
Teachers' Acculturation Attitudes and their Classroom Management: an empirical study among fifth-grade primary school teachers in Switzerland

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ABSTRACT This article investigates the influence of attitudes towards acculturation of 180 primary school teachers on their classroom management. The results indicate that teachers with integrative attitudes towards immigrant students' acculturation have a high propensity to punish students for disruptive behaviour, but they also demonstrate high levels of diagnostic expertise in social areas. Teachers with assimilative attitudes are also likely to punish students for misbehaviour, but tend to have a deficiency in the ability to diagnose social tensions among students. Teachers with assimilative attitudes who report high levels of disruptive behaviour in their classroom have the strongest tendency to punish and the lowest level of diagnostic expertise in social areas.

Introduction

Due to the global increase in the number of migrants, cultural heterogeneity has become a common characteristic of school environments in Western European countries and the proportion of migrant children in schools has been increasing. For example, in Swiss primary schools in the school year 2009/2010, the proportion of classes in which more than 30% of the students had an immigrant background was 40.4% across all cantons (Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2012).

Problems and challenges related to cultural diversity in schools have been increasingly addressed in European peer discussions (e.g. Dollase, 2001; Auernheimer, 2004; Gomolla & Radtke, 2007; Portera, 2008). Yet, the position paper of four members of the European Association for Research on Learning and Instruction states with respect to ethno-culturally diverse educational settings that 'current schools seem to fail in addressing the needs of immigrant students' (Vedder et al, 2006, p. 157). In order to meet the needs of a culturally diverse student population, 'it is important to pay attention to what the teacher expects of his or her students and to create a sufficiently rigorous and challenging academic climate that is both emotionally and instructionally supportive to students' needs' (Vedder et al, 2006, p. 166).

However, 'research on how teachers' beliefs manifest themselves in everyday classroom behavior is still scarce or nonexistent' (Hachfeld et al, 2011, p. 994). Therefore, the aim of this article is to analyse how teachers' attitudes towards immigrant students' acculturation strategies are related to their classroom management.

Acculturation in the School Context

In the tradition of cross-cultural psychology, contact between individuals of different cultural backgrounds is described in terms of changes in behaviour and attitudes, commonly subsumed under the umbrella term of acculturation (e.g. Ward, 2001; Berry, 2003). Originally, acculturation

had been conceptualised and defined by anthropologists (Redfield et al, 1936), but today the issue of acculturation and its effects on group relations and individual development has gained a prominent place in the social sciences in general (Trimble, 2003). The most common conceptualisation of acculturation in contemporary research is bi-dimensional, and holds that it is possible to maintain or avoid the culture of the host society and – simultaneously, but not necessarily in the same way or to the same degree – retain or lose the culture of origin (e.g. Berry, 1990). Thus, a widely established model of four acculturation strategies consists of two main dimensions that are independent of each other: (i) maintenance of heritage culture and identity, and (ii) relationships sought among groups (e.g. Berry, 2003). Alternatively, Bourhis et al (1997) propose an acculturation model that retains the first dimension of culture maintenance but replaces the relationships issue of the second dimension with the issue of adoption of the mainstream culture. At the same time, Bourhis et al (1997) state that acculturation takes place in both groups – the immigrant group and the majority group of the receiving society – with reciprocal effects on each other's preferences. The acculturation attitudes among the majority group members involve their expectations towards the way ethnocultural minority group members should acculturate. Hence, contemporary research on acculturation is interested in investigating acculturative attitudes and behaviours of the members of ethnocultural groups as well as of the larger society (e.g. Montreuil & Bourhis, 2004; Berry et al, 2006; Pfafferott & Brown, 2006).

A specific focus of acculturation research has been the school context as it is one of the more important settings of ongoing and continual acculturation. In Berry et al's (2011, p. 326) words, 'schools and other educational settings constitute the main acculturation context for immigrant children and youth. They can be viewed as a miniature society of settlement; schools represent and introduce the new culture to immigrant children. School adjustment can be seen as a primary task, and as a highly important outcome, of the cultural transition process.'

However, the acculturation process in schools involves not only students, but also their teachers. This raises the question of how teachers' expectations towards immigrant youth's acculturation is related to their teaching in multicultural classrooms.

Classroom Management as a Key Concept of Teaching

According to Henley (2006, p. 4), 'classroom management is the essential teaching skill. Teachers cannot teach and students cannot learn in a classroom plagued with disruption.' In order to establish an appropriate academic climate in classrooms, teachers need to achieve 'two major task structures organised around the problems of (a) learning and (b) order. Learning is served by the instructional function. ... Order is served by the managerial function, that is, by organising classroom groups, establishing rules and procedures, reacting to misbehaviour, monitoring and pacing classroom events, and the like' (Doyle, 1986, p. 103).

The managerial functions of the teacher are commonly referred to as classroom management. When first introduced into the discussion of learning and teaching in the 1960s, classroom management was conceptualised in the tradition of behaviourist psychology and focused on teachers' reactions to discipline disruption (e.g. Kounin, 1970; Canter & Canter, 1976). Since then, however, the paradigm of classroom management has gone through different developmental phases (Jones, 1996; Evertson & Harris, 1999), a process described by Weinstein (1999, p. 151) as 'a shift from a paradigm that emphasises the creation and application of rules to regulate student behaviour to one that also attends to students' needs for nurturing relationships and opportunities for self-regulation'. As a result, classroom management nowadays has a broad definition which includes not only the teachers' reaction to disruptions in discipline, but also their proactive actions aimed at establishing an appropriate teaching and learning environment (Henley, 2006; Neuenschwander, 2006; Pianta, 2006; Wubbels, Brekelmans et al, 2006; Schönbachler, 2008; Helmke, 2011). Accordingly, classroom management includes manifold 'actions taken by the teacher to establish order, engage students, or elicit their cooperation' (Emmer & Stough, 2001, p. 103).

Considerable empirical evidence has shown that teachers who are effective in their classroom management vary greatly with respect to their classroom techniques as well as their personal characteristics (e.g. Mayr, 2006). However, the research on effective classroom management

consonantly highlights the importance of a supportive classroom climate where the 'teacher displays concern and affection for students, [and] is attentive to their needs and emotions' (Brophy, 2000, p. 8). Wubbels, Brekelmans et al (2006) view the classroom as a dynamic, communicative social system and show, on the basis of empirical studies from the Netherlands and several other countries, that a mutually satisfactory teacher-student relationship is a key component of classrooms that facilitate successful student learning. Thus, aspects such as care, respect and empathy in teacher-student interactions are important for prosocial behaviour and well-being in the school context (Brophy, 1999; Murray & Greenberg, 2000; Hughes, Cavell & Willson, 2001; Meehan, Hughes & Cavell, 2003; Pianta, 2006; van Tartwijk et al, 2009). Especially in multicultural classrooms, it is essential to create 'caring classroom climates' (Gay, 2006, p. 362) and 'a positive classroom atmosphere' (Wubbels, den Brok et al, 2006, p. 407) for successful teaching and learning.

We summarise and conclude that effective classroom management includes teachers' functions with respect to the *maintenance of order during class* (e.g. by organising groups, establishing rules and reacting to misbehaviour) on the one hand, but also with regard to *their attentiveness to social dynamics in their classrooms* (e.g. by showing empathy for students' needs or diagnosing social tensions in classrooms) on the other hand.

Teachers' Attitudes towards Cultural Diversity and their Teaching Praxis

Contemporary research on teachers' responses to cultural heterogeneity has shown that teachers do not always value the cultural heterogeneity of their students. According to Faas (2008, p. 121), teachers in Germany are subject to 'cultural insensitivities'; some of them are even 'close to being Islamophobic and also constructed minority ethnic students as the "Other"'. Moreover, after an examination of the discourses of teachers and pupils in British secondary schools, Archer (2008, p. 101) concluded that the "'ideal pupil" emerges as the dominant male, white, middle-class'. Consequently, based on a study among primary teachers across Europe (Czech Republic, England, Germany, Holland, Lithuania, Malta, Sweden), Humphrey et al (2006) highlight the prominent need for caring and inclusive attitudes of teachers in culturally heterogeneous classrooms.

Nevertheless, investigations into how teachers' attitudes towards cultural diversity influence their classroom management in culturally heterogeneous classrooms are rare. Bender-Szymanski et al (2000, p. 227) found two different modes of teachers' response to culture-related conflicts among German teachers: a 'synergy-oriented' mode versus an 'ethnocentric-oriented' mode. 'Synergy-oriented' teachers acted proactively and adjusted learning objectives and materials to the specific conditions of the classroom. They also tried to avoid culture-related conflicts through the discussion of possible conflict areas and the common search for a 'third solution' (Bender-Szymanski et al, 2000, p. 229). 'Ethnocentric-oriented' teachers, on the other hand, attempted to adapt immigrant students to the cultural norms and rules of the host society. These teachers also relied on the importance of following the teacher's instructions and respecting the teacher's authority. According to the findings of another German study on teachers' responses to culture-related conflicts, the teachers' predisposition to punishment is influenced by their acculturation attitudes. Those teachers who preferred integration as an acculturation strategy showed a weaker tendency to respond to problem situations with punishment (Wagner et al, 2001).

As shown by a study conducted among Israeli teachers, daily coping with culturally heterogeneous classrooms can even lead to a 'diversity-related burnout' among teachers (Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003, p. 405). The study showed that teachers with assimilative attitudes experienced the highest level of diversity-related burnout, while teachers with pluralistic views showed the lowest degree of diversity-related burnout. Moreover, assimilative attitudes turned out to be a predictor for low immigration-related self-efficacy among immigrant teachers in Israel (Tatar et al, 2011).

In contrast to previous research, which mainly focused on teachers' response to culture-related conflicts (Bender-Szymanski et al, 2000; Wagner et al, 2001) or on the impact of dealing with culturally diverse students on teachers (Tatar & Horenczyk, 2003; Tatar et al, 2011), our study examined the influence of teachers' attitudes towards acculturation on their classroom management. Based on the previous discussion, we hypothesised that teachers' expectations as to how immigrant youth should acculturate in the host society have a measurable impact on the

teachers' reaction to students' misbehaviour in classrooms. Furthermore, we conjectured that teachers' attitudes towards acculturation influence their diagnostic expertise in social areas.

Method

Procedure

Our study had a cross-sectional design and was conducted in six cantons of the German-speaking part of Switzerland between February and April 2008. It was carried out at the Department of Educational Psychology of the University of Bern. The purpose of the study was to investigate the variety of teaching approaches in classrooms with various levels of cultural heterogeneity, measured by the proportion of first- or second-generation immigrant students whose parents had both been born abroad.[1]

First, the authorities of the participating cantons, cities and villages were contacted and asked for permission to recruit a sample in their schools. Then, the principals of the recruited schools were informed with a letter about the purpose of the study. In those schools where the principals agreed to support the study, fifth-grade teachers were asked to participate in the study. The survey was conducted among fifth-grade students and teachers because this is the one of the two last grades with only one (main) teacher who teaches most subjects. The teachers thus answered the questions not on classroom management in general, but with respect to students of one particular class. A second reason why this grade was chosen is that in Swiss fifth-grade classrooms, a wide range of cultural origins among students is represented.[2]

The teachers who volunteered to participate in the study were surveyed during the lesson in which their students completed a questionnaire for the study. Confidential handling of the data was assured (Makarova et al, 2008).

Participants

In total, 225 (54.7% female and 45.3% male) fifth-grade teachers from public Swiss primary schools participated. The proportion of male teachers in our sample was higher than the average in Swiss primary schools (20%) because we intentionally recruited more male teachers in order to balance gender in our sample.[3] A total of 37.3% of the teachers in our sample taught culturally highly heterogeneous classes. The proportion of highly heterogeneous classes in our sample is very close to the average of such classes in the six Swiss German cantons surveyed in our study (34.05%).[4] For the purpose of this article, 180 teachers (55.2% female and 44.8% male) of classes in which at least 10% of the students had an immigration background were selected. The teaching experience of the participants ranged from 1 to 22 years ($M = 8.43$ years; $SD = 6.14$).

Measures

The participating teachers completed a self-reported standardised questionnaire.[5] The *socio-demographic variables* sex and years of teaching experience were recorded. Sex was measured by one single-choice question. Years of teaching experience was measured by the following question: 'How many years have you been teaching?', with 24 answer options ranging from 0.5 years to more than 46.5 years and an interval of 1.5 years. For analysis, teaching experience was collated into five groups (0.5-2 years, 2.5-6 years, 6.5-18 years, 18.5-30 years, and more than 30 years) in order to include teaching experience as a categorical predictor in the analytical model.

Teachers' attitudes towards acculturation were measured in two dimensions according to the Interactive Acculturation Model (Bourhis et al, 1997). Each dimension of acculturation – (a) teachers' attitudes towards the maintenance of the culture of ethnic origin, and (b) teachers' attitudes towards the adoption of the culture of the host society – were measured by five items on a 5-point scale (ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). Specifically, teachers were asked about the acculturation strategy they expected from immigrant youth with respect to the first dimension of culture maintenance with statements such as 'It is important that immigrant youth living in Switzerland preserve their own language/religion/clothing style/lifestyle/cultural

traditions.’ The teachers’ attitudes towards the second dimension – immigrant students’ adoption of the Swiss culture [6] – were assessed with statements such as ‘It is important that immigrant youth living in Switzerland adopt the Swiss German language/religion/clothing style/lifestyle/cultural traditions.’ For the statistical analysis, the factor values of both dimensions of acculturation were split at midpoint on the scale in order to dichotomise them. The dichotomous values of both factors were combined to identify the four acculturation strategies which teachers expected from immigrant students – namely: integration (i.e. high value in the maintenance of the culture of ethnic origin as well as high value in the adoption of the culture of the host society); assimilation (i.e. low value in the maintenance of the culture of ethnic origin and high value in the adoption of culture of the host society); separation (i.e. high value in the maintenance of the culture of ethnic origin and low value in the adoption of the culture of the host society); and marginalisation (i.e. low value in the maintenance of the culture of ethnic origin and low value in the adoption of the culture of the host society).

Teachers’ diagnostic expertise in social areas was measured by five items on a 5-point scale (ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). This scale was based on Gruehn’s (2000) measurement of teachers’ diagnostic expertise and included the following statements: ‘I sense immediately when something is wrong between students’, ‘I realise pretty quickly when some of my students have troubles’, ‘I do not notice at all if one of my students is sad and his thoughts are elsewhere’, ‘I realise immediately if there has been a dispute between students’, ‘I do not notice at all if someone is afraid’.[7]

Teachers’ reaction to students’ misbehaviour was measured by three items on a 5-point scale (ranging from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). This scale was developed for the purpose of this study and included the following statements: ‘Students must face a penalty for their misbehaviour’, ‘Students know exactly what punishment they receive if they misbehave’, ‘It happens almost every day that someone gets a penalty’.[8]

Teachers’ perception of disruptive behaviour was measured by six items on a 5-point scale (ranging from 1 = *never* to 5 = *very often*). This scale was based on Schönbächler’s (2008) measurement of disruption of discipline and included the following statements: ‘Students disrupt my classes’, ‘There is chatter while I am explaining something’, ‘It happens that students distract their neighbours during lessons’, ‘Students deal with other things during lessons (e.g. writing messages to each other, doing homework, etc.)’, ‘If students work on individual tasks, I have to tell them again and again to be quiet’, and ‘Some students intentionally disrupt my classes’.

Table I provides the psychometric properties of the scales used for data analysis after a principal component analysis.

Measure	Items	M	SD	Cronbach’s alpha
Teachers’ attitudes towards maintenance of ethnic culture	5	3.68	.57	.70
Teachers’ attitudes towards adoption of host culture	5	2.80	.56	.66
Teachers’ diagnostic expertise in social areas	5	4.01	.47	.74
Teachers’ reaction to students’ misbehavior	3	3.08	.87	.69
Teachers’ perception of disruptive behavior	6	2.46	.53	.80

Note: Mean item scores are reported for multi-item scales; all scales range from 1-5.

Table I. Psychometric properties of measurement scales.

Data Analysis

All analyses were performed using the SPSS statistical software package version 19.0 (IBM SPSS, 2010). A generalised linear model (GzLM) was employed to analyse the questions of the study (Garson, 2012). A GzLM was chosen for data analysis because it is a flexible generalisation of ordinary linear regressions and permits a non-normal distribution of the dependent variable. The dependent variable of the first model (i.e. *teachers’ diagnostic expertise in social areas*) and the dependent variable of the second model (i.e. *teachers’ reaction to students’ misbehaviour*) both indicated a non-normal distribution (Shapiro-Wilks [179, 179] = .97, $p < .001$ and Shapiro-Wilks [180, 180] = .97, $p < .001$, respectively). Moreover, a GzLM allows the effect size of model

predictors on the response variable to be determined and the relative importance of predictors to be ranked.

In the initial GzLM, all hypothesised predictors were entered into the model in one step. As suggested by Garson (2012), the non-significant predictors were dropped from the initial model until all remaining predictors were significant in the final model. Moreover, Cook's distance measure was applied in the final model to identify outliers with large residuals in order to provide for the accuracy of regression outcomes (Cohen et al, 2003, p. 404; Chatterjee & Hadi, 2006, p. 103). Finally, the model fit of the initial model was compared with the model fit of the final model.

Results

Teachers' Attitudes Towards Acculturation

Our results show that the majority (55.2%) of the sampled teachers expected a separation strategy from immigrant youth living in Switzerland. Fewer teachers expected an integration strategy (36.0%) or an assimilation strategy (8.1%). Only one teacher (0.6%) favoured a marginalisation strategy.[9] The teachers' acculturation preferences were not dependent on the teachers' sex ($\chi^2[2, 171] = 4.58, p = .101$) or on their years of teaching experience ($\chi^2[8, 179] = 13.56, p = .094$).

Teachers' Reaction to Students' Misbehaviour

In a preliminary analysis with the application of a generalised linear model (Likelihood Ratio $\chi^2[2, 170] = 36.28, p < .05$), only the teachers' attitudes towards acculturation and their perception of disruptive behaviour (Wald $\chi^2[2, 170] = 6.52, p < .05$, and Wald $\chi^2[1, 170] = 11.08, p < .01$, respectively) turned out to be significant predictors of the teachers' reaction to students' misbehaviour. Teachers' sex and years of teaching experience (Wald $\chi^2[1, 170] = 2.68, p = .101$, and Wald $\chi^2[4, 170] = 4.64, p = .326$, respectively) were not significant predictors and were therefore removed from the model.

Thus, in the final model, the teachers' self-reported reaction to students' misbehaviour (z-score: $M = .02, SD = .97$) was predicted by the teachers' attitudes towards acculturation (see Table II), the teachers' perception of disruptive behaviour (z-score: $M = .04, SD = .99$), and the interaction between these two. The predictors were entered into the model in one step.

Factor		n	%
Teachers' attitudes towards acculturation	Integration	67	39.0
	Assimilation	10	5.8
	Separation	95	55.2
	Total	172	100.0

Table II. Teachers' reaction to students' misbehavior: Factor in a GzLM.

This final model consisted of 172 cases (100%). As expected, the final model had a better fit (Deviance Ratio = .87; Akaike's Information Criterion (AIC) = 471.69) than the initial model (Deviance Ratio = .92; AIC = 497.63). The omnibus test (Likelihood Ratio $\chi^2[5, 172] = 20.68, p < .01$) indicated that both predictors and the interaction between them were significant for the teachers' reactions to students' misbehaviour: teachers' attitudes towards acculturation: (Wald $\chi^2[2, 172] = 12.08, p < .01$); teachers' perception of disruptive behaviour: (Wald $\chi^2[1, 172] = 19.78, p < .001$); the interaction between the teachers' attitudes towards acculturation and their perception of disruptive behaviour: (Wald $\chi^2[2, 172] = 8.15, p < .05$).

The regression coefficients of the final model (see Table III) suggested that teachers expecting either integration or assimilation from immigrant students punish misbehaviour significantly more frequently than teachers who expected separation. Relative to the comparison group, the effect sizes based on odds ratios indicated that the probability of being punished for misbehaviour in classes where teachers expected integration increased by a factor of 1.65, and in those classes where the teachers preferred assimilation of immigrant students, it increased by a factor of 1.47.

Finally, the influence of the teachers' perception of disruptive behaviour on their punishment was not significant on its own, but was significant in the interaction with the teachers' attitudes towards acculturation. Thus, the punishment for misbehaviour was significantly higher among teachers who perceived a higher proportion of disruptive behaviour and who favoured assimilation. The effect size indicated that the probability of being punished for misbehaviour in these teachers' classes is highest, as it increased by a factor of 1.74 (see Table III).

Parameter	β	SE	Wald chi-square	df	Sig.	Exp(β)
(Intercept)	-.21	.10	4.28	1	.039	.81
Integration	.50	.15	11.22	1	.001	1.65
Assimilation	.39	.18	4.39	1	.036	1.47
Separation ¹	0 ^a					1
Perception of disruptive behavior	.16	.11	1.84	1	.175	
Integration*Perception of disruptive behavior	.01	.15	.01	1	.930	
Assimilation*Perception of disruptive behavior	.55	.21	6.94	1	.008	1.74
Separation*Perception of disruptive behavior ¹	0 ^a					1
(Scale)	.84 ^b	.09				

Note: Dependent variable: teachers' reaction to students' misbehavior; Model: (intercept), factor: teachers' attitudes towards acculturation, and covariate: teachers' perception of disruptive behavior; ¹ Comparison group; ^a Set to zero because this parameter is redundant; ^b Maximum likelihood estimate.

Table III. Teachers' reaction to students' misbehavior: Model effects.

Additionally, pairwise comparisons (Bonferroni tests) were computed for every pair of levels of the factor 'teachers' attitudes towards acculturation'. The results showed that there were no significant differences in the punishment of students' misbehaviour between the teachers who preferred an integration strategy and those who preferred an assimilation strategy.

Teachers' Diagnostic Expertise in Social Areas

In a preliminary analysis with the application of a generalised linear model (Likelihood Ratio $\chi^2[8, 171] = 19.07, p < .05$), only the teachers' attitudes towards acculturation and their perception of disruptive behaviour turned out to be significant predictors of the teachers' diagnostic expertise in social areas (Wald $\chi^2[2, 171] = 6.21, p < .05$, and Wald $\chi^2[1, 171] = 12.82, p < .05$, respectively). Teachers' sex and years of teaching experience (Wald $\chi^2[2, 171] = 1.23, p = .268$, and Wald $\chi^2[4, 171] = 6.89, p = .142$, respectively) were not significant predictors and were therefore removed from the final model.

Thus, in the final model, the teachers' diagnostic expertise in social areas (z-score: $M = .01, SD = .95$) was predicted by the teachers' attitudes towards acculturation (see Table IV), the teachers' perception of disruptive behaviour (z-score: $M = -.06, SD = .90$), and the interaction between the teachers' attitudes towards acculturation and their perception of disruptive behaviour. The predictors were entered into the model in one step.

Factor		<i>n</i>	%
Teachers' attitudes towards acculturation	Integration	64	37.6
	Assimilation	11	6.5
	Separation	95	55.9
	Total	170	100.0

Table IV. Teachers' diagnostic expertise in social areas: Factor in a GzLM.

This final model consisted of 170 cases (100%). As expected, this model, which excluded eight outliers, had a better fit (Deviance Ratio = .82; $AIC = 457.48$) than the initial model (Deviance Ratio = 1.03; $AIC = 521.70$). The omnibus test (Likelihood Ratio $\chi^2[5, 170] = 21.48, p < .01$) indicated that both predictors and the interaction between them were significant for the teachers' diagnostic expertise in social areas: teachers' attitudes towards acculturation: (Wald $\chi^2[2, 170] = 12.36, p <$

.01); teachers' perception of disruptive behaviour: (Wald $\chi^2[1, 172] = 33.50, p < .001$); the interaction between teachers' attitudes towards acculturation and their perception of disruptive behaviour (Wald $\chi^2[2, 170] = 7.39, p < .05$).

The regression coefficients of the final model (see Table V) show that those teachers who expected integration from immigrant youth scored higher in terms of competence for diagnostic expertise in social areas than the teachers preferring a separation strategy. According to the effect size, and controlling for the perceived proportion of disruptive behaviour, the teachers' diagnostic expertise in social areas in classes where the teachers expected integration increased by a factor of 1.41 compared with those classes where the teachers favoured the separation of immigrant youth. However, the teachers' diagnostic expertise in social areas was significantly lower in classes where the perceived proportion of disruptive behaviour was higher. Thus, in classes with a higher proportion of disruptive behaviour, the teachers' diagnostic expertise in social areas decreased by a factor of .72.

Moreover, the influence of the teachers' perception of disruptive behaviour on their diagnostic expertise in social areas turned out to be significant in interaction with their attitudes towards acculturation as well. Thus, diagnostic expertise in social areas was significantly lower among those teachers who perceived a higher proportion of disruptive behaviour and who favoured an assimilation attitude. The effect size indicated that the probability of diagnostic expertise in social areas in these teachers' classes decreased by a factor of .62 (see Table V).

Parameter	β	SE	Wald chi-square	df	Sig.	Exp(β)
(Intercept)	-.12	.10	1.50	1	.221	.89
Integration	.34	.14	5.71	1	.017	1.41
Assimilation	-.43	.24	3.26	1	.071	
Separation ¹	0 ^a					1
Perception of disruptive behavior	-.33	.09	12.30	1	.000	.72
Integration*Perception of disruptive behavior	.10	.14	.55	1	.460	
Assimilation*Perception of disruptive behavior	-.48	.21	5.19	1	.023	.62
Separation*Perception of disruptive behavior ¹	0 ^a					1
(Scale)	.80 ^b	.09				

Note: Dependent variable: teachers' diagnostic expertise in social areas; Model: (intercept), factor: teachers' attitudes towards acculturation and covariate: teachers' perception of disruptive behavior; ¹ Comparison group; ^a Set to zero because this parameter is redundant; ^b Maximum likelihood estimate.

Table V. Teachers' diagnostic expertise in social areas: Model effects.

Finally, the results of pairwise comparisons (Bonferroni tests) indicated that there were no significant differences in diagnostic expertise in social areas between teachers who preferred an integration strategy and those who preferred an assimilation strategy.

Discussion

The aim of this article was to answer the question as to how teachers' acculturation attitudes are related to their classroom management. Overall, our findings illustrate that the teachers' attitudes towards the acculturation preferences of their immigrant students manifest themselves in both investigated aspects of teachers' classroom management – namely, teachers' reaction to students' misbehaviour, and teachers' diagnostic expertise in social areas. The teachers' sex or years of work experience, on the other hand, do not have an influence on how acculturation attitudes influence classroom management.

In particular, the present findings provide empirical evidence to show that those teachers who expect from immigrant youth either a full (i.e. assimilation strategy) or partial (i.e. integration strategy) adoption of Swiss culture reported a greater willingness to punish their students more often for misbehaviour than teachers who support a separation strategy. In other words, teachers favouring assimilation and integration strategies with respect to the acculturation of immigrant youth tended to punish violations of behavioural norms in their classrooms more severely. This contrasts with Wagner et al (2001), who showed a negative correlation between teachers'

preferences for integration and their punishment tendencies. This divergence can be explained, however, by the different construct measurements and methodological designs of the analyses. Accordingly, teachers with integrative attitudes can be both – that is, they can be less willing to respond with punishment to culture-related conflicts, but at the same time more willing to do so in situations of students' defiance of the social order during classes. Therefore, we argue that the teachers' attention to students' obedience to rules of classroom discipline is not the result of their 'ethnocentric-oriented' view (Bender-Szymanski et al, 2000), but rather is an expression of their effort to create an appropriate learning environment for all students. This interpretation is in accordance with the main findings of a study by van Tartwijk et al (2009) of secondary education teachers who were successful classroom managers in Dutch multicultural classes. These teachers 'were aware of the importance of providing clear rules and correcting student behaviour whenever necessary' (van Tartwijk et al, 2009, p. 453), but they considered explicit reference to the ethnic or cultural differences between their students to be inappropriate. 'We even found that the higher the percentage of students with a non-western background in their class, the less the teachers talked about the role ethnic and cultural difference should play when dealing with students' (p. 459).

At the same time, the present findings indicate that an integrative attitude of a teacher is related not only to his or her tendency to punish misbehaviour in classrooms, but also to his or her diagnostic expertise in social areas. Therefore, we suggest that teachers with integrative attitudes have the best prospects of preventing social conflicts among their students. Overall, teachers with integrative attitudes have a high predisposition for successful teaching in multicultural classrooms due to their propensity to monitor and manage student behaviour (Wubbels, den Brok et al, 2006).

In contrast, teachers with assimilative attitudes who also showed a high tendency to punish their students for misbehaviour had a low diagnostic expertise in the area of social tensions. Furthermore, teachers with preferences for assimilation and who also perceived a high degree of disruptive behaviour reported the lowest diagnostic expertise in social areas and the highest likelihood for punishment for misbehaviour. We therefore suggest that, in the classes of these teachers, a higher degree of disruptive behaviour can be seen as an indicative symptom of ineffective classroom management based predominantly on reactive actions of teachers and their weaker ability to prevent conflicts between students by timely diagnosis of social tensions. Moreover, it is commonly agreed that increased levels of disruptive behaviour constitute a frequent reason for teachers' burnout (Brouwers & Tomic, 1999, 2000; Evers, Tomic & Brouwers, 2004; Lewis et al, 2005; Friedman, 2006; Herzog et al, 2007). Along these lines, our findings are consistent with findings from a study by Tatar and Horenczyk (2003), who found that teachers with assimilative attitudes in culturally heterogeneous classrooms are highly predisposed to burnout syndrome.

To summarise, our results illustrate that teachers who favour the *integration* of immigrant youth seem to pay attention not only to rule compliance among their students but also to the diagnosis of social tensions in their classrooms. These teachers have the best prospects for establishing an appropriate academic environment based on social order and prevention of conflict situations in their classrooms. Teachers who prefer an *assimilation* attitude demand conformity from their students and tend to apply high levels of punishment for misbehaviour. At the same time, these teachers tend to have shortcomings in the area of diagnostic expertise in social areas. Moreover, teachers with an assimilative attitude who perceive high levels of discipline disruption in classrooms lean towards more frequent punishment and less adequate diagnosis of social tensions. Therefore, we argue that teachers who prefer an assimilative attitude are less likely to be successful in providing order during their lessons and preventing social conflicts among their students. Teachers who favour a *separation* strategy of immigrant youth are likely not to pay much attention to rule obedience in their classrooms and to have a low ability to diagnose social tensions in their classrooms. Based on the assumption that it is not possible to provide instructional support in classrooms with high levels of disruptive or conflict behaviour, as is the case when teachers have a low ability to diagnose social tensions, we argue that it is unlikely for teachers with separative attitudes to establish a fruitful teaching and learning environment, and that teachers with integrative attitudes are much more likely to succeed in this respect.

Our findings are important in several ways. First, they prove empirically that the teachers' attitudes towards the cultural diversity of their students are related to their teaching. Thus, our results are an important contribution in the attempt to overcome the research gap regarding

manifestation of teachers' attitudes in their classroom praxis (Hachfeld et al, 2011). Second, our findings are fruitful for the ongoing peer discussion of diversity in teacher education by giving empirical support to the notion that for successful teaching in multicultural classrooms it is advantageous to have an integrative attitude towards the cultural diversity of students (Humphrey et al., 2006; Vedder et al, 2006; Makarova & Herzog, 2011).

Our results have some limitations. First, our study employed a cross-sectional design and therefore cannot empirically prove any causal relations. Hence, a longitudinal study would be needed to confirm the stability of the reported findings. Second, the generalisability of the present results is limited because the study was based on a sample of fifth-grade primary school teachers only. It would be worth testing whether a sample of teachers from lower and upper school levels would lead to similar findings to assess the generalisability of our results across school levels. Third, our results are based on a teacher sample from one European country, and therefore more research is needed in other countries. Finally, further efforts should be made to complement the present findings, which are based on teachers' self-reports, with findings based on the observation of teachers' classroom management.

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Notes

- [1] According to the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (2011), classes without students with an immigrant background are referred to as homogeneous classes, classes with less than 30% students with an immigrant background are referred to as culturally heterogeneous classes, and classes with more than 30% of students with an immigrant background are referred to as culturally highly heterogeneous classes.
- [2] High- and low-achieving students are in the same school track up to at least the fifth grade of Swiss public schools, after which a selection process separates high- and low-achieving students into different tracks in most cantons. A number of studies have shown that immigrant students are less likely to be successful in the Swiss school system (e.g. Kronig et al, 2000).
- [3] The reference is the statistical report *Teachers in Swiss Schools 2007/2008* (Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2010).
- [4] This average for the participating Swiss German cantons was calculated by the first author, using the data of the Swiss Federal Statistical Office (2012).
- [5] The questions from the questionnaire in German were translated into English by the first author for the purposes of this article.
- [6] Switzerland is a country which is historically one of the most diverse in linguistic, religious and ethnic terms compared with other European countries. It has four national ethnic groups and language regions. The majority of the Swiss population (63.7%) speaks German (Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2005) in the form of geographically highly differentiated Swiss-German dialects. In particular, the German-speaking cantons differ with respect to the predominant religion (Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 2004) and other cultural aspects. However, in order to standardise the measurement of acculturation attitudes towards the adoption of the culture of the host society, we subsumed this diversity under the term 'Swiss culture'.
- [7] A PCA of the five items extracted one component and a negative factor loading for two negatively formulated items; these were subsequently recoded in order to calculate the factor value.
- [8] Initially, the scale for *teachers' reaction to students' misbehaviour* consisted of five items for which the PCA extracted one component. However, two items were subsequently excluded because of insufficient communalities, and a final PCA confirmed one component factor including three items.
- [9] This teacher was excluded from further analysis.

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