ARE YOU LISTENING TO ME? HOW DO I KNOW?
EXPLORING TEACHING TECHNIQUES TO INCREASE ACTIVE PARTICIPATION
DURING WHOLE GROUP INSTRUCTION

ERIN MARIE CLANCY
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Reviewed and approved* by the following:

Bernard Badiali
Associate Professor of Education
Honors Adviser & Thesis Supervisor

James Nolan
Hermanowicz Professor of Education and PIC, Curriculum & Supervision
Reader II

* Signatures are on file in the Schreyer Honors College.
ABSTRACT

As a Professional Development School intern, sitting in front of twenty-three third and fourth grade students at Park Forest Elementary School in State College, Pennsylvania, I often wondered, “Are they even listening to me? How do I know?” Through the use of systematic observations, student surveys, and student and teacher interviews I investigated on and off-task behaviors, types of teacher questioning, and students and teachers’ points of views on participation. The following questions developed as a result of that research. What can I do as an educator to increase the level of active participation in the classroom? How does implementing total participation techniques impact student engagement during whole group instruction? Which total participation techniques will be most effective for my group of learners? After implementing and intentionally incorporating total participation techniques, I discovered that the number of off-task behaviors decreased, and the number of students actively participating increased.
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INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

Description of Teaching Context

As an intern in the Professional Development School in the 2011-2012 academic school year, I am working in a third and fourth grade multiage classroom at Park Forest Elementary School in the State College Area School District. My classroom consists of twenty-four students. There are fourteen third grade students, and ten fourth grade students. We have eleven girls and twelve boys. The large majority of our classroom consists of Caucasian students, in addition to two African American students.

Twenty-four unique individuals with a wide variety of different needs move in and out of our classroom. Throughout the course of our school day many students seek services to support their learning needs. One male and one female have separate but severe learning needs, which require an Individual Education Plan (IEP), and full time paraprofessional assistance. In total, each student spends approximately three hours of the school day with our school’s Autistic or Instructional support teams. Two different students also require intermittent support from a paraprofessional while in the general education classroom. One student has been diagnosed with Attention Deficit Disorder (ADD). Five students spend a period of time with a Speech Language Pathologist. One of those five students has an IEP for a hearing impairment. One male spends time with an Occupational Therapist. One female attends English as a Second Language class. Four students go to Title One math services, and two go to Title One reading services. One male student meets with an instructional support teacher, and two have an instructional support plan. Five students attend math-learning enrichment once a week. With a wide variety of student needs, there is also a varying scale of student personality and behavior patterns.
Rationale

An overwhelming majority of the students are very easy to get along with, and for the most part follow teacher instructions, and participate during small and whole group instruction. However, after a data collection session during a read aloud presentation based on visible student participation during whole group instruction on the carpet, many patterns became clear. My fourth grade students, and a few of my confident third grade students, were occupying the majority of the class discussion. After reflecting on this experience, it became evident to me that this pattern of behavior was true for many other whole group instructional activities on the carpet. Then, I began to become curious about my students who were not so inclined to participate verbally during whole group instruction. If students were not verbally participating during a discussion what evidence do I have to make judgments about whether that they understand the content being taught? In addition, after observing a whole group activity I noticed a significant number of off-task behaviors (i.e. talking to a friend, stating unrelated comments out loud, fidgeting, daydreaming). How does the number of off-task behaviors affect the number of student responses?

This question prompted me to initiate this inquiry about finding evidence of student thinking through active participation. Researchers have conducted many inquiries focusing on the issue of active student participation. Through different studies and investigations it has been shown that certain techniques can be incorporated into instruction to increase the amount of active participation and cognitive engagement, which in turn increases the quality of teacher responses (Munro & Stephenson, 2009). After reflecting on teacher and student interactions during whole group instruction, and reading about total participation techniques, and other
approaches that can be used to increase active participation I created a few questions about my wondering.

**Main Wondering and Sub Questions**

During whole group instruction I wondered: *What can I do as an educator to increase the level of active participation in the classroom, and decrease the number of off-task behaviors?*

After posing this question I discovered several other related wonderings that I was interested in investigating, including:

- How does implementing total participation techniques (TPTs) impact student engagement during whole group instruction?
- What total participation technique(s) will be most effective for my group of learners based on the average number of student responses?

These wonderings developed after multiple occasions of reflecting on lessons, and feeling as though the same students were vocally participating during whole group instruction. I often asked myself, what evidence do I have to show of student’s knowledge of material if they do not engage in conversation during discussion? After these wondering questions developed, I decided to look into what the research says about total participation techniques in the classroom.

**A REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE**

From a teacher’s point of view, we use questioning as a means to evaluate student understanding. However, based on the systematic observations of teacher questioning it becomes evident that the style of questioning lends to an individual student response. If this is the case, how can teachers evaluate each student’s understanding of the material when we are only hearing one or a few students’ responses? The text, *Total Participation Techniques: Making Every Student an Active Learner*, addresses how imperative it is to increase active
participation and cognitive engagement through total participation techniques as a means to better understand student learning. Total participation techniques are used to aid in the evaluation process of teaching. Formative evaluation is a prominent component in the teaching process as it serves as the informational piece of student understanding. The evaluation process is what provides information that assists the teacher in deciding when to move on with a topic, when a concept may need to be retaught, which students need more help, or more of a challenge (Moore, 2005).

In addition to evaluating students’ understanding as a whole, research shows that students are more inclined to actively participate in a discussion that proves to be relevant (Munro, 2009). In the book, Motivating Students to Learn, it reiterates the importance of teaching things that are worth learning. As teachers, it is imperative that we set the stage of learning to be meaningful and worthwhile. In addition, students are not likely to be motivated to learn when activities fall under the categories of knowledge, comprehension, and application (Brophy, 2004). These three classifications fall under lower-order thinking skills in Bloom’s Cognitive Taxonomy. The result of not implementing forms of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, or high-order thinking skills, may result in lack of interest, and not creating text-to-text, text-to-self, and text-to-world connections (Himmele, 2009).

After reading several resources in the professional literature concerning the importance of establishing a better system in evaluating my students learning, I developed an intervention plan. The intervention plan was based on several of the total participation techniques suggested in the text Total Participation Techniques: Making Every Student an Active Learner.

INTERVENTION
As a means to increase student participation during whole group instruction the book *Total Participation Techniques: Making Every Student an Active Learner*, was the primary source of information. The text provides thirty-seven classroom-ready total participation techniques (TPTs) that can be incorporated into any lesson with the intention of getting each learner to actively participate during a discussion, and be intrigued by higher order questioning as a means to activate cognitive engagement. Through the intervention process, I have pinpointed four specific types of TPTs to focus on: response cards, chalkboard splash, think-pair-share, and quick, draw, writes.

Response cards are a set of cards that each student receives as a means to answer a prompt by holding it up in the air. The response card differs depending on the type of activity, but the objective is the same. After describing how the response cards work for the specific activity all students are instructed to choose a card to respond to the prompt. They are given time to select a card, and then reveal their answer. After each student has displayed their card discussion is initiated based on student responses. A benefit of using the response cards is the opportunity for teachers to assess on the spot, and provide immediate feedback to the class as a whole based on students’ responses (Munro & Stephenson, 2009).

A chalkboard splash is a process in which students are given a prompt to respond to and display it on the board. Once all students have displayed their responses then students are instructed to walk around, read the responses, and make comparisons between the responses. What was similar? What was different? What was surprising?

Quick, draw, writes are a brief activity in which students have a few minutes to reflect and debrief on an activity. Students will receive a prompt to respond to and will be given a
specified amount of time to record their thoughts. This activity allows students to analyze their own metacognitive thinking processes through writing and drawing.

Think-pair-share is a process in which students share their thoughts with one another before responding to the group as a whole. It gives students the opportunity to think out loud, and share their ideas with another peer before having to respond to the group. It also allows peers to make connections with one another, clarify ideas, ask questions, and make connections with one another. (Brown, 2011).

METHODS

Description

In order to answer my main question, I collected data on the extent to which students were actively engaged. I collected data to establish a baseline of their engagement prior to enacting interventions that I thought might increase active participation. Data were collected in the forms of two systematic observations, and student and teacher interviews.

Pre-Intervention Data Collection

The purpose of collecting systematic data observations in the form of whole group seating arrangements was to identify off-task behaviors, including identifying the type of off-task behavior(s), the student(s), and the frequency in which off-task behaviors occurred. The intention in collecting this data was to evaluate the number of related on or off-task behaviors during whole group instruction on the carpet, identifying the types of passive and active behaviors, and the individual students’ involved in the activity. The connection between collecting data on students’ behaviors was to view how on and off-task behaviors correlate with the number of students actively participating. Is there a connection between off-task behaviors and lack of participation?
The code system can be broken down into active and passive off-task behaviors, and active on-task behaviors. As a whole group instructional period began, the students’ seating arrangement was sketched with a circle indicating a student’s placement, and their initials marking the inside in order to identify the student placement. Every five minutes of the instructional period, my mentor teacher, my Professional Development Associate (PDA), or myself would scan the room, and write down the period in which the on or off-task behavior occurred, and the code for the on or off-task behavior next to the individual(s) name. If a student was involved with another student, then an arrow would be drawn to indicate to whom the interaction occurred. In addition, during the five-minute interval times, observational notes were taken about the activity and student behavior. This format of data collection was taken in both written and video format, using Studiocode to evaluate on and off-task student behaviors *See Appendix A for an example of codes and coding*.

In addition, to being curious about student active on task, and active and passive off-task behaviors, types of teacher questioning was also evaluated in the form of systematic data collection under the wondering: *Does type of teacher questioning play a role in student engagement and active participation?* This systematic observation data collection sheet used a code system to analyze teacher question type, the number of total student responses to the prompt, the individual students who participated, the accuracy of the individual student’s response, and the teacher’s response to the student’s response. The intention of this data collection was to analyze the type of questions that teachers were asking including, open-ended, multiple choice, choral, add-on, and rephrasing, and to view the relationship between the type of question and the total number of student responses. The purpose of recording individual student’s names and the accuracy of the response was to be able to evaluate which students
consistently participate during whole group instruction, and whether their responses were consistently accurate or not. The reasoning for recording teacher responses was to view a pattern of positive, negative, or neutral reactions to student answers. A neutral response is categorized under the use of double wait time, providing a hint, or rephrasing a question (See Appendix B for an example of codes and coding).

The final data collection piece that was used, before the intervention process, was a teacher interview of two, third and fourth grade teachers at Park Forest Elementary school. The purpose of interviewing the teachers was to gain an insight on their views and feelings of student participation during whole group instruction. An interest lies in how teachers’ define participation including, evaluating active participation, different techniques used, and what factors could effect student participation. (See Appendix C for interview questions).

After analyzing the pool of students who participate on a regular basis in the classroom, and individual students’ responses to the participation surveys, I decided to interview two third grade students who represent the participatory population, and the non-participatory population. These two students were asked questions about participation in our classroom community including, what it looks like, its importance, its comfort level, reasons for not for participating, and ways in which to get more students to participate (See Appendix D and E for student A and B interview questions).

Pre-Intervention Data Analysis

Before determining my claims, I had to analyze the data that I collected in the forms of systematic observations, and student and teacher interviews. Through investigating the data, I looked for patterns and trends in the information provided.
After collecting pre-intervention data for on and off-task behaviors, I was able to calculate the total average percent of off-task behaviors during whole group instruction. Table 1 illustrates the average percent of off-task behaviors across science, math, and writing. Table 1 also depicts the total average percent of off-task behaviors at 73 percent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage of Off-Task Behaviors</th>
<th>Percentage of On-Task Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>72</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>78</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td></td>
<td>72</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Avg. Percent</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the second systematic observation sheet based on teacher questioning, there were several ways in which I analyzed the data. Many factors were taken into account during this data collection period, including the type of activity, whether it was an introduction or review of a concept, the sequence in which questions were asked, the types of questions that were asked, the total number of responses, individual student responses, and teacher’s response to student answering.

After taking anecdotal observations of teacher questioning during several different lessons, and activities, I was able to break them down into different categories of codes. The types of teacher questions that were coded included, open-ended (OE) questions, asking another student to add-on (AO) or repeat a peer’s response, providing multiple-choice (MC) options, or looking for a choral (CH) response (e.g. a vocal (V) response or a level of understanding using thumbs up for agreement, and thumbs down (TH) for disagreement). At this time, the most
frequent type of teacher questioning was in the form of an open-ended response. In a classroom of twenty-five students, Table 1 illustrates that the total average number of student responses to open-ended questions is approximately 6 students viewed over a three-day observational period.

Table 2 Total Average Number of Student Responses to Open-Ended Questions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Day 1</th>
<th>Total Number of Student Responses</th>
<th>Day 2</th>
<th>Total Number of Student Responses</th>
<th>Day 3</th>
<th>Total Number of Student Responses</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>9</td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avg.</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>Avg.</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>Avg.</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The purpose of examining teacher responses to students’ answers was to evaluate how frequently a teacher may respond positively, negatively, or in a neutral manner. An example of a positive response would be, “You did a great job breaking the fraction into thirds!” An example of a negative response would be ignoring a student’s answer, and calling on another student. Another example of a negative response would be replying, “No or not quite.” A neutral response would include providing double wait time, providing a student with a hint to the answer, or rephrasing the question in a different way. This was completed under the extended wondering that if a teacher’s response was consistently negative that students would be discouraged to answer questions in fear of the teacher’s reaction. However, after collecting data on teacher responses more than the majority of the responses were positive. The second most frequent response than positive was a neutral response (See Appendix B for an example). Therefore, this lends me to believe that students are not discouraged based on fear of teacher’s
response to questions. To further investigate this wondering, a student survey was completed in an attempt to understand students’ views on active participation.

A third and fourth grade multiage teacher from Park Forest Elementary defines student participation as showing signs of active engagement. In terms of the importance of participation it requires some level of engagement and participation to be essential; however, the ways in which participation can be viewed may vary per activity. Ways in which participation can be evaluated and viewed include sharing ideas in both written and speaking form, completing tasks, providing eye contact, and being able to provide a vocal response. At this time, she does include some participation techniques including showing signs of agreement and disagree, think-pair-share, and providing wait time. In reflecting on using these techniques they do seem to be effective; however, more strategies could be used and incorporated into student learning as a way to better evaluate student understanding. Some factors that may influence student participation include the individual level of confidence and comfort, and the classroom environment (See Appendices C for interview questions and additional comments).

After interviewing two third grade students, one representing a student who participates on a regular basis (student A) and one who does not (student B), an insight about classroom comfort was discovered. Student A and student B were asked the same interview questions (See Appendix D and E for student A and B interview responses). A commonality between the students’ responses was what they thought participation looked like including examples such as, raising one’s hand to answer a question, not calling out or fooling around, and doing work independently and in small groups. In terms of having a level of comfort in answering questions during whole group instruction, both students responded feeling nervous or uncomfortable to answer at times in fear of peer rejection. Both students prefer to work in small groups as
opposed to a whole group setting because a small group feels less threatening, and more welcoming to answering and asking questions. Student B provided some insight as to why he is not an active participant during whole group instruction. Reasons that he provided include, boredom, embarrassment, and feelings of nervousness in answering a question incorrectly. In terms of the importance of participation, student A expressed that as teachers, we need to explain to the students how important it is to participate, and be accepting of others, and that we all sometimes get answers wrong. Both students demonstrated a level of understanding about the importance of participation from a teacher’s point of view in evaluating students understanding of a topic, but both students also reflected they are not likely to participate if they are unsure of the answer.

**Post-Intervention Data Collection**

After intentionally planning and implementing the four total participation techniques, I systematically collected data for on and off-task behaviors, total number of student participation, and a student interview.

The format for collecting data for on and off-task behaviors during whole group instruction was completed by sketching the whole group seating arrangement of the students, and then coding individual students’ behavior. The same on and off-task behavior codes were used for both pre and post intervention data collection. The intent of collecting data on students’ on and off-task behaviors with the implementation of a total participation technique was to view the relationship between off-task behaviors and active participation. Does the number of off-task behaviors decrease with the use of a total participation technique?

The same two students who were interviewed before the intervention process were asked again about their feelings on participation. However, this interview focused on the changes in
our classroom techniques on participation with the implementation of the total participation techniques. To the students, I inquired whether they liked the total participation techniques, how having the class participate as a whole made them feel, and how do the total participation techniques effect how they participate in class.

**Post-Intervention Data Analysis**

Table 3 illustrates the average percent of off-task behaviors in science, math, and writing. It also depicts the total average percent of off-task behaviors, during whole group instruction, after an intervention technique was implemented. The total average percent of off-task behaviors is approximately 50 percent.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Percentage of On-Task Behaviors</th>
<th>Percentage of Off-Task Behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>44</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Avg. Percent</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After speaking with students about the four total participation techniques used in our classroom, I was curious about their thoughts. The students were interviewed separately, but reported similar feelings of enjoying the action of each student having to respond to a prompt in using the response cards. In terms of the chalkboard splash, both students liked the physical movement of getting up and observing peer responses. One student claimed that it is always interesting and surprising to see the similarities and differences between their friends’ thinking from the work that they have completed as well. Each student also liked sharing their ideas with
one another during a think-pair-share. One student reported, “It helps me to put my thoughts together and plan what I want to say before having to say it in front of the whole class.” One student took the time to explain his feelings on the quick, draw, writes, and how he likes having the option of writing and drawing his thoughts down on paper. In all, both students emphasized how the total participation techniques improve their comfort level whether that is every student participating as a whole with a response card, observing the ideas’ and work of their peers with a chalkboard splash, having time to think and plan out responses, or being able to write and draw responses with quick, draw, writes.

CLAIMS AND EVIDENCE

Claim #1: The total average percent of off-task behaviors, during whole group instruction, decreases with the implementation of a total participation technique.

My main wondering throughout this inquiry was, what could I do as an educator to increase the level of active participation in the classroom, and decrease the number of off-task behaviors? Through the use of systematic observations, I coded off-task behaviors both before and after the intervention process (Refer to Table 1 and Table 4 for data collection results). Through the implementation of four main total participation techniques, (i.e. response cards, chalkboard splash, think-pair-share, and quick, draw, writes) I was able to evaluate the average percent of off-task behaviors during whole group instruction in science, math, and writing. Based on the data collected for off-task behaviors for both pre and post intervention periods, the total average percent of off-task behaviors decreased from approximately 74 percent to approximately 50 percent. After reviewing this set of data, it is clear to me that as an educator, I can decrease the average percent of off-task behaviors by incorporating a total participation technique.
Claim #2: Within a subject area there is consistency between off-task behaviors in both the pre and post-intervention periods.

After reviewing the data that was collected for off-task behaviors in both the pre and post-intervention periods, there was a consistent pattern of average percentages across the subject areas. The average percent of off-task behaviors among science, math, and writing, before the implementation of a total participation technique was 70, 72, 72, 75, and 78 percent. The average percent of off-task behaviors among science, math, and writing after the implementation of a total participation technique was 50, 48, 39, 57, and 56 percent. Thus, the percentage of off-task behaviors before an intervention was implemented consistently remained in the 70 percent range. After the implementation of a total participation technique, the average percent of off-task behaviors for four out of the five incidents remained near the 50 percent range. One incident was significantly lower than the other four incidences at an average total of 39 percent. The reason for this average percent outlier is unknown, and a future wondering for investigation. In all, there is no evidence to show that a total participation technique proved to be more or less effective in one subject area than another.

Claim #3 The total average number of student responses to open-ended questions after the implementation of a total participation technique is relatively consistent among the four total participation techniques used in the intervention process.

In wanting to address the wondering, what total participation technique(s) best fit my group of learners, I calculated the average number of student responses per total participation technique. Table 4 represents four instances in which one of the four total participation techniques was the intervention used in the lesson. After reviewing the data collected, the
The average number of student responses among the four total participation techniques implemented in the intervention process is relatively consistent. Focusing on these four total participation techniques, there is not a total participation technique that is significantly more or less effective than another. As a whole, my group of learners benefit from the use of any one of the four total participation techniques used. This is evident in the increase in the total average number of student responses to an open-ended question from six student responses to fourteen student responses with the implementation of a total participation technique (Refer to Table 1 for pre-intervention student responses to open-ended questions).

Table 4 Total Average Number of Student Responses to Open-Ended Questions After a TPT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TPT</th>
<th>Total Number of Student Responses</th>
<th>TPT</th>
<th>Total Number of Student Responses</th>
<th>TPT</th>
<th>Total Number of Student Responses</th>
<th>TPT</th>
<th>Total Number of Student Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>RC</td>
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<td>TPS</td>
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<td>QDW</td>
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<td>QDW</td>
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<td>Avg.</td>
<td>12.75</td>
<td>Avg.</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Avg.</td>
<td>13.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

RC=Response Cards, CS=Chalkboard Splash, TPS=Think-Pair-Share, QDW=Quick, Draw, Write

**Claim #4** Both students and teachers perceive total participation techniques to be beneficial.

Students actively participate during discussions, which provides the teacher or lead learner with evidence of students’ thinking and learning processes. Evidence of students’ thinking and learning processes can be viewed by the physical actions of the students. For example, holding up the response cards, writing a response for a chalkboard splash or quick, draw, write, or visibly seeing and hearing students hold a topic related discussion. Total participation techniques also key in on the element of active engagement, and according to the
teacher that I interviewed is an important piece to teaching. In addition to benefitting teachers, students also expressed the perception that total participation techniques positively impact students. Based on student interviews, total participation techniques create a more comfortable classroom environment. In the process of actively participating, students felt as though they had more time to process their thoughts, prepare their answers, and share their ideas with one another. With this in mind, students also felt that more of their classmates were required to be involved in the discussion process, which in turn decreased the feelings of embarrassment and ridicule.

**IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE PRACTICE**

**Conclusion**

Through this inquiry I have learned many valuable points to consider while having a discussion during whole group activities. First, it is very important to build-in total participation techniques in lessons because it influences all students to actively participate during discussions. In all, specific techniques can be utilized to best meet the needs of the classroom teacher and the students. Teachers are given the opportunity to view student thinking, and students are allotted the time to think, discuss, and question content and one another. Total participation techniques decrease the percentage of off-task behaviors, and increase the percentage of student responses. Finally, from student interviews, total participation techniques positively impacts students in feeling more comfortable in answering questions and sharing ideas with the class as a whole.

**Future Practice**

Throughout the course of this learning experience, I learned about the importance of creating a learning environment that incorporates all learners to participate through the use of total participation techniques. By using response cards, chalkboard splash, think-pair-share, and
quick, draw, write strategies, I was able to better evaluate my students understanding on a topic or concept. This in turn also allowed me the opportunity to provide my students with more meaningful feedback. In terms of implications for future use it is important to keep in mind establishing a classroom community that is accepting of students who may have different answers to a question, who may learn in a different light, and who may prefer to participate in a different form that is not a verbal response. This thought ties into the aspect of purposely planning participation strategies into lessons. It is important to keep in mind students could always use more time to think, more time to discuss and debate, more time to evaluate, and explore. What works with one classroom, subject, or topic may not work with another group of students or domain. One of the major elements of teaching is the evaluation process, and through this process we as educators are trying to best meet the needs of our learners. This thought encompasses creating a classroom community that fosters taking risks, that encourages students to move out of their comfort zones, to interact with others, to answer and ask questions, to explore and to discover, to stretch their imaginations, and display their knowledge. By establishing ways to communicate ideas and think through higher order questioning then we as educators are better preparing our students for the world outside of the classroom’s walls.

**New Wonderings**

After investigating total participation techniques, I wonder, how the idea of utilizing multiple intelligences can play a role in the classroom? Often, in today’s classrooms we attend to the verbal, linguistic, logical, and mathematical intelligences over any other type of learning style (Davis, Smith, & Leflore, 2005). How may this impact a student who enters the learning process through another intelligence? How may this affect a student’s frequency of participation and use of high order thinking skills? In the text, *The New Teacher Toolbox: Second Edition*, it
also emphasizes that incorporating multiple intelligences into a lesson ensures a source of variety and creativity (Mandel, 2009). If this is the case, then how can we combine the ideas of total participation techniques and multiple intelligences into our daily classroom routines in order to better evaluate our students’ understanding, and better cater to their individual learning styles?
REFERENCES


APPENDICES

Appendix A Pre-Intervention Analyzing On and Off-Task Behaviors During Whole Group Instruction
Appendix B Analyzing Teacher Questions and Number of Total Responses During Whole Group Instruction

Date: 2/17/12

Activity: Math: Exploring Tetronimo

**Codes: Types of Questions**  
OE=open ended  MC=multiple choice  AO=add on  RH=repeating  
CH=choral [V=vocal/TH=thumbs up]  Accuracy=correct + incorrect  
Teacher Response=P positive/N negative/Ne neutral

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question Types</th>
<th>Total # Responses</th>
<th>Teacher Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1   OE</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2   OE</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3   AO</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4   AO</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5   CH/V</td>
<td>WHOLE (26)</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6   OE</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7   OE</td>
<td>HALF (13)</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8   CH/TH</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9   AO</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10  OE</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11  OE</td>
<td>WHOLE (26)</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12  OE</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Ne</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13  OE</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>P</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Teacher Response: Neutral=double wait time, providing a hint, rephrasing a question.*
Appendix C Teacher Interview on View’s of Classroom Participation

Teacher Interview: Student Participation

Grade Level: ___3/4____________

Please respond to the following questions below.

1. How would you describe or define student participation?
   
   Active engagement

2. Do you find participation to be valuable in your classroom? In other words, do you find it important? Why?
   
   I find some level of engagement and participation to be essential. What participation looks like is very varied.

3. How do you evaluate participation?
   
   Sharing ideas – either in written or speaking form, active engagement

4. What do you look for in your students to indicate that they are participating?
   
   Volunteering to share ideas, completing tasks, being able to participate, eye contact

5. Do you use any participation techniques or strategies in your classroom? Please list and briefly describe.
   
   Thumbs up/thumbs down, put your hand on your head if you agree, stand up/sit down, providing wait time, pair/share

6. What are some things, if any, that you do to increase participation in your classroom? Have you found them to be effective?
   
   Providing more wait time, providing different ways to participate and share ideas – yes, they are effective, but I know I could do more

7. What do you believe are some factors that may effect student participation?
   
   Level of comfort and confidence, the environment
Appendix D Pre-Intervention Student A Interview
Student Interview

1. Tell me about your favorite class or subject in school?

   Special/Reading-have more time to think about questions.

2. Tell me what you think participation is?

   Listen, work together, don’t fool around with other classmates, and raise hand.

3. Why do you think participation is important in a classroom?

   Helps us learn, and the teacher understands what we know.

4. Do you feel comfortable participating in our classroom?

   Yes, when we are unsure and feel scared about answering a question because of other kids.

5. Do you feel comfortable participating when we are in whole group? Why?

   Yes, but I feel more comfortable in a smaller group.

6. What is the class that you really enjoy participating in?

   Music.

7. Why do you like to participate in this class?

   I understand it really well, and I can talk to other students about it

8. What do you think might be a reason why some students do not participate?

   Feel strange, unsure, pressured by others.

9. Is there a way we can change this in our classroom?

   I don’t know specifically, but we must find a way for all students because some people aren’t learning as much.

10. Do you think there is something we could do in our classroom to get more students to participate?

    Explain to them how important it is and tell them that we need to be accepting of others and that we all sometimes get things wrong.
Appendix E Pre-Intervention Student B Interview

Student Interview

1. Tell me about your favorite class or subject in school?
   Math

2. Tell me what you think participation is?
   Raising your hand, not calling out, does work at seat.

3. Why do you think participation is important in a classroom?
   If you don’t you don’t get good grades.

4. Do you feel comfortable participating in our classroom?
   No, because I don’t feel comfortable. I get nervous and don’t feel like getting things wrong because my friends will make fun of me.

5. Do you feel comfortable participating when we are in whole group? Why?
   No.

6. What is the class that you really enjoy participating in?
   Not any.

7. Why do you like to participate in this class?
   Math because we write a lot of things down and no one can see my work.

8. What do you think might be a reason why some students do not participate?
   May feel nervous, embarrassed, or bored.

9. Is there a way we can change this in our classroom?
   I don’t know, maybe write it down.

10. Do you think there is something we could do in our classroom to get more students to participate?
    No.
ACADEMIC VITA

Erin Marie Clancy
Academic Vita

Present Address
228 S. Garner St. Apt. 102
State College, PA, 16801

Permanent Address
901 N. Penn St. Apt. F2004
Philadelphia, PA 19123

Accomplished, achievement-driven and an active dean’s list undergraduate from Pennsylvania State University interested in pursuing a Graduate Degree in Reading, Writing, and Literacy for a Reading Specialist certification.

EDUCATION

- St. Hubert’s Catholic High School for Girls, Philadelphia, PA………………2004-2008
- Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA………anticipated graduation May 2012
  - Schreyer Honors College
  - Bachelor of Science in Elementary and Kindergarten Education with Honors in Elementary and Kindergarten Education
  - Minor in Special Education

QUALIFICATIONS

- Dean’s list every semester attended.
- Research experience in a Language Acquisition Lab.
- Elective courses taken in the fields of Special Education and Linguistics.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE:

Professional Development School (PDS) Intern……………………………………………… August 2011-June 201
Student teaching placement: 3rd/4th Multiage; Park Forest Elementary School………………… State College, P

Chosen as one of 50 Penn State University Elementary Education majors to participate in a collaborative 185 day, full time elementary student teaching internship in a third and fourth grade multiage setting in the State College Area School District (Pennsylvania). This nationally recognized program received the 2011 Spirit of Partnership Award from the National Association for Professional Development School (NAPDS). This program received the 2009 Award for Exemplary Professional Development School Achievement from the National Association for Professional Development Schools (NAPDS), the 2004 Holmes Partnership Award for the best partnership between a university and a school district and the 2002 Distinguished Program in Teacher Education Award from the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE).

- Prepared and implements lessons in all subject areas for 24 third and fourth grade students in a self-contained classroom.
  - Taught Reading and Language Arts through a system of mini lessons, read aloud, and reading groups.
Taught Math through the Math Expressions curriculum.
Taught Science through inquiry and experiments with an emphasis on student questioning and explanation.
Taught Social Studies lessons with district designed thematic units.

- Assessed student performance through student work examples, projects, and standardized tests.
- Differentiated instruction to accommodate student needs in a diverse classroom.
- Observed and participated in the teaching process of a Kindergarten partner classroom.
- Attended team, faculty, and IEP meetings, as well as Unit Planning and in-service trainings.
- Communicated with parents via email, parent-teacher conferences, and weekly newsletters.

VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCES

- Phi Eta Sigma, National Honors Society, Penn State University, PA………..2009-presents
  *Club Member*
- Second Mile, Penn State University, PA………………………………………..2009-2011
  *Club Member*
- THON, Penn State Cheerleading, Penn State University, PA………………….2008-present
  *Special Events*
- The Friends School, State College, PA………………………………………..2009-2011
  *Videotape Storytelling, Teacher’s Assistant*
- Special Olympics, State College, PA………………………………………..2010
  *Volunteer*
- Special Events Committee 2011 Penn State IFC/Panhellenic Dance Marathon..2010-2011
  *Inspirational Chair*
- Penn State’s African Library Project………………………………………..2010
  *Classroom Coordinator and Public Relations Chair*

WORKING HISTORY

- Philadelphia Department of Recreation, Disston Recreation Center, Philadelphia, PA………..2005-2006
  *Youth Worker*
- Somerton Springs Swim Club, Somerton, PA…………………………………….2006
  *Lifeguard*
- YMCA of Philadelphia and Vicinity, Philadelphia, PA…………………..2008
  *Lifeguard*
  *Assistant gymnastics instructor*
- Wholesale Ice Cream………………………………………..2010
  *Managerial Assistant*
Language Acquisition Lab, Pennsylvania State University…………………….2010-2011
_Undergraduate Research Assistant_
Rebecca Burns  
Professional Development Associate (Student Teaching Supervisor)  
Curriculum & Supervision  
The Pennsylvania State University  
Bxb8@psu.edu

Brenda Hartman (Mentor/Cooperating Teacher)  
Park Forest Elementary School  
3rd/4th Grade/Multiage  
Bmh11@scasd.org

Work Reference:  
Karen Miller  
Department of Spanish, Italian and Portuguese  
242 Burrowes Building  
Penn State University  
University Park, PA 16802  
814.865.6534  
Research Director: Language Acquisition Lab  
Kxm80@psu.edu