

The Role of Culture in Culturally Compatible Education

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This study captured a moment of conflict between Danish and Greenlandic educational leaders as they engaged in a joint endeavor to implement Greenland's nation-wide reform. After adopting the Standards for Effective Pedagogy developed by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE), reform leaders were in disagreement on two strategies that explicitly used Greenland's Native culture to teach. This study analyzes reform leaders' arguments on the disputed Standards, *Contextualization* and *Modeling*. Results indicate that while both groups were committed to the task, their goals for implementation differed. Greenlandic reform leaders were concerned with whether the use of the two Standards would increase and strengthen Native representation and identity. Danish reform leaders were interested in understanding the best way to use the pedagogy in Greenland's educational context. This study points to the complexity of joint endeavors in post-colonial societies, particularly where Native cultural revitalization is the goal. Although it is easy to dismiss conflict and resistance as a product of post-colonialism, arguments made by each side should be analyzed for its contribution to the overall goal of educational reform.

In many post-colonial contexts, indigenous reform leaders are changing their educational systems to reflect the values and cultures of their Native communities. To accomplish their goals, subordinated groups may need to elicit the assistance of the dominating group until they are self-sustaining (Kaomea, 2005). These joint tasks may incite conflict as group members' negotiate different perspectives for what is best in the education of Native students.

This study captures a moment of conflict between Greenland's reform leaders in the implementation of a nation-wide reform. As part of the reform process, Greenland's Ministry of Education officials adopted the Standards for Effective Pedagogy developed by U.S. researchers at the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE). Initially, Danish and Greenlandic reform leaders embraced the pedagogical model citing its appropriateness in the Greenlandic context. In time, Danish reform leaders strongly resisted *Contextualization* and *Modeling*, two Standards that make explicit use of culture to teach.

Although it is easy to dismiss this conflict as a result of the post-colonial divide, each side contributes to the overall discussion of Native educational reform. The purpose of this study was to analyze arguments made by reform leaders to understand why they found themselves at odds in their joint effort to implement the CREDE Standards. A secondary purpose was to investigate what, if any, contributions were made to educators' understanding and implementation of Native reform.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework used for this study is that of Tharp's (2007-2008) work on cultural variation in means of assistance. Means of assistance are the ways in which experts and novices interact to achieve a goal. The list of recognizable forms of assistance grows as psychological research advances. However, published forms, for which there is a substantial body of evidence and theory, include *modeling*, *contingency management*, *feeding back*, *instructing*, *questioning*, and *cognitive structuring* (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988).

Tharp (2007-2008) argues that while all cultures use all forms of assistance to some degree, cultures vary in their patterns of usage. These patterns are expressed through cultural preferences and frequencies of use and develop within cultural activity settings and daily routines. Therefore, in any given activity, cultural groups will bring their repertoires, values, and expectations to the task. Evidence of cultural variations in means of assistance comes from the work conducted by the Kamehameha Early Educational Program (KEEP), a research and development effort to increase Native Hawaiian literacy. Researchers at KEEP created a reading program specifically designed for Hawaiian students' social and linguistic needs. The literacy program was built upon cultural compatibility between school and home culture and was enabled by a system of instruction that was familiar to students. To test its effectiveness in other contexts, researchers transferred it to Navajo classrooms. On the surface the two programs could be readily identified as sister programs, yet there were more subtle differences in teaching that rendered the Hawaiian program ineffective for Navajo students (Tharp & Dalton, 2007).

Tharp (2007-2008) argues that the difference between the two programs was a direct result of cultural patterning in interaction between teachers and students. Navajo students were less responsive to certain means of assistance compared to Native Hawaiian children. Hawaiian students preferred *questioning*, *instructing*, and *contingency management* where Navajos preferred *modeling* and *cognitive structuring*. These forms of assistance are central in processes of socialization in Native American culture (Tharp, 2006). Therefore, programs for specific cultural groups must be based on their preferred forms of assistance and patterns of interaction.

This theoretical framework can also be applied to any form of joint productive activity. When cultural groups come together in joint endeavors, they bring preferences for specific patterns of interaction. These preferences are then

employed in the joint endeavor. Conflict may arise when cultural groups don't recognize other forms of assistance as being valuable to achieving the goal. Groups may experience frustration and in some cases, view the opposing group as resistant or trying to sabotage the project. In this way, both groups can be committed to the common goal, but unable to locate or assist each other in the process. Conflict and resistance is then viewed, not as opposition to the group or ideas, but in the way the other group approaches achievement of the goal. Preferred patterns of interaction may be more difficult to identify and address, especially when there is a history of unequal power relations between cultural groups.

The Role of Schools in Maintaining Unequal Power Relations

According to Apple (1979), schools maintain and embody the collective traditions and intentions of earlier times. Many of these traditions are rooted in social and economic ideologies with the goal of social control. Therefore, slight adjustments to the system will not reform education, because the system itself remains unquestioned. Rather, reform leaders must examine how the rules of engagement were established and the ways in which they remain in place (Kawagley & Barnhardt, 1999). True reform requires a deep analysis of educators' ideology with scrutiny for how values and beliefs undermine broader social change (Giroux, 2003).

Apple (1979) asserts that creating educational environments is a political process because it involves ideological and political conceptions of what constitutes valuable educational activity. How educators organize classrooms directly influences who has access to social and economic positions in greater society. This is accomplished by legitimizing certain forms of knowledge and regulating who has access to it. Other institutions and organizations reinforce what forms of knowledge are considered valuable, by providing economic and social opportunities for people with this body of knowledge. Therefore, the design of educational institutions, including the means by which they are organized and controlled, directly influences who has access to resources and high status positions. In this way, schools function as a major mechanism for the maintenance of unequal status and power relations.

Historically, indigenous knowledge has been viewed as an impediment to progress in need of being replaced by more legitimate solutions based on scientific thinking. Europeans considered non-European states to be permanently lacking in development with indigenous knowledge viewed as "obstacles to development" (Briggs & Sharp, 2004, p. 661). For this reason, Native perspective on teaching and learning has largely been left out of educational decisions in favor of dominant ways. Recently, many indigenous communities have realized the potential opportunity for changing the status quo by reforming their educational systems to reflect the values and beliefs about what constitutes valuable education. Some have called this effort a search for "an anti-colonial approach to education" (Ball, 2004, p. 456). The next section provides an overview of educational reform in Greenland and reform leaders' struggle for greater political and cultural control.

Educational Reform in Greenland

Until the 1970s, Greenland's school system remained a copy of European models developed in Denmark and Scandinavia and reflected little of the Greenlandic culture (Olsen, 2005). Educational reforms initiated in the 1970s and 1990s were largely unsuccessful in transforming Greenland's classrooms because they only made slight adjustments to the educational system already in place. In 1998, *Atuarfitsialak*, meaning "the good school" was initiated through a change in legislation by Greenland's Home Rule government.

Atuarfitsialak is comprehensive in that it is overhauling nearly all aspects of Greenland's educational system by addressing issues in curriculum, classroom pedagogy, higher education for Native teachers, and actively engaging the community. *Atuarfitsialak's* goal is to strengthen Greenlandic culture and identity and increase Native students' academic achievement. These goals are shared by indigenous communities around the world, but reveal some interesting challenges. For example, Dirlik (2002) claims that the colonial legacy has done so much damage to the subordinated group's identity, that even pre-colonial conceptions have been transformed.

To accomplish *Atuarfitsialak's* goals, Greenland's reform leaders adopted a model of effective pedagogy developed by researchers in the U.S. at the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE). The Standards for Effective Pedagogy are principles of effective teaching and learning developed after more than 30 years of research on effective instruction for culturally and linguistically diverse students (Tharp, Estrada, Dalton & Yamauchi, 2000). The principles are steeped in Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory which emphasizes the role of assistance in students' development of higher levels of cognition. The Standards were designed as a guide for teachers to organize classroom activities to promote high levels of learning using students' background knowledge as a foundation.

Reform leaders decided to adopt the CREDE Standards for two reasons. First and foremost, they are based on our era's dominant international developmental theory (Tharp & Dalton, 2007). Sociocultural theory is a widely accepted theory in international education and research and the Greenlanders wanted to use a research-based form of pedagogy in their school system. Second, the pedagogy was developed specifically for cultural and linguistic students placed at-risk by a traditional majority-culture education, many of which populations were currently or recently decolonizing (Tharp & Dalton, 2007). The next section will highlight the two CREDE Standards disputed by reform leaders in this study.

Contextualization: The Process of Making School Meaningful

The Standard of *Contextualization* is a pedagogical strategy that couches new material in students' prior knowledge from home, school, and community in order to create meaningful connections between known and unknown material (Tharp

et al., 2000). These personal connections assist students in relating to academic material that otherwise may appear abstract and irrelevant. Contextualization is a major component in the creation of culturally compatible classrooms and educational programs (Demmert & Towner, 2003). It is one of the most fully studied and supported principles in both cognitive science and psychology (Tharp, 2005).

Contextualization of new material can be approached in different ways. One method is to use students' personal schemata to introduce new material that is more abstract and academic (Yamauchi, Wyatt & Taum, 2005). For example, in assisting students to understand the complexity of political relationships, a teacher might ask students to think about their own friendships and explore topics such as disagreement, negotiation, betrayal, and loyalty. By beginning with topics that are familiar to students, the teacher can artfully make connections to how politicians and political systems form and dissolve alliances. Other means of contextualization make use of students' funds of knowledge, which includes the social, economic, and productive activities of a group found in local households (Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzalez, 1992).

Although the psychological principles underlying contextualization are the same, some educators have suggested that teachers must be mindful of what experiences they are contextualizing to (Demmert & Towner, 2003). If the goal is to create deeper understanding of an academic topic, then perhaps any meaningful connection will suffice. However, if the teacher has a secondary goal, such as reinforcing Native culture, then caution must be used to ensure the right cultural reference is used. For example, contextualizing to teen cultural elements such as music, movies and fashion may produce a different level of cultural awareness compared to connection with traditional activities such as hunting and drum dancing.

Modeling: Learning Through Observation

Research on modeling has shown that it is a highly effective form of assistance in the teaching and learning of indigenous communities (Tharp, Dalton & Yamauchi, 1994). Support for modeling comes from research by Cazden and John (1971), among others, who characterize American Indian children's preference for learning to be "more visual than verbal, more learning by looking than learning through language" (p. 256). Modeling and demonstration are central to socialization practices across Native America and the peoples of the circumpolar North (Darnell & Hoem, 1996; Tharp, 2006). In these cultures, modeling expresses a deep structure of cultural values and functions as a principle of interaction. In teaching and learning, it is a powerful form of assistance. Observational learning has neurological, sociological, psychological, familial, and ecological features (Vogt, Jordan & Tharp, 1987). In teaching Native students, research suggests that modeling be used in the classroom and accompany verbal forms of instruction. That way, Native students' learning preferences are included in the teaching and learning process as they build new repertoires.

Contextualization and Modeling

These two CREDE Standards make explicit use of the Native culture and experience to teach. *Contextualization* connects students with academic material and allows them to see their cultural and personal experiences reflected in the curriculum. *Modeling* uses natural patterns of interaction to create a familiar environment for students to learn. These Standards, in the context of the CREDE's model, have undergone extensive research in Native American communities with positive results (Tharp, 2006). The purpose of this study was to analyze arguments made by reform leaders to understand why they experienced conflict in their joint effort to implement the CREDE Standards. The secondary purpose is to investigate what contributions, if any, were made to the understanding and implementation of Native reform.

Method

My Role as a Researcher

I worked for Inerisaavik as an educational researcher on Greenland's preschool and public school reforms for several years. In 2005, I was invited by Greenland's Ministry to assist reform leaders in the implementation of culturally compatible education that included the implementation of the CREDE Standards. Prior to my position at Inerisaavik, I worked on a project that studied the effects of professional development on teachers' use and understanding of the Standards. In addition, I was using the pedagogical model to teach undergraduate courses in a teacher education program at the University of Hawaii. Although I am not a Native or indigenous researcher myself, I have extensively worked with indigenous groups in educational settings in Hawaii, Guam, and New Mexico.

Participants

Participants included 10 key informants (Fontana & Frey, 1997; Yin, 2003) who were selected based on their employment tenure at Inerisaavik, the institute responsible for implementation of Greenland's reform. All 10 participants were involved in the reform in its initial stages or shortly thereafter, apart from one participant who had been working for Inerisaavik for only a few months at the time of his interview. Of the 10 participants, five identified themselves as ethnically Greenlandic and the remaining as Danish. Names of participants have been abbreviated to protect their identity.

Two of the ten participants were Greenlandic politicians from the Ministry of Education. They wrote the legislation for *Atuarfitsialak* and continue to advise Inerisaavik in the reform's implementation. Two participants were a part of the leadership group, responsible for making decisions at Inerisaavik and delegating tasks to subordinates. In this group, one participant was Danish and the other Greenlandic. Six participants worked as consultants for Inerisaavik, conducting teacher professional development on the CREDE Standards. Of this group, only one participant was Greenlandic.

Data Collection & Analysis

Data Collection. Data were collected through participant observations and informal interviews (Fontana & Frey, 1997). I conducted the interviews on an on-going basis beginning in August 2005 until June 2006 and made follow-ups the next year. Each contributor participated in a 45-90 minute semi-structured interview that used probing and open-ended questioning techniques in order to elicit richness in responses (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

I also collected participant observational data as reform leaders worked to implement the CREDE Standards. Observational notes were written when participants spoke English, which was typically done in meetings and professional development courses and for the most part, was for my benefit. In the early stages of reform, the leaders were interested in a third party to assist in developing a coherent understanding of the pedagogical model.

Data Analysis. Constant-comparative methods were used to analyze the data. According to Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2000), the constant comparison method of analysis has its roots in grounded theory methodology in which the process of data collection and data analysis is interactive, iterative, and can be revised with new information. Using this technique, data are collected by comparing social phenomena across categories allowing new categories and dimensions to emerge. Because this study has its roots in grounded theory, these emergent themes shaped further lines of inquiry.

Data were analyzed by first reading through transcribed interviews and participant observation twice for a general impression. I made notes regarding my initial impression for each groups' perspective on the two Standards and then imported them into a qualitative software program (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The first round of analysis involved open-coding in which each speaking turn was described using a code. The second round collapsed and subsumed codes under larger themes. At this point, I further investigated the literature on hegemony and postcolonial society to assist in the contextual placement of the data.

Establishing Validity. It is recommended for qualitative work that at least 4-12 months of prolonged engagement is spent in the field (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Three years were spent living and working in Greenland of which 18 months were spent collecting data for this study. To establish validity, two colleagues were used, one from Inerisaavik the institute responsible for reform implementation and the other one working as a consultant to Inerisaavik (Creswell & Miller, 2000). One colleague worked as the head of the research department at Inerisaavik and had previously analyzed issues related to mental colonization in Greenland. The other was an advisor to Greenland's Ministry of Education and was used as a sounding board for broader issues of equity, access to education, and political development. These peers challenged assumptions, asked difficult questions, and assisted in clarifying themes in the study.

Results

Early in the implementation process, reform leaders agreed that if Greenland's teachers were successful in implementing CREDE's pedagogical strategies, they would be fulfilling the country's educational mandates. One reform leader discovered Greenland's legislation dovetailed with the CREDE Standards, "Every Standard fits in the paragraphs [of the new School Act]. I have found a paragraph [for] each Standard, so it is, in fact . . . the new School Act" (Interview with B. M., September 1, 2005).

From the outset, Greenlandic reform leaders acknowledged the Standards would need to be adjusted to fit the Greenlandic schools. However, they decided any adjustments were not an immediate concern and could be accomplished at a later time. From their perspective, the educational system was in need of immediate change and the sooner the Standards were in place, the sooner the schools would reflect Greenlandic culture. On the other hand, Danish reform leaders felt that the Standards should be interpreted and implemented correctly on the front end to hedge potential problems. For this reason, they offered arguments for why the Standards could not be used in the Greenlandic context. In time, reform leaders experienced conflict that on the surface appears to be a direct result of the postcolonial divide that exists in Greenland. However, data analysis revealed the conflict is a result of cultural preference for interaction and participation in activity, complicated by Greenland's post-colonial context.

Contextualization

Greenlandic reform leaders embraced *Contextualization* and argued for its pivotal role in revitalizing and legitimizing Native culture in Greenlandic schools. They felt that if teachers could link students' personal experiences to the curriculum, Greenlandic culture would be recognized as equal to Danish culture. Low graduation rates in Greenland have been attributed to Danish ways of teaching entrenched within the school system and perceptions about what it meant to be a successful Greenlandic. A reform leader explained

I think the 5,000 educated Greenlanders had been some of the good Greenlanders in the Danish eyes. We have been able to learn Danish, speak Danish, read Danish and act Danish. That is why we, in some ways, we succeeded in the Danish system. All the rest who never learned Danish or learned . . . Danish irony or the Danish way of living, they couldn't follow the teaching, I am afraid . . . I see that we have some very Danish demands in the system. (Interview with K. F., May 26, 2006)

According to some participants, Danish colonial presence has resulted in Greenlanders embracing a negative self-image. As one participant explained, "That is another heritage from the Danish colonialist way of looking at Greenlanders. There are only some Greenlanders who can really develop to become real Europeans; to become [full of] pride and intelligent individuals" (interview with K.O., March 3, 2006). Greenlandic reform leaders believed that

by infusing the curriculum with references to Greenlandic culture, a healthy view of Greenlandic identity would develop.

Contextualization was also viewed as important because reform leaders felt Greenlandic students' home lives weren't considered enough in the reform development. Contextualizing material would help to fill this gap. One reform leader explained that only in retrospect was he able to see some design flaws. In his opinion, the new school system was "built upon another kind of student . . . [a] normal student, maybe a normal European student" without giving enough attention to Greenlandic students' home life (Interview with K. F., May 26, 2006). He expressed that issues of abuse, neglect, and violence that characterize many Greenlandic students' lives were largely unconsidered. Consequently, Greenlandic reform leaders felt that if teachers didn't make school relevant, students' dropout rates would increase.

In contrast, Danish reform leaders appeared to be primarily concerned with contextualization as a pedagogical strategy, including the decisions and consequences that accompany its use. For example, one participant argued that culture should remain undefined, cautioning that "the minute you go in and define what Greenlandic or Danish culture is, that culture is dead" (interview with L. H., February 10, 2006). According to this participant, by defining culture, it becomes static and unchanging, which can cause damage to the Native culture. She explained her thoughts further

(A person) should never, never, never, never define what Greenlandic culture is, or Danish culture, or British culture . . . because then you sort of draw a line in the sand . . . (and) say, the way the majority is thinking on this date, on this year is what is defined as our culture so that you cannot change it because it will be un-Greenlandic or un-Danish. . . . Culture only lives when you are debating what culture is and what it means. (Interview with L. H., February 10, 2006)

Although this reform leader supported contextualized learning, defining culture, even for classroom use, would render it impotent. Rather than using culture to contextualize learning, she argued for teachers' use of socio-economic status in contextualizing material and explained that economic resources are more important in defining a person's experience than their cultural background. In her view, socioeconomic status determined who has access to aspects of Danish-European culture and therefore the rest of the world. According to this participant, abundant financial resources will produce a very different kind of Greenlandic student compared to a child who comes from a hunting and fishing family. If teachers contextualized material based on anything but socioeconomic status, they would run the risk of attributing activities and characteristics that only exist for small sample of Greenlanders. She explained,

The problem is how will you do that without knowing exactly the circumstances and surrounds that the child is living in. You sort of have to try it out. You need to know the family and say, okay, this is a fishing family, who moved from a settlement and the father is a drunk. And this other family

is going on vacation to Europe twice a year and he is going with them, and he has got everything. (Interview with L. H., February 10, 2006)

It appears this participant didn't see how Greenland's former status as a colony of Denmark contributed to the Greenlander's current social and economic status. Her argument was that contextualization was generally a hit or miss situation, which is accurate and one of the challenges in using this strategy. What might work for one student, may not work for another. However, contextualizing instruction based on socio-economic status in a post-colonial context is problematic. Contextualizing in this way has the potential to reinforce the status quo and adversely interfere with the status of the indigenous population. When asked if there were any universal or communal activities a teacher could use in the classroom, she responded "I don't think you could be sure of that" (interview with L. H., February 10, 2006).

Danish reform leaders were also concerned with forcing relationships between events or ideas that are not naturally paired. One participant explained that if there wasn't a pre-existing connection between the familiar content and the new material, the teacher ran the risk of creating "violence on the culture" by forcing a relationship. In his opinion, contextualized lessons have the potential to distort reality if a natural relationship isn't initially recognizable. It appears this participant didn't fully understand that in using contextualization as a teaching strategy, the teacher draws out students' experiences and from this point makes relevant connections between what is known and unknown. The point is to create meaning for the student and not to develop relationships from an objective point of view.

Further, this participant expressed that if all new material was contextualized, students would be ill-prepared to participate in a global society where knowledge is often presented in an abstract and de-contextualized manner. In his opinion, if Greenlandic students would become too reliant on the teacher's presentation of material in this way, students might expect their teachers to contextualize new information all the time. As a long-term consequence, students would lack the skills needed to connect ideas on their own. In the end, contextualization will do a disservice to the very students the reform is targeting.

Traditional vs. Contemporary Culture

Danish reform leaders expressed that if they were to support *Contextualization*, it was of utmost importance to make a decision for whose culture was to be used. They urged their Greenlandic colleagues to consider using contemporary Greenlandic culture when contextualizing or run the risk of stereotyping. One participant expressed it in this way

I think one should be very, very careful [about] what sort of culture you are going to use in the classroom. I think there have been some really bad examples [of contextualization] in Greenland. All of a sudden everything in the books were about dog sledges and hunting seals on the ice and nobody in the southern Greenland . . . from Sisimiut . . . down south, have ever even

seen a dog sledge and they don't know what a dog sledge is, and they don't hunt seals on the ice. Actually, seal hunting . . . used to be a common thing in the culture, but these days it is only a small minority that have really experienced seal hunting. (Interview with L. H., February 10, 2006)

However, in the context of post-colonial Greenland, Greenlandic reform leaders wanted to ensure that a pure expression of the culture was presented. In their opinion, if contemporary culture was used to contextualize lessons, teachers ran the risk of reinforcing aspects of European culture imposed through colonization.

In an attempt to assuage the conflict, one reform leader urged his colleagues to think about traditional culture in a different way. In his opinion, traditional culture shouldn't be defined as physical artifacts such as kayaks and hunting tools. Rather, a proper definition would incorporate the activities their ancestors participated in and what was learned through their participation. In that way, Greenlandic epistemologies and worldviews would be included. Another Greenlandic reform leader embraced using both traditional and contemporary Greenlandic culture in the teaching and learning process. He explained that teachers should use the "contemporary culture of the time . . . and the social history of the families" to contextualize their lessons. He explained his idea by reflecting on the well-functioning families living in Greenland who have embraced both sides of their culture.

What is essential in these families is that they [have] based their life both in the . . . Norwegian lifestyle, and at the same time in the Eskimo lifestyle. Because your clothes, your food have to be Eskimo . . . based on Eskimo cultures . . . but, the elements, skills, [and] abilities to build to boats, houses, to . . . have control in your country is very much [European] . . . even though you are a colony. . . . You . . . have these colonizers in your [mind]. This creates something very dynamic from my perspective and can be very dynamic in education . . . if you use . . . both sides of these cultural elements. (Interview with P. O., June 13, 2006)

This participant urged the other reform leaders to think about evolution and change as a part of a Native group's culture. He cautioned them to not see "culture as something unique and not created by the social factors and the history of the society," but rather to embrace Greenland's colonial past and integrate it into how Greenlandic culture is defined. In his view, elements brought in by the colonizers were just as much a part of Greenlandic identity as traditional Eskimo culture.

Modeling

In addition to *Contextualization*, reform leaders disputed the use of *Modeling* in Greenland's classrooms. Greenlandic reform leaders felt that modeling, as a form of assistance, was so much a part of their culture that there was little reason to argue its place in the reform. They supported its implementation based on the research conducted by CREDE and their personal experiences with the strategy. Many of the participants told stories that included times when their grandmother

or mother taught them how to do something by first showing them the process. Through observation, they were able to perform the task independently.

On the other hand, Danish reform leaders felt that teachers' prevalent use of modeling was a barrier to Greenland's educational reform. They argued that Greenland's school system has required students to "copy whatever the teacher says, wrote and did" without varying their assistance to include ways that would push students' cognitive and linguistic development. From their perspective, there is no need to highlight this teaching strategy because it is already deeply ingrained in Greenlandic patterns of teaching and learning. They feared that if reform leaders supported this form of assistance, teachers would continue teaching using passive methods and the reform would fall short of making significant changes in the classroom.

Primarily, Danish reform leaders argued that modeling was a risky because it resulted in reproduction rather than the generation of new ideas or products. For example, one participant expressed that the purpose of teaching was to generate new knowledge and better ways of doing something. He felt that modeling could not be considered a way of teaching, because it left little room for inspiration and the creation of anything new. In a discussion on the role of modeling in art education, he explained that Greenlandic teachers tend to copy exactly what the teacher does instead of transforming the ideas into their own. He described his experience in this way, "You create a pig and everyone else produces a pig and it is not the way it . . . should be" (interview with B. M., September 1, 2005).

Other Danish reform leaders felt similarly, "I know you can learn a lot from modeling, [but] . . . I am a little concerned . . . because I don't want people to misunderstand modeling and think copying" (Interview with L. H., February 10, 2006). This participant explained that modeling is an excellent means of teaching in "natural learning settings" for example, where "you learn to hunt the seal," but is inappropriate in formal schooling because there is no longer a societal need to perfect a skill. In her opinion, what is needed in Greenlandic society is innovation or development beyond what has already been perfected. She elaborated,

So if [a skill has] been perfected for 1,000 years it is difficult to come up with new and better ways of doing things. . . . If you just learn from modeling you will never be better than the person who taught us. (Interview with L. H., February 10, 2006)

This participant explained that anytime learning a new skill involves using the hands, modeling will naturally be used to assist the learner. Modeling is appropriate in manipulating objects or materials but, "when learning other things, it is different" and teachers need to respond by employing other methods.

Danish reform leaders argued the difficulty in using this strategy in Greenland was that Greenlandic teachers did not understand the purpose of modeling. From their perspective, Greenlandic teachers were not able to analyze

the modeled process and apply it in their own setting. As one participant put it, “They take it [and] use it without reflection” (L. H., February 1, 2006). This participant illustrated her point by recalling an example where she conducted a professional development session with a group of high school teachers. The purpose of the course was to give teachers new ideas to take back to the classroom. In this session, a female teacher expressed she was in taking the course for a second time because she wanted to learn how to teach a different lesson. The participant shared this classroom experience

I still have not forgotten this one workshop on science where this one teacher said, “Well, I took this one workshop a few years ago and I was taught how to make a lesson plan on,” I think it was on water, “and I use it a lot of times in my classes and now I want to learn another lesson.” (Interview with L. H., February 10, 2006)

According to the Danish perspective, if reform leaders supported classroom use of modeling, teachers would fail to embrace the other Standards in the CREDE model. They would think they are using a reform-sanctioned method of teaching and ignore the other pedagogical strategies that specifically focus on cognitive and linguistic development. Danish reform leaders felt that by not openly supporting the strategy, Greenlandic teachers would continue to incorporate modeling on their own and focus their attention on learning the other CREDE Standards.

Greenlandic reform leaders viewed modeling as a form of assistance in the traditional Vygotskian or socio-cultural way that was intended by the CREDE Standard, while Danish reform leaders spoke to a behavioral method of reproduction. In this way, Danish reform leaders misinterpreted the purpose of the Standard and could not find its value in Greenland’s reform work. Further, Danish reform leaders appear to have misunderstood the role of culture and cultural preferences in teaching and learning. From their perspective, Danish reform leaders may have thought of themselves as being helpful by pointing out some of the difficulties, but in Greenland’s postcolonial context, their comments invalidate Greenlandic preferred patterns of interaction and participation in activity.

Discussion

This study examined the conflict between Danish and Greenlandic reform leaders engaged in a joint endeavor to implement CREDE’s Standards for Effective Pedagogy. In the midst of their work, reform leaders found themselves in conflict in the implementation of two Standards, *Contextualization* and *Modeling*. Hoffman (1999) challenges researchers to not simplify conflict and resistance and set individuals up against the opposing groups or ideas. Rather, each group is seen as contributory to the overall process, which can be unearthed by investigating the cultural models of the groups appearing resistant.

Preferred Forms of Assistance as the Source of Conflict

Danish reform leaders were concerned with the Standards at the pedagogical level because of potential consequences in the Greenlandic context. They wanted to ensure the pedagogy would be implemented correctly given Greenlandic teachers' cultural preferences for teaching. They contributed to the joint endeavor by offering insights, suggestions, and feedback for why the *Contextualization* and *Modeling* would be difficult. In many ways, their arguments had validity and would need to be examined to ensure proper implementation of the Standards.

For example, in its simplest form, *Contextualization* is the process of connecting what is known to what is unknown, which is typically accomplished by using students' background knowledge from their home, school, and community (Tharp et al., 2000). However, in the Greenlandic context, reform leaders hoped to use *Contextualization* to strengthen Greenlandic culture and identity lost during the colonial period. Given the difficulties with post-colonial identity, *Contextualization* may be best used to create meaning between everyday and academic topics and approached differently for cultural revitalization. This distinction may need to be made especially if students do not know their traditional knowledge.

Given the validity of their arguments, what appears to be Danish reform leaders' resistance may actually be a cultural preference for participation in activity. According to Tharp (2007-2008), cultural groups maintain preferences in their means of assistance and preferred forms of interaction. These preferences are expressed in activities and daily routines. Danish reform leaders may have offered their arguments in good faith and a sincere desire to contribute to the reform. They may have viewed themselves as being "good Danes" by identifying and arguing potential problems. What is problematic is that the post-colonial context complicates the joint educational endeavor. The larger social and political context frames Danish reform leaders' arguments and positions them in opposition to Greenland's goals for Native representation.

On the other hand, Danish reform leaders represent Greenland's ruling group and may not have fully appreciated the Greenlander's goal for cultural revitalization. It appears that Danish reform leaders were unaware of how their comments reflected a colonial mindset. For example, one of the Danish participants offered socioeconomic status as a way to contextualize new lessons. This suggestion was offered without reflection as to how families achieved their lower status in the first place.

Gramsci (1971) argues that most ruling classes, such as the Danes in the Greenlandic context, don't use force or coercion to achieve and maintain their status. Rather, dominating groups create subjects who become willingly subservient by using the existing hegemony of the dominant group to "teach" people about their place in society. In all likelihood, Danish reform leaders were unaware of how their opinions and suggestions would maintain inequality in Greenland's post-colonial context. Being on the receiving end of the colonial

regime, the Greenlanders were acutely aware of how their school system was used to support Danish colonial goals.

Tharp's (2007-2008) insight into cultural preferences for patterns of interaction and means of assistance is a useful tool for investigating conflict and resistance, particularly in post-colonial contexts. When conflict is analyzed in terms of cultural preferences for interaction in joint activity, one can see how difficult post-colonial joint endeavors can be. The context complicates matters because it places another level of meaning and understanding to the task. In this study, the real issue may not be a post-colonial power struggle but an example of cultural groups meeting their own and others' teaching and learning processes and negotiating deep cultural structures.

Defining the Role of Non-Natives in Joint Endeavors

Native, and other subordinated groups, may benefit from defining the role of non-Natives in joint endeavors to defuse potential conflict. Kaomea (2005) offers some preliminary advice for how this might be accomplished and suggests that non-Natives place themselves in subordination to the indigenous groups.

Perhaps the most helpful role that can be assumed by non-Natives who are interested in assisting with Indigenous self-determination efforts . . . is to work collaboratively with Native allies, listen closely to our wisdom as well as our concern, interrogate unearned power and privilege (including one's own), and use this privilege to confront oppression and "stand behind" Natives, so that our voices can be heard. (p. 40)

However, other models for joint endeavors may exist. Further research in this area would benefit educators and reform leaders working in post-colonial contexts by providing different models for how both sides can come together to create meaningful educational change.

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