Native American Students' Exposure to Culturally Responsive Support and Their Academic Achievement

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Advance Organizer

• Part 1. Introduction to our project: Tary leads
• Part 2. A more detailed look at teacher use of NLC in the classroom: Heather leads
• Part 3. Pilot study: New student survey & teacher interviews: Cody leads
• Part 4. Building on recent literature on culturally responsive teaching: Tary leads
• Part 5. What advice can you give us? Cody & Heather (See handout for discussion starter)

Part 1. Introduction to Our Project

• The Role of Native Language and Culture in Decreasing Discipline Problems and Increasing Academic Achievement for American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) Students

• An Exploration project funded by the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, Grant # R305A140162

Our Team

• Charles Martinez, Principal Investigator
• Janne Underriner
• Heather McClure
• Mark Van Ryzin

• Heather Robbins
• Tary Tobin
• Cody Gion, adopted member of the Northern Cheyenne Tribe
• Claudia Vincent

Our Advisory Board

• Dr. Michelle Jacob, Education Studies, University of Oregon, Yakama Nation
• Dr. Kirby Brown, English, University of Oregon, Cherokee Nation
• Dr. Brian Klopotek, Ethnic Studies, University of Oregon, Choctaw Nation
• Jane Waite, Senior Associate for Social Justice Learning and Engagement, Office of Academic Affairs, Oregon State University
• Dr. Robin Minthorn, English, University of New Mexico, Board Member of the National Indian Education Association, member of the Kiowa Nation of Oklahoma, descendant of the Apache, Assiniboin, Nez Perce and Umatilla Nations

Our Project’s Overall Goals

• Examine the extent to which use of Native Language and Culture in school contexts is associated with Native students school performance

• Identify what is associated with teacher use of Native Language and Culture to promote a culturally responsive school where Native students can succeed
**Data Used (2009 & 2011)**

- National Indian Education Study (NIES)
  [https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nies/](https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/nies/)
  - Teacher, student, and administrator surveys
- National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP)
  [https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/](https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/)
  - Reading and math achievement for 4th and 8th graders

**Type of Data Analysis**

- Cross-sectional – snap shot
- No intervention
- Does not show change before or after an intervention
- No cause – effect conclusions can be drawn
- Hierarchical Linear Modeling / Regression
- Does show correlational type associations but only for the variables selected
- Ignores other variables that may be influential
- EXPLORATORY, NOT EXPERIMENTAL – LOOKING FOR IDEAS FOR BETTER FUTURE RESEARCH

**Is use of Native Language and Culture (NLC) – as measured by NIES, with this type of analysis – associated with better student outcomes in math?**

(Van Ryzin, Vincent, & Hoover, 2016; Van Ryzin & Vincent, in press)

- What is “culturally responsive support?”
- How is “native language and culture” measured by NIES surveys?

**What is “culturally responsive support?”**

- For academics, it often means providing background knowledge if needed.
- “I define culturally responsive teaching as ‘using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them’” (Gay, 2010, p. 31).

**How is “native language and culture” measured by NIES surveys?**

- Do people in your school talk to each other in your American Indian or Alaska Native (AIAN) language?
- Have any AIAN people come to your school to talk about their traditions and cultures?
- Have you attended school field trips to museums, traditional villages, or other places to learn about AIAN people?
- Have you used books, videos, or other materials about AIAN people? Have you checked out books, videos, or other materials about AIAN people from your school library?
NLC and math achievement, on average, associated with lower math achievement, but different results for different sub-groups!

**Significant moderators:**
- Positive results if Native language spoken in the home and if family attends Native events together
- Attending a school with more Native students

(Van Ryzin & Vincent, in press)

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**Part 2. A more detailed look at teacher use of NLC in the classroom**

- **Preparation:**
  - How often do teachers attend training opportunities and what kind of trainings/resources do they access?

- **Reading instruction:**
  - How often and in what manner do teachers use NLC in reading instruction?

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**Online Websites**

- Based on NIES Survey, how often do teachers consult or attend:
  - Libraries, Cultural centers
  - Elders, Experts, Teachers

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Teachers who sought out more PD opportunities related to NLC were primarily AIAN & Latino/a
• Integrate Native culture and history

• Integrate issues affecting Native people; read or discuss Native issues

• Read literature with Native themes or by Native authors

• Write about experiences and issues affecting Native people

• Write about own experiences as a Native student

• Teacher characteristics measured by NIES teacher survey

  • Years of experience
  • Teacher race/ethnicity
  • Fluency in Native language(s)
  • Training in bilingual education

• Teacher characteristics associated with greater use of NLC, cont’d

  • Teacher identifies as Native American or Latino

  • Teacher has at least some knowledge of a Native American language or is a fluent non-Native or Native speaker of a Native American language
**What classroom characteristics are associated with greater use of NLC**

- Number of Native students in the classroom:
- Higher numbers of Native students (half the class or the whole class) were associated with greater teacher use of NLC

**School characteristics, as measured by NIES Administrator Survey:**

- Administrator race/ethnicity?
- Type of school (public, charter, tribal, BIE, alternative)?
- Percent of teacher from Native backgrounds?
- Percent of other staff from Native backgrounds?

**School characteristics associated with greater teacher use of NLC, cont’d:**

- Administrator identifies as Native American or Latino
- Tribal school or BIE school
- Higher percentages of Native teachers
- Higher percentages of Native staff

Qualitative data from NIES teacher survey responses to:

“What have you found to be the most effective teaching and learning strategies for increasing the achievement of your American Indian or Alaska Native students?”
Part 3. Pilot Study: New Student Survey & Teacher Interviews
1. Developed a student survey to assess:
   • Academic support
   • Social support
   • Cultural identity formation
   • Family and community relationships
   • Students had opportunity to nominate teachers they felt provided culturally responsive classrooms
2. Later, we interviewed some of those teachers

Student Survey Development
• Focus group with Native students at University of Oregon and Native community members in Eugene, Oregon
  • Provided feedback on the relevance, age-appropriateness (middle and high school), and of a draft of survey items
  • Consulted with April Campbell & Tabitha Whitefoot, Indian Education Specialists at the Oregon Department of Education

Student Survey Development, continued
• Additional measurement domains recommended by focus group and Advisory Board:
  Ask about classroom conditions in which student feels empowered to participate:
  • Curricular content culturally relevant?
  • Sense of belongingness to class community, peer relationships?
  • Teachers’ and peers’ acknowledgement of students’ cultural background?

Sample Student Survey Item
We are interested in finding out how you, as a member of a cultural group, perceive your classroom. Cultural groups are people who share the same language, customs, beliefs, and traditions. To help us do so, please rate your agreement with the following statements:

What I learn is relevant to my cultural background.
• Strongly agree
• Agree
• Somewhat agree
• Neither agree nor disagree
• Somewhat disagree
• Disagree
• Strongly disagree
Sample Student Survey Item, continued

As a student of [__________ (Native American, Asian, Latino, Black, White, Pacific Islander, Multiracial) background], I feel that

• My teachers are interested in getting to know my parents.
• My teachers regularly let my parents know about my successes at school.
• My parents feel welcome at my school.
• My parents feel comfortable talking with my teachers.
• My teachers invite members of my cultural community into the classroom.
• My teachers treat members of my cultural community with respect.

Student Survey Revision

• Government to Government (G2G) meeting in Oregon in July 2016 with representatives from
  • Burns Paiute Tribe
  • Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua and Siuslaw Indians
  • Confederated Tribes of the Grand Ronde Community of Oregon
  • Confederated Tribes of Siletz Indians
  • Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
  • Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs
  • Coquille Tribe of Oregon
  • Klamath Tribes, Oregon
  • Cow Creek Band of Umpqua Indians of Oregon
  • Oregon Department of Education

G2G & Advisory Board Feedback

• School-family conditions that empower students
  • Parents participate in school activities
  • Teacher reaches out to parents
    • Do people care if you go to school?
  • Curriculum’s cultural sensitivity
    • Relevance
    • Do you feel silenced by the curriculum?
    • Authenticity

G2G & Advisory Board Feedback, continued

• Students’ perceptions of their cultural identity
  • Comfortable making own cultural background visible
  • Availability of same-culture peers
  • Access to same-culture adults
Ongoing data collection

• Revised survey was not used due to many Snow Days and high teacher turn-over in schools that had intended to participate. Perhaps will be used in a future project.

• Some teachers nominated by Native students participated in interviews to identify specific
  • instructional practices
  • trainings
  • supports

Sample questions from teacher follow-up interviews:

• What brought you to the community where you are teaching?
• Where do you receive formal and informal support to be a successful teacher (e.g., administrator, colleagues, tribal leaders, friends)
• How do you learn about your students’ cultures?

Sample questions from teacher follow-up interviews, continued

• How do you communicate awareness and respect for students’ cultural beliefs and practices individually and in the classroom as a whole?
  How do you engage family members to participate in their students’ learning?
• We are in the process of analyzing the teacher interviews.

Part 4. Building on Recent literature on Culturally Responsive Teaching

• We have gathered information from recent literature on culturally responsive teaching and needs of AIAN students – to combine with our findings as we plan for future intervention research.
• Recent literature emphasizes the following 15 themes: Please see handout on these for discussion.

Avoid embarrassing the child

• Do not use verbal questioning as an assessment method -- teach self-assessment skills
  (Trumbull, Sexton, Nelson-Barber, & Johnson, 2015)

Connect learning to life & make home-school connections

• NLC in school had a more positive effect on achievement among students whose families identified more strongly with their Native culture (Native language spoken at home and family attends cultural events) and who were in schools with larger percentages of AI/AN students. (Van Ryzin & Vincent, in press)
Cooperative Learning

• Working with one or more others on an educational project
• Increases motivation and engagement

(Herrington, 2015)

Counter Negative Stereotypes

• Show that the negative stereotype is wrong
• Learn about positive role models

(Burkley, Durante, Fiske, Burkley, & Andrade, 2016; Clemenco, 2016; Covarrubias & Fryberg, 2015; Freng & Willis-Esqueda, 2011; Gunn & Brice, 2014; Jennings, Gandarilla, & Tan, 2015; Leavitt, Covarrubias, Perez, & Fryberg, 2015; Spencer, Logel, & Davis, 2016)

• Bronson Koenig, top point guard
• “Role model among his Ho-Chunk people and inspiring other Native Americans” (Sports Illustrated, 12/12/16, p. 87)

1st Native American Woman Federal Judge


Diane Humetewa made history -- May 14, 2014, when the United States Senate confirmed her to serve on the federal bench as judge for the U.S. District Court for Arizona.

Kenneth Ramos shares his experience as a community actor in “Urban Rez.” Haawka! (“Hello” in my Native language). I was raised on the Barona Indian Reservation . . . Attended UCLA, where I was one of eleven incoming American Indian freshmen.

Improve History Lessons

• Critically examine what students are reading, including the popular Scholastic Reading Club (Chaudhri & Schau, 2016)
• Bliss (2013) reports that Utah has developed curricula for teaching Native history accurately and fairly year-round
Engage students in lessons that are interesting to them

Vincent, Van Ryzin, and Tobin (in press) found that (based on NIES data from the 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 school years) teachers of AI/AN students needed to increase use of opportunities for students to write about their own experiences. Not only would this make language arts lessons more interesting for the students, it might help the teachers to better understand their students.

Use multi-model, hands-on learning opportunities

Vaughn (2016) reports a variety of multi-modal and hands-on instructional methods, including:
- storytelling,
- music and singing,
- making collages from materials gathered outside in nature,
- drawing and painting.

Include Native Knowledge

- Knowledge of science improved using place-based Native knowledge. Science lessons can include Native knowledge, for example, culturally-relevant plant knowledge (Johnson et al., 2014; Kellogg et al., 2016; Stevens, Andrade, & Page, 2016).

Help students create social change for social justice

Lessons to help Native elementary and middle school students understand history and current need for social action are available online (Constantin, 2016) See Teaching Tolerance http://www.tolerance.org/sites/default/files/general/TT54_NativeVoices%20NativeVoices.pdf

Enhance Student-teacher Relationships

Promoting “reciprocal dialogue” between students and teachers to “engage, empower, and legitimize indigenous students' voices and their perspectives" (Quijada Cerecer, 2013, p. 612).

Address needs that differ in urban / low density and rural / high density schools

“The salience of being American Indian may differ for American Indian youth living in urban environments surrounded by more numerous majority youth populations. It is possible that in such contexts a strong bicultural identity is more critical for optimal functioning” (Tyser, Scott, Readdy, & McCrea, 2014, p. 339).
Improve pre-service training & professional development
A survey of Northern Plains Native youth at a tribal school indicated that more professional development is needed on (a) **strength-based** approaches, (b) how to include self-defined **goal-setting** and service to others as part of the curriculum, (c) how to encourage participation in **extra-curricular** and community activities, and (d) how to **involve youth as collaborative partners**. (McMahon, Kenyon, & Carter, 2013)

Improve understanding of cultural identity
"Tools we have for **measuring** nascent cultural identity are limited . . . Adolescents were just on the cusp of developing the cognitive wherewithal to **explore their identities**" (Whitesell, et al., 2014, p. 449).

Reduce disproportionate discipline of Native students
• We know that AI/AN students are sent to the principal’s office disproportionately for discipline (Whitford & Levine-Donnerstein, 2014) and • disproportionately suspended and expelled from school (Sprague, Vincent, Tobin, & ChiXapkaid (Pavel), 2013; Vincent, Sprague, ChiXapkaid (Pavel), & Gau, 2015; Vincent, Sprague, & Tobin, 2012).

Part 5. What advice can you give us?
• What can teachers do to create respectful classrooms where Native students can succeed?
• Discussion & prioritizing strategies: See handout.

Future – Intervention Research?
• Use the information to:
  • Design interventions
  • Help teachers create classrooms where American Indian students are comfortable and successful