

## CHAPTER 14

# Multi-Perspective Teaching: Nurturing Analytical, Critical & Creative Thinkers

*Dr Niyati Chitkara, Dr Honey Chitkara, Ms Dolma Pathela,  
Ms Piyusha Sharma*

### INTRODUCTION

Over the past few decades, there has been a marked shift from the traditional lecture-based method to highly innovative pedagogies. This continual refinement is premised on the magnitude of diversity that is found among learners within a single classroom. Irrespective of the region or state, a learning ecosystem invariably presents a dynamic convergence of varied perspectives in which learners deem education through their own individual lenses.

**‘Multi-Perspective Teaching’** therefore can prove to be a valuable tool in the hands of the teacher. It constitutes **an overarching educational approach that considers the different perspectives of learners** towards education. An in-house practice of Chitkara International School, Chandigarh, India, Multi-Perspective Teaching enables the learners to learn a given concept or subject in their most preferred styles and manners.

The present chapter elucidates the functional teaching method of *Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT)* and clarifies how the teacher can undertake relevant activities to suit the diverse interests of learners. The method holds good especially for the learners of classes 3 to 12, who can undertake independent projects effectively. Under the Multi-Perspective Teaching, each student is allowed to understand (analyse), conclude (criticize), and present (create) a given topic, in their own manner and style, which enhances the pupils’ ability to think analytically, critically, and creatively, and the aforementioned skills, in turn, prove to be crucial for ensuring the success of learners, especially in the wake of Industry 4.0.

## **THEORETICAL BACKGROUND**

The heavy focus on traditional teaching practices that demand students to memorise or recite and not understand the content of learning has long hampered the full development of learners. Such practices usually bring about an environment, wherein few students stand the chance to thrive and pupils with different abilities and inclinations become sidelined. Apropos of the foregoing, the learners' needs in the wake of Covid-19 have seen a tremendous increase, with children nowadays facing not just the dearth of activities that suit their inclinations, but also the dearth of resources that can render them access to quality education.

In this context, one of the priorities for the in-service teachers is to undertake a more inclusive approach towards teaching which comprehensively meets the diverse needs of learners. Here, the teacher takes into account the likings of his/her learners and devises relevant activities which he/she thinks would help the learners learn.

The core of Multi-Perspective Teaching constitutes and upholds the principle of individual differences, which emphasizes the varying learning paces and styles of students. In today's world where children enjoy considerable access to information and exposure to the world of work from a very young age, Multi-Perspective Teaching can prove to be an extremely beneficial tool in the hands of the teachers who stay in the pursuit of nurturing dynamic and successful professionals. The said mode of teaching remains highly relevant, across all platforms of lesson delivery viz. Hybrid, Online, and Offline. Especially in the post COVID era, MPT can serve as a powerful tool in the hands of teachers through which remote learning may be turned into high-quality education.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

At a universal level, teachers deal with mixed-ability classrooms, which themselves pose as great challenges to the teaching-learning process. In general terms, these classes comprise students with varying interests, inclinations, and abilities (Chapman and King, 2003).

Ansari (2013) for example, depicts mixed-ability classes as those that entail not only pupils with different capacities but also learners that have divergent preferences and learning styles. Consequently, teachers in normal classrooms remain under serious pressure to meet the requirements of their diverse learners (Meyer, 2008). In this context, the diversity within classrooms remains the most significant threat to effective lesson planning, and so, considering the distinct perspectives of learners in the process of planning a class or a lesson is a crucial

move for ensuring teaching efficacy. Correspondingly, research workers and policy formulators encourage teachers to accept and support diversity and adapt their teaching to the varying learning needs of learners in their classrooms (Schleicher, 2016; UNESCO, 2017).

However, teachers today face a dearth of training programs that equip them with the knowledge and skills to deal with such situations in their workplaces. At the end of the day, most teachers lack the necessary training, planning time, or the proficiency to continually undertake and implement distinction (Loiacono & Allen, 2008). In this regard, when the teacher fails to meet the requirements of each learner, it leads to a scenario wherein the active students or high-ability students maintain their “active” status, while the passive learners stay passive, with no considerable progress or development (Hedge, 2000).

Therefore, the teacher needs to implement various approaches or strategies in mixed-ability classrooms that may help him/her elevate the teaching-learning process. Chiefly, the suggested approach to address the problems of teaching in a diverse classroom is “differentiation”. The strategy of “differentiation” has in fact grown in prominence as the same has become a reappearing theme in the classroom teaching strategies (Tomlinson & McTighe, 2006; Winebrenner, 2001). In that, the teacher may segregate his/her pupils into different groups and entail distinct learner-centred teaching strategies to enhance students’ learning and encourage them to participate actively in their most-liked learning styles. Some of these strategies include character enactment, additional homework, in-class activities, and game-based challenges (Pedersen & Kronborg 2014). Corroborating the effectiveness of such strategies, Tomlinson (2001) further maintains that teachers merely need to diversify teaching types in mixed-ability classrooms to adjust and augment the fruitfulness of the learning process.

Premised on the significance of differentiation, Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT) thus helps instructors to leverage the different perspectives of learners and devise functional lesson plans, which help the pupils with varying abilities enhance their analytical, critical, and creative thinking along with their interest-specific skills.

## **EXPLANATION OF THE TOOL**

Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT) posits the effectiveness of multidisciplinary teaching, which builds on the vocational inclinations or interests of students. Herein, the teacher considers the likings of his/her learners, prepares seating plans and puts the students into separate groups according to their interests. He/she then designs such learning activities and tasks that cater to the interests of the learners.

Correspondingly, under Multi-Perspective Teaching, a musically-inclined student is given the opportunity to learn a concept of any subject through the medium of music, whereas an artistically-inclined learner gets the chance to learn through the medium of art. While the idea stays constant behind each such activity, the process varies according to the learner's inclination.

Multi-Perspective Teaching can hence be defined as:

1. a wholly inclusive pedagogical approach that helps learners learn in a pleasurable, natural, and unhindered manner.
2. a comprehensive take on multidisciplinary education that helps pupils augment their concept-related knowledge through the undertaking of activities in their respective areas of interest and simultaneously develops their skills in these areas.

From the given definitions, it may be established that through Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT), the teacher allows a level playing field for learners, wherein each student gets the chance to grow optimally and succeed convincingly.

#### **A. Aims of the Tool**

- To ensure the fulfillment of the diverse needs of learners through multidisciplinary tasks and activities.
- To assist teachers in augmenting the analytical, critical, and creative thinking skills of students.
- To empower teachers to help students enhance skills in their respective areas of interest.
- To enable teachers to promote “out-of-the-box” thinking among the learners.
- To ensure a joyful learning experience for the students.
- To boost students' confidence and nurture well-rounded individuals.

#### **B. Expected Outcomes**

*The teacher will be able to:*

- impart multidisciplinary and interest-based education to his/her students;
- instill critical thinking, creativity, and vocation or interest-specific skills in his/her students.

*The learner will be able to:*

- learn a given concept on the basis of his/her own perspective

- undertake analysis of the given information and come up with creative and out-of-the-box solutions for the assigned tasks;
- enhance his/her critical thinking, creativity, and vocation or interest-specific skills.

### C. Role of Teachers

The teacher's role in Multi-Perspective Teaching is primarily that of a facilitator. In that, he/she first assesses the needs of different learners on the basis of the responses registered in the "Squad Selection Form" by the parents after due discussions with the children, and thereafter, assigns them separate co-curricular clubs or 'vocational squads' related to AI, music, coding, dance, photography, acting, sports, etc. to them. This assignment is premised on the learners' inclination. Subsequently, the teacher along with the Club Mentor or the Squadron Leader comes up with club-related activities that help children gain knowledge in various subjects viz. English, Mathematics, Science, Social Science, Hindi, French, Technology, etc. through their most preferred mediums.

### D. Role of Students

The learners remain active participants in the said form of teaching. In that context, their role encompasses chiefly, the selection of the most-liked co-curricular squad (after due discussion with and guidance of parents) along with the completion of the assigned task through the employment of their critical thinking and creativity skills. Essentially, in a co-curricular squad setup, pupils leverage the opportunity of gaining substantial knowledge of a given concept through their respective interests or hobbies, and they further hone their vocation or interest-specific skills in the process.

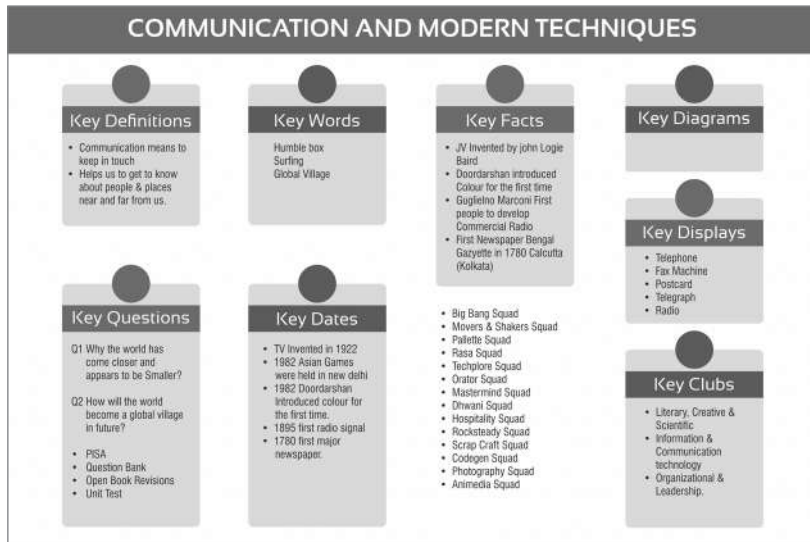
### E. Materials Required

- **Squad Selection Form** – The school shall collect data regarding students' interests through this form, and the allocation of squads (co-curricular clubs) shall be premised on the findings of the same.
- **Rubrics** – Rubrics comprise the parameters of evaluating a task assigned under Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT).

### F. Steps to Use the Tool

The successful implementation of Multi-Perspective Teaching requires extensive thinking on the part of the teacher. In this regard, the steps that he/she must undertake to utilise the pedagogical tool effectively include:

- 1) *Selection of the Topic:* The teacher first chooses the topic from the syllabus of his/her subject that he/she wishes to teach through the Multi-perspective approach. For instance, a Social Science instructor may choose to teach the chapter “Communication and Modern Techniques” through MPT in his/her lesson.
- 2) *General Reading and Explanation of the Topic:* Like all times, the content delivery begins in a traditional manner, wherein the teacher asks students to read through the chapter and explains them the concept simultaneously. In this regard, the teacher sectionalizes the significant sub-concepts of the chapter under a comprehensive “Concept Map”. Illustratively, the Social Science instructor in the example mentioned above would prepare and discuss an explanatory Concept Map on “Communication and Modern Techniques” (Picture 1) to help children break down and assimilate important information.



Source: Chitkara International School, Chandigarh & Panchkula, India  
 Picture 1 - Concept Map on “Communication and Modern Techniques”

- 3) *Assignment of Co-curricular Clubs to Students and Implementation of Seating Plan in the Classroom:* After the general explanation, the teacher shall commence the process of assigning co-curricular clubs to students with the collection of data regarding students’ choices of co-curricular squads or clubs. Generally, at the beginning of the academic session, the class teacher collects the said data and shares it with all the subject teachers.

The list of clubs in this regard may include a theatre club, a music club, an orator club, a sports club, etc.

For instance, at Chitkara International School, India, students across different levels of learning get the opportunity to choose from the following co-curricular squads, on the basis of which, the teachers at the institution implement Multi-Perspective Teaching for their respective classes.



Source: Chitkara International School, Chandigarh & Panchkula, India

Picture 2 - Co-curricular Squads at Chitkara International School

Once the list of students' choices is made, the teacher then devises and implements a complementary seating plan, where children with similar club choices are allocated the same "rows" or "classroom areas" or are put together into groups.

- 4) *Creation of Tasks for Different Clubs:* This step entails creation of separate activities that essentially teach the similar concept. In that, the teachers must collaboratively design interesting tasks mapped to their subjects for each group of students alongside the various leaders or mentors of the co-curricular squads.

At this stage, the Social Science instructor in the example mentioned above would collaborate with the different co-curricular club leaders to devise relevant activities for his/her diverse learners on the topic "Communication and Modern Techniques". Illustratively, he/she may ask the student members of the music club to create a Rap Song on "Means of Communication" or ask the members of the art club to prepare a comprehensive collage depicting the "Evolution of Communication Techniques". Likewise, the teacher in association with the mentors of different co-curricular clubs attempts to cover the various aspects of the chapter for addressing the needs of each learner in the most effective manner.

- 5) *Demonstration of the Assigned Tasks*: Under Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT), the task assignment is ideally followed by a clear demonstration of the method of performing the activity or task. The step is deemed singularly crucial for it enables the teacher to render his/her students enhanced clarity.

### **G. Assessment**

The pedagogical approach of Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT) allows learners with diverse needs to think out-of-the-box and augment their knowledge in the process. In this regard, the assessment of students' learning is conducted with two aims – one, to assess the subject knowledge of students and the other, to assess what students have learnt under their respective squads.

In the general run of things, a teacher would first assess the knowledge of the students vis-à-vis a given topic through asking “key questions” in the class tests. Thereafter, while assigning different tasks or activities to his/her learners, the teacher would give a one-week deadline to the students to prepare for their performances / activities. The evaluation of these performances shall subsequently take place in the week following the “task assignment” week, wherein children belonging to different co-curricular squads or groups would present their respective performances to their teacher.

Importantly, the assessment of activities assigned under Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT) constitutes both the “assessment of learning” and “assessment for learning”.

The “assessment of learning” refers to a process wherein somebody tries to express and measure the quantity of the knowledge, skills, or attitudes that are possessed by the other. In this case, directions from the teacher are imperative and the learner has little participation in the designing or employment of the assessment procedure. On the other hand, the “assessment for learning” entails elevated levels of autonomy, which the learner enjoys under the supervision and with the collaboration of the teacher. Herein, the focus primarily lies on rendering effective suggestions to the learner rather than allotting marks or grades to him/her (Kapoor & Natarajan, 2014).

The evaluation of these performances is thereafter undertaken on the basis of a set of predetermined rubrics, which the teacher along with squad leaders utilizes to present a comprehensive picture of learners' growth. The aforementioned rubrics include five major aspects viz. Creativity, Relevance,



Confidence, Knowledge of the Subject, and Tools / Aids Used, and each parameter is ascribed marks ranging from 1 to 5, depending on the effectiveness of the learner's performance. As per the findings, the teacher also provides verbal feedback to the students to help them work on their areas of improvement and encourage them to enhance their performances.

<b>Rubrics for Task Assigned under Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT)</b> <i>5 = Exceptional, 4= Good, 3= Above Average, 2= Average, 1= Needs Practice</i>						
<b>Name of the Student</b>	<b>Creativity</b>	<b>Relevance</b>	<b>Confidence</b>	<b>Knowledge of the Subject</b>	<b>Tools/ Aids Used</b>	<b>Total Marks</b>

*Table 1 – Sample of the Activity Assessment Rubrics under Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT)*

## **H. Students' Feedback**

Irrespective of the sector, profession or area of expertise, the practice that motivates individuals to perform better and aim for excellence is that of providing feedback. In this regard, since students remain the foremost stakeholders of the educational institution, establishing a routine for collecting learners' feedback stands as a markedly fruitful deal (Chitkara, 2021).

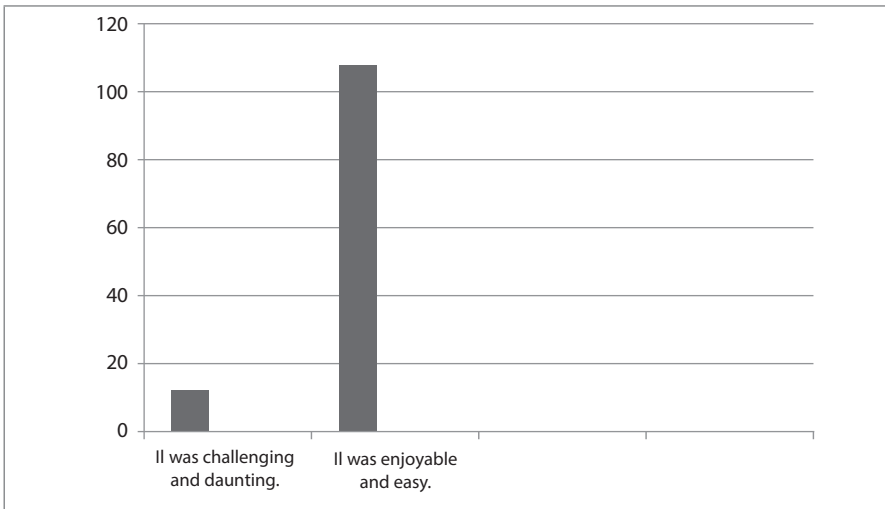
Upholding the relevance of feedback is yet again a crucial step for the teacher who wishes to impart effectual knowledge to his/her learners through the multi-perspective approach. Correspondingly, for the purpose of establishing the efficacy of Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT), Rapid Feedback Method was undertaken by Chitkara International School, Chandigarh, India. The method involves collection of anonymous responses from students (O'Donovan, den Outer, Price, & Lloyd 2019a, 2019b). The answers are generally sought for a set of three questions (Mulliner and Tucker, 2017; Nicol, 2020). Under the mentioned kind of feedback, the responses are collected at the end of the lesson, where pupils are asked to share their opinions on a lesson delivery in a brief manner (Karim et al., 2006; Burke, 2009) within five minutes, after the conclusion of the class.

In this context, a sample of 120 students from Class 5 at Chitkara International School, Chandigarh, India was selected with the aim of assessing the learners' understanding of the topic "Communication and Modern Techniques".

After the tasks were attempted by the students in their respective co-curricular groups, the following findings were made as per the students' feedback on one of the 3 questions asked - "How did you find the squad-based activity on Communication and Modern Techniques?"

### STUDENTS' FEEDBACK – MULTI-PERSPECTIVE TEACHING

*How did you find the squad-based activity on Communication and Modern Techniques?*



Source: Chitkara International School, Chandigarh, India

**Graph 1 (Interpretation):** About 90% of students found the squad-based activity on "Communication and Modern Techniques" to be "enjoyable and easy", whereas 10% of learners thought that the activity was "challenging and daunting" to perform. The data credibly exhibits the effectiveness of Multi-Perspective Teaching, wherein each learner learns various academic concepts in a comfortable and pleasurable manner.

### FIRST-HAND ACCOUNTS

“I loved drawing mobile phones and television. I got to know that John Baird invented coloured T.V. and also about Doordarshan. When I was creating the drawing on internet, I found out about different types of connections such as LAN, WAN, etc.”

- Grade 5 Student, CIS, India

“I had a lot of fun while doing my project. As I was writing my Rap Song on Communication, I learnt many new words and also read interesting articles on how the internet was invented and the history of Apple Computer Company.”

- Grade 5 Student, CIS, India

## I. Visualized Examples

The pedagogical tool of Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT) was implemented to teach the Social Science Chapter of “Communication and Modern Techniques” to the students of class 5 at Chitkara International School, Chandigarh, India. In that, various activities were devised by the concerned teachers, which aimed to comprehensively meet the requirements of the diverse learners.

The illustrations given *hereunder* represent the interest-specific activities that were assigned to different student groups along with the activity demonstrations that were presented by the teachers undertaking MPT:

SQUAD	ACTIVITIES
Palette Squad & Scrap Craft Squad	Collage of different pictures depicting pre and post independence communication and communication techniques
Dhwani Squad & Mastermind Squad	Rap song on "Means of Communication" and Quiz on Communication Techniques
Movers & Shakers Squad	Dance on a tuneful medley depicting the evolution of communication techniques
Rosa Squad	Mime act of different methods of communication / Quiz on non-verbal communication
Animedia Squad	Creating videos/reels on Means of Communication
Techplore Squad & Codegen Squad	Webpage Design, App Development, Bot/ Voice Assistant Development
Hospitality & Grooming Squad and Techplore Squad	Touchless & Innovative Menu via QR Code
Orator Squad	Create a podcast on Modern and Old Ways of Communication/ Debate
Photography Squad	Click a picture of any communication device - pictures on the theme of Radio Day
Techplore Squad/ Animedia Squad	Digital Art on Radio Day
Rocksteady & Orator Squad	Game of Cricket and Evolution of Commentary Mediums

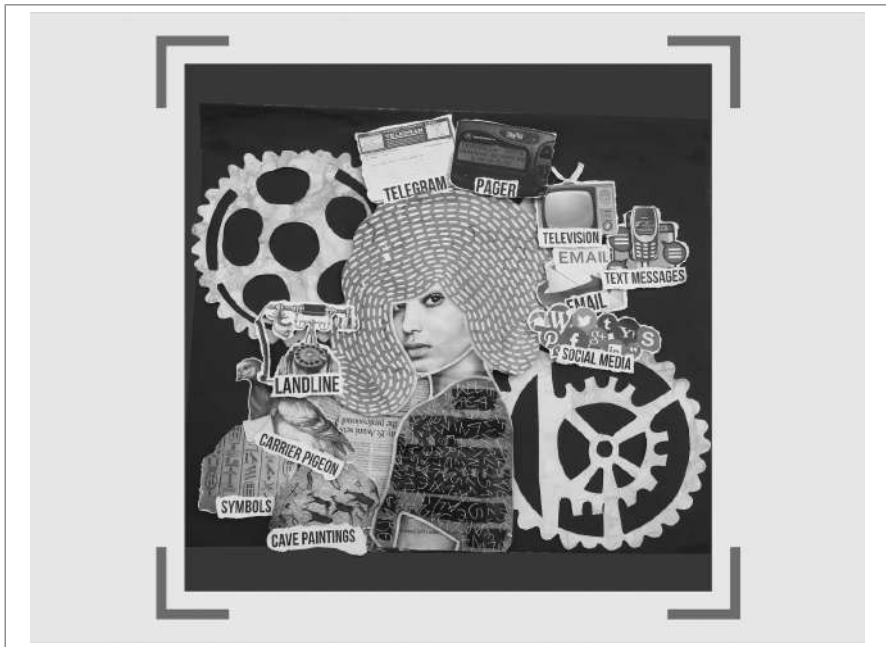
Source: Chitkara International School, Chandigarh & Panchkula, India

Picture 3 - Club-based Activities for Teaching “Communication and Modern Techniques”



Source: Chitkara International School, Chandigarh & Panchkula, India

Picture 4 - Demonstrative Slide for Activity under "Techplore Squad" (technology club) for Teaching "Communication and Modern Techniques"



Source: Chitkara International School, Chandigarh & Panchkula, India

Picture 5a - Demonstrative Slide for Collage Making Activity under "Palette & Scrap Craft Squad" (arts & crafts club) for Teaching "Communication and Modern Techniques"



Source: Chitkara International School, Chandigarh & Panchkula, India

Picture 5b - Demonstrative Slide for Collage Making Activity under “Palette & Scrap Craft Squad” (arts & crafts club) for Teaching “Communication and Modern Techniques”

## CONCLUSION

The functionality of education is best manifested where learners of diverse abilities, interests or inclinations succeed in attaining varying excellences through active, analytical, critical, and creative thinking. Not unexpectedly, this requires the teachers to work toward designing and implementing serviceable teaching strategies, under which, each student is able to find his/her “zone of comfort learning”.

Multi-Perspective Teaching (MPT) *therefore* serves as a weighty tool for teachers by way of which the teachers can render the aforementioned zone of comfort learning to students in their mixed-ability classrooms and thereby ensure development of the learners in an optimal manner.

## REFERENCES

- Ansari, M. S. (2013). *Coping with the Problems of Mixed Ability Classes: A Study in the Context of Teaching English as SL/FL*. International Journal of English: Literature, Language & Skills.
- Burke, D. (2009). *Strategies for Using Feedback Students Bring to Higher Education*. 34(1), 41– 50.

- Chapman, C., & King, R. (2003). *Differentiated Instructional Strategies for Reading in the Content Areas*.
- Chitkara, H. (2021). *Using Students' Feedback to Improve Teaching Effectiveness Based on Kaizen Philosophy of Continuous Improvement*. V, 3-7.
- Hedge, T. (2000). *Teaching and learning in the language classroom*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
- Kapoor, N. and Natarajan, V. (2014). *Assessing Scholastic and Non-Scholastic Areas of Learning of Primary School 4th and 5th Graders in English, Mathematics & Science*. 2 (1.2) 9-12.
- Karim, N. S. A., Darus, S. H., & Hussin, R. (2006). *Mobile Phone Applications in Academic Library Services: A Students' Feedback Survey*.
- Loiacono, V., & Allen, B. (2008). *Are Special Education Teachers Prepared to Teach the Increasing Number of Students Diagnosed with Autism?* International Journal of Special Education, 23(2), 120-127.
- Meyer, E. J. (2008). Gendered Harassment in Secondary Schools: Understanding Teachers' (non) Interventions.
- Mulliner, E., & Tucker, M. (2017). *Feedback on Feedback Practice: Perceptions of Students and Academics*. 42(2), 266–288.
- Nicol, D. (2020). The Power of Internal Feedback: Exploiting Natural Comparison Processes. 1–23.
- O'Donovan, B. M., den Outer, B., Price, M., & Lloyd, A. (2019a). What makes good feedback good? 1–12.
- O'Donovan, B. M., den Outer, B., Price, M., & Lloyd, A. (2019b). What makes good feedback good? 1–12.
- Schleicher, A. (2016). *Teaching Excellence Through Professional Learning and Policy Reform: Lessons from Around the World*. Paris: International Summit on the Teaching Profession; OECD Publishing. doi: 10.1787/9789264252059-en
- Tomlinson, C. A. (2001). *How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-ability Classrooms*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Tomlinson, C. A., &McTighe, J. (2006). *Integrating Differentiated Instruction & Understanding By Design: Connecting Content and Kids*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- UNESCO (2017). *A Guide for Ensuring Inclusion and Equity in Education*. Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization. Available online at: <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000248254>
- Winebrenner, S. (2001). *Teaching Gifted Kids in the Regular Classroom: Strategies and Techniques Every Teacher Can Use to Meet the Academic Needs of the Gifted and Talented. Revised, Expanded*. Free Spirit Publishing Inc., 217 Fifth Ave., North, Suite 200, Minneapolis.