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The Development of Culturally Responsive Literacy Practices in the Classrooms of Three Teachers

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LITERACY PRACTICES
IN THE CLASSROOMS OF THREE TEACHERS

A Thesis
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Alicia N. Stephens

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THE DEVELOPMENT OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LITERACY PRACTICES IN THE CLASSROOMS OF THREE TEACHERS

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The responsibility of educators continues to increase as they serve an increasingly diverse population, while attempting to narrow achievement disparities between students with mainstream backgrounds and those who are culturally diverse. Educator cultural perceptions remain unique to their own background and experiences, yet when presented with the challenge of educating the culturally diverse, teachers are often less than enthusiastic toward their instructional obligations. This study targeted how professional development can enhance teacher capability in a culturally diverse school, with the intent to add to existing literature regarding this topic.

This twelve-week qualitative study examined teacher beliefs pertaining to their own culture and that of their students, and whether or not those beliefs would change once teachers had undergone professional development regarding culturally responsive instruction. This study also analyzed the extent of increase in teacher capability for meeting the needs of culturally diverse students once they had participated in professional development focusing on how to more successfully meet student needs. Three teachers were selected as case study participants and their ideas and instructional practices were critically examined throughout the semester. Several data sources were collected and evaluated, including surveys, pre/post interviews, classroom observations, and journal entries.

Analysis of data alluded to the fact that an affirming attitude toward students who differ culturally and the implementation of culturally responsive instruction is vital to the enhancement of classroom instruction. After further data examination, the researcher concluded that educator life experiences, and especially with diverse cultures, is crucial in maximizing their ability to accommodate culturally diverse students. Case study participants' personal belief systems and previous encounters were the most influential factors in their maturation throughout the semester.

Implications of this study consisted of the necessity for professional development programs explicitly modeling how to engage in critical and reflective thinking, reminding teachers how imperative it is to develop an affirmative attitude toward diversity, and providing educators experiences with diverse settings and people. The researcher also determined that cultural competence is a persistent process.

Chapter I

Introduction

Background

In today's educational world, teachers face challenges in meeting the needs of an incessantly growing racially, ethnically and culturally diverse population. Public schools serve students that are more diverse than ever. In 2005, 42 percent of public school students were students of color, an increase of 22 percent from 1972 (Roekel, 2008). Minority enrollment in public schools has grown in all regions of the country and according to Roekel, this is predominantly due to growth in Hispanic student enrollment.

While educators view the challenge of customized instruction through an optimistic lens, in reality, an achievement gap between White students and those who are culturally diverse remains. According to Hochschild and Shen (2009), over the course of the past 30 years, there has been an increase in minority students' access to high-quality education. Hochschild and Shen also note that The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) has documented a narrowing Black-White test score gap in both reading and mathematics. However, despite the improvement demonstrated in groups tested from three ages (age 9, 13, and 17), a sizeable gap still exists and is pervasive (2009).

Though there is no doubt that teachers desire academic and societal success for their students, teachers often lack training accommodating culturally diverse students. This is not to insinuate that educators are unwilling to attend professional development that would extend their knowledge of how to better meet the needs of culturally diverse learners, but rather that the lack of preparation and provision of professional development

targeting culturally responsive instruction is the central contribution to the problem. "We can't teach what we don't know. This statement applies to knowledge both of student populations and subject matter. Yet, too many teachers are inadequately prepared to teach ethnically diverse students" (Gay, 2002, p.106). The National Education Association also acknowledges the lack of educator preparation and training in this area, "three powerful state policy levers—pre-service education, licensure, and ongoing professional development can help close the current cultural gap between many educators and the students they serve" (Roekel, 2008, p.3).

The ways educators perceive culture remain unique according to one's own background and experiences. The resulting lack in cultural understanding amongst educators has the potential to hinder effective multicultural education in public school systems today. In an empirical study conducted by Magnuson and Waldfogel (2008), the authors noted that "growing disparities in income and related social dimensions have threatened progress in closing Black-White achievement gaps through their effect on families and schools, which in turn influence test scores" (p.22). The expanding diversity in student populations across our country denotes a need for change in teacher preparation as teachers face the challenge of meeting more unique student needs than ever before. In reference to two areas of diversity influencing public schools, Hochschild & Shen state, "The growing presence of Asian and especially Latino children and parents in multiethnic schools and districts will shape the education policy in the 21st century" (2009, p.1).

Since scholars have repeatedly associated academic performance and race, the recent expansion in racial variation signifies the necessity for further educator training

regarding differences between race and culture. Magnuson & Waldfogel, (2008) note the evolution of ideas regarding academic discrepancy between cultures. The initial rationalization for incongruity among populations consisted of biological and genetic processes. For example, low academic performance from students who were not White, has historically been associated with race. However, more recent explanations of variation in performance include differences in environmental conditions. Such factors may include, but are not limited to parent level of education, family income, and lack of educator representation of non-mainstream races in the public school system. Despite the advancement in ideas concerning the relationship between race and academic performance, misunderstanding of this topic persists in public schools today.

This study describes the relationship between teacher sensitivity to culture and the literacy practices implemented as a result of teachers' beliefs. An examination of teacher interaction with and delivery of instruction to students who do not belong to the mainstream culture in an elementary school setting allows the researcher to uncover contributions to the existing achievement gap, with specific examination of association between socio-economic status and academic performance.

<center>Statement of the Problem</center>

Educators are accountable for student performance despite existing cultural and socio-economic variance. Every child enters the educational world with a unique set of beliefs, learning styles, and perception of learning based on interactions in their home and the cultural environment developed throughout their life. While teachers may acknowledge that cultural differences exist, more often than not, inclusion of cultures other than the Eurocentric, mainstream culture in curriculum is not present. According to

<center>3</center>

Gay, "explicit knowledge about cultural diversity is imperative to meeting the educational needs of ethnically diverse students" (2002).

With each new academic year, educators in the United States are faced with an increased diversity among their student population, yet their undergraduate encounters and teacher preparation courses and field experiences often leave them unprepared for the challenges that lie in the classroom. "Only one-third of states require teacher candidates to study some aspect of cultural diversity in their core preparation courses, and/or to have a teaching practicum in a culturally diverse setting" (Roekel, 2008, p.2). Though many educators are aware of performance gaps between students of the cultural mainstream and those who are non-mainstream, the fact that the gap remains and has been repeatedly associated with family socio-economic-status denotes the need for further investigation of a solution to this problem. In relation to the social class achievement gap, Perry and Francis (2010) discuss well-intentioned policy makers who yearn for an avenue to close the gap between classes, yet current efforts remain flawed. Magnuson and Waldfogel (2008) discuss the relationship between income variance and achievement scores. They maintain that because Black families tend to earn less than White families, this largely contributes to disparities in test scores between Black and White students.

According to Magnuson and Waldfogel (2008), increases in economic and social inequality are attributed to stalled progress in closing the achievement gap and especially for Black children when compared with White children. In a recent study conducted at Harvard University it was concluded that, "Schools with high proportions of poor and non-Anglo students often have special difficulties in making adequate yearly progress" (Hochschild & Shen, 2009, p.1). According to The National Center for Educational

Statistics (NCES), "While over half (54%) of public school students in 2008-2009 academic year were White, 14 percent of students attending high-poverty schools were White. Black and Hispanic students, in contrast, were overrepresented in high-poverty schools" (2011). The correlation between poverty, culture, and achievement gaps leads to the need for further examination of how educators can narrow the gap.

In order for teaching to be culturally responsive, the validation of students' prior experiences combined with a comprehensive approach to classroom instruction is crucial and may perhaps lead to a more narrow achievement gap. Gay (2002) elaborates on this topic by reminding educators that they must incorporate and transfer knowledge of cultural contributions from various ethnic groups. This is important because of the direct teaching and learning implications cultural knowledge has on students. In reference to the transfer of cultural knowledge between educators and students, Gay states, "This is needed to make schooling more interesting and stimulating for, representative of, and responsive to ethnically diverse students" (2002, p.107). Classroom interactions between the teacher and student are often the result of cultural perception. Despite differences in background, everyone learns better within familiar settings and through familiar styles of interaction and communication. According to Hochschild and Shen (2009), a student residing in poverty, regardless of ethnic origin, will communicate differently in her natural environment than in an educational setting comprised of White middle class cultural acuities, which will ultimately allow for greater occurrence of misconceptions. "Not only outcomes but also processes of education have racial and ethnic inflections—along with other explanatory factors such as class, region, or individual actions and views" (Hochschild & Shen, 2009, p.1). The development of contemporary

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educational policies is often politically and racially influenced, leaving many races and cultures underrepresented during decision making regarding classroom curriculum.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to collect and analyze teacher beliefs regarding the multiple layers and facets of their own culture and that of their students. This process involved offering professional development that encompassed the recognition of one's own culture, the culture of those they educate, and the most effective culturally responsive literacy practices. After teachers participated in professional development, teacher beliefs were analyzed to determine the extent to which teachers are more capable of meeting the needs of culturally diverse students as a result of participation in professional development. This study was conducted with the intention of benefitting both classroom teachers and the students they educate. Two questions that guided the research throughout this study were:

1. How will teacher beliefs change regarding their own culture and that of their students following participation in professional development that encompasses culturally responsive instruction?

2. To what extent will teachers be more capable in their classroom practices as they attempt to meet the unique needs of culturally diverse students following professional development, which specifically addresses how to more effectively meet student needs?

Significance of the Study

Cultural diversity is a term with which many are familiar, yet educators may not realize the implication this term has on their profession. Statistical evidence reflects the

existing achievement gap between students belonging to the mainstream culture and those who are culturally non-mainstream, resulting from socio-economic, racial, and ethnic differences. The obligation of educators to decrease this gap continues to become more prevalent as the student population grows more diverse. In addition to increasing student diversity in our public schools, our nation faces an escalation of children living in poverty, which negatively impacts student achievement (NCES, 2011). The child poverty rate from 2008 to 2009 increased from 17 to 19 percent (NCES, 2011). A recent study conducted by Irvine informs that, "many teachers have only a cursory understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy, and their efforts to bridge the cultural gap often fall short" (2010, p.58).   While much of the responsibility of reducing the achievement gaps lies within individual classrooms of educators across our nation, there remains an absence of professional training offered to teachers that encompasses how to provide effective multicultural education. Undoubtedly, teachers are well intentioned but according to Irvine (2010), the assumption of educators is that culturally relevant pedagogy means ethnic holidays are acknowledged, popular culture is included in the curriculum, and colloquial speech is adopted. Mere cultural tolerance is not a means of solving the problem and will not offer a progressive means of closing an existing academic gap. In schools consisting of predominantly White middle class educators, an explicit understanding of culture must not only be acquired, but also applied for the betterment of classroom instruction and accommodation of culturally diverse students, as opposed to mere tolerance.

        In recent years, schools across our nation have begun to collaborate to discuss specific differentiated instruction through the use of professional learning communities

(PLCs). "PLCs envision schools as learning environments for teachers and students, and thus, PLCs rely on a community-centered perspective to promote professional learning within which teachers are supported in sharing and building on each other's knowledge" (King, Artiles, & Kozleski, 2010, p.10). While PLCs offer opportunities for teachers to better accommodate students with diverse backgrounds, a lack in the provision of multicultural education remains. Even if educators have had some training regarding how to implement culturally responsive instruction, it may have occurred well before they needed it in the classroom. PLCs could serve as the medium to extend their initial training and would allow for embedded training opportunities to aid in more adequately meeting the needs of the culturally diverse learner. It is clear that teachers need more opportunities regarding how to incorporate culturally responsive literacy practices into their classrooms. According to the National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCREST), the need for studies surrounding how to implement culturally responsive instruction effectively is prevalent. "In order to support culturally responsive pedagogy and instruction, professional learning must also explicitly provide guided opportunities for teachers to examine their own culture, experiences, beliefs and biases as related to their teaching of culturally and linguistically diverse students while engaging in, doing, and talking about subject matter" (King et al., 2010, p.16). The objective of this study is parallel to this statement, which reinforces the need for not only more studies to be conducted, but the provision of professional development in this area, as well. According to King et al., "professional learning approaches should be ongoing, job-embedded and informed by larger reform initiatives, as well as collaborative, constructivist, and inquiry based" (2010, p.16). As the need prevails, so should the

research. In order for the achievement gap between culturally mainstream and culturally non-mainstream students to be decreased and eventually closed, researchers must go forward with similar studies as in this study, addressing individual teachers and classrooms across the nation and providing them with not only a vision, but also training regarding how to meet the needs of the culturally diverse learner.

"Ongoing professional learning is more and more localized in the classrooms rather than in traditional professional development workshops. This approach elevates the role of the teachers as learner and is influencing the ways in which states, school districts, and local public schools are making time for ongoing professional learning among teachers" (King et al., 2010, p.5). Research conducted contributed to this discipline, offering valuable teacher insight regarding how the provision of an equal education, regardless of student background, could be accomplished.

Limitations

Since case study participants were the primary resource in this study, a plethora of data was collected. Due to the large amount of qualitative data collected, the researcher made the decision not to analyze some data, which did not appear to have direct bearing on the research questions. McMillan and Schumacher (1993) defined qualitative research as, "primarily an inductive process of organizing data into categories and identifying patterns (relationships) among categories" (p.479). Hence, while an abundance of data was collected, the implication in this definition is that meaning and data will merge in an organic fashion, allowing the researcher to choose and analyze data that was most influential in the study. Given that results can be influenced by the researcher's personal biases and idiosyncrasies in qualitative research, the fact that the researcher is a White

middle class female who taught in the school where the study was conducted is also a limitation of the study because the researcher had a White middle class background and experiences. In a qualitative study such as this, there is no numerical representation, which likewise, could be determined a limitation of the study.

Definition of Terms

Culturally Responsive Teaching "is a pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning (Ladson-Billing, 1994). According to Gay, "In addition to acquiring a knowledge base about ethnic and cultural diversity, teachers need to learn how to convert it into culturally responsive curriculum designs and instructional strategies" (2002, p. 108). In other words, the teacher implements culturally responsive teaching by creating a climate in the classroom, which is conducive to learning for all students regardless of their race, ethnicity, or background. Gay further explains this type of instruction in her description of the educators who apply culturally responsive teaching,

> Culturally responsive teachers know how to determine the multicultural strengths
> and weaknesses of curriculum designs and instructional materials and make the
> changes necessary to improve their overall quality. These analyses should focus
> on the quantity, accuracy, complexity, placement, purpose, variety, significance,
> and authenticity of the narrative texts, visual illustrations, learning activities, role
> models, and authorial sources used in the instructional materials (2002, p.108).

Culture "encompasses many things. Among these are ethnic groups' cultural values, traditions, communication, learning styles, contributions, and relational patterns" (Gay, 2002, p.107).

Discourse encompasses socially acceptable ways of communicating, thinking, and acting and one's primary discourse is generally developed during their earliest years in the home and community.

Ethnicity pertains to races or peoples (Henry, 1986). "Members of *ethnic groups* see themselves as culturally distinct from other groupings in a society and are seen by those others to be so. Many different characteristics may serve to distinguish ethnic groups from one another, but most usual are language, history or ancestry (real or imagined), religion, and styles of dress or adornment" (Gillborn, 2005, p.5).

Qualitative methodology refers, in the broadest sense, to research that produces descriptive data: people's own written or spoken words and observable behavior (Kopala & Suzuki, 1999. p.51). By definition, qualitative research embodies, "any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990, p. 17). In this study, the researcher relied heavily on participant feedback by means of observation, informal interviews, and surveys, all of which are qualitative in nature.

Non-Mainstream Worldview involves an optimistic view of diversity that requires teachers to, "view differences as the 'norm' in society and reject notions that any one group is more competent than another" (Richards, Brown, and Forde, 2006, p.7). In reference to classroom teaching, "there must be an acknowledgement that the teachers' views of the world are not the only views" (Richards et al.)

Eurocentric Worldview fosters a White middle class view of the world and "by continuing a traditional 'conform or fail' approach to instruction, teachers perpetuate a

monocultural institution" (Richards et al., p.7). By expecting students to conform to the

mainstream or predominant culture, diversity is ignored and discouraged.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Cultural differences between educators and students often impede the teacher's ability to communicate academic expectations, leaving a small window of opportunity for success for the culturally diverse learner. Despite escalating racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity in our country, recent literature (e.g., Garcia & Godina, 2004; McGraner & Saenz, 2009) indicates that educators have yet to transfer their multicultural knowledge into classroom teaching practices that will ultimately benefit all students, regardless of their background. It has been theorized that, "the academic achievement of ethnically diverse students will improve when they are taught through their own cultural and experiential filters" (Gay, 2002, p.106). All students maintain their own unique literacy experiences, most of which are directly associated with their culture and all of which have been interpreted according to their "cultural values, traditions, communication, learning styles, contributions, and relational patterns" (Gay, 2002, p.107). Various theories indicate that literacy practices, which are specific to a student's language and culture, increase the likelihood of success in the culturally diverse learner. "Culturally responsive literacy instruction is instruction that bridges the gap between the school and the world of the student, is consistent with the values of the students' own culture aimed at assuring academic learning, and encourages teachers to adapt their instruction to meet the learning needs of all students" (Callins, 2006, p.63).

As indicated in Chapter I, this study involved the collection and examination of teacher beliefs pertaining to their own culture and that of their students. The extent to which teachers are more capable of providing culturally responsive literacy practices

following ongoing professional development related to this topic were explored as well. This literature review will describe the history of perceptions of multicultural education. In this section, the relationship between socio-economic status, culture, and achievement will be reviewed as well because the study was conducted in a school with a large population of economically disadvantaged students. Theories of culturally responsive teaching will also be discussed. Literature pertaining to culturally responsive pedagogy and literacy practices will also be a focus of this review. Discussion in the multicultural professional development section will involve a deficit in educator preparation for meeting the needs of culturally diverse students due to a lack of professional development pertaining to the provision of multicultural education. Finally, a section regarding cultural barriers to academic achievement will be included in this review. Additional areas of interest to be referenced in this review include the origin of culturally responsive instruction and examinations of cultural beliefs and lifestyles. This review will include both supporting and opposing ideas of previously conducted theoretical research with specific regard for instructional practices and methodology.

History of Perceptions of Multicultural Education

Throughout the history of education, White middle class educators have not only taken control of curricular decisions, but have also assumed dominance over other cultures throughout the United States, which continues to be evident in schools today. Consequently, educators face the threat of academic failure of their students as they continue their careers without the necessary training regarding how to meet the needs of culturally diverse learners. Author Lisa Delpit initially addressed the lack of research data to support instructional literacy approaches for children of color (1988).

Now, more than twenty years later, students continue to attend schools in which teachers are unprepared to meet the unique needs of an increasingly diverse population. Research has consistently documented the failure of programs to adequately prepare teacher candidates for the realities of the classroom. More specifically, the literature on preparation for teaching diverse student populations show few changes over the last 25 years in how teachers are being prepared to address the individual needs of ethnic minority students and English Language Learners (McGraner & Saenz, 2009, p.2).

In 1988, Delpit discussed the fear of African Americans who were then skeptical of the research conducted "Academic research has, after all, found us genetically inferior, culturally deprived, and verbally deficient" (Delpit, 1988, p. 286). More recently however, many authors offer ideas that are contrary to the originally proposed racial inferiority, demonstrating an evolution of beliefs regarding multicultural education. "Although research in this area is largely inconclusive, points of promise have emerged-—specifically those related to the ability of field experiences to bolster candidates' capacity to understand, relate to, and work with diverse populations" (McGraner & Saenz, 2009, p.2).

Despite the increased positive attitudes toward educating students who are culturally diverse, researchers continue to acknowledge the existence of prejudices in the educational world. According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), while many perceive schools to be unbiased settings, this is far from the truth. Public schools foster curricular, pedagogical and evaluative practices that offer an advantage to affluent White males. Due to the historically repetitive lack of provision of classroom instruction that meets the

needs of all students regardless of their background, there is a need for further research pertaining to this topic. According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), in order to overcome the negative treatment of diversity that presently exists, teacher educators must communicate a vision to preservice teachers that encompasses effective teaching and learning in a culturally diverse society and utilize that vision to permeate multicultural education in the classroom.

By exploring each of the many contributors to the development of one's culture, teachers can cultivate necessary skills for addressing specific areas of need based on differences in their own backgrounds and that of their students. One such area that has been repeatedly associated with culture is family income level. Socio-economic status has been historically correlated with lower levels of academic performance. Delpit (1988) addressed the issue of White middle class educators attempting to reform the homes of poor families to match their own. In relation to this problem Delpit recalled often hearing school employees refer to poor parents as "uncaring" when educators approached families with suggestions for reducing dissimilar living situations. More than twenty years later, similar barriers still exist in education. Evans (2004) noted the "legacy of discrimination" (p.4) in regard to those residing in low-income homes. Evans (2004) also discussed barriers to academic performance caused by resource disparities between schools serving low-income families and their more affluent competitors. While barriers can be overcome with adequate culturally responsive instruction addressing variation of culture in relation to family socio-economic status, teachers must become aware of and sensitive to the unique needs and strengths of students.

Theories of Culturally Responsive Teaching

One of the earliest and most prevalent theories of culturally responsive teaching is culturally responsive pedagogy. This theory indicates that teacher sensitivity to culture can increase academic achievement in culturally diverse learners. According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), when teachers apply culturally responsive teaching practices in the classroom, reminding students that they are capable thinkers, students will extend their efforts to meet the expectations of the teacher. While broad definitions of responsive teaching exist, each definition generally encompasses the following, "By responsive teaching, we mean that which merges the needs and interests of youth as persons with the needs and interests of youth as learners of new concepts, practices, and skills" (Garcia & Godina, 2004, p.322). In reference to culturally responsive pedagogy Gay notes that, "this theory postulates that discontinuities between the school and low-income students and students of color is an important factor in their low academic achievement. The theory also postulates that the academic achievement of these students will increase if schools and teaching are changed so that they reflect and draw on their cultural and language strengths" (Gay, 2000, p.ix). Culturally relevant pedagogy emerged from research centered on, "the conceptions of self and others held by culturally relevant teachers, the manner in which social relations are structured by culturally relevant teachers, and the conceptions of knowledge held by culturally relevant teachers" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p.478). Gloria Ladson-Billings also suggested that culturally relevant teaching must meet three criteria: "an ability to develop students academically, a willingness to nurture and support cultural competence, and the development of a sociopolitical or critical consciousness" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p.483).

Villegas and Lucas (2002) extend the idea that sociopolitical consciousness must be developed by creating a vision for the culturally responsive teacher, by following the reading of an abundance of empirical and conceptual literature, by observations conducted in classrooms consisting of culturally and linguistically diverse students, and by working with preservice teachers. According to Villegas and Lucas, sociopolitical consciousness, an affirming attitude, commitment and skills to act as agents of change, constructivism, learning about students, and culturally responsive teaching practices are six significant strands used in the description of culturally responsive teachers.

Among their six characteristics used to define the culturally responsive teacher is sociocultural consciousness. Villegas and Lucas refer to sociocultural consciousness as understanding that the way individuals think and behave is predisposed by race/ethnicity, social class and language. Unless educators acknowledge this fact, they are unable to cross the sociocultural boundaries, which detach them from their students. "Candidates' understanding of the complex web of sociocultural and political contexts of ELL (English Language Learner) teaching is particularly critical because of the mass of language-minority students" (McGraner & Saenz, 2009, p.5). The development of sociocultural consciousness is a common theme as researchers (e.g., Gay, 2001; McGraner & Saenz, 2009; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) offer descriptions of the culturally responsive teacher. Recent literature also suggests that the transfer of sociocultural knowledge from teachers to students is vital. Richards et al. (2006) suggest that when a classroom environment encompasses culturally responsive instruction and allows for the transfer of sociocultural knowledge, alienation felt by culturally diverse students decreases. Additional discussion from Richards et al. includes the obligation teachers have to prepare students for

meaningful and responsible classroom and societal participation, which requires critical examination of collective policies and practices combined with effort to correct existing injustices.

<p style="text-align:center">Culturally Responsive Pedagogy and Practices</p>

Similar to culturally responsive instruction is culturally relevant pedagogy. Effective teaching in a culturally diverse classroom loosely defines culturally responsive pedagogy. Many educators today retain the misconception that simple acknowledgement of other cultures is sufficient for meeting the needs of culturally diverse students. However, repeated academic failure from culturally diverse students indicates otherwise. According to Callins (2006), teachers who demonstrate culturally responsive pedagogy serve as facilitators of learning in the teaching environment, are sensitive to culture, and communicate high expectations for all students regardless of their background. Similarly, Gay (2002) describes the necessity for communication of high expectations and teachers who facilitate a community of learning, in reference to culturally relevant pedagogy. Commonalities of this theory include: facilitation of instruction, cultural sensitivity and positive attitudes toward culture, achievement, and families.

Teachers who demonstrate sensitivity to culture create opportunities for literacy practices that are culturally responsive. Instruction in which unique student prior experiences are utilized and built upon promotes academic success. Endorsing candid discussion of topics related to student lives outside the classroom can facilitate a non-threatening environment where all students, regardless of their background, may thrive. In reference to culturally responsive literacy practices, Villegas and Lucas (2002) maintain that when learning is embedded in meaningful activities of particular interest to

students, they are implicitly taught that concepts and thoughts are phenomena to be engendered as opposed to mere facts.

<div align="center">Multicultural Professional Development</div>

Academic success of students who are culturally diverse is based on the premise of teacher understanding and implementation of effective instructional practices. According to Richards, Brown, & Forde (2006), professional development has been and continues to be an avenue of reform in public schools across the nation and can allow opportunities for growth in specifically targeted areas of concern, when utilized appropriately. "Teachers have a responsibility to all their students to ensure that all have an equal opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability" (Richards et al. 2006, p.10). During the past decade, researchers and educational organizations (e.g., McGraner & Saenz, 2009; NCCREST, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) have insisted that professional development is more essential than ever. In reference to the increasingly diverse population, Villegas and Lucas state, "Clearly, preparing teachers to teach children of diverse racial, ethnic, social class, and language backgrounds is a pressing issue in teacher education today and will continue to be for some time to come" (2002, p.20).

Despite increasingly diverse student populations, professional educator preparation has undergone little change to accommodate the transformation. Researchers have also presented concerns about the quality of professional development. The issue of quality professional development has been a concern for more than 15 years when Guskey (1994) noted that, "Questions are being raised about the effectiveness of all forms of professional development in education." Additionally, Villegas and Lucas note the following in reference to inadequately prepared teachers, "the typical response of

teacher education programs to the growing diversity among K-12 students has been to add a course or two on multicultural education, bilingual education, or urban education but to leave the rest of the curriculum largely intact" (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p.20). Since teachers must complete a number of professional development hours each year, training should be constructed in a way that allows teachers to better meet student needs.

Concerns have also been raised regarding an execution deficit following teacher training. Educators demonstrate a lack of effective implementation once they undergo professional development. "Teachers need to believe that schools can be sites for social transformation even as they recognize that schools have typically served to maintain social inequalities" (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Regardless of the controversy teachers face in their approach to professional development, in reality, it is a requirement that must be fulfilled. Since diverse learners are dependent upon teachers for meeting their educational needs, focused professional development would allow educators to extend their multicultural content knowledge. "Completing coursework in multicultural education is not enough. Teacher candidates also must deepen their knowledge of effective instructional practices for teaching academic content to nonnative speakers" (McGraner & Saenz, 2009, p.11). Gay (2000) suggests that teachers need to change the way they educate the culturally diverse, "Significant changes are needed in how African, Asian, Latino, and Native American students are taught in U.S. schools" (p.1). For more than 20 years, scholars (e.g., Delpit, 1988; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; McGraner & Saenz, 2009; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) have indicated a need for teachers who are more capable of implementing culturally responsive instruction, thus sustaining the fact that

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educators have yet to change their daily teaching methods to meet the needs of diverse learners.

While researchers advocate teacher training in culturally responsive literacy practices, little evidence exists that this advice has been taken. According to McGraner and Saenz (2009), limited literature is available regarding the effects of foundational courses on teachers' ability to provide effective instructional practices and increase student achievement, which this study deems vital to shaping educator mindsets and temperaments toward working with diverse populations. Research investigating the effects of teacher training in culturally responsive instruction would be a valuable addition to current literature.

In 2002, Joyce and Showers wrote about three case studies that examined the effects of teacher professional development on student achievement. The authors concluded that though not all programs for staff development demonstrate the desired outcome of increasing student achievement, professional development, when designed effectively, could positively impact student learning. Murrell (1998) argues against professional development in multicultural education and claims that it hinders urban school reform. Murrell notes that professional development excludes necessary parties, including parents and community members, thus disparaging the need for development of parents, children and community members. The necessity for follow up in professional development is also a vital part of the implementation process. In reference to this matter, Joyce and Showers state, "leaders might want to consider the most effective ways of monitoring professional development activities to evaluate their impact on student achievement" (2002, p.5).

Cultural Barriers to Academic Achievement

Classroom educators attempt to offer all students the same instruction with hopes of success, still student perceptions and interpretations will differ greatly as a result of their unique backgrounds and experiences. Culture is considered one of the most influential factors affecting the creation of new knowledge, and yet the exchange of knowledge between teachers and students is often hindered by cultural disparity. Variation in language, communication, and interaction among teachers and students frequently results in confused pupils who are unable to reach their highest level of potential academically.

According to author Gloria Ladson-Billings, "for the most part, studies of cultural appropriateness, congruence, or compatibility have been conducted within small-scale communities" (1995, p.468). Based on this knowledge, it could be perceived that many contributions to multicultural education are specific to the peoples being studied and thus research is limited, prohibiting accurate general conclusions made by researchers. Though research is limited, commonalities between various studies, however, suggest heightened validity among conclusions drawn. Several researchers (e.g., Delpit, 1988; Garcia & Godina, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1994) note an existing barrier resulting from differences in discourse, as it can impede effective communication exchanges between teachers and students. Since discourse encompasses socially acceptable ways of communicating, thinking, and acting, extreme inconsistencies exist regarding what is considered acceptable in the classroom. A child's primary discourse is generally developed during the earliest years in the home and community, and therefore may differ greatly from the teacher, often leading to misunderstanding in the classroom. Teacher-

student communication is often obstructed by differences in discourse; hence the study of classroom interaction is vital. "Discourse emphasizes not only language itself, but also the ways of knowing, doing, being, reading, writing, and talking that people in different communities enact, often without even realizing that their discourses are unique to their group, whether a cultural, ethnic, gender, or professional group" (Garcia & Godina, 2004, p.322).

Researchers (Delpit, 1988; Garcia & Godina, 2004) maintain that every student enters the classroom with a primary discourse and the development of a secondary discourse in the school setting is dependent upon the mainstream form of communication. For example, White middle class students and teachers often communicate differently than someone who was not born into this social class. Thus, in order for a student to learn a secondary discourse, the rules of language, communication, and what is considered socially acceptable must be explicitly taught. "Status is also maintained because dominant groups in a society apply frequent 'tests' of fluency in the dominant discourses, often focused on its most superficial aspects—grammar, style, mechanics—so as to exclude from full participation those who are not born to positions of power" (Delpit, 1994, p.297).

As educators interact with and instruct culturally diverse students, misunderstandings often occur due to language discrepancy even if they speak the same language. When students are unable to understand teacher expectations, opportunity for success becomes limited. "Teachers must acknowledge and validate students' home language without using it to limit students' potential. Students' home discourses are vital to their perception of self and sense of community connectedness" (Delpit, 1994, p.301).

Researchers share similar conclusions regarding communication or differences between cultures. Consequently, the argument that communication barriers exist is justified. "We argue that best practice attends to the knowledges and discourses of the youths' homes; ethnic, racial, or geographic communities; and youth culture, popular culture, school culture, classroom culture, or discipline-specific culture" (Garcia & Godina, 2004, p.322). The constant reinforcement of the need for communication that matches the students' primary discourse lends itself to the support of this concept. Studies also reflect greater academic success when educators provide instruction that encompasses a student's home language.

According to Richards et al. (2006), many expected behaviors in school, including types of discourse and even sitting in a seat, are different from students' cultural and linguistic practices in the home. Richards et al. also denote that bridging the discontinuity between home and school is the only way to increase student success. In reference to students who do not receive instruction through communication styles matching their primary discourse, Gay states, "because they are denied use of their natural ways of talking, their thinking, intellectual engagement, and academic efforts are diminished as well" (2002, p.111). Primary discourse practice is necessary for knowledge creation. Therefore when students are expected to repress normal interaction, learning opportunities are inhibited.

Another potential contribution to cultural barriers is socio-economic status. Researchers (e.g., Gay, 2001; Perry & Francis, 2010) acknowledge the fact that while barriers exist between social classes, students residing in homes with low-income families are not less capable. According to Perry and Francis, "social class remains the

strongest predictor of educational achievement" (2010, p.2). Though family income and achievement are related, Perry and Francis maintain that closing the social class gap in education would allow students residing in homes of low socio-economic status equal opportunities for success.

Since culture is not limited to a difference in race/ethnicity, but rather, includes differences in way of life, reviewing the correlation between socio-economic status and academic achievement is necessary. According to Evans (2004), young people, who represent 25% of the population, and 40% of which are low-income, demonstrate the effects of poverty both before and after they enter school. Evans also notes that the majority of low-income families are African American (43%) and Hispanic (40%) students.

Low socio-economic status is an area of concern for educators when educating students who are culturally diverse. Statistical evidence noted above demonstrates the fact that low-income families are at a greater risk of experiencing cultural barriers in the classroom setting. According to Evans (2004) students residing in poverty face social environmental challenges that can hinder classroom performance, including limited access to reading and educational materials in the home, fewer routines in the home, a lack of exposure to multiple forms of cognitive stimulation and enhancement, lower levels of parental involvement, and greater occurrence of family disorder. Evans (2004) maintains that factors associated with poverty are indeed risk factors that are potentially hazardous to a child's physical, socio-emotional, and cognitive health.

Literature Review Summary

The examination of theories of culturally responsive teaching, culturally responsive pedagogy, multicultural professional development, cultural barriers such as primary discourse and socio-economic status were included in this review. Commonalities among findings from various researchers over the course of many decades were discussed as well. When educators are more aware of cultural barriers and how to overcome those, they will ultimately provide more effective instruction to the culturally diverse learner. Increased teacher sensitivity to culture can allow for the incorporation of more efficient teaching methods and higher retention in students upon their deeper understanding of expectations. Based on the literature reviewed, incorporating culturally responsive teaching practices will enable teachers to meet the unique and diverse need of their students. As diversity in race, ethnicity, and culture continues to rise in our country, studies regarding how to more capably meet the needs of all students, regardless of their background, must prevail.

Chapter III

Methodology

Overview of Methodology

As educators continue to face the challenge of providing instructional support to the growing diverse population of students, the need persists for instructional practices that facilitate and support academic achievement of all learners. Both previous and current research characterizes effective multicultural education by intellectual reciprocity, acknowledgement and embracement of culture, and equitable access to education. Culturally responsive instruction includes attention to and respect for students' home language and communicative interactions with students in which they are culturally content (McIntyre, Hulan, & Layne, 2010). When an educator implements culturally responsive instruction, she utilizes students' cultural knowledge, experiences, and strengths. A culturally responsive teacher will use the culture and experiences of students as a teaching resource. Despite this knowledge, academic gaps are steadily increasing between those belonging to the culture of power and those who are culturally non-mainstream.

The purpose of this study was to collect and analyze teacher beliefs regarding the multiple facets of their own culture and that of their students. This process involved offering professional development that encompassed the recognition of one's own culture, the culture of those they educate, and the most effective culturally responsive literacy practices. Once teachers participated in professional development, teacher beliefs were analyzed to determine the extent to which teachers were more capable of accommodating culturally diverse students as a result of participation in professional development. This

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study was conducted with the intention of benefitting both classroom teachers and the students they educate. Two questions that guided the research throughout this study were:

1. How will teacher beliefs change regarding their own culture and that of their students following professional development that encompasses culturally responsive instruction?

2. To what extent will teachers be more capable in their classroom practices as they attempt to meet the unique needs of culturally diverse students following professional development, which specifically addresses how to more effectively accommodate student needs?

Research Design

"In qualitative inquiry, initial curiosities for research often come from real-world observations, emerging from the interplay of the researcher's direct experience" (Marshall & Rossman, 2010, p.25). Based on the study conducted and because the process of answering the research questions required the researcher to rely heavily on participant feedback by means of observation, informal interviews, and surveys, the research design was qualitative in nature. Qualitative research does not begin from a predetermined starting point or proceed through a fixed sequence of steps, but involves interconnection and interaction among the different design components (Maxwell, 2005). Contrary to quantitative research, which "supports an assertion of causation by showing a correlation between an earlier event and a subsequent event," (p. 23) the emphasis of this study targeted the progression of educator expertise throughout the process. Author Lisa Delpit (1988) initially noted that there was a lack of research to support classroom

literacy practices for children of color. In 1995, culturally relevant pedagogy arose from research conducted by Gloria Ladson-Billings pertaining to conceptions and knowledge of teachers who implement culturally relevant instruction. While the provision of effective multicultural education is not a new research topic for scholars, the researcher conducted research in an attempt to gain new perspectives related to this topic, hence reinforcing the need for a qualitative research design.

During the preliminary data collection stage, a survey was used to provide the researcher with initial teacher beliefs regarding their own culture and that of their students and the role these convictions play in both instructional methods and student success. Survey responses were considered in the selection of case study participants.

Since the research questions examined the "hows" and "whys" of participant behaviors, three participants were selected to participate in a case study as this type of analysis lends itself to qualitative research. A case study is an empirical inquiry in which the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context and boundaries between phenomenon and its context are not clearly evident (Yin, 1994). Case studies facilitated opportunities for explicit, comprehensive data to be collected. This study included the following sources of evidence collection: documents (letters, agendas, progress reports), interviews (both open-ended and focused), and participant observation (assuming a role in the situation and getting an inside view of the events). Data collection and analysis for this study was completed during the 2011-2012 school year. This study included the analysis of teacher dispositions regarding the multiple facets of culture in relation to teaching methods and student success and how initial teacher beliefs

transformed as a result of professional development. The aspects of culture included, but were not limited to, race, ethnicity, language, and socio-economic-status.

Context of the Study

This study was conducted in an elementary school in a rural town in south central Kentucky. At the time of the study, the researcher was a teacher in Stellar Elementary School (pseudonym). The selected elementary school was one of 13 elementary schools in the district and had approximately 250 students enrolled between pre-kindergarten and sixth grades. Approximately 20% of the students were not White. Ethnicities at this elementary school included: Caucasian, African American, and Latino students. When the study was conducted, 72% of student families enrolled received free or reduced lunch. Despite the predominantly White student enrollment at Stellar Elementary School (80%), the income disparity between student families and teachers at this school resulted in variation of cultures, which led to communication barriers in the classroom. According to the 2009-2010 school report card (Kentucky Department of Education, 2010), students residing in economically disadvantaged homes performed lower than those of average economic status. Additionally, those belonging to the mainstream culture outperformed ethnically and culturally diverse students. During the 2009-2010 school year, 75% of students achieved proficiency in Reading and 74.4% were proficient in Mathematics, with percentages in both areas being higher than the state average. As a result of the information provided in the report card, and because the faculty consisted of predominantly White middle class educators, this was an appropriate school choice in which to conduct this research study.

Selection of Participants

Before any form of data collection could take place for this study, a proposal was submitted and approval (Appendix A) from the Institutional Review Board was granted. Since data was collected during this study in both the natural environment of classroom teachers and through the use of structured questions in interviews and surveys, all participants prior to any data collection submitted a signed informed consent document. The consent form (Appendix B) informed teachers regarding the study prior to their agreement to participate: nature and purpose of the project, explanation of procedures, discomfort and risks, benefits, confidentiality and refusal/withdrawal. Participating teachers were also given the opportunity to have any questions answered regarding the study prior to their consent. Once individuals committed to involvement in the study, an initial data response sheet was administered to all participants to collect general information concerning their unique teaching experience. Immediately following the submission of data response sheets, teachers completed surveys pertaining to cultural diversity awareness and teacher efficacy. The surveys were used to measure the teacher attitudes in relation to efficacy, as well as their "attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors toward children of culturally diverse backgrounds" (Henry, 1986, p.4).

The sampling design was purposeful since this type of sampling was most suitable for this study. Purposeful sampling allowed for in depth study of case study participants. In reference to purposeful sampling, Patten states, "qualitative researchers prefer to use informed judgment in selecting participants, while quantitative researchers prefer to leave the selection of participants to chance" (2007, p.28). Following this sampling design, participants were selected to participate in the case study based on their responses to a

cultural diversity awareness inventory as well as their feedback offered during initial

professional development training. This selection process increased the likelihood of

teachers providing data that was both varied and thorough. Those chosen to participate in

the case study demonstrated variation in their individual cultural awareness, teacher

efficacy, and a willingness to apply culturally responsive instructional practices. Both the

initial surveys and professional development aided in the selection process. By

purposefully choosing case study participants, the researcher ensured that case studies are

wide-ranging, thus providing avenues for a variety of readers to relate to an aspect of at

least one case study participant. Furthermore, varied, yet specific insight was retrieved

from those participating in the case study as a result of the chosen sampling design.

Following the review of surveys, three teachers were selected to participate as a

case study based on the following criteria: (1) four or more years of teaching experience

in an elementary school setting; (2) three or more years teaching experience in a Title I

school, where a high percentage (60% or more) of students are enrolled in the

free/reduced lunch program, which could indicate experience with culturally diverse

students; (3) willingness to offer rich opinions and experiences in relation to their unique

ability or lack thereof to accommodate culturally diverse learners, as indicated in survey

responses. Since the research objective included gathering varied information from each

of the case studies, participants had differing backgrounds in relation to their cultural

awareness. The researcher intentionally selected one participant who had little or no

experience with culturally responsive instruction and demonstrated limited cultural

knowledge, one participant whose adolescence was similar to that of the students at

Stellar Elementary School and demonstrated a desire to learn during the initial

professional development session, and one participant who demonstrated knowledge of both culture and instruction that was culturally responsive, along with an eager attitude toward implementation of culturally responsive literacy practices. Since the selection of case study participants was based on their prior experience, attitude, and cultural knowledge, the researcher combined her previous knowledge of how each teacher interacted in the classroom with their attitude and willingness demonstrated during the first professional development session. The number of case study participants selected was dependent upon the number of individuals who demonstrated an ability to add to the study.

The first case study participant selected was a teacher named Kate who taught Special Education. Kate was a White woman in her mid 40's with a transient background and had devoted 21 years to teaching students with special needs. Her transiency and life experiences contributed to Kate's attitude of openness and positivity. Kate demonstrated an unbiased nature and was eager to participate in this study.

Jade was the second participant selected and after having spent nine years teaching in an emotional behavioral disorder classroom had transitioned to a sixth grade classroom. Jade was raised on a farm and in a home where education was greatly valued. The White, 39 year-old middle class woman was open minded and valued acceptance. Jade agreed to participate in this study quickly and optimistically.

The final case study participant selected was a young, single, outspoken, fourth grade teacher named Jillian. Like Jade, Jillian was also raised on a farm. Her mother and great aunt had both retired from Stellar Elementary School, which happened to be

Jillian's alma mater. Jillian had a strong educational background and demonstrated a lack of experience with diversity.

While all teachers in the school participated in professional development, which informed them of how to enhance implementation of culturally responsive instruction, the three teachers selected for the case study were the only teachers with whom one-on-one interviews and classroom observations occurred. This supports the case study framework, in which the sample size is limited, yet studied to a more intense degree. Qualitative researchers tend to use smaller samples because of the amount of time required with participants as they collect data through extended, in-depth, one-on-one unstructured interviews and extensive observations over time (Patten, 2007).

Professional Development

The professional development, which was offered in thirty minute increments during PLCs, once a week over a span of two months for a total of eight sessions totaling four hours of professional development, entailed perceptions of multicultural education, theories of culturally responsive teaching, culturally responsive pedagogy and practices, and cultural barriers to academic achievement. Professional development also assisted teachers in the development of their unique cultural understanding while offering avenues for them to incorporate more appropriate culturally responsive instructional practices, which ultimately increased the frequency of learning opportunities in the classroom. A key concept conveyed during professional development was that culturally responsive instruction is student-centered, culturally mediated, and that the teacher teaches to and through student strengths. The researcher planned and delivered professional development instruction using various resources. During the planning of professional

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development, the researcher relied heavily upon the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol instrument, CRIOP, (Appendix F). Authors associated with the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development developed the CRIOP instrument (Powell, Cantrell, Carter, Cox, Powers, Rightmyer, Seitz, & Wheeler, 2011.). The CRIOP instrument is also explored in the book *Literacy for All Students* (Powell & Rightmyer, 2011), which was a resource for the creation of professional development. Because the CRIOP is a teacher friendly resource, the researcher was able to demonstrate explicit examples of instructional strategies, teacher-student interactions, and the creation of an environment that is culturally responsive. The researcher was also able to use the work of well-known scholars (e.g., Garcia & Godina, 2004; Gay, 2002; McGraner & Saenz, 2009) to assist in the preparation and implementation of professional development. Educator training delivery was in the form of presentation of Power Points regarding how to incorporate culturally responsive instruction in the classroom. Content included in Power Point presentations involved utilizing student culture to optimize classroom literacy learning, the multiple facets of culture and how teachers can build upon prior knowledge to enhance instruction and learning, how to incorporate culturally responsive instruction that is observable in the classroom, and how students are often negatively affected when culturally responsive instruction is not integral to instruction.

Teachers were also introduced to and given opportunities for discussions of high quality literature and other resources related to mainstream and non-mainstream culture in school. Such literature and resources included scholarly articles and journals from various authors (e.g., Lisa Delpit; Geneva Gay). Power Point presentations were created with information from Preparing for Culturally Responsive Teaching (Gay, 2002),

information in Literacy for All Students (Powell & Rightmyer, 2011), and observable

classroom measures noted in the CRIOP instrument. The CRIOP is an observation

protocol used to measure the extent to which instruction is culturally responsive. There

are eight pillars to be examined when looking for instruction that is sensitive to and

inclusive of all cultures. The following pillars are included in the CRIOP and were

included in the professional development sessions: classroom caring and teacher

disposition, classroom climate/physical environment, family collaboration, assessment

practices, curriculum/planned experiences, pedagogy/instructional practices,

discourse/instructional conversation. The researcher also offered explanations

concerning how an increase in cultural knowledge could allow teachers to better

accommodate their students and how teacher collaboration/discussion in professional

learning communities (PLCs) regarding cultural knowledge could be of assistance in

classroom instruction. For example, during the last professional development session,

teachers were asked to collaborate and discuss how this study did or could change their

instruction to make it more or less culturally responsive, the benefit or lack thereof in

implementing culturally responsive instruction, and how culturally responsive instruction

is significant at a school like Stellar Elementary.

Data Collection

Upon the completion of professional development, all participants were asked to

complete The Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory a second time in order for the

researcher to determine the extent to which teachers demonstrated a deeper understanding

of culture as a result of participation in the training. The teacher efficacy survey was

administered a second time as well in order to determine whether or not teachers

demonstrated growth in this area as a result of professional development. Individuals who were selected for the three case studies were observed twice in order to gather information regarding change in their instructional practices as a result of the ongoing professional development. They also participated in a one-on-one interview with the researcher to answer questions specifically targeting whether or not they demonstrated growth in their ability to provide culturally responsive instruction and if they were more capable of meeting the needs of culturally diverse learners following the professional development. The CRIOP served as the observation tool used during each observation to ensure reliability. Case study participants were also asked to keep a journal noting their progress or lack thereof.

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the results are presented as discussions of trends and/or themes based on words, not statistics (Patten, 2007). As one comes to understand the correlation between quantitative and qualitative research, the role of the researcher in this study became clearer. "The goal of qualitative research is to provide leads, hunches, and hypotheses that, in turn, may or may not be supported by the quantitative researcher employing a more rigorous (and therefore more scientific) method with a much larger sample" (Kopala & Suzuki, 1999, p.37). According to this statement, the qualitative researcher's role is to act as the human instrument, gathering in-depth data from a small sample group of other human instruments and formulating an idea that can be further investigated through qualitative research. Through observation, "the qualitative researcher enters the participant's world, not as a person who knows everything, but as a person who has come to learn" (Kopala & Suzuki, 1999, p.43). Throughout this study,

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the researcher primarily observed and listened to participants selected for the case study. The researcher's role was to acquire new information through direct observation and one-on-one interviews. The researcher authored this study and is a White, middle class, female educator, who taught at Stellar Elementary School. Hence, the researcher was able to relate to case study participants, yet the need for detachment from case studies presented a challenge as the study was conducted.

<center>Data Sources</center>

Surveys

Sources of data collection for this study included surveys, interviews, observations and journals. The first survey administered was the Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (Appendix C), which is a questionnaire that allowed the user to self-examine attitudes, beliefs, and behavior towards young children having culturally diverse backgrounds. It was uniquely designed for those who provide direct services to children of culturally diverse backgrounds (Henry, 1986, p.4). This survey consists of 28 questions pertaining to awareness of cultural diversity and each question contains the following five responses for selection: strongly agree, agree, neutral, strongly disagree, and disagree. A second survey, referred to as the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (Appendix D), was administered to collect teacher opinions regarding self-efficacy. This self-examining questionnaire consisted of questions regarding teacher beliefs concerning their own competence of meeting the needs of diverse learners and answers were measured using the same scale as the Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory.

Interviews

The second form of data collection was an informal interview (Appendix E) that took

place between the researcher and the three participants selected for the case study. Two

one-on-one interviews were conducted with each of the three chosen individuals. An

initial interview took place prior to professional development and the second occurred

afterward. Interviews served as a means of collecting individual teacher opinions of what

culture encompasses, whether or not their unique teaching practices accommodate the

culturally diverse learner, and how their cultural knowledge or lack thereof impacts the

students they encounter on a daily basis.

Observations

The three teachers selected for the case study were observed both at the beginning of and

following professional development. During observation, the researcher collected

evidence of the occurrence of culturally responsive instructional practices. Evidence

included anecdotal records during observation, student work, teacher lesson plans, and

notes from conversations between the researcher and classroom teachers regarding their

ability to effectively implement culturally responsive literacy practices.

During both pre and post observations, the researcher completed the CRIOP

observation tool for each participant during each observation. The observation tool used

was created specifically to measure the incorporation of culturally responsive literacy

practices in the classroom and the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development funded

the development of the CRIOP. This tool measured eight key aspects of classroom

instruction including: "assessment practices, teacher dispositions, classroom climate,

planned curriculum activities, instructional discourse, family collaboration and

involvement, instructional strategies/pedagogy, and sociocultural perspectives"

(Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, 2011). The CRIOP allowed for the

researcher to make consistent comparisons between case study participants for each observation, while allowing for documentation of individual progression from the first to last observation to be made as well.

Following the Institutional Review Board (IRB) Application approval, data was collected from December 2011-January 2012. Completion of a data response sheet was required of all participants to document their age, ethnicity, years of experience, and years in a Title I school. Each participating teacher also completed two surveys both prior to and following ongoing professional development. Surveys assisted in the selection process of case study participants and also served as evidence of whether or not the initial beliefs, attitudes, and opinions of teachers evolved as a result of the professional development. The researcher also noted whether or not teachers put into practice methods exclusively offered during professional development. Classroom observation served as indication of whether or not teachers implemented culturally responsive instruction related to the professional development they received.

Data collection for the three case study participants was thorough. Two interviews with each of the three individuals involved in the case study took place with one near the beginning of the study and one following professional development. The researcher, as a whole and comparatively, examined the two interviews to conclude whether or not information presented during professional development impacted culturally responsive teaching practices and understanding of the many elements of culture in relation to the role they play in educating culturally diverse students. The three individuals selected were also observed in their natural teaching environment for the purpose of collecting evidence that supported or refuted the idea that once teachers are

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aware of how to more effectively accommodate culturally diverse students, they will put the newly acquired methods into practice for the benefit of the students.   Each of the data sources assisted in answering research questions and as previously stated, were appropriate for qualitative research design.

<div align="center">Data Analysis</div>

Qualitative methodology refers, in the broadest sense, to research that produces descriptive data: people's own written or spoken words and observable behavior (Kopala & Suzuki, 1999, p.51). Since conclusions regarding behaviors and beliefs were drawn as a result of this study, grounded theory was used to analyze data collected through interviews, observations, and journals. In the grounded theory approach, "qualitative researchers start with the data and develop theories based on the data" (Patten, 2007). "The process of naming or labeling things, categories, and properties is known as coding" (Borgatti, N.D., p.1). There are three stages of data analysis when using this approach. Data analysis began with an open coding. In this stage, segments of the transcripts of interviews were examined for distinct, separate segments (such as ideas or experiences of the participants) and were coded by identifying them and giving each type a name (Patten, 2007). The second stage is known as axial coding. During this stage, the transcripts of interviews and any other data sources were reexamined to identify relationships between categories or themes identified during open coding (Patten, 2007). In the last stage, a core category was developed. This is the identification of the main overarching category to which other categories and subcategories belong (Patten, 2007).

The researcher, using information from several scholars (e.g., King et al. (2010); Richards et al. (2006); Villegas & Lucas, 2002) created the coding chart used to analyze

data. The coding chart was used to assist the two professionals during coding of

interview responses.

Table 1. Coding Chart Used to Analyze Data from Three Participants' Interviews

Cultural Diversity/ Inexperience/ Unawareness (CDI/U) Descriptors	Cultural Diversity Experience/ Awareness (CDE/A) Descriptors	Reflective Thinking/ Writing (RT/W) Descriptors	Validation of Students' Cultural Identities (VSCI) Descriptors
Demonstrates a lack of knowledge and understanding of culture Does not recognize social inequalities or moral obligation of teachers to make sound decisions for all students regardless of their background Limited awareness of student cultural influences Regard for only mainstream culture expecting cultural assimilation	Demonstrates knowledge and understanding of culture Utilizes past experiences with diversity to form ideas related to culture Defines multiple aspects of culture Demonstrates openness and acceptance	Examines own ideas/beliefs/classroom expectations regarding culture Understands culturally responsive awareness/ instruction involves continuous development Analyzes own cultural identities and predispositions Reflects upon their own experiences in comparison to student prior experiences	Considers student experiences in instructional planning and decision-making Utilizes student experiences to increase student academic connections Creates inclusive/ collaborative learning climate Promotes equity and mutual respect

As the researcher analyzed data, comparisons were made between participant

responses prior to and following professional development.

During the open coding phase of developing reliability, the researcher searched

responses to surveys and interviews and notes from observations to determine the main

categories. The researcher also looked for wording that could potentially answer the

research questions. Once responses were coded using open coding, the axial coding

phase began in which categories and properties, or codes, were related. "To simplify this

process, rather than look for any and all kinds of relations, grounded theorists emphasize

causal relationships, and fit things into a basic frame of generic relationships" (Borgatti,

N.D., p.1). For example, in grounded theory, interrelationships or conclusions drawn

from similarities among case study participants based on repetition of findings is common. In this study, implementation of culturally responsive instruction was recurrently associated with each case study participant's unique experience with diversity.

In order to ensure validity of interview responses, member checking took place between the researcher and respondents following each of the interviews. Member checks are defined as when, "data, analytic categories, interpretations and conclusions were tested with members of those groups from whom the data were originally obtained" (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006, p.1). Based on this definition, subsequent to the interpretation of interview responses, the researcher met with participants a second time to discuss interpretations in an attempt to ensure they reflected the intentions of each respondent. The researcher also sought two professional colleagues who verified coding during the data analysis phase to aid in establishing inter-rater reliability.

Table 2. Coded Interview Responses Table.

Interview Questions and Responses	CDI/ U	CDE/ A	RT/W	VSCI
Q: What is your definition of culture? A: Since culture shapes and impacts every aspect of a person's life, our classrooms are impacted by both the cultures that are present, as well as the culture that is established in the learning environment.		A D K		
Q: How capable are you of meeting the needs of culturally diverse learners? Elaborate. A: I am as capable as the training I have had	A D K			
Q: How do you currently accommodate students who are culturally diverse through your instructional practices? A: I teach acceptance of all. I allow all students to feel part of our class. I listen to my students as much as I possibly can. I try to be very positive and try to encourage confidence. I try to empower them often. I allow students to work together and ask them to help others often. Everyone is important and part. I try to get others to look and listen to each other.				A D K

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Q: What does culture include? A: Sex, race, religion, beliefs, family dynamic	A D K			
Q: What influences your literacy practices in relation to the culturally diverse learner? A: I allow and encourage all students to share their experiences as much as possible. I will give them ways to connect to what they read. If they do not have the experiences, I try to use technology to share what is important and will help form connections.				A D K
Q: What is your definition of culture? A: I think culture encompasses most every aspect of a person's life. Societies have their own cultures, as do neighborhoods, cities, states, countries and religious groups. Since our classrooms are made up of students from a variety of settings, our classrooms take on a culture of their own. That culture is shaped by both the people who are present in the classroom and also by teacher expectations and the expectations set by administration.				A D K
Q: Can someone with the same race as you have a different culture? Explain. A: We may have some things in common and we may not have anything in common as far as our beliefs, experiences, priorities, etc. Absolutely!		A D K		
Q: What is your definition of culture? A: Culture includes different socio-economic statuses, ethnic groups, the way you are raised (morals, values, ethics, beliefs), and the way your home is run.	A D K			
Q: How adequately do you incorporate instructional practices that specifically target culturally responsive literacy practices? A: I do the best I can. On a scale of 1-10, I would put myself a little lower than the middle of the road just because there is so much to take into consideration and the culture of my students come from changes so much I have a long way to go before I would feel like I had it right.			A D K	

Summary

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which teachers were more

or less capable of implementing culturally responsive instruction as a result of

professional development regarding how to effectively meet the needs of students with diverse cultural backgrounds and prior experiences. This study was conducted in an elementary school in a small town in south central Kentucky. The student population served at this elementary school consisted of children with differing backgrounds from their predominantly White middle class teachers. The majority of families in attendance at this school reside in homes with a low socio-economic status, 72% of which receive free and reduced lunch services, which made this school an appropriate study site.

In this qualitative research study, three teachers were selected to participate as case studies. Data collection from case study participants included interview responses, observations using the CRIOP instrument, and information recorded in journals. Interaction between the researcher and case study participants and the environment in which data collection took place, will be described in detail in the following chapter. Data collected from case study participants was analyzed and coded using the CRIOP instrument. The CRIOP was also used to document interactions between the researcher and case study participants.

Chapter IV

Findings

This study analyzes teacher beliefs regarding their own culture and that of their students, with intense examination of the relationship between cultural beliefs and implementation of teaching practices. By providing professional development, the researcher hoped teachers would enhance their ability to demonstrate sensitivity to culture. The qualitative data collected is comprised of notes from observations, informal interviews, journal entries, and survey responses collected from three case study participants. This study also examines the maturation of teacher beliefs regarding culture and the evolution of culturally responsive teaching practices.

Results

A small town in south central Kentucky is home to a Title I elementary school, known as Stellar Elementary School. The diverse population of students at this school, whose cultures are quite unlike their more economically affluent teachers, led to the selection of this elementary school as the study site. Teachers at Stellar are predominantly White middle class females, differing greatly in background from their students, 72% of whom receive free or reduced lunch services.

Upon entering Stellar Elementary, visitors might notice a school climate that is comprised of respect, high expectations, and consistency among educators in the building. As a small school serving approximately 250 students, the environment permits a close-knit staff employed at Stellar. Teachers in the building take the development of a good rapport with students seriously, despite existing cultural differences. If asked, most students would confirm the fact that Stellar offers a safe, caring environment in which

they are encouraged to meet their highest level of potential, as reflected in the daily

mission statement. Differentiation of instruction is the norm, and teachers put forth great

effort to accommodate unique student needs. Character education is taught daily through

incorporation of Stephen R. Covey's *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*.

Case Study Participants

All teachers demonstrate variety in cultural philosophy and that led to the

selection of three teachers as case study participants. Differences in the following areas

are emphasized: teaching expertise, beliefs, backgrounds, cultural sensitivity, and

responsiveness to implementation of culturally responsive instruction. The researcher

administered a Self-Efficacy Scale and Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory to all

teachers at Stellar prior to professional development to aid in the selection process.

Results were combined with researcher knowledge of educator background, expertise,

and cultural sensitivity. Participants were selected in an attempt to offer a range in the

following: responses to interview questions, instructional practices, and teacher-student

interaction. The researcher also used pseudonyms for case study participants.

The insights offered by each case study participant during interviews pertained to

their definition and beliefs related to culture, both prior to and following ongoing

professional development pertaining to culturally responsive instruction. Interview

responses were analyzed and compared with implementation of culturally responsive

instruction, as defined by the CRIOP. According to the CRIOP, which was the

observation protocol obtained from the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development

(Powell et al.) and was used to measure the extent to which instruction was culturally

responsive, there are eight pillars to be examined when looking for instruction that is

sensitive to and inclusive of all cultures. The following pillars were assessed for each observation conducted for all case study participants: classroom caring and teacher disposition, classroom climate/physical environment, family collaboration, assessment practices, curriculum/planned experiences, pedagogy/instructional practices, and discourse/instructional conversation. In addition to observations and interviews, two participants kept journals of various cultural encounters both prior to and during this study. Culturally responsive instruction was analyzed to include both teacher and student point of view. For example, according to Au (2010), some students may not raise their hands in class to answer a question for fear of being seen as superior rather than working for the good of the class as a whole. Insights such as this influenced the examination of teacher-student interaction and instructional approach. The emphasis of culturally responsive instruction is to develop an instructional balance between common values represented in Western schools and values endorsed at home for students with diverse backgrounds, while taking into consideration mainstream and diverse perspectives (Au, 2010).

Table 3 represents common themes and other findings from the three case study participants.

Table 3. Common Themes and Findings from Three Case Study Participants

Themes	Kate	Jade	Jillian
Participant Background	-raised with a low socio-economic-status -not accepted socially -experience with and knowledge of cultural diversity	-raised in a White middle class, farm environment -socially accepted during childhood -experience with and knowledge of cultural diversity	-raised in a White middle class, farm environment -socially accepted -lacked experience with and knowledge of cultural diversity

Worldviews	-non mainstream perspective	-non mainstream perspective	-Eurocentric perspective
Presence of Culturally Responsive Teaching (as defined by Gay, 2002)	-creates a climate where all students can learn -culturally responsive instruction is present	-creates a climate conducive for learning of most students -culturally responsive instruction is present	-creates a climate which acknowledges but does not adhere to those who are culturally diverse

In Table 3, participant beliefs and behaviors were categorized according to commonalities and differences between their classroom environments and interactions. Additionally, participants were considered to have either a Eurocentric or non-mainstream perspective. Conclusions of participant worldviews were based on interview responses, classroom observations and journal entries.

Table 4 represents common themes found in each of the pillars represented on the CRIOP instrument during classroom observations. The overall score was based on the number of culturally responsive indicators demonstrated during each of the two classroom observations following Culturally Responsive Instruction Professional Development. While scores for each of the eight pillars are represented in Table 4, the following three areas are discussed in detail for each case study: classroom caring and teacher disposition, classroom climate/physical environment, and curriculum/planned experiences. The following scale was used for an overall/holistic judgment of Culturally Responsive Instruction implementation.

4 = The classroom was CONSISTENTLY CHARACTERIZED by culturally responsive features
3 = The classroom was OFTEN CHARACTERIZED by culturally responsive features
2 = The classroom was OCCASIONALLY CHARACTERIZED by culturally responsive features
1 = The classroom was RARELY CHARACTERIZED by culturally responsive

features

0 = The classroom was NEVER CHARACTERIZED by culturally responsive
features

Table 4. Classroom Observation Themes from Three Case Study Participants

CRI Pillar	Kate		Jade		Jillian	
	Observation Pre / Post		Observation Pre / Post		Observation Pre / Post	
Classroom Caring and Teacher Disposition	3	4	3	4	2	3
Classroom Climate/Physical Environment	2	3	3	3	1	2
Family Collaboration	3	3	3	4	1	1
Assessment Practices	2	3	2	3	1	1
Curriculum/ Planned Experiences	2	3	2	3	1	2
Pedagogy/ Instructional Practices	2	4	3	4	1	2
Discourse/ Instructional Conversation	2	3	3	4	1	2
Sociopolitical Consciousness/ Multiple Perspectives	2	4	3	3	0	1

*Scores in Table 4 are based on two observations, the pre observation conducted after

one and a half hours of professional development and the post conducted subsequent to

four hours of professional development regarding culturally responsive instruction.

Kate: A Journey To Cultural Responsiveness

Background

A hardworking wife and mother of a teenage boy, Kate has dedicated her life to

the care and education of students with special needs. Her transient background was one

of many prior experiences that helped mold the unbiased nature she embraces in her

classroom and life. After devoting 21 years to special education, her belief that all

students can learn despite disabilities, continues as a paramount principle reflected in her

classroom. A bachelor's degree and special education endorsements from the local university were quite the accomplishment for this White woman in her mid 40's, whose past can be described as pain-filled. Her recollection of an abusive childhood where money was scarce brought tears to Kate's eyes during an interview. Student empathy comes naturally to Kate in part because it evokes memories of her own childhood, when *she* was the child teachers wouldn't hug because of her odor. A compassionate manner served Kate well through her years of teaching and serving students from low-income families, many of whom found themselves relating to Kate effortlessly. Kate's facility in building a good rapport with students is observable to anyone entering her classroom.

The selection of Kate as a case study was based on several criteria and was an easy decision. Following a whole-group introduction to the study, Kate approached the researcher with the idea that she could contribute to this study in a tremendous way. Kate's willingness to participate was appealing and encouraging to the researcher who yearned for the collection of rich and abundant data from those participating. Her prior experience contributed to Kate's ability to relate to students from all walks of life while a lack of proficiency in culturally responsive teaching practices optimized her candidacy as a case study.

In the spring of 2012, the researcher evaluated Kate's survey responses, interviewed her, and observed in her classroom using the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP). Kate also kept a journal throughout the semester in which she documented any cultural encounters from both past and present. Then the researcher reviewed and analyzed these entries.

Kate's Influential Prior Experiences

When Kate agreed to participate in this study, she was quite aware of her ability to contribute as a direct result of her unique upbringing. Memories of violence and fighting in her childhood home enabled her to recognize students with similar fears and needs while motivating her to create peace and calm in her classroom. In one journal entry Kate stated, "I freeze and get nervous when I hear yelling. I just want to hide." Self-descriptions of her educational encounters, she felt, were "much different" than most teachers with whom she worked, therefore expanding her views in the classroom. Raised in a home where social experiences were an unattainable luxury and income was undependable, she portrayed a world in which she never fit in, yet one that was similar to a large portion of students she served.

Years later, as an adult, Kate belongs to the White middle class, yet retains a deep appreciation for parents who struggle financially, those who interact in a manner unlike her own, the Black student who doesn't like White teachers, and the child whose homework is incomplete due to a lack of parental support. Kate reiterated the fact that in spite of her difficult childhood, her parents continually expressed their desire for her to have something more as an adult than they could provide during her upbringing, which tremendously impacted her decision to seek higher education. The combination of her encounters with abuse, limited funds and resources, a lack of social experience, and the transition to the White middle class as an adult, all worked together to instill an appreciation for diversity in Kate.

Worldviews

Non-mainstream worldview. Because Kate experienced much adversity and change throughout her life, her understanding of interpersonal relationships and other behavioral characteristics reflects a worldview that is not mainstream or Eurocentric. In reference to cultural diversity, Kate stated, "Is this really all related? Your culture shapes many of your beliefs and behaviors? Or is it just materials with different colored people? (Is separation of culture a result of race?) I really do feel Black people often are leery of White people." While this statement indicates cultural misconceptions, the underlying skepticism is quite contrary to the dominant or Eurocentric worldview. Kate's non-mainstream worldview was also revealed in the following statement regarding other teachers in her building, "Some, I feel, have the same expectation of all students no matter what."

Optimism filled Kate's journal entries. In one such entry she wrote, "I do not ever think that a student will not be able to do something because of a special need. I look, listen, and learn about students by the experiences that we share and do not share." Kate's opinions disputed societal norms, thus opposing a mainstream worldview.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Observation 1. Kate's worldview permeated journal entries and teaching methods and throughout the initial classroom observation, the researcher noted this. Special education students received individualized instruction in Kate's room. The five boys in this classroom worked in centers both in small groups and individually. Three students received explicit reading instruction while one student worked on a computer program called Lexia. The fifth student was in a listening center; hence, all students were able to

experience forms of instruction unique to their ability level. Developing an environment where students felt cared about came naturally to Kate since she had been in such great need of care and concern during her own elementary experience. Kate was sincere and loving in her interactions with students as demonstrated in this discussion from Kate, "A student was doing independent work at a desk and he turned and told me he loved me. This puts a smile on my face." Kate's appreciation for this sort of interaction is the product of prior experience and demonstrated her capacity to be empathetic. "I loved when a teacher would notice something good about me or hugged me. There were some teachers I had that would have been afraid to touch me in fear I had 'cooties' or lice or even worse." In the CRIOP, indicators of classroom caring and teacher dispositions sum up Kate in the classroom. Comments like, "I bet you already know how to do this" and "You are so smart, maybe you can show *me* how to do this," let students know she cared about them. When a student felt discouraged Kate would say, "Now remember, you can do anything" or "I believe in you," which reminded students of the high expectations their teacher had for them.   By calling on each of the three students consistently, they were required to be active participants in the lesson, and Kate was able to check for understanding.

The physical environment in Kate's classroom was somewhat conducive for group work. A small table could seat up to six students, desks for centers were arranged in groups of two or more, and the computer station could accommodate three students if necessary. However, during this lesson Kate was in control, allowing for minimal collaborative opportunities. Posters, books, and classroom artifacts acknowledged human diversity while ignoring multiculturalism. For example, Leader in Me posters and books,

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which promote the success of all students by depicting how each is a leader, were displayed and utilized in the room. However, the classroom library contained books with White characters and ethnocentric positions.

The story used in the observed lesson had a White child who wanted to make a kite. Before reading the story, isolated phonics instruction was delivered through scripted explanations and choral readings of "-ing" words. Kate delivered the content in the story as factual information not to be questioned, and while she asked engaging questions like, "Do you think the kite will fly?" Diverse perspectives were not discussed. Once Kate and the students had chorally read the story, they completed a worksheet independently. Instructional delivery was not culturally responsive, and students were expected to work quietly and solitarily. However, culturally responsive instruction was obliquely present through student engagement in the lesson. According to the CRIOP instrument, student engagement is an indicator of culturally responsive instruction. Kate's students actively and eagerly participated, hence indicating this facet of culturally responsive instruction.

Kate's planned experiences consisted of following a scripted manual verbatim in an attempt to transfer knowledge. However, Kate did put forth genuine effort to provide instruction based on unique ability levels. For example, even though there were five students during this time, Kate offered explicit instruction in two time intervals, using two different stories. While the bulk of Kate's instruction was conventional, opportunities existed for varied student input. For example, students were asked to offer their own definition of the word "funny," during the reading of the story, "Sam Makes a Funny Kite."

Kate's instructional methods conflicted with her beliefs. By presenting de-contextualized, isolated information, utilization of prior experiences was nearly impossible. Rehearsal and repetition of "-ing" word reading eliminated student creation of meaning. While she communicated care, empathy, and high expectations, the fact that a prescribed reading program was followed hindered Kate's culturally responsive outlook. The absence of culturally responsive instructional strategies and practices was blatant.

Observation 2. In the second observation conducted after the professional development, culturally responsive undertones were evident in Kate's transformation. Because culturally responsive features often characterized Kate's classroom caring and teacher disposition during the first observation, little change was noted. Kate did, however, take the time to say, "Good morning, how are you?" to students individually, thus demonstrating care toward one another. Kate also adjusted previous instructional strategies to include scaffolds. For example, since the three boys in this class demonstrated various interests, there were two stories, one for the two who liked superheroes, and one for the student who loved animals. Promotion of engagement through student interest proved to be a successful tactic.

Physically, Kate's classroom was organized in the same manner described in the first observation. Nevertheless, the classroom climate had changed, and collaboration was evident during this lesson. Kate allowed two students to work collaboratively in the floor, since that was where they were most comfortable. Obvious to the researcher was the shared responsibility in partner work. For example, the completion of a self-evaluation teamwork rubric forced students to be held independently accountable while allowing them to work together. Collaborative teaching practices like working with a

partner to create one superhero resulted in further development of respectful relationships. Contrary to independent worksheet completion observed in the first lesson, the second observed lesson was now more culturally responsive and partner nurturing in Kate's classroom.

Despite maturity in Kate's classroom climate and affirmation of student culture, a deficit existed in her classroom library, multicultural texts, and displays. Acquiring books and displays with eclectic characters, messages, and encouragement of multiple perspectives would aid Kate's future efforts in appreciation for human diversity.

Apparent to the researcher was Kate's alteration of past curriculum, which contributed to more meaningful experiences when compared with the first observation. Replacing the absence of real-world experiences during the first visit to Kate's class were the real purposes for which students completed their work. For example, two students read a story about a boy who wanted to be a superhero and after becoming one used his powers for things that were bad. Their assignment was to work collaboratively to make a superhero and answer questions like, "What would your superhero's power consist of? Would your superhero help people? Would you want to be a superhero like the one in the story? Why or why not?" The third student read a story about an old man contemplating whether or not his dog should be allowed to sleep in his bed. This student's assignment was to write an opinion piece about his own dog and why he would or wouldn't let his dog sleep in his bed. Kate also wrote an opinion piece about her own dogs to share with this student. Kate and the third student had opposing opinions, yet she reminded him, "It is ok if we think differently about this," which encouraged different perspectives.

The curriculum in this lesson inspired student differentiation, appreciation for diverse perspectives, and instilled genuine purpose in students for the completion of their work. The notable disparity between lesson one and two is indicative of an evolution in Kate's classroom regarding culturally responsive instruction. Kate's well-meaning attitude demonstrated in the first lesson was put into practice during the second. Her heightened comprehension of culturally responsive teaching practices ultimately provided a greater avenue for student success.

Kate's Journey

While Kate came to this study with a moderate understanding of culture and a variety of life experiences, she was still able to demonstrate growth and further development in her knowledge of culturally responsive instruction. Her capacity to recognize and respond to the needs of her students was based on cultural similarities and differences. In relation to this topic she stated, "The culture of my students is very different from current culture, but I feel like the culture that I had growing up was somewhat like some of what my students experience." Kate's ability to define culture, while noting the multiple facets of a word not easily defined, echoes what any researcher studying culturally responsive instruction could hope for as an end result from their case study participant. Following all professional development, Kate answered the question, "Do you think culture is limited to race/ethnicity?" Kate responded:

> Culture is not limited to only race. I do believe that it is part of one's culture
>
> because depending on children with different races surrounding experiences could
>
> influence the way they talk, trust, and respond to you. Everyone comes with so

many different experiences you never know what a priority of thinking students

have until you listen to them.

Kate's response confirmed her increased understanding of culture, her non-mainstream

worldview, and her deep-rooted belief in the significance student backgrounds play in

their education.

When asked to offer additional information at the close of the post interview, Kate

offered the following self-description:

I expect respect and give respect to students. I allow for group projects, centers,

differentiated levels of instruction, and have high expectations of all students. I

do not pre-judge by records, etc. I do not ever think that a student will not be able

to do something because of a special need. I look, listen, and learn about students

by the experiences that we share and do not share. Everything is not always done

my way. I do value what is important to students and empower them to build

confidence. I truly care that they all feel welcome and that they can ask questions

and not be afraid to ask me, or others for help. I will never get upset or feel like

helping someone over and over on the same skills is a waste of my time. I do not

focus on negative behaviors. I always have hope in all students.

Kate conveyed her comprehensive understanding of culturally responsive instruction.

The ideas impressed upon Kate through this study were evident in her responses to

interview questions. The evolution demonstrated in Kate's classroom teaching practices

reaffirmed the success of a study such as this when a participant is open to the ideas

presented. Kate studied and utilized the CRIOP instrument to guide classroom

instruction, especially during the second observation, demonstrated through her planned

experiences. One such example was the difference between Kate's appreciation for

diverse perspectives in the first and second lesson. During the first lesson, students

worked for a similar purpose and diverse perspectives were minimally discussed. Yet in

the second lesson, Kate planned activities to offer students a genuine purpose and even

wrote an opinion piece with an idea contrary to the student she was working with to show

him that different ideas are accepted. Prior to the second observation, Kate informed the

researcher that the CRIOP instrument was a tremendous resource for her instruction

throughout the semester, as indicated in the evolution of her culturally responsive

teaching practices.

Kate would confirm the fact that while her beliefs did not really change during

this study, her instructional methods did. Hence, while Kate always had the attitude and

willingness to be a culturally responsive teacher, she now has the aptitude to match.

Jade: The Road to Culturally Responsive Instruction

Background

A single mother to a teenage daughter and son, Jade views the world through an

optimistic lens. Raised on a farm, the well-rounded sixth grade teacher owes much of her

appreciation for hard work, community, family, and church, to her parents. Jade's

Bachelor's and Master's degrees are the result of expectations in Jade's childhood home

combined with her own conviction toward education. Following nine years of dedication

to teaching in an emotional and behavioral disorder classroom, Jade recently transitioned

to a regular education classroom, taking with her an embedded belief that all students are

capable. This White, 39 year-old woman of middle class status greatly values open-

mindedness and acceptance. Jade's empathetic nature and genuine investment in each of

her students enables her to build a sincere, strong rapport with all children in her classroom. Jade's helpful mindset allows her to plan instruction that provides opportunities to succeed for all students. Her accepting predisposition is obvious in teacher-student interactions. Jade encourages an unbiased attitude and facilitates respect toward and among all students regardless of their background as demonstrated in the following statement, "I try to form my instruction in a way that draws on the strengths of my students."

Selecting Jade as a case study participant was an easy choice. Jade's prior experiences and "be open" philosophy were promising to the researcher. Following Jade's active participation and diverse perspectives offered in the initial professional development session, the researcher wanted to explore Jade's contributions to this study. For example, though some teachers had side conversation during the researcher presentation segment of professional development, Jade was willing to answer questions and offer her own ideas regarding culture. One comment alluding to Jade's cultural knowledge was, "My own children have paper, pencils, and a mother who expects them to complete their homework. Many of my students go home to take on adult responsibilities because their parents work at night." Jade's familiarity with family cultural contributions combined with her open attitude indicated that she would be able to grow from an opportunity to be a case study participant.

During the spring 2012 semester, the researcher interviewed Jade, evaluated her survey responses, and observed Jade's classroom teaching practices using the CRIOP. Jade also documented cultural experiences and memories in a journal.

The researcher reviewed and analyzed all data collected. Jade's cheerful

disposition toward this study was helpful throughout the data collection phase. Jade was

more than willing to meet for interviews, eager to share her cultural experiences in a

journal, and accommodating of the researcher's need to observe in the classroom.

Jade's Influential Prior Experiences

Jade quickly accepted the challenge of participating in this study and felt her

impartiality could greatly contribute to the advancement of her culturally responsive

instructional comprehension. Jade's liberal views are quite contrary to her conservative

upbringing in a rural town on a small farm. While recalling a childhood home ruled by a

close-minded father, Jade made it clear that her own parenting techniques are much

different, and her children are encouraged to be as open-minded and accepting as possible.

Jade attributes the expansion of her past cultural views, which she describes as "limited

and textbook-like" to age and experience. She states, "The older I have gotten, and the

more I have experienced, that definition has really expanded and encompasses a lot more.

The older I get, the more I see how a person's values influence culture and how

everything is not compartmentalized, but related to everything else."

Several years before this study was conducted, Jade had a unique experience with

a previous student and she claims it "completely changed my outlook." In one of her

former emotional and behavioral disorder classes, Jade worked with a troubled young

Black boy named Ty. Having Jade for a teacher is one of the best things to ever happen

to Ty and having Ty as a student changed Jade's life. Ty's behavior problems began on

day one, when instead of calling Jade by her name, Ty chose to call her "Miss B**ch."

Appalled yet concerned, Jade reported the incident to the school principal, who Ty

coincidentally had been calling "Miss B**ch" as well. As a matter of fact, every White woman in the building had the same name according to Ty. In an attempt to uncover the reasoning behind Ty's apparent disrespect toward White women, Jade contacted his caregivers. After an interesting phone call, Jade discovered Ty's grandfather had "ran off with a White woman" and from that point on, he referred to all White women as "Miss "B**ch." Jade's challenging, yet memorable year with Ty left quite the impression on Jade. Despite their cultural disparities, Jade and Ty grew to love and respect one another. At the close of the year however, as is the case with transient students, Ty was gone.

Many years passed before Jade heard from Ty again. Then one afternoon Jade was contacted by Ty's social worker, who informed Jade that the now teenage boy had moved from one foster home to another and unless Jade could be persuaded to take Ty for a short time, he would be placed in a group home. The single mother of two, who already had more than enough responsibilities reluctantly agreed. During the time Ty was with Jade's family, she noted tremendous inconsistencies in their lifestyles. For example, Jade instilled in her own children a love of education while Ty's family did not emphasize the importance of a long-term perspective. Jade's time with Ty was a period that she says "opened her eyes to culture." Prior to her encounters with Ty, Jade had been somewhat naïve to the extreme influences of culture. Ty communicated differently, valued entertainment more than relationships, and often did not respond to White women. In her experience with this former student, Jade became aware of the cultural or lifestyle differences that impact the way a person learns, perceives, interacts, and communicates. Hence, her time with Ty largely influences her present views of culture.

Although Jade grew up in a White middle class home, she understands the impact of cultural differences in the classroom. In an interview, Jade said the following about student culture, "There are a lot of shared cultural traits that we have, but especially for the students who struggle, I think we have a lot of differences culturally. Recognizing that the culture is different is the most helpful way to address it because when you address the difference, you can bring the cultures together." Jade's conservative childhood, liberal adulthood, and the opportunity to house someone with a very different culture can enable her to become culturally competent and responsive in the classroom.

Worldviews

Non-mainstream worldview. Because Jade maintains a receptive attitude toward change, cooperation, and interdependence, her beliefs are centered upon non-mainstream worldviews. In an interview, Jade defined culture as, "really all of your experiences, your history, your ideas of how the world works, your food, the way you process experiences, your religion; I think it encompasses everything." Jade's definition aligns with a non-mainstream worldview and reinforces a rather complete view culture. She accepts responsibility for the success of all, which is another indicator of non-mainstream worldviews. Evident in the following statement is Jade's value of individuals, not races. "Some students don't see the value of homework and it is my job to step it up to ensure students see the importance. Seeing that difference helps you as an educator to fill the gaps. My students who don't have their homework done, it doesn't help for them to continue to get discipline marks." Lived experience and value are recurring themes in Jade's explanation of culture.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Observation 1. During the initial observation conducted after three thirty-minute professional development sessions, Jade's non-mainstream worldview permeated classroom instructional strategies. As students enter Jade's classroom, they know exact behavioral expectations. The strong rapport between Jade and her students infiltrates classroom discussion and students are excited to share things with Jade. Jade offers sincere compliments to build student self-esteem, and her vested interest in their lives outside the classroom mirrors the facility in which student-teacher relationships progress. Interjections such as, "What should you be doing?" and "I expect everyone to be working" communicate consistency of expectations among students. Upon entering Jade's classroom, the researcher noted that students began working immediately, indicating the high standard set for active participation. Personalized student language like, "What a cute necklace" or "What did you do this weekend?" exhibits care and individualized interactive techniques.

Differentiation of classroom management in Jade's room is based on student need. For example, different students have different classroom jobs or roles in the classroom (e.g., attendance keeper, materials manager, student greeter). As students are held accountable for various jobs, they come to the realization that variety exists in student strengths and weaknesses, thus celebrating their unique identities.

During this lesson, students worked in small groups. By giving students norms (rules and expectations) to follow during group work, Jade ensures equal liability among students. As students gathered in groups Jade said, "make sure you hold each other accountable during literature circles." The implication in this statement is that students

are capable of producing work while Jade takes on the role of facilitator. If a student gets off task, others in the group are quick to remind him or her of classroom expectations. An environment of care and equitable relationships is the norm in Jade's classroom.

With desks arranged in groups for four and small groups of students dispersed through the classroom (e.g., in the floor, in a corner of the room), Jade utilizes her space well, making it conducive for collaborative work. Though multicultural content was limited in the classroom library, books, posters, and pictures in her room demonstrate an appreciation for human diversity. By using literature circles, Jade promotes group achievement and diverse perspectives. As Jade shares classroom control, she empowers rich student discussion in a non-threatening environment. Displays of student pictures throughout Jade's classroom accompanied with quotes like, "be a leader, you can change the world" serve as reminders of Jade's optimistic attitude toward diversity.

The grammar review that began Jade's lesson left the researcher skeptical. Jade asked questions about capital letters, periods, and run-on sentences, and students raised their hands to answer, with no discussion. Following this brief grammar lesson, however, Jade moved to literature circles. Literature circles, which are a frequent mode of learning in Jade's classroom, allow students to talk. When students talk, they learn, and in this particular lesson, students were talking about what they had read. In literature circles, everyone has a job and students work together to produce a project of some kind (e.g., an obituary for a character, a fake CD of music a specific character would like, a yearbook entry for a character in a book). Reflected in Jade's classroom is her reliance on student interaction as a primary source of learning. Hence, Jade's approach to instruction embraces student knowledge and experience. When Jade gave students real audiences

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and real purposes through literature circle projects, there was a surge of motivation in her classroom.

While the use of literature circles aligns with Jade's beliefs, the grammar review did not. The isolated skills reviewed at the beginning of the lesson along with no explanation of when home language is and is not acceptable, left students puzzled regarding the significance of proper English. For example, Jade might say, "Should you say 'is' or 'are' in that sentence?" In this instance, Jade's instruction is implicit and while students with similar cultures may understand the implication, without explicitly explaining grammatical rules, many students are at a loss. Though there were many instances of culturally responsive instruction in this lesson, the necessity for improvement was equally present.

Observation 2. In the second observation conducted following all professional development sessions, a notable tone of respect was evident in Jade's classroom. Similar to the initial observation were teacher-student interactions demonstrating mutual respect and high expectations. For example, students enter Jade's classroom and begin their work without instruction to do so. Conversation is personalized yet sincere. Comments like, "Is there anything I can help you with?" and "I heard you did well on your Social Studies test, I'm so proud of you" communicate Jade's genuine interest in her students. Since culturally responsive features often characterized Jade's classroom caring and teacher disposition during the initial observation, minimal change was documented from the first observation. Still, Jade's transition to consistency of culturally responsive features was notable. One major instructional change attributed to professional development was Jade's further explanation of when to use primary and secondary

discourses. Furthermore, assignments during the second observation were more individualized, requiring students to use their unique prior knowledge and experiences. Jade also noted the evolution of her expectations in the following journal entry:

> The culture of the students' home environments also has a huge impact on performance in our classroom. Many of the parents and guardians of these children work long hours, many in the afternoons and evenings. Because I know this, I am sometimes more flexible with some students than others when it comes to their expectations outside the classroom, especially with regard to projects and homework that requires support at home.

Jade's comments reflect high expectations for all students while she recognizes the fact that some students need additional assistance at school because of extreme circumstances. Jade does not, however, insinuate that students are able to "get by" without completing assignments, rather she modifies the amount of help students receive based on their unique needs.

Anyone entering Jade's classroom notices that physically it is conducive for group work. With desks arranged in groups of four and students who rely on team members as resources, the family-like environment permeates Jade's classroom. Comparable to the first observation was a flexible seating arrangement, group members holding each other accountable, and Jade acting as a facilitator of instruction. Since culturally responsive features often characterized Jade's classroom during the first observation, there was no extreme modification to her classroom climate in the second observation. One difference, however, which further emanated culturally responsive features, was guided questions given to students prior to literature circles. Jade provided

students with a list of discussion questions to guide conversation during collaboration because she felt students would be more focused, less distracted, and still able to converse in their most comfortable language.

Jade's classroom lacks literature, displays, and artifacts representing a mixture of cultures. Though Jade encourages multiple perspectives, openness, and an appreciation for diversity, her classroom library and displays contradict her beliefs. In order to further infuse her culturally responsive views, Jade would benefit from expanding her classroom library to include multicultural texts.

One significant difference in Jade's classroom during the second observation was the revisions to her grammar lesson. During this lesson, Jade was more explicit in her grammar instructional delivery, thus adding to the already personalized language used in her classroom and increasing the presence of culturally responsive instruction. For example, during the lesson Jade told students to "develop their academic vocabularies." Jade informed students that when in 'academic' settings, they should speak using correct grammar, but when they are journaling or writing for pleasure, they may use their most comfortable language. Literature circles were an additional mode of instruction promoting meaningful student discussion in a non-threatening environment. While Jade used literature circles during both observations, she modified the corresponding activity during the second observation forcing students to access prior knowledge and experiences. For example, students were asked to describe how a member of their own family was comparable to a story character. This not only gave students an authentic purpose for writing but integrated opportunities for expression of diverse perspectives and learning were built upon students' prior knowledge.

Jade's Journey

At the start of this study, Jade possessed a moderate understanding of variation in student culture and how it can be a strength in the classroom. Despite Jade's experience with diverse lifestyles throughout her life (i.e., her relationship with Ty) and her transformation of views (i.e., traditional to open-minded), Jade demonstrated a simple yet critical truth during this study: minor changes can make a vast difference. At the beginning of the semester the researcher entered Jade's classroom only to find that many culturally responsive features already characterized it, such as collaborative work, mutual respect, and planned experiences that allow for expression of diversity. However, by the end of the study, Jade proved that a few changes like more explicit instruction and assignments that require student experience for completion can promote a deeper student understanding, which are components of culturally responsive instruction. Jade's comprehension of the researcher's professional development goals and the CRIOP instrument were reflected in her classroom teaching practices at the close of the study. The evolution of Jade's cultural definition, which was an additional emphasis during professional development, was also evident. For example, Jade recorded the following definition of culture near the end of the study.

> I think culture encompasses most every aspect of a person's life. Societies have their own cultures, as do neighborhoods, cities, states, countries, and religious groups. Since our classroom is made up of students from a variety of settings, our classrooms take on a culture of their own. That culture is shaped by both the people who are present in the classroom and also by teacher expectations and the expectations set by the administrator.

While Jade's definition was similar to that of the first interview, this cultural description was much more extensive. Jade's absorption of material presented during professional development is reflected in her rich definition of culture that includes multiple settings, seeing her classroom as a culture, and expectations. Jade also demonstrated greater consideration for individual student culture as demonstrated in the following journal entry:

> In my current classroom, I have a student who practices a religion that teaches no allegiance to anyone or anything other than God. Thus, this student does not recite the Pledge of Allegiance with the students each morning. I am very careful about answering questions that his classmates have about this because I want this student to feel valued, accepted, and assimilated.

When she agreed to participate as a case study, she had the knowledge and experience necessary for the provision of culturally responsive instruction yet did not implement practices reflecting this type of instruction to the fullest extent.

As a result of the culturally responsive instruction professional development, Jade was able to develop instructional strategies to accommodate all students regardless of their background. Jade also used the information from the professional development and the CRIOP instrument to enhance her classroom environment. Being instructed on how to utilize her cultural knowledge serves Jade and her students well. Jade agrees that the professional development was beneficial, eye opening, and a great reminder of how to implement culturally responsive teaching practices. Jade was always capable and willing to be a culturally responsive teacher and now has further developed her ability to do so. While Jade is not at the end of her journey, she is aware that she will continue to progress

with each new student who thinks differently, each year that brings a new challenge, and every life encounter that forces her to become even more open than before.

Jillian: The More Traveled Road

Background

A young, single, outspoken, fourth grade teacher, Jillian has followed in the footsteps of her ancestors. Preceded by her mother and great aunt, Jillian hopes to fulfill a lifelong dream of teaching for 30 years in the elementary school at which this study was conducted, which happens to be Jillian's alma mater. The White middle class teacher attributes a hardworking outlook to her childhood farm life. After four years of teaching, Jillian's educational philosophy is illustrated by a desire for conformity from her students, regardless of their background. In her mind's eye, parents are the sole contributors for the development of responsibility in children. Jillian states, "Some students in my class have parents who are too busy keeping them out of trouble, and the student does not take responsibility for their actions. When I was growing up, I had to take responsibility." Jillian's strong educational background and third generation teacher status at this school were obvious contributors to the conformity she expects of her students. The fact that she was born and raised in a small town, obtaining both Bachelor's and Master's degrees in education from the local university, seemed to hinder Jillian's capacity to understand cultural differences. Jillian's sheltered life was evident in her commentary throughout the study. She made comments like, "Students now have worries of money, responsibilities, food, adult responsibilities. When I was little everything was done to make our lives well and non-stressful."

Choosing Jillian as a case study was an easy decision. Jillian's lack of experience with diversity indicated room for advancement in her culturally responsive teaching practices. Despite Jillian's well-meaning approach toward diversity, illustrated through her attempts to develop a good rapport with each of her students, Jillian's sentiment of superiority became transparent through the progression of the study. During the initial whole-group introduction to the study, Jillian's side-conversation took precedence over the researcher's presentation. Because the researcher saw an opportunity to educate Jillian on culturally responsive instruction, which would potentially benefit Jillian's students, her selection as a case study was made to provide professional growth opportunities. The prospect of including Jillian as one of the case studies also left the researcher confident that equally well-intentioned educators would relate to Jillian and perhaps reflect upon and enhance their own values and methods.

In spite of her initially positive attitude toward this study, Jillian found the commitment to be a tedious job. The researcher analyzed survey responses, interviewed, and observed in Jillian's classroom in the spring of 2012; however, Jillian did not keep a journal even though the researcher requested this of her. In comparison to the other case studies, much less data were obtained from Jillian; however, the researcher was able to review and analyze interview responses and classroom observation notes.

Jillian's Influential Prior Experiences

Though Jillian quickly and cheerfully accepted the challenge to participate in this study, she preferred to obtain interview questions and provide short responses through email rather than meet with the researcher for face-to-face interviews. Jillian's upbringing in a conservative Catholic home, predisposed her belief in the strength of

family, education, and morality. When asked about her upbringing and the culture of her

family, Jillian commented,   "When I grew up, the culture in my home was focused on

me and my siblings, family, hard work, church, and high morals." The member of a

family who views higher education as an expectation rather than a choice, Jillian is

representative of many White middle class families whose beliefs are founded in the

statement, "I just want the same for everyone else's children as I want for my own."

Jillian's family, childhood playmates, adult friends, and members of the community to

which she belongs, all retain the belief that everyone should strive to interact and believe

as they do. Though Jillian is kind-hearted and well intentioned, the beliefs that pervaded

her interview responses, classroom instruction, and teacher-student interactions reflected

the need for further development in her assessment of diversity.

Worldviews

Eurocentric worldview. Because Jillian has been exposed mostly to a highly

educated, White middle class culture, a mainstream worldview saturates her life. When

asked to define culture in an interview, Jillian responded, "Culture includes different

socio-economic statuses, ethnic groups, the way you are raised (morals, values, ethics,

beliefs) and the way your home is run." Undertones in this statement insinuate that

people who have different socio-economic statuses will value different things. Jillian

also implies that how someone is raised determines adult-life culture, insinuating that

one's culture is static or unchanging. Correspondingly, Jillian believes that everyone

must have morals and ethics. Jillian's interview responses repeatedly alluded to

Eurocentric worldviews. For example, when asked about the relationship between

culture, race, and ethnicity she replied, "Just because you are the same race/ethnicity

doesn't mean you are raised the same (economic status, religion, beliefs)." While in this statement Jillian demonstrates awareness of differences in people, the insinuation is that culture is comprised of socio-economic status and religious views.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Observation 1. An initial classroom observation took place in Jillian's classroom following three thirty-minute professional development sessions. Jillian's lack of involvement in the study and her attitude toward diversity were evident influences of her instruction. While Jillian did demonstrate a caring attitude toward and high expectations for students, she did not differentiate behavioral management techniques. For example, one student was "caught" not reading during silent reading time and immediately lost five minutes of recess, as was the case for any student misbehaving or off task in her classroom. One management tactic, however, that communicates Jillian's caring attitude and high expectations is her handling of homework. Each morning students are given a small amount of time to either finish homework from the previous night or read silently. By approaching homework in this way, Jillian gives all students an opportunity to demonstrate success. A student may not have parental support at home, yet with this method, Jillian guarantees her 'no excuse' homework policy. Jillian also gave various students jobs in her classroom in order to make them feel valued. For example, one student was responsible for changing the date on the board, another student was the homework collector, and other students passed out papers. Throughout the observed lesson, Jillian dominated decision-making and conversation in the classroom. Jillian spoke and students listened. If a student spoke to a peer during this time, disciplinary

action was taken. Hence, there was no opportunity for students to demonstrate respect, care, or empathy toward another.

Physically, Jillian's classroom was designed to promote individual student achievement, which reflected little appreciation for diversity. Desks were arranged individually in rows, the "problem student's" desk was adjacent to the teacher's, and independent work appeared to be the norm. Books, posters, and artifacts reflected the mainstream culture and while posters did reflect student interests, cultural and racial identities were ignored. For example, Leader in Me posters were displayed throughout the room, along with student work, but promotion of ethnocentric views was distinct.

Jillian made it clear that students were to work independently. She read aloud while students listened. Collaboration was considered cheating. Once Jillian was finished reading, she asked students questions and if the answers did not reflect the exact response Jillian was looking for, she termed it "wrong" and moved on to the next student until a desired reply was given, thus promoting individual student achievement.

Jillian's teaching style fosters an environment where information is unrelated and de-contextualized. Topics of story discussion were listed on the board and students were discouraged from interjecting their own ideas. One specific student attempted to share a personal story connection and Jillian quickly reminded him that discussion of only topics listed on the board was suitable. Jillian then proceeded to model an acceptable comment. Many students did not have the opportunity to participate in class discussion; only those selected by the teacher were allowed to speak. Instruction relied upon published textbook materials. During this observation, worksheets and workbook assignments appeared to be the norm in Jillian's classroom and exploratory learning was prohibited. Students read,

write, and answer questions silently, and once their work is completed, the silence continues as they read independently. Once all students had completed a list of questions related to the story, Jillian used a short video to review the eight parts of speech. Social contexts of grammar were not discussed and use of home language was discouraged with no explanation.

While Jillian conducted this lesson with the best of intentions, the presence of culturally responsive instruction was limited. Jillian's well-meaning textbook-oriented practices prohibited rich, meaningful student discussion and practice. Jillian's Eurocentric worldviews were manifest through instructional practices and hindered student potential. The lack of culturally responsive instruction in this lesson confirmed the significance of Jillian's limited participation in the first professional development.

Observation 2. During the second observation conducted following all professional development sessions, Jillian's evolution of culturally responsive teaching practices was notable. The silent students observed earlier in the semester had been transformed into participants in a more collaborative working environment and classroom. This post professional development observation was notable for scaffolding in the lesson, which included student selection of age and ability appropriate reading material and collaborative centers. Since the researcher emphasized the importance of differentiation, student engagement, and scaffolding, each of which is reiterated in the CRIOP instrument, it is apparent that Jillian digested and utilized this information to alter classroom instruction. Jillian also served as a facilitator of knowledge during this lesson as opposed to the formerly noted ruler of the classroom. Jillian displayed interest in student lives outside the classroom and one such instance was with a student new to the school. Jillian

asked, "Do you like our school so far? Do you have any siblings? Does your brother like it here?" This display of personalized language demonstrated genuine care and interest toward the student.

During collaborative work time, students knew and applied classroom expectations of respect and positivity. By reminding students to "be proactive" Jillian instilled a sense of responsibility in students. Students in Jillian's class are also given opportunities to assist one another as they work in centers. For example, in the working with words center, students are given a word and instructed to use the letters to make as many words as possible, thus relying on one another's skills and expertise for completion of the activity. Stressed throughout professional development was the significance of acknowledging, discussing, and appreciating diverse perspectives. Though, in her classroom, discussion of diverse perspectives was absent, the advancement of Jillian's culturally responsive teaching practices reflects a more profound comprehension as a result of professional development. Much of the professional development entailed explanation of and how to implement teaching practices based on the CRIOP instrument, hence the researcher can conclude that because Jillian demonstrated many more culturally responsive indicators from the CRIOP during the second lesson than the first, that this was a result of the treatment.

The physical arrangement in Jillian's classroom also exposed progression to a more culturally responsive teaching environment. Desks were now in groups of two or four which supported group work. Also contrasting the initial lesson were students assisting one another and viewing each other as resources. Jillian's classroom exuded more of a family environment where group achievement was emphasized. For example,

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in the reading center, students were to read a book and work together to answer one set of questions. Every student had a different job (e.g., materials manager, recorder) and therefore had to work together to create a final product. Students were also able to work in their most comfortable position (e.g., standing, in the floor, seated in desks). The flexible seating arrangement portrayed culturally responsive features in Jillian's classroom. Since students were expected to work together to produce a final product in centers, they also demonstrated a higher level of productivity and engagement lacking in the first lesson. While there was still a deficit in cultural literature, displays, and artifacts, Jillian did orchestrate a climate that was more culturally conducive.

Jillian demonstrated increases of culturally responsive instruction in both classroom care and climate, but the greatest change noted during this lesson was in curriculum. Obvious to the researcher was the effort Jillian put forth to plan experiences to employ student prior knowledge and experience. For example, Jillian explained her decision-making process regarding the classroom library. When Jillian prepares a reading lesson, she puts a variety of developmentally appropriate books in a box and students select their own book to read. She stated, "Some of the books have more difficult content than others, but I don't discourage students from reading any book because when they are allowed to read books they are interested in, they will benefit more from what they read." The development of Jillian's cultural perspective was evident in the tone of this statement.

Jillian also demonstrated growth by allowing students to work collaboratively. Group work was a foreign instructional method during the first lesson and considered cheating, yet in this lesson it was apparent and reflected Jillian's enhanced understanding

of how culturally responsive teaching practices are implemented. Expression of diverse perspectives supported by group discussion also indicated Jillian's heightened awareness.

Though Jillian's classroom consistently exhibited more culturally responsive features during the second lesson, she still has barriers to overcome as she strives to be more culturally relevant in her instruction. For instance, though students were able to talk about their unique insights during centers, mainstream and non-mainstream beliefs were never discussed. Furthermore, no real-world connections were made, thus curriculum was somewhat isolated. In spite of planned experiences that supported diversity, without accompanying connections to life outside the classroom, room for improvement remains.

Jillian's Journey

When the study began, Jillian had a limited understanding of culturally responsive instruction. Jillian's prior experiences have and continue to influence her mainstream perspective. Well-meaning and proactive, her efforts were noticeable to the researcher. Though in comparison to other case studies, Jillian was least receptive to professional development, but her instructional modification demonstrated the positive impact of the professional development. By modifying teaching practices to be more culturally responsive Jillian demonstrated a genuine interest in doing what she felt was best for the students. A lack of exposure to anything other than White middle class perspectives impeded Jillian's ability to expand her views. Jillian's interactions with both students and the researcher occurred from a Eurocentric worldview. Jillian's cultural dominance resonated throughout the study, impacting her teaching methods, interaction with students, and lack of dedication to this study.

Since Jillian entered this study with a narrow view of culture, professional development was a necessary component for an increased understanding. Regardless of the small impact demonstrated in her classroom as a result of professional development, any change at all, is respectable. Jillian obviously reviewed the CRIOP prior to the second classroom observation because the climate was different, the curriculum altered, and her overall classroom environment was more culturally responsive. The correlation between Jillian's White middle class experiences and her teaching practices insinuates that Jillian's experiences may have led to more openness. Jillian, like many teachers, lacks the experience and motivation to cultivate a culturally responsive classroom. While undergoing professional development was beneficial, a teacher like Jillian needs more.

Conclusion

Surveys, interviews, observations, and journal entries were each analyzed and used to determine the extent to which culturally responsive instruction was present in each of the three case study participant classrooms. Data collected were utilized for comparisons among the three case studies and divided into the following three categories: Background, Worldviews, and Presence of Culturally Responsive Instruction. A reader-friendly chart was created to characterize participants. The CRIOP instrument also allowed for organization of data collection to determine to what extent participants implemented culturally responsive literacy practices. Each of the eight pillars included in this document was given a score, 1-4, and organized into a chart by participants to allow for simple interpretation of classroom practices for each category (see Table 2).

Kate, Jade, and Jillian brought to this study different backgrounds and prior experiences like the students they educate each day. While Kate and Jade were able to

draw strength from their prior experiences to optimize this study, Jillian's background

hindered changes in her beliefs. Kate's unique background enabled the creation of a

classroom environment where all may feel accepted and cared for. Jade's experience

with Ty added to her personal context of this study. Jillian's lack of encounters with

diversity contributed to a Eurocentric worldview that continued throughout the study.

The change in teacher belief demonstrated by Kate and Jade was apparent in both

interview responses (e.g., advanced definition of culture). Contrarily, Jillian did not wish

to change her definition of culture at the end of the study, an indication that her beliefs

did not change as a result of this study.

Because the CRIOP was used to determine the presence of culturally responsive

instruction, a score increase in individual pillars is indicative of greater teacher capability

in their classroom practices. While variation existed in teacher ability to meet the unique

needs of culturally diverse students, professional development proved effective for each

of the three case study participants.

Chapter V

Discussion and Implications

Discussion of the Findings

This study analyzed teacher beliefs regarding their own culture and that of their students with examination of the relationship between cultural beliefs and implementation of teaching practices. This qualitative study examined the progression or lack of progression in teacher sensitivity to culture following four hours of professional development implemented over the course of eight weeks. The researcher investigated changes in the White female middle class teachers' beliefs and worldviews regarding culture. This study also examined the relationship between professional development and maturation of teacher beliefs regarding culture and the evolution of culturally responsive teaching practices.

The research questions guiding this qualitative study were:

1. How will teacher beliefs change regarding their own culture and that of their students following participation in professional development that encompasses culturally responsive instruction?

2. To what extent will teachers be more capable in their classroom practices as they attempt to meet the unique needs of culturally diverse students following professional development, which specifically addresses how to more effectively meet student needs?

Data for each case study participant included two informal interviews (pre/post), field notes from two classroom observations, journal entries, and survey responses.

Addressing Diversity

The researcher initially discusses findings and follows with implications garnered from this study with potential future research prospects. Research conclusions are based on recurring themes from each of the three case study participants. Patterns in participant behavior also assisted researcher interpretation of this study. Additionally, connections to previous research conducted by Richards et al. (2006) addressing diversity in schools and culturally responsive pedagogy, as well as research conducted by Villegas and Lucas (2002) regarding preparing culturally responsive teachers, assisted in developing conclusions drawn for this study. Case study participants are discussed with three specific areas addressed for becoming a culturally responsive teacher and two areas regarding culturally responsive instruction.

Descriptors of Culturally Responsive Teachers

Reflective Thinking and Writing. According to Richards et al. (2006), one of the most critical aspects of becoming a culturally responsive teacher is reflection. As educators come to the understanding of behaviors that contribute to mainstream ways of thinking (e.g., racism, ethnocentrism), they may then take necessary steps toward change. Kate and Jade engaged in reflective writing as they kept journals, hence facilitating instructional changes that took place in their classrooms. Both Kate and Jade were candid and honest in their journal entries, often demonstrating negativity toward mainstream culture. In one journal entry, Kate questioned the extent to which the study might promote change, reflecting her non-mainstream views and skepticism. She stated, "Cultural diversity, is this really all related? Your culture shapes many of your beliefs and behaviors or is it just materials with different colored people?" Kate's sincerity was

demonstrative of genuine reflection, which thereafter opened opportunities for her to become more culturally responsive in the classroom. Contrarily, Jillian's lack of reflection time was manifested in her unchanging Eurocentric worldview and limited culturally responsive teaching practices. Jillian did not keep a journal during the study despite the researcher's request for her to do so and the lack of reflection upon her teaching practices hindered Jillian's progression during this study. At the end of the study Jillian had not changed her definition of culture, which indicated little or no evolution of her cultural views. Richards et al. (2006) discuss the vitality of honest personal examination of attitudes and beliefs. When a teacher is unwilling to reflect upon her belief system, little change can take place.

　　Cultural Values: Personal and Family Histories. By the end of the study, Kate and Jade demonstrated a more complete awareness of their own cultural values and the role it played in their classrooms. Richards et al. (2006) documented the impact teacher values have on their relationships with students and their families. Information gathered from prior familial experiences and values can enlighten teachers about their own views. When teachers are able to acknowledge the biases that have influenced their value system, they may begin to make changes accordingly. In this study, each of the three participating teachers was a prime example of this concept. In Kate's childhood home the values were similar to that of her students (e.g., living in the present, living paycheck-to-paycheck, focus on entertainment, things rather than people). In Kate's adult home she valued relationships and education, always looking to the future, yet because she understood her own values and the potential biases that could have been created in her adult life, she was able to address and reconcile any negative feelings towards cultures

varying from her own. Kate's journal entries, interviews, and classroom instruction were all indicative of her ability to relate to her students, as well as the meaningful connections she was able to make with her own life as a result of this study. Kate's attitude toward special education reflects her efforts to provide students with an equitable educational experience despite disabilities.

Despite Jade's conservative upbringing, her experience with Ty helped her to create an environment of openness and acceptance as an adult, hence creating greater opportunities for her students to be successful. Jade embraced the responsibility she felt for the academic achievement of all students. Journal entries, interview responses, and classroom instruction revealed an attitude and atmosphere promoting success for all.

Jillian's conservative childhood and indoctrination in mainstream society prohibited her from seeing and accommodating the goals of her students and their parents that were unlike her own. Jillian's discussion of culture and parenting demonstrated resistance to the fact that her values reflected prejudices against families who did not retain the same value for education and did not instill a sense of responsibility in their children. Jillian's instructional approach validated her conviction concerning cultural adaptation of students with diverse backgrounds. Jillian was uninterested in the role of her family history as related to current attitudes and teaching practices, thus exemplifying her restricted perceptions.

Reforming the Institution. According to Richards et al. (2006), culturally biased standards and values are the direct result of an educational system that has historically cultivated success of only one sector of the school population. Consequently, educators are uniquely responsible to ensure that students receive equal opportunities for classroom

success. Hence because teachers are ultimately in charge of day-to-day educational equality, they are essential to the change that needs to take place. Kate repeatedly voiced her feelings of 'diversity' in reference to her own educational stance while fostering an environment where the teacher is held accountable for student success. Neither Kate nor Jade claimed cultural competence throughout the study, and both maintained that cultural competence is never fully achieved, as there is always room for learning and improvement. During classroom instruction, Kate and Jade demonstrated a knack for the transformation of their teaching into more culturally responsive teaching practices. Both teachers retain an attitude that is conducive for culturally responsive instruction, which is the first step toward reformation.

According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), teacher programs have responded to growing diversity by adding a course or two on multicultural education. Since this does not resolve the under preparedness of young teachers like Jillian, their classroom practices continue to reflect the training they receive. Jillian, for example, follows a curriculum that was established with superficial treatment of culturally responsive instruction. However, her indifferent attitude toward the professional development she received indicates a discrepancy in her motivation to incorporate culturally responsive instructional practices, which is a common problem among educators. Jillian's belief that her capability of accommodating culturally diverse learners is equivalent to her training coincides with the traditional "conform or fail" attitude described by Richards et al. (2006) in reference to teachers who perpetuate mono-culturalism. Contrary to teachers like Kate and Jade who question traditional teaching practices, Jillian accepts and applies

conventional modes of instruction that target the mainstream culture while ignoring diversity.

Descriptors of Culturally Responsive Instruction

Validation of Students' Cultural Identities. In each of the three participating teachers' classrooms was the absence of multicultural texts, artifacts, and displays, which proved to be the greatest area of need among the case studies. Because classroom displays are reflective of the climate created by the teacher, a lack of displays reflecting various cultures points to inadequacy in representation of diverse groups, which is representative of a mainstream perspective. Despite her lack of multicultural resources, Kate was an advocate of her students' interests. Though she was only responsible for three students during the second researcher observation, she accommodated students by varying instructional styles and activities. By allowing her students to be expressive through opinion pieces and the creation of unique superheroes, Kate validated her students' cultural identities. Kate capitalized on student strengths with instruction that allowed them opportunities to think differently, thus embracing culturally responsive instruction.

Jade also created an atmosphere in which student cultural identities were validated. Jade's use of literature circles embodied the sense of community necessary for the presence of culturally responsive instruction. As students in Jade's classroom worked together in a supportive, non-threatening environment, they were able to express ideas while interacting as they would at home. Though Jillian demonstrated sensitivity to student interest in the second lesson by giving students choices in their reading selections,

the resources she relied upon and utilized ignore cultural diversity and regard only the mainstream culture.

Promotion of Equity and Mutual Respect. Teachers who recognize existing social inequalities that have been and continue to be revered become more capable of promoting of mutual respect and equity in the classroom. Villegas and Lucas (2002) discuss the moral obligation teachers have to make sound decisions for all children regardless of their background. They state, "By actively working for greater equity in education, teachers can increase access to learning and educational success and can challenge the prevailing perception that differences among students are problems rather than resources" (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p.24). Cultural discontinuity is an unfortunate contributor in limiting opportunities for success. Teachers who expect cultural assimilation unfairly discriminate, leaving students feeling inadequate, incapable, and frustrated.

Kate and Jade demonstrated their belief in equity and mutual respect by forming learning communities where all students actively participate and contribute, building upon their distinct prior knowledge and experiences. Kate catered to student abilities through the use of individualized instruction while academically challenging students. Jade ensured students knew the expectation of respect by her tone and through the list of expectations displayed during collaborative work time. Jillian, on the other hand, orchestrated skill-based instructional strategies, encouraging cultural assimilation as also reflected in her self-descriptive convictions. Because Jillian's instructional approach is not conducive for culturally responsive instruction, there is little way of building upon student prior knowledge. By creating an environment where diverse perspectives are

neither encouraged nor appreciated students develop negative perceptions toward

differences in culture, background and academic strengths.

<center>Implications</center>

An affirming attitude toward culturally responsive instruction and students with

prior experiences and backgrounds that differ from their teachers is the first step toward

becoming a culturally responsive teacher. Previous research validates academic benefits

resulting from affirming attitudes (Ladson-Billings, 1994). According to Villlegas and

Lucas, "Teachers' attitudes toward students significantly shape the expectations they hold

for student learning, their treatment of students, and what students ultimately learn"

(2002, p.23). As teachers begin to demonstrate respect for all students, they may then

communicate the belief that all students can learn and hold those who have been

misunderstood for many generations to the high expectations and accountability they so

deserve.

Reflective thinking and writing.

Until educators acknowledge and analyze their own cultural identities, beliefs,

and predispositions, they will not fully comprehend the concept of culture or the role it

plays in a child's life and education. As demonstrated in this study, critical reflection and

writing can serve as a source of growth and understanding for educators who are willing

to embrace those who are culturally diverse. Encouraging teachers to keep a journal in

which they critically reflect upon their experiences with culture supports and facilitates

positive alteration in attitudes and teaching practices. Kate and Jade engaged in reflective

journal writing, hence contributing to changes in their instructional practices. Jillian's

<center>91</center>

adverse attitude toward journal writing was also reflected in her teaching practices and the minimal change demonstrated in her classroom over the course of the semester. Implications for Professional Development.

The findings in this study suggest the necessity for clearly defined influential factors that contribute to teaching practices. Villegas and Lucas describe the following sociocultural boundaries that hinder teacher-student relationships and effective culturally responsive teaching practices: "race, ethnicity, social class, and language" (2002, p.22.) Professional development programs are often centered upon the precept that through the development of instructional strategies and skills, teachers will become capable of meeting the needs of all students. Exploration of social and cultural concepts is often ignored in both teacher preparation and professional development. Villegas and Lucas suggest "autobiographical exploration, reflection, and critical self-analysis" (2002, p.22) for teachers to develop a sense of who they are socially and culturally. During this study PLCs were beneficial for teachers as they were forced to think critically and make decisions regarding culturally responsive instruction through collaborative interactions. Explicit teaching and modeling of culturally responsive instructional practices accompanied by the development of sociocultural consciousness can ultimately increase opportunities for equal education for students who think, believe, interact and learn in a fashion dissimilar to their teachers.

The change in teacher beliefs of two case study participants is directly associated with professional development. However, the decision of why there was an increase in teacher ability to provide culturally responsive instruction is more involved. Since teacher receptiveness to the study correlated with their own prior experiences and

worldviews, it can be concluded that teacher views and beliefs directly impact the extent to which teachers are adept in implementing culturally responsive teaching practices. Experiences with diversity.

Both Kate and Jade described experiences throughout the course of their lives that contributed to current teaching practices. Kate's unique upbringing and transformation to middle class in her adulthood enabled her to develop genuine relationships with students while respecting and utilizing the strengths resulting from their differences. Jade's encounters with Ty promoted a broader perspective into student lives outside the classroom, thus allowing her to more effectively accommodate students. Jillian's lack of exposure to anything other than White middle class proved to hinder her ability to provide inclusive instruction. Since the three case studies work with diverse populations, maximizing experiences with their students, (e.g., home visits, inviting parents into the classroom to share expertise, learning family dynamics and communication styles) can promote achievement of all.

The correlation between Jillian's White middle class experiences and her teaching practices insinuates that Jillian's experiences may have led to more openness. This idea resounds for each of the case studies. Despite their responsiveness to the study, their attitudes and life experiences were the greatest indicator of how they would react to professional development. Hence, this conclusion suggests that in order for Jillian to be more likely to use what she learns in professional development, she, like the students, must be able to relate to new ideas, see how adjusting teaching methods will benefit her and her students, and have an authentic purpose for implementation.

In the future, more extensive measures could result in Jillian further developing culturally responsive teaching practices and expansion of her views regarding culture.

Implications for Future Research

This qualitative research study examined the development of culturally responsive teaching practices in the classrooms of three teachers following professional development regarding culturally responsive instruction. Since this study emphasized professional development, future research may include more intense professional development involving teaching educators how to acquire sociocultural consciousness for the improvement of culturally responsive teaching practices. Increasing the frequency and length of professional development sessions would be an avenue for upping the intensity. Further development of teacher awareness or sociocultural consciousness could enable affirming attitudes while promoting critical and reflective thinking, both of which are necessary for development of the culturally responsive teacher. Since in this study there was a direct correlation between teacher experience with diversity and willingness to implement culturally responsive instruction, future studies in which teachers are provided with intense exposure to diverse cultures could profit all who participate. For example, by requiring teachers to conduct home visits and attend cultural festivities or workshops they can expand their opportunities to experience diversity.

Final Thoughts

Like the prior experiences of the students at Stellar Elementary, prior experiences of Kate, Jade, and Jillian contributed to their response to this study thus impacting the development culturally responsive teaching practices. Kate and Jade embraced the study and altered instructional strategies and environments accordingly. Contrarily, Jillian's

rejection of content in this study contributed to her unchanged teaching style and attitude at the end of the semester. The affirming attitudes presented by Kate and Jade served them well throughout their journey in this study. The belief of both Kate and Jade that cultural competence is never quite achieved will enable their future development in their ability to meet students with diverse backgrounds and needs. Jillian's future attempts in becoming a culturally responsive teacher will require more extensive training than the other two case studies.

The incessantly growing racially, ethnically and culturally diverse population requires teachers who retain elevated cultural understanding and implementation of teaching practices that are conducive for optimal learning of all students. Teaching approaches comprised of curriculum that embraces the culture supported in student homes will optimize student success. The creation of classroom environments that demonstrate appreciation and respect for diversity is necessary. Cultural competence is an ongoing process, and continuous learning will augment success of all students both currently and in their future endeavors.

APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Approval Letter

A LEADING AMERICAN UNIVERSITY WITH INTERNATIONAL REACH
OFFICE OF COMPLIANCE

DATE: December 20, 2011

TO: Alicia Stephens, Bachelor of Science in Education
FROM: Western Kentucky University (WKU) IRB

PROJECT TITLE: [293107-1] The Development of Culturally Responsive Literacy Practices in
                         Teachers' Classrooms
REFERENCE #:   IRB12-121
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project

ACTION: APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE: 12/20/2011
EXPIRATION DATE: 3/30/2012
REVIEW TYPE: Expedited

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The Western Kentucky University
(WKU) IRB has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit
ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in
accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received an approval based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and
insurance of participant understanding followed by a *signed* consent form. Informed consent must
continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal
regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to
initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others and SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED
adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please use the appropriate reporting forms for
this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this
office.

This project has been determined to be an approved project. Based on the risks, this project requires
continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this
procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and
continued approval before the expiration date of 3/30/2012.

Generated on IRBNet

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent Document

Project Title: <u>The Development of Culturally Responsive Literacy Practices in the</u>
<u>Classroom of Three Teachers</u>

Investigator: <u>Alicia Stephens, Literacy Education, 270-670-1682</u>

You are invited to participate in a classroom project conducted as part of the requirement
for the completion of a research thesis in the Department of Literacy Education at
Western Kentucky University.

The purpose of this research project is to help beginning researchers learn more about
collecting data using qualitative research methods. The information generated will not be
used for academic research or publication. All information obtained will be treated in the
strictest confidentially. The investigator will explain to you in detail the purpose of the
project, the procedures to be used, and the potential benefits and possible risks of
participation. You may ask him/her any questions you have to help you understand the
project. A basic explanation of the project is written below. Please read this explanation
and discuss with the researcher any questions you may have.

If you then decide to participate in the project, please sign on the last page of this form in
the presence of the person who explained the project to you. You should be given a copy
of this form to keep.

1.	**Nature and Purpose of the Project:** As a graduate student in the Department of Literacy Education and under the supervision of Dr. Cassie Zippay, Professor in the Department of Literacy Education at Western Kentucky University, I am conducting research for a Graduate Thesis pertaining to culturally responsive instruction. This project is positive in nature and was designed with the intention of benefiting both educators and the students they service on a daily basis. The purpose of this project is to enlighten educators about what it means to provide instruction that is culturally responsive and to offer suggested practices for doing so.

2.	**Explanation of Procedures:** I ask that you complete a brief survey regarding your ideas and awareness of culturally responsive instruction. I will be administering a survey both prior to and after you have received ongoing professional development encompassing various aspects of culturally responsive instruction. You will also be asked to complete a data response sheet to provide general information about your teaching experience. The data collection will serve the purpose of providing me, the primary investigator, with your specific experiences and needs.

3.	**Discomfort and Risks:** There are no foreseeable risks associated with this research project and the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research is very minimal.

4.   **Benefits:** While you will benefit directly from participation in this study, it is hoped that the knowledge gained through your participation will help others at a later time.

As you engage in and apply professional development relating to an increase of culturally responsive teaching practices, students residing in homes with varying cultural backgrounds, which is not limited to ethnicity, will ultimately benefit.

5.   **Confidentiality:** The survey does not contain any identifiable information, anonymity is assured, and all data will be reported in the aggregate. Data will be stored in a locked cabinet by the course instructor, Dr. Cassie Zippay, and no one except the researcher and the instructor will have access to them.

6.   **Refusal/Withdrawal:**

Refusal to participate in this study will have no effect on any future services you may be entitled to from the University. Anyone who agrees to participate in this study is free to withdraw from the study at any time with no penalty.

You understand also that it is not possible to identify all potential risks in an experimental procedure, and you believe that reasonable safeguards have been taken to minimize both the known and potential but unknown risks.

Your continued cooperation with the following

research implies your consent.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date

_____   _____

Witness   Date

THE DATED APPROVAL ON THIS CONSENT FORM INDICATES THAT

THIS PROJECT HAS BEEN REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY

THE WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Paul Mooney, Human Protections Administrator

TELEPHONE: (270) 745-4652

APPENDIX C

Hampton University Mainstreaming Outreach Services: Hampton, Virginia

Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory By: Gertrude B. Henry

This self-examination questionnaire is designed to assist the user in looking at his/her own attitudes, beliefs and behavior towards young children of culturally diverse backgrounds. There are no "right" answers, only what you believe. Please be sure to answer each item by checking strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree, disagree, or neutral. The intended users are any adults (e.g., aides, teachers, administrators, caregivers, therapists, bus drivers) involved in or being trained for direct services to young special needs children of culturally diverse backgrounds.

Definitions:

The word CULTURE as used in this inventory encompasses the five areas identified by Aragon (1973) as follows:

1) values and beliefs

2) communication

3) social relationships of mother/child, woman/man, uncle/niece, etc.

4) basic diet and food preparation

5) dress or common costume

The word ETHNIC as used in this inventory pertains to races or peoples.

Checklist

I BELIEVE….

1. ….my culture to be different from some of the children I serve.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

2. ….it is important to identify immediately the ethnic groups of the children I serve.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

3. ….I would prefer to work with children and parents whose cultures are similar to mine.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

4. ….I would be uncomfortable in settings with people who speak non-standard English.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

5. ….I am uncomfortable in settings with people who exhibit values or beliefs different

from my own.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

I BELIEVE…...

6. ….other than the required school activities, my interactions with parents should include social events, meeting in public places (e.g., shopping centers), or telephone conversations.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

7. ….I am sometimes surprised when members of certain ethnic groups contribute to particular school activities (e.g., bilingual students on the debate team or Black students in the orchestra).

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

8. ….the family's views of school and society should be included in the school's yearly program planning.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

9. ….it is necessary to include on-going parent input in program planning.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

10. ….I sometimes experience frustration when conducting conferences with parents whose culture is different from my own.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

I BELIEVE….

11. ….the solution to communication problems of certain ethnic groups is the child's own responsibility.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

12. ….English should be taught as a second language to non-English speaking children as a regular part of the school curriculum.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

13. ….when correcting a child's spoken language, one should role model without any further explanation.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

14. ….that there are times when the use of non-standard English should be ignored.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

15. ….in asking families of diverse cultures how they wish to be referred to (e.g., Caucasian, White, Anglo) at the beginning of our interaction.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

I BELIEVE….

16. ….in a society with as many racial groups as the U.S.A., I would expect and accept the use of ethnic jokes or phrases by some children.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

17. ….that there are times when racial statements should be ignored.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

18. ….a child should be referred for testing if learning difficulties appear to be due to cultural differences and/or language.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

19. ….adaptations in standardized assessments to be questionable since they alter reliability and validity.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

20. ….translating a standardized achievement or intelligence test to the child's dominant language gives the child an added advantage and does not allow for peer comparison

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

I BELIEVE….

21. ….parents know little about assessing their own children.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

22. ….that the teaching of ethnic customs and traditions is NOT the responsibility of

public school programs or personnel.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

23. ….it is my responsibility to provide opportunities for children to share cultural

differences in foods, dress, family life and/or beliefs.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

24. ….Individualized Education Program meetings or program planning should be

scheduled for the convenience of the parent.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

25. ….I make adaptations in programming to accommodate the different cultures as my

enrollment changes.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

I BELIEVE….

27. ….in a regular rotating schedule for job assignments, which includes each child within my setting.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

28. ….one's knowledge of a particular culture should affect one's expectations of the children's performance.

___ Strongly Agree   ___ Strongly Disagree

___ Agree   ___ Neutral   ___ Disagree

Resource:

Henry, G. (1986). *Cultural diversity awareness inventory*. Hampton, Virginia: US Department of Education

APPENDIX D

Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale

A number of statements about organizations, people, and teaching are presented below.

The purpose is to gather information regarding the actual attitudes of educators

concerning these statements. There are no correct or incorrect answers. We are only

interested in your frank opinions. Your responses will remain confidential.

Instructions: Please indicate your personal opinion about each statement by circling the

appropriate response under each statement.

Key: 1= Strongly Agree 2= Agree 3= Disagree 4= Strongly Disagree

1. When a student does better than usual, many times it is because I exerted a little extra

effort.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
   1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

2. The hours in my class have little influence on students compared to the influence of

their home environment.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
   1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

3. The amount a student can learn is primarily related to family background.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
   1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

4. If students are disciplined at home, they aren't likely to accept any discipline.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
　　1----------------------2------------------------3------------------------4

5. I have enough training to deal with almost any problem.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
　　1----------------------2------------------------3------------------------4

6. When I really try, I can get through the most difficult situations.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
　　1----------------------2------------------------3------------------------4

7. A teacher is very limited in what he/she can achieve because a student's home

environment had a large influence on his/her achievement.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
　　1----------------------2------------------------3------------------------4

8. Teachers are not a very powerful influence on student achievement when all factors are

considered.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
　　1----------------------2------------------------3------------------------4

9. When the grades of my students improve, it is usually because I found more effective

approaches.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
    1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

10. If a student masters a new concept quickly, this might be because I knew the

necessary steps in teaching that concept.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
    1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

11. If parents would do more for their children, I could do more.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
    1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

12. If a student did not remember information I gave in a previous lesson, I would know

how to increase his/her retention in the next lesson.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
    1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

13. The influences of a student's home experiences can be overcome by good teaching.

Strongly   Agree   Disagree   Strongly
Agree   Disagree
    1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

14. If a student in my class becomes disruptive and noisy, I feel assured that I know some

techniques to redirect him or her quickly.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

15. Even a teacher with good teaching abilities may not reach many students.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

16. If one of my students couldn't do a class assignment, I would be able to accurately

assess whether the assignment was at the correct level of difficulty.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

17. If I try really hard, I can get through to even the most difficult or unmotivated

students.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

18. When it comes right down to it, a teacher really can't do much because most of a

student's motivation and performance depends on his or her home environment.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

1----------------------2-------------------------3-------------------------4

19. Some students need to be placed in slower groups so they are not subject to

unrealistic expectations.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

1-----------------------2--------------------------3--------------------------4

20. My teacher training program and/or experience has given me the necessary skills to

be an effective teacher.

Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

1-----------------------2--------------------------3--------------------------4

From Woolfolk, A.E. & Hoy, W.K. (1990). Prospective teachers' sense of efficacy and

beliefs about control. *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 82, 81-91. Originally based on

the Teacher Efficacy Scale developed by S. Gibson & M. Dembo (1984). Teacher

efficacy: A construct validation. *Journal of Educational Psychology,* 76, 569-582.

APPENDIX E

Pre/Post Interview Questions

The following interview questions were designed to specifically assess teacher

knowledge of dispositions regarding race and culture, how knowledge of culture affects

student learning, if and how student culture should be accommodated in the classroom,

and how subject view their personal capability for incorporating culturally responsive

literacy practices.

1) What is your definition of culture?

2) How would you describe the culture in your home both previously (how you were raised)

and currently?

3) How is the culture of various students you teach different from your own?

4) Do you think culture is limited to race/ethnicity? Why or why not?

5) What does culture include?

6) What did your view of culture in the past entail? What does it presently entail?

7) Does the culture of your students differ from your own and if so, how? If not, how?

8) Can someone with the same race as you have a different culture? Explain.

9) How do you currently accommodate students who are culturally diverse through your

instructional practices?

10) Do you change your instruction to meet the needs of culturally diverse learners and if so,

how? If not, how?

11) How capable are you of meeting the needs of culturally diverse learners? Elaborate.

12) What influences your literacy practices in relation to the culturally diverse learner?

13) How adequately do you incorporate instructional practices that specifically target culturally responsive literacy practice?

14) What additional information can you give me regarding your culturally responsive literacy practices?

Created By: The Researcher

APPENDIX F

Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol
Revised Edition

Developed by: R. Powell, S. Cantrell, Y. Gallardo Carter, A. Cox,
S. Powers, E. C. Rightmyer, K. Seitz, and T. Wheeler

School (use assigned number):_____Teacher (assigned number): _____

Observer:_____ Date of Observation: _____

# of Students in Classroom: _____

Academic Subject: _____ Grade Level(s): _____

Start Time of Observation:_____ End Time of Observation:_____Total Time of Obs: _____

DIRECTIONS

After the classroom observation, review the field notes for evidence of each "pillar" of Culturally
Responsive Instruction. If an example of the following descriptors was observed, place the field notes line
number on which that example is found. If a "non-example" of the descriptors was observed, place the line
number on which that non-example is found.   Then, make an overall/holistic judgment of the
implementation of the concept, according to the following rating scale:

4 = The classroom was CONSISTENTLY CHARACTERIZED by culturally responsive features
3 = The classroom was OFTEN CHARACTERIZED by culturally responsive features
2 = The classroom was OCCASIONALLY CHARACTERIZED by culturally responsive features
1 = The classroom was RARELY CHARACTERIZED by culturally responsive features
0 = The classroom was NEVER CHARACTERIZED by culturally responsive features

Transfer the holistic scores from pp. 2 through 9 to the table below.

CRI Pillar	Holistic Score		CRI Pillar	Holistic Score
I. CARE			V. CURR	
II. CLIM			VI. INSTR	
III. FAM			VII. DISC	
IV. ASMT			VIII. PERSP	

I. CARE   CLASRROM CARING AND TEACHER DISPOSITIONS

Holistic Score   4   3   2   1   0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (√)
1. The teacher demonstrates an ethic of care (e.g., equitable relationships, bonding)	• Teacher differentiates management techniques (e.g., using a more direct interactive style with students who require it) • Teacher refers to students by name, uses personalized language with students	• Teacher uses the same management techniques and interactive style with all students when it is clear that they do not work for some • Teacher promotes negativity in the classroom, e.g., frequent criticisms, negative comments, sarcasm, etc.			
2. The teacher communicates high expectations for all students	• Teacher provides scaffolds to assure student learning, recognizing students' varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, interests, etc. • Teacher advocates for all students • Teacher expects every student to participate actively and establishes structures	• Teacher has low expectations (consistently gives work that is not challenging) • Teacher doesn't balance student participation, allowing some students to remain unengaged • Teacher does not call on all students consistently •Teacher ignores some students; e.g., never asks			

	(e.g., frequent checks for understanding) so that no student "falls through the cracks" • Teacher consistently demonstrates high expectations for all students' academic achievement through insisting that they complete assignments, by providing challenging work, etc. (not letting them "get by" even when their home life is difficult)	them to respond to questions, allows them to sleep, places them in the "corners" of the room and does not bring them into the instructional conversation, etc. • Teacher tends to blame students and families for lack of student achievement and motivation			
3. The teacher creates a learning atmosphere in which students and teachers feel respect toward one another	• Teacher sets a tone for respectful classroom interaction • Teacher and students celebrate each other's achievements • Teacher and students work to understand each other's perspectives • Students do not hesitate to ask questions that further their learning • Students are encouraged to	• Teacher shows impatience and intolerance for student behavior •Teacher establishes a competitive environment whereby students try to out-perform one another • Students are not encouraged to assist their peers • Teacher dominates the decision-			

	provide peer support and assistance • Students are encouraged to respond to one another positively • Students are invested in their and others' learning • Teacher consistently demonstrates high expectations for student social interactions	making and does not allow for student voice • Teacher does not encourage student questions or ridicules students when they ask for clarification • Teacher stays behind desk or across table from students; s/he does not get "on their level" •Teacher does not address negative comments of one student towards another • Teacher demonstrates low expectations for student social interactions			
4. The teacher encourages student empathy and care toward one another	•Teacher encourages students to respect a diversity of ideas, perspectives and experiences •Teacher encourages students to share their stories with one another	• Teacher suppresses diversity of opinion and primarily presents content, ideas and experiences that are representative of dominant groups • Teacher does not allow			

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (√)
and to show compassion for the struggles of their peers and their families

• Biases and discrimination are addressed through the formal and informal curricula | students to share personal stories; instruction remains de-personalized

• Teacher allows students' open expression of prejudicial acts and statements toward others in the classroom community; biases and discrimination are not addressed | | | | |

II. CLIM   CLASSROOM CLIMATE/PHYSICAL ENVRIONMENT

Holistic Score   4   3   2   1   0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (√)
1. The physical surroundings of the classroom reflect an appreciation for diversity	• There are books, posters, and other artifacts reflecting students' and others' cultures

• There are positive and affirming messages and images about students' racial identities

• Classroom library and curriculum materials contain | • There are no or few multicultural texts

• Posters and displays do not show an acknowledgement and affirmation of students' cultural and racial identities

• Classroom library and curriculum materials promote ethnocentric positions or ignore human | | | |

	multicultural content that reflect the perspectives and experiences of diverse groups	diversity			
2. Peer collaboration is the norm	• Students are continuously viewed as resources for one another and assist one another in learning new concepts • The emphasis is on group achievement • There is a "family-like" environment in the classroom	• There is no or very little peer collaboration • The emphasis is on individual achievement			
3. The physical space supports collaborative work	• The seating arrangement is flexible and supports student collaboration and equal participation between teachers and students • Chairs/ desks are arranged to facilitate group work	• The seating arrangement is designed for individual work, with the teacher being "center stage" • Classroom is arranged for quiet, solitary work only • Teacher discourages student interaction			
4. Students work together productively	• The teacher implements practices that teach collaboration and respect, e.g., class meetings, modeling	• The students primarily work individually and are not expected to work collaboratively; and/or students have a difficult time			

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (√)
	effective discussion, etc. • Students interact in respectful ways and know how to work together effectively	collaborating • Lack of respectful interaction amongst students may be an issue			

III. FAM   FAMILY COLLABORATION

Holistic Score   4   3   2   1   0

NOTE: When scoring this component of the CRIOP, the XXX survey or teacher interview should be used in addition to field observations. Observations alone will not provide adequate information for scoring.

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (√)
1. The teacher establishes genuine partnerships (equitable relationships) with parents/ caregivers	• Parents'/ caregivers' ideas are solicited on how best to instruct the child • There is evidence of conversations with parents/ caregivers where it's clear that they are viewed as partners in educating the student •There is evidence that the teacher has made the effort to get to know the "whole child" (his/her background, family culture,	• Parents'/ caregivers' suggestions are not incorporated in instruction • No effort made to establish relationships with caregivers • There is evidence of a "deficit perspective" in which families and caregivers are viewed as inferior and/or as having limited resources that can be leveraged for instruction			

	outside of school activities) by getting to know his/her parents/ caregivers				
2. The teacher uses parent expertise to support student learning and welcomes parents/ caregivers in the classroom	• Parents/ caregivers are invited into the classroom to share experiences and areas of expertise • Parents'/ caregivers' "funds of knowledge" are utilized in the instructional program • Teacher makes reference to parents'/ caregivers' careers, backgrounds, daily activities during instruction	• Parents/ caregivers are never involved in instructional program • Parents'/ caregivers' "funds of knowledge" are never utilized • There is no evidence of home/family connections in the classroom			
3. The teacher reaches out to meet parents in positive, non-traditional ways	• Teacher conducts home visit conferences • Teacher plans parent/family activities at locations outside of school • Teacher meets parents in parking lot or other "neutral" locations	•Communication with parents/ caregivers is through newsletters, where they are asked to respond passively (e.g., signing the newsletter, versus become actively involved in their child's learning) • Teacher conducts phone calls, conferences,			

	• Teacher makes "good day" phone calls	personal notes to parents for negative reports only (e.g., discipline)			

IV. ASMT   ASSESSMENT PRACTICES

Holistic Score   4   3   2   1   0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (√)
1. Formative assessment practices are used that provide information throughout the lesson on specified learning targets; students are evaluated within the context of scaffolded instruction to determine their potential for learning	• Teacher frequently assesses students' understanding throughout instruction • Students may have "talking partners" for reviewing information during the lesson • Students are able to voice their learning throughout the lesson • Teacher assesses students' ability to learn with appropriate support • Teacher may implement "trial lessons" that use texts or require students to solve problems at a higher level than students' performance	• Assessment occurs at the end of the lesson • Assessment is not embedded throughout instruction • Assessment is regarded as a set of evaluation "tools" that are used to determine what students have learned (e.g., exit slips, quizzes, etc. that are administered after instruction has occurred versus examining students' cognitive processing during instruction) • Assessment is solely used to determine what students already know or can do			

	might indicate • Teacher uses observation to determine students' capabilities, listening carefully to students and learning from their attempts to make meaning	• Teacher does not evaluate student understanding while engaged in challenging work			
2. Students are able to demonstrate their learning in a variety of ways	• Students with limited English proficiency and/or limited literacy can show their conceptual learning through visual or other forms of representation • Multiple assessments are used so students have various ways to demonstrate competence	• Most or all tests are written and require reading/ writing proficiency in English • Teacher expects students to tell "the" answer • Students have a narrow range of options for demonstrating competence (e.g., multiple choice tests, matching, etc.)			
3. Formative assessment practices are used that provide information on the learning of *every student*; no student "falls through the cracks"	• Teacher uses formative assessments that determine individual learning • Teacher uses information from formative assessments to scaffold student learning and to clarify	• Formative assessments are too general to capture individual student understanding (e.g. class discussions where only a few students participate) • Teacher			

	misconceptions of individual students when needed during instruction	uses assessment data only to assign grades; data not used formatively to provide explicit instruction when needed • Teacher relies on summative assessments to inform instruction			
4. Authentic assessments are used as the primary means for assessing written and oral language development	• Students' written and oral language proficiency is assessed while they are actively engaged in reading, writing, speaking extended discourse • Students' linguistic competence is evaluated while they are actually using language in purposeful ways	•Assessments measure discrete, isolated skills and/or use short, disconnected passages • Students' linguistic competence is evaluated solely through standardized measures			
5. Teacher sets high standards and students understand the criteria by which they are being assessed	• Teacher bases feedback on established high standards and provides students with specific information on how they can meet those standards • Criteria for particular assignments	• Teacher feedback is subjective and is not tied to targeted learning outcomes and standards • Students do not know the criteria upon which they are being assessed			

	are displayed and teacher refers to criteria as students develop their products	• Standards are not rigorous • Teacher responds to student work with short evaluative comments such as "good job" or "✓"			
6. Students have opportunities for self-assessment	• Students are involved in analyzing their work and in setting their own goals for learning • Students are involved in developing the criteria for their finished products (e.g., scoring rubrics) • Students are encouraged to evaluate their own products based upon a pre-determined set of criteria	• Assessment is always teacher-controlled			
7.Assessment practices promote the achievement of the group, and not just individuals	• Teacher encourages students to work together to learn difficult concepts, and assesses the work of the group	• Teacher emphasizes individual achievement; working together is viewed as "cheating"			

V. CURR   CURRICULUM/ PLANNED EXPERIENCES

Holistic Score   4   3   2   1   0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (√)
1. The curriculum and planned learning experiences use the knowledge and experience of students	• Real-world examples that connect to students' lives are included in the curriculum • Learning experiences build on prior student learning and invite students to make connections • Examples of mainstream and non-mainstream beliefs, attitudes, and activities are included • Students' own texts and experiences are used to demonstrate skills and concepts	• No attempt is made to link students' realities to what is being studied • Learning experiences are disconnected from students' knowledge and experiences • Skills and content are presented in isolation (never in application to authentic contexts) • Students' and families' particular "funds of knowledge" are never called upon during learning experiences • Teacher follows the script of the adopted curriculum even when it conflicts with her own or the students' lived experiences			

2. The curriculum and planned experiences integrate and provide opportunities for the expression of diverse perspectives	• Texts include protagonists from diverse backgrounds and present ideas from multiple perspectives • Texts are available that represent diverse protagonists or multiple perspectives •Opportunities are plentiful for students to present diverse perspectives through class discussions • Students are encouraged to challenge the ideas in a text	• The conventional, dominant point of view is predominating • Few texts are available to represent diverse protagonists or multiple perspectives • Biased units of study that show only the conventional point of view (e.g., Columbus discovered America) are presented • No or very few texts are available with protagonists from diverse cultural, linguistic, and/or socio-economic backgrounds • No opportunities are provided for students to present diverse views			
3. The curriculum and planned learning experiences involve students in using written and oral language for real purposes and audiences	• The language and experiences of the students and the activity of the classroom are used to teach written and oral language skills and conventions	• Written and oral language skills are taught outside the context of meaningful literate activity • An adopted or pre-made curriculum is			

	• Students' own writing and a variety of print materials are used to develop literacy skills • Curriculum experiences include inquiry-based reading, writing, and learning • Authentic learning tasks are an integral part of the curriculum (e.g., developing proposals, presenting information to real audiences, etc.)	used exclusively to teach skills and concepts • Worksheets and/or workbook assignments predominate •Students read from textbooks exclusively and responses to reading consist of prefabricated end-of-chapter questions			
4. The curriculum and planned learning experiences provide opportunities for the inclusion of issues important to the classroom, school and community	• Students are engaged in experiences that develop awareness and provide opportunities to contribute, inform, persuade and have a voice in the classroom, school and beyond • Oral and written language and academic concepts are used to explore real-world issues • Community-	• The curriculum and learning experiences present written and oral language as "neutral skills" and ignores the sociopolitical context in which language and literacy are used • Learning experiences are derived almost exclusively from published textbooks and other			

	based issues and projects are included in the planned program and new skills and concepts are linked to real-world problems and events	materials that do not relate to the classroom community or the larger community being served • The focus of literacy and content instruction is to teach the skills and information required to "pass the test"			

IV. INSTR PEDAGOGY/INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

Holistic Score   4   3   2   1   0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (√)
1. Instruction is contextualized in students' lives and experiences	• Learning tasks and texts relate directly to students' lives outside of school • Classroom interaction patterns and communication structures match those found in students' homes and communities • The teacher builds on students' existing cultural knowledge in lessons and activities	• Learning tasks and texts reflect the values and experiences of dominant ethnic and cultural groups • Only interaction patterns and communication structures of the dominant group are deemed acceptable			
2. The teacher learns with	• The teacher learns about	• The teacher is the authority			

students	diverse perspectives along with students • The teacher engages students in the inquiry process and learns from students' investigations	• Students are not encouraged to challenge or question ideas presented or to engage in further inquiry			
3. The teacher allows students to collaborate with one another	• Students work in pairs and small groups to read, write and discuss texts or to solve problems • The teacher works to equalize existing status differences among students • Teacher arranges shared experiences that build a sense of community (e.g. choral reading, partner reading, drama, working together to solve challenging problems or to create a new product)	• Students read, write and solve problems in isolation • Students are not permitted to help one another or to work together in pairs or groups			
4. Students engage in active, hands-on learning tasks	• Learning tasks allow students to be physically active • Teacher uses	• Students work passively at their seats on teacher-directed tasks • Passive			

	learning activities that promote a high level of student engagement • Exploratory learning is encouraged	student learning is the norm (e.g., listening to direct instruction and taking notes, reading the textbook, seatwork, worksheets, etc.) • Exploratory learning is discouraged			
5. The teacher gives students choices based on their experiences, values, needs and strengths	• Students have multiple opportunities to choose texts, writing topics, and modes of expression based on preferences and personal relevance • Students have some choice in assignments • Teacher allows students some choice in the topic of study and ownership in what they are learning (e.g., student-generated questions that will guide the study, research on a selected topic)	• The teacher selects reading texts, writing topics, and modes of expression for students • All assignments are teacher-initiated •Students have no choice in topic of study or in the questions that will be addressed throughout the study			
6. The teacher balances instruction using both explicit teaching and meaningful	• Instruction is rigorous and cognitively challenging for students from all ethnic, linguistic, and	• Instruction focuses on low-level skills • Students engage in isolated and			

application	socio-economic backgrounds • The teacher models, explains and demonstrates skills and concepts and provides appropriate scaffolding for students • Students apply skills and new concepts in the context of meaningful and personally relevant learning activities	repetitive tasks that are disconnected from each other • The teacher does not always model, explain and demonstrate new skills and concepts prior to asking students to apply them • The teacher does not provide appropriate scaffolding for students as they learn new skills and concepts • Students practice skills and reinforce new concepts in ways that are not meaningful or personally relevant to them			
7. The teacher focuses on developing students' academic vocabularies	• There is an emphasis on learning academic vocabulary in the particular content area •The teacher provides explicit instruction in the meaning of words and students practice using new words in a variety of	• Little attention is paid to academic vocabulary instruction in the content area • New words are taught outside of meaningful contexts • Students are not taught independent			

	meaningful contexts Students learn independent word learning strategies such as morphology, contextual analysis, and cognates	word learning strategies			

VII. DIS   DISCOURSE/ INSTRUCTIONAL CONVERSATION

Holistic Score   4   3   2   1   0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (√)
1. The teacher encourages and responds positively to children's use of home/native language/ dialect and culturally-specific discourse styles	• There is peer conversation in the home language or dialect during both free and academic time • Students share stories in their home language/ dialect • ELL students communicate together in their native language • The teacher accepts students' home languages and dialects, while also teaching the standard vernacular • Students are supported in their use of culturally-specific ways of communicating, such as topic-associative	• Students are discouraged from using their home language or dialect • ELL students are discouraged from using their native language outside of school • The teacher views topic-associative discourse, topic-chaining discourse, and overlapping discourse patterns as rambling talk • The teacher attempts to control and change student communication styles to match mainstream classroom			

	discourse, topic-chaining discourse, and overlapping discourse patterns	discourse patterns			
2. The teacher shares control of classroom discourse with students and builds upon and expands upon student talk in an authentic way	• Students engage in genuine discussions versus "guess what's in the teacher's head" • The teacher uses open-ended questions and various discourse protocols to elicit extended student talk • The teacher demonstrates active listening and responds in authentic ways to student comments; s/he encourages the same active listening from students	• There are strict boundaries between personal conversation and instructional conversation •Students rarely have opportunities for genuine discussions • There are few or no opportunities for extended student talk; rather, talk is dominated by the teacher			
3. The teacher promotes student engagement through culturally responsive discourse practices	• The teacher employs a variety of culturally appropriate discourse protocols to promote student participation and engagement (e.g., call and response, talking circle)	• Discourse practices of various cultural groups are not used during instruction			
4. The teacher promotes equitable discourse practices	• Students use collaborative, overlapping conversation and participate actively, supporting the speaker during	• The teacher controls classroom discourse by assigning speaking rights to students			

	the creation of story talk or discussion and commenting/ expanding upon the ideas of others • The teacher uses techniques to support equitable participation, such as wait time, feedback, turn-taking, and scaffolding of ideas • All students have the opportunity to participate in classroom discussions • There is a sense of congeniality and consensus building; students build on one another's ideas in a respectful way	• Students follow traditional norms in turn-taking • Not all students have the opportunity to participate in classroom discussions • Some students are allowed to dominate discussions			
5. The teacher provides structures that promote student collaborative talk	• Structures are used that promote student talk, such as think/ pair/share, small group work, and partner work • Students collaborate and work together to solve problems • The teacher encourages the use of a "talk	• Students are discouraged from talking together • Collaborating with other students is discouraged and may be regarded as "cheating • The teacher does not allow students to collaborate in producing			

	story like" participation structure to allow children to produce responses collaboratively	answers			
6. The teacher provides opportunities for students to develop linguistic competence	• The teacher articulates expectations for language use (e.g., "I want you to reply using complete sentences. I want you to use these vocabulary words in your discussion") • The teacher develops language objectives in addition to content objectives, having specific goals in mind for students' linguistic performance • Students are engaged in authentic uses of language, (e.g., drama, discussion, purposeful writing and communication) • Students are taught appropriate registers of language use for a variety of social contexts, and they are provided with opportunities to	• The teacher does not articulate expectations for language use • The teacher does not have language objectives for students; rather, only content objectives are evident • Students' use of language is limited and they do not use language in authentic ways • Students are not taught how to vary their language use in different social contexts and for different purposes			

| | | practice those registers in authentic ways | | | | |

VIII. PERSP   SOCIOPOLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS/ MULTIPLE PERSPECTIVES

Holistic Score   4   3   2   1   0

CRI Indicator	For example, in a responsive classroom:	For example, in a non-responsive classroom:	Field notes: time of example	Field notes: time of non-example	Field notes: No example (√)
1. Students are allowed to question the way things are	• Teacher helps students identify important social issues and facilitates students' investigation of the status quo and how to challenge it • Students may identify issues within their own school or texts to investigate and question	• Teacher teaches to the "norm" by using standard textbooks and curriculum and presenting information and ideas as neutral • Teacher discourages critical thought or questioning of instructional materials or social issues • Teacher engages in mystification in which students are not given the "whole story" in order to avoid controversy			
2. Students take action on real world problems	• Teacher and students identify and discuss issues within the community that are of relevance to their lives	• Teacher does not bring community and social issues into the classroom • Learning occurs only			

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	• Teacher facilitates student advocacy for their communities • Teacher encourages students to investigate real-world issues related to a topic being studied • Teacher encourages students to become actively involved in solving problems at the local, state, national, and global levels	as it relates to the standard curriculum • Teacher does not encourage application to real-world issues; accepts or endorses the status quo by ignoring or dismissing real life problems related to the topic being studied			
3. The teacher fosters an understanding of differing points of view	• Teacher helps students frame differing viewpoints about accepted roles (race, gender, age, ethnicity, class, etc.) depicted in instructional materials • Teacher encourages students to challenge statements in written and oral texts and to engage in dialogue that would present alternative views	• Teacher uses materials in class that perpetuate the status quo without presenting diverse perspectives • Teacher accepts information in written texts as factual			
4. The teacher	• Teacher	• Teacher			

actively deconstructs negative stereotypes in instructional materials and other texts	facilitates students' understanding of stereotypes and their function in society • Teacher discusses biases in popular culture that students encounter in their daily lives (e.g., TV shows, advertising, popular songs, toys) • Teacher helps students to think about biases in texts (e.g., "Who has the power in this book?" Whose perspectives are represented in the text? Whose perspectives are missing? Who benefits from the beliefs and practices represented in this text?) • Teacher challenges students to deconstruct their own cultural assumptions and biases	does not encourage students to examine biases in instructional materials or popular texts •Teacher makes prejudicial statements to students (e.g., girls are emotional; immigrants don't belong here; etc.) that indicate that s/he is not consciously aware of stereotypes and how they are perpetuated			

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