2016

Who Matters?: Effective Classroom Management Strategies for Multicultural Elementary Education

Erica Bailey-Ramos
Portland State University

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Follow this and additional works at: https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/honorstheses

Who Matters?:

Effective Classroom Management Practices for Multicultural Elementary Education

By:

Erica Bailey-Ramos

An undergraduate honors thesis submitted in partial fulfillment

Of

The requirements for the degree

Of

Bachelor of Art

In

University Honors

And Bilingual Teacher Pathway

Thesis Advisor:

Dr. Esperanza De La Vega- PSU Professor

Table of Contents

Abstract

Current classroom management procedures, which are dominated by white affluent culture, are not conducive to effectively teaching the increasingly growing diverse school population. Differing backgrounds in a classroom are often viewed as deficits that teachers need to correct instead of individual strengths that add to the classroom knowledge. Currently, the public education system is making students conform to the school culture, instead of the school changing to reflect the community. Multicultural education is for all students, preparing them for the real world by teaching tolerance, acceptance, and learning through multiple perspectives. Current research agrees that a shift in management techniques is needed; teachers are concerned with how to handle today's linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms. This study provides teachers with a framework of explicit strategies to ensure culturally responsive classroom management through authentically getting to know your students, fostering positive teacher-student relationships, and providing a classroom culture centered on community. These techniques were deduced from a wide body of research and interviews with dual language teachers in Woodburn, Oregon, where 70% of the student population is Hispanic and of low socio-economic status. With these practices in place, students were more engaged in learning while feeling valued and represented.

Background and Introduction

Classroom Management

Classroom management (CM) is three-fold; it encompasses motivation, instruction, and behavior regulation. Under motivation fall engagement and interest; within instruction is the classroom routine, rules, and expectations; while discipline consists of conflict resolution,

consequences, and rewards. Classroom management is not a content area that is only focused on an hour out of the school day, it "refers to all of the things that a teacher does to organize students, space, time, and materials so that instruction in content and student learning can take place" (Wong & Wong, 1998, 9. 84). Without effective CM practices, student intake and retainment of knowledge will not take place. In his book, "Practical Classroom Management" Vern Jones indicates five most research-based components of CM:

"1.Understanding students' personal and psychological needs, including understanding how students' culture and home life impact their beliefs and values regarding learning and behavior.

2. Creating a safe, positive community of support within the classroom by establishing positive teacher–student and peer relationships and maintaining constructive involvement with students' caregivers.

3. Involving students in developing and committing to behavior standards that promote on-task behavior and help support a calm, safe learning environment.

4. Using instructional methods that facilitate optimal learning by responding to the academic needs of individual students the classroom group.

5. Responding to student behavior that disrupts the student's own learning and/or the learning of others in a way that treats students respectfully and helps them develop skills for working effectively in the classroom and school settings" (Jones, 2011, pg. 5).

While these are efficient CM practices, they do not take into account a multicultural classroom which should view a students' cultural and linguistic assets as a resource.

Multicultural Education

The struggle for human rights for women and people of color in the early 1970s started an education reform that aimed at equal education opportunities for all. Schools sought to placate the concerns of activists by adding token programs for students of color and teaching one unit a year on famous women or famous people of color. In 1981, James Banks, one of the pioneers of multicultural education, was among the first multicultural education scholars to examine schools as social systems from a multicultural context. (Banks, 1981). He defines multicultural education as "incorporating the idea that all students- regardless of their gender, social class, and ethnic, racial, or cultural characteristics- should have an equal opportunity to learn in school" (Banks, 2010). Multicultural education aims at providing equitable education to all children; in this case, "fair education" is being able to give every student what they need, which is not necessarily the same thing. For example, an immigrant student with low English proficiency should be provided with more visuals and extra time on some assignments, in comparison to an English at home child that has been in the American education system since kindergarten. Providing the necessary resources for children to ensure an equal outcome is the root of individuated instruction. The shift of looking at common school practices through a multicultural education lens is highly needed in urban areas; not only is there a wide variance of student ethnicity and culture, but these kids have to deal with socially and economically deprived living conditions (Milner, 2006). The location of research in this paper, the town of Woodburn, Oregon, is a heavy immigrant town with a rapidly growing population.

Result is Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

The merge of classroom management and multicultural education is coined as culturally responsive classroom management (CRCM) (Weinstein, 2004); the introduction of multicultural

education calls for new practices to follow suit. In a CRCM perspective, the classroom should be a representation of students' "funds of knowledge", which refers to the historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being (Moll, 1992). Through a CRCM lens, the above components of classroom management identified by Jones would need to be changed to meet students' individual cultures and diverse needs. For example, in #1, how students' home life "impacts" their beliefs about learning is separating their beliefs from those of the school; the language used regards home life as negative and as the incorrect way to view learning. This language is in line with a deficit view which devalues a students' background if it differs from the cultural norms. For #3, it is a CRCM practice to set classroom standards with students, but while setting these expectations, the teacher needs to be aware of the differences in culturally appropriate behavior of the students. #4 focuses on developing instructional methods to meet the academic needs of students, but CRCM would suggest taking into consideration their social needs as well so that instruction is relevant to the whole child. In addition, to makes these components adhere to multicultural education, a connection with the community would need to be made. School needs to be viewed as a place that is part of the community, with an attempt at empowering students and families to be agents of social change.

Culturally Responsive Classroom Management is a fairly new concept with a large goal, there hasn't been much time for explicit strategy development. Researchers have identified components, features, and goals of this practice, but little on techniques to achieve them. The purpose of this paper is to provide a list of proven effective techniques for three areas of CRCM: getting to know your students and their families, ensuring positive student-teacher relationships,

and creating a sense of classroom community so that all children in the classroom feel represented and valued.

Question: What are the most effective classroom management practices for multicultural elementary education?

Thesis Statement

Through explicit strategy development in culturally responsive classroom management focused on authentically understanding the lives of students, creating positive teacher-student relationships, and having a classroom culture centered on community, teachers will improve the learning experience of their increasingly diverse population.

Literature Review

Defining Multicultural Education

To adequately designate strategies as beneficial for a culturally responsive classroom, the foundations of multicultural education must first be defined. Banks pinpoints the five essential facets to be "content integration, the knowledge construction process, prejudice reduction, an equity pedagogy, and empowering school culture and structure" (Banks, 1995). The base goal of multicultural education is to empower all students by engaging in genuine, meaningful, two-way communication that aims at avoiding parent view assumptions. Through his work, Banks made way for a shift in practical theory from "the concepts … [that] reinforced the status quo and provided intellectual justifications for institutionalized stereotypes and misconceptions about groups of color" to providing a structure that aims at building upon the cultural and linguistic strengths of the students. Some of these strengths include: differing perspectives on topics, being able to recognize cognates, and varied background experiences. Multicultural education is most

prevalent in urban settings, which is usually the research ground for further development. Many teachers believe that celebrating an ethnicity a month, or recognizing cultural and religious holidays is teaching multiculturally, but that methodology does not include perspectives of other cultures. Instead, multicultural education is when educators teach in way where every culture has a voice.

Classroom Management in an Urban Setting

Multicultural education is more often seen in urban settings and in communities with large immigrant populations. Understanding the society of the schools is crucial for the implementation of methods; a key factor is determining if the said community boundary is imposed by the greater society or as one that the community itself endorses. Weiner conducted a qualitative study to uncover that the later makes way for stronger community pride and unity (Weiner, 2003). In Woodburn, the community I will be researching, there is much community support and engagement within the Latin and Russian people, but hardly any Anglo or cross-cultural support. Weiner highlights that an extra pressure placed upon urban teachers is that the nonacademic tasks take far more effort; "there are greater challenge[s] because the schools themselves are under greater pressure to maintain a safe, orderly, academic environment". The students are also affected by the pressures that an urban setting places on their learning: pollution, overpopulation, poverty, safety, and social factors to name a few. Woodburn is classified as a suburban city, but since the national minority is the majority, many of the same factors are affecting the student population. These pressures are seen in Woodburn; students often come hungry to school, they help their parents pick in the fields, some have had their families deported back to Mexico, and many have incarcerated parents.

Diversity and Discipline

The urban school setting discussed by Weiner above, introduces teachers' highest concern with multicultural education: discipline problems that arise from the added pressures of an urban setting. Discipline is the most discussed component because it involves taking into account students' cultural behaviors and the teachers' perceptions of them. Curran analyzed discipline in relation to ELL's (English Language Learners), while Hernandez looked at discipline in an urban high school. From their research, they both deduced that a lot of the behavior that is seen as traditionally "bad" just stems from cultural differences and the learning setting. For ELLs, "we need to understand, expect, and feel comfortable with the natural responses (laughter, first language use, fatigue) that occur when our students participate in interactions in which they are not completely proficient in a language" (Curran 2003). This is critical for teachers in urban settings to understand, because if too many reprimands are given for these actions, students' learning will be inhibited by nervousness, insecurity, and little to no confidence. Being part of a systemic institution in a racist society is felt by kids implicitly and explicitly. From this article, stems the importance of allowing wait time which responds to how draining and how much energy ELLs use to sit and decipher hours of classroom discourse and activities. When teachers attempt to create a classroom community, every student needs to feel invited to learn, and adapting to their learning needs is a way to do so.

To further classify discipline problems, Hernandez identifies three kinds of conflict in diverse schools; 1. Procedural: established protocol, 2. Substantive: content of instruction, and 3. Interpersonal: social behaviors of the relationship. The type of conflict that I infer to arise most in my research is interpersonal because they intensify when students and teachers don't share the

same background. Hernandez found the causes of these conflicts to be "limited attention to student perception" and "the lack of opportunity to be heard" (Hernandez, 1996). As a result, teachers penalize students who go against their own personal beliefs which spurs resistance in students. These interpersonal conflicts are more common in students of color since the teaching community is predominantly white, but to be culturally responsive, teachers don't have to be the same ethnicity as their students, they just have to display inclusion and value in respect to classroom differences. For example, in a 4th grade classroom I was working in, an African-American student would always get in trouble on Mondays for being loud and speaking out. Coming from a Western Anglo background, the teacher categorized the student's actions as a behavior problem with suspicions of a social disability. Once this behavior presented itself as a pattern that only occurs on Mondays, the teacher called the parents to speak about the students' energy and how it was disrupting her work and the classroom. The parents explained that on Sundays, the family goes to a predominantly African-American church which consists of jumping, singing, and jovial worship. The student in question's behavior was just a result of the environment of the day before. To solve this, the teacher had a casual talk with the student about how classroom behavior is different from church behavior. This example is prime in identifying how teachers should never assume the reason behind a students' behavior if they aren't aware of their cultural practices and their influences on school life.

The Deficit Model and Social Justice in Education

Teaching for social justice is a critical component of effective multicultural education; students will develop their self-advocacy skills by critically examining the world through the multiple perspectives present in their classroom. All too often, classroom differences in culture

and experience are seen as a hinderance to learning, this is labeled as deficit thinking (Moll, 1992). Opposite of that, household need to be viewed as positive receptacles of ample cultural knowledge, that when brought together in the classroom, creates a communal cultural wealth (Moll, 1992). The prevailing norm that students are tested on and expected to conform to is that of white western culture, and when a student deviates from that norm, their behavior is given labels of "lazy", "dirty", "violent" (Solórzano, 1997), descriptors with a negative connotation that elude to poor academic performance. Racially stereotyping students of color in schools leads to a self-fulfilling prophecy where the students start to fill the roles they are perceived to fit. Common assumptions within deficit thinking include that students of color come to school without the normative set of knowledge and skills, and that parents do not value or support their child's education (Yosso, 2005).To combat this, the goal of social justice in education is to "enable people to develop the critical analytical tools necessary to understand oppression and their own socialization within oppressive systems, and to develop a sense of agency and capacity to interrupt and change oppressive patterns and behaviors in themselves and in the institutions and communities of which they are apart" (Adams et. al, 2007). In this context, teachers serve as facilitators where their role is to guide students to draw their own conclusions through questions, inquiry, and exploration.

Components of CRCM

After gaining an understanding of multicultural education and the biggest concerns in the field, I analyzed research that identified the main components of CRCM (Culturally Responsive Classroom Management). Soodak, a doctorate in special education, researched inclusion of kids with disabilities through classroom management. Even though this study isn't focused on

students with learning or physical disabilities, she supplies insight on providing a sense of belonging and membership for all students. In an ethnically diverse classroom, students can feel isolated if their culture isn't represented; Soodak stresses that "membership shouldn't be conditional on the student's behavioral or academic success", and that to foster this, teachers should provide opportunities for "cooperation and collaboration for friendship" (Soodak, 2003). From a teacher-focused perspective, Milner and Tenore (2010) identified the important principles of CRCM to be: the centrality of teachers' (a) understanding equity and equality, (b) understanding power structures among students, (c) immersion into students' life worlds, (d) understanding the Self in relation to Others, (e) granting students entry into their worlds, and (f) conceiving school as a community with family members. This study is very teacher-centered, as the main focus in each principle is the teacher. In contrast, my strategies will be classroom centered; looking at the unit as a functioning whole.

The most influential works in CRCM are co-authored by Weinstein, Curran, and Tomlinson-Clarke. They published two articles within 9 years identifying the main components; in 2004, they stressed the recognition of one's own ethnocentrism, knowledge of students' cultural backgrounds, understanding of the political, social, and economic context, commitment to building caring classrooms, and ability and willingness to use culturally appropriate management strategies"(Weinstein, 2004). However, nine years later they focused on: creating a physical setting that supports academic and social goals, establishing expectations for behavior, communicating with students in culturally consistent ways, developing a caring classroom environment, and working with families (Weinstein, 2013). From these two frames, I deduced the three strategy categories that I will be researching: authentically getting to know students,

creating positive teacher-student relationships, and placing importance on the classroom as a community. Through my research, I will provide a framework for teachers to ensure equitable learning opportunities for all students.

CRCM Strategy Development

The little explicit strategy research that has been done, has been by Norris, revolving around the Social and Emotional Learning lens (SEL), and Van Tartwijk, who focused on Dutch multicultural schools. Norris found that through the implementation of a "keep calm skill", school-wide common language, and perspective taking, students learned to express the social and emotional aspects of their lives so they can successfully manage life and school tasks (Norris, 2013). This approach is relatively new; even though she didn't directly study a diverse school population, her findings help identify tactics that make students feel more comfortable at school. When children are able to express their social and emotional needs, the teacher is then able to tailor classroom management tactics, whether it be by varying teaching style, table groupings, or by changing the room aesthetic.

At an attempt at technique gathering, Van Tartwijk centered his research on 12 Dutch teachers to gather effective strategies they used in their multicultural classroom. The contexts are different from diverse schools in the U.S. and from the area I will be conducting my research; the Dutch government classifies a school as multicultural when one-third of the students are foreign born, and they also provide extra rewards for teachers willing to work in these environments (Van Tartwijk, 2009). Their conclusions consist mainly of goals instead of explicit actions; each favored teacher seemed to place limits on students, prevent escalations, be flexible, create positive relationships, adapt their teaching, and make content relevant. He then continued to state

that there is a gap that needs to filled consisting of proactive approaches that don't center on discipline. Finally, further research is needed to investigate the strategies that teachers use to develop positive relationships with their students from various cultural and ethnic backgrounds outside the context of the formal lesson, or even outside the classroom (Van Tartwijk, 2009). Further research is needed to investigate all the strategies teachers actually use. This is, for instance, important when investigating how teachers take students' background characteristics into account in their classroom management.

Methodology

Site:

Woodburn School District

For this study, I conducted qualitative research which included teacher interviews and an extensive literature review. This qualitative approach allowed me to understand the lived experiences and perspectives of the participants. This research is focused on the Woodburn School District in Oregon where the demographics are: 80% Hispanic, 10% Russian, and 10% Anglo. In relation to poverty, 95% of the student population qualifies for free and reduced lunch. The two-way bilingual program they have in place starts at 90/10 (Spanish, English) in kindergarten, 80/20 in first grade, 70/30 in second grade, 50/50 in third grade, and stays at that rate until 5th grade; additionally, the middle schools and high schools offer content classes in Spanish. The Woodburn School District has won numerous awards for its Bilingual Instruction program; with the majority of their teachers ESOL endorsed, native Spanish and Russian educators, and a philosophy of creating authentic situations for language development.

The elementary school I chose to focus on is Nellie Muir Elementary, an international baccalaureate certified school where each grade has two Spanish dual language classes and one English only class, moreover, the majority of teachers have their ESOL (English Speakers of Other Languages) endorsement. In every Spanish dual language classroom, there are 1-4 students who speak English at home. Out of the 550 students at Nellie Muir, 70 are classified as migrant, and 36 are considered homeless. The average household income in Woodburn is $40,000 and 75% families are below the poverty line; derived from these statistics, every student in the Woodburn School District is given free breakfast and lunch.

Data Collection:

I interviewed one Spanish dual language teacher at each grade level to solicit their best CRCM practices that have yielded positive outcomes in their students. I chose teachers who have had more than 7 years of experience at Nellie Muir in the dual language program; for the interviews, their names will be aliases to protect their privacy. I then fit their technique into one or more of my three facets for effective classroom management for diverse classrooms: 1. Authentically getting to know your students, 2. Fostering positive student-teacher relationships, and 3. Community classroom culture. All six of the teachers have worked in this district ten plus years and are highly qualified in that they have their masters in education and their ESOL endorsement. Below are the questions administered during the interviews:

1. How is diversity seen and represented in your classroom?

2. What does multicultural education mean to you?

3. What should the goal of classroom management in a multicultural setting be?

4. Which classroom management strategies do you use in getting to know your students?

5. Which classroom management strategies do you use to foster positive relationships?

6. Which classroom management strategies do you use to create a culture of community?

        After gathering the techniques above, I will organize them under one of the three components of CRCM for better organization to aid in classroom use. Included in the interview transcripts, are pictures of their classroom that emulate their techniques. Once the interviews are completed and the strategies are collected and organized in one of the three facets, I will discuss how the techniques can be implemented and the positive outcomes they have in the classroom. In order to comply with the Institutional Review Board, the researcher completed a "Review Not Required" application, to which the IRB stated that review was unnecessary. The reasons for this were that the interviewees would all be adults; the questions are non-identifiable because they are not personal, and the interviews would be completely anonymous.

Participants:

Teacher Name	Grade	Native Language	Years in Woodburn
Mrs. Rojas	Kindergarten	Spanish	12
Mrs. Anderson	1st Grade	English	20
Mrs. Ramirez	2nd Grade	Spanish	9
Ms. Jones	3rd Grade	English	10
Mr. Bautista	4h Grade	Spanish	17
Mrs. Lopez	5th Grade	Spanish	17

Findings

Interview I: Mrs. Rojas- Kindergarten

1. *How is diversity seen and represented in your classroom?*

"Well, its in many different ways; in language, learning. They become teachers of themselves, they teach each others. In our class, there is a sense of community, we try to open to the kids that everyone has similarities, doesn't matter what language you speak. We learn in both languages which is very hard in kindergarten, for the new English speakers at home, it's a big shock. At this school, the power language is Spanish, so the new English at home kids feel out of place."

2. What does multicultural education mean to you?

"It is very powerful and it opens opportunities for kids because the minority is now the majority. It has opens up doors for community involvement, parent involvement, and being able to teach and learn from other cultures. It's not just an education, it's a way of living."

3. What should the goal of classroom management in a multicultural setting be?

"Its when the students learn to be kind, understanding, and helping those in need. The goal is for my students to be appreciative of the knowledge that their peers have and to look at the classroom as a functioning unit that lives on cooperation and collaboration."

4. Which classroom management strategies do you use in getting to know your students?

"My students don't come with a lot of oral language development, which is crucial for communication and learning. A lot of the parents in this community work all day long; it's not that the parents don't want to be involved, it's that they don't have the opportunity. I try to schedule meetings with the parents in person or over the phone at times that are convenient for them. I know my students through quality instead of quantity, by sharing meaningful experience that give me insight on who they are as a learner and as a thinker. I make sure my students know

its ok to ask anything in any language because I don't want their language development to inhibit their curiosities."

5. Which classroom management strategies do you use to foster positive relationships?

"First, we learn the rules, we create a lot of posters and diagrams, visuals are key in kindergarten. We start letting them sit on the carpet wherever they want to which builds trust between me and them; then as we go along, I am able to see who works best with who."

6. Which classroom management strategies do you use to create a culture of community?

"When they don't know, they ask their friends, because I don't want to be the only model in the class. There is a lot of collaboration and working together. We start the beginning of the year in table groups and switch them frequently, so that all of the kids get the opportunity to learn from others. In the beginning, I pair English students with Spanish speaking students so they can rely on their partner when they feel isolated. It is key to have a specific purpose on why you pair certain students together. We do a lot of a activities to form a community; we all help in putting the library together, have classroom helpers, normally we have two people for each job. The students take turns sharing their work in the language of their choice which elevates their confidence. I make sure that my students have opportunities to work with peers they don't usually gravitate towards so they develop the skill of working with others."

Interview II: Mrs. Anderson- 1st grade

1. *How is diversity seen and represented in your classroom?*

"Well, of course I have students who speak English at home and students who speak Spanish at home. About two-thirds of my students of my ELLs."

2. *What does multicultural education mean to you?*

"It's so much more than multicultural now, right? It's gender equity, and cultural equity, so it's just making sure that things aren't set up just looking at one acceptable way of being. If you ask what kids ate for breakfast, you're not assuming that they all had cereal with milk, that eggs and chorizo is fine. You're not setting them up to think that doctors are all men, that presidents are all white, or that they're all men. It's learning about different cultures too and learning from each other. Our next unit is on traditions, where we learn about Native American traditions and then that leads us to talking about our own traditions."

3. What should the goal of classroom management in a multicultural setting be?

"Well you want to look at equity to make sure everyone understands the same rules and has the same expectations; and that doesn't mean that I treat you just like I treat you, it means that I know you both, and I know what you need me to give you, and I know what you need me to give you. I don't need to use any behavior management systems this year because this group is not like that, I'm always redoing my behavior management to meet the needs of my students."

4. Which classroom management strategies do you use in getting to know your students?

"I think having them share with partners, they get so many opportunities to talk, and of course I get to hear those things they are talking about. Since it's a dual language class, during English time, the personalities of the students who speak English at home come out a little more because their personalities are a little different when they don't get to express themselves all the time in their second language. And then when we have our Spanish times, the opposite is true."

5. Which classroom management strategies do you use to foster positive relationships?

"Expectations, I teach all of those at the beginning of the year, for example, explicitly showing them what is to be done when it is time to listen. And it's not just learning to listen to

the teacher, but to listen to anyone who is talking. We talk about what that means, what that looks like, and why you want to be that kind of person. And with consequences, I let them know how their behavior affects me; like "when you're doing that, it makes it hard for me to teach". I also explain 'the why' behind the activities and lessons that we do."

6. Which classroom management strategies do you use to create a culture of community?

"When another student is up front, I ask them to say thank you to two people who are listening to them, or who are looking at them. And it's immediate, all of the students want that kid to notice them. Through this, they have learned to respectfully listen to their peers. We start from day one with partners, and every month, that partner changes; they understand that their job is to listen and learn from each other. I partner them differently each month; a high and low reader, but they don't know that, boys choose girls, girls choose boys, students who speak Spanish at home picks someone who speaks English at home. I usually do the Spanish-English partner very early on because it helps build their language skills in our bilingual classroom. The community is based on them knowing that they too are teachers; after math we do our debrief, and we pick a couple kids who are going to help explain. The teaching is not just coming from me. We all rely on each other to show appreciation, to show independence, it's all interwoven into the community."

Interview III: Mrs. Ramirez- 2nd grade

1.   How is diversity seen and represented in your classroom?

"Number one, by honoring the languages we use: English and Spanish. It is seen on all the walls with culturally sensitive examples used for learning. It's not only seen by culture and

language, but also by the diverse socio-economic statuses in my classroom; students with free and reduced lunch and those that are part of the upper middle class."

2. What does multicultural education mean to you?

"The kids learning from me and me learning from the kids. Sharing cultures. Although we speak the same languages, we have different experiences through those languages."

3. What should the goal of classroom management be in a multicultural setting?

"Getting to the learning as quickly as possible; you have to know what your kids' needs are. What their extrinsic and intrinsic rewards are, which are different in a multicultural setting."

4. Which classroom management strategies do you use in getting to know your students?

"We do sharing time. I have the following lunch rewards: birthdays of the month, team behavior winners, and students who consistently turn in their homework. We share experiences which are used for writing and for reading connections. I always give a writing piece in the homework where they share some aspect of their home life or beliefs. During conferences, I make sure I connect with every parent, and I make phone calls home with any concerns throughout the year. I also keep track of all the parent communication I make by keeping a parent communication log by my desk. It's helped me to see my previous contact with a students' family."

5. Which classroom management strategies do you use to foster positive relationships?

"Probably points for good behavior in table groups and individual tickets for behavior as well. I also share about my life with my students; I tell them about my trips, my family, my dog, my tough past so they can relate to, and I share what I like to do. It let's them know that I'm a person just like them."

6. Which classroom management strategies do you use to create a culture of community?

"We view our classroom as a home; they take their self-responsibility to make good choices to keep a happy home. We have classroom jobs that rotate and they pick their table captains. I have a wall in my classroom where children bring their family photos to share with our classroom family."

Interview IV: Ms. Jones- 3rd grade

1. How is diversity seen and represented in your classroom?

"I would say diversity is seen in here, well one, is that it's a dual language classroom and then by the texts that are chosen for read alouds, I really try to have more than one culture represented. I have two IEPs, six TAG students, and twenty-one ELLS, out of 26 students.

2. What does multicultural education mean to you?"

"I think multicultural education is a large part is the teacher being self-reflective of their own bias and cultural framing and to be aware that a lot of our experiences can be different, and not just culturally, but socio-economically as well. I see it as a constant reflection and saying that I'm multicultural because I'm a bilingual teacher doesn't cut it. And luckily, we teach at an IB school, so tolerance is a part of our teaching philosophy. We come from our own cultural place and a lot of my students come from a different background in a bunch of different ways. We don't want to think that we have biases but acknowledging them is the only way to teach in a way that doesn't perpetuate that."

3. What should the goal of classroom management be in multicultural education?

"For me, I really strive for not only learner independence, but really understanding why we come up with certain rules and agreements in our social community. I'm not really so much

into "This is how things are going to be", I try to instill them with the ability to make choices in the classroom. The goal for me is that if they make the "wrong" choice, to learn how that affects other people. And, we have some sayings in here, "good choices", "say good things", "who matters" and they all have to point at themselves and say "I matter" and if somebody is not participating, I say "who matters guys?" and they'll be like "he/she matters!" I am telling my students that they are the student-teacher and I am the teacher-student, you know, who we both have roles where we are both learning and teaching one another. So hopefully, there's not a lot of management to be done because they want this community to run well. As in, the world they are going to be participating in as adults. Classroom management is a lot about routines; they know exactly what is expected. And I just talk to them, I am very transparent, we try to create a family in here."

4&5. Which classroom management strategies do you use in getting to know your students and foster positive relationships?

"It's sometimes hard to get to know them when we are doing academic stuff and focused on learning, but when they make connections in books, I get to know them, and once a week a different group of kids eats with me and that's when I get to sit with them and talk about their families. When I'm working during my recess time, they can come and hang out in here. My strategy is that I don't just see them in the classroom; I just create relationships that I hope endure. I try to see them as people, they are just smaller."

6. Which classroom management strategies do you use to create a culture of community?

"We have conversations and sometimes do a family circle where we can express our feelings. At the beginning of the year, we make a classroom constitution, where we come up with

agreed upon expectations for me and the students. Since we make it together, there is value held in our class rules. When they come up with ideas I listen to them; during our government unit, they could make classroom laws where we had a supreme court and cabinet members. I think also I'm trying to focus on cognitive psychology, like brain. That leads into autonomy because we are working on questions of inquiry and metacognition to train your brain to do certain things. They come in often times thinking that the teacher is going to give them the information and that is not what is going to happen in here. We do a lot of valuing each others ideas and experiences."

<u>Interview V: Mr. Bautista- 4th grade</u>

1. *How is diversity seen and represented in your classroom?*

"Because of my background, it is very welcomed and acceptable. Everybody respects everybody else, without picking on the trivial things. I mean differences are differences; we don't deny differences in our classroom. Also, accepting the differences; not following them, but accepting them. Also, when they ask if they have to play with that person, no they don't. But do they have to work with them? Yes they do. The golden rule also applies in my classroom: treat others the way you want to be treated."

2. *What does multicultural education mean to you?*

"It would be incorporating history of the different struggles the different people into your curriculum. This ridiculous notion of celebrating holidays or dedicating one month to a culture is crap; you are not a food, you are not a festive day, you are you. You are not rancheras, you are not frijoles and arroz, you are you. It's learning the reality of our world. There is a big

misconception of other countries here in the states and their ways of being. Do I make a change for these kids? Damn right I make a change."

3. What should the goal of classroom management in a multicultural setting be?

"I think tolerance, accepting, and understanding of a multicultural setting. In Woodburn we are primarily Mexican decent, and there is a large indigenous population. There are many generational differences that we see. Equity is another key aspect of management in multicultural education; a great thing to start out the year is a privilege walk."

4. Which classroom management strategies do you use in getting to know your students?

"Truth. Honesty. Be honest with them, they can tell if you are lying or fake. I let them get to know me. If I don't know something, I let them know; I'm not perfect, I don't have the answers to everything. We can look it up together. I do home visits, and have parents come over to meet me, I make sure our first conversation is positive. I try to have direct contact and limit the amount of paper I send home; they don't have laptops or easy access to e-mail, so I avoid that as well."

5. Which classroom management strategies do you use to foster positive relationships?

"Just showing them that you care, it can be shown in different ways. Even if you're hard and tough, they can see that you care. If they see that you genuinely care, they will be invested in the classroom and their learning. Being fair is also really important."

6. Which classroom management strategies do you use to create a culture of community?

"Well the thing is, we have a "we" mentality. For our materials, they are our stuff, I don't say it's mine. They respect other peoples materials. If I can get anything for them to meet their needs, I do.

<u>Interview VI: Mrs. Lopez- 5th grade</u>

1. How is diversity seen and represented in your classroom?

"With just the diversity of the students themselves; the majority of the population we have are from Mexican descent. There are no English only speakers in the classroom. Who they are and what they speak is respected no matter where they're at, everyone understands in whichever language they say it. Out of 28 students, I have 22 ELLs, and 8 TAG students."

2. What does multicultural education mean to you?

"I think it's just being aware that we are all different and that we all need to accept each others cultures and languages. The kids need to come to a realization that the academic language needs to become one."

3. What should the goal of classroom management in a multicultural setting be?

"In any setting, the goal should be respect; once you have respect, I don't think there will be any discipline problems in the classroom. I make sure the students know that I respect them.

4. Which classroom management strategies do you use in getting to know your students?

"A lot of the kids I do know, I've had their brothers, their parents, I've had them all so I get feeling about how they are in their home lives. When I have questions, I don't hesitate to call parents and I keep a call log where I write down what we spoke about and when. Whenever I have kids stay after school, I go and talk to the parents at home. During conference time, if I have a parent that isn't available during the scheduled hours, I will go to their house to conduct the conference at a time that is convenient for them. Having those relationships with the parents gives me information on who the kids are. I am also very transparent with my students; they

know exactly what I expect from them and they know who I am. They know I'm loud and fun and a human being just like them."

5. Which classroom management strategies do you use to foster positive relationships?

"There are consequences and rewards, and my students know exactly what those are. I've been starting to have lunch with the kids as a positive reward and some of them initiate it and say "I've done all of my homework, can we have lunch together?". Even my last years kids will come up and ask if they can have lunch with me because they just want to talk. I think humor is important too; I'm pretty funny, I'm always making jokes, and I like songs so I tell the students "I have a song about you". Then I'll sing it and the kids will say "oh I know that one!" and I go "yep, that one reminds me of you!". It's a way for my kids to get to know me."

6. Which classroom management strategies do you use to create a culture of community?

"We work together as a team and we are not making fun of each other. I always try to mix kids up so they can understand that we all need to get along and I tell them that "I don't like everyone I work with, but I have to work with them because I'm a professional and that's what I do". I tell them that they need to be team players, no matter how bright they are, if they can't work with a group, they aren't going to hold a job. It's another way in which students learn tolerance and respect."

Discussion

Common Goals

To analyze the responses, I will find commonalities in questions 3-6 which attempt to deduce classroom management goals and strategies. Responses to the third question, *What should the goal of classroom management in a multicultural setting be?*, revolve around making

respect, tolerance, equity, and community the focus of the classroom. These traits are key in a multicultural setting to instill the importance of appreciating and collaborating with those who have different backgrounds and experiences. Through teaching with equity in mind, the teachers interviewed create a safe space where all of their students feel heard.

Responses from the 4th question, which focuses on how the teachers get to know their students, showed the importance of creating avenues for positive communication. The teachers also provide academic ways for students to express their interests. Teacher-student relationships go both ways; transparency and honesty has worked for all teachers in this study to create an open line of communication when authentically getting to now students. Stemming from the school's bilingual program, multiple teachers mentioned the impact of language use, and that communication in both English and Spanish allows the students to use whichever language they are most comfortable with. In a multicultural setting, teachers have a responsibility to get to know the family as well, which every teacher in this study mentioned as being important. By understanding a students' family structure, teachers see how their home experiences affect their school life; this true integration of home and school makes the whole family feel valued.

Common goals that emerged from the 5th question about strategies to foster positive relationships in the classroom centered around setting expectations, rewarding good behavior, and being consistent. These positive relationships hold children accountable for their actions in the classroom; the respect created by these relationships can be seen in the way the students value each other and the classroom. As a teacher, being relatable and making the classroom a place of shared experiences also came out in these responses. Incorporating items from other

cultures into the curriculum and on the walls lets students know that differences are respected and valued.

Once teachers have gotten to know their students and created positive relationships, a sense of community in the classroom is what will follow suit. The outcome of the work done to care for student relationships is seen in the classroom family. Commonalities in responses to the 6th question, *Which classroom management strategies do you use to create a culture of community?* revolved around direct integration of the students. Students in the classrooms in questions use each others as models and teachers; the teacher in these classrooms is not seen as the sole provider of knowledge. A variation of student pair work is explained in these responses as being key in establishing collaboration as an important factor of our society.

A multicultural school population is an advantage for the school community; the sense of cultural capital is wider, more inclusive, and overall richer. Critical race theory and education mold together in the creation of multicultural pedagogy, including instruction, curriculum, and classroom management. Through attempting to authentically understand students, feed into positive student-teacher relationships, and create a classroom community, teachers are valuing the cultural capital that students possess.

Facets: Explicit Strategy Explanation

1. Authentically Getting to Know your Students

Strategy	Interview	Explanation
Transparency	III IV V	• Share simple stories • Share relatable stories that students can make connections with their own lives • Share your interests and hobbies • Exaggerate when you make a mistake to show that we all make them and that we grow and learn from them
Academic Expression of Interests	III IV	• Use homework writing prompts to ask about individual interest • Daily writing prompts in journals • Making personal connections to reading
Home Visits	V	• Conference at home if they can't make it to the school scheduled ones • Call and arrange a time, always make the first visit positive • Limits amount of paper sent home • Majority of parents don't have laptops or access to e-mail
Parent Communication Logs	III	• Keep a binder or small notebook by the phone where you have a tab for each child to record family communication

2. Positive Teacher-Student relationships

Strategy	Interview	Explanation
Expectations	I II	• Using visuals and posters for ELLs • Explicitly explaining what a certain expectation looks and sounds like
Open Door	IV	• Door open during recess, before, and after school for kids who just need to talk outside of set school activities • Also allows teacher to continue relationships with past students

Strategy	Interview	Explanation
Lunchtime	III IV VI	• Different group of students eats with the teacher weekly: table points, homework, certain table groups, certain reading groups
Rewards	III VI	• Table points • School-wide PBIS tickets • Classroom tickets
Consequences	II	• Restorative justice- how their behavior affected the class • Understanding how that behavior disrupted class learning

3. Classroom Culture Centered on Community

Strategy	Interview	Explanation
Student Partners	I-VI	• Change partners monthly • Have different partners for each subject • Heterogenous or homogeneous leveled grouping • English-Spanish partners- build language skills
Class Jobs	I III	• Rotate monthly • Two kids for each job promotes collaboration
Family Wall	III	• Send a letter home to parents explaining that children can bring any family photos to display on the family wall • Share one of your family as well • Direct integration of each students' family • If a child does not have a photo, they can draw one
Class Constitution	IV	• Teacher and students come up with expectations together • Everyone has to agree before they get written down • Can also have three focus words that the class abides by the whole year: i.e. respect, tolerance, valuing others
"We" mentality and language	V	• This is "our" classroom, "our" library, "our" pencils
Students Praise Students	II	• This occurs whenever a student is "teaching" the class or explaining their work • Once they are finished, they will say "thank you" to two students who were actively listening • Gives students motivation to be the ones picked

Strategy	Interview	Explanation
Privilege Walk	V	• Great for older classrooms • Whole class stands in a line facing outward • Teacher reads of life instances, walking forward for privilege, backward for a difficulty or disadvantage. • Examples: Take a step forward if you have a computer at home, take a step back if you ride the bus to school, take a step forward if you go to summer camps… • At the end, look around and talk about: the differences, how it feels to be on either side, what we can do socially to decrease the gap
Morale Sayings	IV	• Teacher: "Who matters?" Students: "I matter" • "Good choices- good things" • Teachers is "teacher-student", students are "student-teachers"

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study has attempted to scratch the surface at techniques to help

teachers in a multi-cultural setting authentically get to know their students, foster positive

teacher-student relationships, and have a classroom culture centered around community. The

categorization of goals and strategies into these three facets has proven effective at Nellie Muir

Elementary school in Woodburn, OR. Furthermore, this study has made the techniques accessible

for assistants, teachers, and administrators' to use in multicultural classrooms. Further research

needs to be done to determine the effectiveness of the strategies gathered in other schools with

similar student demographics.

Works Cited

Banks, J. (1981). Education in the 80s: Multiethnic education. Washington, D.C.

Banks, J. (1995). Multicultural Education and Curriculum Transformation. *The Journal of Negro Education*, *64*(4), 390–400.

Banks, J. A., & Banks, C. A. M. (Eds.). (2009). Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives. John Wiley & Sons.

Curran, M. E. (2003). Linguistic Diversity and Classroom Management. *Theory into Practice*, *42*(4), 334–340.

Hernandez Sheets, R. (1996). Urban classroom conflict: Student-teacher perception: Ethnic integrity, solidarity, and resistance. *The Urban Review*, *28*(2), 165–183.

Jones, V. (2011). Practical classroom management. Boston: Pearson/Allyn and Bacon.

Milner, H. R., & Tenore, F. B. (2010). Classroom Management in Diverse Classrooms. *Urban Education*, *45*(5), 560–603. http://doi.org/10.1177/0042085910377290

Moll, L. C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classrooms. *Theory Into Practice, 31*(2), 132-141.

Norris, J. (2013). Looking at Classroom Management through a Social and Emotional Learning Lens. *Theory into Practice*, *42*(4), 313–318.

Solorzano, D. G. (summer 1997). Images and Words that Wound: Critical Race Theory, Racial Stereotyping, and Teacher Education. *Teacher Education Quarterly*.

Soodak, L. (2003). Classroom Management in Inclusive Settings. *Theory into Practice*, *42*(4), 327–333.

Van Tartwijk, J., den Brok, P., Veldman, I., & Wubbels, T. (2009). Teachers' practical knowledge about classroom management in multicultural classrooms. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *25*(3), 453–460. http://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2008.09.005

Weiner, L. (2003). Why Is Classroom Management So Vexing to Urban Teachers? *Theory Into Practice*, *42*(4), 305–312. http://doi.org/10.1207/s15430421tip4204_7

Weinstein, C., Curran, M. E., & Tomlinson-Clarke, S. (2013). Culturally Responsive Classroom Management: Awareness into Action. *Theory into Practice*, *42*(4), 269–276.

Weinstein, C., Tomlinson-Clarke, S., & Curran, M. (2004). Toward a Conception of Culturally Responsive Classroom Management. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *55*(1), 25–38.

Wong, H., & Wong, R. (1998). The First Days of School: How to Be an Effective Teacher. Mountain View, CA. OAH Magazine of History, 77-78.

Woodburn SD Report Card Download - Oregon Department of Education. (2015). Retrieved May 20, 2015, from http://www.ode.state.or.us/data/reportcard/reports.aspx

Yosso*, T. J. (2005). Whose culture has capital? A critical race theory discussion of community cultural wealth. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 8*(1), 69-91.