

Teaching Philosophy

My teaching philosophy is deeply rooted in my childhood experiences in a remote village in Burkina Faso, West Africa. Despite growing up in an environment with under-resourced schools, I was fortunate to have teachers who recognized and nurtured my potential. These educators imparted knowledge and empowered me, stirring aspirations that seemed beyond reach. Against considerable odds, I excelled academically, eventually accessing once unimaginable opportunities. This personal journey has profoundly shaped my belief that all children, regardless of their background or circumstances, can achieve greatness when provided with high-quality learning opportunities. As a result, differentiation and individualized support have become cornerstones of my teaching approach.

Methodologically, my teaching practice is firmly grounded in critical social science (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and the transformative paradigm (Neuman, 2011). These frameworks emphasize the active co-construction of knowledge and the importance of disrupting inequitable power structures to promote social justice. This creates an environment in the classroom where students are encouraged to question established norms, engage in critical thinking, and actively participate in shaping their learning experiences. Technology is crucial in this process, providing tools for collaborative inquiry, data analysis, and connectivity.

I wholeheartedly embrace the concept of "principled eclecticism" (Larsen-Freeman & Anderson, 2011) in my teaching methods. This approach allows me to flexibly draw from a diverse array of research-based pedagogical strategies to meet the varied needs of all students. This involves combining art-based learning, gamification, multimodal instruction, personalized learning approaches, and technology integration. For instance, I use digital art tools to explore concepts, implement game-based activities, provide content through various digital media (text, audio, video, and interactive simulations), and use learning management systems to design courses that meet individual student needs and interests.

My stance on sustaining cultural pluralism and linguistic diversity is significantly influenced by Paris' (2012) culturally sustaining pedagogy. This framework goes beyond mere cultural responsiveness, actively empowering students as agents in knowledge creation and sustaining their funds of knowledge. In practice, this involves incorporating diverse cultural perspectives into (digital) art projects, using multilingual and multicultural resources, or designing

personalized assignments that allow students to draw on their unique cultural backgrounds through multiple modalities.

I firmly believe that deep understanding develops through a combination of wonder, reflection, creativity, and meaningful social connections. To this end, I strive to create a learning environment that sparks curiosity, encourages thoughtful contemplation, fosters creative expression, and promotes collaborative learning. Art-based learning, gamification, and technology integration are crucial in achieving these goals, making learning more engaging and accessible to diverse learners.

Four interconnected principles form the foundation of my culturally sustaining student-centered pedagogy:

1. Education is lifelong, building self-determination:

My own academic journey has reinforced my belief that education is an endless voyage of discovery that continues well beyond formal schooling. With this in mind, I am committed to equipping young learners with the tools and mindsets necessary for lifelong, autonomous learning and personal growth. This includes teaching metacognitive strategies, fostering a growth mindset, and encouraging self-directed learning projects. I use personalized learning approaches to help students take ownership of their educational journey and develop self-regulation skills.

2. Learners are competent agents, actively producing meaning:

I recognize that learners possess an inherent capacity for learning and have vast potential to realize. In my classroom, I actively invite students to co-construct knowledge by encouraging questioning, promoting free expression of ideas, supporting thoughtful risk-taking, and resolutely embracing mistakes as valuable opportunities for growth. For example, I implement student-led (digital) art projects, design educational games that require critical thinking, and use multimodal technological means to allow students to express their understanding in ways that best suit their strengths and preferences.

3. Learning thrives through communal dialogue across differences:

I purposefully facilitate spaces where diverse perspectives can interact to advance collective understanding. Embracing the concept of pluralism, I steadfastly ensure that all voices are heard and that no learner is marginalized. This might involve using strategies like collaborative or multimodal group projects using pair/group or collaborative technologies that promote dialogue and perspective-taking while accommodating different learning styles and abilities.

4. Joy intensely catalyzes learning.

I aim to foster students' innate curiosity and drive to understand by cultivating creativity and playfulness in the learning process. I view challenges as decisive occasions for learning and growth. My classroom celebrates tenacious growth mindsets and the joy of discovery. This principle manifests through integrating art-based learning across subjects, using gamification and educational technology to make challenging concepts more approachable and engaging, and the provision of multimodal digital learning experiences that cater to diverse interests and learning preferences.

By leveraging art-based learning, gamification, multimodal instruction, personalized approaches, and integrated technology, I strive to create a dynamic, inclusive, and joyful learning environment where every student can thrive and develop the skills necessary for success in the 21st century.

Inoussa Malgoubri

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Inoussa Malgoubri', written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

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