MARSHALLESE PARTICIPATORY MISMATCHES IN SOUTH-CENTRAL UNITED STATES' SCHOOL SYSTEMS

by

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ABSTRACT

KATLYN LOUISE ANDERSON. Marshallese Participatory Mismatches in South-Central United States' School Systems. (Under the direction of DR. ELISE BERMAN)

Since the Compact of Free Association between the Marshall Islands and the United States, many Marshallese Islanders have immigrated to the United States, leading to a growing number of Marshallese children enrolled in primary and secondary schools, particularly in the south-central United States. Despite this influx, very little research has been conducted in the classroom within this population. By applying Cultural Mismatch Theory, I contend that many 4th grade Marshallese students experience discomfort and inequity in the classroom, as the expected ideologies in the classroom are contradictory to ideologies reproduced at home. The results of this study have implications for how schools can begin to create culturally responsive classrooms.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Marshallese students in the United States face many academic challenges and stigmas throughout their education. Educators lack critical knowledge about Marshallese culture, making any efforts they attempt to make minimal. Understanding how and why this occurs is crucial to knowing how to create equitable educational opportunities. My research project investigates literary performance and interactions that 4th-grade Marshallese students experience in Barnestown classrooms.

I begin by discussing the influence of colonialism and the immigration of Marshallese people to the United States. I then address how differential interactional patterns affect classrooms and create educational inequities. I examine the Cultural Mismatch Theory's concepts and critiques. I then present arguments of potential mismatches, such as different interactional displays of hierarchy across interactions and within an interaction. I then review literature on classroom literary performance by examining book reports as an act of performance and the use of pronouns to claim responsibility. I also consider research on discrimination and implicit bias in the classroom. Next, I analyze several examples of Marshallese and Non-Marshallese students' performance in the classroom and compare them with the expectations of the classroom.

In conclusion, I contend that evidence shows that many Marshallese students experience inequity and discomfort in Barnestown classrooms as the expected forms of performance in school are mismatched and contradictory to what is taught and used at home. With no prior research on Marshallese students' interaction in the classroom, this research is important to understand how these mismatches occur and what can be done to address them.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Why Marshallese Students are in Barnestown

Many Marshallese are in Barnestown, a midsize working-class town located in the south-central United States, because of past colonial history and the current structural remaking of the meatpacking industry for migrants. The Marshall Islands, otherwise known as the Republic of the Marshall Islands, is an island nation in the Pacific Ocean, comprised of two archipelagic chain islands. Influenced by colonial powers since 1874, they were first being claimed by the Spaniards as a part of the Spanish East Indies and then purchased by the German Empire in 1884, making it then part of German New Guinea. During World War I, Japan took control through the military occupation of the Marshall Islands. When World War I ended, Japan was granted authority over German Pacific Territories, including the Marshall Islands (Barker, 2013; Hezel, 2003; Jetnil-Kijiner & Heine, 2020).

After the United States defeated the Japanese during World War II, they ended the Japanese occupation of the Marshall Islands. From 1945 to 1986, the RMI was part of the United Nations Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands (Barker, 2013; Hezel, 2003). Beginning in 1946, the U.S military began nuclear testing approximately 67 atomic bombs in the Marshall Islands over 12 years, leading to many ecological, biological, and cultural consequences. Many indigenous people had to relocate from the test sites. Some islands are still uninhabitable, with many resources allocated to the United States government.

As part of the reparations for damages, the Marshall Islands and the United States formed the Compact of Free Association in 1986. The Compact of Free Association allows Marshallese people to travel freely between the RMI and the United States, obtain work without visas, and access to public education and assistance services (Barker, 2013; Hezel, 2003; Loeak et al.,

2004). In 2003, the Compact of Free Association was renewed by the U.S House of Representatives, increasing the support of educational services in the Marshall Islands, the continued presence of the American military, and a further review of the consequences of nuclear testing (Barker, 2013; Hezel, 2003).

Since then, many Marshallese have come to the United States for employment, educational opportunities, access to healthcare, reunite with their families, and escape the lingering effects of radiation and climate change. (Berman, 2019; Floyd-Faught, 2019; Heine, 1974, Heine, 2004; Hess et al., 2001). This has led to the creation and spread of many Marshallese communities across the United States. Initially, most Marshallese relocated to the West Coast, Los Angeles, and primarily Hawaii; however, today, most Marshallese live in the south-central U.S.A.

This region of the U.S. has the second-largest Marshallese population in the United States, after Hawaii. In a 2010 census report, 4,300 out of 22,400 of all Marshall Islanders in the United States resided in Arkansas (Jimeno, 2013). The Communities and Asian Americans Advancing Justice includes Arkansas as one of the six areas in the United States with a significant population to study (Floyd-Faught, 2019). It is so significant that it is the largest Marshallese population in the continental United States. This large influx of Pacific Islanders has increased the number of Marshallese students and workers, forming close-knit communities (Hess et al., 2001).

With the rapid change of demographics in the south-central United States, educators are not exposed to other cultural models, meaning that there are more likely to be cultural and linguistic conflicts among Marshallese students and educators. Unlike other parts of the United States like New York and Hawai'i, where there have consistently been varying cultural models

that the educators are more likely to experience and understand. For this reason, I find it valuable to examine the potential cultural and linguistic conflicts in the south-central United States.

2.2 Why Differential Interactional Patterns Affect Classrooms and Educational Inequity

How are Communities Socialized Differently?

People in different communities are socialized into different interactional patterns. Language Socialization Theory has shown that people can be socialized to use language and other forms of interaction very differently. Schieffelin and Ochs (1986) define language socialization as "socialization through the use of language and socialization to use language," (163). Language socialization research has focused on the socializing affordances of grammar, lexicon, phonology, speech acts, conversational sequences, genres, and codes. It also focuses on expressive forms such as gestures, demeanors, positioning, and figurative representation (Ochs & Schieffelin, 2012).

Language socialization research aims to distinguish how language reproduces a community's or culture's beliefs, values, and ideologies and how people can change and shift through language (Riley, 2011). The variation in language socializing practices is organized by the speech community's habits and is explained by the relations of participation frameworks, activities, and ideologies. (Ochs et al., 2005; Riley, 2011).

The language ideologies that are reproduced through every socializing interaction can be unspoken or clearly prescribed and impact the continuous socialization and interactive strategies of a speech community. Everyday socialization in face-to-face interaction between children and adults shows the process of becoming a community member, reflecting their community's norms through engagement with the world around them. Through engaging with

the world around them, people are constantly engaged and experience the modification of language and language ideologies daily (Duranti, 2009; Ochs & Schieffelin, 1984).

Miscommunications frequently occur through the interplay of language ideologies and language socialization, particularly in cross-cultural contexts (for instance, Marshallese students in south-central U.S schools) (Riley, 2011). As communities vary in their use of language, minority children often experience discontinuity in using verbal and nonverbal communication at home versus what is expected in schools. Children whose language at home corresponds to what is expected in the classroom have advantages in academic success (Heath, 1983; Gumperz, 1972; Philips et al., 1972).

Schools and institutions are not autonomous settings and are a site of language socialization where students learn communicative and cultural competence—playing a role in reproducing a larger social order and community's values, beliefs, and ideologies. However, social actors in these institutions can redefine and modify such norms through everyday micro-interactions (Duranti, 2009; Figueroa & Baquedanp-Lopes, 2017; Duff & May, 2017).

Interactional Patterns between School and Home often are Mismatched and Can Create Inequity

The discontinuity of interactional patterns in minoritized families versus schools creates misunderstandings and forms of discrimination. As a result, their prior knowledge and experience of language are either unacceptable or prohibited in the classroom, creating academic problems for minority children (Riddle, 2014). Linguists commonly refer to this type of discontinuity of language as cultural mismatch theory.

The inequity that is created by the differences in interactional patterns at home and school is relevant to mismatch theory. Cultural mismatch theory argues that when cultural norms in mainstream institutions do not correspond with the values and norms predominant among

communities that are underrepresented in said institutions, inequities are produced (Stephens et al., 2012; Stephens & Townsend, 2015).

"Specifically, this theory consists of two key tenets: (a) U.S. institutions tend to promote mainstream, independent cultural norms, and exclude interdependent cultural norms that are common among underrepresented groups; (b) when institutions promote only mainstream norms, they inadvertently fuel inequality by creating barriers to the performance of underrepresented groups" (Stephens & Townsend, 2015, p. 304).

The reproduction of mainstream norms creates unequal pathways for students to achieve academic success. In addition, these language codes and norms used in classrooms are not conducive to the codes used in homes and other spaces of those in working-class or minority communities (Riddle, 2014).

Stephens et al. (2012) describe these norms through two cultural models self-independent and interdependent. The middle and upper-class students exhibit and practice independent behaviors such as speaking up in class, acting on personal motivation, and influencing those around them. Independent behaviors allow students to feel comfortable, engage with the material, converse with the faculty, and ask questions. These practices are the dominant expectations of schools and institutions in the United States (Stephens et al., 2012; Nyguen & Nyguen, 2020).

The social actors involved in schools and institutions reproduce and reinforce the independent cultural self-model, suggesting that teachers and students may not share the same model and understanding of the norms and expectations required for achievement in their classroom and in the school. Subconsciously or not, teachers have their own standards they execute that privilege some students over others (Kozloski, 2015).

Working-class students and minorities exhibit the interdependence cultural model of self. These students' dispositions are driven by their sense of community and relationships with others, and attempt to adjust themselves to accommodate the social settings that are demanded of them. The dominant expectations of schools and institutions in the United States do not match the interdependence model, creating a cultural mismatch (Nyguen & Nyguen, 2020).

Critiques of Mismatch Theory

Some researchers argue that Mismatch Theory is either incorrect or incomplete, leading to many critiques of the theory. Cultural mismatch theory associates student failure and achievement within language interaction patterns of students and their teachers. Suggesting that success is represented in the academic achievements that exist in the current social structures of the schools, it has been interpreted by some to lead to a goal of how to conform students to the norms, expectations, and structure of the school. These conceptions of separating those that conform from the "other" only may reproduce these conceptions and inequalities rather than attempting to amend them (Billings, 1995).

Nguyen and Nguyen (2018) concur that a single category of analysis of those who fit the mold and those who are the "other" produce, rather than eliminate these barriers. "Overlooking how students experience the intersections of multiple oppresses identities misses the mark in clarifying how institutional structure and culture are products of multiple forms of social dominance" (Nguyen and Nguyen, p. 227, 2020).

Flores and Rosa (2015), arguing that CMT is just about structure, seek to use a raciolinguistic perspective to build upon how to reframe the "other" outside of the white gaze to create a culturally sustaining pedagogy. The primary goal and expectation of conforming to the cultural model of independence in institutions are to set the goal of teaching and learning with

those of color to comparatively see how closely those students could perform the White middle-class expectations while problematizing and discriminating the community practices of those of color. The raciolinguistic perspective to be attached with CMT seeks to understand how the white gaze interacts with the speaking subject that conforms to the linguistic practices of the white middle class and to the listening subject that interprets the language minoritized communities' linguistic practices as deviant based on the racial positioning of society, rather than caring about how kids actually speak (Flores & Rosa, 2015).

Valentine (1971) describes CMT as an assumption that cultures are competitive alternatives and that cultural systems and human experiences are neither intertwined nor occur simultaneously. This theoretical weakness implies that the failures and misfortunes of language minoritized communities are the results of the inability of those communities to understand or practice the mainstream behavior and expectations of schools. He describes this model as an excuse for educational failure.

Orellana & Gutierrez (2006) wish to remedy this issue by asking how well schools and classrooms adapt to the presence of students from non-dominant groups and how they can do better for these students, rather than asking how these non-dominant group students can adapt to mainstream practices in school. Shifting the focus from students to the institution, we can use CMT to see how change occurs in the students and the institution. Shifting the lens from a cultural mismatch between home and school as being culturally appropriate, congruent, or compatible to a culturally responsive lens creates a more collaborative relationship between the community and the school (Billings, 1995). Despite the critiques of mismatch theory, it is a valuable lens to understand how institutions create an environment that is not culturally responsive for students. By using mismatch theory, understanding the expectations of

educational institutions, students, and teachers and how they interact can help those create a model of schooling that disrupts the inequity in education.

2.3 Potential Mismatches for Marshallese and Micronesian Students in U.S. Classrooms

Different Interactional Displays of Hierarchy Within an Interaction as a Potential Mismatch

One of the main potential mismatches is tied to the interactional display of hierarchy. In interactions, Marshallese children often display respect by remaining quiet and not speaking out (Berman, 2018). Silence is used as a sign of respect, as many people value humility and use it to show respect for their elders. However, this is often interpolated by teachers as being apathetic, as many students refrain from asking for help in the classroom. Speaking up in class in the United States shows that you actively participate in class and understand the material. With the mainstream culture's rules of communication, this mode of respect is often misinterpreted and leads to academic struggles in the classroom (Heine, 2004; Raatior, 2017; Watts, 2011).

Floyd-Faught (2019) also discusses the use of silence, which is valued in Marshallese culture but is seen deficiently by educators. It is not that Marshallese students cannot speak English; it is the concern about speaking English in front of other Marshallese students for fear they are going to be made fun of. This can result in teachers believing the students either do not understand English or are simply refusing to participate (Floyd-Faught, 2019).

Different Displays of Hierarchy Across Interactions as a Potential Mismatch

Community over the individual is one of the conflicts that result in misinterpretations by school personnel. Ratcliffe (2011) discusses that community is often valued in Micronesia because family and community help those who survive on the small islands, creating precedence for the community's needs rather than an individual (Berman, 2020). This often conflicts with Western culture, as independence is highly valued in America. Ratcliffe (2011) claims family

can take precedence over the individual, resulting in a student who may skip school or not do their work in order to help their families. This may create issues with incomplete work, not meeting deadlines, and a high rate of absenteeism. For those who are unaware of the school's expectations and policies, it can mean a failure in education (Ratcliffe, 2011).

In Raaitor's (2011) study, time management was a primary concern. Time on the islands is something that belongs to the community, no personal time, just responsibilities for others. In American schools, students must take responsibility for their own success and value themselves over their families in order to succeed. Heine (2004) concurs that family is the priority in Micronesian communities, with familial obligations and attendance at cultural activities, church, and family gatherings taking precedence over school.

Another value that is present in Micronesia, including the Marshall Islands, is the importance of respecting one's elders. Elders are held in high esteem, with silence being a primary way of respecting them. Elders in Micronesian cultures consist of teachers, politicians, and church leaders (Berman, 2014; Raaitor, 2011). Many Micronesian students in America exhibit this type of value, creating conflict between themselves and their teachers. Students may not speak up in class, directly approach a teacher, and avoid eye contact in order to demonstrate respect. “Avoidance is the highest form of respect for a Micronesian to demonstrate towards an elder. Respectfulness can be manifested in avoidance of physical touch, eye contact, verbal engagement, and most definitely anything resembling imposition on one’s time.” (Raaitor, p. 71, 2017). Not much anthropological research has been done to know the specifics of eye contact and Marshallese Islanders; however there appears to be a clear ideology of eye contact being disrespectful and potentially aggressive (Racliffe, 2010). The school system's ethnocentric

approach to the interpretation of silence and eye contact restricts the school's ability to provide equal education (Floyd-Faught, 2019; Raaitor, 2011).

Another cultural barrier that Marshallese students face is the "rigid concept of time" (Watts, 2011). In American schools, being on time is critical to a student's success. Students must arrive at school on time, or else they will face tardies, detentions, and even suspension. The concept of time also applies to assignments that are due on a particular day, or else they will also face penalties. Students are assigned a specific time when they are expected to go to the cafeteria and eat breakfast or lunch in school. If the students do not show up on time to eat, they will miss their opportunity to eat for the entire day. The school systems fail to accommodate Marshallese students during breakfast and lunchtime, resulting in hungry students. This type of structure is different from the relaxed structure in the Marshall Islands. Even though Marshallese students are conversationally adept in English, educators interpret these cultural adjustments as issues in the classroom. (Watts, 2011).

In addition to communicative misunderstandings, another conflict between schools and families is the importance of school attendance and completed work. There is a high rate of absenteeism of Marshallese students in South-Central U.S. Floyd-Faught (2019) contributes this to the school systems' lack of understanding of Marshallese culture. Heine (2002) concludes that in Micronesia, which includes the Marshall Islands, family relationships are more important than any other activity. "Keeping social relationships harmonious is more important than personal goals or social commitments" (Heine, 2002, p. 13) this includes education.

In the South-Central U.S, the Marshallese appear to maintain several forms of family organization that are common in the islands. Instead of a traditional nuclear family, extended families are more prevalent (Berman & Collet, 2021). Land ownership is maternally inherited in

Marshallese culture, thereby connecting families together through grandparents, parents, aunts, uncles, etc., making family groups important (Ratcliffe, 2010; Robinson, 2018). In the Marshall Islands, it is acceptable for these extended family members to adopt each other's children, as well as Marshallese communities in the United States.

2.4 Classroom Literary Performance

Being able to present in a classroom has become a way for teachers to know the student has the knowledge and the ability to present information to their audience. Often, states require that students perform oral presentations in the classroom in order to complete the standard grade. Not only do schools seek students to understand the material that they are presenting, but they also seek to understand the students' communicative competence (Van Ginkel et al., 2015). A common form of presentation in early education is an oral book report presentation.

Book Reports as an Act of Performance

Performance is a metacommunicative process that assumes the responsibility of the display of communicative competence towards an audience. Performance is verbal and nonverbal acts and is framed as "displayed, objectified, lifted out to a degree from its contextual surroundings and opened up to scrutiny by an audience (Hill & Irvine, 1993). The dominance of performance depends on the speaker's assumed responsibility to an audience to display one's communicative skills and effectiveness, particularly in American culture. The dynamics of performance are complex as performances can be shifting, negotiated, hedged, ambiguous, or partial, which results in speakers not wanting to take full responsibility for communicative competence (Hill & Irvine, 1993).

Hill and Irvine suggest that the allocation of responsibility is an essential part of social meaning constructed in the interactional processes of communication events (1993). There are

several possible realizations of a speaker: animator, author, and figure. The animator is one who physically communicates an utterance and is not responsible for the intent or wording. An author is the one who composes the utterances but is not responsible for the content. The figure is the principal, one who is committed and responsible for the position of the utterance and its content. The goal of the division among the realization of a speaker is what Goffman calls the "reduction of responsibility." Most often, during a performance, the amount of responsibility is claimed or differed through the use of personal pronouns.

Personal Pronouns and Responsibility

Grammatically, pronouns are words that replace other words, usually nouns or other pronouns. Traditionally they are the most popular way for the speaker to avoid repetition of words. Pronouns are groups of words that are able to appear in the place of other words, most often nouns, other pronouns, or noun phrases. Pronouns can be personal, reflexive, possessive, indefinite, demonstrative, reciprocal, relative, and interrogative (Hakansson, 2012). Specifically, personal pronouns refer to things or people, whether it be the speaker themselves, a listener, or things the speaker is talking about. Personal pronouns are separated into two categories, subjective and objective. Subjective personal pronouns refer to the subject of a clause or a subject complement, and objective personal pronouns make reference to the same subject pronouns (Hakansson, 2012).

The use of personal pronouns is often analyzed in political speeches as the speaker claiming or differing responsibility. The use of personal pronouns can create positive and negative depictions of a speaker. Specifically, the use of the pronoun "I" shows that the speaker has authority and claims personal responsibility for the utterance and content, situating themselves outside or above their colleagues. It is also used to highlight the speaker's positive

characteristics and accomplishments (Alavidze, 2017). The clear disadvantage of the use of I is that if anything goes wrong, the attention and fault will lie with the speaker. Alternatively, the use of the personal pronoun "we" can be used to share the responsibility with others, indicating a sense of collectivity and potentially sharing the faults (Hakansson, 2012).

2.5 Discrimination

The United States Department of Education states that their mission is to "promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access," which includes the mission to "strengthen the Federal commitment to assuring access to equal educational opportunity for every individual" (U.S Department of Education, 2011, p.1). It is the school's responsibility to provide all students with the resources to graduate high school. The issues that are rooted in the education system hinder the USDE's mission statement, which involves overworked and underpaid teachers, standardized tests, and differences in cultural and language backgrounds between teachers, students, and the education system (Gulo et al., 2019).

These differences may result in biased perceptions that can intentionally or unintentionally influence decisions and teaching methods in the classroom, possibly resulting in acts of discrimination. These biases are often the result of stereotypes and marginalization of people of color. Discrimination can be explicit or implicit, such as a teacher insulting Marshallese students and their lack of eye contact (5NEWS Web Staff, 2021). Implicitly, it could be a teacher not giving struggling students enough positive reinforcement (Gulo et al., 2019)

Implicit Bias in School

Implicit bias in school often is the result of a cultural or racial mismatch between the teachers and their students. Studies have found that most teachers exhibit implicit biases in the

classroom, resulting in unequal educational opportunities for students (Copur-Gencturk et al., 2019). Out of the individual's control, implicit biases are usually unconscious to the individual with the bias. Teachers' expectations of students often result in a self-fulfilling prophecy, where a teacher's expectations are reflected on the student, impacting the student's education. Modifying the teacher's and the student's behaviors, implicit biases can lead to unproductive instruction, resulting in inequitable education (Gulo et al., 2019).

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Collection and Analysis

The present paper is based on data collected by Dr. Berman periodically from May to mid-July in Barnestown. Residing in Barnestown for a month, spending two days in school and less than two full days in a classroom. Using a camera, recordings were taken of students interacting and giving book reports in the classroom. All of these video recordings are collected and stored in Dropbox.

I selected recordings of students, both Marshallese and otherwise, giving their book reports in front of the classroom and recordings of the children working in the classroom. These recordings are valuable to understanding how Marshallese students and other students participate in the classroom. I transcribed these recordings using MAXQDA; while conducting open-coding, I grouped together repeated themes in the data set. The second round of coding, or axial coding, took the general themes found in the data set and related them to each other to identify patterns.

3.2 Positionality

I am a Caucasian woman, and I do not speak the Marshallese language. I was educated in a Southern American school and studied the appropriate methods of teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students, with my experience being predominantly Central American based. I do have a bias when it comes to America's education system, and it may affect how I interpreted participants' interactions and responses. My understanding of Marshallese culture and experiences of colonialism has been from books, articles, lectures, and conversations with fellow scholars. Therefore, my data analysis may include perspectives that are closer to my own due to the lack of experience with Marshallese culture.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS SECTION I

The results, analysis, and discussion are divided into two separate sections. Section 1 discusses Marshallese and Non-Marshallese students as they perform similarly in these aspects of the classroom. Section 2 focuses on the differences between Marshallese and Non-Marshallese performances in the classroom.

4.1 Eye Gaze is Central to Successful Performance

In the 4th-grade Barnestown classroom, eye gaze is essential to a successful performance of giving a book report and listening to the performance. The teacher reinforces these norms and directs them to the students, whether the students are presenting their book reports or in the audience.

Example 1

1	Teacher	Come on up
2	Class	(CLAP) (CLAP) ####
3	Sally	Soo I read the-
4	Teacher	No, wait till you can look at their eyes
5		and see that they're ready.

Starting with line 1, the teacher is directing Sally, a Marshallese student, to present her book report in front of the class. Following the order, Sally goes to the front of the class and then begins to speak until she is interrupted by the teacher. In lines 4 and 5, the teacher uses a directive to tell Sally that she must look at the audience to gain their attention before she can speak. It is only when Sally's eyes are on the audience that she can begin her presentation. Line 4 is also representative of what the teacher expects of the student audience, saying that when the audience's eyes are on you, they are also ready, suggesting eye gaze as respectful to the presenter.

Example 2

1	Class	(#####)
2	Senior	Here's um… my [cover]
3	Teacher	[Wait]$_2$ till you have respect
4		and everyone is on their bottom
5		like Julia and James their eyes are on you

Linking the importance of eye gaze and respect is more evident in example 2. Marshallese student, Senior, is beginning to present his book report until he is interrupted by the teacher in lines 3 through 5. "Wait till you have respect" is directly related to the eye gaze of the audience on the presenter. The teacher recognizes the students who are respecting Senior because their bottoms are on the floor and their eyes are on the presenter. This suggests that the other students, who are not doing the same, are being disrespectful.

Example 3

1	Roseanne	## characters or I don't know, I just got ##
2	Class	###
3	Teacher	Roseanne you gotta focus on the audience
4		and speak fluently

In example 3, the teacher is giving Roseanne, a non-Marshallese student, guidance on properly giving a report in her class. Roseanne is a quiet speaker and tends to look down at her notes, so the teacher corrects hers in Lines 3 and 4. "You gotta focus on the audience and speak fluently," the teacher is directing Roseanne to look at the audience rather than her notes, and that she must speak louder and clearer. The importance of eye gaze is a repeated theme in this Barnestown classroom that is reflected by the teacher's guidance on the reports. The teacher creates the idea that eye contact is synonymous with respect.

4.2 Teacher/Student Encouragement and Criticisms

Even with the best of intentions, teachers often assign and reinforce stereotypes to Marshallese students. These stereotypes range from "lazy, disrespectful, and restless" and can be noticeable in a classroom environment (Nimmer, 2017). When analyzing the actions of the teacher in regards to the students presenting and those in the audience, it is evident that there are subtle actions of discrimination that alter the supportive environment of the classroom.

When analyzing all ten book reports, there are instances in every presentation where the audience is talking to each other, being restless, or their eyes are not on the presenter. On most occasions, the teacher corrects this type of behavior, which is not how the proper audience would act. Out of 12 instances, the teacher corrected 9 of them, with 7 directed at the entire classroom and 2 directed at an individual. The teacher would often correct the entire audience most of the time, like in example 4.

Example 4

1	Sam	dun dun dun ((Imitating music))
2	Teacher	He's-he's perfecting your thematics
3	Class	#####
4	Teacher	Shhh

In line 4, when the teacher is not directing the “shhh” to a single person, she is directing the whole class to pay attention and be respectful of the presenter. This was the case in most of the presentations; however, there were some exceptions, like in examples 5 and 6, in which the teacher would call out a specific student, Douglas, who is a Marshallese student.

Example 5

1	Roseanne	So the next morning, they went to the magic treehouse
2		and Morgan and Jack ### and they got stuck in a earthquake
3		and so they helped everyone out get out ##
4		what Morgan needed ## it [to get and]
5	Class	[###]$_2$-
6	Teacher	Shh Douglas

Example 6

1	Teacher	Mike
2	Class	########
3	Teacher	Mike, introduce your book first.
4		Wait till you have respect
5	Class	####
6		Shhh
7	Teacher	Douglas, sit your body up and stop playing with hair.
8		Dou-
9		Mike, look around the room make sure no one's talking
10		and their eyes are on you.

In examples 5 and 6, the class is talking and not paying attention to the presenter. The class is moving, lying down, and their eyes are not on the presenter. In both examples, the presenter is a Non-Marshallese student and the student being singled out is a Marshallese student. Multiple students are not the "ideal" audience participants on both occasions, but the only student the teacher refers to is Douglas, who regards them as disrespectful. In example 5, line 5, the class is talking at once and not paying attention. A non-Marshallese male student specifically is talking to his friend and continues to nudge his friend. However, in line 6, the teacher instead singles out Douglas instead of addressing the whole class. This is seen again in example 6, lines 5 and 6, where the class is not paying attention in concurrence with the students shushing one another. A non-Marshallese female student is also distracted by putting her legs in her shirt and rocking back and forth. Despite other students being improper audience members, the teacher directly addresses Douglas, again in line 7, rather than the entire class. In lines 8, 9, and 10, the teacher begins to call out Douglas's name but then addresses Mike to be the one to look out for students who are being disruptive.

Occasionally while giving their book report presentation, the audience would criticize or argue with the presenter about the book. Occasions such as this would lead to interruptions from

the audience and would be viewed as disrespectful to the presenter. The teacher noticed two of these incidents and corrected the students on their behavior toward presenters Roseanne and Mike, who are Non-Marshallese students. This can be seen in examples 7 and 8.

Example 7

1	Roseanne	Mostly every part because
2		um in every chapter it
3		it kept on telling me questions and I ## keep on reading.
4		That's three. ((questions))
5	Class	No, that's two.
6		That was three.
7		That's three
8	Teacher	Shhh
9	Class	######
10	Teacher	Guys,
11		it's really not necessary that you argue with the person that presented.
12		Don't do that.
13		Once they say that was three, let it go, alright?

Example 8

1	Benson	Wait, why'd you say, "you do?"
2	Teacher	Guys, make sure your questions are asking them about their book.
3		You're not commenting on anything about spelling
4		or, "why didn't you add this," you know?
5		You can ask them and say, "what is your theme,"
6		but don't ask them in a way that would be in a negative way.

In example 7, the teacher scolded the students who were criticizing Roseanne's presentation, as seen in lines 8 and 10 through 13. The teacher criticizes the students, who begin to question the presenter. The teacher also scolded the students in example 8, lines 2 through 6. Benson is questioning the presenter, and the teacher scolds this type of behavior. She explicitly follows up with a list of things for the audience to not do and instructs them on how to properly ask questions that are not negative.

However, in example 9, Marshallese student Sally's presentation, the teacher did not scold the students for arguing or criticizing the presenter as she did in Mike's and Roseanne's.

Example 9

1	James	I got a few things to say.
2		You forgot about a few things. You forgot about Tyshawn
3		forgot about ##, yeah.
4	Sally	and then-
5	Christin	Oh, probably the ###
6		probably like the main characters.
7	James	Yeah, the main characters.
8	Class	####
9	Xavier	You said the mom died while giving birth.
10		What-what happened to the dad?
11	Sally	The dad. They didn't talk about the dad, though.
12		It was only about the mom
13	Xavier	No, the dad ran away, didn't he?
14	Sally	No, they didn't talk about the dad
15	James	They did, um they said he ran away.
16	Hannah	## For sure.

In line 2, James is directly criticizing Sally. This comment is very negative towards Sally's presentation, and the teacher did not scold James for being negative, despite her explicitly stating that students should not ask negative questions in example 8. The interaction between Xavier, Sally, James, and Hannah in lines 13 through 16 shows the audience arguing and questioning the presenter. Despite the teacher explicitly telling students not to argue with the presenter in example 7, the teacher did not scold the students during Sally's presentation. These were the only three situations in which the students were arguing or criticizing the presenter.

CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION SECTION I

5.1 Respect and Gaze as a Mismatch in Barnestown Classrooms

In many k-12 classrooms in the United States, there are times when students must get in front of the class and give a presentation. These presentations are traditionally graded and follow a rubric that is given to the students prior to their presentation to prepare, which follows the standards of the state.

SD State Standards Disaggregated English Language Arts

Strand:	Speaking and Listening Standards	**Anchor Standard:**	Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas	**Grade level:**	6

Standards Relating to Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas
6.SL.4 Present claims and findings, sequencing ideas logically and using pertinent descriptions, facts, and details to accentuate main ideas or themes; use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation.
6.SL.5 Include multimedia components (e.g., graphics, images, music, sound) and visual displays in presentations to clarify information.
6.SL.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts, audience, and tasks, using feedback from self and others and demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grade 6 Language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.)

Figure 1: Screenshot of South Dakota's State Standards

Figure 1, 6.SL.4 standard shows that students in the 6th grade are required to present in front of the classroom. To be able to complete this standard, students must "use appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation."The highest score comes from a student who maintains eye contact throughout the presentation, using the display as a reference point when looking at the eye contact category. The lowest score is received when a student's eyes are directed at the report or display and do not make eye contact with the audience.

Conversely, the voice category requires a student to have a clear and engaging voice that exudes confidence and can grab the audience's attention, to receive the top score. The lowest

score is received when the student's voice is mumbled and quiet. Grades like this are mainstream norms in the school system that creates an unequal pathway for students

. When looking at examples 1,2, and 3, the teacher reinforces these language codes in the classroom. The importance of eye gaze is a repeated theme in this Barnestown classroom that is reflected by the teacher's guidance in presenting the book reports. But while the teacher in the classroom understands eye contact as respectful, Marshallese students understand eye contact as disrespectful (Raaitor, 2017; Watts, 2011). To demonstrate respect, Marshallese students will avoid eye contact, especially with an elder, creating a cultural mismatch in the classroom, as what is expected to achieve a high grade, and be regarded as a respectful audience member, is not what Marshallese children are socialized to do. Therefore, this may affect their scores in school but can also create conflict between teachers and Marshallese students. \

A most recent example of this ideology of lack of eye contact and conflict can be seen in a recent video posted by a Marshallese student. In the video, the teacher is asserting that all Marshallese students do not look him in the eye, and that they are being disrespectful by doing so (5NEWS, 2021). By being forced by the school to maintain eye contact, many Marshallese students may understand this as a culturally inappropriate expectation, creating discomfort.

5.2 Stereotypes and Implicit Bias in Barnestown Classrooms

Despite having only a limited amount of data, there appears to be a pattern in which the teacher seems to be singling out Marshallese students. Teachers, like everyone, are not exempt from being influenced by stereotypes; however, teachers are influential and significant social actors in students' everyday lives. These positions allow the influence of stereotypes to have a larger impact on the students in the classroom. Whether they are implicitly or explicitly communicated through behaviors or assessments, these stereotypes can positively or negatively

influence the interpretations the students have of themselves and their peers (Riley & Ungerleider, 2012).

The most common stereotypes associated with Marshallese students in the United States are lazy, unmotivated, disrespectful, and restless (Nimmer, 2017). In examples 5 and 6, the stereotype of the Marshallese student, Douglas, being restless and disrespectful is communicated through the teacher calling out only that student directly, as opposed to other disruptive students or the entire class, as seen in example 4.

In combination with stereotypes, they are most of the time also associated with racial biases. Copur-Gencturk et al. (2019) find that most teachers exhibit implicit biases in the classroom. Implicit biases are often unknown to the individual with the bias and are out of the said individual's control. For example, teachers do not explicitly say male students have a higher mathematical capability as compared to female students; however, it can be implicitly indicated by the types of feedback the teacher provides and the ratio of calling on males versus females in the classroom (Copur-Gencturk et al., 2019). These unconscious biases in the classroom are usually seen as a teacher assessing the students' ability.

In examples 7 and 8, the teacher assists and defends the non-Marshallese students' book report presentations from the rest of the audience. Telling the students not to argue back and essentially trusting the presenter's authority on the book. While in example 9, the teacher did not come to the defense of the Marshallese student, whom her peers were criticizing. In associated with the stereotype of being "lazy," the teacher may implicitly have a bias that the student did not work as hard on their presentation; thus, they do not know much about the book.

The effect of stereotypes and implicit biases in the classroom creates an unequal learning environment. By the teacher only defending the two Non-Marshallese students and singling out

only a Marshallese student as the trouble-maker, she is not creating an inclusive and supportive environment for all of the students. By unintentionally reinforcing Marshallese stereotypes as "disrespectful" and "lazy," the teacher is ultimately affecting Marshallese students' success and experience in school.

CHAPTER 6: RESULTS AND ANALYSIS II

6.1 Discomfort Calling on Individuals

After each student was through presenting their book report, the student was required to answer three questions from the class. This requires students to raise their hands to ask questions and for the presenters to call on specific students to ask questions. Teachers may use this tactic to see if the audience was paying attention or to test the knowledge of the presenter. It is left up to the presenter to choose whom they want to call on. The interactional pattern of calling on individuals in the classroom appears to cause discomfort among Marshallese students, resulting in a mismatch.

Table 1: Total Pauses in Seconds

Total Pauses in Seconds	
Marshallese Students	
Senior	18.92 sec
Joki	16.2 sec
Sally	13.2 sec
Non-Marshallese Students	
Max	11.3 sec
Sammy	4.1 sec
Roseanne	5.6 sec
Mike	8.9 sec
Hilda	4.7 sec
Cadence	8.2 sec
Daniel	10.7 sec
Marshallese Avg	16.01 sec
Non-Marshallese Avg	7.64 sec

When the time came for presenters to call on a student to answer a question, Marshallese students took the longest amount of time. Having the longest pauses individually and the highest average out of the class totaling 16.01 seconds to choose students versus the Non-Marshallese student average of 7.64 seconds, the Marshallese students took their time when considering whom to choose.

Senior appeared to have the longest total pause, totaling the average of his pauses to 18.92 seconds when attempting to select a student. He would often look around the classroom multiple times before making a decision. All of the Marshallese students looked around the classroom first before choosing a student. Sammy, a non-Marshallese student, was very quick to decide whom to select, totaling her pauses to 4.1 seconds. She often chose the person who raised their hand and was directly in her line of sight.

The students in the audience sometimes found it frustrating to wait to be called on and thus chose to make themselves more known to the presenter as a way to assist. This is the case in example 10 with Joki, a Marshallese student.

Example 10

1	Teacher	What was your favorite part?
2	Joki	The end.
3	Derek	What happened at the end?
4	Teacher	He told us
5		you missed that part.
6	Class	(RAISES HANDS)
7	Joki	(LOOKS AROUND) (2.8)
8	Alexandra	Hey, Hey (WAVES HAND WILDLY)
9		What happened at the end?
10		I wasn't here I was in the restroom.

Example 10 shows the second question that Joki has to answer. The first pause for Joki to pick an audience member was 10.4 seconds. Alexandra interrupted Joki's second pause in order to mitigate the process of him deciding on a student or out of frustration of waiting in lines 8 through 10. When she asked Joki the question, he immediately responded with ease.

6.2 Differential Willingness to Take Individual Responsibility

Personal pronoun usage in presentations and speeches represents the speaker's claim of responsibility. The use of personal pronouns can be used to form positive or negative assumptions of the speaker. In the classroom, students are expected to situate themselves in front

of the class as the speaker. By using personal pronouns, students can situate themselves as an authority, claim responsibility for their work, or help the audience form conclusions about the positive and negative traits of their presentation, most often with the use of the pronoun "I."

Table 2: Total Number of Times "I" is Used

Total Number of Times "I" is Used	
Marshallese Students	
Senior[1]	4
Joki	3
Sally	5
Non-Marshallese Students	
Max	10
Sammy	5
Roseanne	4
Mike	46
Hilda	19
Cadence	9
Daniel	16
Marshallese Avg	4
Non-Marshallese Avg	15.6

Table 2 shows the number of times that "I" was used in the students' book report. Mike had the highest usage of "I" at 46, and Joki had the lowest, only using "I" 3 times. Note that Senior's book report is calculated differently. Senior's book report format was in the form of a diary to help summarize the main points of the book, with each entry beginning with "today I." When Senior switches from diary format to present the work he did, he only uses the word "I" a total of 4 times. Overall, the non-Marshallese students had a higher average of 15.5 compared to the Marshallese students, with an average of 8.6.

Example 11

1	Mike	I put-um this
2		I put like-
3		I did a comic book and I put right here
4		I put you do not do your homework
5		then Brent says I forgot sorry

[1]Senior's presentation was in diary format. The use of "I" when pertaining to the format was omitted.

6		then I put dad said back in the old days when he was a kid
7		he had to do stuff himself
8		Then the summary
9		I put Dad is trying to get me to understand what stuff was like in the old days
10		I just think the future is better
11		then I put the author Jeff Kennedy
12		then I put the main characters Griff Huffily
13		and I put made by ###
14		Then I put the date.
15		Then I thought this book was a five-star rating because it-it was interesting
16		and it had a lot of funny parts.

Mike, a non-Marshallese student, was in front of the class giving his book report presentation. His form of presentation was written, so he was often pointing to a poster that was to summarize parts of the book he read. In example 11, Mike consistently uses the subjective personal pronoun "I" in reference to himself. By doing so, Mike is putting the responsibility for his book report onto himself. This can be seen clearly in lines 1,2,3,4,6,9,11,12,13, and 14, where he is specifically using the words "I put" to claim the authorship of his work. Mike is also using "I" to exhibit his proud accomplishment of completing his book report. In addition, he is also speaking in front of the entire class, claiming authority as the speaker, author, animator, and presenter over the audience.

Example 12

1	Daniel	okay so I read the book ### because it was on my level
2		and it was really scary
3	Class	Yay!
4	Luke	Who told you that?
5	Daniel	This is my book report, okay.
6		And then I found multiple themes in skeleton man.
7		One of the themes was that you need to trust your dreams and ###
8		The other important theme that I learned from Molly
9		the main character was that you have to show courage.
10		My evidence for these themes are that the book
11		it said that Molly's parents had told her to trust her dreams
12		also Molly showed great courage and bravery when she came up with her plan
13		and pulled it off even though it was horrifying and challenging.

14		And then here's my five slide summary.

Daniel is also a non-Marshallese student and consistently uses personal pronouns, but with more variation than Mike. In example 2, Daniel uses the subjective personal pronoun "I" and the possessive determiner "my." In lines 1, 6, and 8, Daniel is taking responsibility for the actions and work he has done to present his report to the class. In lines 4 and 5, one of the classmates is questioning Daniel's knowledge of the book; however, Daniel claims authority and responsibility by saying, "my book report."

Example 13

1	Sally	um okay
2		I read the ninth one because
3		umm it was a good book
4		um
5		In the beginning there was a twelve year old named
6		girl named ### who was adopted.
7		She was adopted because her
8		her mom died while giving birth um
9		and no one related wanted
10		um
11		to adopt her
12		um
13		this eighty-two year old
14		um lady half blind named ### adopted her
15		um
16		and this is the drawing.

Sally is a Marshallese student who is also giving a book report with a poster medium. In example 3, Sally only uses a personal pronoun once to identify that she claimed the responsibility of reading the book she is presenting, in line 2. Being careful not to claim any more authority or responsibility, she is directly talking about the book and the characters in it rather than what she did. In line 16, Sally does not claim responsibility or boast about her

accomplishments in the drawing of the story. Instead, she says, "This is the drawing" rather than "I drew this" or "This is my drawing."

CHAPTER 7: DISCUSSION SECTION II

7.1 Presenters/Audience Interactional Patterns as a Mismatch in Barnestown Classrooms

In table 1 and example 10, Marshallese students seem to feel uncomfortable with speaking out in class to decide on which student to call upon to ask their questions. Choosing a student to speak out in front of the class is a cultural mismatch for most Marshallese students, as many are hesitant to speak out in class because it infringes on the importance of humility and respect in order to avoid being in a commanding role, especially over ones' peers (Berman, 2018).

In associating with these cultural values, many Marshallese students may pause longer than other students to single out a peer to speak in front of the class. In pausing, they are giving the students who want to speak up an opportunity to do so, rather than force an individual and maintain their humility. In hesitating Marshallese students may also see themselves as not old enough to ask something of another student. Hesitating may also be in part of discomfort in situtating themselves above their peers. By pausing to call on a fellow student, they may be attempting to mitigate being in an authoritative position.

In example 10, Joki is shown to do this as he looks around the entire class before attempting to select a student. In doing so, another student spoke out without having to be called upon and singled out in front of the class. The concept of calling on students to answer questions presents itself as a cultural mismatch in the classroom as the classroom expectations do not align with the Marshallese language ideologies at home, which may result is stress and discomfort.

7.2 Claiming Authority in Performance

The use of personal pronouns to claim responsibility and authority are evident, even in 4th-grade book report presentations. In table 2 and examples 11, 12, and 13, Marshallese students, compared to non-Marshallese students, did not tend to claim responsibility for their work or authority over the classroom. The non-Marshallese students exhibit the independence cultural model of self, feeling comfortable presenting independent behaviors and claiming responsibility for their work and authority (Stephens et al., 2012).

Conversely, Marshallese students exhibit the interdependence cultural model of self, showing that they are driven by their sense of community and relationships with others (Stephens et al., 2012). Community and family are more important than the individual (Heine, 2002). By not claiming credit for their work or authority over the classroom as a speaker, author, or animator, they are focused less on themselves as an individual. Valuing group efforts and accomplishments over individual success, they attempt to mitigate individualism by reducing the number of personal pronouns used in their presentations. Despite having to do their book report project by themselves, Marshallese students may find it important to not boast about their work, especially among one's peers. If they do claim responsibility, Marshallese students are potentially situating themselves above their peers, which is viewed as impolite.

CHAPTER 8: CONCLUSION

In the 4th-grade Barnestown classroom, Marshallese students are relatively disadvantaged in school. With the existing mismatches, discomfort, and discrimination in the classroom, the classroom environment is inequitable. The expected form of performance in the classroom does not align with Marshallese cultural ideologies. The importance of eye gaze in the classroom, as central to performance, is a mismatch. Marshallese students consider direct eye contact as disrespectful, compared to the classroom environment where it is essential to a better grade. The existing discrimination in the classroom-based existing stereotypes exhibited by the teacher creates an unsupportive classroom environment for Marshallese students. The creation of an unconscious bias leads to more criticism and the singling out of Marshallese students.

Another present mismatch exists between the presenter and the audience. Marshallese students tend to have a longer pause duration when they must single out a student to ask a question. By not wanting to perceive themselves as a higher authority or to respectfully not individualize a student, they take longer to decide. This mismatch creates discomfort in performance and calling on students. Overall, when analyzing book report presentations in Barnestown classrooms, the use of personal pronouns to claim responsibility is evident. When presenting, Marshallese students use fewer personal pronouns to claim responsibility and authority when compared to non-Marshallese students. This appears to be in an effort to reduce individualism as it conflicts with some of the Marshallese's cultural values of community. With the existing mismatches and discrimination in the classroom, the opportunity to provide equal

educational opportunities for Marshallese students does not appear to be put into practice when it comes to acts of literary performance.

With a large influx of Marshallese Islanders continuing to immigrate to the United States, the issue of unequal opportunities in education will only be intensified. Particularly with the primary concentration of the Marshallese population being located in the south-central U.S, educators may not have been exposed to a variety of cultural and language backgrounds that would assist in Marshallese students' overall experience in primary education and combat discrimination, discomfort, and overall mismatches in school. Without this knowledge, many Marshallese students must overcome these obstacles in order to proceed to the next grade level and obtain a high school diploma. Without this knowledge, many Marshallese students must overcome these obstacles in order to proceed to the next grade level and obtain a high school diploma.

The first step for possible future policy changes that could create a more culturally responsive classroom, specifically for Marshallese students, would be to develop critical language awareness. By bringing awareness, teachers and students will be able to identify potential miscommunications and learn how to mitigate them. Another way school policies could change would be by eradicating state education standards and rubrics that require students to maintain consistent eye contact and speak loudly. Many students may benefit from prospectively higher grades by ridding these specifics from grading

It is vital that educators and institutions recognize that every student does not fit into the same cultural model. Once this is understood, it can create many opportunities for schools to create a culturally responsive classroom that fulfills the U.S Department of Education’s mission

to provide all students with equal opportunities to succeed in education (U.S Department of Education, 2011).

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APPENDIX A: TRANSCRIPTION CONVENTIONS

overlap (first set)	[]
overlap (second set)	[]$_2$
truncated intonation unit	-
pause, timed	(1.2)
actions	(CLAP)
unintelligible	### one symbol per syllable
analyst comment	((questions))