“SEEING IT IN ACTION IS MORE BENEFICIAL THAN LEARNING ABOUT IT IN SCHOOL”: A MULTI-CASE OF CLINICAL EXPERIENCES AND CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE LITERACY INSTRUCTION

by

Leslie Watson Schmidt

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Curriculum and Instruction

Charlotte

2021

Approved by:

_____
Dr. Erin Miller

_____
Dr. Bruce Taylor

_____
Dr. Colleen Whittingham

_____
Dr. Amy Good

_____
Dr. Tehia Glass

_____
Dr. Tina Heafner

ABSTRACT

LESLIE WATSON SCHMIDT. “Seeing it in action is more beneficial than learning about it in school”: A multi-case of clinical experiences and culturally responsive literacy instruction. (Under the direction of DR. ERIN MILLER)

This multiple case study explored the characteristics of clinical experiences that support preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive literacy in elementary classrooms. In particular, this study focused on capturing the voices and perspectives of three preservice teachers through semi-structured interviews, observations, and the collection of artifacts such as literacy lesson plans, journal entries, and photographs. Findings suggest that preservice teachers generally understand culturally responsive teaching as: (a) using a variety of diverse texts; (b) building a learning community that honors students’ cultures, (c) maintaining high expectations for all students; and (d) teachers knowing their students in order to connect the course content to their lives, cultures, and interests based on their coursework and experiences in the clinical setting. Data also showed that clinical educators are the most influential characteristic of preservice teachers’ understandings of culturally responsive literacy and being in the classroom setting is more influential than only learning about culturally responsive teaching through university coursework. Findings also indicate that preservice teachers are developing superficial understandings of culturally responsive teaching, suggesting implications for teacher education and preparation.

Keywords: preservice teacher, student teacher, clinical educator, clinical experience, student teaching, culturally responsive literacy instruction, culturally responsive teaching, teacher preparation program, teacher education, elementary, literacy

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I must first acknowledge the preservice teachers and educators who agreed to participate in this study during one of the most challenging years of teaching. Without you all, this important work would not have been possible. I must also acknowledge my previous students who motivated this study. I hope that my work, current and future, contributes to your ongoing learning and success.

To Dr. Miller, my dissertation chair, it has been an absolute pleasure to work with you the past year. Your guidance, positivity, and support helped me produce something I never imagined possible. Your knowledge in this area is inspirational and I have so much more to learn from you. I have to acknowledge the person that pushed me to achieve my ultimate goal of pursuing a PhD—Dr. Good. I am so thankful that our paths crossed again after East Carolina. You remain a model of the type of professor I hope to one day become and the connections you make with your students are something I always try to emulate. Thank you for your ongoing support and humor. Dr. Taylor, I have truly enjoyed working with you over the past two years. You have taught me what it means to be a compassionate and understanding educator, maintaining an even-keeled and positive outlook. You have remained supportive in my work, and for that I am thankful.

To my fellow Scholar Moms, Dr. Whittingham and Dr. Handler: you have both modeled what it means to remain driven, focused, and dedicated while never losing sight of the most important thing in life—family. Dr. Whittingham, you have taught me more about research and writing than I ever could have imagined. My early experiences with you as your graduate assistant ultimately prepared me for this dissertation. Your attention to detail and thoroughness have taught me a great deal about academic writing and I am

thankful for your ongoing (much needed) advice. Dr. Handler, thank you for being a constant source of inspiration and someone to lean on when things got tough. I have learned so much from you over the past three years and have made a friend for life.

I also want to acknowledge the other countless people who have contributed to my learning at UNC Charlotte, including my advisor Dr. Polly, the rest of my dissertation committee, Dr. Heafner and Dr. Glass, professors, and my classmates. I entered this program with the goal of learning how to prepare future teachers and left with so much more.

To my family, thank you for always celebrating my accomplishments and asking me how school was going. You humored me by reading my work and supported me along the way. To my Mom and Dad (Ona and Pops), this would not have been possible without your ongoing support and care. Without hesitation, you took our little guy for extended weekends, allowing me time to work or recharge. Mom, you put your life on hold for a year to support my family and my dreams. Reid will always value the precious time he had with his Ona during his first years of life. You are the inspiration for this dissertation and my doctoral studies.

Finally, to my boys: Reid, I hope you see in your Mommy that you can do anything you set your mind to. Always aim high and follow your dreams. Woody, you heard me repeat my goal of getting my doctorate since our college days. Thank you for supporting me, even when the future was uncertain—and all with a baby and changing careers! You were a constant listening ear, and you sacrificed many weekends and evenings for me. This would not have been possible without you.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my boys. Woody, my husband, for always believing in me and supporting my dreams. Reid, my son and constant inspiration to do better and to be better.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CE	Clinical Educator
CLD	Culturally and linguistically diverse
CRLI	Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction
CRT	Culturally Responsive Teaching
CS	Clinical Setting
CSP	Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy
PST	Preservice Teacher
TPP	Teacher Preparation Program

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

It was 6:50 a.m. on a dark autumn morning. I sat at the kidney bean-shaped table with Carmen's folder, prepared to break the news to her mother that Carmen was in danger of not passing the end of year End of Grade Level Exam (EOGs). Although her daughter was an English Language Learner from Venezuela, the Eurocratic mandates of her American education did not exempt her from taking the mandated EOGs because she had lived in the United States for more than two years. As an emergent bilingual, Carmen was also not exempt from the repercussions of Read to Achieve if she did not pass the EOGs, possibly causing her to attend summer school, complete multiple assessments in English, or retention. I needed more knowledge and experience to connect with Carmen in a way that bolstered her academic successes to prepare for those mandates. Her failure seemed imminent, and I felt an overwhelming sense of personal responsibility for it; yet, I did not even know how to communicate with Carmen's mother, a warm, loving woman with tears in her eyes because she anticipated my news would not be good. And still, I had to come up with a plan of response to address Carmen's academic needs. At this moment, it was not lost on me that I spent five years in a teacher preparation and master's program that had not yet focused on culturally responsive literacy instruction (CRLI). Further, I could not recall learning culturally responsive teaching (CRT) in my clinical experience or in constant communication with my clinical educator (CE). As I sat with Carmen's mother, the weight of my lack of preparation in supporting Carmen felt heavy to me.

While stories like mine are repeated over and over across schools in the United States as research consistently reports that new teachers cite not feeling prepared to teach

culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students (Lambeth & Smith, 2016), what makes this story unique is that I am of Hispanic heritage. Had this cultural and linguistic knowledge been handed down to me, I may have been able to better reach Carmen; however, my mother's language and her cultural knowledges were not passed down to me because of the pressure she felt to assimilate to Whiteness, both culturally and linguistically, which was not unlike most American immigrants.

It was at this juncture—working with Carmen—that I began to cultivate my desire for embracing the various cultures and literacies of my students so, unlike my mother's, these could be cherished and sustained. In other words, I learned to see cultural and linguistic knowledges as valuable resources for learning. What I left wondering, however, was why it took so long for me to come to these understandings and why I learned so little about Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction (CRLI) in my teacher preparation program. It is the culmination of my upbringing and eleven years of teaching experience that motivated this study.

If I had an understanding of CRLI, I may have been able to better meet the literacy needs of Carmen and other racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse students. CRLI centers on students accessing and connecting new knowledge with their prior knowledge, building on their interests, and connecting what they are learning in school to their lives (Au & Raphael, 2000). Au (1993) stated that "literacy learning begins in the home, not the school, and instruction should build on the foundation for literacy learning established in the home" (p. 35). Therefore, CRLI fosters new literacies that make connections to students' home cultures (Au, 2001). According to Au (2001), culturally

responsive instruction is “a thread or theme running through literacy curricula aimed at helping students of diverse backgrounds achieve high levels of literacy” (p. 4).

Characteristics of culturally responsive literacy instruction include making literacy meaningful, creating a sense of community, and providing students with culturally responsive texts (Au, 2001). Teachers make literacy meaningful by inviting the voices of students and creating a space for them to write about issues that reflect their cultural, social, and lived experiences (Winn & Johnson, 2011, p. 22). Students engage in book clubs (Raphael & McMahon, 1994) and are allowed topic selection during writers’ workshop to “write for authentic audiences and purposes that matter to them” (Winn & Johnson, 2011, p. 22). A sense of community can be created during writers’ and readers’ workshop. In writers’ workshop, students share their writing with one another, make suggestions during peer conferences, and support one another in the author’s chair (Au, 2001). In readers’ workshop, students are engaged in partner reading, share opinions about novels during book club, and make book recommendations (Au, 2001). Zapata et al. (2018) reported that “books selected for literacy learning should be representative of the diverse streams of culture, history, and language that compose today’s increasingly global society” (p. 2). Souto-Manning and Martell (2016) concurred, stating that children should read books that portray the practices and experiences of people from minoritized backgrounds.

This chapter provides a background of this study, followed by the statement of the problem. Next, the research purpose and questions are presented. Then, the conceptual frameworks of CRT, culturally responsive caring, and sociocultural theory are explained. The significance of the study and significant terms and definitions are included in this

section of the paper. This chapter concludes with limitations and delimitations and a summary of the study.

Background of the Study

During the 1990s, 35% of the U.S. student population in grades 1-12 were members of minority groups (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1998). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2020), the percentage of students of color is expected to grow to 55% of the student population by the year 2023. Concurrently, students of color are underserved by schools based on standardized testing data (Schott Foundation, 2009). Multiple studies (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, 2019; Losen, 2014; Moore & Lewis, 2012) illustrated that Black boys and girls are expelled and suspended at much higher rates than their White counterparts for the same or lesser offensive infractions, resulting in "spirit murdering" of Black children (Love, 2016, p. 2). In the same vein, Asante (1991) argued that in order for African American and Hispanic people to master the White cultural information in schools, they have had to "experience the death of their own culture" which does not register with most teachers (p. 29).

In response to large social movements of the 1960s and 1970s related to feminism, Black liberation, the rights of Indigenous peoples, and gay and lesbian rights, researchers have sought to study the characteristics and development of practice to improve the opportunities and outcomes for marginalized learners (Cochran et al., 2016). In the 1980s, process-product or generic teaching techniques that were assumed effective regardless of subject matter and culture (Dunkin & Biddle, 1974; Gage, 1978) were critiqued and prompted the research of pedagogies for critical studies of teaching (Britzman, 1991; Lather, 1986). Subsequently, interest in culturally responsive pedagogy

steadily increased since the mid 1990s as evidence showed that students of color consistently underperform when compared to their White peers (Rychly & Graves, 2012). Teaching for social justice and equity is a pressing task as evidence shows that diverse students in the American public education system are underserved by schools while the number of diverse students is projected to continue to rise (U.S. Bureau of Census, 2008).

Meanwhile, the teaching force continues to remain predominantly White, female, middle-class, and monolingual. This is a trend that began in the 1960s when desegregation of schools caused numerous Black schools to close and 40,000 Black teachers and administrators lost their positions (Milner & Howard, 2004). The increased use of teacher competency tests has also created a shortage of individuals from diverse backgrounds in the teaching force (King, 1993). Moreover, most White preservice teachers (PST) enter schools of education with limited cross-cultural experience (Bauml et al., 2016). The juxtaposition of students from CLD backgrounds with a culturally homogenous teaching force that is unprepared to teach them has prompted the need for teacher preparation programs that include content on racism, White privilege, and critical reflection (Durden & Truscott, 2013; Fasching-Varner & Dodo Seriki, 2012).

Many universities have responded to the need for preparing future classroom teachers to teach for equity by requiring a course or two on multicultural education, culturally responsive pedagogy, teaching English language learners, or social justice teaching (Sleeter, 2017). Concurrently, scholars (Fox & Gay, 1995; Gay & Howard, 2000; Gomez, 1996) revealed that equity based practices must be integrated into all aspects of teacher education programs, including an entire curriculum that centers on race and poverty (Milner & Laughter, 2015), embedded in frameworks and mission statements

that place equity front and center (Nieto, 2000), and through clinical placements in diverse settings (Sleeter, 2011). According to Zeichner's (2010) ecological approach to teacher education, teachers must be prepared in the same context in which children are educated.

Sleeter (2011) recommended that teacher education programs emphasize recruitment and selection of PSTs from diverse backgrounds, community-based cross-cultural immersion experiences, and multicultural education coursework with a field experience. Similarly, Souto-Manning (2019) called for a complete transformation of university-based teacher education. Souto-Manning (2019) presented three key understandings to develop asset-, equity-, and justice-oriented teachers: take a public stance on how market-based reform efforts undermine the ideas and democratic aims of teacher education; acknowledge the social, cultural, political, and situated dimensions of teaching and teacher education; and name, problematize, and interrupt overt and covert systems of oppression enacted through teacher education. However, despite these calls, very few empirical studies discuss the impact of outside-of-coursework experiences that shape PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy, specifically the characteristics of clinical experiences.

Additionally, while there has been research published more recently on effective equity based practices (i.e., Baines et al., 2018; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Nash et al., 2020a; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016), there is still a dearth of literature that presents how PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices are actualized in their clinical experiences in classrooms. Contemporary studies of culturally relevant literacy practices demonstrate upholding high academic standards for diverse learners

while also fostering their cultural competence (Souto-Manning, 2016) and providing students with curricular spaces for their home languages and lived experiences (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009, 2014; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016); yet, we still know too little about the characteristics of clinical experiences that support PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy in elementary classrooms.

Statement of the Problem

As revealed in the prior section, studies that examine effective culturally responsive literacy practices make great contributions to educational research. These have had implications for some teacher preparation programs across the country that are making an effort to integrate equity-based teaching practices into coursework. However, there is little empirical research that explores how clinical experiences support PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms. Scholars such as Lambeth and Smith (2016) found that PSTs are indeed learning about the framework and tenets of CRT in university classrooms, but PSTs cite uncertainty about how those theoretical assumptions manifest in pedagogical practices. While research demonstrates the significance of clinical experiences and relationships between PSTs and CEs, there is much needed exploration related to PSTs' understandings of how culturally responsive literacy practices are developed in clinical experiences in elementary classrooms. Jacobs (2019) suggested that when the teacher educator, CE, and PST work in synchronicity, PSTs are more successful in their clinical experiences that focus on culturally responsive practices, but research has yet to illustrate these studies. Likewise, Hill (2012) stressed the importance of the teacher educator and CE working jointly to support PSTs' development of strategies that will facilitate deep thinking with

culturally relevant texts that represent various cultures and backgrounds. When CEs facilitate and mentor similar practices to those of the university, a connection to theory and practice are made by the PST (Hill, 2012).

Research Purpose and Questions

The purpose of this multiple case study is to explore the characteristics of clinical experiences that support PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms. This study focuses on capturing the voices and perspectives of PSTs themselves. Despite entire research journals dedicated to teacher education, there is a relatively small amount of research that specifically looks at how PSTs develop an understanding of culturally responsive literacy practices in their clinical experiences due to the absence of PSTs' voices in the literature. Chang (2017) noted that while theories of equity-centered and socially-just teaching are significant, we know little about the factors that influence how PSTs understand and enact such practices in classrooms. When PSTs' voices are heard, we come closer toward providing equal access to a quality education for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students (Durden et al., 2016).

The following overarching research question will be addressed in this study to gain a deeper understanding on this topic: What are the characteristics of clinical experiences that support preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms? Specifically, this study focused on two research questions:

RQ1. What role do clinical educators play in preservice teachers' development of understandings of culturally responsive teaching in literacy?

RQ2. What role do clinical settings (i.e., curricular components, students, teaching practices, administrators, clinical educators, etc.) have in supporting preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive teaching in literacy classrooms?

This study is distinctive because the voices of PSTs are often absent or underrepresented in the literature (Izadinia, 2017), and limited research has sought to describe the interactions between culturally competent educators and prospective teachers (Tellez, 2008). One exception of such research is Whiting's 2010 dissertation, yet he focused specifically on the viewpoint of Black, culturally relevant CEs who were nominated based on their effectiveness to instruct children of color. Additionally, there has been growing interest focused on preparing teachers to educate students from CLD backgrounds, however field experiences have not been central to the conversation (Howard & Milner, 2014).

Conceptual Frameworks

This study draws upon CRT, specifically its first tenet of Culturally Responsive Caring, and cognitive apprenticeship theory as guiding frameworks.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Geneva Gay (2002) asserted that culturally responsive pedagogy uses the "cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant to and effective [for students].... It teaches *to* and *through* strengths of these students" (p. 24). CRT builds on the tenets of Gloria Ladson-Billings's (1995) culturally relevant pedagogy: building students' cultural competence, critical consciousness, and academic achievement.

Cultural competence means that students develop and/or maintain competence with their primary cultural heritages. Critical consciousness provides a space for students to critique cultural norms, values, and institutions that maintain social inequities. Students must also experience academic success in the classroom. The ideas of other scholars (Hollins & Oliver, 1999; Irvine, 2003) have also contributed to the development of CRT.

Like culturally relevant pedagogy, CRT begins with cultural congruence and turns to action, situating experiences of students within the curriculum to increase their interest (Gay, 2002). CRT centers on teaching that increases student achievement, builds critical consciousness, and develops knowledge of self and other cultures (Gay, 2002). Further, CRT does not expect CLD students to assimilate to the Eurocratic norms in schools but teaches to and through the personal and cultural strengths of the students (Gay, 2002).

According to Gay (2002), there are five important components of CRT: (a) developing a cultural diversity knowledge base, (b) designing culturally relevant curricula, (c) demonstrating cultural caring and building a learning community, (d) establishing cross-cultural communications, and (e) establishing cultural congruity in classroom instruction. Gay (2002) suggested that educators should use the "cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (p. 106). Cultural characteristics include values, traditions, language, communication, learning styles, and relationships norms. Above all, students have the potential to be more successful in school when the content and instruction is relative to their lived experiences rather than taught from a Eurocentric perspective.

Although I maintain the term CRT instead of the updated, more contemporary term Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP) proposed by Paris and Alim (2017a), I agree with the additional nuances to CRT offered by CSP that propose culture can be understood in fluid, intersectional ways that challenge monolithic stereotypes (Paris, 2012). Paris challenged the research and practice under cultural relevance and responsiveness, questioning if they indeed ensure maintenance of the languages and cultures of CLD students. Further, Paris (2012) suggested that "we must ask if a critical stance toward and critical action against unequal power relations is resulting from such research and practice" (pp. 94-95). Paris recommended that pedagogies be more than responsive of or relevant to cultural experiences and practices of youth, requiring that they support young people in sustaining the cultural and linguistic competence of their communities while accessing dominant cultural competence. Specifically, Paris and Alim (2017a) are interested in creating spaces for asset pedagogies to support the practices of youth of color, while maintaining a critical lens.

I have chosen to frame this research with CRT instead of CSP because CRT emphasizes that educators recognize students' cultural displays of learning and respond positively with teaching moves that use cultural knowledge as a scaffold (Hammond, 2015). Specifically, I am drawn to the aspects of CRT that focus on the importance of educators creating relationships and having social-emotional connections to their students in order to create a safe space for learning, as described by Hammond (2015). Culturally responsive education can strengthen student connectedness with school and enhance learning (Kalyanpur & Harry, 2012; Tatum, 2009), namely through culturally responsive caring.

Culturally Responsive Caring

In line with the first tenet of CRT that demands teachers maintain high expectations for student achievement, culturally responsive teachers must believe that all students can succeed (Ladson-Billings, 1995) by a way of caring that holds them accountable (Gay, 2000). This type of caring "is manifested in the form of teacher attitudes, expectations, and behavior about students' human value, intellectual capability, and performance responsibilities" (Gay, 2000, p. 45). Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) referred to these teachers as "warm demanders" (p. 335) who care most for their students with high expectations for academic success. Warm demanders know when to "offer emotional comfort and care and when to not allow students to slip into learned helplessness" (Hammond, 2015, p. 97). Caring teachers should care so much about their culturally diverse students that they hold them to the same standards as students whom are typically given the benefit of high expectations, namely White, middle class students (Gay, 2002).

Not only should the teacher demonstrate caring through high expectations, but the classroom climate should also be conducive to learning for ethnically diverse students (Gay, 2002). This type of caring environment "cultivates and differentiates students' intellectual capacities, potentials, creativities, and heritage cultures" (Yuan & Jiang, 2019, p. 152). According to Hammond (2015), caring generates the trust that builds relationships and "the brain feels safest and relaxed when we are connected to others we trust to treat us well" (p. 73). Above all, caring is a pedagogical necessity that requires teachers to decide how to best meet the interests of others, binding individuals to their

communities and each other (Gay, 2002). My study is also framed by the cognitive apprenticeship theory (Brown et al., 1989).

Cognitive Apprenticeship Theory

According to Collins and colleagues (1991), cognitive apprenticeship theory is "a model of instruction that works to make thinking visible" (p. 6). Thinking is made visible as experts, or clinical educators, impart skills and teach novices, or preservice teachers, how to think like experts in the classroom (Brown et al., 1989). Cognitive apprenticeship theory, also known as learning-through-guided-experience (Brown et al., 1989), underscores that novice teachers move toward full participation in the community of practice (Collins et al., 1991; Lave & Wenger, 1991) through the sequence of six components.

Brown et al. (1989) highlighted six methods that instructors typically apply in order to promote the development of expertise through the cognitive apprenticeship theory: (1) modeling, (2) coaching, (3) scaffolding, (4) articulating, (5) reflecting, and (6) exploring. These methods occur concurrently and in order from more clinical educator support to less clinical educator support within the classroom community. Brown et al.'s (1989) work did not focus on CEs, but CEs are the example here because of the context of my study. *Modeling* involves observation by novices and the explanation of practices by the expert. *Coaching* is provided through feedback once the novices begin to enact practices. *Scaffolding* occurs when experts offer supports at the appropriate level and experts may remove scaffolds as they ask novices to reflect on their own practices. *Articulating* involves the expert requesting that the novice provide explanation for their actions. Once novices move toward more participation in the classroom, they will begin

to *reflect* on and compare their performance to that of the expert. Finally, *exploring* occurs when the novice sets his or her own learning goals once the expert has faded out of the classroom.

Cognitive apprenticeship theory provides a lens for examining effective practices and may be useful in understanding how clinical educators inform preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive literacy in elementary classrooms. Cognitive apprenticeship theory makes explicit the strategies that experienced practitioners use when they apply their knowledge to real-world tasks (Collins et al., 1991), such as culturally responsive literacy instruction.

Significance of the Study

There are many reasons why this study is significant. First, as stated by Sleeter (2011), most of the research focuses on the attitudes and lack of knowledge of White PSTs. While that is important, it is not the same as figuring out how to populate the teaching profession with culturally responsive teachers (Sleeter, 2011). In discovering how PSTs develop an understanding of CRT during their clinical experience, this study adds to the existing literature for teacher educators and CEs. Secondly, Bauml et al. (2016) revealed the need for future research to consider the experiences of PSTs in teacher preparation programs to discover how teachers learn about and engage in culturally informed practices, which is the aim of this study. Third, few researchers have identified specific components of field-based experiences that foster the changes in beliefs and attitudes of PSTs (Castro, 2010). One study (Bennett, 2013) investigated effective facets of tutoring as a field experience that contributed to PSTs' understandings about CRT. Bennett found that one-on-one student-teacher interactions and scaffolding

critical reflection through questions and conversations were effective facets of the field experience. This study highlights the need for continued research about CRT to gain insight and understandings on how to better prepare teachers to teach students from diverse backgrounds, according to Bennett.

Finally, transforming theory into practice, known as the theory/practice divide (Zeichner, 2005), is one of the goals of this study as PSTs participated in classrooms where CRT is a core practice. Rychly and Graves (2012) revealed that there is a missing piece in applying the knowledge of CRT into actual classroom practice and this study will examine that learning. Paris and Alim (2017a) concurred, stating that scholars have raised unanswered questions regarding how CRT has been conceptualized and actualized in both teacher education and K-12 settings.

It is important that scholars continue to research effective CRLI practices and how they are understood by PSTs during clinical experiences because CRT is essential to the literacy discipline. According to Souto-Manning and Martell (2016), "reading, writing, and talk are social cultural practices. That is, the meaning (or meanings) a child makes of a text is influenced by her identity, culture, experiences, and communities" (p. 82). In order to be successful at culturally responsive literacy instruction, teachers must understand that literacy is influenced by who the child is (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016) and teach through their cultural experiences and strengths, as outlined in culturally responsive teaching.

Definition of Terms

Clinical Experience: A culminating, yearlong field placement in which a student teacher works closely with an experienced clinical educator in his or her classroom, gradually

taking over components of the clinical educator's responsibilities until they assume full responsibility for the classroom (Kinne et al., 2016). For this study, the clinical experience refers to the first semester of the two-semester yearlong internship. The preservice teachers spent two full days per week in their elementary clinical settings.

Clinical Educator: An in-service, effective teacher, who "supervises, supports, assesses, and guides a teacher candidate's professional development during the clinical experience" (McElwee et al., 2018, p. 92).

Culturally Relevant Teaching: Gloria Ladson-Billings (2009) defined culturally relevant teaching as "a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 20).

Culturally Responsive Caring: According to Geneva Gay (2000), "teachers have to care so much about ethnically diverse students and their achievement that they accept nothing less than high-level success from them and work diligently to accomplish it" (p. 52). Culturally responsive caring demands that teachers are "tough and intractable" in terms of having "high performance expectations and diligence in facilitating their achievement" (Gay, 2000, p. 70). Culturally responsive caring is a characteristic of the first tenet of culturally responsive teaching, maintaining high expectations for student achievement.

Culturally Responsive Teaching: "Using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively" (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Culturally responsive teaching teaches *to* and *through* the personal and cultural strengths of the students (Gay, 2002).

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy: According to Django Paris (2012), "culturally sustaining pedagogy seeks to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling" (p. 93).

Equity: Cochran-Smith et al. (2016) describe equity as "to value judgements about the presence (or absence) of systematic, but remediable, differences among population groups in terms of distribution of opportunities and resource as well as experiences and outcomes" (p. 69). Equity is primarily fairness and justice.

Literacy: The National Council of Teachers of English (2020) describes literacy as "the way we interact with the world around us, how we shape it and are shaped by it...how we communicate with others via reading and writing, but also by speaking, listening, and creating" (para 11).

Preservice Teachers: I define preservice teachers as undergraduate students who are engaged in an accredited teacher preparation program and seeking licensure, also referred to as teacher candidates or student teachers.

Social Justice: Villegas (2007) described principles of social justice as "a broad approach to education that aims to have all students reach high levels of learning and to prepare them all for active and full participation in a democracy" (p. 372).

Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

A few factors limit the findings within this study. While case studies have the potential to provide rich analysis of the data, they limit the generalizability of the results (Guba & Lincoln, 1981; Merriam, 1998). In order to ensure detailed data collection and analysis, the sample size for this study was rather small. Therefore, the results cannot be generalizable, but they add to the existing literature on PSTs and CRT. Convenience

sampling (Miles et al., 2014) was employed in this study due to access to PSTs at the participating university. The PST participants were accessible to the researcher both geographically and immediately (Miles et al., 2014). Another limitation to my study is that all of my participants are White and female, therefore I am lacking the voices of historically minoritized educators. Additionally, a PST mentioned in an interview that the way her CE acted during my observation may have been influenced by my presence. Participant behavior or interview answers, as a result of my presence, could also be a limitation to this study.

Another limitation includes data collection through technology. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, much of the research was collected via an online platform. Internet access caused interruptions in thought and occasional interruptions of one another. At times, the lack of internet caused lag time and pause in train of thought for the participants. Also, as this study took place during the PSTs' first semester of their yearlong internship, rather than their final semester, they were only in the classroom twice a week instead of five times a week. Future research could take place during a PST's second semester of their clinical experience to gather rich data with more time in the classroom. Finally, the PSTs could not confidently report on observations of culturally responsive teaching from time to time. Phrases such as, "I don't know if this is right or not," "I'm not 100% sure, but __," and "I don't know if this is culturally responsive, but __" were mentioned during the interviews preceding various CRT examples. This is important to consider as CRT may have occurred without the PSTs' or CEs' acknowledgement or the PSTs may not have consistently observed culturally responsive practices.

One delimitation of this study is the exclusion of middle school and high school teachers as the focus was on elementary literacy. Elementary school was chosen for this study because literacy development begins in the early stages of childhood (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016), even prior to formal schooling. Scholars (Nash et al., 2020a; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016) call on the importance of culturally responsive literacy instruction in elementary classrooms. Another delimitation is the choice of participants to serve as CEs for this study. The school administrators were asked to select teachers who exhibited characteristics of culturally responsive teaching. However, it should be noted that just because teachers have been identified by their administrators as culturally responsive does not ensure that the teachers truly embrace the tenets, practices, and beliefs of CRT. Finally, the schools were less diverse than I would have wanted as each class had a majority (over half of the population) of White students. Convenience sampling limited the overall diversity of my participants and school populations.

Summary

Overall, research on PSTs' understanding of CRT within teacher preparation programs is limited (Christ & Sharma, 2018). This qualitative study was designed to explore the characteristics of clinical experiences that support PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms, adding to the current literature and attempting to fill the gap. The focus of this study was on how PSTs actualize literacy practices that include CRT during their clinical experience. This study is particularly significant because there is scant research that supports how PSTs develop an understanding of employing CRT in literacy classrooms during their clinical

experience, despite the growing number of practical deployments of CRT in early literacy classrooms.

In the first chapter of this dissertation, the need for CRT in teacher preparation was introduced, along with the problem, purpose, guiding research questions, and frameworks. Chapter Two provides an in-depth literature review for this study. Chapter Three contains an overview of the qualitative methodology selected to explore the characteristics of clinical experiences that support PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices. Chapter Four provides a presentation of the data and Chapter Five reports findings and the discussion.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this study was to explore the characteristics of clinical experiences that support preservice teachers' (PST) understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms. Teacher education programs that seek to prepare candidates for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) settings maintain two components that are essential to teacher preparation: coursework that focuses on multicultural education and educational equity and placement in CLD schools (Bennett, 2002; Grant, 1994). This literature review presents the characteristics of and research on both vital components of teacher preparation programs. Moreover, not only should teacher candidates be placed in diverse environments, they should also participate in a field experience with clinical educators (CE) who have a thorough knowledge in multicultural education (Tellez, 2008) and demonstrate this knowledge through practice. Although researchers have investigated clinical experiences, few studies have reported what CEs with this knowledge attempt to share with their PSTs and why (Tellez, 2008).

This chapter is divided into three sections. The first section provides an overview of how teacher preparation programs attempt to prepare PSTs for future placements with racially and ethnically diverse students. This section explores the ways PSTs and novice teachers report their experiences teaching students from diverse backgrounds unlike their own. The second section entails an evolution of clinical placements for student teachers and why placement matters more than the teacher education curriculum alone. The final section provides a comprehensive review of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms that support children who are most often marginalized in schools (Nash et al., 2020b).

Teacher Education Curriculum

The Need for Culturally Responsive Teaching

PSTs have repeatedly reported that they are unclear about how to approach students from diverse backgrounds and typically avoid discussions about culture and race with students of color (Adams et al., 2005). Hence, Tellez (2008) argued that "energy given to helping preservice teachers become more effective and devoted teachers for low-income children of color should be considered one of the greatest, and still unfulfilled, dreams of higher education in the United States" (p. 46).

Several studies have attended to PSTs' willingness and comfort in teaching students of diverse backgrounds. In 1990, Larke administered the Cultural Diversity Awareness inventory to 51 preservice elementary teachers and determined that 68.6% of the participants reported feeling uncomfortable associating with people who have differing cultural values than they did. Tettegah (1996) administered the Oklahoma Racial Attitude Scale and the Teachable Pupil Survey and discovered that participants found Latinx and African American students less capable and teachable than their White counterparts and rated Asian Americans as more capable. Upon interviewing 20 PSTs, 14 of whom were White females, Bauml et al. (2016) discovered that almost half of the participants expressed fears, concerns, anxiety, and/or no interest in teaching in an urban school. The PSTs' concerns fell into three major areas including racial/cultural barriers in the school, discipline issues, and a general feeling that teaching in an urban school would be too difficult for a first-year teacher (Bauml et al., 2016).

Similarly, Siwatu (2007) administered the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale and Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy Scale to 275

participants and concluded that PSTs hold more positive attitudes about culturally diverse populations and accept the tenets of culturally responsive teaching. Two years later, Siwatu et al. (2009) again conducted the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale and discovered that novice teachers were ill-prepared to teach students from CLD backgrounds. These contradictory findings suggest the need for future research on the perceptions of teaching culturally diverse students held by PSTs.

Efforts to Include Culturally Responsive Teaching

One of the most daunting tasks teacher educators face today is preparing culturally responsive teachers with the willingness and capability to teach students from CLD backgrounds (Gay, 2002; Villegas, 2008). Grant (1994) argued that multicultural education must be infused throughout an entire teacher education program rather than a single-course approach. Generally speaking, teacher education programs attempt to prepare cohorts of predominantly White females to teach through a course or two on multicultural education, culturally responsive pedagogy, teaching English language learners, or social justice learning, often in a foundation course (Sleeter, 2017). Using qualitative content analysis, Gorski (2009) investigated multicultural teacher education course syllabi in the United States to unveil the ways in which courses frame and conceptualize multicultural education. Gorski found that more than half emphasized celebration of differences rather than inequalities. While the syllabi appeared designed to meet the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education standard, they did not prepare teachers to practice authentic multicultural education (Sleeter, 2017) through key principles such as critical consciousness and a commitment to educational equity.

Similarly, King and Butler (2015) have found interest in investigating teacher education programs' attempts to train teachers to effectively teach diverse populations. The goal of their study was to identify the number of teacher education programs that offered courses on multiculturalism to a teaching force of more than 80% White teachers in the southeast. Of the 14 southeastern public institutions they studied in 2011-2012, King and Butler discovered that 71% of the colleges of education required that students take fewer than one-fourth of their classes on diversity or multiculturalism. These statistics suggest that multicultural content should be required within each course to increase the exposure of diversity PSTs receive. To better prepare future educators, researchers have committed to gaining the perspectives of teaching in a diverse classroom setting by teacher candidates and novice teachers.

Teachers' Perceptions of Preparation

The development of knowledge in multicultural education has become a theme in university-based teacher education (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Cockrell et al., 1999; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) as a result of the lack of PST diversity and cultural mismatches with their students. Moreover, the study of multicultural education with attention to structural inequities and biases in schools is the focus of many university-based courses in teacher preparation (Tellez, 2008). However, beginning teachers argued that the university played little role in preparing them to teach students from various backgrounds (Ada, 1986; Martin, 1997).

According to Lambeth and Smith (2016), preservice and novice teachers are often unprepared to teach in schools where the students' life experiences are different from their own. In 2016, Lambeth and Smith analyzed questionnaires completed by 16 PSTs

and conducted interviews with 12 of the participants. A central theme that emerged in the data was that PSTs suggested that teacher education programs should teach candidates about *how* to work with culturally diverse students, not just *why* they should accept differences. Overall, the candidates indicated that they need support from teachers who have experience working with students of various cultures. One PST in particular explained that professors have stressed the need for teachers to be culturally responsive, but no one has ever shown them *how*.

A survey conducted by Sleeter (2017) revealed that even though the majority of teachers report feeling confident in their understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy, they blame students for their academic success difficulties rather than the curriculum or teacher's actions. For instance, 95% of the 1,275 teachers that Sleeter surveyed considered themselves familiar with culturally responsive pedagogy. Yet, when asked how they interpreted the low achievement of their students they attributed the students' academic struggles to the student and family such as tardiness and attendance, poverty, motivation, families and communities, and the students' home language rather than to the educators' pedagogical control. Academics have found interest in unearthing how teacher education programs are attempting to prepare White cohorts of teacher candidates. Once PSTs are exposed to the tenets of culturally responsive teaching in their teacher education program, they are given the opportunity to enact culturally responsive teaching training in their clinical placements. The following section describes the clinical experience, or student teaching, in detail.

Teacher Education and Clinical Placements

History of Clinical Placements

In the United States, the clinical field placement is a culminating experience for PSTs known as student teaching or, more recently, the clinical experience (Kinne et al., 2016). Kinne and colleagues thoroughly outlined the characteristics of the clinical placement. During this time, a student teacher works closely with an experienced CE in their classroom, gradually taking over components of the CE's responsibilities until they assume full responsibility for the classroom. According to Kinne et al., the PSTs fully manage and teach the students in the classroom while the CE is not involved. Typically, the CE is not even present in the classroom during this time and serves as a mentor to the teacher candidate, along with the university supervisor. Kinne and colleagues revealed that an unspoken rule about this experience is that PSTs will finally demonstrate their true capabilities in managing and teaching in the classroom in which the PST would ultimately "sink or swim."

The model for student teaching has evolved over time, yet the clinical experience has been a capstone in teacher preparation for decades (Veal & Rickard, 1998). In the 1970s, teaching skills were strictly practiced in the university setting (Houston & Howsam, 1974), similar to current day rehearsals which are a newer concept that involve PSTs in publicly practicing how to teach course content (Lampert et al., 2013). Singular practice in the university setting was short lived and ultimately failed because teacher educators underestimated the importance of learning to teach within the context of the school classroom (Tellez, 2008). By the 1980s, university teacher preparation was completely washed out by the direct work with schools (Zeichner & Tabachnik, 1981), contrasting with previous practices of the 1970s. There continues to be an increased

emphasis on clinical experiences in teacher preparation, making the student teaching experience even more crucial (Gurl, 2019).

The clinical experience can be a time of intense emotion for the teacher candidate as they are developing a professional identity (Gross & Hochberg, 2016; Hong et al., 2017) while also seeking to gain membership into the host schools and maintaining their own beliefs despite those of the CE (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011). PSTs follow the guidance and direction of their CEs as they appear to be established members within the social structure of the school (Gleeson et al., 2015). CEs are viewed as gatekeepers who provide the PST with "entryway into the profession through access and approval" (Davis & Fantozzi, 2016, p. 11).

Placement Matters Most

The clinical experience is often considered, by beginning teachers, the single most powerful and critical part of their teacher preparation program (Blocker & Swetnam, 1995; Clarke et al., 2013; Grossman et al., 2012; Koerner et al., 2002; Wilson et al., 2001; Zeichner, 2002). According to Tellez (2008), teacher educators at the university level have increasingly recognized that the knowledge student teachers gained from their CEs or from the general experience of teaching have trumped university-based coursework. Furthermore, the culminating field experience or student teaching is vital to PSTs' development as professionals and prepares them for the realities of teaching (Haston & Russell, 2011) in diverse classrooms.

CEs are essential to the success of PSTs in the student teaching experience and have vast influence over the type of teacher that student teacher will become (Clarke et al., 2013). Without CEs welcoming PSTs into their classrooms, student teaching would

not exist and researchers (Clark et al., 2014; Draves, 2008; Zemek, 2008) have found that CEs have a great impact on the student teachers' future beliefs and practices.

Clinical Educator and Preservice Teacher Relationship

Within the clinical experience, PSTs report CEs are most influential in their development as educators (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990) and that the role of the CE is the most powerful component of learning how to teach (Russell, 2019). During this time, CEs serve as actors and role models for both good and bad practices in the classroom (Clarke et al., 2014; Guyton & McIntyre, 1990; Wang & Odell, 2002). Oftentimes, PSTs accept their CE as the expert of all aspects of teaching, including teaching others how to teach (Lafferty, 2018). The quality and quantity of mentorship matters. Darling-Hammond (2014) suggested that student teachers should spend extensive time in the field applying concepts they are learning in teacher education programs alongside experienced teachers who can model how to teach and be responsive to learners.

The CE "supervises, supports, assesses, and guides a teacher candidate's professional development during the clinical experience" (McElwee et al., 2018, p. 92) playing an integral part of the field placement. Mentors need to have the ability to share experiences and knowledge with student teachers as coaches and advocates, while ideally caring about the future growth and development of the student teacher (Comstock, 2013; Shamoo & Resnik, 2009). Thus, the collaboration between PSTs and CEs is essential to the quality of a PST's experience and overall development (Borko & Mayfield, 1995; Frykholm, 1998; Haggarty, 1995; Peterson & Williams, 2008).

High-quality field experiences include a CE who is willing to provide feedback while demonstrating teaching strategies (Lafferty, 2018), rather than the expectation that

the PST mimics the CE's practice (Graham, 2006; Hamman et al., 2007). CEs who abandon their PSTs to "sink or swim" engage differently than those who prompt reflection, provide feedback, and share their rationales about teaching decisions (Graham, 2006; Valencia et al., 2009). One of the biggest challenges in providing a high-quality field experience is the teacher's perception of what it means to act as a CE (Lafferty, 2018). As Gurl (2019) disclosed, the only model most teachers have for what it means to act like a CE is their own experience as student teachers. Above all, the success of the clinical experience heavily depends on the positive relationship between the CE and the PST (Graves, 2010).

Significance of the Relationship

At the core of the student teaching experience is the relationship between mentor teachers and student teachers (Caruso, 2000). Better relationships develop when the CE and PST share values, goals, and understanding of each other's roles in the experience (Izadinia, 2016). In 2016, Izadinia concluded that in the early stages of the clinical experience, PSTs lack confidence and are intimidated by the challenges they face in the classroom. Additionally, the PSTs needed constant encouragement and emotional support to reduce feelings of self-doubt. Izadinia pointed out that every comment the CE makes can leave a deep impression on who the student teacher is and who they want to become as a teacher. In 1995, Abell et al. interviewed 29 CEs and PSTs and found that respect and trust in the mentoring relationship were identified as critical by both groups and that PSTs need support over anything else. Literature suggests that the presence of a close relationship between the CE and student teacher lead to better outcomes, including feelings of self-worth (DuBois & Neville, 1997; Parra et al., 2002).

Day-to-Day Interactions

Teacher education programs greatly rely on CEs to provide student teachers with a meaningful experience in the day-to-day nuances of the classroom (Lafferty, 2018), yet more investigations are needed that provide the detailed interactions that occur in these partnerships (Bradbury & Koballa, 2008). While teacher educators provide student teachers with theoretical perspectives on education, PSTs and CEs view student teaching as a place where student teachers will learn about the real life of children and schools (Leathan & Peterson, 2010; Zanting et al., 1998). As a result, a discrepancy occurs as teacher educators do not believe that CEs routinely share their version of multicultural education with their student teachers or they fail to implement multicultural education altogether (Banister & Maher, 1998; Villenas & Deyhle, 1999). As student teachers are paying close attention to their CEs, if the CE's view of multicultural education is at odds with the university, the CE's view will prevail (Tellez, 2008).

Tensions With the Clinical Placement

While the clinical placement is the most impactful experience for student teachers, concerns and troubles exist in the current model and are included in most articles surrounding clinical experiences. Studies have found that novice teachers are more effective instructionally when they have learned to teach from an instructionally effective CE during their clinical experience (Ronfeldt et al., 2019). However, literature indicates that student teachers are often assigned to CEs who are not the most instructionally effective teachers in their districts or schools (Greenberg et al., 2011). Further, the role of the CE is not well defined and often not well understood by either the cooperating or student teacher (Graham, 2006).

Among other concerns with clinical placements are a misalignment between philosophies of colleges of education (Gurl, 2019) and teaching practices implemented in the field (Peterson & Williams, 2008), lack of training for the CE (Clarke et al., 2014), and difficulties in recruiting effective CEs due to teacher evaluations (Ronfeldt et al., 2019). Historically, mentor teachers have been selected in their willingness to host student teachers rather than for their beliefs aligning with those of teacher education programs (Clarke et al., 2014). In actuality, it can be difficult to find CEs with classroom practices that are in line with the recommendations provided by teacher education programs (Grossman et al., 2008). After a comprehensive literature review, Burton and Greher (2007) found that CEs whose lives exist inside the walls of their classrooms and supervising teachers who live in the world of the college classroom often do not share the same vision of student teaching.

Universities heavily rely on CEs to coach student teachers, yet often do not prepare them for that role (Lafferty, 2018). Davis and Fantozzi (2016) demonstrated that CEs are not selected upon their knowledge of how to mentor and often do not receive training in mentoring. Mentor teachers are often unprepared for this meaningful responsibility, especially if they are assuming this role for the first time (Gould, 2019). There has been an increasing resistance by teachers to turn their classrooms over to inexperienced teacher candidates for fear that mentoring will negatively impact their teacher evaluations (Ronfeldt et al., 2019) under teacher accountability models (Kinne et al., 2016). Regardless of the troubles and concerns with clinical placements, PSTs' clinical experiences ultimately prepare them for their first classroom and may expose them to culturally responsive literacy practices with diverse populations. At this point, I

will explore culturally responsive literacy practices in current day elementary classrooms.

Culturally Responsive Literacy Practices in Elementary Classrooms

Culturally responsive literacy practices recognize students' interests and build on those interests in responsive and authentic ways (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016). Souto-Manning and Martell (2016) suggested that culturally responsive teachers engage in observing and documenting literacy practices, focus on what students can do, the ways in which students participate, and also make sure that teaching builds on their strengths. In agreement, Au (2001) highlighted that culturally responsive literacy instruction (CRLI) builds upon the strengths that students bring from their home cultures instead of requiring students to learn through approaches that conflict with their cultural values. "Reading is influenced by who the child is" and "thus, in teaching reading, we teachers need to learn about the children we teach" (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016, p. 82).

Culturally responsive literacy teachers support and sustain children's cultural and linguistic practices, while helping them develop academic excellence (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Paris, 2012) by holding visions of success for diverse students rather than images of deficiency and failure (Delpit, 1995; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Further, culturally responsive teachers adapt and adjust literacy programs, curricula, and materials to meet the needs of students from diverse backgrounds (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999). These teachers view bilingualism and multiculturalism as assets and realize that learning should be an additive rather than a subtractive process (August & Hukuta, 1997). Essentially, CRLI aims to enhance academic achievement while concurrently promoting cultural identity.

Geneva Gay (1997) expressed the need for culturally responsive pedagogy in the field of education yet little research exists on the implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy within the context of literacy and how to transform theory into practice in elementary classrooms. Educational researchers (Baines et al., 2018; Ladson-Billings 2009; Nash et al., 2020a; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016) have presented limitations and practical recommendations for implementing CRLI in the elementary classroom. This section of the literature review discusses the current difficulties and limitations in culturally responsive literacy, followed by realistic strategies being implemented in elementary classrooms.

Student Representations

An abundance of research (i.e., Bishop, 1990; Delpit, 1988; Gay, 1997; Hollins et al., 1994; Irvine, 1990; Nieto, 1992) has maintained that culturally and linguistically diverse students fail to succeed in school due to a lack of self-representation or when they do not see their cultures or races reflected in texts around their classrooms (Bishop, 1990). This lack of representation occurs when classroom libraries and instructional texts are dominated by Whiteness, English-only texts, and heteronormativity (Hughes-Hassel et al., 2009), sending messages to students about who matters in our society.

In a study by the Cooperative Children's Book Center (2017), an overwhelming majority of the books developed in 2016 were dominated by White characters or animals (Baines et al., 2018). Only 90 of 3,200 books published that year were written by or about African Americans, 22 books were written by and about Native Americans, 101 written by and about Latinx people, and 212 by or about Asian Americans (Baines et al., 2018). When persons of color were included, they were often portrayed in a stereotypical, one

dimensional way (Gangi, 2008; Miller, 2015). Likewise, Rothschild (2015) unveiled the underrepresentation of people of color as characters and authors in literature for children and young adults. Even if multicultural literature and books are not always bias free or culturally affirming for different ethnic groups, they are a valuable resource for implementing culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2018).

Diverse students must see themselves reflected in the content and instructional texts (Boyd et al., 2015), yet that is not enough (Gay, 2018). Students need to understand that they are part of a common humanity (Gay, 2018) and reading can foster that growth in students. The following strategies add to the growing body of research "calling for a reconceptualization and decolonization of early language and literacy teaching, assessment, and partnering in multilingual contexts" (Nash et al., 2020b, p. 33).

Culturally Responsive Literacy Instruction

This section of the literature review outlines examples of culturally responsive literacy practices that are observed in effective culturally responsive classrooms that combat the absence of diverse student representations.

Elementary Classroom Strategies

Teams of educators and researchers (i.e., Baines et al., 2018; Nash et al., 2020a) have identified effective culturally responsive literacy practices that engage students of diverse cultures and lived experiences. Souto-Manning (2016) proclaimed the importance of upholding high academic standards for diverse learners while also fostering their cultural competence and allowing them to question the world in which they live. She identified five practices that reduce educational injustice: (a) teaching from children's names, (b) learning children's histories, (c) valuing artifactual literacies, (d) valuing

family funds of knowledge, and (e) enhancing access to books. In Hawaiian classrooms, Au and Mason (1981) documented the effectiveness of using culturally responsive teaching through participation structures similar to those in talk story-like participation, a Hawaiian community speech event. They found that the use of talk story participation structures generated Hawaiian students to be more attentive, discuss more text ideas, and make more meaningful inferences.

Geneva Gay (2018) expounded upon the Webster Groves Writing Project, a literature-based literacy program that included culturally responsive practices. Significant improvements on standardized tests, writing samples, and teacher observations were recorded after enacting CRP principles and strategies: building on students' strengths, individualizing and personalizing instruction, encouraging cooperative learning, increasing control of language, using computers, enhancing personal involvement with reading and writing, building cultural bridges, and expanding personal horizons. Similarly, Carol Lee (2001) employed cultural modeling by scaffolding African American students' understanding of literary text through building on students' language and discourse patterns as an example of culturally responsive teaching.

In *We've Been Doing It Your Way Long Enough: Choosing the Culturally Relevant Classroom* (Baines et al., 2018), a team of researchers and educators with the goal of equity and social justice shared their culturally relevant literacy practices that enhanced learning in an elementary school serving predominantly African American students from a low-wealth area, historically significant neighborhood in Columbia, South Carolina. For instance, teachers displayed an alphabet wall of community touchstones or photos of students and landmarks in their communities. Students

successfully used these words as both readers and writers. Janice and Carmen, teachers at this urban school, displayed artifacts from Sierra Leone in the corner of their classroom from the first day of school and beyond, to assist children in making ancestral connections between West Africa and the African American communities in South Carolina. Baskets were filled with books about African Americans and posters and photographs of famous African Americans covered their walls. Their classrooms mirror the calling by Asante (2017) that every classroom be filled with reflections of African American and Indigenous genius.

Another strategy for engaging in CRT is promoting musical literacy, which was also implemented in Carmen's classroom (Baines et al., 2018). This strategy sparked heritage, social justice, and literacy lessons. Students would listen to music, handclap rhymes, read about music, and take home packets to read about music at home with their families. The students also preserved community stories by interviewing elders who helped shape the community prior to gentrification. The students turned oral history into written history and could have expanded the work with studying oral storytelling traditions of Africa, researching gentrification, researching the history of their communities, comparing and contrasting media representations of various communities within their city, and writing a counternarrative to dominate descriptions of low income communities of people of immigrants and African Americans.

Translanguaging. In order to enact culturally responsive pedagogy, educators should build upon what children already know and enable them to feel safe in gaining school literacies (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2009), which includes building on students' home language. Furthermore, culturally responsive pedagogy is more than

letting emerging bilinguals count in their native languages or celebrate holidays and traditions in their ethnic cultures (Yuan, 2019). It is about differentiating teaching to the individual students' growth and succeeding in a culturally responsive classroom that teaches *to* and *through* the strengths of all students, including multicultural and multilingual students (Yuan, 2019). In these culturally responsive classrooms, teachers view students as valuable resources and assert their school identities by providing them with curricular spaces for their home languages and lived experiences (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2009, 2014; Souto-Manning & Martell, 2016).

Emerging bilinguals make up an increasingly large portion of today's American population (Gay, 2018). Genishi (2002) marked the importance of first observing the needs of young emergent bilinguals who are not speaking fluent English yet and see their language as "half full, not half empty" (p. 66). Translanguaging allows educators to do just that. Translanguaging was initially defined as "the planned and systematic use of two languages for teaching and learning inside the same lesson" (Williams, 1994, n.p.) and later renewed by Garcia (2009) to demonstrate the ways in which bilingual students interlock codes and employ a rich repertoire of fluid linguistic turns when speaking.

In a project called Professional Dyads and Culturally Relevant Teaching (PDCRT), borne out of the Early Childhood Education Assembly of the National Council of Teachers of English, Nash et al. (2020a) brought to light the successful use of translanguaging in an urban classroom that embraced culturally sustaining pedagogy in a literacy context. The discussion around translanguaging directly connected to Paris and Alim's (2017b) tenets of culturally sustaining pedagogy: (a) a critical centering on languages, practices, and ways of knowing; (b) that extend from and are accountable to

children, families, and their communities, through; (c) historicized instruction while; (d) fostering children's understanding and ability to confront oppressive and colonizing messages. Patricia, a member of a PDCRT dyad, employed translanguaging with her emerging bilingual students through class songs and books, labeling classroom projects and objects throughout the room so the students observed Spanish privileged over English, displayed poster collages of Latinx families, and shared her personal stories that built on her students' life experiences and struggles (Nash et al., 2020b). Patricia's daily use of translanguaging demonstrated a commitment to sustaining children's identities and languages (Paris & Alim, 2017a) as her centering of languages happened in the moment based on the child and the context (Nash et al., 2020b).

Choice and Authenticity. *Toward Culturally Sustaining Teaching* (Nash et al., 2020a) introduced audiences to the power of choice and remembering in a literacy classroom that maintains culturally responsive, relevant, and sustaining pedagogy. Alicia, a second-grade teacher in the PDCRT project, sparked a persuasive writing lesson by inviting students to choose their favorite New York baseball team between the New York Yankees and Mets to write a persuasive essay in Spanish or English (Polson & Arce-Boardman, 2020). Students researched their favorite teams and completed a graphic organizer to compare the two teams. The final writing piece was displayed on lined paper with the corresponding team logo. This lesson became about more than just baseball; it became an opportunity for emerging bilinguals to engage in a class discussion about a topic they were interested in (Polson & Arce-Boardman, 2020). Alicia's learning environment is grounded in choice and authenticity in which she learned about and responded to students' interests and strengths to create an engaging curriculum (Gay,

2010) while also meeting national and state standards. Through this writing activity, the practices of students, their families, and their communities were valued and the central goal of culturally responsive teaching was met as students created content they cared about (Gay, 2010).

Classroom Libraries. Exposing children to literature that includes characters, settings, and events similar to their lived experiences outside of the classroom walls creates academic, personal, and social achievement in students (Bishop, 1992; Mason & Au, 1991; Norton, 1992). These sentiments were echoed by Ramirez and Dowd (1997) who stated that high-quality, authentic multicultural literature can help young students "make connections to their personal experiences, provide role models, and expand their horizons" (p. 20). Gay (2018) stressed the importance of including issues about students' own racial identity and other people's racial identities at a very young age.

Research (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Sleeter, 2011) has revealed that students from one ethnic group have the ability to learn and appreciate the cultures and contributions of other ethnic groups and that teaching students their own cultural heritages is personally enriching for all students. Additionally, rich literary texts have the potential to expose students to various ethnic groups, cultures, and experiences that differ from their own which they may not have access to in their daily lives (Gay, 2018). Literary texts can also help young children develop positive racial identities, interracial relationships, and understanding of racial injustices (Wanless & Crawford, 2016). Similarly, Kim (1976) maintained that fiction texts can provide students with valuable insights into the social consciousness, cultural identity, and historical experiences of various ethnic groups.

In a study by Diamond and Moore (1995), the Multicultural Literacy Program was implemented over a four-year span with students from various ethnic backgrounds in grades K-8. The program included multiethnic literature and whole-language approaches in a socioculturally sensitive learning environment. The multiethnic literature featured various racial groups and various genres in multiple group arrangements and social settings for learning (Gay, 2018). The researchers discovered powerful signs of success through observations and analysis of samples of student work and achievement was apparent across groups of students who varied in ethnicity, cultural background, and intellectual ability (Gay, 2018). Thus, it is suggested that educators acknowledge and understand that "although our children bring unique literacy histories from their specific communities, they all come to school with the same intellectual potential for literacy" (Whitmore et al., 2005, p. 305).

Research suggests that teachers examine book collections and make no excuses to ensure that all cultures are embraced within classroom libraries (Baines et al., 2018). According to Gay (2018) "teachers need to know how to assess the cultural accuracy and authenticity of these books, essays, poems, and short stories; correct their fallacies; and build upon their strengths in teaching" (p. 162). Stereotyping of cultures occurs by simply "adding a few books about people of color, having a classroom Kwanzaa celebration or posting 'diverse images'" (Ladson-Billings, 2014, p. 82). Failure to examine classroom libraries, teacher beliefs, and practices will continue to perpetuate racial inequality in American classrooms.

Summary

Teacher education programs value the importance of preparing PSTs for instructing students from CLD backgrounds, yet their success is limited to theoretical understandings without practical applications based on studies that focus on the voices and perspectives of such teachers. Teachers in the field have revealed that the most vital component of their teacher preparation program is the clinical experience. However, mentorship, collaboration, and relationships between the CE and PST need to occur in order for the PST to feel confident in setting up and managing their own classroom. While literature exists surrounding the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy, few educational researchers have highlighted successful enactments within a literacy context in elementary classrooms.

Research has stressed the importance of placing student teachers in a safe environment during their clinical experience, but researchers have failed to identify the specific components of these experiences that foster changes in the beliefs and attitudes of PSTs (Castro, 2010). This study addresses that gap by examining the clinical experience of PSTs during their placements. Further, the voices of PSTs are often absent or underrepresented in the literature (Izadinia, 2017) and limited researcher has described the interactions between culturally competent educators and prospective teachers (Tellez, 2008) with the exception of Whiting's 2010 dissertation. A study by Bauml et al. (2016) focused on in-service teachers and stressed the importance of future research considering the experiences of PSTs to discover how teachers learn about and engage in culturally informed practices, which will be another goal of this study. Finally, future studies should investigate how in-service teachers' classroom practices are related to culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy (Kimanen et al., 2019). Through collecting and

analyzing qualitative data surrounding the experiences of PSTs in clinical placements with educators, this study builds upon the existing literature surrounding culturally responsive literacy instruction.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Introduction

To contribute to teacher preparation programs and understand how preservice teachers (PST) develop culturally responsive literacy practices, this multiple case study explored the characteristics of clinical experiences that support PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms. According to Howard (2003), the increasing "degree of racial homogeneity among teachers and heterogeneity among students carries important implications for all educators" (p. 196), including those who prepare PSTs for their future diverse classrooms. This research topic holds great significance as universities grapple with best practices for assembling a teaching force that can meet the needs of our increasingly diverse student population. Moreover, this research can fill the gaps in the literature as teacher preparation programs, according to Jacobs (2019), still face a reality where the majority of teachers who are White and middle class are simply not prepared to best meet the needs of their diverse student populations.

The following research question was addressed in this study to gain a deeper understanding of this topic: What are the characteristics of clinical experiences that support preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms? Specifically, this study focused on two research questions:

RQ1. What role do clinical educators play in preservice teachers' development of understandings of culturally responsive teaching in literacy?

RQ2. What role do clinical settings (i.e., curricular components, students,

teaching practices, administrators, clinical educators, etc.) have in supporting preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive teaching in literacy classrooms?

This research is important for various reasons. The voices of PSTs are often absent or underrepresented in the literature (Izadinia, 2017) and few researchers have sought to describe the interactions between culturally competent educators and prospective teachers (Tellez, 2008). Consequently, knowledge of how PSTs develop an understanding of culturally responsive literacy practices in their clinical experiences is rather limited. Additionally, there has been growing interest focused on preparing teachers to teach for equity, yet field experiences have not been central to the conversation (Howard & Milner, 2014) and there is a missing piece in applying the knowledge of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) into actual classroom practice (Rychly & Graves, 2012).

Chapter Three presents the research design employed for this study, including the methods and sample descriptions. Then, data collection and analytical procedures are detailed. After that, the strategies for quality, research positionality, and ethical issues are described. Finally, this chapter concludes with the timeline of this study.

Research Design

A qualitative multiple case study research design was selected for this study. As reported by Yin (2014), a case study in terms of the process "investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-world context" (p. 16). In this study, the PSTs' experience with CRT in literacy during the clinical experience was the phenomenon under investigation.

Case study was chosen for this research because I wanted to understand PSTs' development of understandings of CRT in literacy within a real-world context, assuming that such an understanding is likely to involve contextual conditions significant to my case (e.g. Yin & Davis, 2007). A qualitative case study was also chosen as it provides an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Within this research, each PST's experiences were studied in detail through observations and interviews to discover how they developed an understanding of culturally responsive literacy practices during clinical experiences in elementary classrooms. Miles et al. (2014) highlighted that qualitative data is rich and has strong potential for revealing complexity.

Multiple Case Study Method

This study employed a multiple case study method. A multiple case study method was chosen as evidence from multiple cases is often considered more compelling, and the overall study is therefore regarded as being more robust (Herriott & Firestone, 1983). Yin (2014) posited that when considering multiple cases, one should consider multiple experiments that follow a "replication" design. Confidence is also increased when data is collected and analyzed from several cases (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Each case was carefully selected, which Yin recommends for cases of two or three. Yin argued that the analytic conclusions that independently arise from two or more cases are more powerful than those coming from a single case. The case, or unit of analysis, for this particular research is the PST's experiences.

Multiple case studies present strategies for quality in scholarly research. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggested that "multiple cases is a common strategy for enhancing the

external validity or generalizability of your findings" (p. 40). In agreeance, Miles et al. (2014) proposed that the use of multiple-case sampling strengthens the precision, validity, stability, and trustworthiness of the findings. Multiple-case sampling gives us confidence that our emerging theory is generic, because we have seen it work out and not work out in predictable ways (Miles et al., 2014) through cross-case analysis. Further, multiple-case sampling adds confidence to findings. By looking at a range of similar and contrasting cases, we can understand a single-case finding, as reported by Miles et al.

Setting and Participants

PSTs and their CEs at two elementary schools, located in the southeastern region of the United States, participated in this study to gather experiences in various contexts. Jacobs (2019) posited that "field experiences, especially those in urban contexts, provide a critical space from which to consider both how early-career teachers enter school sites and how teacher educators can help prepare them for more equitable approaches to teaching and learning" (p. 1528). Therefore, the settings for this study were within the actual school setting, or clinical experience, in which the PSTs were engaged.

For this study, I worked with three PSTs and their CEs in the Fall 2020 semester. PSTs can be placed with any teacher who meets performance requirements, has high instructional standards, and displays strong understanding of pedagogy and content knowledge. Six total participants were recruited and participated in this study. For example, various participant selection criteria were created and followed to ensure that the appropriate participants were chosen. Sampling was strategic and purposeful because I focused on each case's individual contexts (Miles et al., 2014). Also, convenience

sampling was employed as participants were accessible geographically and recruited through the participating university (Miles et al., 2014).

In order to participate in this study, the three PSTs had to be participating in the first semester of their yearlong internship, also known as their clinical experience, in the fall of 2020 at an elementary school. Their cooperating teachers, or CEs, also had to consent to participate in this study. Prior to receiving consent, the school administrators submitted a letter of support to display their understanding of my data collection in the context of the teacher's school day.

Recruitment began as soon as IRB approval was granted in September of 2020. First, elementary schools that were hosting PSTs in the fall of 2020 were contacted. The schools that were contacted are of public knowledge and listed on the Office of School and Community Partnerships webpage at a large urban university in the southeast. I sent an initial email to the 20 administrators at those schools and requested that they indicate who they view as being culturally responsive, effective in teaching literacy to historically marginalized students, hosting a student teacher in the fall, and teaching elementary literacy. Administrators were contacted a total of two times each for recruitment and about 10 people responded to my emails.

Once 15 CEs were identified by their administrators, they were contacted, no more than two times each, via email and asked to participate in the study. Of the 15 CEs contacted, four consented to participate. As the CEs consented to participate, they provided their paired PSTs' names and were recruited to participate in this study via email through the university directory. Each PST was also contacted no more than two times. After no email responses, I reached out to the university supervisors who allowed

me to introduce myself during a course session via Zoom. I believe that this personal touch to recruitment increased my odds. Soon after, I had a total of three PSTs (see Appendix A), their paired CEs (see Appendix B), and three administrators consent to participating in my study. The PSTs and CEs each received a $10 gift card in return for their participation.

All six of my participants were White and female. Rose (all names are pseudonyms) grew up in a middle-upper class area, Kara in an urban setting, and Stella in a rural area. More details will be shared about the participants in Chapter Four. The PSTs were university seniors in the first semester of their yearlong student teaching experience, attending their clinical settings in elementary schools twice a week while continuing coursework. Their elementary students were divided into cohort A (face-to-face instruction on Mondays and Tuesdays) and cohort B (face-to-face instruction on Thursdays and Fridays). When students were not present at school, they engaged in online learning.

The paired CEs were all elementary school teachers who taught literacy during the school day. Two of the three CE participants, Mary and Julia, taught at the same elementary school. This was Mary's (Rose's CE) eighth year teaching, and she was teaching 4th grade at the time of this study. Rose was her first PST. Julia (Stella's CE) taught 3rd grade and is more seasoned than the other two CEs, with 20 years of teaching under her belt. Stella was her second PST. Paige (Kara's CE) taught fourth grade at a different school in the same school district. She had taught for roughly 10 years and Kara was her second PST. Although these teachers had many years of teaching experience combined, all three were fairly new to hosting PSTs.

All of the participants received training from the cooperating university for hosting a PST in the fall. According to the CEs, the training included about six videos to view since they were unable to meet in person due to COVID-19. The videos focused on the requirements for edTPA (a portfolio-based assessment of teaching proficiencies required for licensure), coaching strategies, modeling strategies, providing feedback, the gradual release of responsibility for PSTs, and teaching through technology. The CEs also consistently received newsletters with additional recommendations for success. The supervisors from the university were in close contact with the CEs throughout the semester, requesting specific feedback around the PSTs' teaching and performance.

Additionally, reinforcing their desire to grow as educators, all of the CEs in this study participated in a text equity course that was offered, but not required, by the cooperating university while hosting the PSTs. The three CEs cited that this optional course greatly supported their understanding of CRT. The CEs explained that during this training, they would meet once a week for two hours at a time. They engaged in readings and assignments such as creating a student interest survey. Mary revealed that this course challenged her to think about the types of books she had in her classroom library. The teachers also received culturally responsive resources, books, and other ideas to try in their own classrooms. Upon completion of my study, the CEs anticipated meeting as a group a couple more times through the rest of the school year.

Data Collection

According to Yin (2014) and Creswell (2013), case studies rely on in-depth collection involving multiple sources of evidence. Data collected for this study included

interviews, observations, and the collection of artifacts from all participants and clinical sites. The following section details the data collection that occurred for this study.

Interviews

Both the PSTs and CEs were interviewed to gain a better understanding of how PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy are developed during clinical experiences. PSTs engaged in a pre-, mid-, and post-semester audio recorded interview, guided by a semi-structured interview protocol (see Appendix C). The semi-structured pre-interview occurred early in the fall semester in September. This interview occurred for numerous reasons. First, expectations for this study and the process were outlined during this interview. I took this time to gain an understanding of what PSTs knew about CRT during literacy instruction and how that knowledge was formed. The goal of this interview was to develop a clear understanding of what these PSTs have learned about CRT through their coursework. In addition, I asked questions that allowed me to learn a bit about their life experiences and experiences as students thus far. A second, mid-semester semi-structured interview occurred with the PSTs in early October to capture their current vision of CRT, lesson planning observations, and relationships with their CEs. During this interview and the final interview, I restated the PSTs' visions of CRT so they could add to or retract from their previous statements.

A semi-structured post-interview occurred with the PSTs toward the end of the fall semester in early December. By engaging PSTs in interviews upon the end of their first semester of the clinical experience, evidence was collected to demonstrate the ways in which they and their relationships with their CEs transformed over the course of a semester of the clinical experience. This interview allowed me to learn more about the

aspects of the clinical experience that changed their understanding of CRT. I also inquired about the relationships and the communication that occurred between the PST and CE that supported the PSTs' understandings of CRT. Examples from observations and artifacts were shared to trigger thoughts and conversations that revolved around CRT development. Follow-up questions were also asked during all interviews to gather as much information as possible from the participants.

The three CEs engaged in one semi-structured interview during a time of their choice in October or November in the fall semester to obtain their understanding of CRT as well (see Appendix D). This interview gave me the opportunity to learn about how their practices of instructing students of color have been developed over time. Interviews provided a more in-depth understanding of how CEs build relationships with their PSTs and their expectations of these PSTs during student teaching.

All of the interviews occurred via an online platform, Google Meet, with the exception of one interview, and all lasted between 45 to 60 minutes each. I felt comfortable conducting these interviews and was able to create a professional relationship with each participant, despite the virtual experience. All of the interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed, with the assistance of Wreally or Temi, prior to data analysis. Wreally and Temi are online platforms that assisted me in the process of transcription by playing the audio while I typed the dictation or automatically transcribing the data, which I carefully reread for accuracy.

Written memos (Charmaz, 2014) were recorded during and after the interviews to capture possible codes, themes, and patterns in the data. A reflexivity journal (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) was implemented to record preconceived ideas and my connection with the

data as I was once both a PST and CE and believe that CRT is an effective framework for teaching equitable practices.

Observations

I used an observation protocol (see Appendix E) when observing the participants throughout the fall semester of 2020. I conducted one observation per PST of a planning session that involved collaboration between the PST and CE in literacy lesson planning. Thick description (Creswell, 2013) was used when completing the observation protocol. Thick description is used today to describe the "setting and participants of the study, as well as a detailed description of the findings with adequate evidence presented in the form of quotes from participant interviews, field notes, and documents" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 257). Therefore, as the researcher, I recorded as much as possible when observing lesson planning sessions, while focusing on the actions and interactions of the PST and CE. While completing the observation protocol, I was looking for specific practices that were indicative of CRT (Gay, 2002) such as, but not limited to, maintaining high expectations for all students, incorporating students' backgrounds and lived experiences, creating relationships with students, and embracing home language in classrooms. These observations were also audio-recorded and transcribed.

Artifacts

Archival data were collected throughout the fall semester. The PSTs were asked to share literacy lesson plans, worksheets, de-identified student work and projects, and other artifacts that are indicative of culturally responsive teaching in literacy. Moreover, PSTs were encouraged to journal weekly about critical moments that represented the learning of culturally responsive literacy teaching by responding to a short, open-ended

prompt (see Appendix F). By October, I began emailing the PSTs weekly to kindly remind them to complete a journal entry for that week and provided specific prompts such as how their teacher created a classroom community, taught various holidays, and what the students were doing during readers' and writers' workshop. These artifacts were collected via password-protected shared Google Drive folders as a parameter of the IRB.

COVID-19 Contingencies

The United States was facing unprecedented times with the spread of COVID-19 during my study. In March 2020, schools in the southeast closed their doors, and students of all ages uniquely received a distance education via technology from home. As school officials grappled with reopening schools in the fall of 2020, data collection for this research was directly impacted. To decrease the chances of spreading COVID-19, interviews were conducted off-campus through online platforms. This also meant that COVID-19 protocol, such as social distance and facemasks, was followed when entering the school building for lesson planning observations.

Data Collection Settings

Literacy lesson planning observations occurred within the classroom settings once the elementary students were dismissed, with the exception of one observation which occurred via Google Meet. COVID-19 protocol was followed as we maintained social distancing and wore face masks. All of the interviews with the PSTs and the CEs occurred via Google Meet video conferencing. I intentionally interviewed one CE in person because I was unable to observe their literacy lesson planning in person. Therefore, I was able to meet with each participant face-to-face at least once during this process.

Data Analysis

A preliminary codebook guided deductive coding (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) of the data based on the characteristics of culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2002), cognitive apprenticeship theory (Brown et al., 1989), and the two guiding research questions (see Appendix G). I had to widen my frame to code for CRT specifically because I was not seeing CRLI represented in the data. Therefore, the following codes focus on CRT within a literacy context rather than CRLI itself.

Provisional coding was used to create a list of initial 15 CRT codes prior to the fieldwork based on anticipated responses that were not yet collected in the data and based on the literature review and research questions (Miles et al., 2014). For example, scholars (Hammond, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 1995) stressed the importance of culturally responsive teachers being "warm demanders" who maintain high expectations for all students, therefore the code HIEX (high expectations) was included in my initial list of CRT codes. These provisional codes were revised, modified, deleted, and expanded to include new codes (Saldaña, 2016) as they emerged from the data inductively (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). For instance, during data analysis, I added codes such as PST/CE relationship, current coursework influence, life experiences, self-growth, avoiding the "single story" (Adichie, 2009), self-reflection, knowing your students, and classroom libraries or texts as these were heavily present in the pre-interviews. While CRT has many components that may not be reflected in my data, I chose to illuminate these codes within my codebook because I was looking for patterns in the data and based those codes on my knowledge of CRT. Some examples of the subcodes for CRT include maintaining

high expectations for all students (HIEX), creating a classroom community (COMM), and utilizing diverse texts (TEXT) (see Appendix G).

During the first cycle of coding, line-by-line coding (Charmaz, 2014) was conducted to identify characteristics of clinical experiences that supported PSTs' understandings of CRT through the use of NVivo. I coded for instances of CRT, clinical educator support (CE), the clinical setting (CS), teacher preparation program such as supervisors and coursework (TPP), PST and CE relationship (REL), understanding of CRT prior to clinical experience including life experiences (LIFE), and self-reflection (REF). I first coded the PST interviews as they were my primary source of data. Then, I coded the literacy lesson planning observations, followed by the PST journal entries. Finally, the CE interviews were coded to note how CRT manifested in the classroom through evidence and teacher beliefs. Overlaps of CRT and clinical educator codes (CE), CRT and clinical setting codes (CS), and CRT and teacher preparation program codes (TPP) were observed to make sense of how PSTs understood CRT in literacy classrooms and to answer the research questions. The remaining codes were used to identify the context for each participant and relationships between the CEs and PSTs.

The second cycle of coding, or pattern coding (Miles et al., 2014), was used to group initial summaries into a smaller number of themes. Pattern codes identified an emergent theme and pulled together material from the first cycle of coding (Saldaña, 2016), also known as meta code (Miles et al., 2014). The frequency of instances coded for CRT were first tallied within a spreadsheet. If the CRT code had fewer than 20 instances or 6%, they were collapsed or excluded from the overall themes (i.e., REF, CHOICE, LANG, STREN, CONNKNOW, REL, CONT). Eight major CRT codes

remained (i.e., TEXT, COMM, CC, HIEX, KNOW, CONNLIFE, CONNCUL, STUINT) and were sorted into four overarching themes based on the patterns and categories (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). However, there is one exception. The code CC (cultural competence) only represented 5% of the data with 18 references; however, it felt salient to analyze because it is a tenet of CRT and all of the PSTs mentioned this within at least one of their interviews. The four themes included: (a) using a variety of texts; (b) building a learning community that honors students' cultures, (c) maintaining high expectations for all students, and (d) teachers knowing their students in order to connect the course content to their lives, cultures, and interests.

Once the themes were identified, I created a spreadsheet for each PST that included instances from NVivo that were coded for the four themes and deposited them into the spreadsheet (see Table 1). The spreadsheet included a column for the CRT code, the quote or example coded, and the source which were developed based on the research questions and participant responses (CE- clinical educator, CS- clinical setting, or TPP- teacher preparation program). A similar spreadsheet was created for each CE, based on their interviews, to observe the data coded among the four themes and supported the PSTs' claims.

Table 1 provides an example quote coded for CRT for each PST participant. According to this table, Kara understood CRT as having diverse texts in the classroom learned through her previous TPP coursework. Rose was beginning to understand CRT as much more than diverse texts through her observations of her CE. She was starting to understand that CRT includes getting to know your students. Stella understood CRT as

creating a classroom community through her observations of the students in the classroom setting.

Table 1

CRT Quotes Coded and Sources

CRT code	Quote	Source
TEXT	"In the classroom library having a ton of books that depict the students who are in your classroom." - Kara	TPP
KNOW	"But I can tell that it's [CRT] a lot more than that [texts] and it's getting to know your students." - Rose	CE
COMM	"I've also noticed that the students in the classroom like to learn from each other and there's particular students who are always willing to help [others]…It's community building." - Stella	CS

Note. CRT: culturally responsive teaching, TEXT: diverse texts, KNOW: knowing your students, COMM: classroom community, CE: clinical educator, CS: clinical setting, TPP: teacher preparation program

Next, I created percentages for how each PST understood CRT (CE%, CS%, and TPP%). I did not create these percentages for statistical data; rather, I created them for myself to observe the patterns or trends within the data (see Table 2). For instance, I anticipated that the PSTs largely developed an understanding of CRT based on their teacher preparation program (TPP), but the data suggested otherwise. Based on the percentages, the CE was the most influential within the four themes observed for both Kara and Rose. Stella's unique findings will be divulged in the next two chapters of this dissertation.

Table 2

PST Codes Frequency Table

PST	CRT total	CE support		CS support		TPP support	
	n	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%
Kara	111	43	39	41	37	27	24
Rose	66	28	42	24	36	14	21
Stella	42	5	12	13	31	24	57

Note. CRT: culturally responsive teaching, CE: clinical educator, CS: clinical setting, TPP: teacher preparation program

Triangulation of data occurred through the use of multiple cases (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016) and pockets of data points such as PST interviews, CE interviews, and observations and artifacts. Miles et al. (2014) posited that the more cases included in a study, the greater the variation across the cases and the more compelling an interpretation is likely to be. In line with Yin's (2014) recommendation of multiple case studies, there were two stages of analysis, within-case analysis and cross-case analysis. During within-case analysis, each of the cases were first treated as a comprehensive case in and of itself (Yin, 2014). Once the analysis of each case was completed, the cross-case analysis began. To conduct a cross-case analysis, I looked at the four CRT themes and sources across all three cases and reported the similarities and differences among the PSTs. This qualitative, multi-case study sought to build an abstraction across cases and a general explanation that fits all the individual cases (Yin, 2014).

Strategies for Quality

Triangulation of the data ensured the trustworthiness of this study. According to Denzin (1978), there are four different types of triangulation that can occur in a study: the

use of multiple methods, multiple sources of data, multiple investigators, or multiple theories to confirm emerging findings. Of the four types, this study employed multiple sources of data and multiple theories. Triangulation of multiple sources of data occurred when collecting data through interviews, observations, and artifacts. Since multiple sources of data were collected, what a participant told me in an interview was checked against what I observed during an observation, read in a journal entry, or learned in the CE interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Moreover, culturally responsive teaching and cognitive apprenticeship theory framed this study. Data analysis included reading for understandings and demonstrations of CRT with an additional eye on how the knowledge was transferred through the relationship between the CE and PST, increasing the trustworthiness of the study.

Trustworthiness was ensured by conducting the investigation in an ethical manner (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As human beings are the primary instrument of data collection and analysis of qualitative research, the "interpretations of reality" are developed through a researcher's observations and interviews (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 243). Therefore, we are closer to reality than if a data collection instrument were between the participants and the researcher (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Finally, the researcher's positionality and reflexivity were self-reflected in regard to assumptions, biases, worldview, and relationship to the study that may affect the investigation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Reflexivity, or researcher's position, was recorded as needed throughout the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). For example, one PST mentioned that a student's home life does not affect their performance at school and that students of color should not be taught any differently than their classmates.

Regardless of my opinion, based on my ongoing research and urban elementary education concentration, I did not comment on this and carried on with the interview. Related to integrity, reflexivity allows the researcher to record how they are affected or how the researcher affects the research process (Probst & Berenson, 2014). According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), investigators need to explain their biases, dispositions, and assumptions regarding the research.

Positionality Statement

As presented in Chapter One of this dissertation, I am fully invested in this research based on my experiences growing up and as an adult educator. I identify, ethnically, as White Hispanic—although my light skin often conceals my Latinx identity—and can relate to students who have Hispanic parents but never learned how to speak fluent Spanish themselves. I find myself intrigued by Latinx students who translate for their parents or desire to speak Spanish with their classmates in schools that typically embrace English only.

I was introduced to CRT in my doctoral studies of urban elementary education and believe that teachers must wear cultural lenses and develop critical consciousness to break down the Eurocentric curriculum. When I reflect on my years of teaching, I realize that I implemented culturally responsive teaching, not because I was taught how to in my teacher preparation program, but probably because of my cultural background and personal beliefs.

Throughout my research, I kept a researcher journal to reflect on my observations and data collection. Despite my eleven years of teaching experience and serving as a CE

and mentor to novice teachers, it was important that I did not attempt to analyze teaching practices and beliefs or provide input unless requested.

Ethical Considerations

As the sole researcher of this study, I reflected on the bias I brought to the data collection and analysis based on my positionality. I reminded myself of Stake's (2005) words, "Qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict" (p. 459). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) suggested that interviews carry both risks and benefits to the informants. For instance, respondents may feel their privacy has been invaded, they may be embarrassed by certain questions, and they may tell you things they had never intended to reveal to you (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). It was my responsibility to remind the participants of my intention to simply gather data and never reveal their identities.

According to Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the simple act of observing may bring about changes in the activity or the participant may engage in activity they will later be embarrassed about. Lastly, analyzing data may present ethical problems since the researcher is the primary instrument for data collections (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Above all, the best a researcher can do is to be conscious of the ethical issues that exist and examine their own philosophical orientation (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Conclusion

In this section, I present a timeline of this study. As soon as I defended my proposal in June of 2020, I submitted IRB. Upon receiving IRB approval in September of 2020, I contacted the principals of elementary schools that were hosting PSTs for student teaching in the fall. I wrote to administrators at these schools and asked them to suggest

literacy teachers they perceived to be strong in CRT. Upon recruitment, pre-interviews occurred with PSTs in September 2020. Additional interviews and observations occurred in October and lasted through early December 2020. Data analysis began in late December of 2020.

In order to contribute to the field of knowledge related to the development of culturally responsive literacy practices among PSTs, this qualitative study has been designed using a multiple-case study method to explore PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy in elementary classrooms. The data collection methods in this study included CE interviews, PST pre-, mid-, and post-interviews, and observations of both planning and teaching to better understand how CRT is developed in clinical experiences. I engaged in these sources of data during the analysis process to deductively code and sort the data by themes. Finally, the emergent themes were compared within-case and across cases to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

Chapter Four presents the multiple case studies of three preservice teachers' experiences (PST): Kara, Rose, and Stella. In this chapter, I answer the two research questions by discussing the data collected through semi-structured interviews, literacy lesson planning observations, and artifacts such as literacy lesson plans and PST journal entries. The purpose of this study was to identify the characteristics of clinical experiences that support preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive literacy instruction by answering the following research questions:

RQ1. What role do clinical educators play in preservice teachers' development of understandings of culturally responsive teaching in literacy?

RQ2. What role do clinical settings (i.e., curricular components, students, teaching practices, administrators, clinical educators, supervisors, etc.) have in supporting preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive teaching

This chapter presents the findings within each unique case before discussing the findings across all three of the cases. For each case, I begin by presenting their life contexts. This is important because "as teachers, our life stories are foundational to everything we believe, learn, teach, and the actions we take—or do not take—in and out of classrooms" (Baines et al., 2017, p. 1). Then, I describe the teaching context of the paired clinical educator (CE) and the classroom setting in which the PSTs were placed. I found it important that I provide an in-depth description of each PST and their paired CE for the reader to understand the dynamics and unique understandings of CRT that were developed by each PST and how. After that, I describe the literacy block of each CE's classroom, the CE's vision of culturally responsive teaching (CRT), and the relationship

between each PST and their paired CE. Next, I present the PST's vision of CRT and how that manifested over time based on four overarching CRT themes that emerged from the data. I conclude each case by discussing the findings within the four themes. A cross-case analysis of the three cases is then utilized to describe the characteristics of clinical experiences that supported the PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices, focusing on the role of the clinical educators and their clinical settings.

Understandings of Culturally Responsive Teaching and Literacy

Although I began this study with a focus on culturally responsive literacy instruction (CRLI), I had to take a step back and widen my frame to code for CRT specifically because I was not seeing CRLI represented in the data. Therefore, the following findings focus on CRT within a literacy context rather than CRLI itself.

Upon data analysis, four significant themes were identified to further investigate PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy instruction and how those understandings developed based on the clinical setting, clinical educator, and/or teacher preparation program. The four themes include: (a) using a variety of diverse texts; (b) building a learning community that honors students' cultures, (c) maintaining high expectations for all students; and (d) teachers knowing their students in order to connect the course content to their lives, cultures, and interests. The four themes are described in detail, not in any particular order.

First, the PST participants created an understanding of CRT based on the use of diverse and culturally responsive texts (Au, 2001; Zapata et al., 2018) within the classroom, through instructional materials and self-built classroom libraries. Second, the PSTs described CRT as creating a positive learning community that honors students'

cultures where students learn about their own cultures and the cultures of others, known as cultural competence (Gay, 2002). Clinical educators create a sense of community (Au, 2001) through morning meetings, whole group conversations, and cooperative activities. Third, maintaining high expectations for all students, in line with the first tenet of CRT, was understood as a way of caring so much that the PSTs held the students within the clinical setting accountable (Gay, 2000). Finally, the fourth theme includes teachers knowing their students. This code was created inductively as the PSTs repeatedly mentioned that their CEs intentionally learned more about their students' lived experiences, cultures, interests, families, and learning needs through observations, discussions, and interest surveys. According to the PSTs, teachers need to know their students in order to connect the learning to the students' lives, cultures, and interests and includes four codes: knowing your students, connecting learning to the students' cultures (Gay, 2002), connecting learning to the students' lives (Au & Raphael, 2000), and building learning on students' interests (Au & Raphael, 2000). When teachers situate the learning experiences of students within the curriculum, student interest and achievement is increased (Gay, 2002). The next section outlines the findings for each individual case, all of whom were White and female, mentored by White, female CEs.

Case One: Kara

Life Context

Kara grew up in a diverse community in an urban setting and revealed that she is very appreciative of this experience growing up. Kara enjoyed learning about the cultures of her classmates and the diversity that existed within her schools. She decided to become a teacher when she realized how much she liked working with kids through sorority

volunteer experiences. She made a switch in majors from nursing to education, acknowledging that her "true passion is to help kids grow." Kara emphasized that her experience as a first-generation college student encourages her to give opportunities to others through education.

Kara had a strong understanding of CRT practices prior to beginning the clinical experience. Based on her first interview, she felt as though it is the teacher's responsibility to "really dive into the cultures of each student, like that can be very significant for students." This PST believes that the teacher should help students gain cultural competence by learning about their own cultures and the cultures of others. Once teachers are successful at this, they make learning meaningful for their students, according to Kara. This PST believed that teachers can incorporate various cultures through texts and videos that represent all students. Above all, Kara's experiences growing up in an urban area made her understand the importance of valuing diversity and learning about various cultures.

Kara also valued the importance of maintaining high expectations for all students and believed that all students could achieve in her classroom. She admitted that after reading "*Multiplication Is for White People": Raising Expectations for Other People's Children*, by Lisa Delpit, that the "warm demander" description truly resonated with her:

> I've always felt a bit insecure about the way I teach cause I was like...my other teacher friends and student teachers and colleagues they're so much more nice to their students. I'm not strict. I'm not mean. It's just [I] expect they know you need to be doing your work and I'm sometimes not nice with the part of you need to be doing your work but I am nice with the support like that's where it comes in. So,

> it’s no drop down of where my expectations are. They know firmly that I stand that they need to do this but the way that I help them get there is like the warm part.

She also valued being a reflective practitioner and knowing that our biases can impact how we teach our students:

> You can think about it and backtrack and be like okay, wait I can't think like this cause then it's gonna show out in my teaching and the way that I treat the students so I think it's really important to have a growth mindset and believe that every student can achieve.

It is important to Kara that she continues her appreciation for diversity when she has her own classroom, stating, “I envision my classroom having just like a ton of cultures represented like on the walls or like having like a culture week or something.” Although Kara spoke knowledgeably about some of the major tenets of CRT, she revealed that she is hesitant to teach outside of the scripted curriculum or to teach history in a different way:

> I'm scared that by teaching social studies or history that I might approach things in the wrong way. Whether that be approached in the wrong way for my students or approach it in the wrong way where I maybe upset parents and then I have to kinda like deal with that so.

Kara gained confidence throughout the semester based on our interactions together. Even with prompting, our first interview lasted roughly 25 minutes. By the final interview, she was talking almost an hour, with fewer prompts, and was excited about her experience. She admitted that she was becoming more comfortable, not just talking with

me but also with talking to her CE. At this point in the semester, she found herself asking more questions and probing her CE for explanations of her teaching, revealing that "November was a groundbreaking month." It was inspiring to see her commitment to teaching for equity, her overall passion for learning, and strong understanding of CRT throughout the study.

Clinical Educator and Classroom Setting

Paige, Kara's CE, warmly welcomed me into her classroom for our first and only interview. The lights were off and a newly released movie, *The Witches*, was projected on the screen. Her sister, a kindergarten teacher at this school, was eating lunch in the classroom and grading papers. Paige whispered to me that she promised to show her students this movie as they had recently read the book, but school was cancelled due to an anticipated tropical storm. The children were invited to attend school remotely during this time to watch the movie, and all were eagerly present.

While the movie was playing, Paige gave me a brief tour of her classroom and proudly explained her classroom library. This library was self-built and intentionally included diverse texts. Paige introduced me to the online application Classroom Booksource that scans barcodes on books and lets the teacher know the percentage of books in the library that are diverse and are written by marginalized authors. She explained:

> So I can see if the majority of them [books] are fiction or nonfiction. I can see what types of characters I have in them. I can sort through if I have diverse authors or if they're all old White men. Or from different countries. And that kind of thing.

This application also allows students to scan the barcodes and check the books out to take home. Paige revealed that she has "loved reading forever," so she constantly buys new books from yard sales, adding them to her library. She also conducts interest surveys to recognize the texts her students are interested in that particular school year. This year, the students were most interested in nonfiction books so Paige made an effort to collect new nonfiction books throughout the school year. Her love for reading was evident as she lit up while explaining classroom activities around reading *The War With Grandpa* which can teach several objectives, *The Good Egg*, that teaches students about stress and coping, and *How to Catch a Monster.*

This teacher continued to show me a designated work space for her PST, Kara, along with a colorful bulletin board that contained a word cloud for each student. The word clouds contained words such as creative, silly, friendly, curious, energetic, wise, and many others. Paige explained to me that in building a classroom community, her 19 fourth graders (7% Black, 10% Latinx, and the rest were White), were invited to share words that described one another to create word clouds. Nearby, sentence starters were displayed to support her students during reading, specifically with the Latinx population who exhibited academic success when taught vocabulary, engaged in conversations, and the teacher knew their interests according to Paige. As *The Witches* ended, Paige ran over to the computer to say goodbye to her students and wished them a happy Halloween.

During our interview, Paige revealed her extensive certifications: general education, special education, and master's degree in literacy instruction. Admitting that she always knew she wanted to be a teacher, she had taught in third grade, fourth grade,

and kindergarten across New York, Tennessee, and North Carolina. This was her fifth year teaching at this elementary school in North Carolina.

The Literacy Block

Paige's literacy block took on a gradual release approach (Pearson & Gallagher, 1983), transferring responsibility from the teacher to the students. It began with 10-15 minutes of whole group instruction of the skills such as main idea and supporting details. She revealed that on some days she may model a think-aloud or, later in the week, she might read a book and talk about the main idea. Instead of stations, Paige has found that "must do, may do lists" work better in her classroom because her students are more independent and it keeps them from just sitting at a station they have mastered for the year. Her "must do" activities often include main idea practice, an iReady lesson, or any work they must complete, followed by "may do" activities such as choosing a book to read on Epic or play reading games that she has created. While her students are completing their "must do, may do lists," Paige pulls small groups or the students engage in book clubs. At the end of the block, the students place unfinished work in their red folder and they review the literacy block with a conversation around what they learned or one takeaway for the final 10 minutes.

Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Classroom

Paige described CRT as "being aware that not every student is going to have the same background as you, not just academically like support, but family background." She went on to explain that teachers need to understand that all students may not have two working parents and one may be in jail or has passed away. It is also important that teachers are aware of the traditions that may be acceptable to you, but may not be

something that is “normal in their family.” For instance, she wants her students to know that it is okay to tell her that in their culture it may not be acceptable to look adults in the eyes or that they prefer to keep a safe distance from others. She experienced a moment in which she almost tripped and accidentally touched a student who did not want to be touched, based on cultural norms. This made her realize the importance of knowing what is or is not acceptable to students because of their life experiences. Additionally, she intentionally incorporates culturally responsive books in her classroom, which was a practice developed during her teacher preparation coursework in 2013.

The Relationship

Although Kara was her second PST, Paige had coaching experience in supporting instructional staff at a non-for-profit school in New York. She would provide them with instructional tips and tricks in this role. Paige would model (Brown et al., 1989) small group instruction for Kara, and then provide explanation of practices. Paige has found teaching two cohorts of students beneficial because she modeled a lesson with one cohort before Kara taught the same lesson with the other cohort. She would also provide official feedback (Brown et al., 1989) to Kara once a lesson was completed, identifying her strengths and areas of need.

Both Paige and Kara revealed that they have a positive working relationship. Paige creates a positive relationship with her PSTs by telling them from the beginning that they can be comfortable asking her anything and that there is no dumb question, grounded in her understanding: “I was there once. We all know how stressful it can be.” Her first meeting with her PSTs includes ways to reach her outside of school, building a relationship with them, and “just talking.” Paige felt that Kara was very professional as

they reviewed the previous week or planned lessons as a team. Kara's workspace included a mailbox for Paige to provide resources and the fourth grade team shared their Google Drive folder.

Kara disclosed that their interactions had been very positive. Paige kept her up to date on "what's going on with each student, with each parent, and the school" and kept her overall informed. Kara reiterated that this has been an overall positive experience for her and admitted that she would feel comfortable talking with Paige about trying new things in the classroom. She would add onto Paige's ideas, while "still admiring that it's already a great thing." Further, they have established a relationship where communication occurred when the students were out of the classroom. Kara identified this as "free time" to quickly talk to one another. An interesting point Kara made was her struggle in finding her teaching style while gaining confidence in herself as an educator. She questioned, "Should I be doing what she's [Paige] doing or should I do like my style of what she's doing?" This is not an uncommon feeling as PSTs are trying to develop a professional identity, while gaining membership from the clinical setting and maintaining their own beliefs with those of the CE (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011).

Vision of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Kara's definition of CRT changed over time. During our initial interview in September, Kara described CRT as the representation of various cultures in your classroom through texts and textbooks. For example, she explained the significance of connecting the lesson to the students' cultures:

> In the classroom library, having a ton of books that depict the students who are in your classroom when you're creating lesson plans. Also keeping in your mind that

> if you're teaching out the textbook, does the textbook really show every student in your class? Does it connect to every student in your class? If not, how can you connect that to every student?

She went on to explain that CRT ensures that teachers understand the norms of various cultures, such as eye contact showing disrespect within some cultures, in line with what her CE mentioned in our interview.

During our second interview, Kara built on her previous description and highlighted the importance of knowing each student on their "individual level" such as their life experiences, homelife, what motivates them, their interests, and their cultures. She explained that teachers should connect the content to the cultures of students, allowing everyone to learn about their own cultures and the cultures of others.

At the conclusion of this study, Kara underscored that CRT includes parental involvement. CRT incorporates parents by bringing them into the conversation and bringing them into the classroom to share their own experiences. She believed that this was important because it is "so much fun to see other people's lives and perspectives and experiences."

In addition to her previous definition of CRT, Kara pointed out that students should learn about various holidays, not just the ones they celebrate, such as Christmas. In her future classroom, she wants to show students other cultures, traditions, and holidays even if they are not represented in the classroom. She revealed, "I think it's very valuable for other cultures to be represented." The next section outlines the four themes that influenced this change in her vision of CRT and how.

Understandings of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Diverse Texts. Over and over, Kara mentioned the use of diverse texts within the classroom to implement CRT. She developed an understanding of the use of culturally responsive texts through the clinical setting, including the classroom library and instructional materials, the clinical educator, and her coursework. Kara always knew diverse texts were important, but her experiences in the clinical setting strengthened this idea. In our first interview together, Kara stated that her CE's library was self-built and had "quite the selection of books and they're all over the place and I love that." This was not the first time Kara had observed classroom libraries with diverse texts. She went on to explain that "having a big classroom library with a ton of diverse books" is something she had seen in almost every classroom she had been in for clinicals.

Kara mentioned that her CE incorporated various diverse texts into the classroom to teach content throughout the semester. Kara noted titles such as *Dr. Martin Luther King Jr*. when the students were learning about civil rights, along with the titles mentioned by Paige in her interview above. Kara valued the importance of searching for books that touched on different cultures, traditions, and holidays. Her CE concurred, telling me that Kara was very specific about the passages she chose to use during her main idea lessons. She could tell that Kara wanted to make sure that the passages were about something that all of the students had been exposed to.

This PST observed her CE selecting texts for read-alouds, stating that "my CE is super picky about the books that she brings into the class and especially for...morning meetings and the texts that we read for reading." Kara went on to explain that her CE is "very specific...she wants it to connect with the students so she wants students to be represented in the book." Paige also gave students the opportunity to choose the texts

they wanted to read for book clubs, selecting something "they would connect with or they would enjoy." The tasks would be the same for everyone, but the work would be differentiated and the students would choose the texts.

Finally, according to Kara, she developed an understanding of CRT through the use of diverse texts based on her previous coursework. She learned the importance of having lots of books that depict the students in your classroom, having students represented through books, choosing books that students can connect with, and choosing books that students find interesting. Kara values being selective about the texts a teacher brings into the classroom because "books are a really big part of learning...they have textbooks, they have literature books, they have a ton of books."

Creating a Classroom Community. Repeatedly, Kara mentioned the importance of creating a classroom community as a characteristic of CRT. This PST stated that this understanding was greatly developed by interactions with and observations of her CE Paige. For instance, Kara observed her CE create a classroom community through routine morning meetings with her class once the two cohorts merged into one. During this time, Paige would ask the students to play "stand up, sit down" in which she made statements and the students would stand up or sit down if they applied to them. Kara noticed that the questions Paige asked "spoke to" all of the students, including their interests, experiences, and backgrounds. Paige was selective about the questions she asked so that all students could participate in this activity.

Based on the observations of her CE, Kara revealed that she also learned that time together as a classroom community provides teachers with the opportunities to teach students about their cultures and the cultures of others. She stated:

> With Christmas coming up, since all of my students celebrate Christmas, I want them to learn about other holidays as well….like showing other cultures, other traditions, other holidays, even if it's not represented in the classroom. I think it's very valuable for other cultures to be represented.

Kara went on to explain the importance of students developing cultural competence, "I think it's invaluable because every year they're gonna be in a different classroom, surrounded by different people when they grow up. They're going to be in different workplaces with different people." Based on her interview, she learned from her CE that experiences such as this provide students with different experiences, perspectives, and traditions, helping them become more open-minded and knowledgeable of other people. Kara believes that "even if it's not meaningful that particular year, it will be meaningful later on in life."

The clinical setting, such as students and school, also contributed to Kara's understanding of CRT and building a classroom community. During our final interview, Kara discussed the difficulties her students had experienced while coming together as one cohort after remote learning in two separate cohorts. She revealed that her fourth graders have many different personalities, perspectives, and backgrounds that turned into a bullying issue. Kara went on to explain that students of lower socioeconomic statuses were being targeted by this bullying. As a result, Kara and her CE had to come up with a way to build a stronger, more positive classroom community. Based on Kara's coursework, she decided to take the lead on establishing classroom rules with this new group of students when they returned to school in January. She planned to create an anchor chart to display three rules: be safe, be respectful, be responsible. The students

would then discuss what this looks like, sounds like, and feels like. The next step would be to incorporate a reward system, according to Kara. Even after careful deliberation with the administration about which students should stay in this class and which ones should move to another one, Kara and her CE were being charged with strengthening their classroom community amidst a pandemic.

Kara stated that her previous coursework also contributed to her understanding of creating cultural competence within a classroom community. She believed that it is the teacher's responsibility to help students identify with their cultures and to explore other cultures through assignments. Kara expressed the importance of this practice, "It's so important because it teaches kids about themselves even if sometimes they're not truly connected with their own culture. But it also teaches them about other people around the world. It kinda gives them a global perspective."

High Expectations for All Learners. Kara mentioned the importance of maintaining high expectations for all students repeatedly throughout our interviews. She revealed that her understanding of this tenet of CRT was greatly developed by her interactions with her students and coursework. Kara observed that her CE has expectations of classroom rules, but does not follow through on academic expectations. For instance, if a student starts to say "I don't understand this or I can't do this," Paige will try to help the students but not in the best way, according to Kara. Kara describes herself as a bit more "pushy" as she tells the students "you CAN do this" and "let's walk through this again." She reviews the lesson with the students and then "sets them free." She stated that she gives them more support and really pushes them to meet the

expectations as a “warm demander.” Kara has realized that she demands that students meet her expectations, but supports them in doing so in a warm way.

Other interactions with students supported Kara’s understanding of maintaining high expectations for all students, according to this PST. She holds her students to high expectations and pushes them to accomplish the task at hand. Kara ensures that the students know that she will come back and check on them once a task has been assigned. She uses nonverbal cues to remind students of the expectations by “circling around” them. When students struggle with math assignments, which many of these students do, Kara will tell them, “you’re a mathematician, you got this.” Although Kara mentioned her insecurities of being a “warm demander,” she understands the importance of knowing that all students can succeed.

Kara mentioned that her coursework taught her about the danger of having a deficit mindset about your students and emphasized the importance of a growth mindset. She read a book during a course that taught her that we are all born on the same level, therefore it is the mindset of the teachers that creates a difference in education. She powerfully stated:

> It’s important to not think like that [deficit mindset]...if you do think like that you need to acknowledge it so you can think about it and backtrack and be like okay wait, I can’t think like this cause then it’s gonna show out in my teaching and the way I treat the students. So, I think it’s really important to have a growth mindset and believe that every student can achieve.

This philosophy of teaching is carried out in this PST’s interactions with her students.

Knowing Your Students. Kara, along with the other PST participants, mentioned the significance of knowing your students in order to meet their individual needs and connect the content to their experiences. Of all the PSTs, Kara mentioned this practice the most, which she stated was greatly based on her interactions with and observations of her CE. In the fall and spring, Paige would provide the students with interest surveys, reading interest surveys, and even brain break surveys to learn more about her students. She would also send out a parent survey to learn more about the students' experiences and backgrounds, maintaining constant communication with the families through Class Dojo. Paige also anticipated questions parents may have and contacted them ahead of time. She also anticipated language barriers during conferences, lining up a translator for assistance.

Based on the interest surveys that Paige conducted, she knew more about her students and their particular interests and needs. During my lesson planning observation, Paige knew that her students would struggle with the term "assassination" within their reading. Therefore, she planned for additional time to provide quick background information on the vocabulary and have the students highlight the words that were unfamiliar to them. Likewise, she knew that all of her students did not celebrate Halloween and Christmas, based on their parental surveys, so she accommodated celebrations to make all of her students feel comfortable and welcomed. Kara acknowledged that Paige "tries to make sure that she's constantly being informed about what's going on in students' lives and how that can affect them in the classroom."

Based on the interviews, Kara's experiences with the students also assisted her in valuing the need for knowing her students. In knowing her students, Kara was intentional

about the lessons and activities she chose for her students, always thinking about how she could keep it interesting for them. For example, she chose to make her lessons more interactive and engaging for her students. She would create a Powerpoint and leave a section blank so her students could come up to the board and interact with the lesson rather than sitting in their chair and copying notes. She knew this practice made the lesson more interesting to her students.

In interacting with her students, Kara knew when her students needed additional support and reteaching, which she cited several times during our interviews. She used questioning to see if students were "struggling or is it low confidence." After that, she would reteach or model to support her students' learning. Kara also knew the students who needed additional one-on-one support to keep them engaged. Moreover, Kara knew her students and included pictures in her Powerpoint slides to support her students in their pre-reading discussions. When teachers know their students, they can then connect the content to their lives, interests, and cultures.

Connect Content to Students' Lives. Upon knowing her students, Kara created literacy lessons that connected the reading to the students' lives. Kara stated that this understanding of CRT was based on her clinical setting and students. For instance, she chose a passage about dogs and the responsibility that comes with caring for dogs. Keeping her students in mind, she related the text by asking them probing questions: "Do you guys have any dogs? Do you have any pets? What are the responsibilities?" She asked these questions to connect them to the story. She also selected a text titled *Preventing Cavities* because Halloween was coming up and she knew the text would connect to the holiday, eating lots of sugary food, and preventing cavities. The students

had fun with that text as well according to Kara. *The Wonder of Water*, a text selected for instruction, also connected to the students as the discussion centered around how water is important to our lives, the environment, and the lives of aquatic animals. All of the students were able to connect to this text because they have been to the beach before and drink water every day.

Kara also observed her CE conducting a lesson around the civics and government section of social studies. While all of the students could connect to this lesson, Kara believed that this was a missed opportunity for teaching because Paige explained to the students that no current events would be brought up in the class. Kara revealed in a journal entry, "I disagree with this because I think connecting the social studies unit of study with what is going on could be very valuable in students making connections with the content." While expectations of respect should have been established, Kara believed that "connecting this unit with the election year would be a great opportunity...tie into how the government is run on multiple levels and how it's important to be an informed active citizen would show the importance of social studies." In this instance, Kara's understanding of CRT was based on her previous coursework, rather than her CE.

Connect Content to Students' Interests. Through the utilization of interest surveys, Paige was able to connect the content and activities to students' interests. From brain breaks to timers to text selection, Paige always had the students' interests at heart throughout the school day. After two and a half hours of instruction, Paige conducted brain breaks that were either yoga and meditation or exercise and dance, depending on the day and students' interests. She played a rocket timer while her students worked to signal how much more time they had to write. Based on Paige's report, the students were

entertained by the dogs on the timer so she suggested Kara use the same. In this classroom, students were invited to write about their own ideas and interests, through guided practice. They were also given time to turn-and-talk about upcoming events that connected to their lives and interests. During reader's workshop, Kara observed the students engaging in a personalized learning playlist in which the students would choose which activities they wanted to complete. These literacy tasks were provided by the CE and aligned with the state standards.

Kara explained that her coursework also informed her honoring of students' interests in the classroom. Based on previous classes, Kara learned the importance of learning what motivates students and bringing their interests into the classroom. With this at the forefront of her mind, Kara always intentionally chose books that connected with her students and that they found interesting. A culmination of her experiences contributed to the understanding of "making sure instructional materials are engaging and interesting to the students."

Connect Content to Students' Cultures. Kara's experience in the teacher preparation program influenced her understanding of CRT and connecting the content to your students' cultures, according to this PST. During a reading course that Kara was taking during this study, she learned about the value of parental involvement through coming into the classroom and sharing their experiences or certain parts of their culture in the classroom. Rather than career days, Kara appreciated the idea of "culture days" for parents to share their lives, perspectives, and experiences with the students. Her vision of CRT, including celebrating cultures in the classroom, was greatly developed through her coursework.

The understanding of connecting content to students' cultures was also developed through her clinical experience, as illustrated in her interviews. She observed math Powerpoint slides that included a variety of cultures and races. She also observed her students writing about their personal experiences with holidays and family traditions. In this classroom, students were invited to make connections to their own lives and share their experiences with one another. Even if they did not eat turkey for Thanksgiving, they could share what they eat instead or what they would like to eat instead. Above all, Kara acknowledged that CRT is "really about connecting the lesson plans to the students' personal cultures."

In Chapter Five, I will discuss my interpretation of the superficial or incomplete understandings of CRT that Kara displayed such as having a culture week and the repeated significance of the presence of multicultural literature. I will also discuss the danger of avoiding certain topics in history due to fear of teaching the *wrong* way, mentioned by several of the White, female participants in this study including Kara. In the next section, I will present Rose's findings.

Case Two: Rose

Life Context

Rose, an honors student in the college of education, grew up in a suburban area outside of a large metropolitan area. She attended a Greek charter school growing up, in which she learned to speak Greek fluently. Rose enjoyed this experience because she could later communicate with her grandparents who also speak the Greek language. This PST decided she wanted to become a teacher based on positive experiences with supportive, strong teachers growing up and tutoring students from Title I schools.

Concurrently, she learned which practices she did not want to accept based on negative experiences with teachers. Rose cited that she is excited to have her own classroom and already envisions how she wants to decorate and arrange it. She also admitted to being "obsessed" with "leaving her mark" and making a positive impact on others.

Rose mentioned several times throughout the interviews that she had negative experiences with people of authority such as a dress code issue at a previous clinical experience, a dress code issue at the current clinical experience, less than supportive math instructors, and poor advice from an advisor. This finding resonated with me as Rose had an ongoing dress code issue with her CE and the doubts she had in her CE's recommendations around lesson planning.

When asked about her vision of CRT, Rose valued knowing about one's own cultures and the cultures that exist outside of the classroom. This was repeated throughout this interview. She revealed, "I think that we should take into consideration all of the cultures whether they're present in the classroom or not which is a really big point that I like to make." In order to develop this cultural competence, Rose believed that her students should be exposed to various texts and marginalized historical figures through literature and picture books. Unlike the other PST participants, Rose mentioned the danger of the "single story" (Adichie, 2009) and wants to introduce the viewpoints of all historical figures, even those not mentioned in textbooks. She supported class conversations about different cultures and how cultures are "different for all people."

At the same time, Rose did not feel that students of color should be treated or taught differently than their White counterparts when stating in her first interview:

This isn't me like being whitewashed or like colorblind in any sense because often

> in Dr. (professor)'s class colorblindness is not correct...cause a lot of people think like oh yeah, well, I don't see color then that's incorrect cause it's like you're supposed to see color but treat everyone equally no matter what color they are and everything. So, I think that with that in my mind I think that all students should be treated equally no matter what color their skin is so I don't think that I would treat any student differently just because they are different color...So I personally wouldn't do anything differently instructionally with the student just because they're of a different race.

Although Rose explicitly stated that this statement is not reflective of colorblindness, her beliefs about teaching students of color are actually a reification of colorblindness.

Clinical Educator and Classroom Setting

My virtual interview with Mary, Rose's CE, felt like catching up with an old friend over coffee. She sat on her bed during our interview, speaking freely and easily to the questions I asked her. This fourth grade teacher returned to her hometown to teach upon graduation, stating that she always liked the schools in this area so she decided to go back. At the time of this study, this was her eighth year of teaching in which she had taught sixth, fifth, and fourth grade. This was her second year of teaching fourth grade. Mary revealed that all of the Pre-K through twelfth grade students in this school district receive free and reduced lunch, and therefore provided additional funds based on the overall socioeconomic status of the families in the area. Among her 18 students, three students were Black, three were Latinx, and 12 were White. At this particular school, the classrooms were homogeneously grouped for convenience into "clusters." According to Mary, one teacher had all of the EC (Exceptional Children) students, one had all of the

emerging bilingual students, and another had the AIG (Academically or Intellectually Gifted) students. She revealed that her classroom was not either of those clusters:

> And I have the AIG cluster, which is some of it, but I have two Hispanics that are AIG. One of my African-American girls is in AIG and then I have five White kids that are AIG. So, I was very glad to see that I had some diversity in the AIG because normally it's just your White kids, but this year it's not for us which I was really glad to see.

During this unprecedented time of COVID-19, Mary took on the additional responsibilities of being a mentor to a second year teacher in fourth grade and a cooperating teacher for the first time to Rose. She also served on the equity committee at her school which analyzed the equity of the school staff that included four Black teachers and two males.

Mary's pride in her self-built classroom library was evident in her interview responses. The text equity course she volunteered to participate in taught her to evaluate the texts in her library. Upon this, she realized that the majority of her books were about people of color. She realized that she only had three or four books with White main characters. However, she realized that she needed more Latinx and Indigenous books in her library. She had built her library over the years by purchasing them on her own through affordable websites or PTO donations.

The Literacy Block

Mary's literacy block was an hour and a half each day. She began the block with a vocabulary word of the day in which she presented the students with a word, a picture, the definition, and used in a sentence that the students copy. Then, she utilized a text to

teach skills and strategies through her mini-lesson. Specifically, she may read the book aloud during their morning meeting and then refer back to it for the mini-lesson. The students took notes in their notebooks while Mary recorded them on an anchor chart. Next, she would pull small groups while the rest of the class read independently. She preferred that they do not work on iPads during this time stating, “They have to have an actual novel in their hand. It has to be a chapter book.”

Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Classroom

Mary defined culturally responsive teaching as “making sure that every single student in the classroom is taught to their specific needs and their specific way.” She does not base teaching “off of each culture,” rather she “brings it all in together.” Mary expressed the importance of making learning equitable so every student can learn and see themselves reflected in the book. She went on to explain that, “A lot of times whenever we read a book, the kids will listen to the book and love the book but don’t see themselves in that book.” Simply put, “It’s (CRT) just looking at everybody.” Her understanding of CRT really cultivated over the last few months upon attending the text equity course offered by the university.

The Relationship

“There are some things that I feel like she really trusts me with and then there’s some that I don’t think she really takes my word for educationally.” Mary uttered words similar to these repeatedly throughout our interview. Rose’s interviews supported this feeling in Mary. Although both Mary and Rose felt as though they had a positive working relationship, Rose experienced what I describe as tension between what her CE recommended and what her university supervisors or professors recommended. For

instance, Mary encouraged Rose to teach the same lesson twice with the two cohorts for additional practice after the first lesson. This would allow Rose to reflect on her teaching: Which one was better? What did I do differently? Why did that one seem different? Mary stated, “For me, I was like, this is like one of the best learning opportunities you’ll ever get as a teacher.” Rose did not agree with this idea until she emailed her lesson plan to her professor, who then suggested that she teach the same lesson twice and Rose accepted.

Similar tensions occurred around edTPA lesson planning, a portfolio-based assessment of teaching proficiencies required for licensure. Rose revealed that her CE had not experienced edTPA yet so she valued the recommendations from her supervisor who had graded for this assessment. Rose stated in an interview:

> She [Mary] hasn't done edTPA before so she doesn't really like know that cause she I think she graduated before they had started doing all of that stuff and so she put a lot of comments in there and they're just not correct to like what it's supposed to be.

Mary encouraged Rose to send the lesson plans to her prior to sending them to her supervisor, yet got the impression that Rose thought she was “too old” to provide timely, valuable feedback. Rose found this recommendation “tricky” because she wanted to do what her CE suggested, yet wanted to follow the advice of her supervisor because he was “more familiar with edTPA.”

In this coaching role (Brown et al., 1989), Mary would observe Rose teaching and record her strengths and areas of improvement. Mary encouraged Rose to watch videos of herself teaching, while referring to the reflection sheet. This CE would also give Rose

specific things to look for in her teaching such as excitement level in lesson delivery, any words she used frequently, or her mobility during the lesson (ex. Did she move around the room or stay seated?). In particular, Mary wanted Rose to work on her inflection while reading texts to the students because when teachers read with expression and fluency, the students will adopt the same practices. Mary modeled the teaching practices she hoped to see in Rose such as being theatrical and enthusiastic while reading a book.

Vision of Culturally Responsive Teaching

In our first interview, Rose described CRT as making sure that the cultures that are not represented in your students are still represented within the content. She repeatedly mentioned that the cultures that are taught in the classroom "aren't just because the students are in there," meaning that students should be exposed to all cultures, not just those of the students sitting in that classroom. For instance, Rose believed that "if there's no students with a Muslim religion in the classroom teachers think it's just okay to overlook it...but it exists in the real world." Rose believed that cultures should be taught throughout the school year and not only taught when the holidays are approaching, such as Cinco de Mayo.

By October, Rose changed her viewpoint about CRT, stating it is not only teaching a culture or books with diverse people in them. Rather, CRT is being sympathetic to the different things students are going through, such as "if there's poor students in your class, make sure that you keep that in mind...don't expect them to bring in candy for a science lesson." Rose also described CRT as differentiation of instruction that supports all of the students' needs.

During our final interview, Rose added to her previous vision of CRT and reiterated her first definition, explaining that teachers should not only teach certain cultures during the holidays. For instance, students should learn about Native Americans throughout the school year, not just during Thanksgiving, and teachers should continuously connect back to this holiday throughout the school year. In her future classroom, Rose hopes to incorporate CRT by having a "person of the week" from a marginalized group, one who is not typically mentioned in textbooks, and displayed on the classroom wall all year. By the end of this study, Rose had a new realization about CRT:

> I can see how much more I can incorporate culturally responsive teaching in the classroom than I thought I could. I thought it was only through books and characters and making sure that everyone was getting the help they need like equity instead of equality. But I can tell that it's a lot more than that and it's getting to know your students and actually like being there for him (or her).

The following four sections describe how and why Rose's vision of CRT changed throughout the study.

Understandings of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Diverse Texts. Rose mentioned the use of diverse texts to employ culturally responsive teaching the most of the PST participants. While this study was underway, she was completing her thesis around culturally responsive texts in the classroom, which may have influenced her emphasis on diverse texts. Rose's interview responses indicated that the clinical setting had the most impact on her understanding of CRT through diverse

texts, such as the classroom library and teaching materials. Rose observed her CE's use of diverse texts through read-alouds and revealed:

> I've seen a lot of picture books which show the students, the kids who are of different colors and everything too. It's not just like kids in the book who are running around like White kids with brown eyes or blue eyes and blonde hair. It's kids who are in a wheelchair or they live with their grandma or they live with another person who's not their mother, another mother or father.

Rose went on to explain why these texts are culturally responsive because they are different from the mainstream culture of a family with a dog, two kids, a mom and a dad, all living in a suburban community.

Diverse cultures, races, backgrounds, and experiences have all been represented in the text titles Rose mentioned: *A Bike Like Sergio's, Tiger Rising,* and *Maya Angelou.* Rose described *A Bike Like Sergio's* as culturally responsive because it tells the story of Ruben, growing up in a low-income neighborhood and dreaming of owning a bike like Sergio's. According to Rose, Ruben later discovers a one hundred dollar bill on the floor in a store. He debates returning this money or spending it on a new bike. Rose explained that this text was successful in teaching the students about character development, inference, and theme.

Rose described *Tiger Rising* as culturally responsive because the main character "is poor and lives in a rural town" and has a skin disorder. In the classroom, the students would complete a character map about the main character and compare and contrast him to other characters. Rose's CE, Mary, read aloud a text about Maya Angelou to teach the students about influential people in North Carolina and the arts. Throughout the semester,

Mary would print out the cover of the culturally responsive texts they read and displayed it on a wall in the classroom, including titles such as *My Name is Maria Isabel, Let's Celebrate: Special Days Around the World, The Name Jar, Jabari Jumps, Catching the Moon,* and *Those Shoes*.

Mary's diverse classroom library also contributed to Rose's understanding of CRT through texts. Rose explained:

> They're all really diverse. A lot of the books that she has in there have a lot of different characters and everything in them. It's a lot of girls, the main character, and she's like I'm doing my thing of what I want to do.

Rose believes that Mary makes sure that she is being culturally responsive in her selection of texts and ensures that diverse populations are included. This was reflected in Mary's interview as well and conversations between Rose and Mary. Rose divulged that Mary talked a lot about the importance of teaching different cultures in books and Rose noticed this, "We haven't read any books about an average White child. If we do, it's like the child has some specific ability."

Rose stated that her previous coursework and current supervisor also influenced her understanding of CRT through diverse texts. During Rose's literacy lesson planning observation, she and her CE were discussing plans around *The Last Stop on Market Street*. This text was selected by the advice of Rose's university supervisor and implemented to teach inferencing to this group of students. Rose believed this text was culturally responsive because "the main people in the book are African American." Rose's previous coursework also informed her understanding of diverse texts as reading

books that have different cultures and the students can go into a conversation about how culture is different for all people.

Creating a Classroom Community. Based on the interviews, Rose understood CRT as creating a classroom community that encouraged cultural competence. Rose stated that her understanding of building a classroom community was largely developed through interactions with her CE and cultural competence was learned through her previous coursework. In this classroom, Rose observed Mary conducting morning meetings with her students on a regular basis. These morning meetings included discussions around family traditions, what they did over the weekend, how they were going to celebrate particular holidays, and the rating on an emotional thermometer. The emotional thermometer allowed Mary to gauge the feelings of the students that morning. On a scale of one to 10, with 10 being "on top of the world," the students would share how they were feeling that particular day, with the choice of not sharing out if they did not want to. Rose felt that this was a good way for Mary to build a classroom community because she was building trust with her students through conversations based on their responses. If the number was lower than usual, Mary would have a private conversation with the student to support them.

Mary also created a classroom community with her students through the development of new classroom rules during morning meeting when the two cohorts became one in November. During this time, the students introduced themselves and created a list of Our Classroom Rules: (a) treat others the way YOU want to be treated; (b) be respectful to ALL, be responsible, be safe (socially distance, mask, and everything else); and (c) always keep your DEAR teacher happy! Mary ensured that all students

agreed with the rules before signing them and displaying them in the classroom. Rose also explained that the students work in partners for "pretty much everything." She revealed that they can move around the room and sit wherever they want, providing the students with choice.

Rose stated that through her previous coursework, she learned the significance of cultural competence, which was greatly represented in her first definition of CRT. Over and over again, Rose mentioned the practice of teaching students about various cultures, even if they are not represented within the classroom. For example, in an interview she stated, "If there's no students with a Muslim religion in the classroom, teachers think it's okay to overlook it. But it exists in the real world." In her future classroom, it is very important to Rose that she teaches students about all cultures, not just those present within her classroom.

High Expectations for All Learners. Rose's high expectations for all learners increased over the course of the study, based on the pre- and post-interview, through her interactions with the students in the clinical setting, according to this PST. She shared stories of interactions with students who would "shut down" or simply give up. For instance, Rose shared the story of a student who yelled at her because she did not want to do her math problems. Rose explained to the student that if she was going to sit at the table with Rose that she had to get her work done and if she had an issue with that she would have to talk to Mary. Another student wanted Rose's help on a test, repeatedly asking Rose questions as Rose replied, "I can't keep helping you. This is on what you know."

Rose expressed that when a student repeatedly comes up to her for help, she started by asking them what their first step was, rather than just giving them the answer. The students would tell Rose what the steps were as they answered the questions. She disclosed some frustration when students asked for help immediately after a lesson:

> A lot of the time I tell them...why don't you go ask one of your peers? Because we had just explained it for 20 minutes to the whole group. So why don't you ask one of your friends in the class if they can help explain it to you in a way that you might understand it better?

Rose did not give up on her students when they found a task difficult, while observing a different approach taken by her CE. Rose stated:

> I know she's [Mary] pretty much fine with them coming up to her and asking all the questions. But like, I'm tired of repeating the same exact question over and over again, and like the same exact steps. And like, because I feel like they don't listen as well during the whole group because they know that she's going to be there to answer any single question that they have.

The differing perspectives with their CEs in maintaining high expectations for students was cited by all three of the PSTs.

Knowing Your Students. Rose honored the importance of knowing your students before you can connect them to the content. This CRT practice was primarily developed by observing her CE Mary, according to Rose. By Rose's second interview, she realized that CRT was more than culturally responsive texts by stating, "I can tell that it's a lot more than that (diverse texts). It's getting to know your students." For instance, according to Rose, CRT is knowing that if your students come to school with a ripped up

shirt, “you can help them and if they don’t have another one then like buy one for them.” Rose observed this when Mary bought new school uniforms for her students when they needed them because she knew their life experiences. Mary also gave students new shoes and jackets when they needed them. Rose stated, “She’s taught me really well to know your students and it’s not a bad thing if you work with them a little bit extra and make sure they’re doing what they need to do.”

Rose also described knowing your students as understanding their cultures and the holidays they celebrate. Mary knew that all of her students did not celebrate Halloween, so the class would not be having a Halloween party. As some of her students are Spanish speaking, they celebrate Dia de Los Muertos instead, according to Mary. Rose found it interesting that Mary was taking the time to acknowledge that all of her students did not celebrate Halloween although she may celebrate it herself.

Rose stated that she also learned about the value of knowing your students through her previous coursework. Previous courses taught her to provide students with hands-on work and differentiating your lessons based on the students’ needs. Rose observed this practice being carried out in the classroom when Mary placed students in small groups based on their needs and ability. The students would often work in partners, too, to support one another. Rose’s previous coursework also pointed out that teachers should differentiate ahead of time for all students’ needs, not just the “high fliers and struggling learners.”

Connect Content to Students’ Lives. The CRT practice of connecting content to students’ lives was developed within the clinical setting according to Rose, such as her

CE and course materials. This has become an intentional practice for the fourth grade team as Mary stated in the literacy lesson planning observation:

> And another thing that we've been focusing on a lot this year is like connecting the content with the students. So, like this morning that's why I did that picture about if there's ever something that you wanted to try but and then you tried it and then you ended up liking it. So, see if you can come up with like some type of inferencing about connecting the content with them.

Mary also mentioned playing *Man in the Mirror* for the students on the following day because "that's gonna be like connecting the content cause it's a song and they can all relate to it and then we'll go into our lesson on *The Invisible Boy*." During this observation, Mary made suggestions for connecting the content to the students' lives during a turn and talk, "Turn and talk to your partner. Talk to them about if you've ever ridden on a bus before and what that experience was like. Where were you going?" Rose believed this was culturally responsive because the students could relate to riding on a bus, connecting *Last Stop on Market Street* to the students.

Mary conducted a lesson around the upcoming election in November. The students observed an election map and discussed the results from the previous two elections before predicting who would win this particular year. The class was reminded to "be respectful of other people" while discussing the upcoming election because everyone has different opinions and the opinions being shared were ultimately those of their parents. All in all, the students were told "just keep it to yourself and whatever your parents say then you can keep it at your house."

Through class materials, such as texts, Rose stated that she created an understanding of connecting the content to the students' lives. For example, during a read-aloud when a character was being bullied, Mary paused reading for a couple of days and the students had a discussion around bullying. The students read about bullying from various points of view such as the kid who was getting bullied, the bully, and someone who was watching from the outside. Rose felt this was a connection to what the students see at school through bullying in their class and they were able to connect to the content. Through course materials, the students were able to connect to the capitol building in Raleigh while learning about the branches of government.

Connect Content to Students' Interests. Rose's data did not place much emphasis on connecting content to students' interests as a way to teach CRT. She mentioned this practice once during our final interview. Rose revealed, "We always try to find fun stuff for them to do on their iPads because it can be kind of more interesting than answering some questions and like reading a passage and stuff." This practice was cultivated by her observation of her CE who tried to make interactive learning in response to student interests.

Connect Content to Students' Cultures. Connecting content to students' cultures was only mentioned three times by Rose during the course of this study, and understood through her previous coursework and CE based on the interviews. She communicated that "incorporating culture into the classroom is super important" and that "it shouldn't even be a question or not whether it happens because all students come with a different background." While this appeared important to Rose, she never described how she would do this. Concurrently, her CE connected the content to students' cultures in one instance

journaled by Rose. “The question of the day for the morning meeting was about family traditions the students had in the winter,” Rose scribed. Students were invited to share out or pass if they did not celebrate Christmas, but then shared something else that her family did during winter break. Mary’s knowledge and understanding of her students supported this practice.

As I will discuss more in Chapter Five, I interpret Rose’s repeated mentions of the presence of multicultural literature as a superficial understanding of CRT. I will also discuss how Rose views White as the norm and anything that is not White is cultural or diverse when describing texts in the classroom. Additionally, I will discuss the danger of not considering students’ lived experiences and race during classroom instruction, as Rose mentioned. Although she prefaced this statement with not being colorblind or whitewashed, such statements are a reification of colorblindness. In Chapter Five, I will also present the proximity to coursework as Rose’s repeated statements of diverse texts could be due to her study of culturally responsive texts during the time of this study. Finally, I will present what I call tensions that can occur when the views of the CE and the university do not align. In the next section, I will share Stella’s unique findings.

Case Three: Stella

Life Context

Stella grew up in a predominantly White area. She felt as though she did not learn about White culture or any other cultures in school, putting her at a disadvantage. Stella revealed that “I thought that everybody learned the same things no matter where you went to school and I'm learning that that's not how it is.” Of all of my participants, Stella had the most awareness of developing cultural competence and how our biases can

impact our teaching. This may have been due to her current enrollment, at the time of this study, in an equity and theory course that the other two PSTs took earlier in the program.

Stella revealed that she always knew she wanted to be a teacher growing up, particularly because of the positive experiences she had with her teachers. She mentioned that she had personal family issues and her first grade teacher was a "shining star" who supported her emotionally, academically, and personally. Considering everything she went through, Stella wants to be that "shining star" for her students. She stated that "some students go home and they don't have a support system so I wanna be a support system and I wanna be a positive influence in their lives."

A couple of times, Stella mentioned that she had grown as an educator since joining the teacher preparation program. She was more confident in herself and her instruction by her final year and student teaching. For example, Stella revealed that at the beginning of her college career, she was too scared to even talk to her students and now she jokes and dances with them. During this time of reflection, Stella was considering how she wanted to run her room such as the classroom setup and management.

This particular PST had a very strong understanding of CRT, which I predict was a result of her current coursework at the time of this study. Stella believed that teachers should incorporate students' background knowledge into the lessons. She also believed that every student plays a part in learning and that we need to acknowledge different cultures:

> Culture can help shape learning experiences for all students and if we incorporate who they are then other students can learn about their culture as well which then they can take that knowledge and those skills they've learned into the real world

> because that's what they're going to see in the real world. It's not just white people. It's not just people of color you know.

Not only should we learn about different cultures, but we should learn about our own cultures first, also known as cultural competence (Ladson-Billings, 1995). She stated that, "You have to understand who you are and what your historical background is. Basically, you gotta accept yourself for everything that you are and have been for your race so that you can understand and empathize with others."

Further, Stella understood the importance of maintaining high expectations for all students while creating accommodations for emergent bilingual students. She shared the strategy of reading math problems to students to assess their mathematical understanding. According to Stella, teachers should provide time for students to communicate their thoughts to empower them as individuals within and outside of the classroom.

Clinical Educator and Classroom Setting

Julia, a classroom teacher for 20 years, was excited to participate in this study from the beginning of the process to the end. Her desire to grow and learn was apparent as she repeatedly told me that "learning never stops." Even after 20 years of experience, Julia wanted to learn more and to do what was best for her students, including teaching *to* and *through* their strengths and cultures. For instance, after attending a text equity course offered by the cooperating university, this CE purchased *Hair Love* with the intention of someday reading it to her class.

This teacher taught a variety of grades including preschool, kindergarten, first grade music, fourth grade, and third grade across Florida and North Carolina. Admittedly, she enjoyed teaching third grade the most because of the testing. Julia shared that

although most people do not enjoy the testing aspect of third grade, she appreciates being able to review the data to decide if she needs to reteach a topic and keeps her motivated to "try and do my best with them." Julia's teaching philosophy emphasized the need for teacher excitement to create student engagement. She stated, "I don't know if it's just because I get excited when I'm introducing something, but then it gets them excited." Julia tried to make learning fun and motivating for her class of 16 learners.

Julia described her students as "really, really motivated" although some "require a lot of attention" and "some that work at a much slower pace, but they are eager to please." Upon an observation, Julia's principal also observed that this group of students (three Latinx, one Black, and 12 White) wanted to please and work hard. Stella described this group of learners in her own words: "My teacher typically has like the high flyers and well what I'm starting to see is that's the White students." Julia created relationships with her students by sharing stories about her family, including her daughter eating lunch in the classroom or showing the students family pictures on her phone.

The Literacy Block

Julia described herself as "really structured" and therefore attempted to do the same thing every day. She often began her literacy block with iReady and chose a quiet student, with their hand raised to "run it." Julia described iReady as an instructional guide that included videos for every literacy unit, teacher guides, and practice guides for students. She enjoyed the notes that assisted her in guiding her instruction such as how to model a skill or strategy. The students had their own workbooks for practice and for assessment, including online materials.

During the literacy block, the students would watch a video, Julia would model, and then the students would complete the work pages in Showbie as they read together and filled in the blanks. Upon modeling, the students would complete one or two items independently. This CE left time for vocabulary instruction and spelling tests on Fridays. Next, Julia pulled guided reading groups and made sure the other students were doing their I-Station for 15 minutes every day. Then, she may hang task cards around the room to have students answer questions in an engaging way and informally assessed their understanding with an exit ticket.

Culturally Responsive Teaching in the Classroom

Julia defined CRT as "making sure you're reading books that cover everybody." For instance, teachers should read texts that everybody can see themselves reflected in. Julia also believed that CRT emphasizes inclusivity and making sure that you are trying to reach all of the different learners in your classroom. For instance, she had a Latinx student who was a visual learner, so Julia would write additional information on the board for him to copy. She admitted:

> I'm trying to be a lot more respectful to that this year and to make sure that I'm trying to hit all of the learners in my room to make sure that I'm not leaving anyone out or different types of learners.

Julia also tried to accommodate this student's learning through smaller groups and one-on-one interactions, after recognizing his specific learning needs.

This understanding of CRT was developed mainly from the text equity class she was enrolled in through the university at the time of this study. This training taught her to be aware of different cultures and the way that she learned history may "not be

completely true." For example, she learned to not be afraid to teach what Thanksgiving really is or where it originated from and having a variety of texts in her classroom. Also, she learned to incorporate various holidays into the classroom, not just one. This class made her realize the importance of not leaving anybody out, although she considered culture in the past. She stated:

> Like resources and stuff...you know some of the things I might've been nervous before cause you don't want to teach it wrong or say something you're not supposed to say. But it [the course] definitely put me out of my comfort zone, but at the same time, I learned a lot from taking it.

She also shared that in years past, the teachers at her school would pile into a school bus and drive around the community to observe the neighborhoods of their students. This was always an eye-opening experience for her.

At the conclusion of our interview, Julia stated, "I'm still trying to learn to be a better third grade teacher every day. There's more effective things that I can use to just try to reach everybody." Her willingness to participate in this study and learn something new about her teaching also speaks volumes to her desire to grow. In the end, she was glad she participated in this study. Julia told me, "I learned a lot, just talking with you and thinking through things. Pretty exciting."

The Relationship

Julia and Stella agree that they have a positive, open relationship. They both revealed that they talked outside of school often, as they had each other's phone numbers. They would also stay after school to discuss student performance and behavior. Stella told Julia that she wanted them to be transparent with each other. Although they had

different views on things sometimes, Stella tried to remain professional. While Stella felt uncomfortable at times in sharing her ideas, Julia was always accepting and open to trying new things. Stella also felt that Julia trusted her to pull small groups and work with students. Julia stressed the importance of building this positive relationship through good communication so the CE and PST trust each other, "so it's (school) a place they really want to come all the time."

Vision of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Stella's vision of CRT changed throughout the study from the first to the final interview. She maintained her initial vision from September and added to it each time we met. Stella's initial vision of CRT included incorporating students into the lesson and having student-led discussions, appropriately facilitated by the teacher. She believed that providing students with opportunities to "show their thoughts and share their experiences and ideas" could "empower them as individuals within and outside of the classroom."

In October, Stella's vision of CRT included activating students' prior knowledge to allow them to connect to the text or subject area. Further, she believed in the importance of "validating them as individuals and academically making them feel welcome, trying to build a classroom community." Within this classroom community, Stella believed that teachers could help their students become well-developed citizens who know how to respectfully agree or disagree with others through effective communication. She added that teachers should not make assumptions about their students.

At the end of the study, Stella's vision of CRT stressed the importance of understanding the demographics of your school community. For example, if you teach at

a school with a high population of students of color, you should become more knowledgeable of that culture. She explained:

> If you're not comfortable enough to learn about the demographics of your school, then you shouldn't be there because you can't be what your students need you to be. You shouldn't be something you're not, but they need you to understand them in order to be effective.

The following four themes influenced Stella's vision of CRT throughout the course of the study.

Understandings of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Diverse Texts. Of the three PST participants, Stella mentioned the use of diverse texts to employ CRT the fewest amount of times. She mentioned using texts three times, in which two focused on the CE. For example, during our first interview together, Stella mentioned that her CE purchased *Hair Love* as a suggestion from the text equity course she was enrolled in. While Julia had good intentions of reading this book to her class, both Stella and Julia revealed that she had yet to incorporate it into her classroom. Stella pointed out that Julia read *Seven Spools of Thread,* a Kwanzaa story, to her class around the holidays, exposing students to another culture. During her previous coursework, Stella learned the importance of incorporating multicultural books into her classroom library.

Creating a Classroom Community. According to Stella, she learned about the value of creating a classroom community that encourages cultural competence through her coursework and previous clinical placements. Based on Stella's previous experiences within the teacher preparation program, she revealed that "community is just high up

there on my list of things." She cultivated this goal during a previous clinical experience in which the teacher had a really strong classroom community. After this experience, Stella decided that she wants her students to become "well-developed citizens" who "know how to respectfully agree or disagree with somebody" and "develop communication skills to talk with each other." Stella incorporated this practice into her current clinical experience by providing her students with sentence starters to use when having whole group discussions that include "I agree with __ because" and "I disagree with __ because." Stella encouraged these moments so students could take risks and learn from one another. This PST also wanted her students to be up and moving, interacting with one another, and engaged because current practices provided little time for this.

Stella revealed that her enrollment in the equity and theory course at the time of this study supported her growing understanding of cultural competence throughout this study. She defined cultural competence as "understanding your culture before you can understand others." Stella further described the value of cultural competence, "I think they (students) need to gather understanding of themselves so they can better understand others. I feel like it's our job to learn about other cultures that way we don't go into conversations blindly." Stella also believed that educators must become more knowledgeable of the cultures of their students because "although you may not be able to apply personal experiences of what your culture might be like to theirs, you still have a good understanding of what their culture is." Of the three participants, Stella had the most sophisticated understanding of cultural competence, possibly based on her current coursework.

Based on the interviews, Stella also developed an understanding of creating a classroom community through her experiences within her clinical setting, both with her clinical educator and with the students. Within this clinical setting, Stella observed that her students like to learn from one another and students were always willing to help others. For instance, Stella explained that if a student finished their work, they would ask to assist others with math facts. Stella would ask that the student give the other student time to complete the work first before asking them if they want help. She defined moments like these as "community building." The guidance counselor at this school also supported building a classroom community by providing the teachers with morning meeting options that focus on feelings such as gratitude or giving. Stella hoped to incorporate these practices into the classroom.

This PST observed her CE conduct afternoon meetings during the first two weeks of school, but not again since. During these two weeks, Julia would ask her students questions in which they would answer, rather than having an interactive discussion. Julia would ask questions such as: What's your favorite subject? How was your weekend? What are you excited to learn about? Afternoon meetings were soon removed from the schedule and replaced with math videos. However, since the two cohorts came together as one, Stella and Julia decided to build a classroom community through the students complimenting one another on Mondays. Stella revealed that as she observed this moment "she almost cried" because the students were providing "heartfelt" compliments. She stated:

> It wasn't like...oh I like your shirt today. It was like so-and-so is funny. So-and-so is smart. I like how they do this. And I'm like, wow. I think that is going to be a

great way to help build community and respect for each other.

High Expectations for All Learners. Stella's understanding of CRT included maintaining high expectations for all learners, which she stated was generated through her current coursework and experiences with students in her clinical setting. During Stella's current coursework, she learned that CRT "aims to produce students who can achieve academically." Stella confessed her need for structure in the classroom and was concerned that Julia was not holding the students to the same expectations as she does when she is there two days a week "because that's where the students slip and cracks are happening." This reinforces the differing perspectives that PSTs experience in their clinical placements compared to their coursework and what can happen when teaching philosophies collide.

It was important to Stella that she had procedures and expectations in place with her students. For instance, before lessons, Stella would have her students chant the expectations and read the objectives aloud so they knew what the purpose of the lesson was. She provided students with checklists to ensure that they were completing the task such as adding sequence words to their writing. Stella also facilitated a discussion around the purpose of school with her students:

> I don't think students understand that they come to school with a purpose and I think they come to school for the heck of it. I think they come to school just because it's required. I really told them, when you come to school you have a purpose. We are here to learn and grow both as individuals and intellectually. The purpose for this lesson is to help you become a better reader and to help you understand the texts that you're reading.

She felt that this discussion was important to remind students that they come to school for a purpose and they are school for a reason, “not just because.” Stella tries to be “super intentional and super clear” with her students to avoid “organized chaos, or just chaos.”

Knowing Your Students. Stella revealed in our interviews that her current coursework, experiences with students, and planning with her CE assisted her in developing an understanding of the importance of knowing your students. Her coursework introduced her to the need for engaging students and providing time for interactions with one another so they are a part of their learning. Experiences with the emerging bilingual students in her class taught Stella the need for accommodations and modifications so that all students can succeed. For example, in math, she understood that students should not be tested on their ability to read the world problem. Therefore, she would read the world problem aloud to the students and ask that they solve it. This practice is rooted in her beliefs of “making the playing field fair.” Similar sentiments are carried out in Stella’s beliefs about discipline in that teachers should have the same expectations for all students- students of color, White students, and Hispanic students—and not immediately reacting when a student is “acting out.” This understanding was developed through readings in her current coursework.

During the literacy lesson planning observation, Julia knew her students and anticipated accommodations for lessons. Julia mentioned students who may need additional support during the lesson based on their 504 plan, such as reading the text aloud. She explained, “I could be near those two or I could pull them together and make sure that I’m reading everything to them.” When educators know their students, they become more successful at connecting the content to their lives, interests, and cultures.

Connect Content to Students' Lives. Once more, Stella stated that her current coursework greatly cultivated her understanding of connecting content to students' lives. Based on what she was learning during her equity course, she was able to design literacy lessons that connected the text to the students' lives, always keeping the students at the forefront of her mind and asking "how can I connect them to the text?" During this study, Stella chose texts about time, water, and sports as all of her students had experienced these. She would ask probing questions that connected to her students while reading about time: How do we tell time in the classroom? How do you tell time at home? While reading about water, Stella asked, "Have you ever been to a river or a lake and tell me about your experience." Prior to reading about sports, Stella questioned what kind of sports the students played and what kind of protective gear they had to wear to keep them safe. By connecting the text to her students, the students became excited, which made her excited.

Connect Content to Students' Interests. "Anything that you have control over, your students should be at the center of it. Anything you plan should be based off of your students, what are your students' interests? What do you know they like?" During our final interview together, Stella stressed the importance of connecting content to students' interests based on her experiences with her students, yet no instances of connecting the content to students' interests were explained. She believed that "the more you can relate to what your students like, want, or need the better off you're going to be at engaging them and being an effective teacher." Although no instances of connecting content to students' interests were divulged, Stella appeared to understand the importance of this

practice within CRT. Would she have shared examples if it had been observed within her clinical setting?

Connect Content to Students' Cultures. Stella revealed that based on her current coursework, she understood that CRT "gives teachers the opportunity to learn about students' cultures, to teach students about the behaviors valued in school, to give them ways to keep their teaching exciting." From this understanding and others, Stella often critiqued Julia's teaching practices, revealing how the practices she observed did not center students within the lesson and how she would have conducted the lesson differently. She shared an example early on in the study in which her CE introduced a text about quilts. Rather than asking the students to share their experiences with quilts such as: Do you have a quilt? What does that quilt mean to you? Do you have any other pieces that are passed down from family to family? She expressed that this was a missed opportunity to connect the text to the students because Julia shared her experiences with quilts and "didn't dive into the students' experiences and that's one thing that truly matters is the students." Repeatedly, Stella explained that her understanding of CRT was manifested in her teacher preparation coursework, rather than her actual clinical experience. The knowledge she was gaining gave her the opportunity to point out non-examples of CRT with a CE who was grounded in teaching pedagogies that date back 20 years, but wanted to grow and learn more about CRT.

In Chapter Five, I will further discuss the theory/practice divide (Zeichner, 2005) Stella often mentioned during our interviews. I will also discuss what can happen when the PST's views of CRT do align with the CRT views of the CE, which was the case for Stella and Julia. In the discussion, I will also highlight the importance of the proximity of

equity coursework to the clinical experience and why such coursework should span across the entire teacher preparation program, rather than stand alone in one course. In the following section, I will present my analysis across all three cases and answer the two research questions.

Cross-Case Analysis

This section describes the characteristics of clinical experiences that supported the three PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy instruction. Specifically, I look across the cases to illuminate the role the CEs played in supporting the PSTs' understandings and then we will look at the role the clinical setting played in supporting the PSTs' understandings.

Clinical Educator Support and Culturally Responsive Teaching

A cognitive apprenticeship theory lens (Brown et al., 1989) was employed to identify the role that the CEs played in supporting the PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy. Through PST interviews, lesson planning observations, and journal entries, the CEs provided cognitive apprenticeship supports by modeling teaching practices for the PSTs, coaching the PSTs and providing feedback once the PSTs enacted a lesson, removing scaffolds as the PSTs took on more responsibilities, requesting that the PSTs provide explanation for their actions, and talking through their teaching practices and instructional decisions. Various levels of support from the CEs contributed to the PSTs' understanding of culturally responsive literacy instruction outlined within this section. As a reminder, the PST/CE pairs were Kara and Paige, Rose and Mary, and Stella and Julia.

Diverse Texts. The PSTs paid close attention to the texts their CEs selected to read aloud to the students to teach content and reading comprehension skills. Although all three stated early in the study that they valued the importance of culturally responsive texts based on their coursework, the CEs' demonstrations of using diverse texts solidified this understanding in the actual classroom. Kara observed Paige being very intentional about the texts she read aloud to the students, while Rose noticed that none of the texts in Mary's classroom were about an "average White child." Both Mary and Paige disclosed to their PSTs that they wanted all of their students to be represented in the texts. This was illuminated in the data as Mary and Rose both frequently mentioned the use of diverse texts to connect the content to their students. While Rose may have been hyper focused on texts due to her current thesis, she may have also noticed diverse texts as her CE also valued this practice. At the same time, Julia and Stella spoke very little about the implementation of diverse texts, although Stella noted the use of one diverse text over the holidays. Stella mentioned the intentionality her CE had in reading aloud the newly purchased book *Hair Love* but never observed this text used.

Creating a Classroom Community. All three of the CEs modeled how to create a classroom community through morning meetings, although Mary and Paige were more consistent in this practice. The discussions during this time encouraged interaction and the opportunity for students to learn more about one another. Paige would ask questions that the students could connect to based on her knowledge of the students, while Mary would lead morning meetings with the emotional thermometer. Mary also built a classroom community by encouraging students to work together on activities and sit around the classroom, a practice not mentioned by the other PSTs or CEs. Rose observed

Mary creating new classroom rules when the two cohorts merged in November. The students created the rules together and Mary later displayed the rules, with students' signatures, in the classroom. Stella observed Julia in a newer practice of afternoon meetings on Mondays in which the students would give one another meaningful compliments.

High Expectations for All Learners. In agreeance, all of the PSTs maintained that their CEs did not exhibit high expectations for all learners based on their observations and time spent in the clinical setting.

Knowing Your Students. The PSTs also observed their CEs build relationships with their students, while getting to know them on a personal level. Getting to know students was a teaching practice frequently mentioned by both Kara and her CE, Paige. Kara observed Paige sending home interest surveys, maintaining open communication with families, and providing accommodations for students. Paige also modeled for Kara how to make instructional decisions based on the students' interests such as brain breaks, timers, and choice writing. Furthermore, Paige spent time with Kara to discuss the students to keep her up to date on important classroom information.

Rose noted the care that Mary had for her students by purchasing new uniforms and other pieces of clothing when needed. Mary also displayed an understanding of the students' lived experiences such as not requiring them to send in money or specific items for activities. Knowing your students also meant that students were not excluded from holiday celebrations, as mentioned by Rose's observations of Mary. This CE was selective about questions that were asked during a read-aloud of *The Last Stop on Market Street*, while planning with Rose, so the students could connect to the content. Rose also

observed Mary make instructional decisions based on students' interests, such as using the iPad and working in partners. Mary and Paige modeled for their PSTs how to connect the content to the students' cultures through whole group discussions around holidays and family traditions and choice writing about personal experiences.

Julia would connect the content to her life and tell the students about her experiences and family in order to build trusting relationships with them. Meanwhile, few instances were noted where Julia invited the students to tell their own stories and connect to the content on a personal level. Stella cultivated an understanding of knowing your students through lesson planning with her CE in which she anticipated teaching opportunities for Stella and possible accommodations for the students.

Clinical Setting Support and Culturally Responsive Literacy

The clinical setting also supported the PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy instruction. Clinical setting characteristics included curricular components such as iReady, the students within the clinical setting, interactions with administrators, the school components including staff, classroom visuals, classroom libraries, and teaching materials such as texts.

Diverse Texts. Both Rose and Kara affirmed that the classroom libraries were self-built by their CEs and included diverse representation. These PSTs observed that the texts within these classroom libraries presented a variety of characters, authors, and themes. Paige used the online application Classroom BookSource to assist her in developing her unique classroom library, while Mary highlighted ways to purchase diverse texts through affordable avenues. Both Paige and Mary valued multiple representations within texts, as revealed in both of their interviews.

Creating a Classroom Community. Interactions with students within the clinical setting greatly supported the PSTs' understanding of creating a classroom community. Uniquely, these PSTs observed their students experiencing learning in various modalities: remote learning, face-to-face, and hybrid before coming together as one cohort. As a result, the PSTs were given the opportunity to observe their CEs create classroom communities based on two cohorts merging in the middle of the fall semester. Kara and Stella interacted with the students, taking the initiative to create classroom rules they learned during their coursework. Stella also learned about the importance of creating a classroom community by observing her students interacting with one another, such as supporting each other's learning and giving one another meaningful compliments during afternoon meetings. Likewise, Kara's observation of the bulletin board in Paige's classroom represented how a classroom community was built through the creation of word clouds.

High Expectations for All Learners. All of the PSTs developed an understanding of maintaining high expectations for all learners through interactions with the students themselves. Rose and Kara mentioned students who constantly wanted their assistance during assessments or would easily give up when the task became too difficult. As a result, both PSTs learned to coach the students through the task, often math-oriented, and reassured them that they could do it. While this understanding was developed through interactions with students, none of the CEs appeared to model maintaining high expectations. Yet, this code was higher for both Stella and Julia as they both mentioned the importance of believing that all students can succeed during their

interviews. Stella maintained high expectations for her students when interacting with her students through a whole group discussion around the purpose of school.

Knowing Your Students. The PSTs understood CRT as knowing your students and their interests or needs through interactions with their clinical placement students. Kara, in particular, created this understanding through interactions with her students and observations of her CE. She believed in the importance of knowing your students and their interests in order to connect the content to their lives through text selection and reading question stems. Also, based on her interactions with students, she knew who needed additional support such as reteaching. Kara observed the use of Powerpoint slides within math instruction that included students from various cultures and races, which Paige intentionally created for each unit, upon knowing her students. Kara also hopes to implement personalized learning playlists across all content areas in her future classroom upon observation of her CE creating such playlists for her students. Rose understood the teaching practice of knowing your students through read-alouds that connected the content to the students' lives, such as the text and discussions around bullying. Table 3 illustrates the supports provided by the clinical educator and clinical setting that enhanced the PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy (see Table 3). I arrived as these findings through deductive coding of the data.

Table 3

PST Comparisons of Clinical Educator and Clinical Setting Support

Clinical educator support	Clinical setting support
Demonstrations of using culturally responsive texts	Interactions with students
Decisions around instructional materials	Observation of students
Discussions about students	Getting to know students and connecting content to their lives
Coaching and providing feedback	Diverse classroom library
Conducting morning meetings	Teaching materials
Lesson planning discussions	Barcode application for texts
Communicating with families	Classroom visuals (i.e., PowerPoints, bulletin boards)
Creating personalized learning playlists	
Conducting student interest surveys	
Facilitating whole group discussions	
Modeling writing lessons	
Showing care and knowing students	
Providing question stems that connect the content to the students	

Summary

In this chapter, I answered the two research questions by discussing the data collected through semi-structured interviews, literacy lesson planning observations, and artifacts. Four major themes of characteristics of culturally responsive literacy instruction emerged from the data: (a) using a variety of diverse texts; (b) building a learning community that honors students' cultures, (c) maintaining high expectations for all students; and (d) teachers knowing their students in order to connect the course content to their lives, cultures, and interests. Although the three PSTs gained knowledge about CRT during their teacher preparation program coursework, they were able to identify particular components of CRT because they were lived out in their clinical experiences. The PSTs developed an understanding of CRT through interactions with and observations of their clinical educators such as the implementation of culturally responsive texts and coaching

and the characteristics of the clinical setting such as the teaching materials, visuals, and students.

While many similarities and differences exist among the PSTs and how they understood culturally responsive literacy instruction based on their clinical experiences, all three PSTs agreed on one thing: being in the actual classroom is the most important characteristic of clinical experiences that supported their understanding of CRT. Kara explained that "being a student and having all of these supports that I won't have next year" and being able to have curiosity and ask CEs questions is the most significant experience of the teacher preparation program. Conversations and curiosity were the biggest characteristics that supported Kara's self-growth this semester. Rose concurred, stating that "seeing it in action is more beneficial than learning about it in school," yet it is "not beneficial to have an older teacher not experienced in CRT." She believed that if your CE is not responsive, the PST is not going to see it (CRT). Rose explained, "It's different having your teachers talk about it and viewing their research and everything on it versus seeing it in action." Stella further explained that the characteristic of her clinical experience that most supported her understanding of CRT was actually being with the students themselves. Getting to know her students' interests supported her in designing activities and lesson plans that engaged her learners. This is rooted in her belief that "the more you can relate to what your students like, want, or need the better off you're going to be at engaging them and being an effective teacher."

This chapter presented the findings within each of the unique cases, before illustrating the similarities and differences across the cases. The two research questions were answered through the presentation of my findings. Chapter Five will further

interpret the findings through the theoretical lenses of CRT, provide recommendations for the teacher education community, and offer suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Introduction

In Chapter Four, the findings from a qualitative study exploring the characteristics of clinical experiences that support preservice teachers' (PST) understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices were reported. Chapter Four was organized by findings within each case before a cross-case analysis of all three cases. This chapter begins with revisiting the need for this study. Then, a cross-case analysis of the findings of all six participants is discussed within themed sections. After that, implications for teacher education and teacher preparation programs are presented. Chapter Five closes with recommendations for future research, a summary that answers the research questions, and final remarks.

Revisiting the Need for this Study

Despite research journals dedicated to teacher education, there is a relatively small amount of research that specifically investigates how PSTs develop an understanding of culturally responsive literacy instruction (CRLI) in their clinical experiences. This could be due to the absence of PSTs' voices in the literature. Additionally, research shows that PSTs are indeed learning about the framework and tenets of culturally responsive teaching (CRT), yet cite uncertainty of how those practices are lived out in actual classrooms (Lambeth & Smith, 2016). In response, the purpose of this multiple case study was to explore the characteristics of clinical experiences that support PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms. This multiple case study focused on capturing the voices and perspectives of PSTs themselves by answering the following two research questions:

RQ1. What role do clinical educators play in preservice teachers' development of understandings of culturally responsive teaching in literacy?

RQ2. What role do clinical settings (i.e., curricular components, students, teaching practices, administrators, clinical educators, etc.) have in supporting preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive teaching in literacy classrooms?

The PSTs in this study generally understand CRT as: (a) using a variety of diverse texts; (b) building a learning community that honors students' cultures, (c) maintaining high expectations for all students; and (d) teachers knowing their students in order to connect the course content to their lives, cultures, and interests based on their previous coursework and experiences in the clinical setting. In particular, interactions with and observations of their clinical educators assisted in developing their overall understandings of CRT.

Discussion of Findings Across Cases

In the next section, I discuss the willingness to learn displayed by all of the participants in this study. Then, I provide a discussion of the superficial or incomplete understandings that the PSTs had of CRT, divided into three parts. Each of the surface-level understandings will be situated within the literature that was discussed in Chapter Two. After that, I discuss my interpretation of the importance of proximity to coursework. I also discuss missed opportunities in the clinical settings and limitations of the clinical experience in cultivating an understanding of culturally responsive teaching.

"Learning Never Stops": The Participants as Lifelong Learners

Arguably, all of the participants volunteered to engage in this study because they were willing to grow and learn more about CRT. The clinical educators (CE) were experiencing an unprecedented time in their careers in which they were forced to pivot their teaching practices and move their classrooms and students to a virtual platform. While this was a stressful time for educators across the globe, these three dedicated CEs volunteered their classrooms and their experiences to this research. The same goes for the PSTs who were engaging in their last, and possibly most academically demanding, year of their teacher preparation program. Concurrently, all of the participants were grateful and repeatedly thanked me for this opportunity, revealing that they learned more about CRT simply through our conversations. Everyone was open to this study and the possibilities because they wanted to learn more.

Additionally, all three of the CEs wanted to learn more about CRT by voluntarily enrolling in the text equity course offered by the university at the time of this study. They each also engaged in other voluntary training over the years such as brain functioning and trauma, and even led workshops for their peers through faculty meetings. All of the CEs mentioned their openness to discussing CRT and welcomed implementation of CRT by their PSTs.

With that being said, there were limitations to the understandings of CRT that the CEs demonstrated and that the PSTs developed before and during their clinical experiences. In the following section, I discuss the limitations and possibilities of responsive teaching while taking a deep dive into the PST/CE pairs (Kara/Paige, Rose/Mary, and Stella/Julia).

Culturally Responsive Teaching Limitations and Possibilities

The PST participants within this study are in the beginning stages of developing an understanding of CRT, although their visions expanded by the end of the study. In our final interviews, the PSTs shared their current understandings of CRT. Kara developed an understanding of CRT as bringing families into the classroom to share their experiences and cultures with the students. Rose stressed the importance of teaching about all cultures, not just the ones in your classroom, and teaching about various cultures throughout the school year, not just during the holidays. Stella highlighted that teachers need to be comfortable enough to learn about the demographics of the schools they teach at or they cannot be what their students need them to be. Stella also developed a more sophisticated understanding of CRT by noticing that the "high fliers" in her class were the White students, creating the foundation she needed for acknowledging structural inequities that teachers must be able to pay attention to as an important tenet of CRT. At the same time, the PSTs possessed superficial or incomplete understandings of CST which were reinforced by their clinical experiences.

"Having a Ton of Cultures Represented on the Walls or Having a Culture Week"

Kara, while maintaining an overall positive disposition throughout the study, described her first classroom, stating, "I envision my classroom having just a ton of cultures represented on the walls or having a culture week or something." Although she had good intentions of incorporating diversity into her future classroom through culture days and weeks, Gorski and Swalwell (2015) addressed the danger of diversity parades and multicultural art festivals initiatives in schools that mask rather than address serious equity concerns. Such practices perpetuate stereotypes and become "*un*multicultural when we don't offer them alongside more serious curricular (and institutional) attention

to issues like racism and homophobia" (Gorski & Swalwell, 2015, p. 36). This rests on the earlier work of James A. Banks (1989) who found that the additive, contribution approach has racialized negative effects when used. Banks (1989) explained that such practices are viewed by students as an "appendage to the main story of the development of the nation and to the core curriculum" (p. 234).

Additionally, educators experience a false sense of preparedness to advocate for equity when their preparation has focused on assimilation and celebrating diversity rather than responding to educational and societal injustice (Gorski & Swalwell, 2015) such as racism, economic injustice, and oppression (Au, 2014). Gorski and Swalwell (2015) suggested that meaningful multicultural curriculum center principles of equity and social justice, which these PSTs had yet to acknowledge.

"Her Classroom Library is Really Diverse"

During our first interviews together, the PSTs repeatedly mentioned the use of diverse texts as a culturally responsive practice. This finding signified that the PSTs did not initially realize that CRT is interdisciplinary and that the presence of multicultural literature is their biggest takeaway from teacher preparation coursework. Kara noted that Paige was very intentional in her text selections for read-alouds, ensuring that all of her students were represented within the texts. Kara was also drawn to Paige's classroom library, frequently noting the diverse selection. Similarly, Stella gained an understanding of incorporating multicultural literature books into her future classroom library based on previous coursework.

In particular, Rose described culturally responsive texts as texts that do not have an average White child from a middle-class family. My interpretation of this finding is

that Rose identifies White as the norm or baseline and anything that is not White is cultural or diverse. She stated, “If you wanted a book that was just like an average kid, she [Mary] probably wouldn't even have it.” She has not yet recognized that race is a social construct and reifies that culture only exists outside of the White norm. This finding was reinforced when she mentioned the culturally diverse read-aloud of *A Bike for Sergio* that perpetuates the stereotypes of children of color living in urban neighborhoods, as it subsequently normalizes the experiences of White children. For this PST, there appears to be no interrogation of how whiteness is perpetuated when White culture is the cultural baseline for normal and everything that is not White is considered diverse.

While the importance of multicultural literature cannot be understated, simply having or reading diverse books in the classroom is not enough. For example, Angie Zapata (2013) reminded us that engulfing the classroom with culturally specific literature can feel artificial to some students, namely bilingual children. According to Zapata, what we do with culturally specific literature, how texts are incorporated into our pedagogy, and the mutual trust or *confianza* (Gonzalez et al., 1993) we develop with our students beforehand are more important than the presence of the books themselves.

“This Isn’t Me Being Whitewashed or Colorblind”

The interview responses that seemed most at odds with the principles of CRT were the ones that suggested that all students should be taught and treated the same, regardless of their race and life experiences. Rose prefaced this statement by saying that she was not being “colorblind” or “whitewashed,” yet she did not see the need to teach students differently based on their lived experiences. Additionally, this PST discussed a

student who did not "apply herself too much in school, so that's why she doesn't do very well." When probed to learn more about this student, Rose explained that she did not know much about her background and that she and Mary do not talk much about her background because "we like to base them more on what the student works toward doing because just because something is happening at their house doesn't mean that's gonna get completely in the way of what the student can do at school." These beliefs oppose culturally responsive caring in which teachers who know their students are better able to assess and respond to their needs (Rychly & Graves, 2012). This PST repeatedly stressed the importance of teaching about various cultures *outside* of the classroom, yet missed the significance of learning about the students *inside* the classroom.

In sum, there are gaps in the knowledge that PSTs are developing around CRT based on their coursework and clinical experiences. There is a lack of critical consciousness, an essential tenet in CRT, and an understanding of structural inequities. These PSTs—who were willing to engage in extra learning about CRT through the scope of this study—possessed limited, incomplete, or superficial understandings of CRT. We must wonder, then, if other students in the teacher preparation program shared such understanding without scaffolded opportunities to deepen their knowledge.

"I've Learned a Lot From That Class": Proximity to Coursework

The findings of this study suggest that classes taken concurrently with the clinical experience can influence how the PSTs make sense of CRT within the classroom setting. For instance, Stella was enrolled in the equity and theory course during this study. She was gaining a deeper understanding of CRT and social inequities through her coursework, while learning about the following: culturally relevant and culturally

responsive teaching, culturally responsive management practices, discipline and targeting people of color, the school to prison pipeline, lack of resources for urban schools, cultural barriers between students and teachers, restorative justice, African American Vernacular Language, school language versus home language, the discrepancy in special education referrals, and implicit racial bias. As a result, such topics were at the forefront of her mind while she was engaging in her clinical experience. Table 2 validates that Stella's understandings of CRT were developed by the teacher preparation program (TPP) in 57% of her data, compared to Kara with 24% and Rose with 21% (see Table 2). Kara and Rose referred to some similar descriptions of CRT, but not to the same depth as they had taken this course a previous semester, suggesting that proximity to practice is important.

Additionally, Rose mentioned the importance of teaching with diverse texts 23 times, more often than any of the other participants (Kara, 14 times and Stella, three times). It is assumed that this occurred because Rose was conducting her thesis around diverse texts and classroom libraries during the time of this study. Both Rose and Stella appeared to notice CRT in different ways based on their ongoing experiences during this study. Were both PSTs pulling understandings of CRT right from their "bookshelves" because that was what was at the forefront of their minds at the time of this study? Due to these interpretations, I later suggest that what we want PSTs to understand and practice in the clinical setting at the time of their clinical experience, namely CRT, should align with their current coursework.

"Keep it Neutral": Missed Opportunities

From the PSTs who do not have their own classrooms yet to the CE who had 20 years of teaching experience under her belt, many of the participants mentioned their fear

of teaching content in the "wrong" way. During the time of this study, our country was facing unprecedented times. A pandemic wreaked havoc on hundreds of thousands of Americans during a racial awakening after the death of George Floyd that put the Black Lives Matter movement on a global scale. The year 2020 also marked a historical presidential election that would decide the fate of our country for the next four years, when our country was more divided than ever. While these current events could have provided teachers with rich opportunities for teaching, they avoided topics of race, discrimination, and politics, also described as "touchy topics."

Mary explained that she would typically read aloud *Bud, Not Buddy* at this point in the school year, a book "all about rights" featuring a 10-year-old Black boy who is on the run. Rather, Mary decided she would "keep it neutral" and stick to *Tiger Rising* as her class read-aloud, a book told through the eyes of a White, male protagonist. Also, in response to the Black Lives Matter movement, Mary mentioned that she had resources for discussing this topic, but she was "straight up against" teaching this [Black Lives Matter] because she did not know "how certain parents are gonna take it or how the kid's going to take it home." Such missed opportunities could have provided Rose with a different perspective of CRT, one that challenges the dominant, White social norm.

Kara journaled and adapted a similar, neutral view in her clinical experience with Paige. While discussing civics and elections, Paige prompted the students to not bring up the current election. Kara noticed this as a missed opportunity. At the same time, Kara explained that she felt less comfortable teaching social studies:

> Although I do talk a lot about culturally responsive teaching and I actually do believe it's important, I'm scared that by teaching social studies or history that I

> might approach things in the *wrong* way. Whether that be approached in the wrong way for students or approached in the *wrong* way where I maybe upset parents and then I have to kinda deal with that.

Julia, a teacher of 20 years, echoed the same sentiments as Kara, stating, "Some of the things I might've been nervous before cause you don't want to teach it *wrong* or say something you're not supposed to say." Geneva Gay (2013) acknowledged this challenge for White educators to apply CRT as teachers may concentrate on only "safe" topics while neglecting more "troubling issues like inequities, injustices, oppressions, and major contributions of ethnic groups to societal and human life" (p. 57). These missed opportunities illustrate the continuation of White dominant narratives and highlight some of the limitations of clinical experiences and CRT.

Limitations of the Clinical Experience and Culturally Responsive Teaching

The findings of this study reinforce that PSTs are learning about CRT in their coursework, but still do not know what it looks like in action beyond diverse literature, building a classroom community, high expectations, and knowing your students. Stella professed that she often "Googles" teaching practices that she wants to try before applying them in the classroom because she has never seen them in action. Concurrently, Julia admitted that she does not know what CRT practices look like in the classroom. Therefore, how is Julia going to model CRT for Stella? This section discusses the discrepancies between what PSTs are learning about CRT in their coursework and what can happen when the PSTs' teaching practices and understandings do not align with those of their corresponding CEs.

"If it Hasn't Been Modeled for Me, Then How Do I Know How to Do It?"

This study supports the current literature around the theory/practice divide (Zeichner, 2005) in teacher preparation and culturally responsive teaching. Over and over, the PSTs revealed that they were learning about CRT within their coursework, but they were unsure of what it looks like in action. Up until this point, no one modeled culturally responsive practices for the PST participants, according to the PSTs. Moreover, there appeared to be a lack of CRT knowledge base by the CEs to model CRT for the PSTs. Stella and Rose both found this as a shortcoming within their teacher preparation program. For instance, Stella was concerned with:

> Having clinical educators that are not strong and they don't demonstrate the skills that we need to be observing and implementing into our future classroom. So, when there's a lack thereof, I feel like well if it hasn't been effectively modeled for me then how do I know how to do that?

Darling-Hammond (2014) suggested that PSTs be placed in classrooms applying concepts they are learning in their teacher preparation program alongside experienced teachers who can model how to teach and be responsive to learners. Failure to do so will result in the PSTs' adoption of the CEs' view of CRT as the PST is paying close attention to their CEs (Tellez, 2008).

During my analysis of the data, I often wondered if the lack of culturally responsive practices within these clinical settings were due to the demographic makeup of each class. Based on the CEs' responses, these classrooms were majority White and monolingual, leaving fewer opportunities for observing responsive practices such as translanguaging (Garcia, 2009). This finding reinforces Sleeter's (2011) recommendation

of placing PSTs in diverse settings for their clinical experiences to prepare them in the same context in which children are educated (Zeichner, 2010).

Moreover, there continues to be a misalignment between the philosophies of colleges of education (Gurl, 2019) and practices implemented in the field (Peterson & Williams, 2008). Rose revealed, "Cause it's different having your teachers talk about it [CRT] and viewing their research on it versus seeing it in action." There is a need for CEs who are trained in culturally responsive practices, whose beliefs align with those of the teacher preparation program. When CEs facilitate and mentor similar practices to those of the university, a connection to theory and practice is made by the PST (Hill, 2012). This will require more investment in the CEs by the teacher preparation programs through providing ongoing training and modeling of CRT in actual classroom settings. This finding adds to the current literature surrounding the theory/practice divide (Zeichner, 2005) and that PSTs are indeed learning about the tenets of CRT, but maintain uncertainty about how those theoretical assumptions manifest in pedagogical practices (Lambeth & Smith, 2016).

"You Do You Boo. But I'm Going To Do Me."

The findings from this study propose that PSTs will accept or deny the beliefs that their CEs have around teaching for equity and teaching in general. When the views of CRT do not align between the PST and CE, the PST may critique the CE rather than learn from them or the PST will adopt the CE's beliefs, whatever they may be.

Stella and Julia displayed what can happen when differing understandings of CRT exist in the clinical experience. Stella is more knowledgeable in CRT and Julia is a beginner, although she wants to learn more. Julia's understanding of CRT was rooted in

her deficient oriented experiences of driving through the neighborhoods of her students and purchasing one text in which the main character was Black and female. When I asked Stella to describe instances of CRT in her clinical experience, she often explained how Julia was not responsive to students and instead shared her own personal experiences (i.e., Julia shared her experiences with quilts rather than asking the students about their experiences with quilts). Then, Stella explained what she would do differently based on her understanding of CRT. As a result, Stella often critiqued Julia's teaching practices and explained how she might approach her pedagogical practices differently. Stella confidently stated, "If that works for you and you think you're killing it, you do you Boo. But I'm going to do me," solidifying her oppositional understandings of teaching for equity. She gave several examples of what she would not do in her future classroom. This finding contradicts the literature that suggests that PSTs adapt or modify the CE's practices because the PSTs view the CEs as the pedagogical experts (Lafferty, 2018). Stella rationalized these differences while thinking aloud:

> Maybe she has a different teaching philosophy because she's been doing it for 20 years. She knows where these third graders are going to have to be by the end of the year and sometimes part of me thinks that she thinks these things [Stella's teaching practices] are babyish, but I think in the long run that they're going to be beneficial.

Even as a young, novice teacher, Stella could decide which practices she wanted to take up and which ones she did not. She noticed that the practices she observed did not align with what she was learning in her coursework and stood by her own beliefs.

PSTs are also challenged with developing a professional identity, while potentially being paired with a CE whose beliefs do not align with theirs or those of the paired university, creating a time of intense emotion for the teacher candidate (Gross & Hochberg, 2016; Hong et al., 2017). Kara mentioned the internal challenges when a PST's style of teaching does not match those of the CE, yet she was eventually able to find a balance between her teaching style and Paige's. Beyond that, in Rose's case, PSTs are tasked with developing lesson plans that follow edTPA standards, professor's standards, and supervisor's expectations. Meanwhile, those requirements may not align with what is actually happening in the classroom or being taught by the CE. As the researcher, I define this as a type of tension that can occur between the PST and the CE and the PST and the university. This should have been a valuable time for Rose to learn about teaching, yet she doubted the recommendations of her CE because they did not coincide with those of the university.

Data analysis revealed multiple trends across PST/CE pairs and their understandings of CRT. For instance, teaching with diverse texts was less frequently cited by both Stella and Julia while Rose and Mary mentioned the use of diverse texts quite frequently. Concurrently, teaching content that avoids the "single story" (Adichie, 2009) and presents the reality of history was discussed often by Rose and Mary. Meanwhile, the code for knowing your students was much greater for Kara and Paige than for the other two PST/CE pairs. It can be presumed that as Paige valued and often modeled this practice, Kara was internalizing what she directly observed. In regard to high expectations, Stella and Julia separately reported the importance of maintaining high expectations for all students during their interviews. These trends across the pairs made

me wonder, did the PSTs begin to value or internalize the same practices as their CEs based on their time spent in the clinical experience? If so, pairings with a CE who values and models teaching for equity would only strengthen the PSTs' understandings of CRT during time spent in the clinical setting. The findings from this study warrant implications for teacher preparation programs and teacher education.

Implications for Teacher Education

The findings of this study have several implications for teacher preparation programs, teacher educators, preservice teachers, clinical educators, the research field of education, and scholarship around CRT and culturally responsive literacy instruction. Based on the results of this study, I argue that being in the classroom itself is the most influential experience that supports PSTs' understandings of CRT, specifically time spent with the CE. Subsequently, teacher preparation programs and teacher education must invest in the overall clinical experience through careful selection of paired CEs and ongoing training for the PSTs and CEs. In this section, I will further discuss implications for teacher preparation programs beginning with coursework that could enhance the PSTs' understandings of CRT prior to the clinical experience, coursework paired with the clinical experience or yearlong internship, investment in paired CEs, and a university equity coach for the PST/CE pairs during the clinical experience.

Teacher Preparation Coursework

Prior to the Clinical Experience

Findings reveal that future teachers are developing a superficial understanding of CRT that includes culture weeks, a singular focus of multicultural literature as CRT, and treating everyone the same regardless of their lived experiences. This can be particularly

damaging to teacher preparation because "when we invest our multicultural energies in surface-level cultural exchanges, fantasies of colorblindness, or celebrations of whitewashed heroes while ignoring the actual inequities many of our students face, we demonstrate an implicit complicity with those inequities" (Gorski & Swalwell, 2015, p. 40). As mentioned in my findings, I believe that when educators have incomplete understandings of CRT, they are unable to enact CRLI. Therefore, I argue that educators must first develop critical consciousness, a major tenet of CRT, before they can adopt the tenets of CRLI and move toward antiracism and modern culturally sustaining practices.

In response to the superficial manifestations of CRT developed by the PSTs, the PSTs must recognize that CRT is more than simply reading or having multicultural literature in the classroom. PSTs need a solid understanding of the tenets of CRT and teaching for equity throughout their teacher preparation program experience while learning how to implement multicultural literature. Gorski (2013) suggested equity literacy that relies more on teachers' understandings of equity and inequity and of justice and injustice than on their understanding of cultures. Equity literacy also relies on teachers' abilities to provide students with an understanding of institutional racism and an appreciation of diversity (Swalwell, 2011). Equity literacy should be a focal point of teacher preparation coursework that cultivates four abilities in educators and students: (a) *recognize* even subtle forms of bias, discrimination, and inequity; (b) *respond to* bias, discrimination, and inequity in a thoughtful and equitable manner; (c) *redress* bias, discrimination, and inequity, not only by responding to interpersonal bias, but also by studying the ways in which bigger social change happens; (d) *cultivate and sustain* bias-

free and discrimination-free communities, which requires an understanding that doing so is a basic responsibility for everyone in a civil society (Gorski, 2013).

The idea of "teaching it *wrong*" in response to racialized historical events repeated by these White educators highlighted the assumption that they believed teaching has to be neutral to avoid being *wrong* while historical and contemporary events dealing with race and racism in America could have provided rich learning experiences for their students. The educators chose to remain neutral and avoid such "hard topics," reifying the "white gaze" (Morrison, 1994) privileged to White educators, wherein White teachers get to decide what is hard, and for whom. While talking about racial protests and Black Lives Matter may have been hard for the teachers, it was certainly not as hard as living with the daily consequences of racism that Black and Brown people endure. Therefore, there needs to be more focus within teacher preparation programs on how to talk about race and racism within the classroom through culturally responsive resources. Black Lives Matter curricula and teaching for social justice curricula are available to educators which address inequities. The CEs could have capitalized on these teaching moments rather than running from them due to fear of teaching the *wrong* way or, if aware, the PSTs could have also brought such resources to the attention of their CEs during this semester.

During the Clinical Experience

Implications for teacher preparation programs include being intentional about the courses that PSTs take during their clinical experience and engagement in designing culturally responsive lesson plans or projects that can be applied in the classroom setting. Preferably, the courses taken during their senior year would focus on equitable practices for all students and how to address systemic racism. The PSTs could design lessons with

the guidance of a faculty member well versed in CRT and enact them in the clinical setting. During this coursework, the faculty member would also model culturally responsive practices and teach language discourse to engage the PSTs in conversations around CRT. Dispositional education must also be integrated into the coursework to dismantle systemic racism by creating intellectual space for receptiveness to culturally responsive thinking and discussions around racism.

While the placement of an equity theory course needs to be early on in the program to provide the PSTs with foundational knowledge of CRT, as was the case for this particular university, issues of racial equity must be infused across all coursework as well. I stand by Grant (1994) who argued that multicultural education must be infused throughout an entire teacher education program rather than a single-course approach. Additionally, this study maintains that one multicultural course is not enough and equity-based practices should be integrated into all aspects of teacher education programs (Fox & Gay, 1995; Gay & Howard, 2000; Gomez, 1996), including clinical placements in diverse settings (Sleeter, 2011).

Investment in Clinical Educators

To combat tensions and differences of opinion around culturally responsive practices, the university should be more intentional about the CEs they select to pair their PSTs with. Clarke et al. (2014) revealed that mentor teachers are often selected to host PSTs for their willingness rather than their beliefs aligning with those of the teacher preparation program. Rather than convenience, CEs need to be carefully selected and receive ongoing training through the university. CEs also need to be chosen who have the

ability to advance the learning of the PSTs through demonstrations of what the PSTs are learning about in their coursework rather than stifle it.

Additionally, the education community must be reminded that teaching is an ongoing process and, therefore, training must be ongoing. The university would benefit in joining forces with the community by providing trainings for their CEs and investing in their ongoing education as well. Julia emphasized this need by stating:

> Maybe if we had training, like maybe where examples are shown of different ways to implement that [CRT] into the classroom...just saying this is what it looks like, these are some ways you could do this, these are some of the materials you can use to help you with this. Do we have enough tools in our toolbelt to do those things? To make sure we're doing it right?

Mary also discussed the desire for more and ongoing professional development that demonstrates how to implement equitable texts that challenge dominating social norms in history:

> We need to do a whole school PD on equitable books and how to teach it and how to see both sides and how to be like in the middle, not go towards one side or the other, just kind of stay in the middle lane and make sure that we are like that neutral party in between so they can ask questions and we can give them just factual based evidence and not really support one side or the other.

In other words, whether you are still in college or have been teaching for 20 years, "learning never stops."

The Clinical Experience and Coaching

A major implication would be to create a position for a CRT coaching model at the university. This coach would provide ongoing trainings for the CE and PST that center on CRT and teaching for equity. This training would allow for all participants to: (a) gain knowledge of the tenets of CRT; (b) develop lesson plans together that focus on race, gender, and social class; (c) create a safe space for honest dialogue about how CEs and PSTs can engage in courageous conversations about equity; (d) create practical CRT practices; and (e) observe culturally responsive practices within the clinical setting. Elena Aguilar (2020) presents a Coaching for Equity model and describes how every conversation between the coach and participants can build toward a more equitable world. Aguilar's Coaching for Equity model supports coaches in leading conversations around racial equity, power, and systems of oppression. Universities need to provide learning that occurs by all participants, creating a mutually beneficial relationship by the university and surrounding community.

Additionally, CEs are currently receiving supports from the university that focus on coaching, modeling, feedback, and technology. Why not include information and practices that center equity within those monthly newsletters or communication? This implication reinforces Jacobs's (2019) recommendation that when the teacher educator, CE, and PST work in synchronicity, PSTs are more successful in their clinical experiences that focus on culturally responsive practices. Future research surrounding this topic can enhance our understanding of PSTs, clinical experiences, and culturally responsive literacy instruction.

Future Research

This study adds to the research around PSTs, clinical experiences, and culturally responsive literacy instruction. My study contributes to the field as the characteristics of clinical experiences that support PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy instruction were discovered. The visions of CRT developed by PSTs and their CEs were also illustrated in this study. Future research could further enhance our understanding of this topic.

For instance, future researchers could be intentional about the selection of their participants, rather than applying convenience sampling. Tellez (2008) suggested that PSTs be paired with culturally competent educators. Instead of recruiting participants based on administrator suggestions, the CE participants could have completed in-depth training in CRT in order to display teaching for equity within the classroom, which may have enhanced this aspect of the experiences for the PSTs. Researchers could also interview the university supervisors and professors to understand exactly what content is being presented within teacher preparation and how. Jacobs (2019) suggested that the university, PST, and CE work in synchronicity to enhance the overall experience for PSTs learning about culturally responsive practices. Interviewing these additional participants would enhance the research around university coursework and practices that address equity.

Future research could also take place in more diverse settings that host PSTs, as recommended by Bennett (2002) and Grant (1994). This would allow the PSTs to observe how the CEs honor and sustain diverse identities. Within the clinical setting, researchers could observe literacy lessons conducted by both the CEs and PSTs. While I would have preferred to collect this type of data, COVID-19 restrictions made this

challenging at the time of my study. Researchers could also interview elementary students within the clinical setting to obtain their beliefs about their classroom teacher's ability and/or the PSTs' ability to teach *to* and *through* their strengths, interests, and cultures.

In regard to the PST participants, future research could be conducted during the second semester of their yearlong internship. Due to my timeline, I had to recruit participants during their first semester of the internship in which the PSTs had been in their clinical settings for a short amount of time. Not only had they been in the classroom for a brief period when this study began, but they were only in the setting two times a week throughout the study. I would have preferred to study these participants during their second semester in which they spend five days a week in the classroom, gradually assuming the full responsibility of teaching. Additionally, future research could conduct longitudinal studies that follow the PST participants into their first to fifth years of teaching to observe how CRT practices are lived out in their own classrooms upon graduation.

Summary

The cross-case analysis findings of this study indicate that the CE is the most influential characteristic of the clinical experience that supports PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy. Therefore, we must elevate the role of the CE for teaching and learning. The university should provide the CE and PST pairs with an equity coach who can teach them about the tenets of CRT, model practices, and lead lesson development. The university must be selective about who hosts the PSTs during their clinical experience and CEs need ongoing training around CRT. Moreover, this study

suggests that there is an adoption of CE values when they are congruent with the teacher preparation program.

In sum, Kara and Rose had some preliminary understandings of CRT prior to walking into the classroom setting, and their clinical experiences solidified those understandings. Simultaneously, Stella was developing an in-depth understanding of CRT and frequently pointed out the limitations of her observations of Julia's enactments of CRT. Kara and Rose found that the CEs played a significant role in their development of understandings of culturally responsive teaching in literacy, while Stella critiqued Julia's practices. Concurrently, all of the PST participants agreed that being in the classroom itself was the most influential experience in developing an understanding of CRT in literacy. When the university provides a solid foundation for culturally responsive practices and supports the community in those understandings, we have the potential to develop educators who are equipped with pedagogical practices that uplift our students rather than negating their lived experiences.

Conclusion

I opened this dissertation study with a story about my previous student Carmen, an emerging bilingual student at risk of failing the state mandated End of Grade Test. I had to break this dreaded news to her mother, who spoke limited English, during a parent-teacher conference. It was this moment in my teaching career that I realized my lack of knowledge and experience to connect with Carmen through culturally responsive teaching, despite five years of teacher education, a yearlong clinical experience in a diverse setting, and my Hispanic heritage.

As my story is not unlike the stories of other White educators, I fear that the PST participants in my study will have similar experiences as they demonstrate burgeoning yet cursory and incomplete understandings of CRT, much like I did. With more opportunities such as careful design and placement of equity coursework, university investment in culturally responsive CEs, and CRT coaching within the clinical experience, I may have known how to connect the content to Carmen's life—to teach *to* and *through* her language, culture, interests, and strengths. Although these participants have a stronger foundational understanding of CRT than I did as an undergraduate based on their teacher preparation coursework, their growth must be supported throughout the clinical experience and beyond. If I had been provided a depth of knowledge of CRT within my teacher preparation program, students such as Carmen may not have been at risk of academic failure year after year. This study contributes to the field of teacher education and discloses the superficial understandings of CRT that are being cultivated by PSTs, yet this research must continue. We owe it to the growing population of historically marginalized students, like Carmen, to discover how PSTs understand teaching for equity in order to develop culturally competent educators.

REFERENCES

Abell, S. K., Dillon, D. R., Hopkins, C. J., McInerney, W. D., & O'Brien, D. G. (1995). "Somebody to count on": Mentor/intern relationships in a beginning teacher internship program. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *11*(2), 173-188.

Ada, A. F. (1986). Creative education for bilingual teachers. *Harvard Educational Review, 56*(4)*,* 386–394.

Adams, A., Bondy, E., & Kuhel, K. (2005). Pre-service teacher learning in an unfamiliar setting. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, *32*(2), 41-62.

Adichie, C. (2009). *Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie: The danger of a single story* [Video]. TED Conferences. https://www.ted.com/talks/chimamanda_ngozi_adichie_the_danger_of_a_singlestory?language=en

Aguilar, E. (2020). *Coaching for equity: Conversations that change practice.* Jossey-Banks.

Aronson, B., & Laughter, J. (2016). The theory and practice of culturally relevant education: A synthesis of research across content areas. *Review of Educational Research, 86*(1), 163-206.

Asante, M. K. (1991). Afrocentric curriculum. *Educational Leadership, 49*(4), 28-31.

Asante, M. K. (2017). *Revolutionary pedagogy: Primer for teachers of Black children.* Universal Write Publications.

Au, K. H. (1993). *Literacy instruction in multicultural settings.* Harcourt Brace College.

Au, K. H. (2001). Culturally Responsive Instruction as a Dimension of New Literacies. *Reading Online*, *5*(1).

Au, K. H., & Mason, J. M. (1981). Social organizational factors in learning to read: The balance of rights hypothesis. *Reading Research Quarterly, 17*(1), 115–152.

Au, K. H., & Raphael, T. E. (2000). Equity and literacy in the next millennium. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *35*(1), 170-188.

Au, W. (2014). *Rethinking multicultural education.* Rethinking Schools.

August, D., & Hakuta, K. (1997). *Improving schooling for language-minority children: A research agenda*. National Academy Press.

Baines, J., Tisdale, C., & Long, S. (2018). *"We've been doing it your way long enough": Choosing the culturally relevant classroom*. Teachers College Press.

Banister, J., & Maher, M. (1998). Recentering multiculturalism: Moving toward community. *Urban Education*, *33*(2), 182-217.

Banks, J. A. (1989). Approaches to multicultural curriculum reform. In J. A. Banks & C. A. McGee Banks (Eds.), *Multicultural Education* (3rd ed.) (pp. 229-250). Routledge.

Bauml, M., Castro, A. J., Field, S. L., & Morowski, D. L. (2016). Learning from preservice teachers' thoughts about teaching in urban schools: Implications for teacher educators. *Education and Urban Society*, *48*(1), 4-29.

Beauchamp, C., & Thomas, L. (2011). New teachers' identity shifts at the boundary of teacher education and initial practice. *International Journal of Educational Research*, *50*(1), 6-13.

Bennett, C. (2002). Enhancing ethnic diversity at a Big Ten university through Project TEAM: A case study in teacher education. *Educational Researcher, 31*(2), 21–29.

Bennett, S. V. (2013). Effective facets of a field experience that contributed to eight

preservice teachers' developing understandings about culturally responsive teaching. *Urban Education*, *48*(3), 380-419.

Bishop, R. S. (1990). Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. *Perspectives*, *6*(3), ix-xi.

Bishop, R. (1992). Extending multicultural understanding. In B. Cullinan (Ed.), *Invitation to read: More children's literature in the reading program* (pp. 80-91). International Reading Association.

Blocker, L. S., & Swetnam, L. A. (1995). The selection and evaluation of cooperating teachers: A status report. *The Teacher Educator, 30*(3), 19–30. https://doi.org/10.1080/08878739509555084

Borko, H., & Mayfield, V. (1995). The roles of cooperating teacher and university supervisor in learning to teach. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 11*(5), 501–518.

Boyd, F. B., Causey, L. I., & Galda, L. (2015). Culturally diverse literature: Enriching variety in an era of Common Core Standards. *Reading Teacher, 68*(5), 378-387.

Bradbury, L. U., & Koballa, T. R. (2008). Borders to cross: Identifying sources of tension in mentor-intern relationships. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 24*(8), 2132–2145.

Britzman, D. P. (1991). *Practice makes practice: A critical study of learning to teach.* SUNY Press.

Brown, J. S., Collins, A., & Newman, S. (1989). Cognitive apprenticeship: Teaching the crafts of reading, writing, and mathematics. In L.B. Resnick (Ed.), *Knowing, learning, and instruction: Essays in honor of Robert Glaser* (pp. 47-60). Lawrence Erlbaum.

Burton, S. L., & Greher, G. R. (2007). School-university partnerships: What do we know and why do they matter? *Arts Education Policy Review, 109*(1), 13–22.

Caruso, J. J. (2000). Cooperating teacher and student teacher phases of development. *Young Children, 55*(1), 75–81.

Castro, A. J. (2010). Themes in the research on preservice teachers' views of cultural diversity: Implications for researching millennial preservice teachers. *Educational Researcher*, *39*(3), 198-210.

Chang, W. C. (2017). *Measuring the complexity of teachers' enactment of practice for equity: A Rasch Model and facet theory-based approach.* [Doctoral dissertation, Boston College]. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses Global.

Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools. (2019, May). Breaking the link: Second annual report. https://www.cms.k12.nc.us/cmsdepartments/accountability/REA/Documents/Breaking%20the%20Link%20English.pdf

Charmaz, K. (2014). *Constructing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Sage.

Christ, T., & Sharma, S. A. (2018). Searching for mirrors: Preservice teachers' journey toward more culturally relevant pedagogy. *Reading Horizons: A Journal of Literacy and Language Arts*, *57*(1), 5.

Clarke, A., Triggs, V., & Neilsen, W. (2013). Cooperating teacher participation in teacher education: A review of the literature. *Review of Educational Research, 84*(2), 163–202.

Clarke, A., Triggs, V., & Nielsen, W. (2014). Mentor teacher participation in teacher education: A review of the literature. *Review of Educational Research, 84*(2), 163–202. https://doi.org/:10.3102/0034654313499618

Cochran-Smith, M. (2003). The multiple meanings of multicultural teacher education: A conceptual framework. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 30*(2), 7–26.

Cochran-Smith, M., Ell, F., Grudnoff, L., Haigh, M., Hill, M., & Ludlow, L. (2016). Initial teacher education: What does it take to put equity at the center? *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *57*, 67-78.

Cockrell, K. S., Placier, P. L., Cockrell, D. H., & Middleton, J. N. (1999). Coming to terms with ‘‘diversity’’ and ‘‘multiculturalism’’ in teacher education: Learning about our students, changing our practice. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 15*(4), 351–366.

Collins, A., Brown, J. S., & Holum, A. (1991). Cognitive apprenticeship: Making things visible. *American Educator: The Professional Journal of the American Federation of Teachers, 15*(3), 6-11, 38-46.

Comstock, G. (2013). *Research ethics: A philosophical guide to the responsible conduct of research*. Cambridge University Press.

Cooperative Children’s Book Center. (2017). Publishing statistics on children’s books by and about people of color and first/native nations people. *Cooperative Children’s Book Center.*

Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Qualitative inquiry & research design* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Darling-Hammond, L. (2014). Strengthening clinical preparation: The holy grail of teacher education. *Peabody Journal of Education, 89*(4), 547–561. https://doi.org/:10.1080/0161956X.2014.939009

Davis, J. S., & Fantozzi, V. B. (2016). What do student teachers want in mentor

teachers?: Desired, expected, possible, and emerging roles. *Mentoring & Tutoring: Partnership in Learning*, *24*(3), 250-266.

Delpit, L. (1988). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. *Harvard Educational Review,* 58(3), 280-299.

Delpit, L. (1995). Other people's children: cultural conflict in the classroom. *Harvard Educational Review*, *65*, 510-510.

Denzin, N. K. (1978). *The research act: A theoretical introduction to sociological methods* (2nd ed.). McGraw-Hill.

Diamond, B. J., & Moore, M. A. (1995). *Multicultural literacy: Mirroring the reality of the classroom.* Longman.

Draves, T. J. (2008). "Firecrackers" and "duds": Cooperating music teachers' perspectives on their relationships with student teachers. *Journal of Music Teacher Education, 18*(1), 6–15. https://doi.org/10.1177/1057083708323140.

Dubois, D. L., & Neville, H. A. (1997). Youth mentoring: investigation of relationship characteristics and perceived benefits. *Journal of Community Psychology, 25*(3), 227–234.

Duffy, G. G., & Hoffman, J. V. (1999). In pursuit of an illusion: The flawed search for a perfect method. *The Reading Teacher*, *53*(1), 10-16.

Dunkin, M. J., & Biddle, B. J. (1974). *The study of teaching.* Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Durden, T., Dooley, C. M., & Truscott, D. (2016). Race still matters: Preparing culturally relevant teachers. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *19*(5), 1003-1024.

Durden, T. R., & Truscott, D. M. (2013). Critical reflectivity and the development of new culturally relevant teachers. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *15*(2), 73-80.

Fasching-Varner, K. J., & Dodo Seriki, V. (2012). Moving beyond seeing with our eyes wide shut. A response to “There is no culturally responsive teaching spoken here.” *Democracy and Education*, *20*(1), 5.

Fox, W., & Gay, G. (1995). Integrating multicultural and curriculum principles in teacher education. *Peabody Journal of Education, 70*(3), 64–82.

Frykholm, J. A. (1998). Beyond supervision: Learning to teach mathematics in community. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 14*(3), 305–322.

Gage, N. (1978). *The scientific basis of the art of teaching.* Teachers College Press.

Gangi, J. (2008). The unbearable whiteness of literacy instruction: Realizing the implications of the proficient reader research. *Multicultural Review, 17*(1).

García, O. (2009). *Bilingual education in the 21st century: A global perspective.* Basil/Blackwell.

Gay, G. (1997). Multicultural infusion in teacher education: Foundations and applications. In A.I. Morley & M. K. Kitano (Eds.), *Multicultural course transformation in higher education: A broader truth* (pp. 192-210). Allyn & Bacon.

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, practice and research*. Teachers College Press.

Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(2), 106-116.

Gay, G. (2010). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (2nd ed.). Teachers College Press.

Gay, G. (2018). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (3rd

ed.). Teachers College Press.

Gay, G., & Howard, T. C. (2000). Multicultural teacher education for the 21st century. *The Teacher Educator, 36*(1), 1–16.

Genishi, C. (2002). Young English language learners: Resourceful in the classroom. Research in Review. *Young Children*, *57*(4), 66-72.

Gleeson, J., O'Flaherty, J., Galvin, T., & Hennessy, J. (2015). Student teachers, socialisation, school placement and schizophrenia: The case of curriculum change. *Teachers and Teaching 21*(4), 437–458. https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2014.968895.

Gomez, M. L. (1996). Prospective teachers' perspectives on teaching "other people's" children. In K. Zeichner, S. Melnick, & M. L. Gomez (Eds.), *Currents of reform in preservice teacher education* (pp. 109–132). Teachers College Press.

Gonzalez, N., Moll, L. C., Floyd-Tenery, M., Rivera, A., Rendon, P., Gonzales, R., & Amanti, C. (1993). *Teacher research on funds of knowledge: Learning from households.* Report to the National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning.

Gorski, P. C. (2009). What we're teaching teachers: An analysis of multicultural teacher education coursework syllabi. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 25*(2), 309-318.

Gorski, P. (2011). The unintentional undermining of multicultural education: Educators at the equity crossroads. In J. Landsman, & C. Lewis (Eds.), *White teachers/diverse classrooms: Creating inclusive schools, building on students' diversity and providing educational equity* (2nd ed.) (pp. 75-92). Stylus.

Gorski, P. (2013). *Reaching and teaching students in poverty: Strategies for erasing the*

opportunity gap. Teachers College Press.

Gorski, P., & K. Swalwell, K. (2015). Equity literacy for all. *Educational Leadership, 72*(6), 34–40.

Gould, C. A. (2019). Navigating the stages of clinical practice: Practical tips for mentor teachers. *Kappa Delta Pi Record*, *55*(4), 160-163.

Graham, B. (2006). Conditions for successful field experiences: Perceptions of cooperating teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 22*(8), 1118–1129.

Grant, C. A. (1994). Best practices in teacher preparation for urban schools: Lessons from the multicultural teacher education literature. *Action in Teacher Education, 16*(3), 1–18.

Graves, S. (2010). Mentoring pre-service teachers: A case study. *Australasian Journal of Early Childhood, 35*(4), 14–20.

Greenberg, J., Pomerance, L., & Walsh, K. (2011). *Student teaching in the United States.* National Council on Teacher Quality. https://www.nctq.org/dmsView/Student_Teaching_United_States_NCTQ_Report

Gross, M., & Hochberg, N. (2016). Characteristics of place identity as part of professional identity development among pre-service teachers. *Cultural Studies of Science Education, 11*(4), 1243–1268.

Grossman, P., Hammerness, K. M., McDonald, M., & Ronfeldt, M. (2008). Constructing coherence: Structural predictors of perceptions of coherence in NYC teacher education programs. *Journal of Teacher Education, 59*(4), 273–287.

Grossman, P., Ronfeldt, M., & Cohen, J. J. (2012). The power of setting: The role of field experience in learning to teach. In K. R. Harris, S. Graham, T. Urdan, A. G.

Bus, S. Major, & H. L. Swanson (Eds.), *APA educational psychology handbook, Vol. 3. Application to learning and teaching* (pp. 311–334). American Psychological Association. https://doi.org/10.1037/13275-023

Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1981). *Effective evaluation.* Jossey-Bass.

Gurl, T. J. (2019). Classroom practices of cooperating teachers and their relationship to collaboration quality and time: Perceptions of student teachers. *Teaching Education, 30*(2), 177–199.

Guyton, E., & McIntyre, D. J. (1990). Student teaching and school experiences. In W. R. Houston (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 514–534). Macmillan.

Haggarty, L. (1995). The use of content analysis to explore conversations between school teacher mentors and student teachers. *British Educational Research Journal, 21*(2), 183–197.

Hamman, D., Fives, H., & Olivarez, A. (2007). Efficacy and pedagogical interaction in cooperating and student teacher dyads. *Journal of Classroom Interaction, 41*(42), 55–63.

Hammond, Z. (2015). *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students*. Corwin Press.

Haston, W., & Russell, J. A. (2011). Turning into teachers: Influences of authentic context learning experiences on occupational identity development of preservice music teachers. *Journal of Research in Music Education, 59*(4), 369–392. https://doi.org/10.1177/0022429411414716.

Herriott, R. E., & Firestone, W. A. (1983). Multisite qualitative policy research: Optimizing description and generalizability. *Educational Researcher, 12,* 14-19.

Hill, K. D. (2012). Cultivating pre-service teachers towards culturally relevant literacy practices. *Issues in Teacher Education*, *21*(2), 43–66.

Hollins, E. R., King, J. & Hayman, W. (1994). *Teaching diverse populations: Formulating a knowledge base.* SUNY Press.

Hollins, E. R., & Oliver E. I. (Eds.). (1999). *Pathways to success in school: Culturally responsive teaching.* Erlbaum.

Hong, J., Greene, B., & Lowery, J. (2017). Multiple dimensions of teacher identity development from pre-service to early years of teaching: A longitudinal study. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 43*(1), 84–98. https://doi.org/10.1080/02607476. 2017.1251111

Houston, W. R., & Howsam, R. B. (1974). CBTE: The ayes of Texas. *The Phi Delta Kappan*, *55*(5), 299-303.

Howard, T. C. (2003). Culturally relevant pedagogy: Ingredients for critical teacher reflection. *Theory into Practice*, *42*(3), 195-202.

Howard, T. C., & Milner, H. R. (2014). Teacher preparation for urban schools. In R.Milner & K. Lomotey (Eds.), *Handbook of urban education* (pp. 199-216). Routledge.

Hughes-Hassell, S., Barkley, H. A., & Koehler, E. (2009). Promoting equity in children's literacy instruction: Using a critical race theory framework to examine transitional books. *School Media Research, 12*.

Irvine, J. J. (1990). *Black students and school failure. Policies, practices, and*

prescriptions. Greenwood Press.

Irvine, J. J. (2003). *Educating teachers for diversity: Seeing with a cultural eye.* Teachers College Press.

Izadinia, M. (2016). Student teachers' and mentor teachers' perceptions and expectations of a mentoring relationship: Do they match or clash? *Professional Development in Education, 42*(3), 387–402. https://doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2014.994136

Izadinia, M. (2017). Pre-service teachers' use of metaphors for mentoring relationships. *Journal of Education for Teaching*, *43*(5), 506-519.

Jacobs, K. B. (2019). "So why is it OK here?" Literacy candidates grappling with culture/culturally relevant pedagogy in urban fieldsites. *Urban Education*, *54*(10), 1520–1550.

Kalyanpur, M., & Harry, B. (2012). *Cultural reciprocity in special education: Building family-professional relationships.* Paul H. Brooks.

Kim, E. (1976). *Survey of Asian American literature: Social perspectives*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. University of California.

Kimanen, A., Alisaari, J., & Kallioniemi, A. (2019). In-service and pre-service teachers' orientations to linguistic, cultural and worldview diversity. *Journal of Teacher Education and Educators*, *8*(1), 35-54.

King, S. H. (1993). The limited presence of African-American teachers. *Review of Educational Research, 63*, 115-149.

King, E., & Butler, B. R. (2015). Who cares about diversity? A preliminary investigation of diversity exposure in teacher preparation programs. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *17*(1), 46-52.

Kinne, L. J., Ryan, C., & Faulkner, S. A. (2016). Perceptions of co-teaching in the clinical experience: How well is it working? *New Educator, 12*(4), 343–360.

Koerner, M., Rust, F. O., & Baumgartner, F. (2002). Exploring roles in student teaching placements. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 29(*2), 35–58.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). What we can learn from multicultural education research. *Educational leadership*, *51*(8), 22-26.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995). Toward a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy. *American Educational Research Journal, 32*(3), 465-491.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The Dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American students (2nd ed.).* Jossey-Bass.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2014). Culturally relevant pedagogy 2.0: a.k.a. the remix. *Harvard Educational Review, 84*(1), 74-84.

Lafferty, K. E. (2018). The difference explicit preparation makes in cooperating teacher practice. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 45*(3), 73–95.

Lambeth, D. T., & Smith, A. M. (2016). Pre-Service teachers' perceptions of culturally responsive teacher preparation. *Journal of Negro Education*, *85*(1), 46–58.

Lampert, M., Franke, M. L., Kazemi, E., Ghousseini, H., Turrou, A. C., Beasley, H., Cunard, A., & Crowe, K. (2013). Keeping it complex: Using rehearsals to support novice teacher learning of ambitious teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *64*(3), 226-243.

Larke, P. (1990). Cultural diversity awareness inventory: Assessing the sensitivity of preservice teachers. *Action in Teacher Education, 12*(3), 23–29.

Lather, P. (1986). Research as praxis. *Harvard Educational Review, 56*(3), 257-278.

Lave, J., & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge University Press.

Leatham, K. R., & Peterson, B. E. (2010). Secondary mathematics cooperating teachers' perceptions of the purpose of student teaching. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education, 13*(2), 99–119.

Lee, C. D. (2001). Is October Brown Chinese? A cultural modeling activity system for underachieving students. *American Educational Research Journal*, *38*(1), 97-141.

Losen, D. (2014). *Closing the school discipline gap: Equitable remedies for excessive exclusion*. Teachers College Press.

Love, B. L. (2016). Anti-Black state violence, classroom edition: The spirit murdering of Black children. *Journal of Curriculum and Pedagogy, 13*(1), 22-25.

Martin, D. (1997). Mentoring in one's own classroom: An exploratory study of contexts. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 13*(2), 183–197.

Mason, J. M., & Au, K. H. (1991). *Reading instruction for today*. Scott Foresman.

McElwee, C. B., Regan, K., Hudson Baker, P., & Weiss, M. P. (2018). Preservice special education teachers' perceptions: The influence of university coursework, context, and relationships, during the clinical teaching experience. *Teacher Educators' Journal, 11*(9), 91–104.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education.* Jossey-Bass.

Merriam, S. B., & Tisdell, E. J. (2016). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.

Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldana, J. (2014). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Miller, E. (2015). Race as the Benu: A reborn consciousness for teachers of our youngest children. *Journal of Curriculum Theorizing*, *30*(30), 28-44.

Milner, R., & Howard, T. C. (2004). Black teachers, Black students, Black communities, and Brown. *Journal of Negro Education, 73*(3), 285-297.

Milner, R. H., & Laughter, J. C. (2015). But good intentions are not enough: Preparing teachers to center race and poverty. *The Urban Review*, *47*(2), 341–363.

Moore, J. L. & Lewis, C. W. (2012). Confronting the dilemmas of urban education: The scope of the book. In J. L. Moore, & C. W. Lewis (Eds.), *African American students in urban schools: Critical issues and solutions for achievement* (pp. 3-10). Peter Lang.

Morrison, T. (1994). *The bluest eye.* Plume.

Nash, K. T., Glover, C. P., & Polson, B. (Eds.) (2020a). *Toward culturally sustaining teaching: Early childhood educators honor children with practices for equity and change.* Taylor Francis.

Nash, K. T., Polson, B., & Glover, C. P. (2020b). Education for the human soul: Culturally sustaining pedagogies and the legacy of love that guides us. In K. Nash, C. Glover, & B. Polson (Eds.), *Toward culturally sustaining teaching: Early childhood educators honor children with practices for equity and change* (pp. 1-53). Taylor Francis.

National Center for Educational Statistics. (1998). *The condition of education 1998*. U.S. Department of Education, Office of Educational Research and Improvement.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2020, June 10). *Bar chart races: Changing demographics in K-12 public school enrollment.* U.S. Department of Education Institute of Education Sciences.

National Council of Teachers of English. (2020, March 23). Literacy is more than just reading and writing. *NCTE*. https://ncte.org/blog/2020/03/literacy-just-reading-writing/

Nieto, S. (1992). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education*. Longman.

Nieto, S. (2000). Placing equity front and center: Some thoughts on transforming teacher education for a New Century. *Journal of Teacher Education, 51*(3), 180-187.

Norton, D. (1992). *Through the eyes of a child: An introduction to children's literature*. Merrill.

Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: A needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational researcher*, *41*(3), 93-97.

Paris, D. & Alim, S. (2017a). *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and learning for justice in a changing world.* Teachers College Press.

Paris, D. & Alim, S. (2017b). *Author interview by Larry Ferlazzo: 'Culturally sustaining pedagogies'* Education Week Teacher. http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/classroom_qa_with_larry_ferlazzo/2017/07/author_interview_culturally_sustaining_pedagogies.html?r=604476754.

Parra, G. R., DuBois, D. L., Neville, H. A., Pugh-Lilly, A. O., & Povinelli, N. (2002). Mentoring relationships for youth: Investigation of a process-oriented model. *Journal of Community Psychology, 30*(4), 367–388.

Pearson, P. D., & Gallagher, M. C. (1983). The instruction of reading comprehension. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, *8*(3), 317-344.

Peterson, B. E., & Williams, S. R. (2008). Learning mathematics for teaching in the student teaching experience: Two contrasting cases. *Journal of Mathematics Teacher Education, 11*(6), 459–478.

Polson, B., &. Arce-Boardman, A. (2020). Together ensuring students' voices are heard, stories are told, and legacies are put into action. In K. Nash, C. Glover, & B. Polson (Eds.), *Toward culturally sustaining teaching: Early childhood educators honor children with practices for equity and change* (pp. 116-139). Taylor Francis.

Probst, B., & Berenson, L. (2014). The double arrow: How qualitative social work researchers use reflexivity. *Qualitative Social Work, 13*(6), 813-827.

Ramirez, M., & Dowd, F. S. (1997). Another look at the portrayal of Mexican-American females in realistic picture books: A content analysis, 1990-1997. *Multicultural Review, 6*(4), 20-27, 54.

Raphael, T. E., & McMahon, S. I. (1994). Book club: An alternative framework for reading instruction. *Reading Teacher, 48*(2), 102-116.

Ronfeldt, M., Bardelli, E., Brockman, S. L., & Mullman, H. (2019). Will mentoring a student teacher harm my evaluation scores? Effects of serving as a cooperating teacher on evaluation metrics. [Grantee Submission].

Rothschild, A. (2015, March 8). *The world of children's books is still very White*. FiveThirtyEight.

https://www.fivethirtyeight.com/features/the-world-of-childrens-books-is-still-very-white/

Russell, H. A. (2019). Connections and disconnections: Music cooperating teachers' perceptions of working with universities. *Contributions to Music Education, 44*, 55–79.

Rychly, L., & Graves, E. (2012). Teacher characteristics for culturally responsive pedagogy. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *14*(1), 44-49.

Saldaña, J. (2016). *The coding manual for qualitative researchers.* Sage.

Schott Foundation for Public Education (2009). Lost opportunity: A 50-state report on the opportunity to learn in America [National Summary Report]. Retrieved from http://schottfoundation.org/sites/default/files/resources/50_state_report_national_summary_0.pdf

Shamoo, A. E., & Resnik, D. (2009). *Responsible conduct of research* (2nd ed.). Oxford University Press.

Siwatu, K. O. (2007). Preservice teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and outcome expectancy. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 23*(7), 1086-1101.

Siwatu, K. O., Polydore, C. L., & Starker, T. V. (2009). Prospective elementary school teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy beliefs. *Multicultural Learning and Teaching, 4*(1), 1-15. https://doi.org/10.2202/2161-2412.1040 [22]

Sleeter, C. E. (2011). *The academic and social value of ethnic studies: A research review.* National Education Association.

Sleeter, C. E. (2017). Critical race theory and the whiteness of teacher education. *Urban Education*, *52*(2), 155-169.

Souto-Manning, M. (2016). Honoring and building on the rich literacy practices of young bilingual and multilingual learners. *Reading Teacher*, *70*(3), 263–271.

Souto-Manning, M., & Martell, J. (2016). *Reading, writing, and talk: Inclusive teaching strategies for diverse learners, K-2.* Teachers College Press.

Souto-Manning, M. (2019). Transforming university-based teacher education: Preparing asset-, equity-, and justice-oriented teachers within the contemporary political context. *Teachers College Record*, *121*(6).

Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative case studies. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 443-466). Sage.

Swalwell, K. (2011, December 21). Why our students need "equity literacy." *Learning for Justice*. www.tolerance.org/blog/why-ourstudents-need-equity-literacy

Tatum, A. (2009). *Reading for their life: (Re) Building the textual lineages of African American adolescent males.* Heinemann.

Tellez, K. (2008). What student teachers learn about multicultural education from their cooperating teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 24*(1), 43-58.

Tettegah, S. (1996). The racial consciousness attitudes of white prospective teachers and their perceptions of the teachability of students from different racial/ethnic backgrounds: Findings from a California study. *Journal of Negro Education, 65(*2), 151–163.

Thompson, A. (1997). For: Anti-racist education. *Curriculum Inquiry*, *27*(1), 7-44.

U.S. Bureau of Census (2008, August 14). An older and more diverse population by mid-century [Press Release]. Retrieved from http://www.census.gov/Press-Release/www/releases/archives/population/012496.html

Valencia, S. W., Martin, S. D., Place, N. A., & Grossman, P. (2009). Complex interactions in student teaching: Lost opportunities for learning. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *60*(3), 304-322.

Veal, M. L., & Rickard, L. (1998). Cooperating teachers' perspectives on the student teaching triad. *Journal of Teacher Education, 49*(2), 108–119.

Villegas, A. M. (2007). Dispositions in teacher education: A look at social justice. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *58*(5), 370-380.

Villegas, A. M. (2008). Diversity and teacher education In M. Cochran-Smith, S. Feiman-Nemser, & D. J. McIntyre (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education: Enduring questions in changing contexts* (3rd ed., pp. 551–558). Routledge and the Association of Teacher Educators.

Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, T. (2002). Preparing culturally responsive teachers—Rethinking the curriculum. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53*(1), 20–32.

Villenas, S., & Deyhle, D. (1999). Critical race theory and ethnographies challenging the stereotypes: Latino families, schooling, resilience and resistance. *Curriculum Inquiry*, *29*(4), 413-445.

Wang, J., & Odell, S. J. (2002). Mentored learning to teach according to standards-based reform: A critical review. *Review of Educational Research, 72*(3), 481–546.

Wanless, S. B., & Crawford, P. A. (2016). Reading your way to a culturally responsive classroom. *Young Children, (71)*2, 8-16.

Whiting, C. A. (2010). "This is who I am, and this is the work I do": Cooperating teachers, student teachers, and the case for culturally relevant mentorship [Published Doctoral Dissertation]. University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Whitmore, K., Martens, P., Goodman, Y., & Owocki, G. (2005). Remembering critical lessons in early literacy research: A transactional perspective. *Language Arts, 82*(5), 296–307.

Williams, C. (1994). Arfarniad o ddulliau dysgu ac addysgu yng nghyd-destun addysg uwchraddddwyieithog [An evaluation of teaching and learning methods in the context of bilingual secondary education] [Unpublished PhD thesis]. University of Wales.

Wilson, S. M., Floden, R. E., & Ferrini-Mundy, J. (2001). *Teacher preparation research: Current knowledge, gaps, and recommendations.* University of Washington Center for the Study of Teaching and Policy.

Winn, M. T., & Johnson, L. P. (2011). *Writing instruction in the culturally relevant classroom.* National Council of Teachers of English.

Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Sage Publications.

Yuan, T. (2019). Culturally responsive teaching for children from low-income, immigrant families. *Young Exceptional Children.*, *22*(3), 150–161.

Zanting, A., Verloop, N., Vermunt, J. D., & Van Driel, J. H. (1998). Explicating practical knowledge: An extension of mentor teachers' roles. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 21*(1), 11–28.

Zapata, A. (2013). "No, I don't want to!": Nurturing contexts for sharing culturally specific literature. *WOW Stories, 3*(3), 2-9. https://repository.arizona.edu/bitstream/handle/10150/651226/WOW-Stories-Vol_III-Issue_3-2_9_w.pdf?sequence=1

Zapata, A., Kleekamp, M., King, C., & International Literacy Association (ILA). (2018). Expanding the canon: How diverse literature can transform literacy learning. Literacy Leadership Brief. In *International Literacy Association*. International Literacy Association.

Zeichner, K. (2002). Beyond traditional structures of student teaching. *Teacher Education Quarterly, 29*(2), 59–64.

Zeichner, K. (2005). Becoming a teacher educator: A personal perspective. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 21*, 117–124.

Zeichner, K. (2010). Rethinking the connections between campus courses and field experiences in college- and university-based teacher education. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61*(1-2), 81-99.

Zeichner, K. M., & Tabachnick, B. R. (1981). Are the effects of university teacher education "washed out" by school experience? *Journal of Teacher Education*, *32*(3), 7-11.

Zemek, M. D. (2008). The selection and preparation of cooperating teachers in music education. *Journal of Music Teacher Education, 17*(2), 7–18. https://doi.org/10.1177/1057083708317619.

APPENDIX A: PRESERVICE TEACHER CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Cato College of Education
9201 University City Blvd. | Charlotte, NC 28223
Consent to be Part of a Research Study (PST)

Title of the Project: Characteristics of Clinical Experiences That Support Preservice Teachers' Understandings of Culturally Responsive Literacy: A Multiple Case Study
Principal Investigator: Leslie Schmidt, Ph.D. Candidate
Faculty Advisor: Erin Miller, Ph.D. (Dissertation Chair)

You are invited to participate in a research study. Participation in this research study is voluntary. The information provided is to help you decide whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please ask:

Important Information You Need to Know

- The purpose of this study is to explore the characteristics of clinical experiences that support preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms.
- You will be asked to participate in two interviews regarding your understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices. If you agree to participate, they will require approximately 30-45 minutes of your time, each.
- You and your assigned clinical educator will be observed approximately three times (one planning session and two literacy lessons) over the fall semester.
- There are no foreseeable risks involved with your participation in this research study.
- Benefits of your participation may include an increase of knowledge about culturally responsive teaching. Also, by sharing your experiences as they relate to culturally responsive literacy, you are contributing significant knowledge to the field of education.

Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before you decide whether to participate in this research study.

Why are we doing this study?

The purpose of this study is to better understand how preservice teachers develop an understanding of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms before and during their yearlong student teaching experience.

Why are you being asked to be in this research study?
You are being asked to be in this study because you are a preservice teacher at UNCC who is participating in student teaching in the fall and have demonstrated mastery of course content in a diversity course your sophomore year.

What will happen if I take part in this study?
If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to engage in two semi-structured interviews about your teacher education program experiences and culturally responsive teaching. The interviews, which will be audio recorded, will take place at your school, on campus, or via an online communication platform (e.g., Zoom).

The interviews will take 30-45 minutes each. You will be given the opportunity to read the interview transcripts within a week after the interviews to check for accuracy. I will also observe you and your clinical educator approximately three times over the fall semester. This will not require any additional time or planning on your part. I will simply observe your actions during this time.

What benefits might I experience?
For your time and commitment to this research, I will provide a $10 Target gift card. If desired, I will offer any suggestions or input you would benefit from my time with you. Additionally, other teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and education policymakers may benefit from the information you provide in the study.

What risks might I experience?
There are no foreseeable risks involved in your participation of this study. The dignity, rights, and well-being of all participants in this study will be given primary consideration at all times.

How will my information be protected?
I will do everything I can to keep your identity private and your responses confidential. The data collected from this study will only be accessible to the researcher and the researcher's dissertation committee members.

We plan to publish the results of this study. To protect your privacy, we will not include any information that could identify you. Your interview transcript and observation data will remain confidential and secured on a password-protected computer. Additionally, your identity will be represented by a pseudonym of your choice in the research.

How will my information be used after the study is over?
After this study is complete, study data may be shared with other researchers for use in other studies or as needed as part of publishing our results. The data we share will NOT include information that could identify you.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?

It is up to you to decide to be in this research study. Participating in this study is voluntary. You will be given the option to decline to answer any or all questions and terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

Who can answer my questions about this study and my rights as a participant?
For questions about this research, you may contact Leslie Schmidt, lschmid9@uncc.edu, or Dr. Erin Miller, emille90@uncc.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the Office of Research Compliance at 704-687-1871 or uncc-irb@uncc.edu.

Consent to Participate
By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will receive a copy of this document for your records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I understand what the study is about and my questions so far have been answered. I agree to take part in this study.

Name (PRINT)	Email Address (PRINT)
Signature	Date
Name and signature of person obtaining consent	Date

APPENDIX B: CLINICAL EDUCATOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE

Cato College of Education
9201 University City Blvd. | Charlotte, NC 28223
Consent to be Part of a Research Study (CE)

Title of the Project: Characteristics of Clinical Experiences That Support Preservice Teachers' Understandings of Culturally Responsive Literacy: A Multiple Case Study
Principal Investigator: Leslie Schmidt, Ph.D. Candidate
Faculty Advisor: Erin Miller, Ph.D. (Dissertation Chair)

You are invited to participate in a research study. Participation in this research study is voluntary. The information provided is to help you decide whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please ask:

Important Information You Need to Know

- The purpose of this study is to explore the characteristics of clinical experiences that support preservice teachers' understandings of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms.
- You will be asked to participate in an interview regarding your experiences with student teachers and your culturally responsive literacy practices. If you agree to participate, it will require approximately 45-60 minutes of your time.
- You and your assigned student teacher will be observed approximately three times (one planning session and two literacy lessons) over the fall semester.
- There are no foreseeable risks involved with your participation in this research study.
- Benefits of your participation may include an increase of knowledge about culturally responsive teaching. Also, by sharing your experiences as they relate to preservice teachers and culturally responsive literacy, you are contributing significant knowledge to the field of education.

Please read this form and ask any questions you may have before you decide whether to participate in this research study.

Why are we doing this study?

The purpose of this study is to better understand how preservice teachers develop an understanding of culturally responsive literacy practices in elementary classrooms during their yearlong student teaching experience.

Why are you being asked to be in this research study?
You are being asked to be in this study because you are a (K-5) literacy teacher who is hosting a UNCC student teacher in the fall, participated in culturally proficient training, and have been nominated by your school administrator as a culturally responsive educator.

What will happen if I take part in this study?
If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to engage in a semi-structured interview about your personal and professional teaching experiences. This interview, which will be audio recorded, will take place at your school or via an online communication platform (e.g., Zoom).

The interview will take 45-60 minutes. You will be given the opportunity to read the interview transcript within a week after the interview to check for accuracy. I will also observe you and your preservice teacher approximately three times over the fall semester. This will not require any additional time or planning on your part. I will simply observe your actions during this time.

What benefits might I experience?
For your time and commitment to this research, I will provide additional volunteer hours to you and your classroom. If desired, I will offer any suggestions or input you would benefit from my time with you. Additionally, other teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and education policymakers may benefit from the information you provide in the study.

What risks might I experience?
There are no foreseeable risks involved in your participation of this study. The dignity, rights, and well-being of all participants in this study will be given primary consideration at all times.

How will my information be protected?
I will do everything I can to keep your identity private and your responses confidential. The data collected from this study will only be accessible to the researcher and the researcher's dissertation committee members.

We plan to publish the results of this study. To protect your privacy, we will not include any information that could identify you. Your interview transcript and observation data will remain confidential and secured on a password-protected computer. Additionally, your identity will be represented by a pseudonym of your choice in the research.

How will my information be used after the study is over?
After this study is complete, study data may be shared with other researchers for use in other studies or as needed as part of publishing our results. The data we share will NOT include information that could identify you.

What are my rights if I take part in this study?
It is up to you to decide to be in this research study. Participating in this study is voluntary. You will be given the option to decline to answer any or all questions and terminate your involvement at any time if you choose.

Who can answer my questions about this study and my rights as a participant?
For questions about this research, you may contact Leslie Schmidt, lschmid9@uncc.edu, or Dr. Erin Miller, emille90@uncc.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, or wish to obtain information, ask questions, or discuss any concerns about this study with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact the Office of Research Compliance at 704-687-1871 or uncc-irb@uncc.edu.

Consent to Participate
By signing this document, you are agreeing to be in this study. Make sure you understand what the study is about before you sign. You will receive a copy of this document for your records. If you have any questions about the study after you sign this document, you can contact the study team using the information provided above.

I understand what the study is about and my questions so far have been answered. I agree to take part in this study.

Name (PRINT)	Email Address (PRINT)
Signature	Date
Name and signature of person obtaining consent	Date

APPENDIX C: PRESERVICE TEACHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW #1 PRESERVICE TEACHER

Length: 30 mins- 1-hour, audio-recorded
Conduct toward the beginning of the fall semester
Steps:

1. Explain the expectations for study participation.
2. Sign permission form. Ask the participant to select a pseudonym. Discuss preferred contact method (phone, text, email).
3. Set up recording device.
4. Begin interview.

PST Pre-Interview Protocol

- Tell me about your own experience as a student coming through school. What was your school/community like growing up (urban, suburban, rural)? Does that influence how you think about teaching?
- Describe how and why you chose to become an educator.
- How would you describe your teacher training thus far?
- I'm really interested in culture and teaching. What are your thoughts on culture and teaching? What is the role of culture and teachers?
- What teaching skills are critical to helping students of color achieve academically?
- What does *culturally responsive teaching* (CRT) mean to you? Explain your current understanding of culturally responsive teaching. What does that look like in the classroom? What experiences have fostered this understanding, thus far?
- What aspect of teaching do you feel most comfortable with before beginning your student teaching? What are the things you feel less comfortable with? In what ways do you feel prepared for implementing CRT?
- What examples of CRT have you observed in your clinical setting so far?
- What have your interactions been like with your clinical educator (CE) so far? What expectations have been communicated to you? What do you wish was better communicated to you?
- What else would you like for me to know about you or CRT, prior to beginning this study?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW- #2 PRESERVICE TEACHER

Length: 30 mins- 1-hour, audio-recorded
Conduct toward the middle of the fall semester and after literacy lesson planning observation

PST Mid-Interview Protocol

- Talk me through your literacy lesson from start to end, including lesson design. Talk about your choice of materials. Why did you make those decisions? How did you know which texts you were going to use? Did you choose these together or were they from the curriculum? Which curriculum do you use? If no CRT is mentioned, ask specifically: What CRT was written into that lesson? Did you implement your plans?
- What is your vision of CRT? What has contributed to that understanding? How has your clinical experience contributed to your understanding of CRT? What experiences in the classroom have supported your understandings of CRT in literacy (i.e., curricular components, students, teaching practices, administrators, clinical educators, etc.)?
- What content did you learn in the equity course you previously mentioned in our pre-interview?
- What are some examples of CRT that you have observed in the classroom? How have you observed CRT within the literacy block? What about any other part of the school day? Remember, culturally responsive literacy instruction can be taught across all subjects, such as math or social studies.
- How does your CE create a classroom community, from what you've observed? What do you notice about the cultures of your students?
- What has your relationship and/or interactions been like with your CE (For example, what have the following experiences been like: planning, feedback, communication, support, modeling, etc.)?
    - Support with observation notes
- How comfortable do you feel talking about CRT (scale of 1-5) with your CE and explain. How do you reconcile with what you want to see and what you are seeing- "If you're not seeing CRT, how/or are you approaching that with your CE? How do you reconcile with that?"
    - Provide interview examples
- What role has your CE had in developing your understanding of CRT? Explain.
- What else should I know about your clinical experience, teacher training, and/or understanding of culturally responsive teaching?
- Is there anything I can do to better support you?

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW- #3 PRESERVICE TEACHER

Length: 30 mins- 1-hour, audio-recorded
Conduct toward the end of the fall semester

PST Post-Interview Protocol

- How has the experience been moving the students to one class (altogether) versus two separate cohorts? How has or has your teacher built a classroom community?
- Reread how she described CRT last time. What is your vision of CRT now? What experiences have supported your understandings of CRT in literacy (i.e., curricular components, students, teaching practices, administrators, clinical educators, professors, supervisor, etc.)?
- What are some examples of CRT that you have observed in the classroom since we last spoke? How have you observed CRT within the literacy block, specifically? What role has your CE had in developing your understanding of CRT, if any? Explain.
- What has your relationship been like with your CE now, at the end of the semester? How has your CE supported you from the following: modeling, coaching, scaffolding, articulating? Describe each and ask about specifics and examples. Which support has been the most beneficial? Which do you wish you had more of?
- Upon teaching a lesson, do you reflect or compare your performance to that of your CE? How? Have you set any learning goals by yourself or with your CE?
- How do you respond to feedback- Give an example of feedback your CE has given you
    - General
    - CRT
    - CRLI
- When you're teaching and a student struggles, how do you handle that? Talk me through the experience.
- What characteristics of student teaching do you think are essential in supporting PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive literacy (i.e., curricular components, students, teaching practices, administrators, clinical educators, etc.)? Can you share an example of how those are lived out in your school environments or barriers that you encountered in your attempts to live them out?
- When you have your first classroom, what will it look like? What general practices or CRT practices will you pull from in what you've learned from your:
    - CE
    - CS
    - TPP coursework
    - University supervisor

- What else should I know about your clinical experience, teacher training, and/or understanding of culturally responsive teaching?

APPENDIX D: CLINICAL EDUCATOR INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW- CLINICAL EDUCATOR

Length: 30 mins- 1-hour, audio-recorded interview
Conduct within research timeline at the convenience of the CE
Steps:

1. Explain the expectations for study participation. Review what I will provide in return for participation.
2. Sign permission form. Ask the participant to select a pseudonym. Discuss preferred contact method (phone, text, email).
3. Set up recording device.
4. Begin interview.

CE Interview Protocol

- What is your professional teaching background? How long have you been teaching and in which grade levels? How would you describe your class? Who are your students?
- What has your experience been with PSTs so far? How many have you had? Did you receive any training? As you begin working with a PST, what are the most important things you establish first?
- Briefly describe your literacy block. How do you believe children successfully learn literacy? Ask about classroom libraries and how those are created (self, district, school, etc.). What curriculum does your school use? What teaching skills, do you believe, are critical to helping students of color achieve in literacy?
- In the COED, this is how we describe CRT [read online description]. Given this, can you describe anything you've seen the PST do that is indicative of CRT and their coursework? This is what we're looking for, are you seeing it? Have you learned anything from observing your PST that will inform your future practices (also in CRT)?
- What do you think of when I say *culturally responsive teaching*? What teaching skills are critical to helping students of color achieve?
- When and how have you learned about culturally responsive teaching? What professional experiences have contributed to your understanding of CRT, if any? How has your school or district supported your understanding/implementation of CRT (i.e. resources, curriculum, planning support, etc.)? (If they bring up text equity training, ask them to tell me more about it. What exactly did they learn? Have they tried to implement any new techniques?)
- How do you implement CRT, even if your PST is not there?
- How do you implement CRT within the literacy block? Examples? Throughout the rest of the day and across all subjects (start with the beginning of the day, such as morning meeting).

- How do you create a classroom community? What about relationships with your students? Their families?
- How do you view your relationship with your PST? What type of support do you try to provide your PST and how (i.e. model, feedback, talk through thinking, etc.)? Power/reciprocal issues with her? What if she wanted to try new things? Would you be willing to let her?
- Anything else you would like for me to know about your teaching practices, culturally responsive teaching, PSTs, or your classroom? Maybe even advice or concerns you have for how to implement CRT within your school? What do teachers need (i.e, support, resources, etc.) to make this possible?

APPENDIX E: OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

Location:
Date:
Time:
Participants:
Lesson/planning information (e.g., objectives, materials, lessons, etc.):

Description/Context of observation:

Field notes:

Descriptive Notes	Reflective Notes
Start time: End time:	

Note-taking Conventions:

- Timestamp every 5 minutes or more frequently
- Write down anything you observe that you can capture in your notes. This includes what clinical educators (CE) and preservice teachers (PST) are saying and doing
- Note materials teachers are using
- Take and add photos of materials, what is around the room, on the walls, etc. *Be sure to ask the teacher if it is okay to take photos of the room, walls, work examples. Tell teachers I will de-identify any student work.*
- Collect or take photos of lesson planning materials
- Be sure to note culturally responsive teaching practices in detail
- Immediately after the observation: mark anything you remember seeing but did not note in-the-moment and journal any reflexivity notes

APPENDIX F: PRESERVICE TEACHER JOURNAL ENTRIES

Freewrite Journal Response

Please maintain a journal throughout the fall semester of your clinical experience (student teaching) to record instances of culturally responsive teaching. Explicitly describe the instance of culturally responsive teaching and in which setting (i.e., curricular components, students, teaching practices, administrators, clinical educators, etc.) it occurred. Also, consider journaling interactions and literacy planning sessions with your clinical educator after they occur.

APPENDIX G: EXAMPLE OF CODEBOOK

Example of Codebook

Code	Subcode	Description	Example quote
CRT	HIEX	High expectations	"You can do this. Let's walk through it again." "Knowing that your students can achieve."
CRT	COMM	Classroom community	"Every Monday we're all going to complement each other." "She does a lot of the morning meeting."
CE	COA	Coaching	"She'll give me feedback when the lesson is over." "She writes a lot of feedback for me. Lots of glows and grows."
CE	MOD	Modeling	"I'll observe her teach it and then I'll go back and ask her questions." "She models a lot of read-alouds. I get to see a model to the students and stuff."
CS	STU	Students	"I've noticed that the students in the classroom like to learn from each other." "The lesson that I was planning, I really was trying to keep in mind like I wanna get this interesting for my students."
CS	LIB	Classroom library	"Having a big classroom library with a ton of diverse books." "Her classroom library is really diverse."
TPP	SUP	University supervisor	"He [supervisor] knows what they [edTPA] want so that's kinda trying to walk the fine line of what she [CE] wants and what he wants." "Feedback from [supervisor] is to change struggling readers to striving readers."
TPP	CURCOUR	Current coursework	"I have learned over the past month the importance of bringing parents into the conversation." "We talked about how culturally relevant pedagogy is instruction that uses students' cultures and strengths as a bridge to success in school achievement."

Note. CRT: culturally responsive teaching, CE: clinical educator, CS: clinical setting, TPP: teacher preparation program