Little by Little the Bird Builds its Nest: First Steps in Cross Cultural Curriculum Training

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With the goal of raising awareness of child slavery and devastation of the natural environment in Haiti, while simultaneously supporting active teaching strategies, a team of educators collaborated to develop The Respecting Haiti curriculum. Following development of the curriculum, representatives from the team facilitated curriculum training with teachers in Haiti. The process continues to evolve as participants work to build on strengths and use individual expertise to enhance our collective knowledge and develop an effective and authentic curriculum. This paper provides a brief overview of the development of a "draft" curriculum, and the experiences and lessons learned by the team of faculty conducting training on the curriculum. Using an analysis of journals, curriculum materials, and notes, the authors identified four key themes necessary to avoid barriers to full successful curriculum implementation: negotiation, confrontation, preparation and connection. The process and experiences presented may serve as a model to inform curriculum development and training in developing countries.

The Haitian proverb "Piti, piti, zwazo fe nich li" (Little by Little the bird builds its nest) serves as a fitting description of efforts taken to develop a curriculum for use in Haiti. The process beginning as an idea in Haiti, facilitated by a Haitian activist living in the United States and built upon by faculty in the United States and teachers in Haiti, continues to evolve as participants build on strengths, use individual expertise to enhance their collective knowledge, and develop an effective and authentic curriculum. This paper provides a brief overview of the initial curriculum development and the experiences and lessons learned from the team of faculty conducting training around the curriculum in a developing country.

Knowledge has become a global commodity as the benefits of transnational and international collaboration and teaching become more apparent. Either through increased funding for travel opportunities or improved technologies, the academic world has moved beyond the

boundaries of oceans, with scholars working cross-continentally in mounting numbers (Ellingboe, 1998; Gopal, 2011; Knight, 1999; Zolfaghari, Sabran, & Zolfaghari 2009). The international opportunities afforded to faculty and students in contemporary society are burgeoning, with countless ways to engage the university community in teaching and learning overseas. The potential for growth on all fronts is limitless.

However, as we learned through our work in Haiti, physically crossing borders into lands unknown is actually easier than crossing cultures. As members of a curriculum development team, we collaborated with a Haitian activist hoping to bring about change in Haiti. With approval of the Haitian Education Ministry, our goal was to generate a curriculum on Respect, that Haitian teachers could use to address problems related to the devastation of the nation's natural environment as well as human rights issues prevalent in their country. Fueling our cross-cultural curriculum work was the national movement gaining momentum for the abolishment of childhood domestic slavery, or Restavec, in Haiti.

Prior to engaging in this international endeavor, we armed ourselves with insider information related to Haitian culture. We desired this information and viewed it as a sincere attempt to demonstrate cultural competencies. During our international experience, however, we became woefully aware of our inadequate preparation, recognizing our lack of knowledge of what it actually means to be a teacher and learner in Haiti. We learned that simply having access to information about the culture was not sufficient for successfully implementing the type of work we were attempting. We were thus compelled to gain knowledge from our experiences to determine how best to move forward with this work. Our goal for this inquiry project was to use a process of purposeful analysis and reflection, as advocated by Smith (2010), to mine what we learned through our experiences to not only inform our future work, but the work of others who endeavor to engage in cross-cultural curriculum design.

Project Genesis

In October of 2010, an activist from the island of Haiti visited the University of Cincinnati's Blue Ash College (UCBA) to share his experience as a child-slave or "restavec." He also spoke of his personal mission to change the lives of the thousands of restavecs that still exist today in his homeland (Cadet, 2011; Cadet, 1998). His story moved several people including the Dean of UCBA, who was stirred by the call to change the future of Haitian children through

education so the idea of a restavec could be seen as a cultural anomaly rather than a cultural norm.

In addition to the child slavery issue in Haiti, an equally significant concern is the environmental devastation that has occurred in the country. Haiti's dependency on wood as its primary fuel source has led to decades of deforestation. This deforestation has left the country with less than 2% of its original forest cover, which in turn, has led to severe soil erosion and a depleted ability of the soil to hold water, thus making Haiti significantly vulnerable to flooding and landslides. A compounding issue stemming from deforestation in Haiti is the disappearance of wildlife that depend on either the forest cover or ground for their existence. Some researchers believe the situation is so grave on this island that a massive extinction event similar to the disappearance of dinosaurs will happen unless serious conservation efforts take place (Our Amazing Planet Staff, 2010).

Based on the restavek concern and the equally disturbing environmental issues, a call went out to faculty at the University of Cincinnati and Northern Kentucky University to help develop a curriculum for primary teachers in Haiti. The call resulted in five faculty members from the University of Cincinnati, two faculty members from Northern Kentucky University, and a high school teacher with close ties to the Haitian community.

Curricular Evolution

The team met early in 2011 to determine the theme and approach to developing the curriculum. In preliminary discussions, the experiences of one of the team members as a restavec, his descriptions of Haiti's environment and history, and his portrayal of the schools where the curriculum would be implemented were critical in determining that the broad central theme of the curriculum would be "Respect." This theme was selected because it tied together key content areas in a way that capitalized on the strengths of the Haitian people and culture while also providing opportunities to address challenges. It was imperative that respect underlie not only our efforts, but the curriculum as a whole, for it was out of respect for Haiti that the curriculum was envisioned and through respect for Haiti that it would be realized. Specifically, the curriculum would address the following: 1) Respect for the environment; 2) Respect for Haiti's history; 3) Respect for one's self; and 4) Respect for another. With these four areas established, the curriculum team broke into four smaller groups each of which would develop

teaching modules focusing on the cultural identity of Haiti and spotlight active pedagogies Haitian teachers might use to instill in children a deeper understanding of the prominent issues facing Haitians and their way of life.

Curriculum Implementation

In late summer of 2011, a finalized draft of the curriculum was completed and a plan for implementation was formulated. It was determined a small team, including three university professors from two institutions, a high school teacher who had traveled extensively through Haiti, and a Haitian activist, would go to Haiti to introduce and educate teachers there to the curriculum. A work in progress, the curriculum was to be revised based on teacher feedback at the conclusion of the training. The project, known as the "*Respecting Haiti* Teacher Workshop" would take place in December of 2011 in Port-au-Prince, Haiti over a six-day period.

In the months leading up to the trip, the training team had several strategy sessions to determine the most appropriate method(s) for working with the teachers. Through these sessions, the team determined the materials that needed to be included and made logistical plans for the training. What was of utmost importance to the team was finding a balance between the introduction of new instructional strategies that would expand on the traditional lecture and memorization format typically used in Haitian schools, while overtly incorporating Haitian cultural values in to the curriculum. With help from our Haitian team member, we included the use of Haitian proverbs, storytelling, and pictures of Haitian children in training materials and workshop activities.

We felt that engaging in the *Respecting Haiti* Teacher Workshop would require not only incorporation of intercultural competence but also models of adult learning. Cultural competence plays a key role in teaching and working across cultures effectively (De Beuckelaer, Lievens & Bücker, 2012; Gopal, 2011), and intercultural competence, including attitudes, behaviors and knowledge, facilitates both effectiveness and appropriateness in cross cultural scenarios (Gopal, 2011). During the planning stages of our curriculum design, we recognized that successful interactions across cultures require some intentionality. Not only do outside trainers have to be open to and value other cultures, with respect playing a key role, but they must also be willing to examine personal biases and assumptions.

Respecting Haiti Teacher Workshop

The team worked with approximately 35 teachers over four, six-hour days. On each day, the team modeled facets of the curriculum and as a culminating activity; the teachers were asked to demonstrate a sample lesson based on the curriculum. The *Respecting Haiti* Teacher Workshop involved not only the training team sharing portions of the curriculum and modeling specific teaching strategies, but even more importantly, soliciting input from the participants as a means for learning which activities would be most meaningful and effective in their culture.

Well-Intentioned but Unprepared

Even with our conscientious efforts to incorporate components of the Haitian culture in our presentations, we had not trained ourselves in the nuances of effective cross-cultural collaboration – a phenomenon that Gopal (2011) describes as occurring all too often. While we began to develop the skills needed for negotiating the foreign culture through our actual experiences, as a team we realized we were ill-equipped for the challenges that ultimately inhibited our effectiveness and thwarted our progress forward. If we had sufficiently prepared ourselves for cross-cultural collaboration, we might have been better able to meet the needs of the Haitian teachers at the outset, generate a more sustainable plan for future work, collaborate more effectively and efficiently, and maintain momentum in our work in Haiti.

Through the analysis of our journals, photos and training notes, four key themes were revealed reflecting the barriers and challenges we confronted during the workshop training experience. The four themes were negotiation, confrontation, preparation and connection. *Negotiation* included navigating issues of identity whether personal, cultural, or racial. We had to figure out who we were and where, how and if we fit into the world in which we were trying to exist, if only temporarily. *Confrontation* included the conflicts we faced such as the overarching ethnocentric focus of our journey in contrast with the genuine desire to form a collaborative partnership with the Haitian teachers. Additionally, confrontation describes the contradictions and emotional conflicts arising from exposure to the juxtaposition of extremes such as wealth and poverty. *Preparation* included two issues. First, we were faced with a lack of materials. Secondly, and overwhelmingly, was the daily realization that we would face something for which we were not prepared and could not predict. Finally, *connection* was a need as the training team worked to connect with the Haitian workshop participants as well as with one another as

team members. Negotiation, confrontation, preparation and connection are threads weaving through the stories of our first foray in cross-cultural collaboration.

Negotiation

The Negotiation of Personal Identities

One of the unexpected challenges with which we were confronted was the instability of our American personal and professional identities, particularly related to race. Our small band of travelers consisted of a black male Haitian, two white male Americans, a black female American of Haitian descent, and a white female American. At the outset of the professional development experience, the presenters perceived themselves as equals. However, our identities within the learning community evolved as hierarchies fluctuated, with each of us moved in and out of power relations through the perceptions of our Haitian colleagues and participants. It was disconcerting to not have a solid grounding in one's sense of self in this new environment, forcing us to engage in an ongoing negotiation of our racial identities.

Recognizing Differences in Cultural Identities

This unbalance of identities became apparent almost immediately after our plane landed and we were literally expected to run through the throng of Haitian travelers and beggars as if we should know our way. Our unsure footing grew more tenuous throughout our trip as each day brought a challenge related to race and culture. We were constantly in a state of disequilibrium as we shifted from acceptance, to isolation, to collective knowing about difference regarding our racial heritages and personal histories. Our professional identities in this group had not previously been defined by race, but the environment and the culture in which we were engaged demanded that we not only become aware of the impact race and culture had on our effectiveness as presenters and collaborators with the Haitian professionals, but that we proactively consider and even use race and culture as a means for better conveying our message.

In an attempt to transcend the stereotypes of Americans that preceded us, we found tentative connections with our Haitian colleagues through relatable stories of poverty or loose cultural linkages, making connections through our shared experiences. For example, one of the team members relayed the story of his childhood where he shared a bath, once a week with this three other siblings so that they would not waste water. The participants realized that Americans

could be poor and there was a connection. Although somewhat minor, these connections supported the development of trusting relationships and increased engagement of the workshop participants.

Shifting Awareness of Racial Identities

As we began to become aware of and examine our racial identities in the light of the workshop participants, other incidences threw us into another dimension of racial awareness. We were constantly reminded of our lack of cultural capital, remaining outsiders to the Haitian culture. Even with this awareness, we were unprepared for the changes in status experienced by each of us in various situations based on our perceived racial identities. Male, female, white, black, Haitian, American, all played a revolving role during our Haitian experience. The inequality of races prevalent in Haitian culture was filtering in on us, as if we were being sucked into a space where our past relationships within an American culture lost relevance, and we had to relearn who we were based on a new set of principles. Our identities subtly shifted as we slowly became aware of our roles in this professional development opportunity, creating a dance of sorts as we gingerly tread on unfamiliar and uncomfortable territory.

Although appreciative of the workshop opportunity, Haitian organizers of the workshop made it clear to the white team members that they were outsiders, and that the message of respect should be coming from Haitians themselves. However, the same was true for the black team member. In one instance there was a communication breakdown and confusion about where the team was headed. One of the individuals serving as a guide exclaimed that he had to take care of the "very important white people." At the time, there were two black people in the car. While quite accustomed to dealing with issues of race and discrimination, the black team member of Haitian descent was somewhat caught off guard. Being in the racial majority it seemed did not preclude being viewed as less important. It was a reminder that she did not belong. She might be of Haitian descent, but she was not Haitian. She might have been with the training team, but she was not as valuable as them. She looked out the window feeling alone and invisible and knowing her experience was different from the others.

Although we were involved in the same situations, and connected as American colleagues in some ways, we remained isolated in other ways. The negotiation of our identities during our time in Haiti involved issues of race, culture, gender, class and personal histories,

making the experience unique to each of us. The emotional roller coaster both drew us together and isolated us. We remained in constant negotiation with how we fit together as a team as well as how we fit into the country.

Confrontation

Conflicting Instructional Paradigms

A major hurdle involved in the successful implementation of the curriculum was the need to coalesce the ethnocentric view of the participants with that of the visiting instructors, causing cognitive dissonance as we compared the pedagogical differences in how education is approached in each country. In Haiti, instruction is primarily didactic where teachers stand in front of the students, with instruction and learning occurring through recitation by the instructor and subsequent repetition of the material by the students. In contrast, the American instructors used instructional strategies such as group discussion, effective questioning, and games. When the American instructors offered Haitian participants new strategies, there was significant hesitation exhibited by the Haitians, requiring repeated coaxing to engage in small groups. In addition, the American instructors needed to provide supports such as guided practice to help the Haitian participants stay on task and implement strategies in meaningful ways. Ultimately, however, the workshop ended with Haitian participants teaching the curriculum to the instructors, effectively modeling the use of the newly learned instructional techniques adapted to fit their own unique style and strengths. The confrontation of pedagogies proved to be a first step in transitioning away from imposing the American style of teaching toward an integrated style of instruction. It was important to find a way for the teachers to make the strategies their own. For example questions to extend thinking and analysis of issues were integrated into skits with humorous storytelling relevant to the current circumstances at the time in Haiti. In presenting a lesson about respecting the environment as well as yourself, references to what the implications might be of not washing your hands were connected to characters in a skit.

A Cultural Assault on our Senses

Entering Port-au-Prince, Haiti, we knew we would be confronted with the realities of life in a large, urban setting in one of the poorest countries in the world. However, no amount of indoctrination by the native Haitian in our group, no amount of description provided by the high

school teacher in our group who had been to Haiti numerous times, no amount of reading, no amount of watching videos or other media about Haiti prior to our visit could prepare us for the confrontation of the senses we would encounter. Riding to and from the workshop site, the constant visual of the mounding trash and rooting stray dogs and pigs, and continual signs of poverty were unending. The consistent smell of burning trash, burning charcoal, rotting refuse and open sewer drainage permeated the air. The sounds of the city, too ill-equipped to deal with the mass of humanity, rung unending in our ears, and finally, the taste of the grit and grime present throughout our travels, created a sensory overload. This overload on our senses had both a mental and physical toll on the American instructors, necessitating opportunities to rest and reflect on the events of each day. One team member recalls crying silently while riding in the car past tent cities which held large groups of people two years post Hurricane devastation. Confronted with the assault on our senses and emotions, we were overwhelmed in unanticipated ways.

Addressing the Juxtaposition of Extremes

What may have had the greatest impact on each of the team members was the constant juxtaposition of extremes with which we were bombarded on a daily basis. The cleanliness and pride of a people who live among rubble from natural disasters and piles of uncollected trash; the entrepreneurial nature of the Haitian people against the lack of imagination used in teaching and problem solving; the connection to personal stories of abuse and the recognition of national injustices as a backdrop to the perpetual devaluing of children. Having to reconcile what were perceived as blatant inconsistencies in cultural values became a daily ritual for the foreign travelers. To process the cultural realities with which we were confronted, we had to engage in a process of ongoing reflection to negotiate and rationalize the emotions generated as we navigated the social, political and environmental ramifications of extreme poverty. Yet, the timeframe that had been originally allotted to the trip and training did not include planned opportunities for daily debriefing and sharing.

An Ethnocentric Focus of Our Mission

Even though the impetus for our work was birthed and nurtured by a native Haitian, the focus silently shifted as we generated the curriculum, materials, and training agendas. As

outsiders to the world we were entering, when we set the agenda we risked promoting educational colonialism or imperialism, as Smith (2010) warned. "Exporter-country control could be interpreted more negatively as an expression of cultural hegemony" (Smith, 2010, p. 804) than as a form of sustainable support. We continuously had to evaluate and at times resist inserting European-American values in the materials we were delivering, teetering precariously and sometimes faltering between an ethnocentric ideal and Haitian values. Yet, this could not be entirely avoided since the idea of abolishing the cultural tradition of childhood slavery was riddled with American values. These competing frameworks created an ongoing sense of dissonance among both the large group team members and the small group of instructors who traveled and delivered the training.

Preparation

Addressing the Lack of Materials

As we became immersed in this cross-cultural experience, we quickly realized elements of poverty we had originally ignored, the most obvious being the lack of materials. We were aware that supplies would be limited; however, we were not prepared for the reality of no supplies being available. Many of the workshop participants did not even have a pen or pencil with which to record notes. We had brought hand sanitizers, pens and post-it notes to share with the teachers during the workshop, and when we passed these items out for the teachers to take, smiles spread wide as teachers shyly accepted the small tokens. We even witnessed one person secretly squirrel a few items away, highlighting the desperate conditions of the teachers in Haiti.

Through this experience, we learned the importance of bringing materials when working in areas of extreme poverty. Materials should include not only those to implement any professional development opportunities being presented, but also to leave behind so teachers can continue the work. "Gifts" of consumables such as paper, pens, markers, tape, folders, and even hand sanitizer, gave the teachers a sense of empowerment, recognizing the power that was placed in their hands through these materials. In a world of have-nots, the teachers became keepers of priceless valuables, even if only for a brief period of time. Everything we brought with us to use during the professional development sessions, we left behind. Our only regret is that we did not bring more. Perhaps of greater importance, however, was the value of learning how to teach creatively without supplies, since that is the reality in Haiti.

Not only had we assumed that teachers would have the most basic materials, but also that they would have certain basic teaching skills upon which we could scaffold new information. That the latter was untrue was illustrated when we shared the idea of using questions to foster student inquiry. We were immediately confronted with dissent as one Haitian teacher adamantly claimed that when his students asked questions, they expected and deserved answers. It took time and relevant demonstration to help the teachers realize there exists an array of instructional strategies to meet diverse learning situations.

The Importance of Flexibility

As we became more comfortable in our surroundings and the Haitian culture, we became better at recognizing the need for adaptations in our presentations and teaching. Flexibility became a key component of our workshop experience when working with a diverse cultural group. Using what we were learning about the strengths and interests of the Haitian participants, we began to encourage drawing, singing, humor, and dramatic role play as a means for the participants to engage in the curriculum, abandoning some of our original plan in order to better meet the needs of the group. When we learned of the competitive nature of the teachers, we incorporated games into the workshop, with teams earning points through the familiar game of tic-tac-toe. Not only did this enliven the group, but there seemed to be a growing confidence among the teachers as each was able to demonstrate budding knowledge and skills through relevant activities related to the Haitian culture and individual learning preferences. By capitalizing on the teachers' strengths, we were able to demonstrate the value of such strategies for enhancing their students' engagement and learning.

Connection

Debrief, Deconstruct, Reflect and Reconnect

With each new experience and challenge layered on the other, the stress of the travel began to take its toll, and by the end of the first day, we realized the importance of reconnecting and debriefing. We needed time to reflect on our experiences and share with one another how we were interpreting our new reality, providing a form of member checking, helping us to create a powerful collective experience that forged a sense of solidarity among us. Each day, in

preparation for the next, we needed time to debrief, deconstruct, reflect, and reconnect on how to handle for unplanned events that might have occurred.

On one of our days off, we traveled in two separate cars to a seaside resort. During the trip, one of the cars had a flat tire and was forced to stop so the driver could fix it, separating the group. Several hours later, when the group was reunited, a sense of relief washed over the small band of travelers. Although everyone had been relatively safe during the experience, the need to be physically connected overrode any perceived sense of safety. Needing to stay connected as travelers and visitors in a foreign country where the culture was so different to what we were accustomed, the time taken to reconnect as a unit became our salvation, drawing strength, perseverance, and ideas from one another as we shared experiences intimate to us alone as outsiders. "Down time," as we called it, allowed us to regroup, working together to decipher the day's events and determine follow-up actions. Those precious moments, when we were not relying on translations, provided us with the sense of renewal needed in order to carry on the work. The exhaustion generated by working with translators and trying to get one's point across to people who not only spoke a different language, but who also perceived the world and their role in it in diverse ways, alone was enough to tax the trainers, let alone the other more formidable barriers that existed. We began the journey as professional colleagues, but ended the journey with both an inter-connectedness based on our experiences, as well as a simultaneous disconnect as our personal identities, both individual and communal, had been challenged. This disconnect brought to the forefront the importance of having time to debrief, reflect, and reconnect in such an environment. By realizing the need for and building in these components during the experience, our brief time in Haiti became more productive.

Where Do We Go From Here?

A common goal driving the globalization of education is "the capacity-building role assumed by developed higher education systems in relation to regions where tertiary education is either underdeveloped or lacking in terms of demand" (Smith, 2010, p. 793). But how effective are the exporting countries in truly facilitating capacity-building among their cross-cultural colleagues? Have we taken in to consideration the existing barriers that have inhibited the development of progressive ideas in the first place? It will take a truly responsive set of tactics and sincere actions to develop collaborative partnerships with the importing country. The

Respecting Haiti curriculum could not simply be exported by the American team, but had to be collaboratively constructed. Our experiences helped reveal several basic constructs that teams may want to adhere to when embarking upon a similar endeavor. Table 1 summarizes those key ideas regarding possible challenges, ways to think about those challenges and suggested strategies.

Table 1. Themes and Implications

Theme	Key Attitudes, Styles and Processes	Example Experience	Implication for Curriculum Development and Training in Developing Countries
Negotiation: Racial and cultural identities	Flexibility	Some team members were identified as "very important white people."	*Tout moun se moun, tout moun pa menm.* (All people are people but not all people are the same.) Be aware that not all team members may be treated the same. Also, the same experience may be different for different individuals. Take care of yourself and work to address the emotional consequences of identity issues. Consider keeping a journal as well as talking to colleagues.
Confrontation: Confronting our ethnocentric ideals Confronting the juxtaposition of extremes	Valuing other cultures Developing Intercultural Competence	The team introduced teaching styles inconsistent with what the teachers typically used. Participants argued.	*Neg di san fe*. (People talk and don't act.) Move beyond talking, and engage participants in a way consistent with their culture. Provide opportunities for active involvement. Make explicit connections to everyday reality. Participants from all cultures involved have something to contribute. Strengths must be identified and utilized.
Preparation	Expect the unexpected. Be prepared to feel unprepared. Identity shifts; Roles; Materials Teachable moments	We lacked both sufficient materials and understanding of the teaching styles of the Haitian teachers.	*"Ou we sa ou genyen, ou pa konn sa ou rete.* (You know what you've got, but you don't know what's coming.) Be aware that there is a cultural disconnect. Be prepared to be unprepared (and to stay unprepared); bring materials
Connection	Collaboration Engagement Making time to debrief and reconnect.	After a day of training spending time going over what worked and what did not.	*Men anpil, chay pa lou (*Many hands make a load lighter.) Collaboration not only within the team, but also with the workshop participants is essential. Be intentional about trying to connect with both team members and participants. Dialogue is essential.

We do not have the blue print on how to conduct a curriculum change in another country. Our experience, however, has some implications for future journeys. It is essential to be able to recognize learning opportunities or "teachable moments" as they arise, working with participants and collaborators, following their lead as well as addressing issues of conflict. It is also important to balance one's position as an outsider while fostering instructional relevance to the participants.

Although there existed a general passion and commitment from all involved, the team lacked a real long-term strategy for team formation and project planning. With fragmented planning and lack of attention to sustainability, we are now faced with determining lessons learned and creating a plan to move forward that builds on successes and proactively addresses challenges.

Developing Intercultural Competence

Although language is an important component of intercultural work, it is not the only form of support. Other important factors for working successfully across cultures include self-reflection, critical awareness of our interactions and communication (Gopal, 2011), cultural awareness, clear communication and building relationships (Peters, 2008). The process of cultural competence takes time and begins at a peripheral level during which individuals simply take in cultural similarities and differences without processing them. At this initial stage, there may be a sense of shock as cross-cultural workers are confronted with differences not previously acknowledged or known. In such a short time frame and without adequate preparation before the trip, we struggled with moving beyond this initial stage. Basic facts and information about the culture are certainly helpful during this period (Chang, 2007). However, after being involved in a culture for an extended time, a shift often occurs, moving from a peripheral acknowledgement to a more cognitive level during which adaptations are made based on a greater awareness of what is culturally appropriate. Opportunities to help identify discrepancies between expectations and reality would be useful during this phase of collaboration. Finally at the reflective level, individuals are able to change perspectives and better interpret the world around them. During this phase, opportunities to discuss experiences and emotions would be beneficial (Chang, 2007).

Lambert, Wallach and Ramsey (2007) apply the framework of rigor, relevance and relationships to adult learning, and when working with teachers, the intended outcome is

transformational learning, impacting their practices and in turn enhancing student learning. Relationships include engaging teachers as a community of learners who trust one another and are committed to learning. In our work as facilitators of the *Respecting Haiti* Teacher Training Workshop, our ability to effectively engage participants played a key role. We wanted to involve the teachers as partners in revising the curriculum in order to enhance social validity, cultural relevance and teacher ownership. Intercultural competence was therefore only a first step as we negotiated our roles, working in concert with Haitian teachers to synthesize our ideas with theirs, constructing a new reality within the learning community.

Relevance entails engaging teachers in a variety of ways, working across cultures to integrate the strengths and interests of participants into cross-cultural programs. When working with Haitian teachers, we found it important to build on their assets and customs. Haitian ways of being, doing and knowing are important, valid and essential to the rebuilding of Haiti (Désir, 2011), with the knowledge and perspective of Haitian teachers and students playing "a leading role in developing sustainable educational interventions and programs (Désir, 2011, p. 293)." Enhancing the development of their skills as educators became a primary focus for our workshops.

Rigor involves working with teachers as active participants in ways that are challenging, creating opportunities for deep learning. Rigor involves research and monitoring progress (Lambert, Wallach & Ramsey, 2007), requiring the ability to think critically. While, there is disagreement about the definition of critical thinking, it includes the processes, skills and dispositions related to problem solving, analysis and making informed decisions (Shim & Walczak, 2012). Instructional practices such as posing challenging questions and presenting material in a well-organized manner may facilitate development of critical thinking skills (Shim & Walczak, 2012). In our work with the *Respecting Haiti* teacher workshop, we attempted to both model such practices and encourage Haitian teachers to use them with their students.

Through the purposeful fostering of relationships, and engaging teachers in rigorous and relevant activities, the immediate outcomes of the workshops were deemed a success. Yet, the ties that were made with the participants were too loosely constructed to sustain any long term effects.

Promoting Sustainability

While the project was widely seen as a success, several aspects of the project were identified for change. These changes may ultimately improve the curriculum itself, but more importantly make it more sustainable and farther reaching in its effect. These changes involve intentionality in preparation to prevent some of the issues that arose as well as building on what we accomplished. Relying on the knowledge of our Haitian informant and collaborator, the team of Haitian teachers was randomly selected. By not working with a group of teachers or teachers in training from an identified educational entity, follow-up with the teachers remained haphazard and incidental. We learned the benefit of making professional connections with educational entities in the receiving country to promote ongoing collaboration, momentum, and sustainability. Collaborating with early career or pre-service teachers was also deemed a potential change in the future implementation of the curriculum, translating into greater perceived acceptance and practice of effective pedagogies.

To address the juxtaposition of extremes related to cultural differences, we learned the value of establishing clear ground rules concerning communication among members of the cross cultural curriculum team and teachers. Enhancing the materials to embed more culturally related inferences and visuals may also promote further success.

To help the traveling team develop a cohesive partnership, it might be helpful to facilitate a "boot camp" for the team prior to traveling, to promote team building, problem solving and provide an opportunity to practice in a safe environment. While working in the foreign country, we found it imperative to schedule time to debrief and reconnect, sharing perceptions, concerns, and success stories, using what is learned each day to inform the agenda for the next.

The memory of the clash between cultural values among all of the collaborative partners in this intercultural endeavor remains ever present in our minds and is not as easily remedied. Balancing our need as outsiders to provide momentum to the abolishment of childhood slavery and respect for the environment in a culture riddled with dichotomies continues to lurk as an ongoing challenge in our work. Our goal is to continue collaborating with the teachers of Haiti and the curriculum development team, cycling other members of the team who helped to write the curriculum in to the next trip to conduct training and collaborate with past workshop participants in Haiti for support in training other preservice and inservice teachers. As we reflect on our practices and begin to plan for our move forward, we now embrace intentionality

regarding intercultural competence, preparation and collaboration, while remaining flexible and connected in the face of diversity.

Acknowledgements: The authors would like to acknowledge the following people and groups for their participation and support - The teachers of Haiti, Jean-Robert Cadet, The Haitian Curriculum team, Cady-Short Thompson, NKU College of Education and Human Services and our families.

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