

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 454 143

SO 032 855

AUTHOR Green, Barbara; Hsu, Kuei Mei
TITLE Multicultural Education: Common Problems Experienced by Various Cultures.
PUB DATE 2000-02-00
NOTE 8p.; In: National Association of African American Studies & the National Association of Hispanic and Latino Studies: 2000 Literature Monograph Series. Proceedings (Education Section) (Houston, TX, February 21-26, 2000).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom (055) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Bilingualism; *Classroom Techniques; Cultural Context; Cultural Differences; *Cultural Pluralism; *Diversity (Student); Elementary Secondary Education; English (Second Language); Limited English Speaking; *Multicultural Education; *Student Empowerment; Student Needs; Teacher Role
IDENTIFIERS *Communication Strategies; *Learning Environment; Multicultural Materials

ABSTRACT

The United States today is a pluralistic society, and a multicultural curriculum is a necessary component of the overall school curriculum. Multicultural education should address the culturally and the linguistically diverse student. This paper considers problems with and strategies for incorporating multicultural curricula into the classroom, and it provides suggestions for empowering students who speak English as a second language. The paper discusses the Optimal Learning Environment, a project that addresses the needs of the culturally diverse and exceptional student population. (BT)

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION:
COMMON PROBLEMS
EXPERIENCED BY VARIOUS
CULTURES

DR. BARBARA GREEN

&

MS. KUEI MEI HSU

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL
OKLAHOMA
EDMOND, OKLAHOMA

ED 454 143

SO 032 855

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

Lemuel Berry, Jr.

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as
received from the person or organization
originating it.

Minor changes have been made to
improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this
document do not necessarily represent
official OERI position or policy.

205

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

2

Multicultural Education: Common Problems Experienced by Various Cultures

As American citizens, we live in a pluralistic society. Keeping this fact in mind, multicultural curriculum is a necessary component of the overall school curriculum. As educators, there is a unique opportunity and challenge to teach and provide opportunities for our students to develop respect themselves and others via this inclusive curriculum.

This being an information technology era, citizens can exchange information and thoughts without distance being an obstacle. As educators, technology can be creatively integrated into the curriculum to facilitate academic success through awareness as well as teach students how to manage their own lives. In doing so, diversity is respected, self-concepts are enhanced, and students are empowered to advance toward actualizing their potential.

Implementation of appropriate multicultural education should address the culturally and the linguistically diverse student. More commonly, these

groups are referred to as bicultural or bilingual students. Both groups are unique in that the student's major culture is not the dominant culture of our society. Cultural differences may pose a problem in that behavior exhibited is often different from the norm and not readily understood or respected.

Students who are bilingual in many cases experience cultural differences in addition to a language barrier. English as a second language poses many problems to include, instruction presented by monolingual instructors and learning retarded because most lessons are developed in English.

Twenty ways to introduce multicultural curriculum suggested by *Taku Hagiwara (1991) include:*

1. Gather information about your students' cultural backgrounds.
2. Be aware of cultural conflicts.
3. Avoid underestimating student's abilities.
4. Encourage curiosity about other cultures (invited guest or do different songs and dances appreciate their culture.)
5. Be aware of cultural difference in discipline.

6. Utilize the Internet.
7. Plan an international cookout party with students' families.
8. Collect children's literature from different countries.
9. Play games from other countries.
10. Put a world atlas and/or globe in your classroom.
11. Exchange greeting words in a variety of foreign language.
12. Respect other cultures.
13. Be able to pronounce students' names.
14. Compensate for a student's difficulty with English.
15. Incorporate cooperative learning in your classroom structure.
16. Invite guest speakers from foreign countries.
17. Monitor students' activities.
18. Avoid forcing your own cultural style on students.
19. Incorporate other countries learning methods into your curriculum.
20. Create thematic units.

As a professional educator, there is a dire need to realize that the more we know about the culture of all

students, the better equipped we are to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of students. Consistent with the goals of multicultural education and the overall goal of an appropriate education, Cummings (1989) offers the following to empower students:

- Reflect the various cultural groups in the school district by providing signs in the school in the various languages.
- Provide opportunities for students from the same ethnic group to communicate with one another in their primary language.
- Put books written in the various languages in classrooms and in the School.
- Encourage students to write contributions in their primary language for school newspapers and magazines.
- Provide opportunities for students to study their primary language in elective subjects and extracurricular activities.
- Follow developmental processes in literacy acquisition.
- Include curriculum in a meaningful context where the communicative purpose is clear and authentic.
- Connect the curriculum with students' personal experiences.

- Involve parents as active partners in the students' instruction.

Similar and reflective of the transactional model of educating students, the Council of the Exceptional Child (CEC) (1994), reform suggestions include addressing the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse exceptional students. The Optimal Learning Environment project is recommended by CEC to address needs of the culturally diverse and exceptional students population. This project helps students gain an appreciation for other cultures and achieve success. Additionally the project changes the learning environment from frustration to successful experiences through implementing holistic strategies that include creating partnerships between regular and special educators.

The classroom is run by students, whole language is implemented, use of home language is encouraged, and peer learning is incorporated to promote success. Additionally, learning strategies are taught, educators increase learning through learning styles, and students are taught how to think and resolve problems.

As facilitators of learning, we are challenged to assist students in developing their potential and achieve goals. Incorporating multicultural education is a vital component of the overall curriculum. Results from this approach are improved self-concepts, higher grades, the ability to make positive decisions and resolve problems, and advancement toward self-actualization.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)
ERIC REPRODUCTION RELEASE

I. Document Identification:

Title: Monograph Series of the National Association of African American Studies

Author: Lemuel Berry, Jr.

Corporate Source: National association of African American Studies

Publication Date: July 2001

II. Reproduction Release:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, Resources in Education (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please check one of the following three options and sign the release form.

Level 1 - Permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g. electronic) and paper copy.

Level 2A - Permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only.

Level 2B - Permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only.

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

Sign Here: "I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries."

Signature:

Lemuel Berry, Jr.

Position:

Executive Director

Printed Name: Organization: National Association of African American Studies

Samuel Barry Jr.

Address: 213 University Telephone No: 606-783-2650
Blvd., Morehead
KY 40351

Date: 4-16-01

III. Document Availability Information (from Non-ERIC Source):

If permission to reproduce is not granted to ERIC, or, if you wish ERIC to cite the availability of the document from another source, please provide the following information regarding the availability of the document. (ERIC will not announce a document unless it is publicly available, and a dependable source can be specified. Contributors should also be aware that ERIC selection criteria are significantly more stringent for documents that cannot be made available through EDRS.)

Publisher/Distributor:

Address:

Price per copy: Quantity price:

IV. Referral of ERIC to Copyright/Reproduction Rights Holder:

If the right to grant this reproduction release is held by someone other than the addressee, please complete the following:

Name:

Address:

V. Attach this form to the document being submitted and send both to:

Velma Mitchell, Acquisitions Coordinator
ERIC Clearinghouse on Rural Education and Small Schools
P.O. Box 1348
1031 Quarrier Street
Charleston, WV 25325-1348

Phone and electronic mail numbers: