather, fundamentally changing the content, delivery and goals of a course to ensure that those perspectives are meaningfully incorporated into the class.

Inclusive teaching emphasizes classroom design and course activities to meet needs of all learners

Drawing from the UDL approach, inclusive teaching is where classrooms and assignments are designed to account for learner variability and all foreseeable barriers to learning

and active participation in the learning process are attended to and rectified. Instructors “provide a variety of ways for students to demonstrate knowledge” (Parker, 2012, p. 119).

Inclusive classrooms encourage active learning and interaction

Inclusive instructors embrace a pedagogical approach that emphasizes active learning as opposed to lecture, and curriculum and classroom activities that incorporate students’ lived experience and that connect to curriculum and assessment that is meaningful to students.

Inclusive educators strive for students to have meaningful experiences and to be able to meaningfully engage with others and learn from their peers. In short, students are ‘empowered’ to participate in the learning process (Dimitrov & Haque, 2016; Gannon, 2018; Salazar, Norton & Tuitt, 2011).

Inclusive educators engage with students in open, honest, and authentic ways and act with self-awareness

Inclusive educators exhibit self-awareness and reflect on their own positionality and how that influences how they teach, how they engage, the choices made in developing the curriculum, etc... (Dimitrov & Haque, 2016; Linder et al., 2015). Inclusive faculty do not shy away from controversial issues in class discussion, and at the same time, they set up group norms and ground rules for discussion in class (Linder, Harris, Allen, & Hubain, 2015). In other words, inclusive educators ensure that their classroom is safe for students (students should not feel that their livelihood or wellbeing is not safe) and they also intervene when needed, and do not allow racist, sexist, homophobic, transphobic, anti-immigrant or any harmful comments to go unaddressed. While these principles do not represent the entire gamut of inclusive teaching

principles, they provide a helpful comprehensive starting point into thinking about inclusive teaching in practice.

Inclusive teaching approaches and the principles of IE at UBC

All of the common guidelines of inclusive teaching discussed above are aligned with the principles of IE at UBC. As universities are academic enterprises, and students' experiences in the classroom have a large role in shaping their overall university experience, seeking to implement the principles of inclusive teaching outlined above is a key task in the larger project of working towards Inclusive Excellence at UBC. In particular, the common principles/guidelines of inclusive teaching discussed in this review are most relevant to the following principles of IE at UBC:

-Cultural and social differences of learners enrich and enhance the University: this is a key tenant of all the inclusive teaching approaches discussed above; more specifically, inclusive teaching approaches emphasize the pedagogical importance of diversity (social, cultural, etc) in the classroom to enhance student learning and overall classroom experience.

-Inclusion is more than just numbers: all approaches discussed above emphasize the importance of students' experiences and active engagements in the classroom and in the educational experience at large

Moreover, the common principles/ guidelines of inclusive teaching discussed above relate to and contribute directly to the four features of achievement of IE at UBC: equitable experience and success, inclusive culture, enhanced experience due to engagement with diversity, and a diverse campus.

Inclusive teaching's emphasis on meeting the needs of all learners, and designing classroom activities, as well as the physical classroom space to reflect that is grounded by the goal of achieving equitable educational experiences and providing as many opportunities and possibilities for all students to succeed. Inclusive teaching's emphasis on creating a sense of community and belonging is guided by the larger goal of achieving an inclusive culture. Moreover, the notion of an "enhanced experience due to engagement with diversity" is also a key principle of inclusive teaching outline above. Perhaps this goal is most clearly expressed as a fundamental part of the intercultural approach to inclusive teaching, but other approaches support this goal as well. Inclusive teaching contributes to a diverse campus most clearly through course content and design (i.e. by providing diverse perspectives to students on a variety of topics, and with particular attention to the voices and perspectives of marginalized and underserved communities), as well as fostering in-class activities that facilitate students' interactions with diverse groups of students. It should be noted that the guidelines of inclusive teaching aren't confined solely to classroom teaching; workshops, trainings, seminars, and other educational gatherings can be designed and implemented with these principles in mind.

Inclusive Teaching and connections to recent work on Indigenization of post-secondary institutions

As discussed above, the literature on inclusive teaching has not seriously addressed colonization or engaged with Indigenous approaches to teaching and learning. As such, in my review of the literature, it has proved very challenging to connect the common guidelines of inclusive teaching with Indigenous approaches. Furthermore, for the purposes of informing the practical work of the SDI and EIO that is related to teaching in any sort of capacity, the existing literature has not provided much helpful orientation. With that said, there are opportunities to

make new connections, but I think those connections need to be made not from a perspective of ‘adding’ indigenous perspectives to an existing multicultural-based approach to inclusive teaching, but rather, from sustained and authentic engagement with emerging scholarship on Indigenization of post-secondary education. As Antoine, Mason, Mason, Palahicky & Rodriguez de France (2018) clarify, “While multiculturalism presents a valuable approach to honouring diversity, Indigenization is a distinct process that needs to be practiced in its own right, and the two should not be merged together in policy or practice “(p. 8). One very recent and important resource that can inform SDI and EIO practice in this endeavor is the BC campus’ Indigenization Professional Learning Series (<https://bccampus.ca/indigenization/>), which provides extensive guides for teachers, professors, curriculum developers, front line staff, university administrators, among others on the topic of Indigenization of post-secondary education.

Points of consideration for moving forward

There are some important questions (beyond questions concerned with teaching) to consider in the effort to further the project of IE at UBC. With respect to IE and Indigenous initiatives at UBC, it is important to ask, is the conceptualization of inclusion articulated in the IE framework based on the norms, beliefs, and identities of those who are already dominant in society? Is it possible to rethink our notion of inclusion that seriously engages with calls for decolonization and indigenization of higher education?

Moreover, there are some ways in which the articulation of certain IE guiding principles, as well as the explanation of inclusion within the UBC strategic plan, can appear to embrace a depoliticized notion of inclusion, which as discussed above, is an area of tension and divergence between Indigenous perspectives and the university. For example, there appears to be an emphasis on recognition, but as critical Indigenous studies scholars have noted, the discourse of

recognition has its limitations with regards to working towards Indigenization of higher education. How can the explanation of inclusion extend beyond recognition? Furthermore, it is important that the conversation and work around inclusion at UBC also explicitly address ongoing colonization, not just speaking to its legacy; speaking to its legacy implies a past, but it is important to also emphasize how it is still perpetuated, even by policies that portend to have noble goals (such as the majority of notions of inclusion discussed above).

The points of convergence between IE work and Indigenous initiatives can be greatly strengthened when the following is present and explicitly stated:

a.) a commitment to work both within and beyond the university as it currently stands/operates. Moreover, the work is oriented by the larger goals of Indigenous sovereignty and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

b.) that inclusion work is willing to critically examine the assumptions behind calls for inclusion and be willing to disrupt and alter current notions of inclusion to more meaningfully engage with larger projects of both indigenization and decolonization as well as social justice more broadly. While it's important to more clearly articulate the connection between IE work and indigenous initiatives, it is also important to note that the work of decolonization is and must continue to be broader and cannot be subsumed within inclusion work at the university (Gaudry & Lorenz, 2018).

With regards to Inclusive Excellence and non-Indigenous students and communities on campus, is there a way to make redistribution and broader goals of equity a more explicit part of IE work? Similar to the question of inclusion in the context of Indigenous Peoples, current structures and systems in society often exclude marginalized and underserved communities.

Perhaps the definitions of inclusive education provided at the beginning of this review can provide a starting point into thinking about ways to include more explicit language around equity in the conceptualization of IE at UBC or think about ways to include this equity-focus in more programmatic ways. In other words, how can IE at UBC be expanded to more concretely support redistributive (the redistribution of quality opportunities to learn and participate in educational programs) and representative (the opportunities for marginalised groups to represent themselves in decision-making processes that advance and define claims of exclusion and the respective solutions that affect their children's educational futures) dimensions of inclusive education work?

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