

CULTURALLY CONGRUENT TEACHING STRATEGIES: VOICES FROM THE FIELD

Nanette S. Schonleber

This article describes a year-long qualitative study to discover, first, the preferred teaching strategies of Hawaiian language immersion and culture-based (HLCB) educators and, second, how the strategies were being implemented in HLCB classrooms. Interviews and focus group discussions with 40 HLCB educators yielded a set of 10 teaching practices viewed as culturally appropriate, as healing, and as increasing academic self-efficacy. Although these teaching practices are directly related to important Hawaiian values, beliefs about teaching and learning, and worldview, participants noted a lack of available training and support to implement them. Outcomes suggest that training in culturally congruent teaching strategies should be ongoing and systematic and that incorporating place-based curricula in public school settings could possibly increase the academic self-efficacy of Hawaiian students.

CORRESPONDENCE MAY BE SENT TO:

Nanette S. Schonleber, Education Division, Chaminade University of Honolulu
3140 Wai'ālae Avenue, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96816
Email: nschonle@chaminade.edu

Hūlili: Multidisciplinary Research on Hawaiian Well-Being Vol.4 No.1 (2007)
Copyright © 2007 by Kamehameha Schools.

In this article I share outcomes of a year-long qualitative case study to discover teaching strategies viewed by Hawaiian language immersion and culture-based (HLCB) educators as a good fit for their goals, values, and beliefs, and to investigate how these teaching practices were being implemented in their classrooms. Over the course of the year that I actively collected data, I visited and talked with HLCB educators on three Hawaiian Islands. These educators shared their stories, their values, their hopes and dreams for their students, and their reasons for being educators. They also shared their frustrations and challenges.

The findings revealed 10 specific and well-defined teaching practices viewed by many HLCB educators as culturally appropriate, as healing, and as increasing academic self-efficacy and resiliency in students. These strategies are connected to values and beliefs that are important to many Hawaiians, including the values of humility and patience as personal qualities, the value of harmony in relationships, and the belief that individuals have a responsibility to the community, the family, and the land. The belief that children are born with individual gifts and talents that if fully developed serve to enhance the entire group was mentioned by several of the participants as important in their understanding of what it means to be a teacher. Many participants also mentioned a strong belief that the land is to be cared for and nurtured; some articulated that, in fact, they did not and could not know who they were apart from the land, or *'āina*. These values and beliefs were related to a worldview in which all things are interconnected, children have a kind of divine power participants described as *mana*, and the earth is to be cared for and respected as a living entity, “an elder sibling.”

The findings also revealed challenges in implementing and utilizing the teaching practices reported as preferred and as culturally congruent. These challenges not only impede the ability of teachers to implement teaching practices they feel are culturally congruent but may also lead to the use of conventional teaching practices that are not reflective of Hawaiian ways of teaching and learning. Examples include the use of single-grade classroom settings and the use of grades rather than mastery as a measure of success in learning.

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Today, after years of suppression, a revitalization of the culture and language of the Hawaiian people has begun to occur. Native arts, knowledge of the natural world, and indigenous ways of understanding and relating to the world are more and more commonly seen as sources of pride, beauty, and identity, rather than as shameful relics of the past to be disdained and discarded (Meyer, 2003; Yamauchi, 2003). In Hawai'i, one result of this revitalization has been the creation of Hawaiian language immersion, Hawaiian and English bilingual, and Hawaiian culture-based English-medium schools. As described by one of the founders, the movement began out of "a need, an urgent need, to help to revitalize the language and the culture for all of Hawai'i's people" (K. Kamanā, personal communication, May 2005). According to Stiles (1997), these schools, collectively called Hawaiian language immersion or culture-based (HLCB) schools in this article, now serve as international models of excellence. Like schools in other parts of the United States that emphasize the culture and language of indigenous people (Lipka & Ilutsik, 1995), these schools become places where the language and culture of the Hawaiian people are revitalized. Programs are designed to make use of the cultural strengths of the Hawaiian culture and community, and children are taught that cultural differences can be seen as an asset (Meyer, 2003; Yamauchi, 2003). This sense of cultural competence through the use of a culturally congruent curriculum will lead, it is hoped, not only to a stronger sense of what it means to be Hawaiian but also to improved academic outcomes for the children who are students in such programs (K. Kamanā, personal communication, May 2005).

According to a study by Kana'iaupuni and Ishibashi (2005), Hawaiian children attending HLCB charter schools have performed at least as well, and sometimes better, on standardized tests of reading and writing than their counterparts in non-culture-based and conventional public school settings. Other indicators of interest in school, such as attendance, are often proportionately higher as well (Beil, 2004). At Hālau Kū Māna New Century Public Charter School, for example, almost one-third of the students had perfect attendance in the first quarter of the academic year 2005–2006, and there was a 95% attendance rate for that same time period (Nakanishi, 2005). This is in contrast to the generally high rates of absenteeism among their counterparts in non-HLCB public settings (Kana'iaupuni, Malone, & Ishibashi, 2005).

Importance of Alternative Pedagogical Practices

While vitally important, it is not enough to simply utilize the Hawaiian language and/or cultural values within the context of culturally congruent curricula and content. Knowledge and use of culturally relevant teaching strategies is also an important factor in the achievement of high academic outcomes and high academic efficacy (Darling-Hammond 1998; Tharp & Entz, 2003). A substantial body of research indicates that *how* educators teach is as important as *what* they teach. In fact, Bielenberg (2000) argued that without access to well-defined alternatives, indigenous educators may be forced to fall back on the conventional mainstream teaching practices that have not to date proven to be successful with their students. Knowledge and use of teaching practices that are a good “fit” culturally is viewed as one key to higher academic outcomes. For these reasons, as the HLCB educators build schools and programs that revitalize their language and culture, many of them are looking to the past, to their elders, to help guide them in rediscovering the ancient ways of teaching and learning that support their values, beliefs, and worldview.

Traditional Hawaiian Teaching Practices

According to Chun (2006), Hawaiians in precontact Hawai‘i had a well-organized system for both informal and formal learning. Pukui, Haertig, and Lee (1972) documented that remnants of this system survive today in the wise sayings or *‘ōlelo no‘eau* (Pukui & Elbert, 1986) of the Hawaiian people, as well as in the practices of teaching and learning found in Hawaiian homes. They stated that traditional Hawaiian teaching practices included three interrelated processes. The first was the expectation that children must observe their elders or a more experienced person in order to learn; the second was that children must listen in order to remember; and the third was that once children had observed and listened as those more experienced modeled the steps in the activity to be learned, they next imitated and practiced the skill to be learned. Questioning and interrupting was strongly discouraged until these three steps had occurred, and mastery or perfection was expected as the final outcome.

Other common teaching and learning methods included an expectation that older children would teach the younger, and younger children would learn from the older or more senior members of the *'ohana* or family. Children's first teachers were members of the *'ohana* who observed children to discern both their readiness to learn and their natural inclinations and talents. The appropriate time to teach something was determined by the ability of children to perform certain activities, not by a specific age, as is more common in school settings today. For example, at about age five or six a child was "Big enough to carry two coconuts" (Pukui et al., 1972, p. 50). Children learned practical things such as how to conserve natural resources; they also learned intangibles such as the value of *hana*, or work. Children were considered to be valuable contributors to the well-being of the *'ohana* and larger community.

METHOD

The notion of culture as integral to learning provided an overarching point of reference throughout the investigation. Grounded theory methodology (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) guided the overall design strategy of the study. Data for the study were gathered through semistructured interviews triangulated by (a) classroom observations, (b) onsite visits of all programs, and (c) review and analysis of selected documents such as school mission statements and Hawaiian language newspapers.

Participants

There were a total of 40 participants, all of whom were HLCB educators. They were located in 12 schools and programs on three Hawaiian Islands and worked as teachers and administrators in Hawaiian language immersion, bilingual Hawaiian and English language, and English-medium culture-based programs. The mean age was 36 years, and the median number of years teaching was 8. Pseudonyms

were used except in cases where the participants gave permission to use their real names. Because of the importance of names in Hawaiian culture, all pseudonyms were approved by participants prior to use. As is common in grounded theory methodology, all participants were invited back into the process at the conclusion of the data analysis cycle. They were able to review their comments and quotations for accuracy, and in some cases, chose to add more in the way of explanation. It is their voice and experience that are quoted in this article.

Data Sources

FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSIONS. Five focus group discussions with a total of 25 HLCB educators were conducted. Each of the 25 participated in one focus group with between 3 and 7 educators in each group. Demographic information on focus group participants is provided in the Appendix. A one-hour workshop showing teaching methods previously informally identified as culturally congruent was provided. This workshop consisted of a half-hour overview and a half-hour viewing of commercially produced videos demonstrating the approach. Next, I conducted a semistructured group interview. Questions were first developed from the initial review of the literature, informal conversations with educators in the HLCB programs, and my own background. Questions focused on the goals, values, and worldview of the HLCB educators. They also focused on alternative teaching strategies viewed as both culturally congruent and supportive of high academic outcomes as evidenced by the test scores of other programs using these alternative teaching strategies (Rodriguez, Irby, Brown, Lara-Alecio, & Galloway, 2003). Interviews ranged from one hour to 90 minutes and were audio-taped, transcribed, and coded.

INTERVIEWS. Semistructured interviews were conducted with 15 participants, called key informants, who had previously been exposed to the culturally congruent teaching methods shared with focus groups. Questions were similar to those in the focus group interviews, and interviews ranged from one hour to 90 minutes and were audio-taped, transcribed, and coded using the QSR N-6 NUD*IST software program. Demographic information on key informants is provided in the Appendix.

FIELD OBSERVATIONS. Using a running record format (Cohen, Stern, & Balaban, 1997) and two checklists (Montessori Accreditation Commission for Teacher Education, n.d.) used in programs utilizing many of the culturally congruent teaching methods preferred by HLCB educators, I observed the classrooms of 12 participants to see how teachers were incorporating the teaching strategies they viewed as important and culturally congruent. These were all classrooms of participants who were individually interviewed, and each observation took place in the morning on the same day as the interview. The length of the observations ranged from one to three hours. After the observation, observations were shared. Checklists and field notes were used to triangulate the data from the individual interviews and focus group discussions.

SCHOOL TOURS. A school tour of each of the 12 sites was taken. Each tour lasted from one to three hours. After each tour, I made field notes about what had been observed. These notes were used to triangulate data from the individual interviews and focus group discussions.

DOCUMENT ANALYSIS. A sampling of the newsletters and Web sites of the HLCB programs represented by the participants was collected. These documents were used to triangulate data from the interviews and focus group discussions.

Limitations

The general limitations of the study include the holistic nature of an exploratory case design. They also include a reliance on my (the researcher's) trustworthiness and experience as the primary instrument for both data collection and analysis. Possible lack of generalizability is a limitation of grounded theory and a case study approach. Another possible limitation was my previous role as professor for 12 of the participants. As former students, participants may have changed their answers to please me or in ways they knew would be more socially acceptable.

A WAY OF TEACHING

Findings revealed 10 specific pedagogical strategies that were viewed as culturally congruent and valued by the HLCB educators in this study. These strategies included hands-on learning, place-based education, and teaching based on observation of students. All 10 strategies were directly related to culturally important values, including responsibility to community and caring for the earth. Connecting the pedagogical strategies and values was an underlying view of reality in which all things are connected, children have an essentially spiritual essence, and the earth is an “elder sibling” to be respected and cared for. Participants stated that utilizing culturally congruent practices increased cultural pride and academic self-efficacy among students.

Self-Directed Learners

The teaching practice most frequently mentioned was encouraging children to be self-directed learners. These are practices that foster independence and the ability of children to make their own choices as to the kind of work they wished to do. Keomailani, an administrator of an HLCB infant-toddler program, discussed this teaching strategy as she was describing the work of a colleague.

Her work was to show Hawaiian children learning together with a cultural base and learning through projects...and making their own discoveries along the way. Not so much a “sit down and being taught to” but learning through what is inside of your *na’au* [gut]. You know, if you want to be a taro farmer, then that’s what you should be learning in high school.

Kapono, an HLCB middle school teacher, also mentioned this practice. His comments demonstrated another aspect of independence that several participants mentioned: the ability or willingness on the part of adults to allow children to choose their own path.

I think that's the whole goal of this school, too. It's kind of, you know, they have to pick their own path. They're going to know a hell of a lot more than you do. You teach them the principles, and you can let them go. I think that's the best way to go.

This sentiment was echoed by Kamaka, an HLCB administrator and focus group participant, as he explained why he thought the self-directed learning strategies used by both approaches were the best way to work with students.

Since everybody has their own perspective, you can't really tell somebody what they're thinking, or how to think. You got to let them come to it at their own way.... Kids respond to that. You try and push something on them and it's like, "I no like do that."

Use of Demonstration and Modeling

Teaching through the use of demonstration and modeling was the second most commonly mentioned pedagogical practice. Pua, an HLCB preschool teacher, described this way of teaching as she shared how she had learned from her father.

My father taught me how to weave and how we just follow and don't say anything. Not even one verbal thing. All he would say is, "Watch." And I'd be like, "Okay." And don't ask any more questions. Just do. The whole thing—it was so spiritual. It was like you weren't even connected with dad anymore. You know what you're doing. And you're connected with someone more divine than yourself.

Hands-On Learning

Like the practice of learning by observing, the practice of learning by doing was described by Hawaiian 'ōlelo no'eau, or wise sayings (Pukui & Elbert, 1986), something noted by several participants. As Kapa'a, an HLCB middle school teacher, stated when describing why he liked hands-on learning,

Because that's the way I was taught as a child. And that's how we do things in Hawaiian culture. Hands-on. Because back then there were no books to read, so you could not go and do research. And there's a term we use, "*ma ka hana ka 'ike*," from doing, one learns.

Mixed-Age Classrooms

According to participants in this study, multiage grouping or mixed-age classrooms mirrored the practices of a Hawaiian home. Older children were expected to help and teach the younger ones and, conversely, younger children were expected to "mind" the older siblings and to learn from them. As Lehua, an assistant teacher in an HLCB elementary school, put it when describing her reaction to seeing a video where children were in a mixed-age setting and the older ones were helping the younger ones,

The older helping the younger...that, I think, is truly like a Hawaiian value. I felt so good [watching the video] because the older ones were always looking out for the younger ones; and not even the oldest—the second oldest kids and all that. So, yeah, I liked that—especially in the classroom to see that. That's really nice.

Connecting with Nature

HLCB participants also mentioned the importance of teaching children about, and connecting them with, nature and the natural world. As Pua said, again, in response to a video she had viewed,

Something else that stood out for me, too, was when, in the video, the children went out and fed the goats and what not. That is definitely another true reflection of life, of real life meaning for us. Why not have animals at school? That would be my idea of school: to have a yard full of goats, and horses, and pigs, and cows, and all.

Reality and Place-Based Curriculum

Some HLCB educators in this study stated that they place an emphasis on learning through a reality-based curriculum focused on where the children live, their “place.” This included the use of the real artifacts of the culture of the children and the natural objects of the surrounding place where the school was located. Nailima, an assistant teacher at an HLCB K–12 school, mentioned both of these aspects as she was explaining how the learning environment is not found only within the four walls of the traditional classroom.

The learning environment is not only in the classrooms, but outside too. Emphasizing physical activity and learning about sea knowledge, for example. This is fruit-bearing knowledge. You go down to the ocean, learn about your life skills, the real skills, down at the ocean, and then connect that with the Hawaiian literature [back in the classroom].

Integrated Through the Sciences

Teaching through the use of a science-based integrated curriculum was the seventh most often mentioned preferred strategy. In an integrated curriculum approach, all content areas are taught through researching a unifying topic or theme. A science content area such as a study of the universe, for example, or a study of the plants of a particular ecosystem, would be used as the basis for studies in other content areas such as math, language arts, social studies, and the arts.

One way content is linked in an integrated curriculum is through the use of various integrating materials and devices. Some examples include (a) the use of timelines and maps to incorporate historical and geographical perspectives, (b) the use of vocabulary and language arts assignments connected to the scientific aspects of the research project, (c) the creation of art projects related to the topic being studied, (d) the use of storytelling, and (e) the use of mathematics in whatever quantitative aspects of the project might be relevant (Fogarty, 1991). The *Kumulipo*, a Hawaiian story of creation, was used in 7 out of the 12 schools I visited.

Another way content is linked is through using a place-based curriculum, that is, through using the physical place where the children's school is located as an integrating theme. This way of integrating the curriculum was evident in all but one of the classrooms. Auhea, an HLCB toddler teacher, spoke of what she saw as the important practice of teaching children by starting with the stories of their own place and then extending this. She shared that although she and the other preschool teachers had tried different curricula over time, the one they liked the best was the year they used the stories of their own place as the focus of the curriculum. She and the others in the focus group then showed me children's books one of the high school students created, all stories about the plants, the animals, the reasons for the names of particular places.

I observed two fully integrated science-based units of study. One was at the preschool level and utilized the *Kumulipo* as its integrating theme. The other was at Grade 4 and utilized the Hawaiian concept of the *ahupua'a*, a traditional division of land typically running from the mountains to the ocean. In both cases, the *Kumulipo* served as the focal point. The following describes how the two HLCB teachers working at a high school used the content of the *Kumulipo* within their science curriculum.

From those stories and from those concepts you can get everything. From the science to the politics, everything can come out of that.... Basically, the *Kumulipo* says it all. We've made efforts, and it was pretty good, but I think we could have gone deeper with it in tying in the academics.... For example, when you learn at this *wā* or this age of the *Kumulipo*, talking about certain plants and animals, well, that is where that science learning comes in. And when you reach the *kanaka* [human being] stage, that's where the politics side could come in, so we could have tied in a lot more academics. You could even get in math in there.

Observation of Students

According to participants who discussed this particular strategy, the notion of guidance and teaching based on observation of a child's actions and discerned talents by an elder or elders was a common and expected practice in the Hawaiian culture. It is related to the practice of encouraging children to be self-directed learners and the underlying belief that children have a spiritual essence or energy that is unique to them. As Kauanoë put it,

It's a way we think about things here. People have talents; they come with talent. Your responsibility is to find out what they are. Be observant and find out what those talents are and guide children to come into their own.

Pua also mentioned the Hawaiian practice of observing children in order to know what to teach as she mentioned the role of the family in educational decisions.

A *kupuna* [grandparent, elder, or ancestor] would recognize each child. For example, maybe a child is an excellent dancer or chanter but they are so shy it's just painful for them to get up and hula. The *kupuna* would push or guide that child toward composing individually, instead. This would also be a family decision.

Finally, Evalani, an HLCB toddler and preschool teacher with her own children in an HLCB K–12 school, added another perspective to the notion of observing children. According to her, the Hawaiian practice of *hānai* (fostering) was related to the practice of observing and encouraging children to follow their interests. A common practice in precontact Hawai‘i, children were given to a different family member to be raised.

That’s why with a lot of traditional practices...people hānaied everybody else’s kids. It was like...if my child showed an interest in this thing, then, “Okay, go stay with Aunty. Aunty will show you how to do that.” ’Cause back then, even traditionally, the parents would watch their children and see their interest and see where it would take them, instead of forcing. You know, “Because I’m a hula dancer, you’re gonna be a hula dancer.” If the child had no interest in that, but maybe wanted to paddle or build canoes...they would pass the child on to a family member, or whatever, who could teach them those things. And so, they really went by the desires of the children, instead of just enforcing, you know, “this is the law.”

Step by Step to Mastery

This teaching strategy suggests that content to be mastered should be broken down into steps that are easily mastered with minimal intervention on the part of the adult. Each activity is part of a sequence of activities, graded from easiest to hardest, with each step broken down in such a way that it is doable and understandable by even the youngest. This was viewed as congruent with traditional Hawaiian ways of teaching and thinking by several of the participants. Hawaiian elders taught children as much as they were ready to absorb and then provided opportunities to practice until mastery was achieved. According to the participants in this study, this continues to be a valued pedagogical practice in HLCB programs. Kapuanani, an HLCB administrator, discussed this traditional Hawaiian way of teaching:

Your kupuna wouldn't give you a task that he or she knew you wouldn't be able to complete. And even if you weren't able to do it perfectly at first that was okay. They understood that you were learning.

Storytelling

The final strategy was teaching through telling stories such as the *Kumulipo*. This was mentioned by several participants as a valued strategy. Lehua, an HLCB educator and Hawaiian language teacher, focused on how telling stories helped children to have a stronger sense of place and a stronger sense of their own history. She stated that this was a key value in the Hawaiian culture.

When we were in Kailua we did a lot of stories and histories about Kailua, the places and the people, mostly the places because the people come from the places. We learned the different mountains, the different water formations, the land formations, and we know the names of how they connect to the history. And the stories come from those places.

A WAY TO HEAL

Several of the HLCB educators I interviewed saw education and the use of culturally congruent teaching methods as a way to change society and to take ownership of their culture and their language once again. They envisioned doing this through influencing not just children but their families and communities as well. An example of an HLCB educator who dedicated her life to this mission was Kauanoë. In her interview she described why she and others got involved as pioneers in the HLCB movement. Their focus was on reaching families through the schools and the children in an attempt to regain a language and a culture.

We choose the context of education because that's where we can reach our children and our families. Through the context of education, we work together with families, but it actually is a mission that goes far beyond the educational context. In order for culture and language to survive it has to be a part of every facet of society and economy in order to be successful, yeah?

And later, Kauanoë stated what she believed to be a key element of this activist and transformative view of education. "We're trying to hold on to that and not compromising, you know. And that really requires clarity of vision."

This clarity of vision involves transformation and healing at both a personal and a community level. It also has the capacity to increase the self-efficacy of not only students but ultimately the entire community. The first focus group, a group of middle school educators, highlighted this element. They discussed why they felt their school made a difference with their many placed-at-risk-students. They stated that they were very proud of their students' progress, as they witnessed personal change and transformation in the demeanor and attitude of many students. An example of this kind of change was provided by Kai, an HLCB high school teacher, as he described students at the state legislature testifying in support of funding for the charter schools.

And one of our older kids, he and his brother came in with a real bad attitude.... And now he's pretty open-minded.... He actually said in his testimony to the senators, "They don't only teach me to be proud of being Hawaiian," because he is also Samoan-Chinese, "but they teach me to be proud of my Chinese side, my Samoan side." And he says, "You know, I'm reading *The Art of War* by Lao Tzu." And that was really positive.

Lani, a focus group participant and teacher's assistant at an HLCB middle school, described a different kind of transformation in her nephew.

He came in walking like this (demonstrated someone with their head held down, eyes to the ground). Everywhere he went he would always look to the ground.... And by the end of the half semester, he now walks like this (demonstrated someone with their head held up), with a smile on his face wherever he goes. And he's not only doing hula and stuff, but now he plays basketball. He's starting to join other sports, and starting to come out of himself. He's starting to crack the shell now.... You know, it happened so fast, I barely even recognized him from before. And that is like a perfect example, because for me, seeing him transition from a regular public school to a charter school, I've seen him grow.

She continued, describing the students' hula performance in front of a large audience and stating how surprised she was that the students, including her nephew, actually got up and performed what they learned. And then she said something that really touched me.

So we [the nephew and her] were talking story one day, and I said, "I think it's going to be the kids that's going to make my family realize, 'Eh, we are Hawaiian, you know?'" And we should be proud of who we are. Because we lost that." And to see [the kids] having the chance to learn that, and bring it home, and to have our family actually see, "Hey, we are somebody, yeah?" "We did come from a solid background." It makes me proud that, "All right. We will live again. We will survive."

When I mentioned this conversation to another focus group and asked if they thought this seemed true to them, Pele, a relatively new HLCB teacher, responded, "You're right. In our school it is a healing. It's going back to what our families were a long time ago."

CHALLENGES

Although the teaching practices detailed above are desired, educators stated that they face many challenges to the implementation of these strategies. Four major challenges relate to (a) a lack of models, (b) a lack of easily available training, (c) a lack of ongoing and in-service training, and (d) a lack of specific didactic materials. Kapa'a, a new HLCB educator, articulated his need for training in the pedagogical practices that were unfamiliar to him.

For me, I've got choke [a lot of] challenges because I'm a new teacher. I was brought up in that old school way of "You sit down, you shut up, you do this; you do that." I know it's all a learning experience...[and] my training is all on-the-job experience.

Such challenges led, in some cases, to the use of culturally incompatible teaching practices, such as introducing material to be learned based on age and grade rather than readiness to learn; the use of what has been called a "recitation script," that is, a form of classroom discourse in which the teacher asks questions and individual students are expected to answer (Tharp & Gallimore, 1988); and testing students based on a timeline of material to be "gotten through" rather than with the goal of mastery. These incompatible teaching practices also included the use of teaching materials that were not reflective of the values of the HLCB educators. Worksheets that are not related to any meaningful activity and books that may have been translated into Hawaiian but did not embody Hawaiian values and beliefs are examples of these kinds of materials.

DISCUSSION

A Need for Training

HLCB educators desire systematic and ongoing training in the specific pedagogical practices and strategies they view as culturally congruent. Kamaka, the administrator at one of the HLCB charter schools, described his challenge as one of designing a system that works for “us as indigenous people.” He stated that he feels that a stronger system, including systematic training, would free the teachers to be more creative. As he ended the conversation, he added, “There’s not necessarily somebody I can look up in the phone book to come and do this training for us because we are in uncharted territory.”

Koalani, a teacher in that same school, agreed on the need for training via a cohesive philosophy. She stated,

In the classroom we don’t have a cohesive philosophy, you know. We don’t have one cohesive something that’s holding all of the instruction together. It’s like a whole lot of, like the way Kamaka describes it, it’s eclectic, yeah? It’s a whole bunch of little pieces stacked on top of each other. Great ideas stacked on top of each other.

The outcomes of this study indicate that such a systematic training needs to have as its underpinning values, beliefs, and a worldview that relates to the strategies and methods being learned. Without such a cohesive underpinning as well as ongoing support and modeling, participants in this study felt that there is little chance that real change will happen. When asked what she would most like to have if she could have anything, Maile, an HLCB teacher working in a middle school, said this:

A comprehensive training program. I mean right now, we're eclectic in what we do and we take the best practices from the different models that we see. To come up with a comprehensive training program that incorporates everything that we believe. To have that, then to be able to train our teachers in that, then to have the curriculum and the materials that will support that, that's really what we need and are working on.

To meet the need of both individual HLCB teachers and HLCB program goals for culturally congruent method and curriculum, faculty in teacher education programs at the college or university level, school administrators, and researchers interested in educational reform should consider providing training in the pedagogical practices identified by participants as valued and culturally congruent. They should also include the cultural context of such practices in their preservice training programs.

Place-Based Education

While the focus of the study was on the teaching strategies of HLCB educators, the findings also suggest that place-based education, an important component of many HLCB schools and programs, could provide an avenue for educators in conventional school settings to better reach their placed-at-risk Hawaiian students. Most children of Hawaiian ancestry are in conventional public school settings where, as described earlier, teachers may not understand the culture and values of their families and communities. According to participants, place-based education responds to deeply held Hawaiian cultural values and thus may provide the needed bridge for Hawaiian children to feel more comfortable and "at home" in school.

According to Gallimore and Goldenberg (2001), when educators in conventional school settings understood the values and goals of the community, they were better able to understand how to teach children in their classrooms and how to communicate effectively with families. Because a place-based curriculum by its design must adapt to the unique characteristics of the place, incorporating such a curriculum could also create an avenue for educators in such schools to gain a deeper understanding of the communities where they work.

As described by Smith (2002), the aim of place-based education is to “ground learning in local phenomena and students’ lived experience” (p. 2). This may help students to better internalize abstract concepts as they move along the continuum from concrete to abstract. Place-based science programs could easily incorporate Hawaiian culture into the content, helping to make the context more meaningful for all children living in Hawai‘i, but especially for children of Hawaiian ancestry. Finally, the teaching methods that lend themselves most naturally to place-based educational approaches are also those that were stated as culturally congruent and valued by the participants in this study.

Self-Efficacy and Culturally Congruent Teaching Strategies

Related to the above is the notion that self-efficacy, defined as “people’s judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances” (Bandura, 1986, p. 391), may be increased when culturally congruent curriculum and teaching strategies consistent with the worldview of those involved are implemented. Additionally, high academic self-efficacy has been correlated with better school outcomes. The findings and grounded theory to emerge from this study support the notion that culturally congruent teaching strategies, including an understanding of the worldview of both teachers and learners, can enhance this process. According to participants, students who learn that their culture matters and are able to experience success in an academic setting that incorporates aspects of their culture also experience an increased sense of pride and academic capability. In some cases, this may lead to increased self-efficacy on the part of the entire family. This phenomenon was noted by Bandura (2002), who stated that just as individuals’ self-efficacy is influenced by the group, the collective self-efficacy beliefs of the group are influenced by individuals.

A NEED FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Further research should be conducted to discover if the strategies valued by the HLCB educators in this study are indeed effective in enhancing academic self-efficacy and student outcomes. Using measures such as student portfolios, student performance, and other measures congruent with Hawaiian ways of teaching and learning, along with conventional measures of achievement and self-efficacy, would provide valuable information for HLCB educators. Interviewing or surveying senior students to see if the students' school experiences/observations match with their teachers' would provide another source of valuable information to HLCB educators. Longitudinal data regarding, among other things, graduation rates, college attendance, and career paths to triangulate initial data are also needed.

Finally, because they were seen as enhancing academic self-efficacy and providing a sense of cultural pride for students and their families, these strategies should also be investigated as part of a possible model for conventional as well as HLCB public and private schools serving Hawaiian children.

CONCLUSION

In this article I have described 10 teaching strategies considered by the HLCB educators in this study to be culturally relevant and increasing academic self-efficacy. I have shared, through the voices of the participants themselves, the reasons these teaching strategies are considered to be culturally congruent. I have also shared evidence that they may, indeed, increase academic self-efficacy. That these teaching practices are related to underlying values, beliefs, and worldview was briefly discussed, along with the challenges of HLCB educators as they attempt to implement these strategies. Finally, because of their potential to increase academic self-efficacy and healing at both the individual and community levels, I note that it seems important to continue to do further research on the effectiveness of these methods—the methods from voices in the field.

REFERENCES

- Bandura, A. (1986). *Social foundations of thought and action: A social cognitive theory*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A. (2002). Social cognitive theory in cultural context. *Journal of Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 51, 101–119.
- Beil, D. (2004, April 25). Lack of money, support killing charter schools. *The Honolulu Advertiser*. Retrieved November 11, 2004, from <http://the.honoluluadvertiser.com/article/2004/Apr/25/op/op05a.html>
- Bielenberg, B. (2000). Charter schools for American Indians. In J. Reyhner, J. Martin, L. Lockard, & W. S. Gilbert (Eds.), *Learn in beauty: Indigenous education for a new century* (pp. 132–148). Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University.
- Chun, M. N. (2006). *A'o: Educational traditions*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Curriculum Research & Development Group.
- Cohen, D. H., Stern, V., & Balaban, N. (1997). *Observing and recording the behavior of young children* (4th ed.). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (1998). Teacher learning that supports student learning. *Educational Leadership*, 55, 6–11.
- Fogarty, R. (1991). *The mindful school: How to integrate the curricula*. Palatine, IL: IRI/Skylight.
- Gallimore, R., & Goldenberg, C. (2001). Analyzing cultural models and settings to connect minority achievement and school improvement research. *Educational Psychologist*, 36, 45–57.
- Kana'iaupuni, S. M., & Ishibashi, K. (2005). *Hawai'i charter schools: Initial trends and select outcomes for Native Hawaiian students* (Policy Analysis & System Evaluation Rep. No. 04-05:22). Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools.
- Kana'iaupuni, S. M., Malone, N. J., & Ishibashi, K. (2005, September). *Income and poverty among Native Hawaiians: Summary of Ka Huaka'i findings* (Policy Analysis & System Evaluation Rep. No. 05-06:5). Honolulu: Kamehameha Schools.
- Lipka, J., & Ilutsk, E. (1995). Negotiated change: Yup'ik perspectives on indigenous schooling. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 19, 195–207.
- Meyer, M. A. (2003). *Ho'oulu—Our time of becoming: Hawaiian epistemology and early writings*. Honolulu: 'Ai Pōhaku Press.
- Montessori Accreditation Commission for Teacher Education. (n.d.). Retrieved March 8, 2004, from <http://www.macte.org/>

- Nakanishi, K. (2005). Evidence of what works: A progress report. *Ka Mana Leo*, 1, 1–5.
- Pukui, M. K., & Elbert, S. H. (1986). *Hawaiian dictionary: Hawaiian–English, English–Hawaiian* (Rev. and enlarged ed.). Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press.
- Pukui, M. K., Haertig, E. W., & Lee, C. A. (1972). *Nānā i ke kumu: Look to the source* (Vol. II). Honolulu: Hui Hanāi.
- Rodriguez, L., Irby, B. J., Brown, G., Lara-Alecio, R., & Galloway, M. (2003, April). *An analysis of a public school prekindergarten bilingual Montessori program*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL.
- Smith, G. A. (2002). Place-based education. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 83, 584–685.
- Stiles, D. (1997, May). *Four successful indigenous language programs*. Paper presented at the Fourth Annual Symposium on Stabilizing Indigenous Languages, Flagstaff, AZ.
- Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. (1998). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures for developing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Tharp, R. G., & Entz, S. (2003). From high chair to high school: Research-based principles for complex thinking. *Young Children*, 9, 38–43.
- Tharp, R. G., & Gallimore, R. (1988). *Rousing minds to life: Teaching, learning and schooling in social context*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Yamauchi, L. A. (2003). Making school relevant for at-risk students: The Wai‘anae High School Hawaiian Studies program. *Journal of Education for Students Placed at Risk*, 8, 379–390.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Nanette S. Schonleber, PhD, is an associate professor of education at Chaminade University of Honolulu. An educational psychologist with a Montessori specialty, she has an interest in indigenous pedagogy, the impact of teaching practices and culture on learning, and alternative assessment.

APPENDIX

TABLE A1 Demographic information for key informants

Names	Sex	Age	Where Raised	Yrs Tchnng	Ethn	Hwn Lang	School Type	School Location	Grade Tchnng
Koalani	F	28	O'ahu	5	NH	No	PR CB	SUB O'ahu	6–8
Koa	M	34	O'ahu	10	NH	Yes	PR DI	URB O'ahu	4
Wailani	F	47	Hawai'i	12	PH	Yes	PR DI	URB O'ahu	ADMIN
Keani	F	33	Hawai'i	8	H	Yes	CH H	SUB O'ahu	4–6
Kalaunuola	F	32	O'ahu	8	PH	Yes	CH H	SUB O'ahu	1–3
Kaiulani	F	29	O'ahu	8	NH	Yes	CH H	SUB O'ahu	KIND
Kealohi	F	31	Maui	8	NH	Yes	PU H	URB O'ahu	2–3
Liko	M	35	Maui	8	NH	Yes	PU H	R Maui	3–5
Evalani	F	29	Maui	5	H	Yes	PR H	R Maui	PRE
Kauanoë	F	NA	O'ahu	15	PH	Yes	CH H	R Hawai'i	ADMIN
Kanani	F	47	O'ahu	11	PH	Yes	CH H	SUB O'ahu	2–3
Keomailani	F	50	O'ahu	7	PH	Yes	CH DI	R Hawai'i	IN/TOD
Ulu	F	35	Maui	7	H	Yes	PR H	R Maui	PRE
Puanani	F	37	O'ahu	3	PH	Yes	PR H	R Maui	PRE
Kapuanani	F	30	Hawai'i	9	PH	Yes	PR H	SUB O'ahu	ADMIN

Key to abbreviations

NH: Not Hawaiian	PR: Private School	PRE: Preschool
PH: Part Hawaiian	CH: New Century Charter School	KIND: Kindergarten
H: Hawaiian	PU: Hawaiian Immersion Public School	IN/TOD: Infants and Toddlers
R: Rural	CB: Culture-Based English Medium	
URB: Urban	DI: Dual Hawaiian/English Immersion	
SUB: Suburban	H: Hawaiian Immersion	

Note: Names of informants are listed in the order they were interviewed.

TABLE A2 Demographic information for focus group participants

Names	Sex	Age	Where Raised	Yrs Tchnng	Ethn	Hwn Lang	School Type	School Location	Grade Tchnng
Lani	F	28	O'ahu	3	H	No	CH CB	URB O'ahu	6-8
Kapono	M	38	O'ahu	8	PH	No	CH CB	URB O'ahu	6-8
Kapa'a	M	29	O'ahu	5	PH	Yes	CH CB	URB O'ahu	6-8
Emailani	F	29	Hawai'i	5	PH	Yes	CH HI	R Hawai'i	2-3
Pua	F	31	Hawai'i	12	H	Yes	PR HI	R Hawai'i	PRE
Auhea	F	30	Hawai'i	12	H	No	PR DI	R Hawai'i	IN/TOD
Keomailani	F	34	O'ahu	18	PH	Yes	CH HI	R Hawai'i	1-2
Kalaokahaki	F	43	Hawai'i	8	H	Yes	CH HI	R Hawai'i	KIND
Kuulei	F	34	O'ahu	5	PH	Yes	CH HI	R Hawai'i	KIND-6
Lehua	F	43	Hawai'i	18	PH	Yes	CH HI	SUB O'ahu	KIND-6
Lea	F	20	O'ahu	1	PH	Yes	CH HI	SUB O'ahu	PRE
Ipu	F	23	Maui	1	PH	Yes	CH HI	SUB O'ahu	1-2
Hina	F	23	O'ahu	2	PH	Yes	CH HI	SUB O'ahu	3-4
Puamana	F	25	O'ahu	2	H	Yes	CH HI	R Hawai'i	1-2
Pele	F	26	Hawai'i	2	PH	Yes	CH HI	R Hawai'i	PRE
Kaiolo	F	26	O'ahu	3	PH	Yes	CH HI	R Hawai'i	KIND
Nailima	F	43	Hawai'i	18	H	Yes	CH HI	R Hawai'i	3-4
Pau	M	59	Hawai'i	29	PH	Yes	CH HI	R Hawai'i	KIND
Kanani	F	34	O'ahu	8	PH	Yes	CH HI	R Hawai'i	5
Lanakila	M	29	O'ahu	2	PH	No	CH CB	SUB O'ahu	9-12
Maile	F	32	Hawai'i	8	PH	No	CH CB	SUB O'ahu	9-12
Kai	M	28	Maui	5	H	Yes	CH CB	SUB O'ahu	9-12
Kamaka	M	29	O'ahu	6	PH	No	CH CB	SUB O'ahu	ADMIN
Sol	M	38	O'ahu	12	NH	Yes	CH CB	SUB O'ahu	9-12
Eric	M	35	Calif	10	NH	No	CH CB	SUB O'ahu	9-12

Key to abbreviations

NH: Not Hawaiian	PR: Private School	PRE: Preschool
PH: Part Hawaiian	CH: New Century Charter School	KIND: Kindergarten
H: Hawaiian	PU: Hawaiian Immersion Public School	IN/TOD: Infants and Toddlers
R: Rural	CB: Culture-Based English Medium	
URB: Urban	DI: Dual Hawaiian/English Immersion	
SUB: Suburban	HI: Hawaiian Immersion	

Note: Names of informants are listed in the order they were interviewed.