DIVERSITY: AN ANNOTATED INTERDISCIPLINARY BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Abstract

This article aims at highlighting the wide-ranging occurrence of **diversity,** as one of the key universal interdisciplinary concepts of our times. Accordingly, in briefly annotated form, illustrative, relevant quotations are provided from varied current scientific and humanistic sources. Key words: diversity - interdisciplinary studies - conceptual universals.

Introduction: key interdisciplinary concepts

An examination of key-concepts in contemporary thought will show that many of such "general ideas" are shared by educational,scientific, and cultural domains. Thus, **culture** is of interest to anthropologists and biologists; **set** is featured in the terminology used in Mathematics and in Sports; **community** is a concern of sociologists and ecologists; **Gender** occurs in grammatical studies and in socio-cultural studies; **web** is shared by architects and by computer scientists; **core** is part of the geologist´s and the educator´s vocabulary. The listing of key-concepts-terms could very well become a fascinating exercise of discovery/identification, from elementary through graduate

school,so I urge that readers,individually or collectively, engage in that kind of semantic selection or challenge others to do so, as a dimension of the assessment of interdisciplinary-conceptual-terminological competence/sensitivity.

Among the vital interdisciplinary concepts found in the current scientific literature, **diversity** stands out. Given the commendable focus of this issue of *Ilha do Desterro*, that "general notion" will be dealt with here,especially so as to illustrate its current interdisciplinary relevance and productivity. Before providing a sample annotated bibliography, it might be instructive to tell you a little about the **divers** family of words, especially the date when each ot its members first appeared in written English. According to Random House Webster´s College Dictionary (New York, Random House, 1997, p. 382), the adjective **Divers** makes its lexicographic debut in 1200, the variant adjective **diverse** appears 75 years later (1275), **diversity** enters the written language in 1300, **diversify** appears in 1400, and **diversification** makes itself visible in 1595. In short, the family of **divers-** words grew from the 13th through the 16th centuries.

A complementary type of word-family analysis could focus on the combinability (or "collocation", to use the preferred term by British linguists) of each lexical item. Thus, **divers/diverse** groups are involved, we have **diverse interests,** the company is **diversifying** more rapidly. A third analytical possibility would focus on the form of words: thus **diversity** can be pluralized in such context as cultural **diversities.**

The interdisciplinary visibility of "diversity": a brief annotated bibliography

There follow 10 annotated entries, aimed at illustrating the diversified uses of **diversity** across disciplines. Readers are asked to expand the sample, by probing their own fields or related domains. The selection is merely suggestive and reflects the choices made by

this author among current books of interdisciplinary relevance to his research. Revealingly of the influence of **diversity**, such concept can be seen in the titles of two of the books included. For each entry, its respective area will be given, together with a comment and/or relevant quotation. Works included have been published since 1995.

1. Area : Linguistic rights

Skutnab-Kangas, Tove (2000). *Linguistic genocide in education - or worldwide **Diversity** and human rights?* Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, 785 pp.

Chapter 2 (38 pp) is on Connections between biodiversity and linguistic and cultural diversity. Chapter 4 (80 pp) deals with Linguistic diversity – curse or blessing? To be maintained or not? Why?

2. Area : Cross-cultural studies

Kohls, L. Robert & Herbert L. Brussow (1995). *Training know-how for cross cultural and **Diversity** trainers*. Duncanville, Texas: Adult Learning Systems, 212 pp.

There is a 6-page section on Advantages and disadvantages of a dozen teaching/ training techniques.

3. Area: Psychology

Morton Deutsch & Peter T. Coleman (Eds.) (2000) *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution. Theory and Practice.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 649 pp.

There is a section on Diversity management (pp. 546-547).

4. Area: Education

Darling-Hammond, Linda (1997). *The right to learn. A blueprint for schools that work*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 394 pp.

In chapter 4- Teaching and learning for understanding – there is a section on Appreciation for diversity and a section on The benefits of diversity. Teacher knowledge of diversity is dealt with on pp. 295-296. In the book´s Subject Index, there are 10 entries on diversity.

5 Area: Discourse Analysis

De Beaugrande, Robert (1997). *New foundations of a science of text and discourse. Cognition, communication, and the freedom of access to knowledge and society.* Norwood, New Jersey: Ablex Publishing, 670 pp.

Chapter VIII features a 14-page section on Discourse and culture in modern Diversity. Both diversifying and diversity are included in the Index of Terms.

6 Area: Peace Education

Reardon, Betty A. (2001) *Education for a culture of peace in a gender perspective.* Paris: UNESCO Publishing. The Teacher´s Library, 197 pp.

Cultural diversity is one of the book´s foundational concepts. According to Reardon, "it is a value based upon respect for the multiple manifestations of human objectives, practices, institutions, belief systems, arts forms, family structures and gender arrangements in different cultures, ethnic and national groups. It acknowledges that there are many and various ways in which people can express human values and meet human needs" (p. 36).

7 Area: Sociology

 Albrow, Martin (1999). *Sociology. The Basics.* London, Routledge, 203 pp.

The author discusses cultural diversity (p. 132) and diversity of research methods in sociology (pp. 52-55).

8 Area: Second language acquisition

Cook, Vivian (Ed.) 2002. *Portraits of the L 2 user.* Clevedon, U.K.: Multilingual Matters.

Cook´s chapter on Language teaching methodology and the L 2 user perspective features a section on Multiple goals of language teaching (pp. 329 -331). On p. 330 he cogently makes the point that "The diversity of teaching goals is stressed here because of the emphasis in the twentieth century consensus on external goals of behaving in the

L2 environment, rather than the internal goals of better cultural attitudes or greater cognitive flexibility" (p. 330).

9 Area: Anthropological Linguistics
Duranti, Alessandro (1997). *Linguistic anthropology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chapter 3 focuses on Linguistic diversity. Among related concepts dealt with: linguistic relativity, linguistic repertoire, multilingual communities, heteroglossia.

10 Area: Applied Linguistics
Pennycook, Alastair (2001) *Critical applied linguistics. A critical introduction.* Mahwah, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum, 206 pp.

Diversity is discussed in Chapter 3 (The Politics of Language), where the author questions both liberal models of diversity which view the latter "in terms of pluralism for its own sake, diversity as a national resource " and a model which "is in favor of the support for diversity in terms of fundamental human rights" (p. 63.). Interestingly, Chapter 6 is titled The Politics of Difference. Its discussion of Inclusivity draws attention to A pedagogy of inclusion of diversity, Representations of diversity in texts, curricula, and classrooms, and to issues to do with diversity (p.158).

Concluding remarks

Much more could have been added to the brief bibliography, especially if the literature on quotations had been considered for inclusion. An example: David Crystal and Hilary Crystal´s *Words on Words. Quotations on language and languages* (2000, London: Penguin Books, 2000). Its Index of Key words, phrases, and concepts lists five quotations on **diversity**, one of which written by one of the precursors of psycholinguistics: Benjamin Lee Whorf in his classic, 1940 article Science and Linguistics: "A fair realization of the incredible degree of the **diversity** of linguistic systems that ranges over the globe leaves

one with an inescapable feeling that the human spirit is inconceivably old …" (p.22).

In closing, let me reiterate the great interdisciplinary – and **trans**disciplinary (to boldly advance and deepen our knowledge) – relevance of **diversity** in our everyday activities and endeavors. May its diverse uses contribute to improving the quality of our life, especially of our commitment to a world ever-enriched with knowledge diversification, theoretically and applicationally. To put it in a nutshell: let´s **dignify** our **discourse** for **diversity.**