

A NARRATIVE INQUIRY OF SECOND LANGUAGE TEACHER AGENCY IN
PROMOTING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY

by

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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

2020

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ABSTRACT

ANNA SANCZYK. Narrative Inquiry of Second Language Teacher Agency in Promoting Culturally Responsive Pedagogy. (Under the direction of DR. ELIZABETH R. MILLER)

With an increasing immigrant population in the United States, there is a growing number of English as a Second Language (ESL) classes in adult education institutions. Given that English language learners (ELLs) come from various backgrounds, they face unique challenges when learning English, and language instructors should make an effort to understand their life histories and circumstances. With this in mind, it is crucial that ESL teachers effectively address the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms by promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. The purpose of this research study is to explore whether and how ESL teachers exercise agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse adult students. In supporting my theoretical understanding of critical theory and agency, narrative inquiry provides a useful framework for studying how participants' past, present, and future contexts influence their own understandings of teacher agency while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Therefore, the goal in this narrative research was to provide a space for the voices of adult ESL instructors to be heard as they shared stories that represent whether and how they exercise agency. The participants of the study were seven adult ESL instructors teaching at a community college in the southeastern United States that serves diverse students. Data were collected through face-to-face semi-structured interviews, journal entries, and classroom observations. The data were analyzed in three stages, using narrative thematic analysis, narrative holistic analysis, and NVivo analysis. A constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used in that

process. Three themes developed from the data analysis that pertained to language teacher identity, culturally responsive pedagogy, and challenges adult ESL instructors face when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. The findings of this study revealed that the common aspect of participants' identities was exploration even though they exhibited multiple identities throughout their lives and experienced shifts in their identities. However, although participants constructed themselves as explorers, only a few of them exhibited identities that relate to being transformative practitioners. The narratives also revealed that adult ESL instructors engaged in various culturally responsive practices; however, the data analysis revealed some gaps in the effective promotion of such practices. The findings of this study illuminated a challenging institutional environment in which the context is continuously changing in response to shifting testing requirements, citizenship regulations, and mandated curriculum. This research confirmed that teaching is a complex undertaking, where language teachers' agency is shaped by multiple and varied experiences, contexts, beliefs, and hopes, which are intertwined with their past, present, and future identities. The lessons learned in this study provide new knowledge in terms of teacher preparation, teacher professional development, and community outreach.

Keywords: Adult ESL, Critical Reflection, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, English Language Learners, Language Teacher Agency, Language Teacher Identity

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge a few people who made a difference in my dissertation process. Firstly, I would like to thank my family for their unconditional support and encouragement. My mom, dad, and sister always inspired me to reach my educational goals! Thank you for listening to my concerns, understanding my frustrations, and believing in me. Also, I would not do this without my sweet daughter. Gabi, you have gone through this process along with me. From the moment I started this journey, you were always patient, positive, and inspiring me! You gave me strength to keep going. You are my rock! Manuel, you too, are my hero for putting up with me when I did not have time to take care of you and Gabi and was hiding in the coffee shops and libraries. You gave me space to do this and I am grateful for that! I am so excited I am done. Now, I can spend all that time with you! Secondly, I would love to thank my dissertation chair, Dr. Elizabeth R. Miller who has believed in me and provided me with guidance and encouragement throughout my dissertation process. I have learned so much from you and have grown personally and professionally while working with you on this research study! In addition, I would love to thank my committee members and Dr. Meaghan Rand for their continuous support during my research and writing process. Lastly, I would like to thank my supervisor at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, Joshua Avery, for his support and understanding! I am lucky for the support systems I had during this journey! .

DEDICATION

I am dedicating this dissertation to my family: my mom, dad, sister, brothers, Manuel and daughter, Gabi. I would not do this without you! Thank you for always being there for me!

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CLD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students
CRP	Culturally Responsive Pedagogy
ELL	English Language Learner
ESL	English as a Second Language
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

The United States has always been a land of diverse people. The foreign-born population has been steadily growing since the 1970s. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2012), the percentage of the foreign-born population increased from 4.7 percent in 1970 to 12.9 percent in 2010. The highest percentage of these immigrants is from Central America. They comprised 53.1 percent of all foreign-born people in the United States in 2010. The census data also shows that other immigrants come from Asia (28.2 percent), Europe (12.1 percent), Africa (4 percent), Northern America (2 percent), and Oceania (0.5 percent). In regard to language use by these immigrants, the U.S. Census Bureau indicated that “[a]bout half of all foreign born either speak only English at home or speak a language other than English at home and speak English very well” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012, p. 3).

Likewise, the southeastern United States, where this research study is situated, is experiencing similar trends in increasing diversity. The state where the study was conducted reported that the population demographics have been changing dramatically. According to the National Immigration Forum (2016), this southeastern state “has a rapidly growing immigrant population. In 1990, immigrants were just 1.7 percent of the population. During the booming 1990s, that percentage more than tripled to 5.3 percent. By 2014, it was 7.6 percent.” The data from the Migration Policy Institute (2016) revealed that 52.5 percent of immigrants living in this state come from Latin America. The other foreign-born people come from Asia (27.9 percent), Europe (10.1 percent), Africa (6.8 percent), Northern America (2.3 percent), and Oceania (0.4 percent).

With an increasing immigration population in the United States, there is a need for more English as a Second Language classes in public schools and adult education institutions. The National Center for Education Research (2017) reported that 9.4 percent of public school students participated in programs for English language learners in the 2014-2015 school year. The majority of these English language learners speak Spanish (77.1 percent), followed by Arabic (2.3 percent), Chinese (2.2 percent), Vietnamese (1.8 percent), and other languages include Somali (0.7 percent), Hmong (0.7 percent), Russian (0.7 percent), Haitian (0.6 percent), Tagalog (0.6 percent), and Korean (0.6 percent). In addition, it is reported that “ESL instruction for adults is the largest and fastest growing component of America’s adult education system—representing more than 40 percent of enrollment and more than 1.2 million students per year—and is the fastest growing program of any kind at many community colleges” (Community College Consortium for Immigrant Education, 2015). For example, in 2010, the community colleges in the southeastern state in which this study takes place served 175,458 adults who attended adult ESL classes (National Center for Higher Education Management Systems, 2010).

Given that English language learners (ELLs) come from various backgrounds, they face unique challenges in schools. Patel (2013) illustrated some of the obstacles that immigrant youth go through during their educational journey. ELLs have to navigate through new communities, schools, and social norms. They may experience microaggressions, social isolation, economic challenges, and depression. McCluskey (2012) also reminds us that immigrants and refugees who attend adult ESL classes may have fled their countries because of war or economic hardships, and language instructors should make an effort to understand their life histories and circumstances. With this in

mind, it is crucial that ESL teachers effectively address the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse learners in their classrooms. Richards et al. (2007) advocated for culturally responsive pedagogy and noted that, “In a culturally responsive classroom, effective teaching and learning occur in a culturally supported, learner-centered context, whereby the strengths students bring to school are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student success” (p. 64). However, ESL teachers, whether in public schools or adult ESL classes, encounter dilemmas, constraints, and pressures that may affect how they develop relationships with and “teach students with diverse socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds” (Kang, 2015, p. 4). Samson and Collins (2012) highlighted a few challenges in teaching ELLs: 1) teachers are not well prepared to educate a culturally and linguistically diverse population, 2) schools are constrained by federal and state demands, and 3) ESL programs receive limited resources to assist ELLs. Kumaravadivelu (2012) added that “most teachers operate within a fairly rigid framework of state-sponsored pedagogic policies and practices” (p. 58), and only after language teachers can recognize the relations of power and dominance as well as challenge hegemonic pedagogies can they promote equitable and transformative education. He continued by explaining that language can be seen as an ideology that is “tied to power and domination and reflects the ideologically grounded perceptions and practices that are shaped by dominant institutional forces, historical processes, and vested interests” (p. 25). Thus, hegemonic pedagogies refer to “language policies and educational practices that are situated in relation to wider issues of power, access, opportunity, and inequality” (Gutierrez, 2014, p. 308). Jakubowski and Visano (2002) and deMarrais and LeCompte (1998) offered an additional perspective by noting that traditional pedagogical instruction

tends to promote hegemonic ideologies as schooling often lacks opportunities for critical thought, empowerment, and action. Within such educational contexts, schooling supports the reproduction of dominant cultural and societal thinking and practices that may perpetuate racism and oppression, but those involved in the schooling process may work towards social change not social reproduction. Hegemony exercised in schools influences teachers and their practices, yet some teachers use their agency to resist hegemonic ideologies and advocate for ELLs in their diverse classroom. Thus, this study documents whether and how ESL teachers promote culturally responsive pedagogy to mediate adult English as a Second Language students' learning and explores whether and how teachers exercise agency to advocate for ELLs. This study also explores whether and how teachers' critical reflection on diversity, power structures, and inequality fosters ESL teachers' agency to better serve their culturally and linguistically diverse adult students.

Statement of Problem

The problem this study addresses is the various challenges English language learners and ESL teachers face in their classrooms related to their cultural differences when teaching and learning English as a Second Language. As previously mentioned, today's population in the United States is increasingly diverse. However, the teacher workforce is relatively homogeneous. The Center for American Progress (2017) reported that 83 percent of teachers in public education are White and a report from the American Institutes for Research (2015) showed that the majority of instructors in adult ESL classes are White. The American Institutes for Research (2015) conducted a study in three states (not identified), and data available from two states revealed that 76.1 percent of adult ESL instructors in one state and 67 percent of adult ESL instructors in the second state

are White. In addition to the lack of racial diversity in the teacher workforce, there is also a tendency in using a “color blind” approach to education which results in a monocultural curriculum (deMarrais & LeCompte, 1998; Wiggan, 2012). Wiggan (2012) noted that immigrant students often experience social isolation, poverty, and cultural and linguistic challenges that affect their school achievement, and he found that this is especially true for “Black immigrants in America [whose experiences in the U.S.] are compounded by the legacy of racism: alienation, subordination, and xenophobia” (p. 84). Some scholars raise further concerns of White privilege in education, showing how it can result in a state of denial or misunderstanding of the issues of systemic racism and oppression in schools (Kendall, 2016). Thus, this study engages teachers in critical self-reflection that fosters examination of their own identities, privileges, dispositions, and attitudes in order to improve teaching and relationship building with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Even today, schools are critiqued for using Eurocentric curriculum and instruction. Banks (2001) defined a Eurocentric pedagogy as one that “reinforces the status quo, makes students passive and content, and encourages them to acquiescently accept the dominant ideologies, political and economic arrangements, and prevailing myths and paradigms used to rationalize and justify the current social and political structure” (p. 130). Gunderson et al. (2014) and Wiggan (2012) reminded teachers to resist Eurocentric curricula and highlighted the importance of using culturally responsive pedagogy in teaching English language learners. Sleeter (2012) also noted that one of the factors that contributes to the marginalization of culturally responsive pedagogy is “the elite and white fear of losing national and global hegemony” (p. 562) and recommended

more evidence-based research on the utilization of the theory of culturally responsive pedagogy in classroom instruction. Therefore, there is a critical need for language teachers to ensure that ELLs are afforded equitable, culturally responsive instruction, and this study explores such practices.

In addition to pervasive Eurocentric views in the curriculum, Ollerhead and Burns (2016) stated that “many language teachers have to operate within considerable educational constraints, controlled by rapidly changing and top-down ministry policies, mandated curriculum, prescribed materials, and prespecified outcomes” (p. 227). These constrained school contexts, coupled with limited preparation in culturally responsive pedagogical knowledge, skills, and tools (Bickley et al., 2014; Brooks & Adams, 2015; Johnson & Owen, 2013), create unique struggles for ESL teachers. In their attempts to create culturally inclusive classrooms, they often fall short of enacting culturally responsive teaching and frequently revert to teaching only language skills (Collins & Dydynyshyn, 2012; Dantas-Whitney & Waldschmidt, 2009). Guy (1999) contended that greater instructional emphasis on culturally responsive pedagogy is needed. In view of these confounding issues, teachers may experience constraints or an inability to exercise agency and need support in reflecting on the importance and urgency of moving toward a culturally inclusive classroom environment, and this study explores such complexities of agency work in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy.

Samson and Collins (2012) and McCluskey (2012) also raised concerns that adult ESL teachers receive ineffective or insufficient training in order to understand and assess the unique needs of adult ELLs. Research has shown that the successful promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy and student outcomes can be improved through effective

professional learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Brooks and Adams (2015) noted, “Traditional methods-based professional development initiatives are incomplete when teachers do not engage in deep conversation, critical self-reflection, and professional problem solving as regular components of their professional lives” (p. 6). Thus, it is essential to develop ESL teachers’ critical awareness through critical reflection in order to transform their instruction and empower them to become agents of change. Critical reflection can empower educators to meet students’ needs, build inclusive schools, strengthen communities, and become agents of change (Flessner et al., 2012). Lopez (2011) identified critical awareness as a first step in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). She noted that “Engaging in culturally relevant teaching practices does not happen by chance” (p. 76); however, teachers must be purposefully supported and guided to “look for new ways and multiple entry points to enact CRP principles. Reflective processes which lead to critical awareness include documenting experiences and examining both failures and tensions which generate barriers or challenges to culturally responsive pedagogy” (p. 91). Both Flessner et al. (2012) and Lopez (2011) remind us of the importance of critical reflection that can empower teachers to think critically about the complexities of their classrooms, schools, and communities and that can lead to a transformation of practices and relationships with their linguistically and culturally diverse students. Therefore, this study explores critical reflection as a process that facilitates teacher agency negotiation and promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Purpose of the Study and Research Questions

The purpose of this research study is to explore whether and how ESL teachers exercise agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse adult students. This narrative inquiry research explored how culturally responsive pedagogy is enacted, what ESL teachers' beliefs, values, and attitudes about fostering culturally responsive environment are, how they build relationships with ELLs, how they address inequalities in education, what constraints they experience while working with ELLs, and how they develop agency for teaching and advocating for diverse students in adult ESL classrooms.

This research study draws on critical theory to bring awareness to the issue of power and agency in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The exploration of language teachers' enactment of agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy through critical reflection during the interviews and journal writing as well as classroom observations shed light on challenges language teachers face in supporting ELLs and the actions they take to advocate for their diverse students. This research study also incorporates an ecological approach to agency that sees it as being achieved in various settings and shaped by various experiences (Priestley et al., 2012) with a focus on how it emerges "within the ecological conditions through which it is exercised and enacted" (White, 2018, p. 200). In supporting my theoretical understanding of critical theory and agency, narrative inquiry provides a useful framework for studying how participants' past, present, and future contexts influence their own understandings of teacher agency while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. The research questions are as follows:

1. How do ESL teachers understand and enact culturally responsive pedagogy?
2. What is the role of teacher identity in shaping agency for promoting culturally responsive pedagogy?
3. How have the various contexts and experiences shaped ESL teachers' agency in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners?

Significance and Future Implications

This research study has the potential to contribute to the limited body of research on culturally responsive pedagogy in adult ESL classroom settings and teacher agency work in culturally and linguistically diverse educational contexts. The literature review in the next chapter illustrates that ample research on culturally responsive pedagogy has been conducted in the K-12 education, but only a limited body of research can be found in adult English as a Second Language contexts. The reasons for that may be various, including the political situation, funding allocation, or landscape of adult English language instruction. Similarly, the studies on teacher agency mainly focus on K-12 education, and when studies explore language teacher agency in adult ESL education, they mostly are conducted in non-U.S. educational settings. Therefore, this research addresses these gaps in the literature by exploring language teacher and culturally responsive practices in adult ESL programs in the United States.

This study is significant because it examines how adult ESL teachers use culturally responsive practices to meet different needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Howard (2003) stated that current educational practices “have failed miserably when it comes to educating students from culturally diverse and low-income backgrounds” (p. 201). Thus, this study explores a very critical educational problem in

that it supports adult ESL instructors in reflecting on culturally responsive teaching as a professional practice. Given that some researchers have raised concerns that the promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy in ESL classrooms has been underexplored, the study sheds more light into this area of teaching in the adult ESL classroom setting (Han et al., 2013; Howard, 2003). This research makes significant contributions to the field of teaching English as a Second Language because this study bridges the existing gap in the literature about culturally responsive pedagogy by providing a thorough examination of milestones and challenges ESL teachers encounter while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Some scholars, Santamaria (2009) for example, noted that research studies focus on theoretical understandings of culturally responsive teaching instead of on practical application of such practices that may help teachers improve their own teaching and relationships with ELLs. This study intends to add to the body of research that illustrates teachers' voices and experiences in order to extend our understandings about culturally responsive practical strategies in diverse classrooms.

In addition, research on language teacher agency focuses on advocacy, decision making, and accepting or resisting curricular reforms, policy environments, prescribed resources, and school practices (Edwards & Burns, 2016; Kayi-Aydar, 2017; Lasky, 2005; Lopez, 2011; Ollerhead & Burns, 2016; Tao & Gao, 2017). The findings of this study help us understand how sociocultural influences, including the hegemonic ideologies, institutional culture, and standardized tests affect language teacher agency. There is still only a limited body of literature that discusses language teacher agency in promoting culturally responsive teaching (Lopez, 2011). This research thus makes

noteworthy contributions to the field of teaching English as a Second Language as it explores language teachers' agency in working with diverse student population. The findings of this study revealed how language teachers capitalize on students' cultures and engage in working as agents of change.

Additionally, Flessner et al. (2012) and Pantić and Florian (2015) highlighted the importance of critical reflection in developing a sense of agency, and this study contributes to the literature on language teacher agency with unique perspectives and findings by revealing teachers' agency formation during a self-reflection process. It makes an explicit connection between language teacher agency and critical reflection while promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. Bartolomé (2004) and Pantić and Florian (2015) noted that teachers who critically evaluate ideologies and practices in diverse classrooms develop critical consciousness and understanding of the impact of social, political, and economic influences on education. Therefore, this study is significant because it offers an insight into how reflecting on professional identities, experiences, practices, as well as social, political and economic environments nurtures teacher agency for promoting culturally responsive pedagogy, and "helps teachers recognize that inclusive practices are not isolated from the structural and cultural contexts of their workplace that might encourage or impede such practices" (Pantić & Florian, 2015, p. 345).

Finally, this study is important because the findings serve as a premise for teacher training to enhance instruction quality and improve the learning environments of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Some scholars voice concerns about the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs in preparing pre-service teachers to work

with diverse students (He, 2013; McCluskey, 2012; Pettit, 2011; Samson & Collins, 2012); therefore, implications of this study can also provide guidance for course development and enhance current offerings in pre-service teacher preparation programs. The reflections of ESL teachers reveal valuable information on training needs, the challenges the teachers face in teaching ELLs, as well as their unique experiences and various practices.

Subjectivity Statement

I initiated this study primarily based on my own experience of learning and teaching adult ESL. I am an immigrant like all adult English language learners who come to the United States to search for better opportunities. I came to this country with limited proficiency in English and attended an adult ESL class at a community college. I was passionate and determined to learn, and after a year, I decided to move back to my home country and attend a teacher preparation program. When I started teaching adult ESL, many students told me I understood their needs better than other teachers. I believe this is because I share some characteristics with adult ESL learners: I speak a different language, I was raised in a different country, and I have different values and perspectives. Because of my own experience of living in a foreign country and learning a new language, I recognize the importance of valuing students' experiences, and I have always accommodated to their needs, whether by adjusting my instruction, helping them feel more comfortable in a new neighborhood, familiarizing them with the local norms, or listening to their concerns. Thus, for me, being a teacher means more than transferring knowledge.

When I was an adult ESL instructor and then a program coordinator in the Refugee Education program, I saw some instructors acting from an American-centric perspective, where they wanted students to assimilate to their beliefs and practices in order to learn. Some followed scripted lesson plans and put an emphasis on teaching English language skills that would help their students pass the test, which is an accountability and policy pressure issue instead of an effort to help them thrive in their new communities. Based on what I observed and conversations with the students, such approaches to teaching diverse learners were unsuccessful in creating welcoming, engaging, and safe classroom environments. I agree with Gay (2002) who stated, “If educators continue to be ignorant of, ignore, impugn, and silence the cultural orientations, values, and performance styles of ethnically different students, they will persist in imposing cultural hegemony, personal denigration, educational inequity, and academic underachievement upon them” (p. 25). On the other hand, I also worked with a colleague who exercised agency in advocating for culturally responsive practices, and I saw students’ enthusiasm to learn. We had deep conversations about White privilege, multiculturalism, and culture. I believe these discussions and my own self-reflection contributed to my professional growth. In light of this, this study revealed valuable information regarding effective strategies that could be helpful for ESL instructors in creating culturally inclusive classrooms.

My concerns were intensified when I attended TESOL conferences, where I had interesting conversations with some adult ESL instructors. Some of them seemed to have no desire to learn about their students or their backgrounds because they were convinced their sole responsibility was to teach them English to get a job. With this in mind, I

decided to find out what adult ESL instructors' culturally responsive practices were and how agentic they were to advocate for their ELLs. I strongly believe that adult ESL instructors have the potential to greatly enhance their teaching when they implement culturally responsive strategies. My support for culturally responsive instruction stems from the research by Gay (2002), Ladson-Billings (1995), and Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011), who advocate for incorporating students' backgrounds and experiences into the curriculum and emphasize making instruction responsive to diverse students' needs in order to accelerate student achievement.

To sum up, my values, experiences, and passion in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy have had a profound influence in my choosing this topic for the study. I acknowledge that my roles as a student, and then as an instructor and a program coordinator may have an impact on my data collection and interpretation. My responsibility as a researcher is to frequently engage in reflexive analyses in order to critically examine my own subjectivity throughout the entire research process. I was careful in selecting the context and the participants for the study by developing a set of guidelines that fulfilled specific criteria for selection. I also took detailed notes during the interviews to help me reflect on an ongoing basis.

Definition of Terms

Critical reflection: It involves “a deep exploration process that exposes unexamined beliefs, assumptions, and expectations, and makes visible our personal reflexive loops. Reflective practitioners challenge assumptions and question existing practices, thereby continuously accessing new lenses to view their practice and alter their perspectives” (Larrivee, 2000, p. 29).

Culturally and linguistically diverse students (CLD): This term refers to students from homes and communities where English is not the primary language of communication. These students speak “a variety of languages and come from diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds” (Gonzalez et al., 2011, p. 18).

Culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP): This term refers to the education of “racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse students that connects in-school learning to out-of-school living; promotes educational equity and excellence; creates community among individuals from different cultural, social, and ethnic backgrounds; and develops students’ agency, efficacy, and empowerment” (Gay, 2013, p. 49).

English as a Second Language (ESL): It refers to a program of instruction designed to support English Language Learners (NCTE, 2008).

English language learners (ELLs): This term refers to active learners of the English language who may benefit from various types of language support programs. ELLs are “a highly heterogeneous and complex group of students, with diverse gifts, educational needs, backgrounds, languages, and goals” (NCTE, 2008).

Teacher agency: It is characterized as “a capacity to act that is achieved within continually shifting contexts over time. It helps us understand how teachers are reflexive and creative, act counter to societal constraints, and are both enabled and constrained by their social and material environments” (Priestley et al., 2015, p. 3).

Teacher identity: This term refers to how teachers construct their own ideas of “how to be,” “how to act” and “how to understand” their work and their place in society. It is negotiated through experience and the sense that they make of that experience (Sachs, 2005, p. 15).

Limitations

There are several limitations in this study, including the sample size, participant bias, researcher bias, as well as duration and location of the study. The limited number of participants in this research study (7) may present a limitation in terms of transferability. The research also recognizes that the participants and I as the researcher may bring various perspectives, experiences, and possible biases into the study. I documented my reflections in a researcher journal throughout the study and provided participants with a safe space for critical dialogue and reflection. In addition, the study took place over the course of one semester in one state. Interview, journal, and classroom observation data was collected from ESL teachers living in a state in the southeastern United States. Therefore, findings may not be generalizable to English as a Second Language education in the whole country due to regional differences and state/curricular policies governing ESL programs.

Overview and Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 describes the statement of the problem and purpose, research questions, the significance of the study, definitions of terms used in this study, and limitations. Chapter 2 provides a literature review on culturally responsive teaching, critical reflection, and teacher agency. Section 1 of this chapter discusses research on culturally responsive teaching, some of the concerns in promoting culturally responsive practices found in qualitative and quantitative studies, ESL teachers' promotion of culturally responsive teaching, and suggestions for improving culturally responsive teaching practices. Section 2 focuses on critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is explained, followed by a discussion on the connection and importance of critical pedagogy and

culturally responsive teaching, research conducted on implementing critical reflection in teacher education, and a description of reflective practices to transform teaching. Section 3 provides an overview of the meaning of teacher identity and agency and of research that illustrates the importance of taking identity and agency into consideration when fostering critical reflection in order to transform language teachers into agents of change. Chapter 3 presents the research methodology, including a description of the research design, participants and setting, data collection methods, trustworthiness strategies, ethical considerations, and data analysis. Chapter 4 presents the findings of this study that relate to the first research question. It focuses on language teacher identity and describes participants' as explorers. Chapter 5 presents findings of the study that relate to the second research question. It discusses participants' culturally responsive strategies and gaps in such practices. Chapter 6 presents findings of the study that relate to the third research question. It illustrates participants' challenges when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Each chapter that presents findings of the study starts with short narratives and then describes thematic analysis of the data. Chapter 7 includes the summary, conclusions, implications, and recommendations for further research of this study.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

English language learners come from various backgrounds and face unique challenges in schools, and ESL teachers need to effectively enact culturally responsive pedagogy to address the needs of these culturally and linguistically diverse learners. However, some studies reveal that ESL teachers often do not have sufficient knowledge, skills, or tools (Brooks & Adams, 2015; Bickley et al., 2014; Johnson & Owen, 2013) to enact culturally responsive teaching and some prefer teaching only language skills (Collins & Dytynyshyn, 2012; Dantas-Whitney & Waldschmidt, 2009). In such cases, it is critical for teachers to develop agency and understand the importance and urgency of moving toward a more culturally responsive classroom environment. This chapter starts with describing a theoretical framework that guided the research study. Later, this chapter outlines research conducted on ESL teachers' enactment of culturally responsive pedagogy, a discussion on critically reflective practices, a link between teacher identity and agency, and how critical reflection can foster ESL teachers' agency to better serve their culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Theoretical Framework

Including a theoretical framework in the research study helps us understand how existing bodies of literature connect to the topic, study design, and findings of the study. Thus, in this study, the critical theory and agency from the ecological perspective are two theoretical frames used to guide the research questions, data collection, discussion of the findings, and most importantly they influenced which concepts from the field of education and TESOL have been chosen in the literature review (Ravitch & Carl, 2016). Critical theory heavily influenced the data collection process as critical reflection was a

fundamental part of collecting data on culturally responsive pedagogy. The theory of agency from the ecological perspective influenced understandings of various contexts, environments, experiences, and relationships as forces in shaping teachers' actions. Thus, these two theories are brought together to "frame and conceptualize the domain and focus of inquiry and setting and context that shape its exploration (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 46).

Critical Theory

Critical theory is one of the theoretical approaches often adopted in qualitative research. It "examines the current structure of society, in which dominant socioeconomic groups exploit and oppress subordinate groups" (deMarrais & LeCompte, 1998, p. 27). It originates from the work of the Frankfurt School, a group of social theorists and philosophers who worked at the Institute for Social Research in Germany between 1923 and 1950 (deMarrais & LeCompte, 1998). However, it is the work of Paulo Freire, another influential critical theorist based in Brazil, who demonstrated how critical theory can be practiced in educational contexts to challenge "the constraints and inequalities of traditional institutions" (deMarrais & LeCompte, 1998, p. 30). Freire's work centered on critical consciousness, the goal of education that is practiced through critical dialogue and critical reflection (Freire, 1993).

According to deMarrais and LeCompte (1998), critical researchers seek to challenge oppressive systems, believe that reality is socially constructed and that knowledge can be a source of inequality, encourage critical reflection, advocate for emancipation from the oppressive state, and call for social action. Scholars who use the critical theory approach in qualitative research employ various research methodologies to

explore power relations; social relationships of inequality, injustice, and exploitation; as well as class, race, gender, sexual, cultural, and religious oppressions. They look for the ways power and oppression influence everyday life and human experience. They are interested in “uncovering social structures, discourses, ideologies, and epistemologies that prop up both the status quo and a variety of forms of privilege” (McLaren & Kincheloe, 1994, p. 306). Some of the major concepts found in the studies are: “resistance, human agency, oppression, hegemony, domination, stratification of power, and deconstruction” (McLaren & Kincheloe, 1994, p. 306).

Drawing on critical theory, especially on Paulo Freire’s work, this study focused on understanding the social, historical, and contextual conditions of constraints and teachers’ work in promoting culturally inclusive classroom environment. Thus, the research goal was to bring awareness to the issue of power and agency in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The exploration of language teachers’ agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy through critical reflection via interviews and journal writing may potentially shed light on the challenges language teachers face in supporting ELLs and the actions they take (or choose not to take) to advocate for their diverse students. This study used a critical lens in learning how “teachers recognize that inclusive practices are not isolated from the structural and cultural contexts of their workplace that might encourage or impede such practices” (Pantić & Florian, 2015, p. 345).

Ecological Approach to Agency

This research study also incorporated an ecological approach to agency that sees it as being achieved in various settings and shaped by various experiences (Priestley, Edwards, & Priestley, 2012). Biesta and Tedder (2007) explained that:

This concept of agency highlights that actors always act by means of their environment rather than simply in their environment . . . the achievement of agency will always result in the interplay of individual efforts, available resources and contextual and structural factors as they come together in particular and, in a sense, always unique situations. (p. 137)

This study utilized a triad of the iterational (past), projective (future imaginings) and the practical-evaluative (present) elements of agency that describe an individual's engagement with a variety of experiences (Priestley et al., 2015). This study highlighted aspects of each teacher's educational setting, social relationships, and personal and professional experiences that allow me to infer how the ecology of each context shapes teachers' sense of agency in promoting culturally responsive practices. This perspective on agency allowed for learning whether and how teachers act counter to institutional, societal, or political constraints when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students, how they are enabled or constrained by their institutional or social environments, how they act to change their classroom instruction and relationships in order to be more culturally responsive, and how they engage in societal transformation (Biesta & Tedder, 2007).

After explaining the theoretical framework, it is crucial to discuss three overarching concepts in the literature that pertain to the topic of this research study, such

as culturally responsive pedagogy, critical reflection, and teacher identity and agency.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Students differ in culture, ethnicity, language, and many other aspects, especially in ESL classrooms. As schools become more diverse, ESL teachers, more than ever, have to address the needs of English language learners by employing culturally responsive teaching practices. However, He (2013) stated, “Teacher candidates are not well prepared with sufficient knowledge, disposition and skills to build upon the ‘funds of knowledge’ of ELLs and their families” (p. 57). Pettit (2011) added, “Many teachers hold deficit beliefs toward the ELLs in their classrooms” (p. 124). This section offers a literature review on culturally responsive teaching, some of the concerns of promoting culturally responsive practices found in qualitative and quantitative studies, research focused on ESL teachers’ promotion of culturally responsive teaching, and suggestions for improving culturally responsive teaching practices.

Culture, Language Learning, and Teaching

Culture and learning are interrelated. These concepts are especially important in language teaching (Byram & Grundy, 2003; Ford et al., 2014; Gay, 2002; Hinkel, 1999). According to Gay (2002), “Culture encompasses many things, some of which are more important for teachers to know than others because they have direct implications for teaching and learning. Among these are ethnic groups’ cultural values, traditions, communication, learning styles, contributions, and relational patterns” (p. 107). Hall (1976) and Hanley (1999) contributed significantly to our understanding of the notion of culture by explaining the iceberg model of culture that distinguished between surface and deep culture values. Hall (1976) coined the term of cultural iceberg model that represents

visible and invisible aspects of culture. The surface culture is what we can see, hear, or touch, for example, language, literature, music, dancing, dress, or food. The deep culture encompasses what is invisible, such as concepts of beauty, motivation, a definition of friendship or love, a notion of courtesy, body language, personal space, or a concept of time. These include the unspoken rules of social interaction and attitudes that vary across cultures. Hanley (1999) highlighted that these invisible values are the most meaningful parts of culture. Hinkel (1999) and Porto (2010) referred to the iceberg metaphor of culture in discussing language education. Hinkel (1999) noted that the notion of culture relates to social norms, worldviews, beliefs, assumptions, and value systems that influence aspects of second language use, teaching, and learning. ELLs' home cultural experiences can effectively mediate L2 acquisition. For this reason, Porto (2010) called for awareness-raising tasks for language educators in order to recognize the centrality of culture in language education, such as reflecting on the notion of culture, engaging in open dialogue about culture, and building cultural responsiveness in the diverse language classrooms. When ESL teachers understand "the social, cultural, and language backgrounds of ELLs, it is more likely that the ESL teachers will adapt the academic content and pedagogy to the ELLs' needs" (Arongna, 2017, p. 146). However, the research reveals that some teachers hold a deficit view of ELL students and their cultures. For example, Manning and Baruh (2009) commented that, "Students who are culturally different are thought of as 'deprived', 'disadvantaged', and 'socially deprived' only because their behavior, language, and customs are different" (p. 47). For this reason, we need culturally responsive teachers who can "understand these cultural differences and then respond with appropriate teaching behaviors" (Manning & Baruh, 2009, p. 135). It is

essential now to describe culturally responsive pedagogy and characteristics of culturally responsive teachers.

Defining Culturally Responsive Teaching

A wide range of terms exists in the literature that illustrate the pedagogical approaches of validating students' home cultures in instruction and curriculum. Some of these terms are funds of knowledge (Gonzalez et al., 2005; Moll & Gonzalez, 1997), multicultural education (Banks, 2014; Nieto, 1999), culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995), culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2002), culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012), and culturally proactive pedagogy (Garcia & O'Donnell-Allen, 2015). The primary term that is used in this study is culturally responsive pedagogy; however, it is useful to explain these terms in order to have a better understanding of efforts that address nurturing marginalized students' diversity in schools.

Moll and Gonzalez (1997) introduced the concept of funds of knowledge that described the importance of the cultural, linguistic, and intellectual resources that students bring into the classrooms. They highlight that families have abundant knowledge that teachers should use in teaching in order to improve students' learning of new skills and concepts. The research revealed that teachers who integrate students' funds of knowledge in their teaching improve students' school performance, classroom relationships, and family relations (Llopart & Esteban-Guitart, 2018). Rodriguez (2013) conducted an analysis of the literature representing the practice of funds of knowledge in the classrooms and highlighted that teachers who tapped into students' funds of knowledge saw beyond stereotypes and made efforts to understand the knowledge and

skills found in students' households and communities. This research review shows three major themes in pedagogical approaches to tap into students' funds of knowledge:

(a) engaging students in the co-construction of knowledge to deepen or extend academic knowledge through funds of knowledge; (b) recognizing and encouraging the utilization within the classroom of multiple funds of knowledge among students, including home/family funds of knowledge as well as youth and popular culture funds of knowledge; and (c) moving beyond solely the connection between student/family/community funds of knowledge and academic content and instruction to a process of classroom transformation involving the reorientation of both teachers and students as learners and agents within and beyond the classroom. (Rodriguez, 2013, p. 95)

Banks (2014) and Nieto (1999) are prominent proponents of multicultural education. The main goal of multicultural education is to recognize differences in race, ethnicity, religion, language, economic status, sexual orientation, gender, and other student differences, and to promote academic excellence for all, using antiracist instruction, social justice efforts, critical analysis of the curriculum, and an examination of privilege. Multicultural education refers to teaching practices and strategies that resist White domination and institutional oppression in order to help multicultural students thrive in schools (Banks, 2014). Ovando and Combs (2018) advocated for multicultural education in ESL and bilingual classrooms and asserted that teachers should learn about language minority students' various backgrounds and perspectives, and encourage them

to serve as “cross-cultural informants” (p. 254) who help bridge the cultural gaps in schools.

Culturally relevant pedagogy was introduced by Ladson-Billings (1995) who highlighted the importance of teachers “empowering students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (p. 18). Ladson- Billings (1995) described culturally relevant pedagogy as:

... committed to collective, not merely individual, empowerment.

Culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria or propositions: (a) students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the current status quo of the social order. (p. 160)

This means that teachers who engage in culturally relevant teaching incorporate students’ various backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives in their instruction in order to improve their academic achievement and offer support to students in questioning societal and institutional inequalities (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Gay (2002), on the other hand, coined the term culturally responsive pedagogy and argued that “the academic achievement of ethnically diverse students will improve when they are taught through their own cultural and experiential filters” (p. 106). Gay (2002) continued with explaining five crucial elements of culturally responsive pedagogy. The first element involves teachers building a cultural diversity knowledge base that includes not only awareness of cultural differences but also a deeper understanding of specific cultural characteristics. The second component is concerned

with creating culturally responsive curricula that include effective, high-quality strategies, materials, and activities that validate diverse students' cultures. The third element stresses the importance of being a caring, empathetic teacher and building learning communities to strengthen relationships between the teacher and students. The fourth principal of culturally responsive teaching refers to using effective, cross-cultural communication skills that involve an understanding of different communication styles, learning styles, patterns of task engagement, and organizing tasks. The fifth component relates to the classroom instruction that encompasses matching teaching techniques and learning arrangements to the needs of diverse students.

Researchers who have studied culturally responsive teaching portray a culturally responsive teacher as: “a practitioner that is caring and empathetic, reflective about their attitudes and beliefs about other cultures, reflective about their own cultural frames of reference, and knowledgeable about other cultures” (Rychly & Graves, 2012, p. 48). According to Irvine and Armento (2001), culturally responsive teachers use effective strategies that include connecting students' prior knowledge and cultural experiences to their current school practices, setting high expectations, selecting and aligning instructional materials that reflect students' various cultures, fostering positive classroom climates and positive relationships with students, parents, and the community, promoting experience and perspective sharing, encouraging students to participate in planning instructional activities, and adjusting the curriculum to students' experiences. In addition, Villegas and Lucas (2002) identified six characteristics that define culturally responsive teachers. Such teachers:

1. “are socio-culturally conscious, meaning they recognize that there are multiple ways of perceiving reality and that these ways are influenced by one’s location in the social order;
2. have affirming views of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, seeing resources for learning in all students rather than viewing differences as problems to overcome;
3. see themselves as both responsible for and capable of bringing about educational change that will make schools responsive to all students;
4. understand how learners construct knowledge and are capable of promoting learners’ knowledge construction;
5. know about the lives of their students; and
6. use their knowledge about students’ lives to design instruction that builds on what they already know while stretching them beyond the familiar”. (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. xiv)

Additionally, Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) examined research by Gay (2002), Ladson-Billings (1995), and Nieto (1999) and offered a helpful perspective in understanding culturally responsive pedagogy. They highlighted the importance of incorporating race and racism in the promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy and described five themes of culturally responsive pedagogy: a focus on “a) identity and achievement, b) equity and excellence, c) developmental appropriateness, d) teaching the whole child, and e) student-teacher relationships” (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011, p. 75). The identity and achievement theme emphasizes the importance of encouraging teachers’ and students’ identity development, recognizing diverse cultural heritages, welcoming

multiple perspectives, affirming diversity as an asset, and supporting public validation of home-community cultures in order to improve student success in schools. Teachers who foster culturally responsive pedagogy validate students' various identities and acknowledge that they perceive themselves and others in different ways. While recognizing that, the teachers take time to understand their own identities and dispositions and value students' identities and dispositions as well. In practice, these teachers support students' diverse cultural heritages, provide an inclusive classroom environment, and challenge inequalities in American education. The equity and excellence theme refers to reflecting on one's own dispositions, incorporating multicultural curriculum content, emphasizing equal access, and holding high expectations. Culturally responsive teachers also resist a color-blind approach to teaching. Therefore, teachers provide culturally responsive content that embraces various cultures and promote counter storytelling to question the grand narrative. The developmental appropriateness theme includes varied learning and teaching styles and emphasizes cultural adaptation in students' needs. Teachers who enact culturally responsive pedagogy contest the "dominant, and sometimes racist, non-inclusive ideology that has been institutionalized and legalized in American education" (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011, p. 76) by promising to support students' cultural knowledge; use activities that meet "the cognitive, emotional, social and psychological needs of diverse students" (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011, p. 76); and using a variety of testing options. These teachers recognize that it is crucial to "teach students so that they are able to learn and to transfer such learning in various environments" (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011, p. 76). The teaching the whole learner theme refers to understanding cultural influences that

shape students' identities, making efforts to bridge home, school, and community, including cultural experiences in learning outcomes, supporting learning community in the classroom, and empowering students. Teachers who foster culturally responsive pedagogy "recognize, understand, and intentionally acknowledge cultural group behaviors, but also observe and interact with students as individuals" (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011, p. 77). Such teachers genuinely want to learn about each student, use cultural sensitivity, and connect students' home culture with the school community. The student-teacher relationship theme includes empathy, building meaningful relationships, fostering positive interactions, and developing an inclusive classroom atmosphere. Culturally responsive teachers show considerations and respect to each student, maintain authentic relationships in and outside classroom, and recognize students' different ways of knowing by creating a safe space for expressing thoughts and sharing experiences in the classroom. Therefore, such teachers create a collaborative, empowering, and supportive classroom community. It is crucial teachers use these techniques in the classroom in order to successfully engage in culturally responsive teaching.

Culturally sustaining pedagogy is a recently introduced term in the literature that promotes advocating for diversity and equality in education. Paris (2012) argued that teachers should resist White domination in the curriculum and "embrace cultural plurality and cultural equality" (p. 93). Culturally sustaining pedagogy describes teaching that promotes sustaining "linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism" (p. 95), which means teachers need to challenge systemic inequalities and support marginalized students in preserving their cultural heritage. It is worth noting that this view on cultural pluralism in education emphasizes that teachers should connect learning to the life histories of

students' and their communities where students can explore other cultures but also sustain their own valuable languages, identities, practices, and knowledge (Paris, 2012).

The newly introduced term in the field of language and literacy is culturally proactive pedagogy coined by Garcia and O'Donnell-Allen (2015). They extended the previous research on culturally responsive pedagogy and argued that when pre-service teachers are adequately prepared to take on roles as culturally proactive teachers, they reflect on their teaching and analyze students' needs in order to enhance their teaching practice. Such teachers see themselves as hackers, agents for civic action, reflective writers, curators of curriculum, and designers. It means that, firstly, teachers need to focus on an inquiry-stance approach in their teaching that aims at looking deeply at own teaching practices, dispositions, and broader social practices and promotes inclusive learning environments. Secondly, teachers need to encourage civic engagement and challenge ideological forms of knowledge by creating a safe space in the classroom and curricula that supports criticality, collaboration, dialogue, and civic participation. Additionally, teachers need to embrace their inner writer through engaging in habitual reflective writing practices on their teaching, frustrations, and experiences. Then, teachers need to take a more active role in curriculum design that reflects diverse students' needs and recognizes students' emotional and physical spaces. Lastly, teachers need to cultivate criticality in the classrooms by selecting engaging reading texts as well as giving students opportunities to select their own texts that foster passion for learning, community engagement, and identity development.

To sum up, there are many terms in the literature that contribute to the understanding of the importance of advocating for and supporting diverse students in

schools and communities. They differ in some ways, and the distinct differences are visible in the terminology. For example, funds of knowledge refers to students' rich cultural knowledge, multicultural education focuses on a variety of differences among students, and culturally relevant/responsive pedagogy refers to connecting teaching to students' cultures, whereas culturally sustaining pedagogy centers on cultural heritage preservation. On the other hand, culturally proactive pedagogy centers on preparing effective, creative teachers who anticipate students' cultural differences and needs when planning and teaching. Nevertheless, all of these approaches denote the importance of teachers validating students' various experiences and backgrounds in teaching, challenging current Eurocentric/ethnocentric practices in schools in order to improve student academic achievement, and empowering teachers and students to be cultural advocates in their schools and communities.

Even though there is newly introduced terminology, this study focuses on culturally responsive pedagogy because it relates to my personal experience in teaching adult ESL students and ample research has been conducted to explain its importance and effectiveness in teaching diverse students. Thus, the research on culturally responsive pedagogy deeply impacted my teaching philosophy, mainly Gay's (2002) five principles of culturally responsive pedagogy: a) "developing a cultural diversity knowledge base; b) designing culturally responsive curricula; c) demonstrating cultural caring and building a learning community; d) cross-cultural communication; and e) cultural congruity in classroom instruction" (p. 106). In this research study, these principles form a basis for understanding how culturally responsive teachers learn about their students, develop caring relationships, validate their cultural differences, empower them to be critical,

cultural activists in school and communities while cultivating their academic success, and create equitable classroom spaces. Also, the choice of the term is evident in other research that reveals a strong interconnection between culturally responsive teaching and critical self-reflection (explained in the next chapter). It is vital to refer to Gay and Kirkland (2003) who highlighted that interrelation and explained that culturally responsive teaching focuses not only on using students' cultural backgrounds, personal experiences, and diverse perspectives as filters through which to teach diverse students, but also promotes challenging inequality and privilege, and fosters shared learning about each other. It is worth noting, however, that many studies refer to both culturally responsive and relevant teaching when discussing the importance of culturally inclusive pedagogical practices in teaching diverse learners.

Importance of Culturally Responsive Practices

As the above review of varied terminology and approaches to cultural diversity in classrooms in the scholarly literature has demonstrated, many scholars underscore the importance of using culturally inclusive pedagogical practices that address the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. This section examines several research studies that illustrate the value of culturally responsive teaching. Milner (2010), for instance, conducted a qualitative study to investigate how one teacher promoted culturally relevant practices to foster cultural competence in a diverse urban classroom. He concluded that the teacher fostered meaningful and genuine relationships with students, recognized his and students' multiple identities, worked towards changing students' negative views about him, and interacted with the students outside the classroom. His culturally responsive strategies "helped him build cultural competence

with the goal being to develop optimal learning opportunities for all students” (p. 87). In addition, Moore and Lewis (2012) interviewed an African American teacher at an urban school to get a better understanding of his culturally relevant practices. That teacher used successful culturally relevant strategies that included making his instruction and curriculum relevant to students’ daily lives and experiences, holding high expectations and emphasizing the importance of learning, ensuring students viewed him positively, promoting a climate of fairness and consistency, connecting with students inside and outside the classroom, acknowledging students’ desires, wants and needs, and playing music in the classroom to foster a welcoming classroom environment. Moore and Lewis (2012) concluded that “teachers must work to develop classroom contexts that validate who students are; classrooms that allow students to build the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for academic success, social success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness” (p. 158).

When teachers incorporate culturally responsive teaching practices, they positively impact student outcomes, motivation, and attitudes. This claim is illustrated in Aronson and Laughter’s (2016) research review on culturally responsive practices across content areas in the K-12 education. They concluded that culturally responsive teachers make concepts more relevant to students’ cultural experiences and personal lives; as a result, they make learning more meaningful and positively impact students’ understanding. Promoting culturally responsive practices brings increases to students’ awareness of sociopolitical issues, contributes to improving their critical thinking skills, and strengthens relationships among students and the teacher which can enhance students’ learning. The teachers who connect students’ various life experiences and

cultural backgrounds to the content they teach contribute to students' willingness to consider new perspectives, as well as increasing their motivation, interest and engagement in the curriculum. Even though existing research points to the benefits of using culturally responsive pedagogy in diverse classrooms, some teachers struggle with promoting culturally responsive practices. The next section offers a discussion of challenges teachers experience in enacting culturally responsive pedagogy.

Challenges in Enacting Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

While there is a critical need for developing effective culturally responsive educators who can address the needs of culturally, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students, some teachers lack the skills, knowledge, time, and support to embrace cultural diversity in schools (Kea et al., 2006). Sleeter (2012) raised concerns about current practices of standardizing curricula and pedagogy that can negatively affect the successful promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy. She presented three factors that contribute to the marginalization of culturally responsive pedagogy. One of the factors is a simplistic understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy. She argued that culturally responsive pedagogy is confused with simply incorporating cultural celebrations in the classrooms or that culturally responsive strategies are not well understood or implemented in the classrooms. The second factor that contributes to the marginalization of culturally responsive pedagogy is that there is still insufficient research that connects this pedagogy to student learning outcomes. Finally, she argued that current pressures in education contribute to the marginalization of culturally responsive pedagogy. Standardization of curricula and testing maintain institutional and social hegemony instead of nurturing students' diversity. Therefore, teachers encounter various challenges

in enacting culturally responsive pedagogy, and it is worth discussing some findings from the qualitative and quantitative research studies.

Numerous qualitative studies have been conducted to explore difficulties teachers experience in fostering culturally responsive pedagogy in their classrooms. Young (2010), for instance, used a qualitative approach to examine eight educators' culturally relevant practices in an urban school. They had different positions within the school and differed in experience, age, and discipline of expertise. She concluded that teachers were conflicted about integrating traditional teaching, standardized curriculum, high-stakes testing, and culturally relevant practices. Some teachers struggled with incorporating discussions on social inequalities and sociopolitical issues, using multicultural literature, and using activities other than just holiday themes to build relationships with diverse students. Also, lack of time for lesson planning and knowledge of successful application of the culturally relevant practices contributed to educators selecting a traditional curriculum over culturally relevant pedagogy. This research revealed that the participants were frustrated with incorporating culturally relevant teaching into their classrooms, and the authors concluded that it may be due to ineffective teacher preparation programs and professional development programs.

Lew and Nelson (2016) conducted another qualitative research to investigate novice teachers' understanding of culturally relevant teaching, classroom management, and assessment. The study revealed that teachers had only a surface level knowledge of culturally relevant practices as "some participants mentioned that CRT is a pedagogy that incorporated cultural elements in the lessons but failed to elaborate on how learning can build on cultural strength" (p. 9). The participants also reported that they either had

insufficient or ineffective professional development training that referred to promoting culturally relevant teaching. Furthermore, Rozansky (2010) conducted a qualitative case study to examine a middle school teacher's understanding and implementation of culturally relevant pedagogy. The study's findings showed that the teacher had an understanding of how to apply culturally relevant practices; however, she rarely made connections between students' cultural experiences and the curriculum. The challenges of classroom management affected her implementation of culturally relevant practices and contributed to students' lack of engagement. Nelson and Guerra (2014) conducted another qualitative study that reported on educators' beliefs about diverse students and families. This study illustrated that the majority of educators had a general awareness of culture; however, many of them "held deficit beliefs about culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse students" (p. 35), and some of them "had inadequate cultural knowledge to recognize and respond to culture conflicts" (p. 36). The authors concluded that these educators are not consistent in applying culturally responsive practices, and preparation as well as in-service professional development is crucial in developing culturally responsive educators. However, it requires "a transformative journey that takes educators beyond cultural awareness and knowledge to a place where deficit beliefs and practices can be explored, challenged, and changed" (Nelson & Guerra, 2014, p. 90).

Even though the literature on culturally responsive pedagogy points to its importance in promoting a positive learning environment, the above research studies demonstrate that teachers encounter difficulties when they engage in culturally responsive teaching. These challenges closely relate to the statement of the problem in chapter one. For example, teachers struggle with promoting culturally responsive

practices because of lack of knowledge (Lew & Nelson, 2016; McKoy et al., 2017; Sleeter, 2012; Young, 2010) and that may stem from ineffective teacher education (McCluskey, 2012; Samson & Collins, 2012). These challenges are also connected to the institutional pressures that teachers experience (Mette et al., 2016; Morrison et al., 2008; Sleeter, 2012; Young, 2010) and that may be associated with maintaining societal, cultural, and institutional hegemony in education (Sleeter, 2012; Wiggan, 2012). These challenges also show a lack of teacher engagement in enacting culturally responsive practices (Nelson & Guerra, 2014) and that may relate to the concerns of White privilege discussed by Kendall (2016). The next section focuses on research in TESOL that illustrates the promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy and the challenges language teachers experience when engaging in culturally responsive practices.

Research on Language Teachers' Promotion of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Numerous authors and researchers stress the importance of promoting culturally responsive pedagogy in teaching languages (Ford et al., 2014; Guy, 1999; Howard, 2003; Kagle, 2013; Kikanza et al., 2012; Rychly & Graves, 2012); however, a limited number of studies have been conducted on culturally responsive teaching in the English as a Second Language classroom. ESL teachers should use creative and inclusive teaching strategies in order to reach “marginalized immigrants who are a group in need of compassion, validation, and empowerment to learn and grow in their brave new world” (Johnson & Owen, 2013, p. 28). Waxman and Tellez (2002) referred to Rivera and Zehler’s (1991) research and stated:

Some benefits of culturally responsive instruction for ELLs are that it a)
improves the acquisition and retention of new knowledge by working from

students' existing knowledge base, b) improves self-confidence and self-esteem by emphasizing existing knowledge, c) increases the transfer of school-taught knowledge to real life, and d) exposes students to knowledge about other individuals or cultural groups. (pp. 18-19)

Some studies focus on exploring teachers' culturally responsive practices in teaching ESL in K-12 settings. Aronson and Laughter (2016), for instance, explained that fostering culturally responsive teaching is essential in the ESL classrooms. Their research indicates that ESL teachers who embrace diversity in the classrooms to meet the needs of the ELLs foster positive attitudes, increased motivation, and self-esteem. When teachers were promoting culturally responsive practices in ESL classrooms, "students overcame the misalignment of cultural expectations and practices" (p. 198). In addition, Rowsell et al. (2007) conducted focus groups with teachers in an urban, diverse elementary school about using culture to mediate ESL teaching. They stated that "in order for minoritised students to feel culturally validated, inclusion must go beyond representation of specific cultural practices and towards a more holistic approach to education that understands all of the children as coming from backgrounds that bring specific and valid knowledges to the school" (p. 141). The findings of this study revealed that teachers used cultural and religious celebrations and diverse materials that related to students' experiences and backgrounds in order to create inclusive classrooms; however, Rowsell et al. (2007) highlighted that teachers need to go beyond celebrating ethnic holidays and should build stronger relationships with parents and community. Another qualitative study described the experience of a bilingual paraprofessional who worked with Latino students in the ESL classroom (Wortham & Contreras, 2002). That participant used culturally relevant

strategies such as creating a warm, communal feeling in the classroom, developing students' pride in their home cultures, and giving personal attention to each student. The findings revealed that such strategies have a positive effect on students as they are more engaged in the curriculum and have fewer behavior problems.

In addition, Parhar and Sensoy (2011) used interviews to examine ESOL teachers' perceptions of culturally responsive teaching in K-12 education. The findings reveal that participants validated students' diverse backgrounds and experiences; however, participant responses also revealed challenges teachers face in exercising agency to enact culturally responsive pedagogies. Many of the obstacles they face relate to structural or institutional constraints, such as limited school decision-making, little community-based involvement, lack of creativity and criticality in the classrooms due to imposed standardized testing, scarce resources to assist culturally diverse students and families, and lack of time for sustained opportunities for professional development. Dantas-Whitney and Waldschmidt (2009) also examined ESOL teachers' views in professional development programs that were designed to develop their cultural consciousness. That qualitative study revealed that the ESOL teachers who participated in the study put an emphasis on teaching language skills and avoided "examining larger social, political, cultural, economic factors that are behind ELLs' responses to the classroom context" (p. 69).

As far as culturally responsive pedagogy in adult ESL is concerned, researchers have used quantitative and qualitative research methods to find out how adult ESL instructors enact culturally responsive pedagogy. Rhodes (2013), for instance, conducted a quantitative research study on culturally responsive practices of 430 adult education

ESOL (English as a Second or Other Language) and EAP (English for Academic Purposes) teachers. The survey answers revealed that the most frequent practices used were providing feedback to students, eliciting students' experience in reading activities, comparing students' cultures with the U.S. culture, and making an effort to get to know students' families and backgrounds. However, rarely did these teachers supplement the curriculum with diverse materials, spend time outside classroom to learn about students' cultures and languages, and ask students for input when planning lessons and activities. The study revealed that there were some culturally responsive teaching practices that were not regularly used, such as including students' voices in the learning process and promoting learner autonomy and self-directedness. The responses also show that "adult education ESOL and EAP teachers did not include lessons about anti-immigrant discrimination or bias" (p. 81), which indicates a lack of addressing topics of inequality and oppression in their classrooms.

Johnson and Chang (2012), on the other hand, conducted classroom observations and interviews with adult ESL teachers in community programs to understand how culturally responsive teaching was addressed in their ESL classrooms. The findings of that qualitative study show that ESL instructors implemented culturally responsive teaching strategies; for example, they used activities for connecting students' culture with American culture and included students' lived experiences in the discussions. However, the authors concluded that it was crucial that ESL instructors be cautious about relying on surface culture values when teaching diverse learners, and instead be "reflective practitioners who monitor, evaluate, and revise their teaching style" (p. 21) on a continuous basis. It was also noted that adult ESL teachers faced challenges in enacting

culturally responsive pedagogy, such as fear of making students uncomfortable or igniting tensions among different students during discussions, but they continued to strive for creating inclusive classroom environments in their classrooms. Collins and Dytynyshyn (2012), in addition, used video recordings and transcripts of classroom interactions to investigate interculturality in one adult ESL classroom in urban Quebec. Based on the study's results, the authors could not conclude whether or not the ESL teacher promoted interculturality since she fostered close relationships but avoided cultural exchanges in the classrooms. Moreover, Arongna's (2017) qualitative case study explored four adult ESL teachers' perceptions and implementation of the culturally relevant pedagogy. The participants indicated that they did not have a sufficient knowledge base about culturally relevant practices. The findings revealed that the participants avoided incorporating students' cultures into the classroom environment to minimize student embarrassment as well as cultural and religious tensions. They mostly stayed away from sensitive topics. They also struggled with connecting the academic learning to the ELLs' culture and experience. On the other hand, the adult ESL teachers made efforts to take the students' cultures and religion into consideration in their instruction, for example, by "organizing field trips, selecting authentic materials, and grouping students for collaborative tasks" (p. 145).

The studies in TESOL emphasize the importance of going beyond cultural celebrations to a genuine engagement and support for student diversity in teaching and learning (Rowse et al., 2017); however, similar to findings from the studies in general education, they also indicated that teachers struggle with enacting culturally responsive pedagogy and have insufficient knowledge or simplistic understanding of culturally

responsive pedagogy (Arongna, 2017; Dantas-Whitney & Waldschmidt, 2009; Rhodes, 2013), lack support (Bickley et al., 2014; Parhar & Sensoy, 2011), or feel incapable (Collins & Dytynyshyn, 2012) to improve their culturally responsive practices.

Therefore, it is crucial to provide an overview of successful culturally responsive practices below. In addition, providing professional development, giving more time and space for teacher collaborations, and engaging in the community may contribute to a better understanding and implementation of culturally responsive teaching practices. A few solutions will be discussed further.

Culturally Responsive Practices

The research indicated that some teachers promote culturally responsive pedagogy successfully while others do not. Basically, ESL teachers should be cautious in focusing on teaching only language skills and avoiding discussions on cultural differences during their instruction. Incorporating only cultural holiday and celebration activities is ineffective in promoting culturally responsive teaching (Arongna, 2017; Dantas-Whitney & Waldschmidt, 2009; Rowsell et al., 2007). Building strong relationships with students and their parents, making instruction relevant to students' backgrounds, engaging students in experience sharing, and using materials that reflect students' various cultures are more effective strategies in promoting culturally responsive teaching (Collins & Dytynyshyn, 2012; Dantas-Whitney & Waldschmidt, 2009; Irvine & Armento, 2001; Moore & Lewis, 2012; Rhodes, 2013; Rowsell et al., 2007). It is also crucial that teachers build a welcoming classroom environment where students can engage in critical thinking, deep discussion, and perception sharing (Irvine & Armento, 2001; Milner, 2010; Moore & Lewis, 2012; Rowsell et al., 2007).

Additionally, Kransnoff (2016) developed a guide for teachers who teach culturally and linguistically diverse students to help them understand practical culturally responsive strategies. The following strategies are adopted from *A Guide to Evidence-Based Practices for Teaching all Students Equitably* (Kransnoff, 2016):

- “Acknowledge students’ differences as well as their commonalities
- Validate students’ cultural identity in classroom practices and instructional materials
- Educate students about the diversity of the world around them
- Promote equity and mutual respect among students
- Foster a positive interrelationship among students, their families, the community, and school
- Motivate students to become active participants in their learning
- Encourage students to think critically
- Challenge students to strive for excellence as defined by their potential” (pp. 19-20)

The Guide to Evidence-Based Practices for Teaching all Students Equitably (Kransnoff, 2016) also specified activities that teachers can use to promote culturally responsive pedagogy, for example:

- “Welcoming students by name as they enter the classroom
- Using eye contact with high- and low- achieving students
- Using proximity with high- and low-achieving students equitably
- Using body language, gestures, and expressions to convey a message that all students’ questions and opinions are important

- Arranging the classroom to accommodate discussion
- Ensuring bulletin boards, displays, instructional materials, and other visuals in the classroom reflect students' racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds
- Using a variety of visual aids and props to support student learning
- Learning, using, and displaying some words in students' heritage language
- Modeling the use of graphic organizers
- Using class building and team building activities to promote peer support for academic achievement
- Using random response strategies
- Using cooperative learning structures.
- Structuring heterogeneous and cooperative groups for learning
- Using probing and clarifying techniques to assist students to answer
- Acknowledging all students' comments, responses, questions, and contributions
- Seeking multiple perspectives
- Using multiple approaches to consistently monitor students' understanding of instruction, directions, procedures, processes, questions, and content
- Identifying students' current knowledge before instruction
- Using students' real-life experiences to connect school learning to students' lives
- Using "wait time" to give students time to think before they respond to teachers' questions
- Asking students for feedback on the effectiveness of instruction
- Providing students with the criteria and standards for successful task completion

- Giving students effective, specific oral and written feedback that prompts improved performance.
- Providing multiple opportunities to use effective feedback to revise and resubmit work for evaluation against the standard
- Explaining and modeling positive self-talk
- Asking higher order questions equitably of high- and low-achieving students
- Providing individual help to high- and low-achieving students” (Kransnoff, 2016, pp. 4-7)

In addition to *The Guide to Evidence-Based Practices for Teaching all Students Equitably*, many helpful resources are available online that can help teachers gain a better understanding of culturally responsive teaching. Some of them are located at the National Education Association website (<http://www.nea.org/archive/16723.htm>), Inclusive Schools Network website (<https://inclusiveschools.org/category/resources/culturally-responsive-instruction/>), and the CEEDAR Center website (<http://www.k12.wa.us/BEST/Symposium/2d.pdf>). Teachers may also find practical activities and strategies that foster culturally responsive classroom environment in recently published books, for example *How to Teach Students Who Don't Look Like You: Culturally Responsive Teaching Strategies* by B. M. Davis (2012) and *From Discipline to Culturally Responsive Engagement: 45 Classroom Management Strategies* by L. E. Pinto (2013). However, in such abundance of resources, teachers may feel overwhelmed or incapable and need other support systems in order to improve in their promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy. This will be discussed in the next section.

Improving Culturally Responsive Teaching

Pre-service ESL teachers attend teacher preparation programs in order to gain knowledge and skills to teach in diverse classrooms. However, some scholars question the effectiveness of teacher education programs to prepare teachers to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students. Mills (2009) noted, “Historically, teacher education programs have aimed to address diversity with add-on or piecemeal approaches, with little success” (p. 278). He (2013) added that even though teacher education programs offer multicultural education courses, they do not offer enough opportunities for students to apply knowledge about cultural competence and have insufficient opportunities to interact with diverse communities. van den Berg (2017) recommended that teacher preparation courses offer not only knowledge in culturally responsive pedagogy but also field-based experiences. He argued that factors that contribute to a better understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy are: “previous experience with diversity, connecting theory and practice, modeling, learning through a community of learners, and critical reflection (p. 2), and emphasized that “becoming a culturally responsive teacher is a time consuming process” (van den Berg, 2017, p. 2). In addition, teachers often have few professional development opportunities that focus on teaching English language learners. A study conducted in California, for example, revealed that teachers in K-12 schools had only one in-service training that centered on the instruction of English language learners. Teachers in that study expressed concerns that EL Teacher Professional Development was poorly executed and information was not practical for teaching ELLs (Gandara et al., 2005). In addition, Cronen et al. (2005) noted that adult ESL instructors “usually receive little or no professional development and teach

in crowded classrooms with limited resources” (p. 1). It is noteworthy now to review what types of efforts have been taken in order to improve culturally responsive teaching in diverse schools.

Researchers argued for improving the promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy. These improvements relate to school culture, community building, professional development, curriculum, assessment, and critical analysis of one’s own teaching and dispositions. Bergeron (2008) and Colbert (2010) highlighted that the administration and staff should provide more support systems for teachers, so they feel more confident and supported in promoting culturally responsive teaching. Some stress that a supportive school environment along with professional development influences teachers to enact culturally responsive practices (Bergeron, 2008; Parhar, 2011). In addition, Morrison et al. (2008) and Ford et al. (2014) argued that teachers should have more opportunities to foster community partnerships that strengthen relationships with their students’ families and to involve their students’ communities. In addition, Hyland (2009) argued for systematic community-based practical experiences and cultural immersion to enhance teachers’ multicultural relationships. Johnson (2010) proposed that teacher transformation in using culturally responsive practices is effective when teachers are involved in building strong relationships, collegial learning, and critical inquiry. For example, Colbert (2010) and Stuart and Volk (2002) advocated for strengthening teachers’ collaborations that involves joint problem solving, critical dialogue, and intentional work on culturally responsive activities. Brooks and Adams (2015) suggested building professional learning communities and engaging in deep conversations, self-reflection, problem solving, and action research to transform teachers’ culturally

responsive practices. In addition, Gunderson et al. (2014) and Wiggan (2012) called for teachers to resist Eurocentric curricula that suppresses students' unique identities and promotes cultural stereotypes and instead encouraged teachers to use creative strategies to diversify materials that match students' backgrounds and needs. Montenegro and Jankowski (2017) also argued that teachers should also consciously evaluate assessment methods in order to create culturally responsive classroom environment. They argued that "assessment, if not done with equity in mind, privileges and validates certain types of learning and evidence of learning over others, can hinder the validation of multiple means of demonstration, and can reinforce within students the false notion that they do not belong in higher education" (p. 5). In fact, a wide body of research suggests that a teacher's critical self-reflection plays a crucial role in improving culturally responsive practices in diverse classrooms (Brooks & Adams, 2015; Ebersole et al., 2016; Howard, 2003; Lopez, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Conclusion

In conclusion, implementing culturally responsive teaching effectively may be difficult due to lack of time, training, and resources in the classrooms. The research showed that validating students' cultures through incorporating holiday and celebration lessons is not enough to promote culturally responsive teaching. Such practices require that teachers provide a safe space for sharing ideas, perceptions, and experiences, as well as challenging social inequalities in schools. The research studies also indicated that it is critical to support teachers in embracing culturally responsive pedagogy in various ways and on a daily basis through giving them more time and space in order to transform into culturally responsive teachers. This section also revealed that most of the research on

culturally responsive practices has been conducted in the general education field in the K-12 education contexts, and only a handful studies explore culturally responsive practices in the English as a Second Language classrooms. In view of that, this research study fills the void in the literature and offer insights about culturally responsive practices by adult ESL instructors in the United States. The next section focuses on critical pedagogy that engages teachers in critically analyzing oppressive practices in schools and society in order to promote culturally responsive practices more successfully.

Critical Reflection

As noted in the previous section, some research revealed that teacher critical self-reflection is one of the most essential ways to improve culturally responsive practices in diverse classrooms (Brooks & Adams, 2015; Ebersole et al., 2016; Howard, 2003; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). However, critical self-reflection cannot be confused with the traditional view of reflection on practice. Gore and Zeichner (1991) discuss four types of reflection: academic reflection, social efficacy reflection, developmental reflection, and social reconstructivist (critical) reflection. During an academic reflection, a teacher thinks about pedagogical strategies and resources and how they fit students' needs. During a social efficacy reflection, a teacher ponders on evidence-based practice. During a developmental reflection, a teacher evaluates students' skills and his or her suitable instructional modifications. However, during a social reconstructionist (critical) reflection, a teacher critically analyses the purpose of education, power structures, bias and prejudice. Therefore, one needs to keep in mind that the distinction between teacher reflection and critical reflection is that teacher reflection focuses on teachers' teaching practices, and critical reflection takes into consideration political, social, and cultural

conditions that influence students' learning and teachers' work as well as assumptions, biases, and prejudices that impact teachers' actions and interactions. Hoffman-Kipp et al. (2003) argued that "Because teachers work in increasingly diverse schools where equity issues, multiple contradictory reforms, and power differentials abound, reflection defined as a technical and isolated skill is insufficient to support meaningful teacher learning" (p. 248). This section focuses on critical reflection, a fundamental part of teacher transformation. Critical pedagogy is explained, followed by a discussion on the connection between and importance of critical pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching, research conducted on implementing critical reflection in teacher education, and a description of reflective practices to transform teaching.

Defining Critical Pedagogy

Paulo Freire advocated for critical pedagogy in his publication *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1993). For Freire, schooling should focus more on critical thinking, self-reflection, and imagination. In critical classrooms, teachers question existing knowledge and power structures, encourage curiosity, and pose solutions to problems in order to empower students (Freire, 1993). A number of researchers and scholars have offered definitions of critical pedagogy that align with the Freirean concept (Giroux, 2010; Kumaravadivelu, 2006, 2012; McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007; Pennycook, 1990). These definitions relate to the notions of empowerment, activism, resistance, equity, liberation, and agency in teaching. For example, McLaren and Kincheloe (2007) and Giroux (2010) highlighted the importance of social critique and social engagement in promoting critical pedagogy. Pennycook (1990) pointed to the need to "reflect upon the ideological principles" (p. 311) that can help teachers to connect their teaching practices with social

issues. Such ideological principles are referred to a current educational policy that promotes student and teacher disengagement, and in that case, critical pedagogy emphasizes sharing of ideas, validation of various experiences, and active participation in the learning process that promote empowerment and emancipation. Kumaravadivelu (2012) also emphasized that critical pedagogists are empowered to “enhance the socioeconomic mobility of students” (p. 34).

Freire (1993) argued that the goal of education is to develop critical consciousness that is practiced through critical dialogue and critical reflection. In such practice, individuals move from accepting their situation to being empowered to take action and change their oppressive state. Dialogue is used to refer to a conversation that elicits critical thinking, invites sharing experiences on oppression, and promotes humility, hope, and mutual trust. Though similar to dialogue, reflection is a meaningful, dialectic process of contemplation that leads to discovery and activism (Freire, 1993). Larrivee (2000) added that critical reflection involves thorough analysis of one’s own beliefs, assumptions, and attitudes. Critically reflective teachers contemplate on their personal dispositions and “challenge assumptions and question existing practices, thereby continuously accessing new lenses to view their practice and alter their perspectives” (p. 29). As such, teacher reflection can lead to critical consciousness, dialogue, and critical pedagogy. It is this connection which I explore in the next section.

Connecting Critical Pedagogy with Culturally Responsive Teaching

Some of the culturally responsive teaching advocates’ views can be associated with critical pedagogy because they promote liberation, empowerment, and critical consciousness as shown in the following quote by one of the most prominent proponents

of culturally responsive teaching:

Culturally responsive teaching simultaneously develops, along with academic achievement, social consciousness and critique; cultural affirmation, competence, and exchange . . . individual self-worth and abilities; and an ethic of caring. It uses [different] ways of knowing, understanding, and representing various ethnic and cultural groups in teaching academic subjects, processes, and skills. It cultivates cooperation, collaboration, reciprocity, and mutual responsibility for learning among students, and between students and teachers. It incorporates high-status, cultural knowledge about different ethnic groups in all subjects and skills taught . . . Thus, [it] validates, facilitates, liberates, and empowers ethnically diverse students by . . . cultivating their cultural integrity, individual abilities, and academic success. (Gay, 2010 as cited in Gay 2013, p. 51)

Therefore, Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011), Gay (2002, 2010, 2013), Howard (2003), Ladson-Billings (1994,1995), Milner (2011), Nieto (2009), Rychly and Graves (2012), and Villegas and Lucas (2002) see culturally responsive teaching from a critical lens and argue that culturally responsive teachers are critical individuals who seek to transform oppressive structures of schooling and instruction through validating culturally and ethnically diverse students' backgrounds, experiences, and perspectives.

Significance of Critical Reflection in Promoting Culturally Responsive Teaching

It is evident that culturally responsive pedagogy is connected with critical pedagogy, and critical reflection is a part of critical pedagogy and plays a central role in

an effective promotion of culturally responsive teaching. Some scholars stress the significance of critical reflection on racial and cultural differences to develop culturally responsive teachers (Howard, 2003; Liu, 2015; Milner, 2003; Mette et al., 2016; Rychly & Graves, 2012). Howard (2003), for example, argued that, “Critical reflection should include an examination of how race, culture, and social class shape students’ thinking, learning, and various understandings of the world” (p. 197). Mette et al. (2016) also added that a deep contemplation on one’s own identity and experiences can contribute to raising the awareness of a teacher’s own deficit views on diverse students. It is also important to remember the following argument:

Critical reflection is a personal and challenging look at one's identity as an individual person and as an active professional. Facilitation of this process must be sensitive and considerate to the lived experiences that people bring to their current time and space. The purpose of critical reflection should not be to indict teachers for what they believe and why it does not work for students. It is a process of improving practice, rethinking philosophies, and becoming effective teachers for today's ever changing student population. (Howard, 2003, p. 17)

Rychly and Graves (2012) also noted that teachers need to evaluate their own assumptions, perspectives, and attitudes first to become effective culturally responsive teachers. Teachers should analyze their own and their students’ cultures and avoid making generalizations or stereotyping to address the needs of all students. They explained that teachers should be prepared and supported to engage in critical reflection as a personal process and argued that culturally responsive teachers should observe and

listen to diverse students' needs, adjust their teaching methods based on these needs, include students' cultural backgrounds and perspectives in the instruction, and continuously learn about students' differences. The study also highlighted that such actions can be facilitated through teacher reflection. In addition, Liu (2015) argued that critical reflection has to focus on evaluating assumptions and relating one's own dispositions to societal practices and such reflection may encourage activism for a more just society. Critical reflection, then, contributes to taking action in changing the oppressive reality in schools and society as proposed by Freire (1993). Chen et al. (2009) added that those teachers who feel empowered to act "must first and foremost develop a strong understanding of their own biases, identity, and cultural beliefs. Because beliefs and biases influence what we choose to ignore or act on, it is important for teachers to reflect on their family values, how they were raised, and what behaviors they view as acceptable or not acceptable" (p. 102).

Some scholars make similar suggestions on teacher critical self-reflection, but underline different aspects of critical self-reflection. For example, Howard (2003), Liu (2015), and Mette et al. (2016) pinpointed that the reflection on culturally responsive practices should be done on a regular basis. Chen et al. (2009), Howard (2003), and Mette et al. (2016) also remind us that critical self-reflection should involve examining one's own cultural identities and questioning one's own assumptions. Howard (2003) and Rychly and Graves (2012) also stressed that students' lived experiences and characteristics should be at the center of critical self-reflection in order to deeply understand cultural differences. Howard (2003), Liu (2015), and Rychly and Graves (2012) added another important piece to the understanding of effective critical self-

reflection: agency. The goal of critical self-reflection is to develop teachers as active agents for improving their teaching, relationships, classroom environment, and student achievement, and critical self-reflection can “contribute to the development of a consciousness that is emancipatory and has social and cultural relevance” (Howards, 2003, p. 200). However, Howard (2003) and Rychly and Graves (2012) made an important point that the critical self-reflection process should be facilitated and supported in order to be effective. While discussing the significance of critical reflection to enhance teachers’ understanding of their own dispositions and beliefs about culturally and linguistically diverse students, it is now vital to review studies that discuss critical reflection in teacher education, including teacher preparation and professional development.

Research on Critical Reflection in Language Teacher Education

A number of studies were conducted to examine the importance of reflective practice in language teacher education. Some studies discussed reflective practice in professional development for teaching ELLs (Brooks & Adams, 2015) and improving culturally responsive teaching (Mette et al., 2016). Others focused on reflective practices on teaching in the pre-service language teacher education (Lange, 1990; Richards, 1990; Wallace, 1991; Williams, 1994) while others on the importance of deeper critical reflection on diversity and inequalities (Mok, 1994; Sowa, 2009).

Brooks and Adams (2015) reported on a professional development initiative for teachers who taught English Language Learners. Part of this professional development was involvement in teacher inquiry in which teachers participated in critical conversations, problem solving, and action research as well as engaged in reflective

writing. In that study, participants had to keep a reflection journal that included their assumptions and views on their personal learning. After engaging in a deeper analysis of own dispositions and practices, participants recounted an improved sense of agency for teaching ELL students, transformed their beliefs about ELLs and teaching strategies, and became agents of change who promoted “school and classroom cultures that are more welcoming and supportive of ELLs” (p. 306). For example, teachers reported that engagement in critical reflection made them aware of existing school structures and they felt enabled to challenge inequalities in school. Teachers’ beliefs about ELLs were also transformed. For instance, they reported they had often neglected to build relationships with students, and during the critical reflection process, teachers became more cognizant of students’ needs and were motivated to advocate for their diverse students, such as by improving communication with school administration and district leaders. Involvement in this professional development initiative also facilitated participants’ development into agents of change; for example, teachers formed a parent task force and a shared leadership model for supporting parents of ELLs to engage in school activities.

Moreover, Mette et al. (2016) conducted a study to examine the impact of a professional development program on teachers’ perceptions of culturally relevant practices. Most teachers agreed that the professional development helped them analyze their racial identities, acknowledge cultural differences in the classrooms, enhance their understanding of the value of diversity, and examine pressures connected to school reform efforts. Participants also commented on the usefulness of reflection on students’ backgrounds because it encouraged examining White privilege and issues of institutionalized racism, helped develop genuine, positive relationships with diverse

students, and empowered teachers to address the issues of social justice. More particularly, some researchers argued that the autobiographical narrative as part of teacher professional development is an effective tool for teachers' intercultural learning (Cloonan et al., 2017; Delgado, 1989; Leonardo, 2013; Solorzano & Yosso, 2002). Cloonan et al. (2017), for example, conducted a longitudinal study in twelve schools in Australia and highlighted that teachers who participated in autobiographical narratives were engaged in deep analysis of their personal and professional histories, and such thorough examination offered insights into their diverse cultural identities and revealed stories that were "usually unrecognized and unacknowledged, silent and silenced" (p. 139).

As far as the research in second language teacher education is concerned, reflective practices have focused mainly on language teaching practices. A large body of research illustrates the importance of pre-service language teacher education programs nurturing reflective practices in order to gain a deeper understanding of language teaching (Lange, 1990; Richards, 1990; Wallace, 1991; Williams, 1994). However, Hawkins and Norton (2009) stressed that "because language, culture, and identity are integrally related, language teachers are in a key position to address educational inequality, both because of the particular learners they serve, many of whom are marginalized members of the wider community, and because of the subject matter they teach—language—which can itself serve to both empower and marginalize" (p. 32). Accordingly, Sowa (2009) conducted a study among graduate students in an English as a Second Language methods course to explore reflective practices on teaching linguistically and culturally diverse children. Four themes were developed after analyzing

student surveys, action research projects, reflection papers, and professional working theory papers: 1) a deeper understanding of teaching ELLs; 2) the impact of the course work on teaching; 3) teacher reflection; and 4) impact on teachers' dispositions. The findings of this study revealed that participants acknowledged that they had little understanding of students' needs, and after being engaged in the project, they became more mindful of how they presented material in class and adjusted their instruction in order to accommodate ELLs. Reflection enhanced participants' criticality and transformed their teaching practices and their perceptions about teaching ELLs. For example, participants started consciously examining their teaching strategies and activities and were more open to take students' lived experiences and cultural backgrounds into consideration when planning lessons. They also stressed that their engagement in the project made them more aware of their dispositions, and they learned the importance of patience, communication, and community building in diverse classrooms. Furthermore, Mok (1994) conducted a case study to examine ESL teachers' concerns and changing perceptions. Twelve ESL teachers participated in reflective writing and individual introspective interviews. He argued that the reflection process "must be cyclical and that reflective teaching involves action combined with critical thinking" (p. 96). Five major concerns that Mok (1994) found in teachers' reflective writing related to: "teacher's self-concept (teacher role and teacher-learner relationship); attitudes (towards learners, their L1 and their L1 culture); teaching strategies (decision-making about teaching and feedback to learners); materials used (what and how to use); and expectations of learners (classroom behavior, learning and attitude towards teacher)" (p. 99). During the interviews most of the teachers reported that they had developed their

abilities to address students' needs and difficulties, built trusting and comfortable learning environments, appreciated various cultural backgrounds of their students, addressed cultural differences, and avoided biases in the classroom and that these actions were facilitated through their reflective writing practice.

As the above studies illustrate, research on critical reflection has been conducted in teacher preparation programs and teacher professional development to make stronger connections between teaching theory and practice through teachers' analysis of their teaching and learning. However, incorporating critical reflection in teacher education that aims at improving teachers' culturally responsive pedagogy requires more focus on race, racism, and activism. Gay and Kirkland (2003) argued that many teacher education programs do not focus on offering a space for critical reflection on issues of race, ethnic diversity, and social justice in education. Pre-service teachers, then, often evade reflecting on such issues through avoiding discussing sensitive topics and analyzing their biases, changing the topic when the discussion does arise, feeling guilty about past acts of oppression, and being oblivious to the fact that racism exists in schools. Gay and Kirkland (2003) highlighted that "to engage in these continuous critiques and efforts to make teaching more relevant to diverse students, teachers need to have a thorough understanding of their own cultures and the cultures of different ethnic groups, as well as how this affects teaching and learning behaviors" (p. 182). Pre-service teachers should have more opportunities in their training programs to develop cultural critical consciousness and self-reflection by being involved in guided practice, such as modeling, simulations and role-plays, and working on authentic, real-life examples. Milner (2003), in his publication *Reflection, Racial Competence, and Critical Pedagogy: How Do We*

Prepare Pre-service Teachers to Pose Tough Questions?, asserted that teacher preparation should involve pre-service teachers in deeper critical evaluation of power structures, social inequalities, multiple identities, and privilege in relation to students' lives and needs, and they work towards transforming the society.

The existing research in general education and TESOL that focuses on the promotion of critical reflection in teaching emphasizes the significance of reflecting on one's own values, dispositions, and experiences that influence teachers' work and relationships with diverse students, which in turn can lead to teacher transformation (Brooks & Adams, 2015; Mette et al., 2016; Mok 1994; Saavedra, 1996; Sowa, 2009; Van Halen-Faber, 1997). The reviewed studies also highlight the importance of providing support to ensure effective teacher reflection (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Milner, 2003). Therefore, the next section illustrates practical approaches to engaging teachers in self-reflection in order to transform their teaching and relationships with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Practice of Critical Reflection

This section focuses on some of the reflective prompts and activities that have been used in various studies to advance critical reflection, and ultimately, enhance critical pedagogy. Richards and Lockhart (1994) emphasized that ESL teachers should be engaged in critical reflection that involves “posing questions about how and why things are the way they are, what value systems they represent, what alternatives might be available, and what the limitations are of doing things one way as opposed to another” (p. 4). They propose a few procedures for critical reflection, including teaching journals, lesson reports, surveys and questionnaires, audio and video recordings, observations, and

action research.

Dray and Wisniewski (2011), for instance, stressed the importance of mindfully reflecting on personal beliefs as well as on how teachers communicate with students. They offer a few steps for teachers to take to examine their classroom activities and argued that such critical reflection is a process of developing culturally responsive practices. Firstly, a teacher should engage in examining their judgments and deficit thinking of diverse students and confront their biases in classroom interactions. Then, a teacher should write out and mindfully reflect on his or her feelings and thoughts when working with students. The next step in the process is for teachers to consider alternative explanations by reviewing their own documentation and reflections. After reviewing their own biases, teachers should learn from professionals trained on working with diversity, such as community members, staff, and parents in order to gain more understanding of diverse learners. Collaborating with others who hold different perspectives should lead to the next step: making a plan to change one's classroom environment and one's own actions. The final step is to continually revisit this process to reassess one's own attributions regarding student identities and actions and progress with the students. Such a process aims to "create a culturally and linguistically responsive and supportive learning community that recognizes and celebrates differences" (p. 34).

Farrell (2008) provided an additional lens in discussing reflective practices for teachers of adult English language learners. Three of the approaches he proposed include action research, teaching journals, and teacher development groups. Language teachers may engage in action research independently or in a group, where they collect and interpret data with the purpose of developing an action plan. In doing that, teachers are

encouraged to reflect on what is happening in the classroom on a daily basis. A teaching journal, on the other hand, is an individual activity in which a teacher writes habitually about teaching experience and focuses on analyzing their attitudes, beliefs, and practices. Critical reflection can also take place in a teacher development group that focuses on continuous collaboration and support. Teachers come together to reflect on their work through discussing classroom issues, methodologies, and research.

Rodriguez and McKay (2010) also stressed the value of reflective writing for teachers working with adult English language learners. They suggested engaging in journaling, collaborative teacher portfolio writing, a critical analysis of incidents and case studies, and participating in online professional learning. Journaling is an independent, self-paced, and evolving writing. Working in collaboration with fellow teachers on a teacher portfolio allows for critical dialogue and mutual support. Writing a critical analysis of incidents or case studies directs the attention to a specific issue, concern, or matter. In addition, participating in online professional development sessions helps teachers share perspectives and experiences in order to enhance adult ESL instruction in diverse communities.

The next few pages provide an overview of some scholars' suggestions for specific prompts to engage teachers in analyzing their identities, life histories, values, biases, and attitudes. For example, Chen et al. (2009) designed a self-study tool to help teachers examine their own diversity practices in the classroom. It includes four sections: "self-awareness, physical environment, pedagogical environment, and relationships with families and community" (p. 101). The first section includes questions that engage teachers in self-reflection on their biases, identity, and views. The second section focuses

on reflecting on materials used in the classroom. The third section consists of questions that include “the intended and unintended messages that are conveyed to the learners through the choice and use of language, the curriculum, and teachers’ conscious and unconscious teaching strategies and expectations” (p. 103). The fourth section engages teachers in reflecting on their knowledge about the school community and relationships with parents. Chen et al. (2009) argued that as teachers write journal responses to such prompts, the process can lead to teacher transformation.

Furthermore, Milner (2003) recommended two activities that can be used to promote critical reflection in developing teachers’ self-reflection skills with a particular emphasis on race: critically engaged dialogue and race reflective journaling. He proposed to go beyond reflecting on practice and emphasized reflection on one’s own assumption on race. Through critically engaged dialogue, teachers become aware of “who they are and why they believe what they do” (Milner, 2003, p. 203). Race reflective journaling engages teachers in active analysis of “self-perception, problem-posing, philosophy on creativity and action upon reality” (p. 203). Milner (2003) proposed tracking one’s own reflective process by using a critically reflective chart. This chart includes questions that prompt teachers to think deeper about the intersection of race, privileges, and biases. In addition to Milner’s (2003) suggestions, Howard (2003) noted that “a teacher’s willingness to ask tough questions about their own attitudes towards diverse students can reflect a true commitment that the individual has towards their students’ academic success and emotional well-being” (p. 11). He suggested questions relating to race and prejudice to ponder on, such as:

- a) “How racially diverse were the neighborhoods I grew up in, and the schools I

attended?

b) What types of interactions did I have with individuals from racial backgrounds different from my own?

c) Who were the primary persons that helped to shape my perspectives of individuals from different racial groups? How were their opinions formed?

d) Have I ever harbored prejudiced thoughts towards people from different racial backgrounds?

e) If I do harbor prejudiced thoughts, what effects do such thoughts have on students who come from those backgrounds?

f) Do I create negative racial profiles of individuals who come from different racial backgrounds?

g) How do I work towards establishing an anti-racist mind set and pedagogy?"

(Howard, 2003, p. 9)

In addition to the research on promoting teachers' critical reflection in general education, Pennycook (1990) focused his research on incorporating critical pedagogy in Second Language Education. He highlighted the importance of validating ESL students' cultures and backgrounds, where teachers should reflect on their educational practice by asking themselves these questions:

a) "Under what conditions can induction into a new language and culture be empowering?;

b) What kinds of curricula will allow students to explore critically both the second language and the second culture?;

c) How can one validate and explore students' own cultures and experiences

through the second language?;

d) How can students pose their own problems through the second language?;

e) How can one validate student voice when the means of expression of that voice may be very limited?;

f) How can one work with limited language yet avoid trivializing content and learners?;

g) How does one balance the need to explore critically the forms and implications of standard languages and the need to empower students by teaching that standard language?" (Pennycook, 1990, p. 303)

Conclusion

Promoting culturally responsive teaching effectively may be challenging, especially when such practice requires not only inviting diverse students' cultures into the classrooms but also challenging one's own beliefs and assumptions. Critical reflection is pivotal in developing effective culturally responsive teachers. This activity engages teachers in examination of their racial and cultural identities, values, biases, and prejudices and can lead to both transformation in teaching practices and perceptions that contribute to a more culturally inclusive classroom environment. As a result, continuous critical self-reflection may develop teachers who become agents of change. Gore (1992), however, reminded us that teachers may encounter difficulties in engaging in critical reflection due to insufficient guidelines, resources, or time. In that case, Hawkins and Norton (2009) highlighted that even though teachers face challenges in current standards-based and high-stakes testing teaching contexts, they need to stay committed to social justice and learning equity to ensure student success. Taking that into consideration, the

next crucial component that needs to be analyzed is teacher identity and agency in promoting culturally responsive and equitable learning environment in diverse classrooms.

Teacher Identity and Agency

According to Richards (2008), English language teaching “is not a politically or morally neutral activity” (p. 173). Language teachers play a key role in addressing educational inequalities and privilege. Thus, they should not be solely focused on teaching language but should also be involved in reflection on “ideological forces that are present in their classrooms, schools, and communities” (Richards, 2008, p. 174). This involves understanding their own dispositions, carefully developing curricula, selecting materials, designing activities, and encouraging discussion that raises awareness of power relations and educational inequality. This section delves into complex notions of language teacher identity and agency. First, my perspective on both teacher identity and agency is defined and discussed, followed by a research review of teacher agency and the connection among identity, agency, critical reflection, and culturally responsive pedagogy. The section closes with a discussion on the importance of teachers as agents of change.

Defining Teacher Identity

The research on language teacher identity has increased over the past decade. Walkington (2005) explained that teacher identity “is based on the core beliefs one has about teaching and being a teacher; beliefs that are continuously formed and reformed through experience” (p. 54). Teachers “construct their own ideas of how to be, how to act, and how to understand their work and their place in society. It is negotiated through

experience and the sense that they make of that experience” (Sachs, 2005, p. 15).

Buchanan (2015) added that teacher identity is seen as both a process and a product and is shaped by various social, cultural, historical, and political contexts. Thus, it is created through relationships and is not fixed but instead changes based on interactions and various factors, such as context, experiences, policies, or school culture. Kumaravadivelu (2012) also highlighted that as the world becomes more globalized, teacher identities “are constructed at the complex intersections between individual, social, national, and global realities” (p. 58). Therefore, Buchanan (2015), Kumaravadivelu (2012), Sachs (2005), and Walkington (2005) agree that teacher identity is understood as how teachers define themselves through their experiences and that teacher identity is negotiated throughout their career lives.

Teacher identity development is influenced by personal, educational, professional, and political experiences. Bukor (2013) argued that language teacher identity consisted of interconnected components, such as teacher knowledge and beliefs, professional development, and teacher emotions. Pennington and Richards (2016) also noted the complex relationship between personal, contextual, and professional factors that shaped language teacher identity. Day et al. (2005) also stressed that teacher identity is shaped by personal and professional experiences, and can shift throughout these experiences, in various contexts, and in relation to power structures. In addition, Mockler (2011) argued that teacher identity is formed and mediated through the interaction of three domains: personal experience, professional context, and the external political environment. These domains are dynamic and interwoven, and thus, influence teachers’ professional lives. The domain of the personal experience relates to how the teachers’ personal life

experiences are shaped by their class, race, or gender. The domain of the professional context encompasses various educational contexts such as their teacher training experience, school environment, current education system, or professional development experience. The domain of the external political environment includes “discourses and attitudes surrounding education” (p. 521) that can be experienced through, for example, media and government policies. In addition, Varghese et al. (2005) stated that there are different approaches to analyzing language teacher identity and consolidated them into three perspectives. The first perspective is based on the social identity theory that describes identity as shaped by social categories, such as nationality, race, or class. In that view, identity formation is influenced by power and status relations. The second perspective draws on the theory of situated learning, where identity is formed when an individual is engaged in a community of practice. This perspective draws attention to the social setting in identity development. The third perspective focuses on identity as “image-text,” which points to how teachers’ identities are shaped by relationships between students and teachers. It also draws attention to discourse and language. These three perspectives shed some light on identity being formed through relations and interactions. Mockler (2011) and Varghese et al. (2005) offer an insightful contribution to understanding of teacher identity. Both agree that identity formation is influenced by various lived experiences, contexts, and environments. But, Varghese et al. (2005) also stressed the importance of relationships in the identity development process. It is also noteworthy that these scholars mentioned that identity formation is impacted by power structures, which related to the concerns by Kumaravadivelu (2012) and Ollerhead and

Burns (2016), who described many of the educational, social, and political constraints teachers experience during their teaching careers.

As stated before, professional identities vary among teachers and can change throughout their career lives (Bachanan, 2015; Mockler, 2011; Sachs, 2005; Walkington, 2005; Varghese et al., 2005). Some scholars have conducted studies on teacher identity and provide an insight into the variety of identities teachers exhibit during their professional careers. Farrell (2011), for example, conducted a qualitative study among ESL college teachers and offered a robust discussion on 16 language teacher role identities. He argued that role identities are essential in understanding “beliefs, assumptions, values, and practices that guide teacher actions both inside and outside the classroom” (p. 54). The study revealed that language teachers exhibit professional role identities, such as a manager, vendor, entertainer, communication controller, juggler, motivator, presenter, arbitrator, acculturator, socializer, social worker, careprovider, professional, collaborator, learner, and knowledgeable. Some identity roles are ready-made, while others are individually created. When the identity roles are individually created, the language teachers negotiate them through interactions, for example, as a presenter, a motivator, or a learner. In addition, Kumaravadivelu (2003) discussed three language teacher roles: a passive technician, a reflective practitioner, and a transformative intellectual. The role of the passive technician represents a language teacher who focuses mainly on transferring knowledge and does not explore new ways of teaching. A reflective practitioner, on the other hand, is a problem solver who is attentive to students’ needs and reflects on classroom experiences. A transformative intellectual “reflects upon ideological principles” (p.13), questions school practices, challenges social

inequalities, and works towards personal and social transformation. The transformative intellectual's teaching is "inquiry oriented, socially contextualized, grounded on a commitment to world making, dedicated to an art of improvisation, extended by a concern with critical self- and social-reflection, shaped by a commitment to democratic self-directed education, steeped in a sensitivity by pluralism, committed to action, and concerned with the affective dimensions of human beings" (p. 15). Morgan (2009) continued that discussion and argued that teachers most often take on the role of the technician in the language classroom, and very rarely exhibit the role of the transformative practitioner. One of the reasons is that some may consider English language teaching as an ideologically neutral activity, or language teachers may feel incapable to work towards transformation. Therefore, those who demonstrate the role of the transformative practitioner exercise their agency and engage in critical reflection in order to change the way they teach and interact with students. Kumaravadivelu (2012) added that transformative practitioners "play the role of change agents raising educational, social, cultural, and political consciousness in their learners" (p. 56).

Similarly, Miller et al. (2017) argued for language teachers to engage in ethical self-formation, a process whereby they can develop transformative practitioner identities over time. Delving into one's own teacher identity involves reflecting on "the substance of teacher identity, the authority sources of teacher identity, the self-practices of teacher identity, and the telos of teacher identity" (p. 95). The aspect of the substance of teacher identity includes exploring teachers' own identity constituents, such as their practices, behaviors, emotions, and values. The component of the authority sources of teacher identity refers to analyzing powerful entities that impact identity formation, for example,

social values or external validations. Self-practices of teacher identity include teachers critically examining their own decisions and actions in order to create change. The component of the telos of teacher identity encompasses work that teachers undertake towards achieving an ideal self. The authors noted that “One’s telos can be framed as vision or an imagined identity, but it is necessarily formed by an ethical purpose” (Miller et al., 2017, p. 100). This process of intentional self-development contributes to an improved sense of self and practices, and thus, can lead to helping teachers to change into effective and potentially transformative language practitioners.

Research on Language Teacher Identity

Many scholars in second language teacher education have conducted qualitative studies to gain a deeper understanding of teacher identity. The research indicates that examining the complexities of language teacher identity is useful in understanding factors that affect language teaching (Farrell, 2011). Some recent studies discussed language teacher identity in relation to pre-service language teacher education (Yazan, 2017), novice language teaching (Kanno & Stuart, 2011), personal experiences, (Bukor, 2015), emotions (Song, 2016), community of practice (Liu & Xu, 2011), and study abroad experience (Trent 2011).

Yazan (2017) conducted a case study to explore teacher identity constriction of three pre-service English as a Second Language teachers. The study took place in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States and data collection was done during an MATESOL teacher practicum. The findings of the study revealed various ways teachers negotiated their identities. The pre-service language teachers self-positioned as language teachers while engaging in the TESOL coursework. During the teacher preparation

coursework, one participant positioned herself as respectful and empathetic teacher for English language learners, the second one as a content and student goal-focused professional, and the third one as a culturally and linguistically responsive teacher. In addition, teachers negotiated their identities in teacher learning community. In such an environment, language pre-service teachers engaged in critical dialogue, reflective practice, and sharing of experiences and perspectives. Such experience was a transformative process for all three participants as they started looking “at language in a different way” (Yazan, 2017, p. 38). They gained a deeper understanding of ELLs’ language needs and goals. In addition, participants reported that they became more knowledgeable about the public school context during their teaching practicum. The findings, then, pointed to the importance of providing collaborative, dialogical spaces for language teacher identity development.

Kanno and Stuart (2011), on the other hand, explored the language teacher identity of two novice ESL teachers’ engagement in their first year of classroom teaching. The study was narrative in nature. The findings of the study revealed the complexities of teacher identities as the two participants did not exhibit competent or confident teacher identities in the beginning of their teaching career. This study pointed to the importance of sustained learning-in-practice experiences that can facilitate teacher identity development. One participant was hesitant about his interpersonal relationships with students while the other one was unsure about teaching strategies. Also, both faced challenges in teaching content. While engaging in a year-long classroom teaching practicum, both teachers gained more confidence. The researchers write, “The development of expertise enhanced their confidence as teachers, as it allowed them to

justify the teacher authority they were supposed to command” (Kanno & Stuart, 2011, p. 249).

Bukor (2015) conducted a qualitative study to explore teacher identity through engaging three language teachers in reflective practice on their beliefs, perceptions, experiences, and relationships for a period of six months. One of the participants taught English as a Second Language for Academic Purposes at the university level and two taught adult ESL in the community. The findings of this research revealed forces that influenced language teacher identity formation and confirmed a close relationship between personal experiences and teacher identity. For example, the family environment and educational experience influenced teachers’ beliefs and confidence. Personal experiences also impacted participants’ career and teaching practices. Bukor (2015) highlighted that participants’ reflective notes revealed their career decisions were a part of claiming their identities that they were deprived of while growing up. Teaching, then, allowed for “self-acceptance, self-expression, enhanced self-love, and self-confidence” (Bukor, 2015, p. 322). The findings of that study called for “a holistic understanding of the dominant influences on teacher identity and instructional practices” (p. 323) as personal experiences have an impact on language teacher teaching.

Some scholars, such as Song (2016) also emphasized the crucial role of emotions in language teacher identity development. She conducted interviews with and engaged five English teachers in reflection on their feelings of teaching English in South Korea. She found that language teacher identity was influenced by sociocultural conditions, and that emotions such as anxiety, vulnerability, happiness, disinterest, and shame were crucial pieces of their narration of identity development. The findings also indicated that

language teachers experienced transformation in their emotions through a reflective process because it provided a venue for “the recognition of their emotions, identification of the sources, and understanding of their effect on teaching” (Song, 2016, p. 645).

Furthermore, Liu and Xu (2017) conducted a narrative inquiry to explore the identity of one language teacher in the teacher community of practice. They argued that “changes of identity can form different trajectories of learning” (p. 179) and found out that Feng, the focal language teacher, negotiated various identities throughout his teaching career. Feng viewed himself as an ordinary and passive teacher, and then joined a community of practice to lead a liberal pedagogical reform effort, but at the end he felt overwhelmed while attempting to implement the new school reform. This finding indicated that he experienced conflict in his teaching and had to shift his identities in the workplace. This research pinpointed the complex role of power relations in the community of practice as Feng felt powerless and had to comply with the demands of the new school reform, and thus viewed himself as, at best, “a legitimate peripheral participant in the community” (p. 191).

Trent (2011) explored language teacher identity development of eight ESL teachers from Hong Kong who participated in a short-term international experience program in Australia. This study abroad improved the teachers’ language proficiency, enhanced their cultural understanding and confidence in teaching English as a Second Language, and thus, contributed to the construction of their identity as English teachers. Also, their participation in the immersion program revealed differences in identifying self as a language teacher in China vs. Australia. For example, participants reported seeing language teachers as autonomous, confident, relaxed professionals in Australia and the

ones in Hong Kong as mechanical, insecure, formal teachers, who lacked agency.

However, studying abroad offered transformational learning opportunities as they compared and contrasted perspectives, practices, and competencies between teaching in China and Australia. That means self-reflection played a crucial role during that international teaching experience.

The research on language teacher identity points to the importance of critical reflection on one's own identity (Morgan, 2009; Miller et al., 2017; Song, 2016; Trent, 2011; Yazan, 2017) in order to improve teaching practices and relationships with diverse students. I agree with Kumaravadivelu (2012) who advocated for teachers becoming transformative practitioners that work to make a change in their classrooms, schools, and communities. This closely relates to the view that identity is influenced by power struggles as mentioned by Mockler (2011) and Varghese et al. (2005) and to the concerns of educational, social, and political constraints as raised by Kumaravadivelu (2012) and Ollerhead and Burns (2016). This implies that teachers who are transformative practitioners need to learn to analyze their own dispositions, question current Eurocentric/ethnocentric curricula, encourage students to resist social inequity, and thus work to overcome these constraints and become agents of change. After providing an overview of teacher identity, it is necessary now to offer a detailed analysis of teacher agency.

Defining Teacher Agency

Teacher agency has been described in various ways in the literature. Scholars from general education, English linguistics, and TESOL have all theorized it. Joseph (2006), a scholar in applied linguistics, contended that “no single model is adequate for

understanding agency” and emphasized the need to center on “who has and who lacks it in what context” (p. 239). Deters et al. (2015) also pointed out that the focus on agency in second language research has accelerated since the early 2000s, and that various approaches and definitions have emerged in the literature. Therefore, a compilation of literature is provided below in order to illustrate various frameworks, approaches, and perspectives on agency. Some of the most prominent approaches to defining and theorizing agency draw on a variety of theories, such as a sociocultural theory, social cognitive theory, activity theory, dialogical theory, complexity theory, positioning theory, and an ecological approach.

Sociocultural Approaches to Agency

It is useful to begin describing agency by referring to Ahearn (2001), who conducted research in anthropology and social sciences. In her article “Language and Agency,” she drew attention to the importance of “language and linguistic form” when clarifying agency (p. 109). She stressed that language is a social action because there is a relationship between linguistic practice and social structures. Thus, she argued that language plays a crucial role in understanding the complexity of agency. In drawing on Ahearn’s work, Miller (2012) added that,

... an investigation of how people “talk about agency—how they talk about their own actions and others’ actions, how they attribute responsibility for events, how they describe their own and others’ decision-making processes” (Ahearn, 2010, p. 41) through using available linguistic resources can help us gain insight into “people’s own theories of agency” in ways that direct observations of actions

often will not. After all, choosing *not* to act is also a performance of agency. (p. 448)

Ahearn (2001) also highlighted that agency is dependent on the individual and social environment and defines it as “the socio-culturally mediated capacity to act” (p. 12). The sociocultural approach to agency can also be connected to the ideas of Lev Vygotsky (1978), who proposed that human agency was mediated by various factors, such as language, settings, or systems. In that view, agency is seen not as an individual characteristic but as negotiated in and through various sociocultural settings; thus, the focus is on the social contexts and cultural experiences that shape the development of beliefs and actions. This theory significantly influenced research on language teacher agency (van Lier, 2008). Scholars using this perspective on agency usually used interviews as a research method; for example, Ollerhead (2010) explored how the agency of an adult ESL instructor was affected by the institutional culture of the school. Lasky (2005) also used a sociocultural lens to explore teacher identity and agency in the context of school reform. She reported that two mediational systems affect teacher agency: “the early influences on teacher identity; and (b) the current reform context” (p. 899).

Social Cognitive Theory

Within social cognitive theory, Bandura (2006) described agency as cognitive processes, such as beliefs, thoughts, and reason that determine influences on one’s actions. It is conceptualized as being comprised of four components: intentionality, forethought, self-reactiveness, and self-reflectiveness. That means that agency is characterized as making intentional choices, working towards achieving goals and reflecting on one’s own actions. Therefore, individuals regulate their actions through

reasoned deliberation and self-determination. Agency can be individual as well as collective, and self-efficacy beliefs have an impact on both. Individual agency from this perspective is often seen as autonomy, and collective agency is characterized as a collective effort to achieve a common goal. Martin (2010), for instance, drew on social cognitive theory when describing classroom practices. He noted that agency is embedded in teachers' practices when they use self-regulatory processes in teaching strategies, such as supporting student active engagement in learning, risk-taking, and problem solving.

Activity Theory

Some studies draw on activity theory when defining and theorizing agency (Feryok, 2012; Johnson, 2009). Feryok (2012) highlighted that “activity theory distinguishes between social motives at the level of activity, individual goals at the level of actions, and concrete operations used to achieve goals” (p. 96). Therefore, the activity theory approach to agency centers on the context of actions, which means that individuals who exhibit agency “choose different possible individual actions within an activity system and its interrelationships with other activity systems” (Feryok, 2012, p. 97). Feryok (2012) and Johnson (2009) analyzed teacher agency from this viewpoint by observing teachers' activities in the classrooms. Yamazumi (2007) highlighted that by taking intentional, agentic actions, teachers can transform their instructional practices and create change in schools; thus, teachers' activity is crucial in understanding teacher agency.

Dialogical Theory

Scholars drawing on dialogical theory, in turn, have brought the focus on the individual experience within interactions in various environments. The emphasis is

placed on the individual and his or her dialogical relationships with personal feelings, perspectives, interpretations, and emotions and the physical and social environment (Dufva & Aro, 2015; Vitanova, 2010). Bakhtin (1984) is one of the most prominent proponents of the dialogism and argued that dialogical relationships are at the center of individuals' lives as they interact with the environment with "the whole body and deeds" (Bakhtin, 1984, p. 293). Miller (2014) added that, "Bakhtin's dialogic Self, with its ongoingly mediated agentive capacities, is not merely engaged in dialectic interactions with the social world, but is already constituted through and in the social world" (p. 19). Sullivan and McCarthy (2004) continued that, "Perhaps the most significant feature of agency in the context of experience is the reflexive awareness of our own agency (I-for-myself). It is this reflexivity that brings with it a sense of morals in our dialogues with the other" (p. 307). Studies that use a dialogical perspective focus on interviews, such as Vitanova (2010) who explored the experiences of adult immigrants' agency in learning a second language. White (2016) also used a dialogical perspective to explore interrelation of teacher agency and emotions in narrative accounts of conflict in the English language class for immigrants and refugees.

Complexity Theory

Scholars in applied linguistics and general education who draw on complexity theory view agency as a complex phenomenon that involves reciprocity of individual experiences, different contexts, and various environments (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008; Mercer, 2012; Morrison, 2008). Mercer (2012) highlighted that it is crucial to understand the complexity of agency as it involves multiple dynamic systems that constantly interact with each other, such as affordances, behaviors, emotions,

experiences, self-concept, beliefs, personality, motivation, affect, and self-regulation. All these factors are interconnected and guide someone's agentic actions.

Positioning Theory

Kayi-Aydar (2015a) draws on positioning theory and defines agency as the positions one takes in certain situations. Individuals assign or are assigned specific positions in interactions that limit or encourage agentic actions, such as by challenging authority, creating change, or resisting power structures. Rogers and Wetzel (2013) defined it as “the capacity of people to act purposefully and reflectively on their world” (p. 63). Agency is exhibited through teachers' will and ability to initiate changes in their classrooms. Kayi-Aydar (2015a) viewed agency as “constructed and understood through teachers' self- and other- positionings” (p. 95) that “are situation specific, disputed, challenged, shifting, therefore dynamic” (p. 95). Studies that explore language teacher agency through a positioning viewpoint tend to focus on case studies to gain an in-depth understanding of teacher positioning and agency (Kayi-Aydar, 2015a; Rogers & Wetzel, 2013).

Ecological Perspective

The ecological perspective has emerged as another approach to understanding agency and stems from sociocultural theory. Based on Emirbayer and Mische's (1998) approach, agency is seen as not a property or capacity, but something that an individual achieves in relationship with others and through multiple affordances. Priestley et al. (2015) described agency as individuals being “reflexive and creative, acting counter to societal constraints” (p. 3). Agency is seen as temporal, relational, and dynamic, and as contingent upon one's experiences and environment. According to Priestley et al. (2015),

teacher agency is related to activities in the school setting and consists of three dimensions: the iterative, the projective, and the practical-evaluative. Those dimensions stress the interplay of past and present experiences and future goals. The iterative aspects of agency include the skills, knowledge, beliefs, and values that play a crucial role in teachers' past personal and professional experiences. Therefore, teachers' lives and professional histories shape their agency. The projective dimension comprises an individual's hopes, motivations, aspirations, and goals. The agency, in that case, is driven by teachers' short and long-term goals. The practical-evaluative dimension of agency refers to exercising it in the present. Agency, then, is shaped by culture, social contexts and structures, physical resources, and environment. For example, teachers may demonstrate a stronger sense of agency when they face challenges with current curriculum or school policies (Priestley et al., 2015). Dadvand (2015) explored pre-service teachers' beliefs and agency using an ecological approach. Pre-service teachers in that study showed a strong sense of agency in "creating a more democratic classroom environment" (Dadvand, 2015, p. 87). Studying teacher agency through this lens helps us understand how "the interplay of individual efforts, available resources, contextual and structural factors" (Biesta & Tedder, 2007, p. 137) constrain or enable teacher practice as they "act by means of their environment rather than simply in their environment" (Biesta & Tedder, 2007, p. 137).

Accordingly, this study draws on this perspective because the aim of this research is to understand ecological factors (cultural and professional experiences, social structures, school environment, and personal and professional goals) that shape the conditions under which teacher agency is achieved. This study explores adult ESL

teachers' sense of agency in promoting culturally responsive teaching, particularly, how they act counter to institutional, societal, or political constraints when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students, how they are enabled or constrained by their institutional or social environments, how they act to change their classroom instruction and relationships in order to be more culturally responsive, and how they engage in societal transformation (Biesta & Tedder, 2007). To further understand teacher agency, it is beneficial to provide a discussion on research in general education and TESOL that illustrates how teachers exercise agency in their classrooms.

Research on Language Teacher Agency

The research in the general education scholarship showed that teachers exercise agency in teaching English Language Learners. The studies focused on different forces that affect teacher agency. Teachers exercise agency or experience loss of it while implementing pedagogical practices (Lopez, 2011), curriculum decision-making (Alford & Kettle, 2017), adjusting to school accountability pressures (Buchanan, 2015), and engaging in professional learning (Brooks & Adams, 2015). There is also ample empirical work in TESOL and English linguistics that problematizes language teacher agency in relation to engaging in pre-service teacher mentoring experience (Kayi-Aydar, 2015a), bilingual language teaching (Kayi-Aydar, 2017), participating in action research (Edwards & Burns, 2016), implementing curriculum (Fleming, 1998), negotiating teacher autonomy (Mortenson, 2015), participating in learning communities (Jaar, 2017), and engaging in curricular reform (Tao & Gao, 2017).

Some studies are worth mentioning as they illustrated how teacher agency is problematized. For example, Lopez (2011) conducted a case study of a secondary English

teacher's activism and agency in promoting culturally relevant pedagogy in her classroom. She argued that embracing culturally relevant teaching entails challenging power relations in school and in relation to the materials used in the classroom. The findings revealed that the participant developed agency for social justice in teaching while engaging in action research and promoting critical literacy in her classroom. The English teacher reported that she became more intentional in providing a culturally responsive curriculum, resources, and teaching practices; for example, she chose poems that discuss culture and social inequalities.

Alford and Kettle's (2017) study examined the accounts and classroom interactions of three high school teachers who implemented critical literacy while teaching English language learners. The purpose of the study was to explore how teachers exercised agency while implementing critical literacy. Alford and Kettle (2017) viewed critical second language teaching as working for social change, where teachers question current practices and address the cultural, social, and linguistic needs of English language learners. For example, one of the teachers engaged students in critical analysis of the texts and involved them in a discussion of the power of language. They note that despite experiencing challenges in being required to use a prescribed curriculum, teachers demonstrated agency in teaching and planning by promoting critical literacy in their classrooms.

Moreover, Brooks and Adams (2015) organized a professional development program for the mainstream teachers of ELLs. The study focused on developing teacher agency for supporting ELL students through engaging teachers in inquiry projects. One of the requirements of the study was to have teachers submit a critical incident reflection

journal at the end of each semester. The findings revealed that teachers developed a strong sense of agency by working collaboratively with other teachers and reflecting on the challenges their ELL students faced in schools. As a result, the teachers transformed their relationships with their ELL students. It is clearly visible that this school change project facilitated teachers' agency development for supporting culturally and linguistically diverse students. The teachers felt empowered to advocate for improving how they taught and interacted with ELL students. The authors noted that teachers transformed their beliefs and practices and became change agents in advocating for ELLs and sharing their transformational experiences with fellow teachers.

As far as research in TESOL is concerned, Kayi-Aydar (2015a), for example, explored how ESL teachers negotiated their sense of agency from a positioning perspective. Interviews and journal entries were used as a data collection method. The findings revealed that the three focal pre-service classroom teachers assumed different role identities, faced various limitations in addressing the needs of ELLs, and thus exercised their agency in different ways. The main themes of the study include self-positioning in relation to English language learners (ELLs), self-positioning in relation to mentor teachers, and conflicting positional identities. The first theme illustrated that the participants positioned themselves as "teachers of all children" (Kayi-Aydar, 2015a, p. 97) who cared for and supported their students and wanted them to succeed, but one participant positioned herself as "a bridge between ELLs and the society" (Kayi-Aydar, 2015a, p. 97), whereas two others positioned themselves as "a guide in ELLs' content learning" (Kayi-Aydar, 2015a, p. 97). The second theme revealed that relationships with teacher mentors influenced their identity formation. The participants were opposed to

some of their mentors' behaviors, attitudes, and practices in their diverse classrooms, and thus exhibited a strong sense of agency in positioning themselves as invested and caring teachers. The findings of the study also showed that the participants negotiated conflicting identities as they positioned themselves as capable professionals in some situations and struggling new teachers in others. The study showed that teachers' life experiences and interactions with their mentors shaped their sense of agency and influenced their professional identities. Kayi-Aydar (2015a) concluded that teachers in preparation programs should be empowered to recognize their strengths as teachers of ELLs.

Kayi-Aydar (2015b) conducted another qualitative study to investigate how a language teacher negotiated her identities over time and space and exercised her agency. The teacher's narratives produced in interviews and journal entries offered insight into the relationship between her identity and agency. The findings of the study revealed the importance of engaging teachers in constructing and reflecting on narratives about the past, present, and future and in how linkages of race, ethnicity, and nonnativism shape their agency. The participant came to see that her agency was shaped throughout her personal and professional experiences and was impacted by the social context and interactions in which she was involved. The teacher experienced shifts in exercising agency; for example, she made an agentic decision to transition from being a Spanish language teacher to an ESL teacher.

Similar to Kayi-Aydar (2015a) and Kayi-Aydar (2015b), Kayi-Aydar (2017) used journal entries and four semi-structured interviews to explore language teacher agency and identity development in educational and professional contexts. However, in this case

study, a bilingual language teacher shared her life histories through autobiographical narratives. The language teacher's narratives centered on three dimensions: iterative, projective, and practical-evaluative, where Paloma (pseudonym), a Mexican native, shared stories of her experiences in learning English, studying in a PhD program, and teaching Spanish. They illustrated her negative experiences with learning a language and feeling unsupported, being discriminated against because of her accent and belittled by the fellow teachers, and how her doctoral experience enabled her to believe in herself as a capable professional. The study also revealed Paloma's advocacy for Latino students. She exhibited a strong sense of agency to support her students, for example, by showing compassion, modifying her teaching content and strategies, and building genuine relationships with students. The interview also revealed how she exercised a strong sense of agency by resisting microaggressions in the workplace and academia.

Moreover, Edwards and Burns (2016) conducted a qualitative study to explore how two language teachers negotiated their identities and agency after engaging in an action research program. The findings of the study revealed that teacher agency is problematized in association with professional identity. The results are reported for each teacher participant, Rory and Danni. Two themes emerged from analyzing Rory's experiences after he conducted an action research study. One theme portrayed Rory as a self-confident leader and the other as a teacher-researcher who searches for institutional recognition. Rory exhibited a strong sense of agency in his ongoing participation in TESOL research. His experience in action research encouraged him to mentor other fellow teachers, engage in professional development, and present at the conferences. However, he also felt that his research efforts were unrecognized in his institution. Data

analysis of Danni's experience, on the other hand, revealed two themes: an empowered teacher-researcher, and economic and institutional constraints on agency. Engaging in action research empowered Danni to become a professional researcher and to pursue a PhD degree. She put effort into conducting research, writing proposals and articles, and presenting at the conferences. However, even though she received administrative support to conduct action research and implement it in the curriculum in her classroom, she still faced challenges in promoting action research among her teacher colleagues due to their lack of motivation to participate in action research themselves.

Fleming (1998), likewise, explored the views and practices of five adult ESL instructors in developing and implementing a new curriculum. The findings of this case study revealed that ESL instructors exercised agency towards being involved in the curriculum decision-making process. They wanted autonomy over the choice of materials and activities. The ESL instructors also admitted that curriculum guidelines provided guidance on curriculum content, but they expressed a desire for more flexibility in order to meet the students' needs in their specific classrooms. The ESL instructors also exercised agency by making their own teaching materials, especially for their multilevel classrooms. Fleming (1998) concluded that it is crucial that curricula be "individualized and designed for specific purposes" (p. 30) and that teachers can exercise agency in helping to create such curricular innovations.

Furthermore, Mortenson (2015) studied ESL teachers' perceptions of how curricular standards influence their agency and autonomy in working with ELLs. All the ESL teachers in her study agreed that they felt constrained by standardized testing, and that it had a detrimental effect on student engagement. However, they felt powerless to

change that because of the rigorous guidelines in their schools. The ESL teachers expressed that accountability measures also created unhealthy competition among teachers and negatively impacted relationships among teachers. Despite these constraints, the study revealed that the ESL teachers found ways to exercise agency by collaborating with each other in designing lesson plans and selecting relevant teaching materials for ELLs. For example, teachers created their own materials and used resources developed by the Immigration and Refugee Community Organization (IRCO) to engage students in a meaningful way and help them integrate into the community.

Jaar (2017) explored teacher agency and advocacy through participation in learning communities. This case study revealed that participating in collaborative curriculum and activity planning shaped bilingual teachers' identities. Bilingual teachers also exercised agency through promoting the value of bilingualism in education, sharing culturally relevant resources with each other, and advocating for culturally diverse students and community. The institutional constraints bilingual teachers faced in schools included lack of funding, continuous professional development, and resources. But, their collaborative work and the school's supportive environment empowered these bilingual teachers to voice their concerns and advocate for their immigrant and minority students.

Finally, Tao and Gao (2017) explored the sense of agency among eight language teachers in a Chinese university. They focused their attention on how language teachers exercised agency in their professional development efforts during a curricular reform. Tao and Gao (2017) problematized teacher agency in three areas of professional development: learning, teaching, and research. They emphasized that teacher identity is interconnected with agency, and both of them influence classroom practices. They also highlighted that

teacher agency and identity are shaped by history and social circumstances. The findings of the study revealed that most of the language teachers exercised agency for continuous learning and sustained engagement in teaching. However, agency towards research endeavors as part of professional learning varied among the language teachers.

The research in general education and TESOL sheds some light on the key characteristics of teacher agency. Teacher agency is limited when teachers feel constrained by school structures, practices or policies, and is not stable but is shaped by teachers' own experiences and interactions with others. A vast body of literature discusses teachers' experiencing educational constraints or pressures (Buchanan, 2015; Fleming, 1998; Jaar, 2017; Mortenson, 2015). Thus, teacher agency is influenced by institutional contexts. It is also evident that some studies on teacher agency stress the interconnection between teacher agency and identity (Buchanan, 2015; Edwards & Burns, 2016; Kayi-Aydar, 2015a, 2015b, 2017). Neither identity nor agency are static; thus, language teachers' professional identities are shaped throughout their teaching careers. Teacher agency is also exhibited in various contexts and environments. Therefore, new identities emerge while facing institutional constraints, and teachers may enact agency to challenge these constraints or give up. In addition, the studies also illustrate the importance of involvement in individual and collaborative professional learning in developing teacher agency, which further illustrates the interdependent relationship between agency, identity, and self-reflection, for example, through participation in continuous research opportunities (Edwards & Burns, 2016; Tao & Geo, 2017), attending a doctoral program (Kayi-Aydar, 2017), and participation in professional development (Brooks & Adams, 2015; Edwards & Burns, 2016; Jaar, 2017),

all of which may strengthen a teacher's sense of agency. Accordingly, the next section focuses on the relationship among identity, agency, and critical reflection. It also touches on the link between these three notions and culturally responsive pedagogy.

Connection among Identity, Agency, Critical Reflection, and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

In light of the above discussion, it is clear that identity, agency, and critical reflection are closely related. Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) and Buchanan (2015) highlighted the significance of the connection between identity and agency and the role of reflection in developing identity. According to Beauchamp and Thomas (2009), teachers explore their identities through reflection in order to understand self, practices, values, and beliefs. In other words, teachers develop their identities when they engage in deep self-reflection; as a result, they better understand who they are and that “may lead to a strong sense of agency” (p. 183). Similarly, Mockler (2011) stressed that the teachers who are aware of their professional identity exhibit a moral purpose, and are better positioned to make a difference in their classrooms and in the community. Thus, teacher identity influences teachers' actions and practices, for example, in whether they seek opportunities for professional development or put more effort in teaching. Buchanan (2015) too emphasized that critical self-reflection allows teachers to “imagine new ways of being, thinking, believing, and acting” (p. 715). Kumaravadivelu (2012) added that both agency and identity are “socially constructed and socially shared” (p. 59), and it is crucial that language teachers engage in critical self-reflection that challenges their beliefs and values to become moral agents. Moreover, Rogers and Wetzel (2013) argued that culturally responsive pedagogy is connected to agency because of its “empowering

potential” (p. 66). Lopez (2011) also highlighted the importance of implementing culturally responsive teaching in diverse classrooms as it “requires teachers to be critically aware and agentive in their classrooms, drawing on relevant socio-cultural theories, and creating their own purposeful praxis” (p. 76).

Teachers as Agents of Change

Extending the discussion on teacher agency, Kumaravadivelu (2012) argued that language teachers become moral agents when they consciously choose materials, content, activities, instructional strategies, and classroom interaction patterns that center around addressing diverse students’ needs, enriching them as individuals, and embracing their various interests instead of following prescribed curricula and policies. He called for critical pedagogy, where teachers challenge ideological, discursive, and social domination in schools. He contended that language teachers should “initiate, execute, and evaluate classroom-based research projects” (p. 85) that lead to transformation of self, teaching practices, and classroom communities. Greene (1995) also called for teachers to become agents of change who resist the dominant powers in education by creating interpretative and critical teaching approaches that incorporate dialogical experiences, multiple perspectives, and reflection. Moreover, Jacob et al. (2014) conducted a qualitative research study to explore teacher leaders’ practices as change agents. They conducted interviews, involved participants in reflective writing, and analyzed the teachers’ class assignments to see how they engaged in professional learning that promoted equitable environments for diverse students. The findings of the study showed that teacher leaders face barriers in schools, such as accountability, isolation, lack of support, and stressful school environments. However, engaging in action research

empowered the participants to make change to support equity for students and take action to improve their school climate.

Kubota and Miller (2017) furthermore contended that self-reflexivity offers an opportunity for changing not only teachers' actions, but also for having an impact on society. They argued that "fostering critical awareness can lead to solidarity building and collective action, and ultimately to transforming the reality of oppression and exploitation" (p. 142). Thus, it is essential to develop language teachers' critical awareness through reflection in order to change their instruction and communities. Flessner et al. (2012) stressed that critical reflection can empower educators to meet students' needs, build inclusive schools, strengthen communities, and transform them into agents of change. Pantić (2015) also stated that teachers who become agents of change participate in "school development and professional networking, initiate collaborations with colleagues, and other professionals or inquiries seeking to address exclusion and educational disadvantage" (p. 764).

Furthermore, Li (2013) proposed a cultural approach to professional learning to promote teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students as change agents. She described professional learning as comprised of three stages: "cultural reconciliation" that refers to helping teachers know self and others; "cultural translation" that means developing skills and competence to overcome differences in instruction; and "cultural transformation" that promotes becoming agents of change in the classrooms. The process involves group discussions, writing cultural memoirs and autobiographies, engaging in critical reflection and inquiry, and facilitating school-wide support with a goal to develop teachers who advocate for challenging cultural domination and changing their actions to

become change agents. As a result, teachers can transform school practices as well as offer empowerment to culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Conclusion

Language teachers teach diverse students with various needs and experiences. Such teachers need to better understand their own dispositions in order to teach English language learners more effectively. That involves understanding their own identities. Language teaching may also perpetuate cultural hegemony; thus, it is vital to understand language teacher agency from an ecological perspective and how teachers can learn to challenge oppressive social and political structures. Many scholars advocate for critical self-reflection as an effective tool for developing teachers' sense of agency (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Biesta & Tedder, 2007; Biesta et al., 2017; Brooks & Adams, 2015; Kubota & Miller, 2017; Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Li, 2013; Lopez, 2011; Priestley et al., 2015). This section intended to provide an overview of the meaning of teacher identity and agency and research that illustrated the importance of taking identity and agency into consideration when fostering critical reflection in order to transform language teachers into agents of change. The research shows that when engaged in critical dialogue and self-reflection, language teachers develop agency to support culturally and linguistically diverse students, take action to change their teaching practices and school practices, and make the community more culturally inclusive. This section also revealed that most of the research in language teacher agency has been conducted in the K-12 education contexts or in international institutions such as China or Canada. In view of that, this research study fills the void in the literature and offer insights about language teacher agency in adult ESL learning contexts in the United States.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Kumaravadivelu (2012) noted that “most teachers operate within a fairly rigid framework of state-sponsored pedagogic policies and practices” (p. 58), and only after teachers can recognize the relations of power and dominance as well as challenge hegemonic pedagogies can they promote equitable and transformative education. Similarly, according to deMarrais and LeCompte (1998), teachers should be involved in critical analysis of the society, communities, and classrooms, and uncover the ways in which dominant ideologies are translated into practice in schools, and how that may lead to a stronger sense of agency. Taking such educational complexities into consideration, this study was qualitative in nature, utilized a constructivist epistemology, drew on two theoretical perspectives (critical theory and an ecological approach to agency), and used narrative inquiry as a methodological approach.

Qualitative research is an interpretative approach to conducting research because it “assumes that reality is socially constructed, that there is no single, observable reality. Rather, there are multiple realities, or interpretations, of a single event” (Merriam, 2016, p. 8). This qualitative research allowed for varied interpretations and conclusions to be drawn from the unique experiences of the participants in the study. Qualitative methods are used in research in order to understand “how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam, 2016, p. 5). Thus, the participants engaged in critical reflection on their teaching experience in diverse classrooms in order to provide an insight into language teacher agency.

In this research study, my epistemological positions were influenced by post-modern approaches, particularly a constructionist approach, that utilizes a critical lens and the foundations of critical reflection. Constructivist epistemology, in part, views “knowledge [as] constructed through social interactions” (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 304); therefore, it is crucial to explore the ways that participants construct meaning out of their personal and professional experiences using narrative inquiry as a methodological approach. According to Pavlenko (2002), “narratives are not purely individual constructions—they are powerfully shaped by social, cultural, and historical conventions as well as by the relationship between the storyteller and the interlocutor” (p. 214). This study built on such an assumption that the narratives can provide unique insights into participants’ enacted identities, beliefs, lived experiences, as well as social, political, and cultural forces that influence their agency in embracing culturally responsive practices in adult ESL classrooms. Participants’ accounts portrayed complex stories of their sense of agency, or its lack, in working with culturally and linguistically diverse adult learners.

This chapter serves as an outline for understanding the research methodology. It provides a description of the research purpose and questions, the study design, information on the setting and participants, the data collection methods, such as interviews, journal entries, and classroom observations, data analysis, and trustworthiness procedures.

Study Design

In supporting my theoretical understanding of critical theory and in taking an ecological approach to agency, narrative inquiry was appropriate for studying how participants’ past, present, and future contexts and experiences influence their own

understandings of their agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. Phillion and He (2007) stressed the importance of narrative inquiry in English language teaching because this research methodology offers an opportunity to delve into participants' personal experiences and to engage in storytelling, meaning making, and relationship building. They noted that "The promise of narrative inquiry is that it permits and encourages the study of English language teaching and learning in the context of life and in the pursuit of broad educational questions of immigration, culture, identity, community, and literacy" (p. 1013).

Therefore, the goal in this narrative research was to provide a space for the voices of adult ESL instructors to be heard as they shared stories that represent whether and how they exercise agency. This study focused on narratives or stories as a source of data to understand "human action and experience" (Merriam, 2016, p. 36). Narrative inquiry offered a way of understanding the experiences of instructors and their identity construction process. Accordingly, this research design allowed for investigating the complexity and nuances of culturally responsive practices and can provide a richer understanding of how participants view and enact agentic choices in their diverse classrooms.

Research Purpose and Questions

A narrative inquiry approach fit this research study because it allowed me to explore how individuals made sense of their agency through the narratives that they shared. The purpose of this research study was to learn how language teachers exercise agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. The research questions were:

1. What is the role of teacher identity in shaping agency for promoting culturally responsive pedagogy?
2. How do ESL teachers understand and enact culturally responsive pedagogy?
3. How have the various contexts and experiences shaped ESL teachers' agency in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners?

The goal of this future research was to understand the experiences, beliefs, and teaching practices of teachers who exercise agency to advocate and support their diverse students. The findings of this study serve as a premise for teacher training to enhance instruction quality and improve the learning environment for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Setting and Participants

The participants of the study were seven adult ESL instructors teaching at the community college in southeastern United States that serve diverse students. The participants were recruited through criterion sampling and snowball sampling strategy. The criteria for selection was as follows: (a) currently employed as an adult ESL instructor at a community college; (b) has a degree/certificate in TESOL; (c) a minimum of three years of teaching experience; and (d) works with culturally and linguistically diverse students. Drawing on the ecological view of teacher agency (Priestley et al., 2015), I asked participants to discuss their cultural background, life histories, teaching experience and area, and daily teaching responsibilities.

The purpose of this narrative case study was to understand the identity and agency negotiation of a group of teachers working in the same institution. This community college is located in the southeastern United States and serves about 3,000 ELLs

representing 152 countries. It is one of the largest colleges in the state. It has eight campuses and offers a variety of classes for ELLs who want to enhance their language and academic skills. ELLs can attend classes free of charge that are part of the following non-college-credit programs: adult ESL, ESL transition, family literacy, and refugee education.

Table 1

Participants' Information

Instructor (Pseudonym)	Cultural Heritage	Race	Degree/ Certificate	Teaching Experience	Class Location	Level of Students
Agnes	American	White	M.A.T. in TESOL	5 years	On-campus	High Intermediate
Andrew	Lenni Native	African American	B.A. in International Marketing/ certificate in teaching adult ESL	29 years	On-campus	High Intermediate
Cici	European	White	M.A.T. in TESOL	15 years	On-campus	Multi-Level
Mary	Eastern European	White	M.A.T. in TESOL	10 years	On-campus	Intermediate
Suzy	European	White	B.A. in Spanish/ certificate in teaching adult ESL	14 years	Community	Literacy
Sebastian	American	White	M.A.T. in TESOL	25 years	On-campus	High Intermediate
Tim	Eastern European	White	M.A. in History/ certificate in teaching adult ESL	9 years	Community	Literacy

Table 1 shows the characteristics of the seven participants. All participants teach in the same department that serves adult English Language Learners (ELLs) and offers classes related to learning English for college, career, and citizenship. The participants teach at various campuses, and there are eight in total in the city. Adult ESL offers free English classes at a variety of locations, including on and off campus locations. Campus classes are different than community programs. On-campus classes have access to computers, classes

are leveled, and students usually have academic advancement in mind while attending ESL classes. The students on campus usually want to learn general English skills and focus on listening, speaking, grammar, and writing. Community-based classes meet in churches and community sites. In this program, the institution partners with churches and organizations to offer adult ESL classes. Some classes focus on the development of everyday English language skills, others on citizenship preparation. The classes are taught throughout the week, including mornings and evenings. Adult ESL programs help ELLs develop language skills at various levels. Some participants teach literacy classes, others intermediate level courses, and some advanced level courses. The National Reporting System (NRS) for Adult Education is “the accountability system for the state-administered, federally funded adult education (AE) program” (King, 2016, p. 3).

The participants differed from each other in many ways, such as by age, gender, race, and teaching experience. The youngest participant is in her late twenties, and the oldest one is in her sixties. There were four females and three males in this study. Six participants are White, and one is African American. Some participants identified as having European descent, including German, Swiss, and Slovakian origin. As far as teaching is concerned, some participants have more than fifteen years of experience teaching a second language, and one had only five years. Also, four participants have master’s degrees in teaching English as a Second Language, and others obtained certification in that field.

Data Collection

In addressing my research questions, I collected data through face-to-face semi-structured interviews, journal entries, and classroom observations. The purpose of combining these methods was to explore the teachers’ exercise of agency in more depth.

Data collection lasted five months (one semester). The timeline of this research project is in Appendix A. I contacted an adult ESL program director of a community college in the southeast region of the United States by emailing the permission letter and asked if she could connect me with the instructors in her program who would be interested in participating in the research study. Then, I met with the program director in her office to discuss the details of the research study and explained the selection criteria. She gave me a list of names of instructors who met the criteria. Therefore, the program director selected an initial list of instructors whom then I contacted. When the permission was granted from the program director of the institution, invitation emails were sent to the participants from the list who met the criteria to explain the purpose of the study. I clarified the institutional review board (IRB) information regarding their rights to withdraw from the study at any time. I then communicated with the participants who responded via email and set a date for the interviews. At this time, the informed consent was emailed to participants for review. The participants were assured that their name and institution site would be kept confidential. A pseudonym was used when referring to the participant. Demographic information was collected on participants during the interviews. I explained the purpose of the interviews and collected a consent form from each participant at the beginning of the first interview. The consent form can be found in Appendix D. Ultimately, this study included purposeful sampling, where the program director selected the adult ESL instructors who met the criteria. Then instructors were self-selected because there is a probability that the participants who agreed to participate in the study felt confident and comfortable for a researcher to enter into their classrooms and ask them about their pedagogical practices. In addition, I have met some of the

participants before in different professional occasions and that helped me establish rapport and mutual trust more easily. The group of these participants, thus, is well suited for this study because their participation helped me explore how adult ESL instructors enacted culturally responsive pedagogy. I gathered rich data to explore their agency in promoting culturally responsive practices.

Interviews

Interviewing is the primary data collection method in qualitative research. Ravitch and Carl (2016) stated that the purpose of the interview is to obtain knowledge about human experience and behavior. Interviews allow researchers to get insight into the lived experiences of their participants and the meaning they make of those experiences.

Individual, face-to-face, semi-structured interviews were used in this study, where the interview protocol included open-ended questions that focused on the participants' experiences, practices, perceptions, and opinions regarding teaching and institutional context. The interview protocol can be found in the Appendix E. I worked to establish rapport with each interviewee and created a comfortable interview environment in order to make the interviews more productive. The interviews were audio-recorded, and the participants were made aware of that.

I conducted three interviews per participant that lasted one hour each. Drawing on Jovchelovitch and Baeur (2013), this study used a narrative interview process. During the narration of the story, I as the interviewer asked open-ended questions that encouraged participants to share a story about their experiences, significant events, environments, and relationships. I did not interrupt and comment but was an attentive listener and provided encouragement. The purpose of the first interview was to ask questions about the

participants' backgrounds and ask probing questions about the participants' personal and professional experiences throughout their teaching careers. During that life history interview, I gained insights into the past cultural and international experiences of each instructor and how these experiences impacted their understanding of their agency. I also introduced the concept of culturally responsive pedagogy by asking teachers how they understand it. The purpose of the second interview was to explore the participants' views on school climate, classroom environment and teacher-student relationships and ask probing questions about how she or he learns about the students' cultural backgrounds, advocates for them in the community, and enacts various culturally responsive practices in the classroom, such as specific strategies the teachers use. The purpose of the third interview was to gain insight into teachers' various challenges in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Interview questions focused on understanding constraints and supports teachers face as they strive to implement culturally responsive pedagogy in their particular institutional context. This third interview also focused on the teachers' experiences of engaging in the critical reflective journaling through the research process, and how it affected their enactment of culturally responsive pedagogy in the classroom. I took detailed notes during the sessions. My memo writing aimed to capture nonverbal reactions during the interview and offered more insights into the analysis (Ravitch & Carl, 2016).

Journal Entries

Each participant engaged in critical reflective journaling. In critical reflection, "the focus is to understand assumptions about knowledge, power and reflexivity" (Hickson, 2016, p. 384). Drawing on Freire (1970), critical reflection, then, encouraged

critical consciousness and action, and thus, the purpose of engaging participants in critical reflection was to bring critical awareness on the interconnection among their various experiences, contexts, relationships, and teaching. Participants were encouraged to write in their journals on a regular basis about personal and academic observations and experiences and connecting them to social and cultural issues. Actively reflecting during and after participants' teaching experiences helped participants to internalize the experience and to make meaning of their own teacher agency. The critical self-reflection protocol can be found in Appendix F. The participants received a prompt every two weeks for five months. Thus, there were ten journal entries per participant at the end of the data collection process. All the journal responses were recorded on a Google Doc folder shared with the researcher. This helped the researcher read each journal response regularly and sustain continuous communication with the participants. It was important that each participant took time to reflect upon their experiences to recall events, beliefs, or impressions over a longer period of time. Providing them ample time to produce journal entries allowed teachers to examine old files or find resources that may prompt memories, which added insight into the participant's enactment of culturally responsive teaching. The prompts every other week included one reflection question and one follow-up question that referred to the teacher's previous response. This allowed for a space for ongoing, open communication with the participants and researcher during their reflecting process. Drawing on the research on critical reflection presented in the literature review chapter, some of the example questions to prompt participants' telling of their stories included:

1. What is my cultural identity and history? How does my cultural identity/background influence my work as a teacher with ELLs?
2. How do I decide what I'm teaching and how I'm going to teach it? Are there any topics that I don't teach even though I believe they would be relevant to my students' needs, and why?
3. How do my instructional materials connect to the students' experiences? To what extent do I question and engage with evaluating instructional materials to connect with the lived experiences of my ELLs?

Classroom Observation

Observation is defined as “the systematic noting and recording of events, behaviors, and artifacts (objects) in the social setting chosen for study” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 98). During the observations, I was a non-participant observer and maintained hand-written field notes that recorded teaching, learning, and interactions that occurred within the classroom. The purpose was to describe the setting, the activities that took place in that setting, interactions between the instructor and students, and verbal and nonverbal communications (Merriam, 2009). The observational protocol can be found in Appendix G. I observed each participant's lesson twice for an entire class period (approximately two hours total) to collect data about the teachers' culturally relevant pedagogical practices. One observation was conducted at the beginning of the semester and the other at the end of the semester to ensure triangulation of data. I gathered data during the observation and took a role of the non-participant observer, which meant I maintained only superficial contact with the participants so I did not interrupt their daily routines in the classroom. Following each observation, I reflected on the events that took

place during the class period and wrote down notes regarding the practices of the ESL teachers and my reactions.

Data Analysis

Data analysis is “the process of bringing order, structure, and interpretation to a mass of collected data” (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p.154). All interviews were transcribed and jotted memos from the interviews were expanded. Both the transcripts and expanded notes were coded using an inductive process. Data were analyzed for thematic categories. Consistent with Ravitch and Carl (2016), the analysis process involved identifying words and phrases and organizing them into meaningful categories and thematic clusters. A constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) was used in that process. In the end, I synthesized and reported significant patterns or themes found in the data. Throughout the analysis process, I included memos to document my concerns, ideas, and reflections. For the journal entries analysis, I also used a constant comparative method to discover the central themes across the entries, which provided further evidence to support the themes and categories that were generated from the interviews. Therefore, I “read texts for personal, social, and historical conditions that mediate the story” (Wertz, 2011, p. 226). In doing that, data analysis was done in order to discover “both the themes that unify the story and the disparate voices that carry, comment on, and disrupt the main themes” (Wertz, 2011, p. 226). In addition, the classroom observation field notes contributed to providing triangulation to the data analysis process. “Triangulation is a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study” (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 126). Classroom observation field

notes, then, were an additional source of data that added insights into teachers' teaching practices and classroom interactions. After analyzing interview transcripts, journal entries, and classroom observation field notes separately and assigning themes, I then analyzed all the data, looking for common themes across the data types, keeping in mind the research questions, and at the end, I reported the findings. Data investigation in this narrative inquiry followed a cyclical process that proceeded from more general to more specific analysis and conclusions (Creswell, 2007). Thus, drawing on Butina (2015), the narrative thematic analysis process involved "five stages: (a) organization and preparation of the data, (b) obtaining a general sense of the information, (c) the coding process, (d) categories or themes, and (e) interpretation of the data" (p. 193).

Drawing on Butina's (2015) thematic analysis procedure and following constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967), I first organized three data sets in separate folders, read, highlighted raw words and phrases in each data set, reread the data sets, and all raw words and phrases from each data set were put into a table. Then, similar raw words and phrases from each data set were grouped in a table. Then, I looked for patterns and assigned codes. After assigning codes, I looked at the patterns in the codes and developed categories. Then, I read, reread, and analyzed categories and assigned themes. Three themes were developed that pertained to each research question. Three codebooks consist of categories, codes, and raw words/phrases, and can be found in Appendices H, I, and J. Table 2. illustrates an example how thematic analysis process was performed. After highlighting raw words/phrases/sentences, I put them in the table. I then engaged in interpreting data by thinking about the connections between the raw words, discerning patterns, and then grouped them. After grouping them, I assigned codes, such as

international roots, international partners, international friends, and international traveling. Then, after thinking about the codes and their meaning, I assigned a category that described a commonality among those codes: having international connections. That category is one example of a few categories that pertained to the theme that illustrated adult ESL instructors as explorers. Adult ESL instructors in this study explored various cultures and countries by establishing various international connections More discussion on that theme can be found in Chapter 4.

Table. 2

An Example from a Codebook

Categories	Codes	Raw Words/Phrases
Having International Connections	International Roots	my cultural identity is Swiss German, my families migrated here many years ago, I am a 3 rd generation American, European roots, My grandparents came here, My grandfather was from Slovakia, my cultural identity influences my work, I know my roots were from another place also, my families migrated here many years ago but still have a lot of the same cultural values European descent (England-Slovakia), My mother's family came on the Mayflower
	International Partners	I met my husband who was Spanish, my experience with my husband, my husband speaks Spanish, my experience with my husband being a language learner in the United States, I think that seeing what my husband went through learning English, and I dated a person from another country really impacted my teaching, I dated a, um, an immigrant, My wife is from Ecuador she can't take the cold weather
	International Friends	some of our friends and neighbors were Jewish, Catholic, and Greek, one of my friends was of Cuban ancestry,

		<p>we had neighbors who had lived in Africa, I had a lot of international friends, pretty much my whole life, feeling for international people, meeting people from different places friends from different countries immigrant friends</p>
	International Traveling	<p>rural Thailand, Japan, China, Spain, Germany, I traveled a lot, South America, Canada, a variety of countries, Oman, Asia, Italy, some work and I was going to go to China. go overseas, I lived in a few countries, lots of little lessons in other countries, my travel experience, travel interaction, living, working in school systems, uh, knowing that in other countries, studied abroad in Spain, I had the opportunity to go to Thailand, get accepted into that China program, work in China, My parents enjoyed traveling, so my sister and I were able to experience being in other countries and meeting internationals, I've travelled and taught in two other countries (Canada and Italy), I moved from the South to New England and Quebec, I was interested in traveling and being able to travel and live in a place</p>

Drawing on Polkinghorne (1995), this narrative inquiry research also employed narrative analysis during data analysis. This meant that one outcome of the data analysis was to configure the data into narratives. I created participants' stories through

interpretation of multiple forms of representation, by drawing on their individual interviews, their journal entries, and my classroom observations. That data was used to construct a narrative that displayed the connections I found in each of the participants' experiences. Based on Polkinghorne's (1995) suggestions: 1) I included descriptions of the cultural context in which the stories took place; 2) in gathering and configuring the data into a story, I attended to the embodied nature of the participants, such as the employments of emotions, expression of values, and the look of physical spaces while they narrated their stories; 3) in developing the story's setting, I was aware not only of the general cultural environments and the person as embodied, but also of the influence of others in the actions and goals of the participants; 4) I focused on the choices and actions of the participants; 5) in constructing the story, I considered the historical continuity of the participants; 6) I kept in mind that the outcome of a narrative analysis is the generation of a story; and 7) I provided a story line or plot that served to organize the disparate data elements into a coherent explanation of the participants' responses and actions (pp. 16-18).

Accordingly, as Table 2 illustrates, the data analysis was done in three stages. During the first stage of the data analysis, I conducted thematic analysis. After analyzing interview transcripts, journal entries, and classroom observation field notes separately, I analyzed all the data, looking for common themes, keeping in mind the research questions. Interpretation consisted of reading all of the data sets, identifying codes, rereading the data, discerning categories, taking notes, and determining overarching themes that provided insight into the teachers' personal and professional experiences (Creswell, 2014). The thematic analysis of all the data illustrated the commonalities among data and illuminated

particular nuances in the data. Secondly, the data was analyzed holistically in order to understand the stories of each participant. Holistic analysis offers deeper understanding of participants' unique experiences and characteristics (Connelly & Clandinin, 2006). For the purpose of constructing separate narratives, all three data sources were organized per participant, such as interview transcripts, field notes, and journal entries. Each folder was labeled with the participant's pseudonym. Then, I read each data document, took notes, highlighted chunks of text, and created an outline of the narrative. I reread the texts and organized the information that portrayed participants' lives into chronological order. I kept in mind all three research questions and wrote the narratives using the chronological order of the stories of participants' lives. Ultimately, the analysis of data for the narrative profiles was conducted in a different way than the thematic analysis of all the data. I focused on presenting each participant as a unique individual with unique experiences since "narrative inquiry allows the possibility for understanding how the personal and social are entwined over time in their lives" (Clandinin, 2006, p. 51). I looked at how "their individual experiences are shaped by the larger social, cultural and institutional narratives within which they live and have lived" (Clandinin, 2006, p. 51). In the analysis chapter, however, I wanted to present the narratives before the thematic analysis in order to make sure I stayed true to a narrative inquiry study design. I wanted to illuminate particular nuances of participants' experiences and practices and name the themes in a captivating way, and thus, the process of developing the names for the themes was very time consuming.

Table 3

Data Analysis Procedure

Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Narrative Thematic Analysis	Narrative Holistic Analysis	NVivo Word Frequency

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I read all interview transcripts, journal entries, and field notes separately, and identified codes, categories and themes • I read through all data to discern overarching themes across three data sets • I created a codebook that included all themes, categories, and codes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I compiled interview transcripts, journal entries, and field notes for each participant • I read through each participant's data sets and took notes • I constructed separate stories after analyzing each participant's data sets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I conducted the Word Frequency Query • I read through the word frequency list and took notes • I analyzed how the words offer an additional insight into the developed themes • I created tables with around 10 most frequent words that pertained to each theme using different word search options
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During the third stage of data analysis, NVivo software was used to provide triangulation to data analysis. Leech and Onwueguzie (2007) stressed that the use of word count was one of the effective data analysis triangulation tools. They argued that researchers can understand participants' perspectives and "obtain more meaning" (p. 568) by counting the words in their narratives. The word count can help "a) identity patterns more easily; b) verify a hypothesis; and c) maintain analytic integrity" (Leech & Onwueguzie, 2007, p. 568). Therefore, counting words can enhance the quality of the study by showing the most frequently used words and indicating patterns in the data. In this study, NVivo software was used to ensure the conformability of the data, which means that the list of most frequent occurring words allowed for discerning whether the emergent themes accurately represented the information in the interview transcripts, reflections, and field notes. This software is a useful tool to categorize and classify data efficiently by sorting the most frequent words that appeared in interview transcripts, reflections, and observation field notes. The option used for this part of the data analysis was The Word Frequency Query. This option provided a list of the most common

semantic-based words in the data set. All files, such as interview transcripts, reflections, and classroom observation fields notes were melded into one folder in the NVivo software and then I ran the query. When the run was completed, the summary data was shown in a table. I also could see it represented in a visual way as a tree map, word cloud, or a cluster analysis. The resulting table of frequent words was listed in descending order with the most popular words at the top and the least used words on the bottom. NVivo can show five levels of word frequency search: 1) exact matches only; 2) exact matches and words with the same stem; 3) exact matches, words with the same stem, and synonyms; 4) exact words, words with the same stem; synonyms, and words with more specialized meaning; and 5) exact matches, words with the same stem, synonyms, words with specialized meaning, and words with generalized meaning. Table 1 illustrates the example of words that are included in the word frequency search based on each level. When NVivo looks for synonyms, it finds synonyms for all possible meanings of the word. When extending the search to include specializations and generalizations, NVivo finds specializations and generalizations for all possible meanings (NVivo, n.d.). In this study I used three options (level 3, 4, and 5) and each list is explained in each chapter, and all word frequency lists are found in the Appendices K, L, and M.

Table 4

NVivo Word Frequency Search Levels

Level	Word Search	Example
1	exact matches only	sport
2	exact matches and words with the same stem	sport, sporting
3	exact matches, words with the same stem, and synonyms	sport, sporting, play, fun

4	exact words, words with the same stem; synonyms, and specializations	sport, sporting, play, fun, running, basketball
5	exact matches, words with the same stem, synonyms, words with specialized meaning, and generalizations	sport, sporting, play, fun, running, basketball, recreation, business

- Adapted from NVivo Website: www.qsrinternational.com

Trustworthiness

In ensuring the trustworthiness of this research I have used Tracy's (2013) three core concepts in conducting qualitative research: self-reflexivity, context, and thick description. The study incorporated the researcher's reflective journal writing during the entire research process. I included my own reactions, assumptions, biases, and understanding throughout the research process. I also promoted transparency in describing the research process and revealing my own subjectivities that relate to the research project. In doing that, I was clear in describing my decision making and shortcomings of research procedures and used triangulation to reduce researcher's bias. Debriefing sessions with the committee members also provided a space for critical dialogue on the data collection process and analysis stages as well as offered time for sharing perspectives, brainstorming ideas, and discussing concerns.

I also used member checking to ensure the credibility of the research; in particular, I shared transcribed interviews with each corresponding participant for accuracy and commentary. For example, after conducting a holistic analysis and writing narratives, I contacted adult ESL instructors by email and scheduled a meeting with each participant to discuss the accuracy of the narrative in each chapter. Participants during that meeting had an opportunity to delete any information that they did not want to share and correct any mistakes. Some participants requested some information to be

confidential during that meeting. I also emailed all revised narratives to the participants before including them in the dissertation, so the participants would have a final look at all narratives. Each participant, then, emailed me back their consent to proceed with the submission of narrative in each chapter. In addition to reviewing the narratives, during the face-to-face meeting I showed participants the quotes I included from their interviews and critical reflections and asked for their permission to include them in the dissertation. The timeline of the research in Appendix A shows when it was conducted. I also consulted with the participants about the demographic data before including it in the dissertation paper. This follow up procedure ensured that participants' voices are presented as they intended. Therefore, self-reflexivity (Tracy, 2013) is a crucial part of this research, where I was transparent in sharing my experiences, views, and understandings that relate to this research project with the research stakeholders, and such openness invites challenging of ideas, strengthening collaboration, and meaningful analysis. Tracy (2013) also stressed the context as a core qualitative concept.

Bearing this in mind, I was explicit in explaining theoretical conceptualizations that guided the research for the readers so that they can better comprehend particular ideas and concepts that lay the foundation in understanding teacher agency, culturally responsive pedagogy, and critical reflection. I also reported on the processes within the study to enable the reader to develop a good understanding of the methods and soundness of the study. The research study included the methodological section devoted to the research design, details of data collection, and data analysis that achieved coherence with the underpinning theoretical framework and illuminated the contextual setting of the study. Therefore, the methodology and theoretical framework are “interwoven with, and

throughout, the context” of the study (Tracy, 2013, p. 3). The research study also provided a thick description of the phenomenon under consideration (Tracy, 2013) by giving a detailed account on participants’ personal information, their personal and professional experiences, and teaching expertise in the data analysis section as well as by providing a detailed description of the data collection procedures. The study also provided an extensive background to the problem, a detailed description of the phenomenon, and a thorough description of the context of the study to enhance the reader’s understanding of each participants’ life experiences.

Ethical Considerations

According to Tracy (2013), “ethical research includes the consideration of procedural rules and regulations, as well as of situational preferences and participants’ needs” (p. 245). Accordingly, to gain initial trust and acceptance from participants, I discussed my intent for this research with the program director at the institution where they teach. During the meeting with the program director, I explained my research interests, my personal background as a teacher, and the procedures that I intended to use for this research. I also explained the measures I planned to use to protect the anonymity of participants’ identity throughout the research project. In addition, a consent form was obtained from each participant that describes the research project. Before the consent was sent via email, I provided details of the nature and purpose of the research to the participants in the email. The participation in the study is anonymous and voluntary. In protecting the anonymity of data collected, I used pseudonyms that participants selected for themselves. Participants could withdraw from the study at any time. The data collected was confidential. It was stored on a flash drive that was located in a locked

cabinet. Participants' recorded interviews, journal entries, classroom observation field notes, and my reflection notes were kept on file with names removed and pseudonyms in place. In addition, I made an effort to create a safe environment during the interviews and journal writing by explaining that participants could stop at any time or could omit answering any question that made them uncomfortable. The participants' well-being was a priority to this research project, and I made sure to build positive relationships with each of them.

In addition, this narrative inquiry involved participants and a researcher as co-constructors of the findings. According to Kim (2015), "Narrative inquiry is open-ended, emergent, and evolving, and allows narrative inquirers to invite participants to become co-researchers, co-constructors, co-narrators, and co-storytellers" (p. 99). It is crucial to remember that "co-construction between the researcher and the participants creates opportunities for more democratic ways of knowledge construction between the two parties" (p. 99). I invited questions and comments during participants' journaling process. I engaged participants in proofreading the narratives, quotes, and demographic data before including that information in the dissertation. Thus, both I, as a researcher, and the participants engaged in critical reflection and dialogue during the research process. Drawing on Kim (2015), I acknowledged that participants were the original storytellers and while deconstructing their experiences from the transcripts and reflections, I maintained fidelity and preserved integrity towards their stories and encouraged participants to make any changes to the final written narratives.

Furthermore, I engaged in reflexivity throughout the research process, from generating research questions, collecting data, interpreting data, and explaining the

findings. I am aware that my prior knowledge, experiences, and readings influenced the topic I chose, the interview questions I developed, and thus the topics that the participants talked and wrote about. Thus, it is transparent that identifying themes, creating connections, making interpretations, and generating ideas could have been informed by previous research and my biases. Bignold and Su (2013) remind us that “Researcher reflexivity is particularly important as personal perspectives can and do inevitably impact on the construction or co-construction of the narrative” (p. 402). Thus, during this research process I was mindful of my past experiences, assumptions, and orientation that could have shaped the interpretation of research findings. Based on Bignold and Su’s (2013) recommendations, I gave participants’ voice, provided details on the complexities of the context of the study, and described my positionality in the introduction chapter. Engaging in this process contributed to producing rigorous, ethical research.

Conclusion

This narrative inquiry explored seven adult ESL teachers’ capacity to exercise agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. Through conducting semi-structured interviews and engaging teachers in journal writing, the research study looked at teachers’ agency for supporting their diverse students in their classrooms, their views and practices of culturally responsive pedagogy, and the challenges they face while advocating for and supporting diverse students. The major practical contribution of this research study is that it provided much needed empirical data on teachers’ practices that can promote social change and describes some of the constraints that prevent teachers for doing so. This research is especially timely in the current call for educational reform to create an inclusive environment for all students as well as strengthening multicultural

teacher education (Cherng & Davis, 2017; Darling-Hammond, 2010). This study, being of an exploratory and interpretive nature, raises a few opportunities for future research. More research will, in fact, be necessary to refine and further elaborate on the findings. This study could thus be extended in longitudinal and comparative ways. It would be beneficial to conduct longitudinal studies to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' activities that promote a strong sense of agency for social change, and it also would be of a great value to include students' voices and compare them with the teachers' practices.

CHAPTER 4: THEME 1 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study is to learn about ESL teachers' agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. This chapter focuses on addressing the first research question: What is the role of teacher identity in shaping agency for promoting culturally responsive pedagogy? In considering participants' narratives about their teacher selves and in conducting thematic analysis of the full data set, I found that participants' personal identities influence their agency in working with culturally and linguistically diverse students. The chapter is divided into two parts. First, the participants' narratives are presented, and then categories that were developed from thematic analysis are discussed.

Stories into Adult ESL Instructors' Lives as Explorers

Life stories reveal identity work as they are vehicles for linking together and making relevant "the important interpersonal and social relationships one has formed, and [for providing] a sense of one's values, beliefs, and worldviews in the storyteller's own words" (Atkins, 2007, p. 234). Reflecting on their own life stories encouraged participants to delve into their understanding of self and how their own experiences and beliefs can influence their teaching. The interview questions and self-reflection prompts, then, were designed in accordance with the principles of critical theory and agency from an ecological perspective in order to engage participants in critically analyzing their own personal lives and ponder on their professional experiences. Drawing on critical theory as a theoretical framework, interview questions were designed to encourage participants to critically investigate their privileges, experiences, and relationships in order to connect larger social issues with their teaching practices (Winkle-Wagner et al., 2019). In addition, viewing

agency from an ecological perspective, the interview questions were designed to encourage participants to reflect on their past and present personal and professional experiences, aspirations, and future goals as well as various institutional environments or teaching resources that may play a role in their career (Priestley et al., 2015). Therefore, this study gave participants' a space to reflect on their various experiences and practices. Such rich accounts reveal participants' meaning-making processes and provide valuable insights into their identity formation. Engaging in critical self-reflection enabled participants in critically analyzing their own life experiences, beliefs, personalities, and practices, and that reflective activity provided a narrative learning process, where participants had a space to deeply connect their various experiences and dispositions. Therefore, the construction of stories articulates a sense of self and is a form of identity work because the production of a life- story "helps individuals to make sense and come to terms with their life and adjust to changes in their lives" (Biesta, 2008, p. 20).

When viewing teacher identity as not fixed and understanding that teachers' multiple identity roles can shift during the life course (Bachanan, 2015; Miller, 2008; Mockler, 2011; Sachs, 2005; Walkington, 2005; Varghese et al., 2005), I found that the participants' life stories indeed demonstrated a range of identities that participants had negotiated throughout their lives. Every teacher is unique and has had diverse experiences that set them apart. However, while teachers were narrating their life stories, one important aspect of their identity was illuminated. All seven participants who were part of this research study have something in common: they are explorers. Their strong personal identities of exploring throughout their lives have influenced their teaching. The Cambridge Dictionary (n.d.) explains that an explorer is "a person who travels to places

where no one has ever been to find out what is there”, and the Macmillan Dictionary refers to it as “a person who travels to a place that other people do not know much about in order to find out what is there”. In the view of these definitions of a physical explorer, some aspects of participants’ identities strongly relate metaphorically to being an explorer, someone who explores many opportunities to learn about different people, countries, cultures, and traditions. The participants’ personal curiosity and pursuit for gaining various new experiences is felt in their classrooms. They explore various strategies, approaches, and materials in order to deeply understand their students. Thus, just as we physically hike through steep mountains, sail through rough sea, or go through tough terrains, the participants embark on their complex teaching journeys to find out who their students are and how to best serve them. Through their quest to address students’ needs, they deeply connect with their students and deliver lessons that are culturally responsive. As explorers they work through many strategies, hear from students, and engage in conscious reflection to understand their students. This chapter offers a discussion on what the role of teacher identity is in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy, but first let us learn more about each teacher and their unique personal stories. I have crafted these narratives from the comments participants made in the interviews and from the reflections they wrote. Thus, participants and I co-constructed these stories. As a narrative researcher, I “elicited, co-constructed, interpreted, and, in their retelling, represented participants’ accounts of lived and imagined personal experience. These practices come with complex ethical, ideological, and emotional responsibilities” (Barkhuizen, 2011, p. 392). I aimed to represent the stories of my participants and their interpretations of these experiences “systematically, creatively,

credibly, and ethically” (Barkhuizen, 2011, p. 392). In other words, below are presented coherent life story accounts from different points in the data collection.

Agnes: An Explorer Who Turned into a Spanish Speaking Community Advocate

Agnes is in her late 20s and has been teaching for over five years. She grew up in a small town in New York and attended schools that were not diverse at all. From a young age, she has been passionate about learning languages. Her favorite subject in school was Spanish, where she excelled in all courses. Her quest for learning more about this language prompted her to major in Spanish in college. She reminisced about her college experience as filled with many opportunities to learn about other cultures and countries. She spent time with people from many different countries, including Mexico, the Republic of Georgia, Armenia, Russia, and Colombia. Thus, she sought opportunities to learn about fellow students’ home countries and listened to their various perspectives. However, she did not stop at that. She wanted to explore the Spanish language and culture in more depth and decided to enroll in the study abroad program in her sophomore year of college. She reminisced that one of the most impactful experiences during her study abroad term was seeing children’s and parents’ enthusiasm when she taught them English. She also met her husband in Spain, who had to learn English when they both arrived in the United States. This rewarding language immersion experience and her husband’s challenging transition experience prompted her into enrolling in a Master of Education program with a concentration in teaching English as a Second Language.

Living and studying in Spain and seeing her husband struggle to learn English and work on his citizenship paperwork transformed her into an advocate who intentionally pursues opportunities to connect with the Spanish speaking community in her hometown.

While taking graduate classes and teaching at a high school for three years, she volunteered in the community as an adult ESL teacher helping Latino students learn the English language and cultural practices in their new communities. After graduating, she took on another position in the local community college and has been teaching adult ESL for over a year now. She described this teaching experience as fulfilling and exceptional and explained her teaching philosophy as focusing on building a learning community that has a safe space for exploration, dialogue, and mutual appreciation. She concentrates on providing students with materials and activities that meet their needs and relate to their backgrounds and interests. Agnes explores their cultures through asking them a lot of questions, adapting instruction to reflect their backgrounds, and offering additional resources, such as community event brochures, job fair pamphlets, and emails about activities that bring them closer to the community in which they live. She strives to help students explore opportunities to not only improve their linguistic skills but also to thrive in their new communities. Her passion in creating change in her students' lives and making them more comfortable in their new communities prompted her to enroll in a doctoral program at the local public university, where she can be vocal about the needs of her culturally and linguistically diverse students and continue her advocacy efforts. She hopes to contribute to research in the field of English as a Second Language upon completing her doctoral work.

Andrew: An Explorer Who Helps Students Navigate the American System

Andrew is an African American male in his fifties and has been teaching for over 25 years. Out of these years, he has been teaching for 21 years in the same community college institution, teaching family literacy, General Educational Development (GED) and

Adult Basic Education (ABE) in an Associate of Arts degree program and then adult ESL. Thus, he explored a variety of teaching roles as a full-time instructor before accepting a job as an Adult ESL instructor ten years ago. He grew up in New Jersey, where he attended a public-school system comprised of a racially diverse community. His grandparents, uncles, and aunts were highly involved in his upbringing and supported his ambitions and built a strong community. Even though he had strong role models in his life, he faced his own challenges in childhood, and these experiences now help him be more in tune with students in his classroom. He indicated that he can relate to students' experiences because he himself had gone through hardships in his childhood as an African American male. He considers himself as a culturally sensitive teacher who provides opportunities for exploration, critical thinking, and community building. Thus, having a strong support system from his family extended to his teaching, as he strongly believes in guiding students through the cultural minefields and daily practices and norms in the students' new communities. He provides lessons, activities, and readings that serve as a bridge between the students' culturally diverse experiences and American lifestyles, practices, and traditions. In doing that, he deliberately supplements materials with relevant books or online sources and diverts his discussions to different topics based on students' questions and concerns about certain themes or grammar structures.

Andrew is intentional in creating lessons that relate to students' needs and constantly asks them for their feedback. He makes sure that his students are engaged, energized and take educative excursions that are both growth-producing and enhance their educational experiences. He explores topics pertaining to comparing educational, social, and cultural understandings; thus, he does not shy away from presenting problems,

generating disequilibrium, and drawing students' attention to personal development. For example, he includes readings from American history as well as world history to illustrate certain social issues such as discrimination, oppression, and social injustice and encourages students to present educational and social norms and issues from their countries. Thus, he teaches language skills along with presenting content that enriches students' understanding of past and current social norms and issues in the United States and the world.

Cici: An Explorer Who is a Moral Agent

Cici is in her forties and has been teaching for over 15 years. She has lived in her home state all her life. She identifies as Swiss German having family who migrated to the United States decades ago. Her mother's side is primarily German, and her father's side is Swiss German. She was brought up with these cultural values and traditions. She recalls her family valuing good morals, being responsible, expecting high standards, and abiding by the rules. She has loved learning languages since childhood and received her bachelor's degree in Teaching Foreign Languages with a Spanish minor at a state university. She described herself as a hard-working, diligent, and engaged student. She constantly pursued enriching opportunities during her undergraduate studies, such as volunteering and tutoring. After graduation, she taught Spanish in a local elementary school. However, she described this teaching experience as demotivating and decided to transition to adult ESL, where she believed her passion for teaching would be more appreciated. She has been teaching adult ESL for ten years now. She believes that teaching immigrants is a rewarding experience because she can help them reach their full potential. She values their investment in learning a second language because she once was a language learner herself, who put a lot of effort in learning Spanish. Cici can also relate to her students by having many

international friends who shared their learning experiences as well as cultural and social practices.

Therefore, these experiences influenced her teaching as she strives for connecting with her students in order to encourage them to keep going with their educational journeys. In doing that, she is constantly inquisitive about her students and feels morally responsible for their growth. She learns about their needs and interests and modifies her instruction accordingly, for example, by designing lessons that pertain to their specific job skills. Cici helps her students search for jobs, develops their business English vocabulary, and also nurtures their professional growth. The teaching content is student driven and mostly relates to job and social skills. She provides a personally and professionally enriching learning environment and views herself as a moral agent, committed to transferring her values into her teaching by constantly exploring students' needs in order to facilitate their learning process and regularly reflecting on her practice. She deeply cares about their success and invests her time and energy in delivering lessons that relate to their goals and interests.

Mary: An Explorer Who Promotes Social Justice

Mary is in her fifties and has been teaching for over ten years. She identifies as a Jewish American who has experienced anti-Semitism and marginalization and has dedicated her career to helping minority and immigrant students feel welcome and a part of their communities. She received a master's degree in TESOL at a state university, where she had the opportunity to learn from professors, whom she described as knowledgeable and passionate, and who nurtured her social justice aspirations by giving her voice to raise concerns about language and power struggles as well as cultural and societal issues. After

her graduation, she started her work with adult English Language Learners in a refugee program in off-campus locations, such as at churches and libraries. That literacy program provided a venue for her social justice efforts. She was involved in curriculum development, engaged in community events, created lessons and provided resources that would help refugee students integrate into their new communities. She was engaged in events that promoted community integrations, such as a World Refugee Day festival, or professional development workgroups, such as literacy curriculum redesign. She focused on helping students explore new language and norms, so they could feel more welcomed in their new communities.

After a few years, due to a student enrollment drop in the refugee program, she transitioned to teaching on-campus classes at a community college. Mary described that teaching experience as very different. There is less community involvement and a bigger focus on academic skills. Therefore, she intentionally brings in additional resources, such as books, brochures, handouts, audio recordings and videos and creates a safe environment for discussing cultural differences and social issues in her classes. Her work towards social justice took a different form in the ESL classroom. Now, she focuses on teaching communicative skills and infuses topics that relate to students' backgrounds, needs, and the complex issues they experience in their communities. For example, she supports discussions on religious differences, immigration concerns, and social issues. She engages in exploration by asking students a lot of questions, inviting their home food into the classroom, supplementing materials that relate to their backgrounds, encouraging students to share their personal experiences, and promoting examination of their own views, communities, and society.

Sebastian: An Explorer Fascinated About Language Acquisition

Sebastian is a third generation American with European roots. He was raised in a large household, being the youngest of eleven children. He relocated as a college student, from the South to New England and then to Canada. He did well as an undergraduate, was admitted to graduate school, earned a Master's in TESOL, and pursued an academic career. He was truly passionate about geography and language and traveled overseas as part of a federally funded international program. As part of that program, he taught English in different schools in Asia and Middle East. Later on, he worked at a university in Oman for a couple of years. During that traveling period of his life, he collected an array of experiences where his traditional norms and values were questioned as the Asian and Middle Eastern cultures were so different from what he had known from his personal experiences. For example, he learned a lot about differences in educational values and practices. Sebastian decided to come back to the United States and has been teaching adult ESL for over fifteen years at the community college in the southeastern part of the United States.

Sebastian described his teaching philosophy as focused on language acquisition and mainly on communicative skills. He believes that if students' cultures and identities are valued, then there is a higher chance of language acquisition. Therefore, language and culture are strongly interconnected in his view. He provides opportunities for students to share their experiences, expertise, and knowledge in order to advance their language abilities. However, principal to his classes are interaction and communication. He consistently creates his own materials, adjusts his instruction based on students' needs, and provides explorative experiences for students in order to learn practical English, such as by

organizing field trips, inviting guest speakers, and showing short films. His aim is to sustain a genuine, communicative learning environment in his classroom where students can explore multiple resources, such as books, magazines, videos, and online materials that help them improve their linguistic skills.

Suzy: An Explorer Who Became a Cultural Broker

Suzy is in her sixties and has been teaching for over 20 years. She is of Anglo-Saxon protestant ancestry as her family emigrated to the United States generations ago. She was born in the South and has lived in the region ever since. Throughout her schooling experience, she was exposed to children of other religious and cultural backgrounds. Some of her friends and neighbors were Jewish, Catholic, and Greek, and others were of Cuban or African ancestry. Her parents enjoyed traveling and instilled a love for traveling in her. She traveled to North and South America, Europe, and Asia, and to countries such as Canada, Mexico, Spain, and Russia. Her father was involved in the Rotary Club, which provided him with an opportunity to go to international conventions, and he took his family with him, such as to Denmark, Sweden, and Norway. She was able to experience being in other countries and meeting international people. From an early age, she was curious about people from other parts of the world, languages, traditions, and ways of life. She took numerous opportunities to expand her traveling experiences through learning Spanish in college and participating in a study-abroad program. She studied and lived in Costa Rica for a semester, where she learned local cultural customs and improved her Spanish communication skills.

Through travel, language, and study abroad opportunities, she was able to step outside of her “bubble” and experience what it feels like to be in a very different

environment and be surrounded by people different from her. These experiences have greatly influenced her work as a teacher with ELLs since it helps her to better understand what it might be like to walk in their shoes, not understanding the language, culture, or how to navigate a very new environment. Thus, she has gained extensive experience working with immigrants and creating safe and welcoming communities for them. She volunteered at non-profit organizations, worked in Catholic Charities, and was in charge of forming an ESL program in the community before starting her work as an adult ESL instructor at the community college. She has been bringing together students of various cultural backgrounds and helping them acclimate in their new communities. She actively pursues opportunities to learn about students by visiting them at home and participating in their cultural ceremonies, such as weddings, and connects them with community members from local ministries, social services, and senior centers. She has taught in the refugee program at the community college for eight years now in areas such as family literacy, work skills, and citizenship. Her priority is to help students learn practical English in order to be successful members of the community. In doing that, she learns about students' backgrounds to understand cultural differences among them by asking them questions, incorporating surveys, and using role plays, and supports activities in the community that pertain to their personal and professional growth, such as cultural festivals, job training programs, and language learning programs. Throughout her teaching career, she has gained extensive knowledge about her students and shares her expertise with fellow teachers, volunteers, administrators, and community members. At the end of this research project, she moved to a different city in the East coast and retired as an adult ESL teacher but plans to keep volunteering in the local language programs.

Tim: An Explorer Who is Drawn to People

Tim is in his sixties and has been teaching adult ESL in the United States and overseas for over 20 years. He was raised in the northern part of the United States and has experienced country, suburban, and urban life. He is of European descent as his mother's family came to America on the *Mayflower* from England and his father's family came in 1905 from Slovakia. Before his teaching career, he had gained a variety of life-enriching experiences, such as being a sound man on a docu-drama in North Africa for three months, sailing with friends in the Caribbean for seven months, and traveling across many continents. He embarked on his teaching journey by completing a Certificate in English Language Teaching to Adults in Canada, and shortly after that he taught there for a month. Yearning for more adventure, Tim decided to go to Italy and taught ESL for four months. After coming back to North America, he taught adult ESL at the International Learning Center in Boston, Massachusetts for nine years. At that time, he met his wife, who is from Ecuador. Both of them wanted to live in a warmer place and moved to a city in the Southeastern region of the United States. Seven years ago, he began teaching adult ESL in the community college and five years ago he started teaching at a language academy, and he still holds both part-time positions. He describes his hunger for teaching as an opportunity to explore new places and meet new people. He highlights that one of the best parts of teaching is building relationships with students, teachers, and administrators. His sense of humor is felt in each lesson as he makes an effort to make students feel comfortable, creates lessons that are vibrant, interactive, and engaging, and shares his diverse traveling experiences to connect with students.

Thematic Analysis of Teacher Identity

Reading through these narratives, one can see that each participant is different, but they share some commonalities in terms of enacting explorer identities as teachers. Thus, the first theme that was identified during thematic analysis relates to teacher identity and how it influences their work with culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The thematic analysis shows that adult ESL instructors are explorers in a variety of ways, and the following categories and examples illustrate that. Table. 1 shows the categories and codes that were generated during thematic analysis.

Table 5

Theme 1 Thematic Analysis

Categories	Codes
Having International Connections	International Roots International Partners International Friends International Traveling
Seeing Through Your Eyes	Sharing Own Experiences Validating Students' Experiences Transformative Discussions
Teaching as Agentive Expedition	Exploring Own Dispositions Inquisitive Teachers Prioritizing Students' Goals Creating Diverse Materials Adjusting Instruction

Bringing Outside In	Promoting Community Resources Inviting Students' Food Going on Field Trips
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In addition to performing thematic analysis that included highlighting raw words and phrases, organizing them in clusters, and detecting common themes across three data sets, NVivo analysis assisted me in organizing data by showing word frequency counts. The word frequency count from NVivo analysis helped triangulate the data (Leech & Onwuebusie, 2007) and revealed that participants make constant references to words denoting students, community, traveling, changes, learning, and experiences. In this chapter, the NVivo word frequency query was performed using a level 4 search option that provided a word grouping with stem words, synonyms, and words with specialized meaning. I also selected the option to see 50 most frequent words in the data set, and they appeared from the most frequent ones on the top of the table to the least frequent ones on the bottom of the table. The complete lists of 50 most frequent word groupings for the level 4 search in the data set can be found in Appendix L.

Table 2. shows ten most frequent word groupings used in the participants' interview transcripts, reflections, and classroom observation field notes, such as *change*, *community*, *act*, *content*, *evaluate*, *see*, *going*, *event*, *and connect*, and *tell*. The column with the similar words consists of all the words in the data sets that are stem words, synonyms, and words with specialized meaning of that word grouping. Thus, NVivo grouped all occurring words into word groupings that denote similar meanings. The third column provides the frequency of all the similar words related to the word grouping occurring in the data. Some of the

other word groupings in the data included *information, know, work, teaching, language, students, and country*. Table 2. suggests that participants focus heavily on discussing changes in their lives and in their classrooms, the community of learning in their classrooms, the connections they make personally and professionally, and the events that participants have experienced. Thus, participants' explorer identity is evident in words they use in shaping their accounts, especially, word groupings, such as *going, evaluate, see, and event* indicate participants' active interest in traveling and learning about diverse countries, languages, and events while word groupings, such as *change, community, connect, content, act, and tell* indicate participants' active interest in connecting with students, sharing experiences, and creating dynamic, learning communities when they teach.

Table 6

Level 4 NVivo Word Frequency Query List

Words	Similar Words	Frequency
change	access, acclimate, accommodate, acquire, adapt, adaptation, add, addition, address, adjust, administration, adopt, advance, affect, age, align, alternate, appreciate, appreciation, approach, approaching, assimilate, assist, assume, attrition, better, black, bringing, change, changed, changes, changing, charge, check, combination, combine, come, comfort, coming, compare, complete, completion, conform, confusion, connection, decide, delivery, descent, develop, development, difference, dynamic, enable, enhance, enrich, enrichment, exchange, exchanges, expand, expense, experience, find, finish, fit, fix, fortify, funding, immersion, immigration, impact, improve, improvement, inclination, inclusion, incorporate, increase, inform, infuse, initiative, inspiration, institution, integrate, interrupt, involve, issue, journey, jump, make, mixture, mobile, modify, mold, move, movement, narrow, negate, outcome, overflow, parallel, pass, passage, passing, people, preparation, prepare, process, reach, reaching, readjust, ready, realign, realize, recommend, redouble, reduce, reform, register, reinforce, replacement, replacing, resolve, result, resume, shift, shifted, shifts, shock, shrink, stay, steady, step, transfer, transferred, transformed, transition, translate, translation, transportation, travel, traveling, varied, variety, vary, varying, verbalize, visit, walk, walking, work	8610
community	account, acknowledge, addition, address, advise, agent, alert, appeal, apply, common, communicate, communicated,	5505

	communicating, communication, communicative, communities, community, community', contact, continue, converse, convey, cover, cut, day, debate, deliver, demand, demonstrate, describe, develop, greet, ground, nvite, issue, joke, journalist, key, kid, learn, lecture, lens, level, liaison, lie, lower, medium, message, minimize, mouth, narrative, national, nationalities, nationality, nations, neighborhood, network, nod, nonverbal, note, publicize, quest, question, radio, raise, reach, read, record, recount, register, reinforce, relate, remind, repeat, report, representative, require, restate, return, reveal, reward, ring, scale, service, share, shift, shit, tutor, type, verbalize, verse, visit, vocal, vocalize, volunteer, want	
act	acceptance, achievement, acquisition, act, acting, action, activity, acts, administration, agency, aggression, application, arrest, art, assembling, assessment, attempt, attendance, attending, attention, balance, behavior, break, career, celebration, challenge, choice, comfort, commitment, competition, conduct, conflict, confusion, consideration, contact, control, deal, dealing, decision, dedication, delivery, demand, determination, development, drill, effort, encouragement, engagement, entering, entertainment, exploration, exposure, expression, experience, experienced, fight, fighting, find, finding, going, government, grouping, guidance, hand, hanging, hostility, identification, impact, influence, instruction, interaction, interest, leave, leaving, measure, measurement, motivating, move, movement, music, negotiation, objection, observation, offense, offer, office, organization, orientation, ownership, , placement, planning, politics, practice, pressure, presume, procedure, process, project, quest, raise, rating, reaching, reading, reference, reflection, refuge, registration, reinforcement, release, relief, relocation, repeating, repetition, resistance, responsibility, rest, return, selection, struggle, substituting, suggestion, supply, support, supporting, surveying, survival, switch, switching, taking, task, teach, teaching, test, thanks, thing, throw, visit, voice, wait, waiting, work, works, writing	5226
content	advice, agreement, answer, appeal, application, appreciation, approach, approval, center, challenge, charge, collection, comment, commitment, commonplace, competition, competitions, complaint, concept, confidence, conflict, consent, content, contents, controversial, converse, culture, curriculum, cut, deal, dedication, definition, demand, description, design, details, dictate, difference, direction, discipline, disrespect, division, documentation, education, encouragement, engagement, error, example, expectation, feedback, , generalization, goal, greeting, ground, grounding, guarantee, guess, guidance, guide, humor, idea, ideal, information, input, inspiration, instruction, intelligence, intent, intention, interpretation, issue, joke, judgement, judgment, justification, lead, learning, leave, lesson, life, material, matter, meaning, memory, mention, message, messages, mind, mistake, misunderstanding, objective, observation,, program, project, purpose, question, reading, reality, reference, reflection, regard, region, reinforcement, reply, report, resolution, resource, resources, respects, response, result, resume, satisfy, schedule, section, standard, story, study, subject, suggestion, survey, teaching, technology, topic, tradition, trust, truth, understanding, value, values, view, welcome	5008

evaluate	absorb, accept, acknowledge, add, admit, adopt, agreement, align, allow, analysis, anticipate, arrangement, assess, assessment, believe, believed, believes, compare, connect, consider, consideration, considered, considering, considers, construction, correlate, count, critique, deal, design, different, direct, disapprove, disrespect, diverse, estimation, evaluate, expect, exploration, factor, favor, feel, guessing, hold, hope, idea, identify, ignore, imagine, include, inquiry, integrate, intelligence, intelligent, intend, intended, interpretation, learn, learning, meaning, means, measure, mention, mind, mistake, modify, need, needs, needing, process, plan, question, reason, reasons, recall, recalling, recognize, refer, reflect, reflection, regard, relate, respect, rethink, review, see, study, survey, suspect, think, thinking, thought, thoughtful, thoughts, understand, value, view, want	4987
see	appreciate, assure, attend, attendance, attended, attending, call, card, carry, case, catch, check, checked, checking, come, consider, considered, considering, considers, contrast, control, count, cover, cross, date, dated, dating, determination, determining, disrespect, encounter, encountered, encountering, encounters, enjoy, escorting, esteem, examined, expect, experience, experiences, experiment, favor, feel, figure, figured, figures, figuring, find, finding, findings, glass, hear, hearing, hold, identify, include, insurance, insurer, interpret, interpretation, interpreted, interpreters, intersect, learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, like, look, looked, looking, looks, make, meet, meeting, meetings, meets, minister, perceive, picture, pictures, picturing, prize, project, projects, proofread, read, realization, realize, realized, realizing, regard, regards, respect, see, seeing, sees, sense, skim, survey, take, tend, test, understand, understanding, understands, value, view, views, visit, visited, visual, visualization, visualizing, visuals, watch, watched, watches, watchful, watching	4192
going	active, advance, alight, angle, approach, arise, back, belong, boat, boom, bounce, break, breaking, breaks, bridge, bubble, bus, career, carry, cast, change, charge, chatter, chime, circle, clear, clip, close, come, continue, correct, course, cover, cracking, cracks, cross, crowd, cut, cycle, department, departments, dog, double, draw, drive, drone, drop, duck, ease, extended, extends, fail, failed, failing, fall, fell, file, fit, fits, fly, follow, foot, founder, function, functional, functionality, going, head, home, hum, inch, joint, journey, jump, lag, last, lasts, lead, leading, leads, leave, leaves, leaving, lift, light, live, lived, lively, lives, living, loss, make, march, move, moved, moving, near, negotiate, offer, offered, offering, offerings, offers, open, pace, pass, passed, passing, pedal, pink, plane, play, plod, post, process, progress, pull, pursue, push, quest, race, range, recession, release, releasing, resort, return, ride, ring, roll, round, run, running, scale, school, scoot, see, seek, serve, set, ship, shoot, sit, skim, slide, sound, sounded, sounds, speed, spelled, spelling, start, started, starting, starts, step, surf, surface, survival, survive, swim, take, thread, tip, tool, top, tour, toured, track, train, transfer, travel, traveled, traveling, travelled, tree, trump, turn, turned, turns, walk, well, wind, wing, work, worked, working, works, zoom	3500
event	achievement, acquisition, act, acting, action, activity, administration, agency, aggression, antagonism, application, assessment, assignment, assist, assistance, attempt, attendance, attending, behavior, breakthrough, business, case, cases, catch,	

	causing, change, choice, collaboration, commitment, competition, control, course, deal, dealing, dedication, delivery, demand, determination, direction, drive, education, effort, election, employment, engagement, error, estimation, evaluation, event, events, exchange, exercise, find, finding, fit, follow, fun, game, gathering, getting, giving, going, government, help, important, influence, instruction, interaction, involvement, job, judgement, judgment, jump, justice, kindness, last, laughter, leadership, leading, leave, leaving, lift, line, lively, location, measure, measurement, meeting, mistake, motivating, negotiation, objection, option, organization, participation, performance, pick, placement, play, playing, politics, position, practice, praxis, preparation, procedure, process, protection, protest, pull, push, pushing, raise, rating, recreation, reference, release, resistance, responsibility, rest, return, sharing, shooting, stay, stop, struggle, supply, support, supporting, taking, teaching, thing, throw, touch, touching, training, transfer, trigger, try, turn, usage, use, visit, vote, wait, waiting, war, waste, way, wear, work, works, writing	
connect	appeal, articulate, associated, attached, bearing, bell, bridge, buckle, catch, chain, clip, close, code, cohesiveness, communication, comprehension, connect, connected, connecting, connection, connections, connectivity, contact, continually, continue, continued, continuing, continuous, correlate, couple, cover, encounter, engaged, enter, fair, fix, generalization, ground, grounding, hang, hit, identify, inclusion, input, introduce, involvement, joint, know, lead, link, love, match, mean, meeting, mention, mismatch, name, neighboring, node, online, pair, paste, piece, point, post, raise, refer, relate, related, relates, relating, relational, relations, relative, relatively, relatives, relevance, remember, ride, ring, secure, series, serve, service, stay, stick, supplement, unit, united, units, weld, wired	3347
tell	call, charge, claim, comment, contrast, convey, counter, demand, direct, distinguish, distribute, dwell, edit, effective, explain, express, field, guarantee, hold, indicate, intend, interpret, introduce, isolate, issue, know, lift, look, mean, mention, move, narrative, note, notice, observe, order, ordered, ordering, page, peach, point, present, proposition, protest, publicize, reason, recall, recommend, recount, relate, related, relates, repeat, rephrase, reply, require, respond, restate, resume, return, reveal, revealed, reword, saying, sayings, send, sentence, show, signal, sing, spread, spring, state, stated, states, submit, summarize, supply, support, take, talk, tell, telling, tells, thank, translate, vocalize	3108

Both the thematic analysis and word frequency counts indicate that participants negotiate their identities as explorers because they have international connections, share diverse experiences, intentionally explore how to meet students' needs in the classroom, and promote exploration beyond teaching language and content. Below I explain each category and include direct quotes as examples.

Having International Connections

My thematic analysis showed that the adult ESL instructors have strong international connections that influence their teaching. Some teachers have traveled overseas; others have had a partner or friends that came from different countries, or they have international roots. Such international connections have shaped their identities as they become more open to diverse groups of people, possess cultural sensitivity to work with immigrants, and continuously explore how to make connections between language study and students' lives in the classroom. Therefore, their identity as explorers was shaped through these international experiences.

International Roots

Possessing international roots, such as grandparents or parents from another country influenced some teachers' work. Some participants clearly stated that their cultural heritage influenced their teaching, and that finding affirms research by Kennedy et al. (2005) who assert that "teachers bring themselves--their life, experiences, histories, and cultures--into the classroom" (p. 2). Cici reflected that her cultural heritage plays a role in her teaching in commenting,

My cultural identity influences my work in that I know my roots were from another place also. I can see how both cultures play an important part in my life. I identify with a lot of ELLs.

International Partners

Agnes and Cici also shared that having a partner or a spouse from another country influenced them as adult ESL teachers. Having a significant other from an international background indicates their quest for exploration, as they are not afraid to build strong

relationships with people from other countries. They find opportunities to spend time with people who are culturally different and invest their time to learn about them and enjoy their company. Their significant others' experiences influence them as well because they see their efforts and struggles. For example, Agnes describes how having a husband who was learning English encouraged her to become an ESL teacher. She reported,

My husband didn't speak any English. So that really kind of geared me towards TESOL as well, was seeing his, what he went through that really influenced me to help others.

International Friends

Suzy, Agnes, Cici, Tim, and Mary also reported that they have had many opportunities to build friendships with people from other countries, some in high school, others in college. Such international friendships helped them explore other cultures without even traveling abroad. For example, Agnes met people from a variety of countries in college and that experience prompted her to search for travel abroad opportunities. She loves learning from other people, and about their values, traditions, and practices, and expanding her knowledge about people from other countries. She indicated that this openness helped her become a more knowledgeable teacher. In addition, Cici described her experience of having a lot of international friends and how that helped her to be more sensitive to students' needs,

I had a lot of international friends, like, you know, pretty much my whole life. So, I had a feeling for international people, um, and sensitivity.

International Traveling

Suzy, Tim, Mary, Agnes, and Sebastian explained that traveling to other countries influenced them as it broadened their horizons and enriched them personally and professionally. Some teachers travelled abroad as part of their leisure activities; others had worked in different countries; and yet some others decided to participate in study-abroad programs. For example, Tim had traveled to many continents before taking on a job as an adult ESL instructor. He visited countries in Europe, South and North America, where he took on various jobs because he wanted to learn about different cultures and customs. In addition, Suzy and Agnes explained that traveling to different countries opened their eyes to differences and helped them relate to students. Agnes went to Spain as part of a study-abroad program for six months and described it as an enriching and eye-opening experience for her. That finding indicates that traveling abroad can positively affect teachers by improving their cultural competence and sensitivity (Allen, 2010; Garii, 2009; Lee, 2009). Suzy recalled her traveling experience in stating,

I would say probably my travel background and being able to experience other, uh, parts of the world, other languages, meeting people from different places, um, helps me relate a little bit about how it feels to be somewhere totally different.

Ultimately, all seven participants were brought up in different places, have different cultural backgrounds, and teach different classes, but they share similarities by having international connections. Having international roots, partners/spouses, and friends, and traveling abroad have shaped teachers' identity in a way so that they are open to learning about different places and people and are passionate about teaching culturally and

linguistically diverse students. This research study revealed that participants are conscious of their international connections and believe that such experiences bring them closer to their diverse students.

Seeing Through Your Eyes

In addition to international connections, some participants shared that they have gathered extensive culturally diverse experiences that have impacted the way they teach. It has motivated them to create a learning environment that allows for sharing their own experiences and perspectives. These experiences have led them to use a variety of activities that explore diverse places, and they have incorporated different strategies to explore students' experiences and backgrounds, and such sharing and validating of diverse experiences allow them to better understand students' views, perspectives, and histories.

Sharing Own Experiences

Cici and Andrew indicated they did not travel abroad in order to learn about diverse students, but their own culturally diverse background helps them relate to students and explore students' various backgrounds. Andrew shared how growing up as an African American male influences his teaching. He feels comfortable exploring students' experiences because he as well comes from a background where racial diversity figured prominently in his daily experiences. He stated,

My urban background and cultural sensitivity to people's interactions with the struggles that life can bring helped me to understand how an individual can see his or herself within any situation, including learning new educational material or investing in an instructional session.

Validating Students' Experiences

Participants explained specific techniques that they use to share and validate diverse experiences and backgrounds, and that reveal their identities as explorers. For example, Mary, Agnes, Sebastian, and Andrew reported in their reflective journals that they incorporate critical thinking activities and promote ongoing inquiry to compare and contrast cultural differences and similarities. Similar to Richards et al. (2007) and Villegas and Lucas (2002), this finding indicates that participants use teaching techniques that involve students in the construction of knowledge, and students' varied experiences are seen as assets. Thus, this research confirms it is crucial to avoid the concept of a deficit view of ELLs and engage students in an insightful exchange of diverse experiences. This finding strengthens Morell (2005) and Gordon's (2019) research that point to the significance of validating students' voices in language teaching. For example, Agnes uses her traveling experience in her class, where she compares and contrasts different countries. During one of the classroom observations, she talked about the happiest countries in the world. Instead of just using the textbook content, she explored the topic further, and asked students about their experiences in their countries and shared her own experience of living in Spain.

Suzy, Mary, Agnes, Sebastian, Cici and Andrew also explained specific activities and strategies they use to explore students' experiences and backgrounds, such as using cooperative learning, classroom discussions, and peer sharing. For example, during classroom observations, Sebastian and Andrew engaged students in class discussions about their countries and norms and encouraged students to explore each others' cultures by

pairing students with a different classmate. Exploring students' experiences and backgrounds is a priority for Suzy as well. She uses games and group work to create a safe environment for sharing such information. Richards-Tutor et al. (2016) suggest that using cooperative learning group activities helps ELLs understand and use English in a low-risk learning environment. Suzy wrote in her reflection journal,

Learning about your students (country of origin, language, family, etc.) is very helpful and demonstrates your interest in their backgrounds. Helping students become acquainted with each other through games and group activities is extremely valuable.

Transformative Discussions

Agnes, Mary, and Andrew also engage students in thought-provoking, transformative discussions that relate to social justice issues. For example, Andrew believes that exploring difficult topics in the classroom, such as complexities of heritage or social struggles, helps students connect their diverse experiences to each others' and learn about important historical events that lead to inequalities in the society. This also helps them share their perspectives and understand that some events are described from different perspectives. This finding supports the importance of "emphasizing a transformation of the individual's perspective, meaning, or frame of reference, in order to affect personal change" (King, 2000, p. 69). Andrew explained the importance of engaging students of Mexican heritage in extending understanding of the Cinco De Mayo holiday by commenting,

What many people think Cinco de Mayo is, it's the day of independence for independence for Mexico. And a lot of the Mexican people in the class who

were from Mexico said it's not. It's about a part of independence, but it has not nothing to do with the independence of Mexico itself. So that's a different perspective. And most native-born people here celebrate it as a big holiday and party all day when most Mexican born people do not. So that was very different than many people in the class didn't know that came from this reading that story.

Ultimately, all seven participants' experiences differ from their students' experiences, but they make sure they share their own various experiences and validate students' culturally diverse experiences in the classroom. This research study reveals that the participants consciously value diverse experiences and make efforts in seeing students' experiences from their own perspectives while fostering exploration in their culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms.

Teaching as Agentive Expedition

Another category showing teachers' strong sense of agency is their intentional pursuit of exploring their students' needs when they teach. Their teaching is seen as undertaking an expedition with the purpose of deeply learning about and connecting with their students in the classroom. This category includes codes that reveal teachers' attitudes and teaching strategies related to intentional exploration of students' lives, cultures, and experiences.

Exploring Own Dispositions

Intentional teaching starts with teachers consciously exploring their own dispositions and comparing their own experiences to those of their students in order to have a better understanding of students' circumstances, and that knowledge informs their

teaching. For example, Agnes, Cici, Sebastian, Suzy, and Mary showed awareness of being more privileged than students and recognized students' hardships. They want to make sure that they take these complex issues into consideration when they teach, so students can be more successful in new communities and in the classroom. That finding shows that the teachers in this study are reflective practitioners who are attentive to students' needs and intentionally reflect on classroom experiences (Kumaravadivelu, 2003). For example, in the excerpt below Suzy described her "trial and error" approach to developing a culturally responsive teaching practice, thereby signaling her intentional, agentic efforts to determine "what works and what doesn't" work with students.

Many ELLs face a number of challenges and obstacles when it comes to language and life skills acquisition. They have taught me a lot about their cultures, values, and how I can best teach them in ways they can understand. Much of this has come from a lot of trial and error—learning what works and what doesn't.

Mary described her intentional practices of "observation, communication and reflection" as necessary for understanding her students. In commenting on her own privilege in the excerpt below, she demonstrates self-awareness that typically develops out of deliberate reflection:

Every immigrant has a different experience. Some arrive as refugees with nothing except hope and others enjoy the privileges of wealth, but the common denominator is being new, different from others and having to learn language the culture. I have not had those same experiences and can only understand their lives through observation, communication, and

reflection. Regardless of their experience, every student has something to share and I learn from all of them.

Inquisitive Teachers

In addition, all participants reported continuously and deliberately looking for opportunities to deeply learn about their students. They are inquisitive and curious, and this is visible in their teaching. Thus, participants' purposeful curiosity about students' lives, cultures, and experiences suggests that their teaching is like an expedition to discover who their students truly are. For example, during my observations of Sebastian's classroom, I saw that he approached each group working together on a reading and asked personal questions to each group member to engage students in comparing their experiences. Mary forms circle time in the beginning of the class and asks students questions to learn more about them, their jobs, and their families. Agnes shared how learning about her students is an integral part of her teaching, and such an account indicates that she is a curious teacher, who is invested in hearing about students' personal experiences even during a break. She stated,

When we have a break and we're just sitting around, and I'm just asking them about their family and things like that. So it's not always just about learning, but like creating personal relationships.

Cici also mentioned that learning from her students is an important part of her teaching. In explaining her commitment to continuously learning about and valuing her students' experiences, she demonstrates a strong sense of agency in exploring students' unique histories and circumstances. She stated,

I always learn from my students. I believe we can learn from each other. They bring new ideas, different experiences, different education and I have learned a lot from my students. They bring a lot to the table.

Prioritizing Students' Goals

While being on the expedition to explore their students' needs in the classroom, all participants are truly student goal focused when they teach. They conduct student needs assessments by asking them questions, giving them questionnaires, and conducting formative assessments during group activities. For example, Cici asks her students in the beginning of the class whether they would like to work on grammar, vocabulary, or speaking skills. She gives them choices, so the instruction reflects their immediate needs. In addition, Andrew explained that he explores students' needs in each class by using surveys, and he teaches accordingly,

Cause you know, so, um, you do the best you can and I'll have time to study a student, each student to see all their needs and how to do it and go back and say, okay, I need to do this. What happens is, uh, maybe the next semester I figure out that there's some of my classes I need more vocabulary. Everyday situations, common situations as opposed to, um, or I need more audio, um, exercises so people can hear the different accents of U.S. citizens.

Suzy also raised the important point by acknowledging that each student has a different goal in mind, and her exploration is evident by deliberately addressing her students' needs in every class,

The makeup of the class and the needs of the students can vary greatly. For example, the learning goals of seniors versus younger students who are working and raising families are very different. Other classrooms may be made up of students who are not literate in any language along with students who have some prior educational background. Some may have the goal of earning their citizenship while others may need basic survival English in order to get a job. Therefore, instructional materials must match the goals of the students and must be relevant.

Creating Diverse Materials

One aspect of how teachers' explorer identities affect their teaching practice in the classroom is through creating appropriate materials for their diverse students and providing additional resources. For example, Sebastian, Agnes, Mary, Suzy, and Andrew are deliberate in creating additional handouts, PowerPoint slides, and vocabulary lists that help students learn about the language and content but also explore additional information that is not included in textbooks. This finding supports research by Gay (2004) and Kumaravadivelu (2012) who asserted that when teachers use materials that are representative of their diverse students, they provide a flourishing learning environment. For example, Sebastian constantly designs new materials for students, such as graphs, maps, and short reading clips that expand their linguistic and cultural knowledge. The other example is from one of the classroom observations, where Agnes showed me a couple of textbooks and explained that she picks readings from a variety of books based on students' needs and interests, so that the content is customized to a particular class. Supplementing readings with various worksheets also are created and assigned by teachers in order to offer

teaching materials that relate to students' needs and different purposes. During classroom observations, I saw that the participants shared worksheets that they created in addition to the content presented in the textbooks, such as fill in the blank activities, discussion guides, and copies of current news. For example, Mary explained that the textbook is the basis of her instruction, but that she goes beyond that text. She supplements it with a variety of resources, such as newspapers, videos, and online sources. She commented,

So, you have to use, um, material, you know, dynamic material that's always changing and updating. You have to use things that are timely, vocabulary changes where change expressions change. These books are never going to keep up with that. So, what do you do then? You, um, you combine things, some of the staples and these are like that. I like to think of it as like the meat and potatoes, the vegetables, and then the, you know, the, the condiments. This might be the, the foundations, the meat and potatoes. The condiments are what you find on the Internet online, in, um, in newspapers. Anything that is, you know, radio, media, social media, even. So, you start with the basics, you've got your grammar, you've got your basic, you know, grammar structures. In here you have topical basic, general topics and then you supplement it with all these other little things.

Adjusting Instruction

Participants also shared that they were intentional in adjusting instruction to accommodate to students needs and interests. Porto (2010) asserted that once ESL teachers understand students' backgrounds, they are more effective in adjusting academic content and teaching strategies. This finding is in line with that research and revealed that

participants in this research study are flexible and accommodating because they do prioritize students' needs. They do not shy away from taking risks during teaching and take action in constantly exploring their teaching in order to address the needs of various students. Thus, they demonstrate their strong sense of agency in being flexible as the end goal of their expedition is to address students' needs. For example, Agnes shared that she adjusts her instruction after talking to her students. She includes their feedback and plans her lessons accordingly. She commented,

But when I, when I talked to them, they really wanted to work on more specific things. So, I looked at a different textbook and decided that would be better to work out of for what they wanted to work on. So just adjusting that like, okay, we should switch gears to something more interesting or more valuable to what they want to learn.

Some participants, such as Agnes, Tim, Sebastian, and Andrew also revealed that they do change their instruction if something does not work. They constantly analyze their teaching and are intentional in improving their lessons. Such mindful adjusting of instruction indicates that they engage in self-examination and exploration of their own effectiveness. That confirmed that these participants are reflective practitioners (Kumaravadivelu, 2003).

For example, Tim said,

Sometimes I'll do a lesson plan and the lesson plan just for whatever reason it flops and then I have to make an immediate decision and say okay this I wasn't working, you know, I missed the boat on this one and I'm going to have to focus. They're having trouble with this particular part of the lesson plan so I'm not going to be able to move on. I'm going to have to divert.

Ultimately, all seven participants teach differently, but they all intentionally explore how to be more supportive teachers in the classroom by consciously searching for better techniques, strategies, and activities. This research study shows that exploration is evident in participants' teaching practices as participants are reflective practitioners, are deliberate in their ongoing learning about their students' backgrounds and aim at delivering effective and responsive lessons. Thus, their teaching can be seen as expeditions taken to discover their students' needs.

Bringing Outside In

Another category that was developed during thematic analysis points to various activities and strategies teachers use to promote exploration beyond language and content teaching, such as sharing community activities, inviting students to bring food from their native cultures, and going on field trips.

Promoting Community Resources

The thematic analysis revealed that some participants make an effort in sharing events and bringing resources in the community into the classroom that help students explore available opportunities to expand their language skills. For example, during one of the classroom observations, Suzy was approached by a student who shared her concerns that she did not have enough exposure to practicing English. Suzy instantly shared about an event organized by a local non-profit organization that would help the student practice her communication skills. Thus, Suzy encouraged her students to explore more options in her community. Another example is when Sebastian shares job training opportunities during his lessons by bringing in the community college's brochures that describe specific job training courses. During his lessons, he uses these brochures to not only increase

students' language skills but also encourages them to explore opportunities to improve their job skills.

Inviting Students' Food

Most of the participants value sharing in students' cultural heritage by inviting them to bring various types of food into the classroom. Mary, Sebastian, Cici and Suzy always have an end of the semester party, where each student shares a dish. Such celebrations welcome exploration of cultural differences and cultural appreciation. Suzy shared that her students had celebrations when someone passes a citizenship exam, where students brought food and invited family members to come to the class. Suzy also commented that welcoming students' food creates a classroom community by stating,

Inviting students to share food from their countries is another way to create interest along with a sense of community.

Going on Field Trips

Some teachers take students on various field trips. Thus, they go beyond their teaching duties and plan interesting excursions into the city in order to promote learning about students' new community. Such experiences outside the classroom can foster curiosity and appreciation about their own city. This finding affirms the findings of Palmer (2010) who argued that the identity and integrity of the teacher have a strong influence on their teaching. In this case, participants' identity as explorers is evident in their quest to go beyond what is prescribed by curriculum and offer exploratory experiences that enrich students and build a strong community of learners. For example, Sebastian shared during one of the interviews how he liked to explore with students beyond classroom walls by touring a local library, a movie theatre, and a mall. Sebastian commented,

We went to the public library, uh, talked about library cards. Uh, we went to, we walked by museums and we went to the IMAX [a domed, large screen cinema]. And, we watched a movie, a couple of years ago, we watched about something about China Panda bears. This time we watched about the nature in Africa. They were totally fascinated by the IMAX. And, and so that is, it is a, uh, pretty good, pretty important things there. And then this time we didn't have a chance to walk down to the baseball stadium, but I'd like to go down there, walk back up through town, through a couple of those interior malls, then come back. You know, we have a little tour.

Ultimately, all seven participants teach different classes, but they all go an extra mile in bringing additional experiences that promote exploration into students' own communities. This research study illustrates that participants are deliberate in promoting exploratory learning where everyone can learn from each other and about available opportunities outside classrooms. However, even though many similarities were found among participants, one needs to be aware that they have a range of experiences and teaching styles that reveal their explorer identities. For example, Sebastian elaborated on his teaching in the Middle East, Agnes shared her memories of working and studying in Spain while Suzy discussed a mixture of cultural experiences that influenced her work with refugee students.

Conclusion

This chapter addresses the research question that pertains to the role of teacher identity in shaping agency for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. The findings demonstrate that participants' personal identities affect their teaching and sense

of agency. Because they have been having numerous opportunities to explore other cultures, countries, and traditions, they have been open, curious, innovative teachers who currently have a strong sense of agency in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The findings of this study supported Bukor's (2015) argument that "teacher identity is an intricate and tangled web of influences and imprints rooted in personal and professional life experiences" (p. 320). The findings of this study add to the current research studies that show teacher identity is constantly negotiated through their various personal experiences, interactions, values, and aspirations and personal and professional identities are intertwined (Buchanan, 2015; Bukor, 2015; Day et al., 2005; Olsen, 2008).

The findings of this study also validate a close relationship between teacher identity and agency as personal identity plays a crucial role in teacher agency when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Buchanan, 2015). Participants' stories and the thematic analysis indicate that teachers are agentic in engaging in exploration inside and outside the classroom. In their classrooms, teachers exercise agency in deliberately evaluating, choosing, supplementing materials that relate to students' needs. They provide explorative experiences not only by asking students about their lives but also go beyond instruction to encourage exploration of a variety of cultures, experiences, and places. They are motivated to serve their students and find various ways to accommodate to their needs such as by creating diverse materials and adjusting their instruction.

However, it is crucial to remember that identity and agency are not static and can change in different circumstances and conditions (Lasky, 2005; Pristley et al., 2015). The narratives illustrate that participants have engaged in identity negotiation throughout their

lives, and their sense of agency is exercised in various ways in their classrooms. The findings indicate that participants are passionate about teaching ESL and their identities as explorers are evident in sharing their experiences and learning about their students. They actively pursue opportunities to take learning excursions that create a learning community. Generally, this study reveals that all participants currently exhibit a strong sense of agency in teaching diverse students and exploring throughout their lives influenced their agency. However, the following chapters illustrate that even though participants actively explore different teaching approaches that display their culturally responsive pedagogy, sometimes they face constraints that may impede their strong sense of agency.

This study also reveals that critical self-reflection allows for negotiation of teachers' own identities. Some teachers shared that engaging in critical reflection during this project encouraged them to reflect on their practices and challenges and raised their awareness on their identity and teaching. That confirms research by Miller et al. (2017) who assert that the process of ethical self-formation contributes to a clearer sense of one's self and practice in relation to one's sociopolitical contexts, and thus, can lead to helping teachers to change into potentially transformative language practitioners. All participants constructed themselves as explorers, but only a few are transformative practitioners who "play the role of change agents raising educational, social, cultural, and political consciousness in their learners" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 56). Particularly, Agnes, Andrew, Mary, and Suzy are the ones who openly shared that they explored a variety of ways to help students be more active and conscious members of the community. Agnes, Andrew, Mary, and Suzy in addition to being explorers also are transformative practitioners who work towards social change in their classrooms. They deeply explore

their own dispositions, various strategies, and a variety of resources to encourage their students to explore cultural and social norms and inequalities, and thus, their classrooms are often a venue for transformative learning. This finding provides additional evidence for the argumentation made DeCapua et al. (2018), who explain that implementing culturally responsive practices can be “transformative in nature” (p. 1). That finding, however, highlights that participants who exhibit identities as explorers are not necessarily also transformative practitioners. All participants exhibit strong identities as explorers, but some are transformative practitioners while others are reflective practitioners. Reflective practitioners, such as Cici, Sebastian, and Tim deeply examine their teaching and explore a variety of materials, strategies, and resources but do not engage in social change efforts in their classrooms (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). Participants’ teaching practices will be explained in more depth in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5: THEME 2 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to investigate how ESL teachers' exercise sense of agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy in their culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. This chapter seeks to address the second research question: How do ESL teachers understand and enact culturally responsive pedagogy? In considering teachers' narratives about their teaching practices and interactions with their students and in conducting thematic analysis of the full data set, I found that teachers do enact culturally responsive pedagogy but only to the point where they consider it is best for their students. They prioritize their students' needs and also make a comfortable and safe classroom environment. The chapter is divided into two parts. First, the participants' narratives are presented to display various teaching techniques, approaches, and classroom environments related to culturally responsive pedagogy, and then categories that were identified during thematic analysis on the same topic are discussed along with relevant quotes.

Stories into Adult ESL Instructors' Classroom Practices

Teaching adult ESL is a complex undertaking as adult English Language Learners come from various backgrounds and have a variety of needs and goals. The Literacy and Communication Network System (LINKS) published a guide for effective and rigorous language instruction for teaching adult ESL, where the emphasis is put on three elements: academic language, academic strategies, and critical thinking. That report highlights that adult ESL teachers should provide instruction that offers opportunities for working on real-life projects, expanding critical thinking skills, and enriching academic vocabulary and grammar that helps students engage in communicative tasks (Vinogradov, 2016). This is a valuable resource; however, many scholars in English linguistics, TESOL, and education

fields argue that culture plays a crucial role in teaching a second language, and that embracing culturally responsive teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms is essential to help students thrive in the classrooms and their new communities (Gay 2002, 2010, 2013; Howard 2003; Ovando & Combs, 2018; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Many studies have explored how language teachers exercise culturally responsive pedagogy with various outcomes. Some studies revealed that language teachers incorporate a surface level understanding of such practices (Arongna, 2017; Rhodes, 2013; Rowsell et al., 2017; Sleeter, 2012) while only few were successful in engaging in more meaningful culturally responsive teaching in the language classrooms (Parhar & Sensoy, 2011).

Narrative research was chosen to gain a deeper understanding of the practices and experiences of the seven adult ESL instructors, and the goal of exploring these narratives is “not to generalize their experience but rather add texture and complexity to the current stories circulating (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 417) about language teaching. Narratives aid in understanding teachers’ practices and “elucidate teachers’ ways of knowing” (Behar-Horenstein & Morgan, 1995, p. 144) as engaging in storytelling gives teachers a voice to interpret and present their understanding of their own teaching. Teachers bring unique experiences into their classrooms and form unique relationships with their students, and their stories presented in this chapter aim at illustrating such uniqueness before presenting the findings of the thematic analysis. The stories illuminate teachers’ institutional environments, classroom interactions, work-related activities, and focus on explaining their culturally responsive practices. Drawing on critical theory and agency from the ecological perspective, one can say that the participants were engaged in critically analyzing their teaching and classroom interactions. This research seeks to uncover and “challenge master

narratives” (Ravitch & Carl, 2016, p. 409) by highlighting participants’ voices, raising their critical consciousness on their practices, and bringing awareness to complexities of teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. A current master narrative in language teaching refers to education as a way for immigrants to assimilate into a society without engaging ELLs in voicing concerns about their sociocultural realities (Gordon, 2010). Thus, interview questions and self-reflection prompts were designed to encourage participants to self-reflect on their teaching strategies and classroom environment and make connections between their teaching, past and present experiences, and the social and institutional contexts in which they teach (Freire, 1970); for example, some of the questions prompted critical reflection on their daily routines, instructional materials, teacher-student relationships, teaching procedures, and classroom atmosphere. This chapter aims at illustrating how adult ESL instructors understand and enact culturally responsive pedagogy, but first let us learn more about each teacher’s classroom practices. I have crafted the narratives from the comments participants made in the interviews and from the reflections they wrote. Thus, participants and I co-constructed these stories. In other words, below are presented coherent life story accounts from different points in the data collection.

Agnes: Building Meaningful Relationships is a Foundation of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Agnes works part-time and teaches upper level students at one of the community college campuses four evenings a week. She arrives to class thirty minutes early, and she uses that time to prepare for each lesson. She reviews the lesson’s plan, pulls up the PowerPoint slides, prepares the textbooks, and makes copies if necessary. She starts each lesson with a short conversation with the students about their daily accomplishments, a

warm-up activity, or a written assignment to engage students in reflection on language learning, and such activities help her get to know her students. She told me that she understands students are busy professionals and workers and does not mind if they are late to class. Her class is comprised of students from various backgrounds, mainly from South and Central America. In order to learn about her students, she uses needs assessment tools. This way she learns about students' backgrounds, personal and professional needs, academic goals, interests, and proficiency levels. She usually puts together a questionnaire in the beginning of the semester and asks students questions as an ice-breaker activity every class. Agnes described her teaching philosophy as concentrating on strong, meaningful relationships with her students. Every class, she asks students how they were doing, how was their family and work. Through her students, she has learned a lot about different cultures, languages, and customs. When I observed her classes, she was cheerful and showed understanding and compassion to her students, and attentively listened to them. She emphasized to me that the knowledge she gains about students helps her create more effective lessons. For that reason, she often searches for new materials or online resources that could help her students relate to the material she teaches. Since she teaches upper levels, her readings focus on academic and social skills. She, then, makes sure that she brings additional experiences to her students to learn about their community so they can feel part of it.

Agnes reflected in her journal that she constantly engages students in comparing and contrasting their experiences and knowledge by using debates, reflective writing, and group work projects. It appears that such activities also create a strong learning community, where students feel comfortable to ask for help and critically analyze language and content.

She told me that she believes that taking risks with the language increases students' English proficiency, for example, by encouraging students' active engagement in the discussions without constantly correcting their speech errors. Another way she helps students feel supported is by allowing the use of their L1. She encourages students to compare English to their L1 when they are struggling with vocabulary or reading comprehension. She believes that doing so helps with negotiating the power structure as well because the students know that their culture and L1 is important too. Agnes' goal is to build genuine relationships with students and ensures she gives them a voice to share perspectives and challenge societal structures. In addition to learning academic language, she wants her students to have opportunities to learn about resources in the community, analyze current events in the world, and engage in problematic conversations that pertain to their lives as immigrants. In doing that, she shares personal stories with them about her traveling and language learning journeys, and then has them share their life stories with the class or with a partner. She believes that incorporating different perspectives in each thematic unit helps her students to understand racial, cultural, and class diversity better, rather than doing just one unit on diversity specifically.

Andrew: Empowering Students is the Root of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Andrew teaches full-time on the main campus. He juggles a busy schedule of teaching classes every day, along with working in the language lab and attending various meetings as part of his job duties. He teaches two upper level classes in the morning that last three hours each. He always brings snacks and coffee to class because he believes nutrition is crucial in boosting learning. He begins each class with greeting everyone by name. Even when some students are late to class, he makes sure to greet them and asks

them how they were doing. Andrews believes that another way of creating an encouraging learning environment is by ensuring his classroom is conducive to learning. Andrew has a printer, a microwave, and a projector in his classroom. There are also posters, pictures, and other visuals that denote diversity and inclusion on the walls. Posters represent students' projects about their countries and heritage, and pictures illustrate staff and faculty members from various social events. His classes are comprised of a variety of students who differ in gender, age, profession, cultural and linguistic backgrounds. The students come from around the world, including Mexico, Afghanistan, Croatia, Bosnia, or Korea. In addition to creating a welcoming classroom environment, my impression of Andrew is that he works to be very helpful, positive, and encouraging, and that he conducts lessons that not only enrich students' language skills but also enrich them socially and culturally.

Andrew shared a lot of culturally responsive practices in his reflective journal. He explained his goal is to help students navigate through cultural and social practices of daily American life and varied communication schemes. Guided by the belief of the importance of empowerment, Andrew shared that the students are empowered by the continuous communication and sharing of information in an authentic manner as well as students' ability to exercise their rights under the school's policies. During the interviews, he reflected that his instructional materials connect to the students' experiences by introducing the students to relevant knowledge to enhance their abilities to navigate successfully through daily activities and academic barriers. He reported that he invited each student to be authentic, to invest in their learning by sharing their knowledge, experiences, cultural norms and personal feelings about many subjects and ideas. He strives for encouraging students to invest in each other by helping bridge gaps in educational knowledge between

students. His critical reflection notes indicate that he puts effort in building student confidence, inspiring them to reach their educational goals, and becoming independent and critical thinkers.

While empowering his students to be independent and critical learners, Andrew explained that his lessons are very interactive and thought-provoking, where some of the materials covered introduce common stereotypes and discuss the actual facts that diminish or eliminate a negative perception or he provides materials that delve into historical events and figures that demonstrate cultural and social differences. Some readings in class engage students in discussion on multiple versions, meanings and expression of English language in different contexts. Andrew explained students are also regularly presented with controversial issues and the texts present characters who are conflicted between religion, politics, marriage, and daily living. He added that such readings encourage students to analyze problems, engage in discussing diversity and inclusion, and share different points of view. In addition, students are encouraged to choose the topics they want to cover, select the materials they want to read, and drive the discussions based on their interests; however, Andrew makes sure it is within the parameters of the standardized testing requirements.

Cici: Compassion Drives Culturally Responsive Teaching

Cici works part time at one of the college campuses. She teaches two multi-level groups in the lab. Her classes are very diverse as students differ not only in cultural and linguistic backgrounds, but also in language abilities. Sometimes she has a group of students who barely speak English while others have mastered basic communication skills. Rooted in her belief that everyone should be treated with respect and fairness, she explained that she cares deeply for her students and their experiences and genuinely wants them to

succeed in their new communities. Thus, she noted in her reflection journal that she emphasizes building authentic relationships with the students by sharing from her heart and allowing her students to share from their hearts authentically. She reports that she genuinely connects with the students by fostering interactive, collaborative, and respectful classroom community, where everyone is reminded of openly sharing diverse opinions and listening to each other respectfully. Each lesson begins with a group activity that encourages sharing events from their personal and professional lives, and students very often work together in small groups on solving problems and working on projects.

While encouraging students to share own stories, she reported that she integrates discussions about difficulties regarding living in the United States where student have a hard time adjusting or feeling left out. She explained that she attentively listens to students, is supportive, cheerful, and compassionate, and is sensitive to their personal and professional needs. She asks a lot of questions to find out their prior knowledge and experience with English to adjust her lesson's level to ensure the lessons relate to students' personal needs and circumstances. The lessons seem to be student driven since she prepares discussions, activities, and materials that best fit students' needs. Classroom observation fieldnotes revealed that in every class Cici gives students a choice on what topic or language area they would like to focus on and is flexible in changing her planned lesson if students' voice concerns about certain skills they would like to improve or matters they would like to have explained.

In order to create a safe and welcoming classroom environment, she lets students use their L1 and wants to stay politically neutral as she avoids discussing controversial topics such as immigration and students' religious views in class. She believes that being

politically neutral allows for building stronger relationships with students. The topics she usually covers in class pertain to students' real-life needs and backgrounds, such as job-related themes and cultural appreciation discussions. She shared that she deeply cares about her students' success, both academically and professionally. In order to enhance their learning experience, Cici brings additional resources such as, websites, job application forms, or videos that help students improve their communicative skills and job-related vocabulary. However, very often she promotes using an already existing online learning platform used in the college. That way, students have an available resource that helps them improve their language skills and prepares them for testing.

Mary: Successful Culturally Responsive Teaching Begins with Creating a Close-knit Community

Mary teaches part time on one of the campuses but used to teach off-campus as well. She has extensive experience in teaching a variety of classes, such as literacy and citizenship classes, and now she teaches two upper level groups four times a week. She dedicates her teaching career to helping minority, immigrant, and refugee students feel welcome and meaningful in their communities. She wants to do her part to help people integrate into the society and feels like teaching English is the best way to do it. For her, learning English is about helping students become successful members of society, and creating a safe and stimulating learning environment in her classroom is a first step in doing that.

Mary shared that she regularly promotes events in the community that enrich students' language skills and cultural knowledge. On a regular basis, she uses short prompts that encourage students to practice communicative and social skills, share happenings from

their personal lives, and communicate events from their neighborhoods. While sharing diverse experiences, she reports that every student deserves respect from other students; thus, she offers this and expects it of others. Students know if there is a problem, they can discuss it with her, and she can help them navigate the issue. Simply put, Mary described her classroom as a close-knit community. Students connect inside and outside the classroom through a WhatsApp group and are responsible for each other. She encourages sharing lessons and homework to those who are not in class and explaining concepts to each other. Students check on one another when someone is absent. Mary encourages her students to respect each other's diverse cultures. For example, before Ramadan, she mentioned that observant students explain the holiday during discussion time. They detail the fast, prayers, and challenges. In her critical reflection journal, Mary shared that there are a lot of questions and comparisons made to other faiths in her class. Students also discuss common greetings and messages that are appropriate to send during that time. Such open discussions prompt an exchange of texts, well wishes, pictures and general sharing of culture. Because the classroom is so diverse, Mary said it is important to find some common ground among students and embrace differences outwardly. She reported that she builds in a lot of inquiry, sharing, and cultural inclusion throughout the class, and focuses on creating a classroom, where students can feel comfortable sharing their views, culture and traditions with others. She also has a set of ground rules at the beginning of each course to set a tone of respect and inclusion in the group. She facilitates discussions, supports students to openly talk about different topics, and actively listens to their unique stories.

As far as instructional materials are concerned, Mary reflected that they are contextual and are chosen carefully and adapted to the cultural backgrounds and

capabilities of students. Mary believes that instructional materials must be able to relate to students' experiences and should match students' needs. She explains that she carefully selects videos, readings, and other authentic materials that represent various social issues, and she does not teach from one textbook, but searches for readings and activities from a lot of different textbooks and puts them together. Even from semester to semester, she has never been able to take a previous lesson plan and just reuse it again. She always has to adapt it because the students are different. In addition to creating an inclusive learning environment, she shared that she engages in numerous efforts to advocate for immigrant students. She started a Jewish community refugee initiative, was part of curriculum redesign work group, volunteers during refugee world festivals, and connects students to local organizations and agencies that can support their integration in their new communities.

Sebastian: Cultural Knowledge is Essential in Culturally Responsive Teaching

Sebastian has extensive knowledge about different countries, cultures, and languages as he has been passionate about geography and languages for a long time. He constantly learns about cultures by traveling, reading, and watching documentaries, and this passion is felt in his teaching. Currently, he works full-time teaching one morning and one afternoon class along with helping in the language lab. He has a busy schedule as he arrives on campus by 7:30 am and leaves no sooner than 6:00 pm every weekday. In addition to his teaching hours, he is engaged in curriculum development efforts and participates in many professional development trainings at the college. He is a life-long learner who constantly finds opportunities to learn about his students and their diverse backgrounds, interests, and languages. Both of his classes consist of many different

individuals with unique backgrounds as there are often fifty or more nationalities represented in Sebastian's classes during the course of a year. When you walk into his classroom, you can see he embraces such diversity. The classroom walls are filled with flags, maps, graphs, and images that illustrate students' nationalities, languages, and learning goals. Some handouts also hung on the wall in order to help students develop communicative skills, such as ready-to-use questions for discussions or phrases for clarification or repetition.

Sebastian reported that he promotes exploration in his classroom, where every student has a chance to openly share information about him or herself and comfortably ask about others. One way to do that is using written assignments, where students share their stories, for example writing about a memorable event in your life and a place that is important to them. Another way he helps students relate to the activities is, for example, by walking around during group work activities and stopping by each group to ask questions about students' experiences that may help them understand the topic under discussion or feel more confident to speak up. Sebastian explained that students have numerous opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge, expertise, and experiences, but he is frank that he focuses mainly on advancing students' language abilities and facilitating their learning journey. In order to do that, his classes are communicative, interactive, and stimulating. He reported that students are challenged by being moved around and working in different groups every class. The classes are dynamic, involve problem solving, and sharing various viewpoints. He is aware of students having a variety of goals in attending the classes as some attend classes to develop career skills, communicative skills, and other academic skills. The topics that Sebastian chooses help students reach their learning goals

and lead students to improved English and communication, such as everyday life situations and work-related matters.

In his reflective journal, Sebastian shared that he also promotes learning about community by offering opportunities to explore the city. He has taken students to tour museums, libraries, and watch documentaries at the local movie theatre. He encourages learning about each other through inviting sharing knowledge about cuisine and traditions. At the end of each eight-week course the students share a meal together, where everyone brings a dish representing a food from their country. He also makes sure that materials match students' backgrounds. From the beginning of his teaching career, he commented that he has often and consistently created his own materials and continues to do this weekly if not daily. He shows documentaries representing lives in different countries, brings pictures that depict various ethnicities and cultures, and incorporates readings that illustrate different social norms. He reflected that he does not shy away from teaching any given topic unless it is a subject that would lend itself to highlighting some students' life experiences in a negative way. Some of the issues he does not bring up in discussions are immigration, politics, abortion, and religion. He believes these are highly sensitive and personal issues. He reflected that he has introduced some of these stories only to push students for challenging material and critical thinking and not to address issues of social justice. He wants to create a safe, welcoming, nurturing, respectful, and interesting learning environment, where each student feels comfortable in improving their communication skills and cultural knowledge, and thus avoids topics that may cause conflict or embarrassment.

Suzy: Seeing Students Who They Are is a Must in Culturally Responsive Teaching

Suzy works part time in off-campus locations, one class is at the senior center and another at the local church. She teaches literacy and citizenship classes to refugee students who come from a variety of countries, such as Burma, Nepal, Bhutan, Congo, Eritrea or Vietnam. Both of her classes are made up of students from a wide variety of countries with differing languages, religions, cultures, and backgrounds. She is focused on getting to know them in the first week of classes. She acknowledges that many of her students are fearful, apprehensive, and uncomfortable. Therefore, she makes sure students feel welcome, accepted, comfortable, and respected. Creating a sense of community and camaraderie is of the utmost importance. Suzy explained that she prepares activities that encourage everyone to learn each other's names and how to pronounce them correctly along with their background information. Through such activities, she learns about their families, employment status, personal goals, and issues they may be dealing with. In particular, by incorporating ice breakers and group activities, students can learn more about each other and begin to communicate with each other using the English they have learned. They can learn and review how to greet people, introduce themselves and others.

Suzy shared that she deeply cares about her students and wants them to practice important life skills while creating a comfortable learning atmosphere. She explained that she works to create a sense of community within the classroom, where students of different cultures learn how to greet, interact, and help each other in English. This provides an opportunity for students to learn about each other's countries and cultures. Inviting students to share food from their countries is another way to create interest along with a sense of community. Because students have the opportunity to be exposed to people very different

than themselves, often for the first time, she explained it may help to break down cultural barriers, promote awareness of diversity, and encourage mutual respect. Suzy also encourages students to let her know of any problems they may be facing or of any issues that are affecting their attendance.

She reported she is empathetic to their needs and tries to think of ways to make language and life skills learning not only useful, but empowering and enjoyable. She explained that her lessons are motivating, challenging, engaging, and relevant to the needs of students, no matter the level or makeup of the class. In creating stimulating classroom environment, she acknowledged no textbook can meet the needs of all students in a class as they usually include very basic topics such as personal information, housing, work, money, or food. Thus, she takes an active role in supplementing materials and covering topics that pertain to students' needs, such as personal safety, health related topics, navigating the bus system, basic computer skills, using the public library, and learning more about community resources. Some students may have the goal of earning their citizenship while others may need basic survival English in order to get a job. Therefore, she explained that she ensures instructional materials match the goals of the students. She also brings additional resources, such as visuals, hands-on activities, songs, games, and videos. In her classes, students also learn about the struggles of others including slavery, discrimination, the fight for freedom and justice, the right to vote, and gender equality. She sees that many students can personally relate to these issues and understands that it is extremely beneficial to learn about students' own struggles in their former countries and how they compare to those who struggle in the United States. She explained that she talks with students and does her own research to enhance her understanding of her students'

culture, religion, customs, traditions, and issues faced in their home countries and in the U.S. This ensures her lessons feel more connected to her students and students feel cared for, valued and respected. She also serves as a liaison between students, administration, and the community. She supports them by connecting them with community agencies and organizations, advocating for students' needs while having discussions with the administrative staff, and attending students' important events in their neighborhoods.

Tim: Positive Classroom Environment Facilitates Culturally Responsive Teaching

Tim teaches part-time at off-campus locations, one at the senior center, and the other at the community site. He teaches one citizenship class that focuses on equipping students with basic language skills and knowledge about American society and history and one literacy class that centers on enhancing students' literacy and civics skills. Both classes are comprised of diverse refugee students who come from Burma, Bhutan, Congo, Somalia, Vietnam and Ukraine; most are elderly, disabled, have no previous education, and are sometimes traumatized from being in refugee camps in Asia. Tim shared in his reflective journals that he is sensitive to cultural diversity as teaching around the world has helped him remain positive and supportive in teaching regardless of the limitations placed on him by an institution or adverse political winds. He believes his primary job is to enable students to speak on a basic level and pass the citizenship test. He explained that he uses many ready-to-use materials, such as citizenship textbooks, flashcards, worksheets, and videos, but he often creates dialogues for practice that combine American history with everyday idioms, slang and small talk so that students can speak and understand everyday English.

He reported that he is a patient, understanding, enthusiastic teacher and focuses on repetition, choral drilling, listening to short dialogues, and ensuring that students have fun in every class. During the classroom observations, his classes were interactive, where a lot of music, drama, and pairwork were used to involve students in learning. In the beginning of each class, Tim explains that everybody needs to be patient with each other and respect each other. Students are at various proficiency levels since both classes are multi-level. Some students are not acquainted with the American educational system and are new to a structured classroom environment. Tim believes that humor can really do a lot to break down their resistance. He shares his observations that sometimes students are afraid they make a mistake; they are timid, and refrain from actively participating in class. Creating a positive classroom environment, where students laugh, act out dialogues, and do a lot of collaborative work helps engage students in learning. Tim also makes sure their various backgrounds are validated when they learn about the American society and history, English grammar and vocabulary, and reading stories. When pointing to the map of America he constantly refers to students' countries. When learning about the current presidential administration, he asks students about a political structure in their home countries. When working on drills that recycle grammar or phrases, he constantly uses students' personal information as a reference to connect to their personal experiences. He has numerous flags, maps, images, and books that illustrate cultural diversity and inclusion in his classroom and uses a lot of visuals when teaching to facilitate learning.

Thematic Analysis of Classroom Practices

Teacher narratives illuminate participants' culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms and their various practices. These stories revealed their strong sense of agency

in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. While each participant teaches in his or her own way by prioritizing certain strategies and approaches, thematic analysis aids in discerning interesting patterns in their teaching practices. Thus, the second theme that was developed during data analysis pertains to teachers' culturally responsive practices. The thematic analysis shows that adult ESL instructors exhibit culturally responsive teaching but only to a certain degree. There are some teaching techniques, strategies, and approaches used by participants that facilitate promotion of culturally responsive teaching; others show their strong sense of agency in enacting culturally responsive pedagogy. However, there are also some practices that actually impede participants in fully engaging in successful culturally responsive pedagogy. Table 3. shows three main categories and variety of codes that were identified in data analysis. These categories illuminate participants' understanding and enactment of culturally responsive teaching.

Table 7

Theme 2 Thematic Analysis

Categories	Codes
Paving the Way for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	Attentive Listener Flexible Facilitator Language Teaching for Communication Enriching and Positive Learning Environment Effective Teacher Preparation
Embracing Culturally Responsive Practices	Cultural Sensitivity Genuine Relationships

	Empathy and Understanding Diversity Knowledge Base Diverse Curriculum Giving Students a Voice Critical Literacy Transformative Learning Affirming Multilingualism Bridging Communities
Culturally Responsive Teaching Slipping Through the Cracks	Avoiding Sensitive Topics Staying Politically Neutral Deficit View on Education Conscious Teaching Dilemma Lack of Professional Development

In addition to performing thematic analysis, NVivo software was used to detect key words that pertain to teachers' practices and classrooms. The word count analysis helps triangulate data analysis by revealing the most commonly appearing words in the whole data set. Leech and Onwuebusie (2007) argued that "qualitative researchers can obtain more meaning by obtaining counts of words in addition to their narrative descriptions" (p. 568) and "maintain analytic integrity" (p. 568). It means that combining thematic analysis with examining the most frequent words can help discern emergent patterns in data, and thus it provides triangulation of the data analysis. In this chapter, the NVivo word frequency query was performed using a level 3 search option that provided a word grouping

with stem words and synonyms. NVivo word frequency query was performed and included not only exact words and words with stem words, but also synonyms. I also selected the option to see 50 most frequent words in the data set, and they appeared from the most frequent ones on the top of the table to the least frequent ones on the bottom of the table.

Table 4. shows some of the most frequent words used in the participants' interview transcripts, reflections, and classroom observation field notes that pertain to their teaching. The full list of the word groupings created by the NVivo software is found in Appendix K. Some of the words that I did not include in Table 2. from the list in Appendix K are *see*, *make*, *come*, *get*, or *take* because they denoted too general meanings and did not explain teachers' practices. As Table. 4 shows, the word groupings with synonyms clearly indicate that teachers focus on teaching their students, as some of the most frequently used words in the whole data set are *teaching*, *class* and *students*. The other most frequent words that appear in the participants' reflections, interview transcripts, and observation field notes are *know*, *need*, *want*, *feel*, *talk*, *learn*, *think*, *help*, *question*, and *understand*. Since these words were used across the data set, their high frequency indicated that participants focus on creating a classroom that facilitates learning, but also revealed participants' active role in accommodating to diverse students' needs, wants, and feelings by talking to them, getting to know them, promoting thinking and questioning, understanding students' circumstances, and supporting them.

Table 8

Level 3 NVivo Word Frequency Query List.

Words	Similar Words	Frequency
know	acknowledge, acknowledgement, cognizant, experience, experiences, experiment, intent, intention, intentionally, know, knowing, knowledge,	2159

	knowledgeable, knows, recognize, recognized, recognizing, wise	
teaching	educate, educated, educating, education, educational, educator, instructing, instruction, instructional, instructions, learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, pedagogy, teach, teaches, teaching	1189
class	class, classes, course, courses, division, families, family, grade, grades, grading	1079
students	student, students, students', students'	1016
work	act, acting, acts, employ, employment, exercise, exercises, function, functional, functionality, influence, influenced, influences, make, makes, making, mold, process, processes, processing, solve, solved, studied, studies, study, studying, work, worked, working, workplace, works	919
feel	belief, beliefs, experience, experiences, experiment, feel, feeling, feelings, feels, look, looked, looking, looks, notion, notions, opinion, opinions, sense, senses, tone	851
need	ask, asked, asking, asks, involve, involved, involvement, involves, involving, motivate, motivated, motivates, motivating, motivations, motivator, necessarily, need, needed, needing, needs, require, required, requirement, requirements, requires	836
want	absent, desires, lack, miss, missed, misses, missing, missing', precious, private, want, wanted, wanting, wants, wish, wishes	829
learn	acquire, acquisition learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, memorable, read, reading, readings, reads, scholarships, studied, studies, study, studying	750
talk	dialogue, dialogues, dialoguing, lecture, lectures, lecturing, mouth, negotiate, negotiated, negotiating, negotiation, peach, sing, speak, speaking, speaks, talk, talked, talking, talks, verbalize, verbally	587
different	differ, difference, differences, different, differently, differing, otherwise, unlike	557
think	believe, believed, believes, consider, considered, considering, considers, guess, guessing, imagine, intelligence, intelligent, mean, meaning, means, reason, reasons, remember, remembered, suppose, supposed, think, thinking, thought, thoughtful, thoughts	518
question	head, headed, heads, inquire, inquiry, inquisitive, interview, interviews, motions, question, questionable, questioning, questions, wonder, wondered, wonderful, wondering	459
help	assist, assistance, assistant, assisted, available, facilitate, facilitates, facilitating, facilitator, facilitators, help, helped, helpful, helping, helping', helps, portion, serve, service, services, serving, support, supported, supporting, supportive, supports	416

cultural	civil, cultural, culturally, culture, cultures, ethnic, ethnicities, ethnicity, finish, finished, finishing, polish, political, politically, politics	370
understand	clear, clearly, comprehensibility, comprehension, comprehensive, intelligence, intelligent, interpret, interpretation, interpreted, interpreters, perceive, perceived, perceiving, reason, reasons, understand, understanding, understands	356

Both thematic analysis and word counts indicate that participants prioritize students' needs when selecting teaching approaches, strategies, and activities. Their culturally responsive teaching is evident in their classrooms, but in varied ways and degrees. Thus, the thematic analysis points to three categories that explain teachers' practices, such as paving the way for culturally responsive pedagogy, embracing culturally responsive pedagogy, but also how culturally responsive pedagogy can slip through the cracks. Below I explain each category with its codes and include direct quotes as examples.

Paving the Way for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Thematic data analysis shows that participants use various effective teaching strategies that help them connect with their students and address their needs; and thus, such strategies pave the way for the successful promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Active Listeners

All participants agree that they are attentive listeners who listen to students' needs and goals. Listening is part of their daily teaching as it helps them learn about their students, backgrounds, experiences, and current circumstance, and they plan their instruction accordingly. They actively listen to them during group work activities, during break time, and after classes end. Participants go beyond just listening to students as a formative assessment tool to help them improve their communication skills, they are agentive in listening to students' real concerns and struggles. This finding points to the importance of

listening to students' life histories and circumstances as immigrant and refugee students may feel isolated in the new country (McCluskey, 2012). For example, Cici shared that listening is an effective strategy to help students open up as she focuses on building a trusting classroom environment. She explained during one of the interviews,

I just really try to have a lot of little mini conversations with them and as we have as many conversations, if they feel comfortable, then they'll open up and tell me about, well, yeah, my kids are over there so I'm really upset or whatever or you know, um, we're gonna, we're having problems with the whatever, getting the rest of my family here or you know, they'll tell me their problems and I just listen, I listen and then I get to know their backgrounds, um, a lot that way.

Flexible Facilitators

Another effective strategy that some teachers use to connect with their students is being flexible facilitators. For example, Andrew, Mary, Sebastian, and Agnes see their teaching as providing guidance and support and want to empower students to be independent learners. They stay away from lecturing and having strict lesson plans and timed activities. Thus, their teaching revolves around helping students learn authentically instead of confirming to purely prescribed lessons. This finding revealed that even though teachers have already designed curriculum and planned lessons, they are not afraid to change gears and be flexible in their teaching (Ollerhead & Burns, 2016). For example, Mary shares that facilitating learning leads to a more interactive and communicative classroom environment. She states,

I'm more of a facilitator than a teacher. So I bring the material to students in a relevant way, in an authentic way that they can get their head around it and that they can practice it and use it. And hopefully through the activities in the classroom, they can begin to absorb, and learn. And if you noticed from my class, they ask a lot of questions and so I feel like that is my, my ultimate goal is to present it and give them opportunities and then be there to answer questions. So it's interactive.

Language Teaching For Communication

Sebastian, Cici, Andrew and Tim agreed that they primarily focus on developing students' communicative skills. During a student needs assessment process and daily conversations, they learn about students' goals of improving communication skills. Thus, they make sure they provide a lot of opportunities for students to practice through informal conversations, group work, pair work, and group presentations. In some classes, students are challenged to speak on a daily basis, where they share their interests, experiences, and opinions. Providing them a space to communicate is a way to value such diverse experiences. Sebastian shares that providing a space for improving students communication skills helps them feeling more valued and then they learn better. He reflects,

Broadly speaking, students want to communicate in English and they want their ability to have value. I think it is my task to create a "value setting" such that daily, weekly, a student can feel their efforts are worthwhile as measured in successful interaction and communication in English. Is this how then not only their own identity and culture has a starting place to be

valued in an English-speaking setting. If there is such value, there will be greater chance of acquisition.

Enriching and Positive Learning Experience

All participants shared in their reflections that they take action in providing an enriching and positive learning experience, where students have opportunities to learn not only language skills but also about each other, community, and social and cultural differences in a safe and comfortable environment. Classroom observation field notes also illustrate that teachers looked cheerful and attended to students' needs by approaching them during group work and asking how they were doing, prompting them to make personal connections to the readings, and encouraging them to support classmates if they did not understand certain vocabulary. That finding supports research by Irvine and Armento (2001) who argued that it is crucial to foster positive classroom climates in culturally responsive classrooms. For example, Sebastian shared during one of the interviews that having a class full of students from various countries provides a personally enriching experience. He stated,

Um, it's life enriching, I hope for the, for the students it's rewarding. There's a great opportunity for them to meet other people. And in some cases, this is it, this classroom, whatever happens and outside and the breaks and are their experience for a time in the United States. And so, you know, they, maybe they didn't think, oh, well, I'm sitting next to a guy from China or something and I speak Spanish. But it doesn't take long for that to be enriching for most of the students.

While providing an enriching and positive classroom environment, all teachers emphasize the importance of lowering the stress in their language classrooms. Lowering the “affective filter”, a term introduced by Krashen, is widely promoted in their classrooms and leads to effective language learning (Hutchison, 2011). Participants shared in their reflective journals that they do that through actively maintaining inclusive and emotionally safe classroom environments. Tim, for example, uses a lot of humor to ensure his students feel more at ease. He commented,

And you know I use a lot of humor. I try to, you know I use, I act out a lot.

Uh, you know to get them to try to have fun with it. You make them have fun and they can laugh, they'll relax. You take the stress off, you know, I, like I said, I kind of try to keep the class light. I laugh, you know, I think humor can really do a lot to break down their resistance, have fun.

Effective Teacher Preparation

Effective teaching stems from effective teacher preparation programs (Nelson & Guerra, 2014), and the findings of this study point to the importance of having enriching experiences during teacher preparation courses that expand pre-service teachers' knowledge on both effective teaching and cultural competence. Some participants, such as Agnes, Mary, and Sebastian shared during the interviews that they enjoyed methodology courses in their teacher preparation programs because they learned about useful teaching strategies, had engaging professors, and expanded their knowledge about diversity. Agnes comments that a teacher preparation program she attended affected her passion for teaching English Language Learners. She states,

My professors were great, and I got a lot of the things, I think it did for me the most. It opened my mind to diverse learners. And I, and I really decided to do that because I was having some struggles and that I just, I didn't know what to do. And so that really helped me and I really enjoyed the program and that really helped me learn to love ESL as well.

Ultimately, the first category that was developed during thematic analysis points to the strategies that facilitate promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy. By listening, facilitating, focusing on creating a communicative and safe language environment, and gaining effective teacher preparation experience, teachers exhibit a strong agency in ensuring their classrooms are comfortable spaces to learn. Thus, participants' individual choices in their classrooms and personal experience in their teacher education program indicate they are active agents in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The next section explains specific practices that portray their successful promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Embracing Culturally Responsive Practices

Thematic analysis also revealed that participants use a variety of culturally responsive practices in their classrooms. The codes that were identified pertained to participants' discussions on cultural sensitivity and the importance of gaining a cultural knowledge base, building meaningful relationships, empathizing with students, providing diverse curricula, giving students a voice, affirming students' diverse languages, offering transformative learning opportunities, and bridging communities.

Cultural Sensitivity

During the first interview, participants were asked about what they knew about culturally responsive pedagogy. Most of them were open to admitting that they had heard the term but did not remember or fully understand what it meant. After asking them to define it, most of them referred to cultural sensitivity. They described it as teaching that is sensitive to students' various backgrounds and being open to learning about them. That definition aligns with the definition by the American TESOL Institute (2011) that explained, "a culturally sensitive person would understand other countries' traditions and ways of life or attempt to learn and apply new understandings" (p. 1). Tim's explanation is very similar to that. He states,

I guess it would mean being sensitive to, uh, the cultures as much as you possibly can. Not to bring into any, into the class, any preconceived notions of what the people, um, what they're like or how they act and just be open, um, to, uh, you know, issues that they may have.

Diversity Knowledge Base

However, when asking participants to critically reflect on their practices and classroom interactions, the data analysis showed that they actively promote various aspects of culturally responsive pedagogy in their classrooms. All participants are aware of the importance of learning about the students not only by talking to them but also by reading about their countries and cultures. Building a cultural knowledge base helps them understand their students, their unique challenges, and needs. For example, Cici, Tim, Agnes, Mary, and Suzy noted that immigrant and refugee students come from various settings and recognized that their complex, sometimes traumatizing experiences can affect

their learning. Understanding their students' personal journeys helps them connect with students and create a safe learning environment. That finding strengthens research by Gay (2002) and Villegas and Lucas (2002) who argue that teachers should have knowledge about students' lives in order to design culturally responsive instruction. For example, Suzy explains that it is important to keep educating oneself about one's students as their previous experience affect their learning. She is aware of students' complex histories and seeks ways to find out about their stories and such knowledge informs her teaching. Suzy noted that gaining a knowledge base about refugee and immigrant students is crucial to effective teaching and learning. That confirms research by Burns and Roberts (2010) who reminded teachers that learning about refugee students requires them to be sensitive to student experiences as "participation in social contexts can be challenging for refugee trauma survivors, whose marginalization is often perpetuated by their depression, isolation, and unfamiliarity with the language of their new home" (Burns & Roberts, 2010, p. 589). Suzy's account illuminates her strong sense of agency for acquiring knowledge about her diverse students in order to create a safe learning environment. She said,

It's very helpful to do a lot of reading about the country that the person comes from, um, to understand that culture and, um, to learn about the political climate and what it was that, that forced these people to come to the United States. Um, it helps to know what types of trauma they may have faced since that affects learning a lot of times. Um, and when someone feels stressed, especially, uh, when they first start coming to an English class, um, it can be very stressful and intimidating and it takes a while for people to adjust sometimes in an American classroom. And I've always learned and

remembered that when someone is stressed, they cannot learn. So sometimes it means I'm giving that student some space to get adjusted and realize that the classroom is a safe space and that it can be a place of refuge and community and friendship and that the teacher is not going to bite them. And once I think a student figures that out, then they start to learn.

Genuine Relationships

In addition, all participants value building genuine relationships with students that help them understand their needs and goals. All of them shared in the interviews that they prioritize establishing relationships from the beginning of the semester and authentically maintaining them through engaging in conversations with students about their families, work, and academic goals, as well as ensuring respectful classroom interactions. Also, the classroom observation field notes showed that participants greet students by name and take time to ask them questions about how their day went. In each observed class, students looked comfortable to ask questions if they did not understand something, to ask for help with a personal problem, and to ask about finding additional learning resources. Some teachers, such as Mary and Suzy also hug students at the end of the class, stay in touch with students over the phone, and visit them when they are sick or have important life events. For example, in one of the interviews, Suzy shared that she attended students' weddings and birthday parties, when invited. Participants also make sure to have a positive attitude that is welcoming and that fortifies close relationships. That finding adds to the growing body of research (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011) that recommends building close student-teacher relationships by fostering good

classroom interactions and a positive learning environment. For example, Agnes shares the importance of genuine relationships with her students by explaining,

I believe that building genuine relationships with my students is one of the most important parts of teaching. I try to establish this relationship from the first class by taking time to get to know the students right away. I also take the time to introduce myself and share personal stories so that the students feel like they can get to know me as well. On the first day they take a couple surveys, and we spend a lot of time getting to know each other's names. It can be difficult when I have diverse students for them to understand each other's names, so I think this is an important part of class. After the introductions, I continue to build relationships with my students by having a positive attitude each class. They have told me many times that they appreciate that I seem happy to be there every class. I think that this helps them feel more excited about learning, and also to trust me more. In each lesson I try to talk about my personal experiences and ask about theirs too.

Empathy and Understanding

Data analysis also shows that participants are compassionate teachers. All participants recognize that students have different experiences and make an effort to be empathetic, caring, and understanding. They genuinely show empathetic concern for their students, their feelings, and their experiences. That finding also indicated that some of them are aware of their privileges and deeply connect with students because they care about lowering their distress. Thus, similar to Warren's (2017) assertion, some participants, such as Agnes, Cici, Suzy, and Mary reflected on their own dispositions, are attentive to "the

humanity and lived realities of diverse students” (p. 8), and make sure their students “feel visible, heard, valued, and an important member of the classroom community” (p. 3). For example, Cici acknowledged her privilege of not being an immigrant and reflected on how she makes an active effort in empathizing with students’ various experiences by stating,

My experiences are different from some ELLs in that some of them have lived through war, terrorism, starvation, and horrible circumstances. They have lived with majorly corrupt governments and have seen it all. I have never had to face these terrors. I am a very compassionate person though and feel deeply for other people and their experiences.

Diverse Curriculum

Participants also indicate that they actively create a diverse curriculum by supplementing with materials, online resources, or additional textbooks so they reflect the needs and cultural backgrounds of students. They are intentional in choosing readings that relate to students’ experiences and have activities in class that allow for learning about various social and cultural differences. For example, Suzy, Mary, Agnes, Cici, and Sebastian openly acknowledge that textbooks do not reflect students’ diversity and they need to add additional materials. That finding supports Guy’s (2002) assertion about standardized curriculum avoiding controversial issue, focusing only on certain cultural groups, and minimizing multiple perspectives. Most of the participants in this study are critically conscious about the gap in the curriculum and take action to deliver lessons that match the needs and cultural backgrounds of their diverse students. This indicates their resistance against a “hidden curriculum” in educating adult ELLs (Hutchison, 2011). For example, during one of the classroom observations Sebastian showed a short film

portraying life in Middle East and brought pictures of people varying in culture, race, age, social class, and gender in order to prompt a discussion and extend understanding on diversity. One classroom observation of Andrews' lesson also revealed that he deeply examined the curriculum and added readings that pertained to students' various backgrounds, interests, and social struggles. That confirmed the assertion by Guy (2002) who called for a diverse curriculum that does not perpetuate stereotyping and exclusion but illuminates cultural appreciation and validation. Mary explained her strong agency in selecting textbooks and designing creating culturally responsive materials by stating,

Instructional materials are contextual and need to be chosen carefully and adapted to backgrounds and capabilities of students. Students must be able to relate to the ideas presented and be capable of interacting with the materials and delivery. All my materials are matched to the needs of students. I am constantly searching for new materials. I love to try out new textbooks. So anytime that anybody in the department gets their hands on a textbook, I have it.

Giving Students a Voice

Another way in which some participants create a culturally responsive environment is through giving students a voice in their classrooms. Classroom discussions allow for sharing various perspectives, opinions, and experiences, where students can feel empowered and validated. That finding confirmed that culturally responsive teachers work towards developing students' socio-cultural consciousness (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Some of the teachers take an active role in their classrooms to create a classroom environment where students' various perspectives are valued and validated and learn about

multiple ways of perceiving reality. Thus, teachers, such as Agnes, Mary, and Andrew talked about how they make sure they minimize carrying their own “frames of mind” in order to openly challenging stereotypes, misconceptions, and judgement. They try to allow for negotiation of meaning and perspective sharing by giving students’ a voice to raise concerns and dispute common structures (Hutchison, 2011). For example, Agnes shared,

I try to give them a chance to share in every class how the topic can relate to their lives in their home countries, as well as their lives in the United States. For some topics I share personal stories with them, and then have them share their stories with the class or with a partner. I also do a lot of speaking activities where I give them topics and they speak with a partner for five minutes, and then change partners. This allows them to get to hear from their different classmates too. Other than that, I feel like I have been successful at promoting a positive classroom environment. I try to teach from different perspectives and learn from my students. I think that having my students work together in groups is something I have incorporated well too. Our class really does feel like a community, and I feel like my students feel comfortable to share with me and their classmates.

Critical Literacy

The findings also point to the importance of fostering critical literacy when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Participants who teach higher level students, such as Andrew, Sebastian, Mary, and Agnes shared in their reflective journals that they create opportunities for students to develop their critical thinking skills and engage in discussion that pertain to problem solving, cultural differences, and experience sharing.

Such stimulating learning environments boost students' motivation and expands their knowledge and cultural sensitivity. That finding is in line with the findings by Aronson and Laughter (2016) who assert that culturally responsive teachers offer active opportunities to increase students' awareness on sociopolitical issues by improving their critical thinking skills. Andrew, Sebastian, Mary, and Agnes actively promote open inquiry in their classrooms by posing problems and comparing and contrasting societal and cultural norms during classroom discussions, selecting readings that extend students' knowledge, and grouping students of different backgrounds together so they can share diverse experiences during pair and group work. For example, Andrew shared,

But I, you know, that motivates students to be active in the class and I do that to validate identity in the class. I try to do that. I try to learn from that cause some stuff I may not know depending on where they come from or which subgroup that come from it. Um, critical thinking is top on my list. We need to think about it. What does this mean? Why are we doing it? Why is it done? When was it done and for what reason? So I do a lot of critical thinking in my class in, in, in, in asking my students to participate in that, um, connecting with students all the time doing, connecting this. When students come in and I see a student walking way over there, I said, no, you need to come sit with the people. I always say the people and then they turn around and come sit with the people and the engagement comes through with the people. You know, they want to go be a solo, but I won't let them. Um, most of the time that's it. Come sit around somebody cause we're going

to work together and stuff so they get in the habit of that. So I think that's it.

While promoting critical literacy in their classrooms, some participants, such as Suzy, Mary, Andrew, and Agnes also showed a strong sense of agency in offering opportunities for students to critically analyze inequalities in the society and empowering them to compare their experiences. For example, Suzy explains the importance of raising students' awareness on discrimination practices in the United States by explaining in one of the interviews,

It is also important for the teacher to model openness and acceptance of all students. Many students come from countries and societies where they, themselves, have not been accepted or treated fairly. Therefore, it is important to make students aware that in the U.S., discrimination and bigotry does exist, but is not considered acceptable and, in many cases, is against the law. They also learn about the struggles of others including slavery, the fight for freedom and justice, the right to vote, and gender equality. Many can personally relate to these issues and understand that, in many cases, these are issues that we still struggle with today. It is extremely beneficial to learn about your students' own struggles in their former countries and how they compare to those who struggle in the U.S.

Transformative Learning

Data analysis also indicated some participants take an active role in extending their efforts in developing students' critical thinking skills by providing transformative learning experience. Some participants, such as Mary, Agnes, and Andrew involve students' in

confronting “grand narratives” and promote thought-provoking discussions to “transform students’ understanding of themselves, their communities, and their history” (Linde & Arthur, 2015, p. 28). This finding supported the argumentation by King (2000) about the importance of “emphasizing a transformation of the individual’s perspective meaning, or frame of reference, in order to effect personal change” (p. 69). For example, Andrew ensures that his students’ perspectives are validated in his classroom by letting students explain their points of view and comparing it to the class readings. Such teaching points to his resistance to the banking model of education described by Paulo Freire (1970) who explained that teachers instilled knowledge into students instead of engaging in mutual knowledge construction. Data analysis showed that participants, such as Andrew, Mary, and Agnes actively engage students in sharing their understanding of the world in hopes of transforming their understanding of other students. Andrew explained,

So we were talking about reading about Cinco de Mayo stuff, but I told the class in the middle of the discussion that this story is from the perspective of someone from the United States. What many people think Cinco de Mayo is, it's the day of independence for independence for Mexico. And a lot of the Mexican people in the class who were from Mexico said it's not. It's about a part of independence, but it has not nothing to do with the independence of Mexico itself. So that's a different perspective. And most native born people here celebrate it as a big holiday and party all day when most Mexican-born people do not. So that was very different, that many people in the class didn't know that came from this reading that story.

Affirming Multilingualism

The data analysis also showed that some participants actively affirm multilingualism in their classrooms. Some of the teachers, such as Mary, Agnes, Suzy, and Cici have learned Spanish as part of their undergraduate studies or through traveling to Latin America and Spain and openly express that they use it in the classes to facilitate learning. That shows teachers own language learning background is a powerful resource in promoting multilingualism in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms (Ellis, 2010). Agnes, Suzy, Mary, and Cici also let students use their L1 to explain concepts and make new students more comfortable. However, their classes are comprised of students of various linguistic backgrounds; thus, they take an active role in affirming their languages as well, for example, by learning basic greetings in their students' first languages and encouraging students to learn about each other's languages. That finding confirmed the research that shows that culturally responsive teachers interact with students as individuals and learn not only about cultural differences but also promote linguistic pluralism (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Paris, 2012). That finding provided evidence that participants actively negotiate power structures by resisting a linguistic ideology that perpetuates suppressing students' native languages because participants make sure students' various linguistic backgrounds are valued and validated in their classrooms (Tollefson, 2007). For example, Suzy explained her excitement to see how her students learn about each other's names and languages by commenting during one of the interviews,

There's a woman in this class who is from Mexico and I have some for from Burma and Bhutan, and from some countries in Africa. And um, they began to greet each other and say hello when they come into the classroom and

they teach each other how to say each other's names and they'll want to teach each other a word in their language. That's very good.

Bridging Communities

In addition, most of the participants take active efforts in bridging communities. They connect students with culturally and linguistically diverse people, resources, organizations, and events. That confirmed research by Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) who emphasize creating a welcoming, culturally responsive environment, where students feel connected and empowered to be a part of a diverse community. That is also in line with the argumentation posed by Rowsell et al. (2007) who stressed that teachers need to go beyond celebrating ethnic holidays and should build stronger relationships with parents and community. During some classroom observations, I observed how deeply participants cared about making sure students felt part of a diverse community in and outside the classroom. For example, Agnes, Mary, and Suzy connect students to the community through discussing various events that pertain to expanding and validating cultural awareness and celebration. They also actively work in the community to help students feel more welcomed, for example, by sustaining close relationships with immigrant and refugee agencies. Suzy regularly shares and attends events in the community. She explained that teaching classes in the off-campus locations requires connecting students to the community by stating,

Refugee support services, um, they put together a lot of events and activities. So, um, those of us that work in the refugee community and teach the community classes, um, we also communicate with refugee support services and whenever they have some kind of celebration or activity, then

we will take that information to the classrooms and let them know about it and to, and encourage them to come. Um, they have an annual birthday party, which is in January. And the reason why it's in January is because so many of the refugees have, they were given January birthdays, right? So it is a huge birthday celebration and it's, uh, one of the local churches in their fellowship hall and it's in January. And people bring food from their countries. And, um, there are a lot of kids there. Um, there's a lot of interaction between lots of different, lots of different people, lots of diversity. And so there's, there's food and there are games for children and there's entertainment. Um, there's a book vendor that comes and they have free books for children. It's really great.

Ultimately, this section revealed participants' strong sense of agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. They engage in numerous practices that validate their culturally and linguistically diverse learners backgrounds, such as learning about their unique stories, building strong relationships, selecting diverse materials, giving students a voice to share diverse experiences, being empathetic and understanding, developing students critical thinking skills, ensuring transformative learning environment, and bridging communities so students feel welcome not only in the classroom but in their neighborhoods.

Culturally Responsive Teaching Slipping Through the Cracks

Thematic analysis also revealed some gaps in teachers' culturally responsive practices. A few participants intentionally stay away from difficult topics; some experience a teaching dilemma between teaching English and incorporating culturally responsive

teaching. One participant's reflective journal revealed his deficit view on education, and a few participants complained about limited opportunities for enhancing cultural competence.

Avoiding Sensitive Topics

Even though all participants engage in culturally responsive teaching, some of them consciously shun certain topics or practices. These decisions are made based on the belief that they want to ensure a positive classroom environment that promotes being comfortable, valued, and relaxed. For example, Sebastian and Cici purposefully stay away from sensitive topics, such as abortion, immigration status or religion because they do not want students to feel uncomfortable. Arongna (2017) reported similar findings that suggest teachers often avoid sensitive topics due to wanting to minimize student embarrassment and cultural and religious tensions. Sebastian, for example, shared that he avoided certain topics because they are too sensitive by explaining,

One of the issues I do not bring up in class by way of discussion is immigration, in so far as it leads to mention of the documented versus undocumented status of students. This becomes too personal too quickly. Also, I do not bring up the subject of abortion. This too is a highly sensitive and personal issue. Other personal issues, in name the ravages of war and conflict and struggle for survival that some have experienced can at times find expression in writing assignments.

Staying Politically Neutral

Some participants also shared that they intentionally stay politically neutral when teaching. However, that is in contradiction to the assertion that English language teaching

“is not a politically or morally neutral activity” (Richards, 2008, p. 173). Cici, in particular, was open to share in the interview that she avoids being politically involved, but she gave a valid reason why she does that. She believes that this is in the best interest of her students. She believes that being strongly engaged in politics would affect her teaching by imposing her political views on students. Thus, she deeply cares about her students’ feelings and does not want politics to impact her positive relationships with students. That shows her strong sense of agency in preserving a conflict-free, comfortable learning environment. She stated,

I don't really like politics. For me, I'm just not interested in it. I don't, I'm not interested. It just drives me crazy. Literally, if I were to do pay attention, it would drive me crazy because it's too much. It's just too much drama. Okay. Too much trauma is too much. You know, this person is a person, they're fighting, they're fighting. This says this, this, this, this. They're lying. So I just choose to kind of ignore it and um, and then it keeps me and my classroom, it kind of keeps me more neutral because I'm afraid. If I got really heavily involved in it, it may make me more like, I don't know the right word. Um, it might make me more, I don't know the right word. Biased. Yes. And maybe that's, I mean I'm not doing it for that reason, but I think it helps me to stay more neutral.

Conscious Teaching Dilemma

Another way culturally responsive teaching is diminished is by the dilemma between prioritizing developing students’ academic language skills and integrating students’ cultures in teaching. Some teachers, such as Tim and Sebastian, make teaching

students language skills a priority and put the promotion of culturally responsive practices on the second stage. For example, Sebastian was honest about emphasizing language teaching over promoting culturally responsive teaching strategies. This finding points to Sebastian's comfort level when integrating culture in language teaching. He seems more comfortable teaching language than merging both language and deeper discussions about cultural differences in his instruction. He is aware of that and at the end of participation in the project reflected that he should be more conscious of taking active efforts in fostering culturally responsive pedagogy. He described seeing a need in integrating language teaching with culturally responsive strategies by stating,

There is room to add to my efforts. I think I can be more conscious of CRP and make more deliberate decisions in lesson planning and materials development. Most interesting to me is the designing of activities and materials that would provide opportunities for speaking and writing, informed by discussion and reading, that inherently address the many different cultural ways of communicating, teacher and students' expectations of one another, and the timely meeting of the wishes and goals of everyone in a class – all of which become culturally responsive threads of a lesson.

Deficit View on Education

In addition, data analysis revealed that a deficit view on education also diminishes some of the teachers' engagement in culturally responsive practices. That is in line with the research by Manning and Baruh (2009) who argued that culturally and linguistically diverse students can be seen as 'deprived', 'disadvantaged', and 'socially deprived' only

because their behavior, language, and customs are different” (p. 47). In this study, students’ educational backgrounds can be found as limitations and instead of using students’ backgrounds as strengths, they are sometimes seen as obstacles. Therefore, that relates to argumentation by Villegas and Lucas (2002) who stated that culturally responsive teachers should affirm views of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and should not view differences as problems to overcome. For instance, Tim, in particular, saw students’ educational backgrounds as problematic, but he still believes that he is patient and uses a lot of drills in order to address the needs of his students. Thus, in accordance with Burns and Roberts’ (2010) suggestion of addressing cognitive difficulties when working with refugee students, Tim takes an active role in providing opportunities for constant reviewing of the content and language skills and that is to the best interest of his students. However, seeing educational backgrounds as deficits also limits the opportunities for having high expectations of diverse students when engaging in culturally responsive pedagogy (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Such adult ESL teachers like Tim should, then, perhaps take more action in setting higher expectations with individual support and guidance (Yang, 2005). Tim stated,

And, um, you know, the, the fact that many of them do, did not have any education in their own, um, countries. And there are basically, many of them are just old farmers. And so teaching them a language at this point in their lives is, uh, you know, is the probably the biggest challenge I've faced.

Lack of Professional Development

Some participants are also frank about having no professional development opportunities that would improve their understanding of culturally responsive practices.

Scholars argue that professional development enhances teachers' awareness and value of diversity and provides them with specific strategies to be culturally responsive (Mette et al., 2016) as well as encouraging teachers to "examine larger social, political, cultural, economic factors that are behind ELLs' responses to the classroom context" (Dantas-Whitney & Waldschmidt, 2009, p. 69). For example, Mary acknowledges the gap in training for diversity awareness or multicultural practices offered by her former institution. She stated,

I know that we are not, we have, we're not given any sort of multicultural training. There's no PD for diversity. There's no, we're not given any sort of sensitivity training or anything like that for part-time instructors.

Ultimately, even though all participants engage in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy, there are some limitations. The findings of this study point to purposeful avoidance of discussing difficult, politically related topics, experiencing teaching dilemmas, and having no professional development to improve their familiarity with culturally responsive practices. As far as avoiding controversial and political discussions is concerned, participants explained that they emphasize making students' feel comfortable in the classrooms, and thus, they avoid activities that would create discomfort, embarrassment, or conflict. Such findings also showed teachers' sense of discomfort in discussing difficult topics and strengthen argumentation by Amos (2016), Sleeter (2001), and Williams and Evans-Winter (2005) who found that some teachers show resistance to fully engaging in culturally responsive teaching by avoiding difficult conversations. However, even though these findings point to three ways culturally responsive pedagogy was enacted in the adult ESL classrooms, one needs to be aware that there was a range if

commitments to exploring and enacting culturally responsive pedagogy. Some teachers took more risks in their classrooms while others preferred to stay in their comfort zones.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the participants of this study showed a strong sense of agency for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners, but they promote such pedagogy within a comfort zone. In the beginning of the study, all participants described culturally responsive pedagogy as cultural sensitivity; however, their own critical evaluation of their practices and their relationships with students illuminated many intentional culturally responsive strategies that they perform to address the needs of their diverse learners. They all take action to provide a safe, inclusive, and enriching learning environment, where students' needs, goals, feelings, and interests are valued and supported. Data analysis also point to participants' quest to create a 'third space' in their adult ESL classrooms. Kramsch (1993) argued that classrooms are spaces for identity development, critical exchange of meanings and perspectives, intercultural appreciation, and genuine interactions. I found that the participants in this study work hard to create a safe and comfortable learning environment, where students' various cultural and linguistic backgrounds are validated and appreciated. In doing that they enact many culturally responsive practices to make sure students feel part of a classroom community. They build strong, genuine relationship with students, learn about students, listen to their real needs and concerns in order to understand their real circumstances, give students a voice to share their perspectives and knowledge, and engage them critically in the material and discussions in order to empower them to be successful members of the community in and outside the classroom.

Even though these teachers have been effective language teachers who take action in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy, they are also agentive in avoiding certain aspects of culturally responsive teaching in order to create a comfortable classroom environment. In contrast to the argument by Sleeter (2012) who suggested that culturally responsive pedagogy is being “simplified, trivialized, and essentialized” (p. 570) in the classrooms, the participants of this study do successfully utilize their students’ unique strengths and experiences in their classrooms instead of just using surface level strategies, such as cultural celebrations. The participants focus on student’s unique cultural and linguistic backgrounds and individual goals and use that to strengthen their teaching. However, even though all teachers make sure their students feel comfortable and validated in their classroom, not all teachers’ practices are the same. Some of them, especially Suzy, Agnes, Mary and Andrew work towards creating a social change. They treat their classrooms as venues for giving students’ a voice to share their unique stories, raise concerns, and exchange cultural values and perspectives. Some teachers, however, have some reservations or are cautious about fully engaging in culturally responsive pedagogy. For example, Sebastian and Cici intentionally avoid discussing difficult topics that pertain to religion, immigration, or politics because they do not want students feel uneasy. Thus, this study revealed that several of the participants do not view culturally responsive pedagogy as “a political endeavor” (Sleeter, 2012, p. 577).

While some participants, such as Agnes, Andrew, Suzy, and Mary work towards social justice in education by engaging students in challenging power structures, norms, and differences, and thus promoting transformative learning, Cici and Sebastian purposefully stay away from the politics and sensitive topics. Another aspect of teaching

at a comfort level is prioritizing teaching language skills over fully integrating culturally responsive pedagogy. For example, Sebastian and Tim view their job responsibilities mainly as enhancing students' language proficiency because they believe students desperately need to improve their language skills. These findings demonstrate that participants make agentic choices in their classrooms that they believe are in the best interest of their students. However, there are some restrictions to teacher agency as these teachers experience constraints and challenges when teaching English Language Learners that may affect their enactment of culturally responsive pedagogy, and the next chapter will address these concerns.

CHAPTER 6: THEME 3 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

This study explores adult ESL teachers' experiences, practices, and relationships in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The previous chapters offered a discussion on teachers being explorers who actively pursue promoting culturally responsive teaching practices. This chapter seeks to address the third research question: How have the various contexts and experiences shaped ESL teachers' sense of agency in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners? In considering teacher narratives about their personal and professional experiences and environments and in conducting thematic analysis of the full data set, I found that teachers share similar struggles in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners and experiences that empowered them to teach their ELLs. Even though they face challenges in their classrooms, they are persistent in meeting students' needs. They are agentive in creating safe and welcoming classroom environments, where students feel welcome and appreciated. However, there are some factors that impede their sense of agency. Thus, this chapter focuses on various pressures adult ESL teachers experience when teaching their ELLs. First, the participants' narratives illuminate each participants' institutional pressures and personal challenges, and the categories that were identified during data analysis are explained.

Stories into Adult ESL Instructors' Challenges

While a body of research on language teacher agency centers on advocacy, decision making, and accepting or resisting curricular reforms, policy environments, prescribed resources, and school practices (Edwards & Burns, 2016; Kayi-Aydar, 2017; Lasky, 2005; Lopez, 2011; Ollerhead & Burns, 2016; Tao & Gao, 2017), this study seeks to understand how sociocultural influences, including the institutional culture of learning and teaching

English, hegemonic ideologies and standardized tests affect language teacher agency. This research study elicited stories of teaching, exploring, relationship building, and professional struggles. In the introduction chapter, I began with the condensed overview of some challenges language teachers face in their classrooms. To reiterate Ollerhead and Burns (2016) assert that “many language teachers have to operate within considerable educational constraints, controlled by rapidly changing and top-down ministry policies, mandated curriculum, prescribed materials, and prespecified outcomes” (p. 227) and such constraints create unique struggles for ESL teachers. In their pursuit to create culturally inclusive classrooms some teachers exhibit a strong sense of agency while others are limited by some pressures, tensions, and struggles. Teacher agency is characterized as “a capacity to act that is achieved within continually shifting contexts over time. It helps us understand how teachers are reflexive and creative, act counter to societal constraints, and are both enabled and constrained by their social and material environments” (Priestley et al., 2012, p. 3). And thus, teachers’ stories foreground the complexities of teaching adult ELLs and unique obstacles in addressing their needs.

Narrative research attempts to provide reflective opportunities for participants to make sense of their experiences and environments and critically reflect on their knowledge, power, and actions. Therefore, “narrative researchers are interested in deconstructing assumptions and exploring influences” (Hickson, 2016, p. 387). Whilst trying to understand participants’ stories, the theoretical framework that draws on critical theory and agency from the ecological perspective aided in designing interview questions and reflection prompts that engaged participants’ in critically analyzing a variety of experiences and contexts. Participants reflected on their curriculum, resources, and interactions. Some

of the questions prompted participants' to deeply think about their institutional, social, political, and cultural issues that affect their teaching. Their stories show various degrees of investment or detachment in their personal and professional spheres. In this light, the ways teachers narrate their negotiation of different motivators and pressures are directly related to their sense of agency. Thus, their narratives offer a window into their beliefs, values, goals, and forces that motivate them or discourage them to promote culturally responsive pedagogy (Bell, 2002). This chapter aims at illustrating factors that enable or limit adult ESL instructors' sense of agency in fostering a culturally responsive classroom environment and let us first learn more about each teacher's unique challenges.

Agnes: Balancing Addressing Students' Needs with Testing Pressures

Agnes has been teaching at this community college for over a year now. During her classroom observations, she looked energetic and passionate about delivering interesting, relevant, and high-quality lessons. In every class she makes conscious decisions of choosing activities and resources that are culturally sensitive. She reports that she makes sure that the textbook she uses includes many different communities and not just one. However, not all textbooks can accommodate the needs and experiences of diverse learners. If she finds that a text does not show different perspectives, she actively looks for other resources to supplement it. That helps students to look at other perspectives and realize their bias towards other communities within this topic. In order to reduce stereotyping and generalization, Agnes always tries to show her students different perspectives and let them share theirs. If her students say something that is a generalization, she encourages them to do research so that they may find something different. As an adult ESL instructor, she gets the opportunity to work with a very diverse student population, so

she feels that it is important to give students a voice, learn from each other, and have a variety of materials that would help them gain new knowledge and perspectives. However, sometimes it is challenging because she does not have access to many resources. She has to design, gather, and prepare many of the materials for her class to meet the needs of her students. She reports that due to funding restrictions, her resources are limited.

In addition to budget constraints, she also experiences testing pressures and that affects her teaching practices. She expresses her concerns that she has to focus on having good test scores or she might lose program funding. She reflects that focusing too much on testing is stressful for both the students and the teachers, and acknowledges that it affects her teaching and student learning. Her students are assessed on their reading and listening skills, so she sees the importance of using materials that have content that are on the test. However, she is committed to balancing the testing pressures with addressing students' needs, goals, and learning styles. She is careful in choosing instructional materials that not only align with the tests, but that are interesting for the students as well as culturally responsive. Therefore, once she chooses a textbook that is appropriate for the students' level, and that fits with the standards, she goes through the book and decides what topics are relevant to her students. She also supplements the textbook material with other books, authentic materials, and online resources. She strives for covering most of the topics that are relevant to her students, even though they have to focus on test preparation. She understands that her students would rather have speaking and real-life situations instead of a listening or a reading test practice because most of her students voice their interest in learning other skills, such as life or work skills, instead of academic skills.

Agnes deeply connects with her students and makes sure her teaching addresses their needs. She listens to them and adjusts her instruction accordingly. She reflects that her own personal experiences empowered her to be a compassionate and understanding teacher, who puts students' needs first. Going through the immigration and green card process with her husband and working with immigrant families in public schools and the community really gave her a new perspective. Seeing how some Americans treat immigrants for not speaking perfect English opened her eyes to the growing prejudice and discrimination. She sees the struggle English Language Learners experience both socially and academically because of the language barrier, and she dedicates her career to helping them thrive in new communities. That is why she makes sure to create a welcoming, transformative learning community in her classroom and brings additional resources, promotes events in the community, and engages students in collaborative work. She works hard to make students feel safe and validated. However, sometimes she feels isolated in her classroom. Since she works part-time, rarely does she have opportunities to collaborate with other faculty, be part of professional development efforts, and have continuous support from the administration. She hopes for more collaboration among the faculty in the department. At the end of the research project, she shared great news. She was successfully admitted to a PhD program at a local university.

Andrew: Not Enough Money or Time to Do Everything

Andrew works full-time. He juggles a busy schedule, but makes sure he always prepares dynamic, appealing lessons. His decisions on teaching certain materials are primarily based on the students' collective needs along with following the official core texts and recommendations from the instructional staff. Often times he has to balance

changing rules, regulations, and administrative networks that affect the timing of the assessments and student educational choices. During these stressful changing administrative pressures, he reports that he decides to comply and then adjusts his instruction and class management to produce positive outcomes from the students. That means, he does use textbooks that conform to standardized testing standards but supplements them with a variety of resources to make sure students can relate to the content he teaches. He also reports taking agentive steps while experiencing funding constraints. Instead of going through three different levels of authorization for funding, he takes action and goes out and purchases resources from his own budget. For example, he purchased a printer for his class and makes copies for students because he knows they need physical copies of readings they cover in class. He also brings his own ink and paper to class. Therefore, he focuses on using time wisely in addressing students' needs. If they need additional worksheets, he supplies them. His lessons are student-centered, where students contribute to deciding what is taught and how it is taught. During classroom observations, I found that his lessons were culturally responsive, and his classroom was inviting and empowering. He reports that he tirelessly fought for having his students' work hung on the classroom walls. Rarely can one see students' work on classroom walls in that college. However, he explained the importance of having a warm and inclusive classroom environment, and the administration let him keep students' posters, pictures, and artwork on the walls.

Andrew is determined in providing an enriching learning experience. One of his biggest impacts on his teaching was realization that the government picks and chooses who should be a citizen based on negative perceptions and that ELLs experience barriers

because of that. That realization helped him understand that his students want to learn English as quickly as possible and learn certain concepts as quickly as possible. He adjusted his instruction and started bringing more content that dealt with citizenship, community, and work. He also is invested in expanding students' critical thinking and leadership skills and encourages transformative discussions. He lets students lead portions of the lessons, decide what they want to learn, and promotes experience sharing. His instructional materials connect to the students' experiences by reminding or introducing the students to relevant knowledge to enhance their abilities and to help them navigate successfully through daily activities and academic barriers. Andrew often sorts through instructional materials to find subjects that relate to the general experiences ELLs may have experienced, uses historical resources that highlight diversity and introduce bias intent, and encourages class discussions about specific differences and attitudes about race, sex, gender, social perception and historical findings. He reports that he creates a safe classroom environment that supports students to respectfully talk about many things that affect their lives or their native norms, values and generalizations. Introducing common stereotypes and discussing the actual facts allows for diminishing or eliminating a negative perception. He also weekly re-arranges the desks in the classroom into different designs to interrupt the student's pattern of normalcy, routine, emotional reliance on a same group identity or learning hierarchy. However, he sees challenges in teaching many ideals, subject areas and language norms in such a short time period. In addition to teaching two classes, he has to attend many meetings, professional development sessions, and plan for the classes. In addition, every few weeks things change administratively. Because of the time constraints he experiences, he acknowledges that it is very difficult to analyze a lot of things. He hopes

for having more time to analyze his students, design a better lesson plans, and work with other instructors. He believes that if teachers have fewer contact hours and more planning time, they have more time to study students' needs and reflect on their practice and classroom environment. Currently, he expresses his frustration in not having time to do that on a regular basis.

Cici: Overwhelming Testing Pressures

Cici works part-time in the lab. She believes that a lab environment requires different ways of teaching. Sometimes she cannot have lessons that are project-based or group-work oriented because students mainly work on their grammar or listening skills on the computers. Sometimes she has group work but due to the lab format it is limited. Thus, she takes an active role in ensuring that she allocates some time in each lesson to talk to students, create collaborative activities, and get them work on games as a whole class. Every class she forms circle time, where she asks students how they are doing and what specific language skills they want to focus on. Her class consists of multilevel students and she has to scaffold a lot and works on making it as interactive and fun as possible. She also believes that being in the lab setting gives her more flexibility. She surveys and talks to students often to see what they need first. Then, she looks at the class performance and evaluates what they need. However, having students of various levels pressures her to keep all of them engaged and at the same time she ensures that they improve their language skills and go up a level. What she does is to consciously use grammar structures and speed of speaking at an understandable level, so that students at the higher level are not bored and students at the lower level are not frustrated. She also uses a variety of resources to engage students, such as online resources, textbooks, and audio. In addition, she makes

sure that her lessons are relevant to students' needs, backgrounds, and experiences. Students have a voice in choosing the topics of the lesson and then she selects the appropriate materials. She prioritizes listening to students and creating lessons that reflect their needs. However, she expresses her inability to control what people do on a federal level, but at the same time she stays true to her belief of supporting her students and makes sure they are actively engaged in lessons.

One of the biggest impacts on her teaching was her relationship with an immigrant years ago. Seeing his struggles, his persistence, and his hard work towards reaching English proficiency helped her recognize the importance of focusing on students' needs and goals. Thus, that indicates she is a compassionate and passionate teacher. However, while addressing students' needs, she encounters overwhelming testing pressures. Her commitment to helping students with test taking skills is seen by using a practice test software for reading and listening on a regular basis. She acknowledges that she has to comply with reading and listening test targets and is aware of that in every class. She expresses concerns about the need for teaching more towards what students need instead of more towards what the testing requires because testing does not necessarily show life skills. She sticks to testing guidelines and infuses the required components of the tests in her lessons, for example, reading medicine labels, pay stubs, job posts, or advertisements. While complying with the standardized testing requirements, she also creates activities that relate to life and work skills since these are the areas students want to practice most frequently.

Mary: Strategic in Addressing Students' Needs

Mary is vocal about her frustration about rules, regulations, and bureaucracy that comes from the state. She reflects that standardized assessments inform a lot of the curriculum, and that assessment rarely has anything to do with what students need. She bluntly states that everything is about the assessment. She reports that administration cares only about the data. There is an assessments every 40 hours and teachers are held accountable for the numbers. However, she is aware that students need to be able to see their own progress or they are not going to be motivated. She says she is strategic about testing then. Meeting with her students, showing them where they are, listening to their goals, and then talking about what is the most challenging about getting there are some ways she works to keep students focused and motivated. Her students have already lived, worked and existed in America for a long time. So, she does not need to teach them the ins and outs of life skills the way she did for the lower levels and the newcomers. She supplements the curriculum with topics that are relevant to student's lives and plans activities that help them reach their goals, either career or academic, and tends to incorporate testing practice, such as test taking strategies. Then outside of the test practice, she spends the majority of the curriculum in expanding vocabulary through readings and listening that are relevant and interesting for students. And a portion of every class is dedicated to communication. Students learn grammar and the subject that they have talked about and they use it in discussions. The purpose of this is to build a student-centered, communicative learning community. She also actively pulls resources from wherever she can get them. She does not use one book, but uses a variety of resources, such as additional

books, the internet, and whatever else she can find. In order to find out about what her students need, she poses questions for them to answer in small groups and as a whole group.

However, Mary emphasizes the scarcity of resources and professional development for teachers. To overcome it, she stays current on research, seeks out professional development opportunities and stays focused on the goal of student achievement. However, she is open about the scarcity of multicultural training for part-time faculty and believes all teachers should be required to complete professional development on diversity. She is concerned that some instructors do not understand where the students came from, their traditions, and what they need. Thus, she reports it is very difficult to be responsive to what students need, and it is very challenging on campus because the contact hours with students have shrunk. Funding has shrunk and student growth has shrunk. She used to teach literacy-level students in the community but because of the funding cuts she had to move to teaching on campus. Lately, she has been teaching higher level classes, but explains it is a different environment since the students are not connected to the community as much. Thus, she makes the effort to promote events in the community in her classroom, so students feel integrated in the community. At the end of this research project, when seeing Mary during the follow-up meeting, she shared that she had resigned from the position as an adult ESL teacher, explaining that she had fought for her immigrant students too long and decided to make a change.

Sebastian: Persistent in Meeting Students' Language Goals

Sebastian works full-time and has a busy schedule every week. He arrives at 7:30 in the morning and leaves no sooner than 4:00 in the afternoon. Thus, the main challenge he faces is the time constraint brought on by his teaching schedule. He teaches two classes

with a short break. Nonetheless, he reports that being a teacher is a rewarding profession as he is passionate about helping students improve their language skills. Working in other countries, he learned many valuable lessons. His points of view on cultural differences were broadened. For example, he recounts his Thai experience as helping him understand and connect with his diverse students. In the classroom, he is focused on students advancing in their language ability and taking a step toward their goals. He works to create an authentic communicative environment in the classroom. Sometimes his students converse easily together and then at other times he reports that he has to be watchful and direct more. He often asks students, individually, if they are happy in their groups, working with the other students in their individual group, and asks them that in multiple ways to ensure that they feel comfortable in class. Through discussion and sharing, but also through opportunities for students to demonstrate their knowledge, expertise, and experiences, he encourages a communicative environment. He states that he plans carefully in order to offer such a dynamic environment. Sebastian reports that he stays in tune with students' goals as a class by giving students' necessary support, but then he steps back in order to encourage autonomy and creativity. However, he deliberately avoids discussing sensitive topics to minimize embarrassment or conflict.

Sebastian also mentions that teachers and administration tend to forget it is about the students. His main concern is that administration seems to not really know what is happening in a class. She explained that for an instructor it is constantly about a class of individuals, even outside of the class, the individuals and dynamics and learning that does or does not happen stay with the instructor. In the eyes and vision of an administrator a class often becomes about the data. That is very different from the day in and day out of teaching

and the teaching life of an instructor. However, he complies with the decisions and requirements of a program as he understands the importance of sets of standards and competencies that may be in play when teaching a language. Regardless of the administrative burdens, he reports that there is a room for him to supplement the curriculum with materials that the program deems appropriate. He freely supplements materials whenever he sees a need. Rarely has he found textbooks to be so well-constructed that there is not a need for him to add or subtract to the material found in them. From the beginning of his career, he has often and consistently created his own materials. He often creates PowerPoint visuals, shows short films, and provides handouts to practice grammar and vocabulary. He is aware of testing pressures in the program and recognizes that the level gains are tied to funding. Thus, he actively incorporates multiple choice exercises that require critical thinking skills and often discussion to resolve when students work in groups on reading activities. Using such exercises help students prepare for testing as well as reach their academic language goals.

Suzy: Keeping My Eyes and Doors to the Community Open

Suzy works part-time in community locations teaching literacy-level students. She believes that numerous traveling experiences to distant places have greatly influenced her work as a teacher with ELLs since it helped her to better understand what it might be like to walk in students' shoes, in not understanding the language, culture, or how to navigate their new communities. She raises her concerns that especially her refugee students, who come from underdeveloped countries, face many struggles after arriving to the U.S. Having experienced being in a new country, where she did not speak a local language, she reports that she is empathetic to the needs of ELLs and tries to think of ways to make

language and life skills learning not only useful, but empowering and enjoyable. Through years of teaching and learning from ELLs, she has come to understand the importance of lessons that are motivating, challenging, engaging and relevant to the needs of students, no matter the level or makeup of the class. While focusing on students' needs and success in the classroom, Suzy reports it can be very challenging to serve as a liaison between students and the administration. Administrators want to see students making level gains, so she tries to prepare students for test taking and content knowledge. Some students, however, are at a great disadvantage if they have no formal education, are at an advanced age, or have physical or mental disabilities. These students may show progress but not the type of progress that can be measured on a standardized test. For example, Suzy recalls that a student may have learned to write his name or has learned to converse in very basic English, but this type of improvement is not reflected on a test. Unfortunately, administrators are not always aware of these special circumstances, and may not have had any firsthand experience with this type of students. She calls for more awareness that students must first learn how to take a test and become familiarized with a 'fill in the bubble' format. Thus, she actively provides such practice activities in her literacy class, continues to encourage students, uses positive reinforcement, and tries to help students make progress and feel supported when confronted with testing. While acknowledging that lessons should also correlate to testing, she deliberately divides the class into groups based on their level or pairs a higher-level student with a lower level student to facilitate learning.

Suzy also sees a gap in teaching materials. No one textbook can meet the needs of all students in a class. She reports that textbooks usually include very basic topics, such as personal information, housing, work, money, or food. She also helps students navigate the

bus system, promotes using the public library, and talks about community resources. She also acknowledges that many students are fearful, apprehensive, and uncomfortable when they enter the classroom. Therefore, it is extremely important for her to make students feel welcome, accepted, comfortable, and respected. In order to establish a nurturing community within the classroom, she incorporates icebreaker types of activities to help students learn each other's names and where they are from. In addition, learning about religious holidays and cultural traditions such as Ramadan, is a way to learn more about students, and it helps her to better anticipate and respect their needs. She also highlights that instructional materials must match the goals of the students and must be relevant. This usually requires using many visuals, hands-on activities, songs, games, and videos. Suzy loves to teach; however, at the end of this research project she retired from teaching and settled closer to the coast, where she actively volunteers in the community and advocates for ELLs on social media.

Tim: Troubled by Power Structures Interference

Tim works part-time in the community teaching citizenship and literacy classes. He shares that biggest challenges he faces pertain to students' lack of previous schooling experiences. Many of his ELLs are older and disabled and come from cultures where they did not attend any schools, and the language they speak has no connection to English. He struggles when teaching because he thinks that they do not have the time, inclination or confidence to go out and practice English in the community, and thus their English improves very, very slowly with very little retention. He takes active steps to help them learn by being patient and incorporating certain strategies that help them retain the language, such as by repeating the material, using choral drills, listening to short dialogues

while also ensuring the students have fun. Other ways of helping students learn English is to engage them in the community, such as by participating in community center gardens and activities at a local senior center. He believes that the community, in general, is very sensitive to helping refugee students. However, he acknowledges that he may not be exactly aware of what the community organizations do to support immigrants because he is an adjunct part-time teacher and does not have much access to things that are going on outside the classroom.

In addition, Tim is concerned about the present presidential administration's strategies that affect refugee students. He is vocal that the election of the current president has affected the way he teaches. He works harder to help them become citizens because it is becoming more difficult in the current political environment. He is persistent in doing his best regardless of what the political situation is but feels discouraged to hear that the students fail the citizenship tests more frequently now, where before they would have passed. Sometimes, he says, he has to change his strategy in teaching, depending on what is happening with, for example, the citizenship test. He contends that the immigration office has become more hostile to immigrants and refugees and as a result more students have been failing the citizenship exam lately. He thinks it is because the immigration office wants to keep the numbers of new citizens down. And that affects his teaching as he works harder to help students improve their speaking and writing skills. He uses a variety of materials to practice 100 questions that are part of the citizenship test. He asks students a lot of questions that pertain to personal information. He also plays videos and songs about American history and society to make learning more vibrant. However, there is lack of resources in one of the locations he works, such as nothing on the walls, sometimes there

is no heat, or the bathroom does not work. But, in general, he feels like he has enough to support his teaching.

Thematic Analysis of Adult ESL Instructors' Challenges

The narrative accounts reveal that each teacher faces some challenge, whether it is something in the past that affected their instruction, their current teaching environments, or hopes of change that indicate gaps in teacher job satisfaction. Thus, the third theme that was identified during data analysis addresses the various contexts and experiences that have shaped ESL teachers' sense of agency in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The thematic analysis shows that adult ESL instructors' sense of agency varies in different contexts and that they take agentive stances in certain situations. That confirms research by Priestley et al. (2012) who argue that agency is multifaceted and dynamic, and that it can be affected by different factors and environments. Thematic analysis points to three ways that teachers deal with their challenges. When they experience certain institutional pressures, some of them are aware of such pressures but choose to comply. In other instances, participants deliberately create a stronger learning community in and outside the classrooms in spite of experiencing some limitations in order to counteract these institutional pressures. In addition, some personal and professional experiences affect teachers' agency by empowering them to take stances and make changes in their teaching or classrooms. Table 4. shows four categories that were generated during thematic analysis, such as institutional pressures cause imbalance, shortages stimulate resilience, adversities encourage action, and enriching experiences improve understanding.

Table 9*Theme 3 Thematic Analysis*

Categories	Codes
Institutional Pressures Cause Imbalance	Constant Administrative Burdens Overwhelming Power Structures Recognized Curriculum Tension
Shortages Stimulate Resilience	Revamping Limited Resources Building Diverse Community Inside and Out
Adversities Encourage Action	Marginality Through Significant Other Feeling of Outsider Empowering Relationships Avoiding Politics for a Reason Making a Conscious Choice of Change
Enriching Experiences Improve Understanding	Traveling and Language Learning Opened My Eyes Enabling Critical Reflection

In addition to conducting thematic analysis, NVivo software was helpful in providing high frequency word analysis. The word count helped me to see what words have been used the most often in participants' interviews, reflections, and observation field notes. NVivo has a few options for running a word frequency query. Chapter 4 showed us words with synonyms and specialized meanings that occurred in the transcripts, reflections, and field notes, and chapter 5 showed more specific a group of words that included only exact words and synonyms. This chapter reveals a more generalized view of the words

occurring in both interview, reflection, and observation field notes data sets. Thus, Table 5. shows ten general words that the software grouped based on their generalizations, specializations, and synonyms. That analysis shows that *change*, *community*, *act*, *content*, *evaluate*, *see*, *information*, *going*, *event* and *connect* are the most frequent word groups appearing in participants' accounts. That indicates that there is a dynamic interplay of actions in participants' narratives. They seem to experience change, action, and movement. They also focus on students, community, events, content, information, and making connections. These factors seem to interconnect in their professional and personal lives. Appendix M shows a list of 50 most frequent word groupings in the data set.

Table 10

Level 5 NVivo Word Frequency Query List

Word	Similar Words	Frequency
change	access, acclimate, accommodate, acquire, adapt, adaptation, add, addition, address, adjust, administration, adopt, advance, affect, age, align, alternate, appreciate, appreciation, approach, approaching, assimilate, assist, assume, attrition, better, black, bringing, change, changed, changes, changing, charge, check, combination, combine, come, comfort, coming, compare, complete, completion, conform, confusion, connection, decide, delivery, descent, develop, development, difference, dynamic, enable, encounter, end, ending, enhance, enrich, enrichment, exchange, exchanges, expand, expense, experience, find, finish, fit, fix, fortify, funding, immersion, immigration, impact, improve, improvement, inclination, inclusion, incorporate, increase, inform, infuse, initiative, inspiration, institution, integrate, interrupt, involve, issue, journey, jump, make, mixture, mobile, modify, mold, move, movement, narrow, negate, outcome, overflow, parallel, pass, passage, passing, people, preparation, prepare, process, produce, progress, promote, provide, purple, purse, push, raise, reach, reaching, readjust, ready, realign, realize, recommend, redouble, reduce, reform, register, reinforce, replacement, replacing, resolve, result, resume, shift, shifted, shifts, shock, shrink, stay, steady, step, transfer, transferred, transformed, transition, translate, translation, transportation, travel, traveling, varied, variety, vary, varying, verbalize, visit, walk, walking, work	8766
community	account, acknowledge, addition, address, advise, agent, agreement, alert, appeal, apply, ask, begin, book, build, call, carry, cat, challenge, change, channels, chant, chat, chatter, check,	5964

	claim, clap, clarify, clock, coach, comment, commitment, common, communicate, communicated, communicating, communication, communicative, communities, community, community', connection, contact, continue, converse, convey, cover, cut, day, debate, dedication, deliver, demand, demonstrate, describe, develop, dictate, direct, discipline, discuss, educate, expect, explain, express, expressive, field, gathering, get, give, grass, greet, ground, guest, house, hum, indicate, inform, inquire, interpret, interview, introduce, medium, message, minimize, modify, mouth, narrative, national, nationalities, nationality, nations, neighborhood, network, nod, organization, orient, ownership, place, point, prepare, prescribe, present, question, reach, read, record, recount, reinforce, relate, relationship, relationships, remind, repeat, report, representative, require, service, share, shift, sign, signal, signed, slang, smile, speak, speaker, study, style, subject, submit, talk, teach, visit, vocal, vocalize, volunteer	
act	acceptance, achievement, acquisition, act, acting, action, activity, acts, administration, agency, aggression, application, arrest, art, assembling, assessment, attempt, attendance, attending, attention, balance, behavior, break, career, celebration, challenge, choice, comfort, commitment, competition, conduct, conflict, confusion, consideration, contact, control, deal, dealing, decision, dedication, delivery, demand, determination, development, drill, effort, encouragement, engagement, entering, entertainment, exploration, exposure, expression, experience, experienced, fight, fighting, find, finding, going, government, grouping, guidance, hand, hanging, hostility, identification, impact, influence, instruction, interaction, interest, investigating, involvement, leave, leaving, measure, measurement, motivating, move, movement, music, negotiation, objection, observation, offense, offer, office, organization, orientation, ownership, pairing, paperwork, participation, pass, path, pattern, pause, pedagogy, perception, performance, pick, picturing, pitching, place, placement, planning, politics, practice, pressure, presume, procedure, process, project, quest, raise, rating, reaching, reading, reference, reflection, refuge, registration, reinforcement, release, relief, relocation, repeating, repetition, resistance, responsibility, rest, return, selection, struggle, substituting, suggestion, supply, support, supporting, surveying, survival, switch, switching, taking, task, teaching, test, thanks, thing, throw, visit, voice, wait, waiting, work, works, writing	5865
content	advice, agreement, answer, appeal, application, appreciation, approach, approval, center, challenge, charge, collection, comment, commitment, commonplace, competition, competitions, complaint, concept, confidence, conflict, consent, content, contents, controversial, converse, copy, counsel, culture, curriculum, cut, deal, dedication, definition, demand, description, design, details, dictate, difference, direction, discipline, disrespect, division, documentation, education, encouragement, engagement, error, example, expectation, experience, expression, eyes, fact, feedback, feeling, figure, food, format, foundation, front, fun, funny, generalization, goal, greeting, ground, grounding, guarantee, guess, guidance, guide, humor, idea, ideal, information, input, inspiration, instruction, intelligence, intent, intention, interpretation, issue, joke, judgement, judgment,	5133

	justification, lead, learning, leave, lesson, life, material, matter, meaning, memory, mention, message, messages, mind, mistake, misunderstanding, objective, observation, offer, offering, opinion, passion, perception, picture, plan, play, point, politics, position, praise, pride, problem, program, project, purpose, question, reading, reality, reference, reflection, regard, region, reinforcement, reply, report, resolution, resource, resources, respects, response, result, resume, satisfy, schedule, section, standard, story, study, subject, suggestion, survey, teaching, technology, topic, tradition, trust, truth, understanding, value, values, view, welcome	
evaluate	absorb, accept, acknowledge, add, admit, adopt, agreement, align, allow, analysis, anticipate, arrangement, assess, assessment, believe, believed, believes, compare, connect, consider, consideration, considered, considering, considers, construction, correlate, count, critique, deal, design, different, direct, disapprove, disrespect, diverse, estimation, evaluate, expect, exploration, factor, favor, feel, figure, figuring, find, focus, frame, gather, give, grade, guess, guessing, hold, hope, idea, identify, ignore, imagine, include, inquiry, integrate, intelligence, intelligent, intend, intended, interpretation, learn, learning, mean, meaning, means, measure, mention, mind, mistake, modify, need, needs, needing, process, plan, question, reason, reasons, recall, recalling, recognize, refer, reflect, reflection, regard, relate, remember, remembered, research, resolve, respect, rethink, review, see, study, survey, suspect, take, think, thinking, thought, thoughtful, thoughts, trust, understand, value, view, want, wonder	5060
see	appreciate, assure, attend, attendance, attended, attending, believe, bet, call, card, care, carry, case, catch, check, checked, checking, come, consider, considered, considering, considers, contrast, control, count, cover, cross, date, dated, dating, debate, deliberate, determination, determining, disrespect, encounter, encountered, encountering, encounters, enjoy, escorting, esteem, examined, expect, experience, experiences, experiment, favor, feel, figure, figured, figures, figuring, find, finding, findings, glass, hear, hearing, hold, identify, imagine, include, insurance, insurer, interpret, interpretation, interpreted, interpreters, intersect, invite, learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, like, look, looked, looking, looks, make, meet, meeting, meetings, meets, minister, notice, observe, perceive, perception, picture, pictures, picturing, play, prize, project, projects, proofread, read, realization, realize, realized, realizing, regard, regards, respect, seat, see, seeing, sees, sense, skim, survey, take, tend, test, think, tour, understand, understanding, understands, value, view, views, visit, visited, visual, visualization, visualizing, visuals, watch, watched, watches, watchful, watching	5071
information	advise, agenda, book, call, , check, clarify, clear, collection, comment, common, communicate, concern, confidence, consideration, content, contents, conversation, conversational, conversations, converse, conversing, convey, copy, cover, coverage, curriculum, daily, data, demographic, demonstrate, describe, detail, details, distribute, documentation, educate, educated, educational, elaborate, enlightened, enlightening, explain, inform, informal, informally, information, informed, informs, infuse, input, inspire, instance, instructing, instruction, instructional, instructions, intelligence, interpret, intimate,	4340

	introduce, know, knowing, knowledgeable, language, learn, lecture, material, message, minimize, modify, moment, news, newsletter, notice, observation, observer, offer, prepare, present, presentation, presume, program, prompt, publicize, read, reading, reason, record, recount, reflect, regard, register, reinforce, reinforcement, relate, release, remind, repeat, rephrase, report, speaker, specific, spread, spring, story, strike, stuff, summarize, talk, teach, tell, telling, understand, wise, word, worry	
going	achievement, act, active, advance, agree, alight, angle, approach, arise, attempt, back, belong, break, breaking, breaks, bridge, career, carry, cast, change, charge, chatter, chime, choose, come, compare, continue, correct, course, cover, diverse, drive, effort, extended, extends, fail, failed, follow, going, happen, head, home, hum, inch, joint, journey, jump, lag, last, lasts, lead, leading, leads, leave, leaves, leaving, live, lived, lively, lives, living, move, moved, moving, near, negotiate, offer, offered, offering, offerings, offers, open, pace, process, progress, pull, pursue, push, quest, race, range, recession, release, releasing, resort, return, ride, ring, roll, round, run, see, seek, select, serve, set, shift, ship, shoot, sit, skim, slide, sound, sounded, sounds, speed, spelled, spelling, start, started, starting, starts, step, tour, toured, track, train, transfer, travel, traveled, traveling, travelled, try, turn, turned, turns, walk, well, work, worked, working, works	3898
event	achievement, acquisition, act, acting, action, activity, administration, agency, aggression, antagonism, application, assessment, assignment, assist, assistance, attempt, attendance, attending, behavior, breakthrough, business, calming, capture, case, cases, catch, causing, change, choice, collaboration, commitment, competition, conduct, conflict, contact, control, course, deal, dealing, dedication, delivery, demand, determination, economy, education, effort, election, employment, engagement, error, event, events, exchange, exercise, find, gathering, getting, giving, going, government, grab, grouping, hell, help, hit, hitting, hostility, important, influence, instruction, interaction, involvement, job, judgement, leave, leaving, lift, line, lively, location, making, management, manipulation, market, means, measure, measurement, meeting, negotiation, objection, option, organization, participation, pattern, pause, pedagogy, position, practice, praxis, preparation, procedure, process, protection, protest, resistance, responsibility, rest, service, sharing, struggle, supply, support, supporting, taking, teaching, thing, throw, touch, touching, training, transfer, trigger, try, turn, usage, use, visit, vote, wait, waiting, war, waste, way, wear, work, works, writing	3852
connect	acquaintance, appeal, articulate, associated, attached, cohesiveness, communication, comprehension, connect, connected, connecting, connection, connections, connectivity, contact, continually, continue, continued, continuing, continuous, correlate, couple, cover, diverse, encounter, engaged, enter, fair, fix, friend, generalization, ground, grounding, hang, hit, identify, inclusion, input, interact, introduce, involvement, joint, know, lead, link, love, match, mean, meeting, memory, mention, mismatch, name, neighboring, node, online, pair, paste, piece, point, post, raise, refer, relate, related, relates, relating, relational, relations, relative, relatively, relatives, relevance, remember, respond, responsive, serve, service, stay, stick, strike, supplement,	3755

	support, supportive, supporting, tack, tape, think, tie, tied, ties, transfer, union, unit, united, units	
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Looking at word frequency analysis helps us understand various words that indicate participants' dynamic experiences, actions, and environments. Delving deeper into thematic analysis aids in understanding how their experiences, choices, and environments affect teachers' sense of agency in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Thematic analysis shows that institutional pressures cause imbalance, shortages stimulate resilience, adversities encourage action, and enriching experiences improve understanding. Below I explain each category and include direct quotes as examples.

Institutional Pressures Cause Imbalance

The first category that was identified during data analysis pertains to teachers' concerns about administrative burdens, power structures, and curriculum dilemmas that they experience while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. While acknowledging these institutional pressures, participants feel frustrated and try to balance their work by showing compliance and agreement. They do not go against the rules and perform their teaching duties as assigned, but exhibit agency in trying to balance their assigned roles with addressing students' real needs.

Constant Administrative Burdens

One of the pressures teachers experience in teaching ELLs is connected to the administrative burdens, such as time constraints, busy work schedules, a lot of paperwork, and a disconnect between the administration staff's objectives and classroom practices that take away teachers' focus from students' real needs. For example, classroom observations revealed that teachers' have little time for themselves during the break. They make copies, enter attendance into the system, and read students' work. Sebastian and Andrew as full-

time instructors have busy work schedules, where they have two classes back to back and have many meetings in the afternoons that keep them away from lesson planning and reflecting on the practice. However, they understand what full-time teaching entails and conform to their teaching responsibilities. For example, Andrew comments during one of the interviews how time constraints affect his reflective practices by stating,

Cause you know, so you do the best you can and I'll have time to study a student, each student to see all their needs and how to do it and go back and say, okay, I need to do this. What happens is, uh, maybe the next semester I figure out that there's some of my classes I need more vocabulary. Everyday situations, common situations as opposed to, or I need more audio, exercises so people can hear the different accents of U.S. citizens. But I don't have time to really do it on the regular, on a regular basis. So, you just cherry pick what you can do.

In addition, Andrew, Cici, Mary, Sebastian, and Suzy raise concerns about administrative staff being unaware of students' real needs. They report that the administration focuses on data and does not always know or care about what is done in class. Teachers shared that administrative goals and students' goals were different; however, they did not share any actions that they took to make the administration aware of their concerns. They keep teaching despite recognizing the fact that administrative burdens hinder their ability to address students' needs. For example, Sebastian shares his concern by stating,

We forget it is about the students. I think administration forgets this in a profound way. They seem to not really know all that is happening in a class.

To have one's hand, so to speak, in the actual moment to moment factors transpiring in a class and with individuals engaged in lesson material before them puts a teacher in a rather different frame of mind in contrast to administrators.

Participants feel discouraged about administrative goals being different from their students' goals, and that shows a constraint on their agency to teach culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Participants express that they have flexibility in choosing what to teach, but there are some limitations to what they can do. For example, Sebastian mentions that through his career of teaching at this college, sometimes the administration has not involved teachers in the decision-making about various aspects of teaching by stating,

Presently, instructors in our program have a high degree of influence in the curriculum that we use. We also are recognized as key stakeholders in instruction and the student experience. At times, this has not been the case, and instructors have been almost afterthoughts to decisions being made about the program – curriculum, testing, attendance, intake processes, the language lab and so on. I would say that one must be watchful that instructor opinions are valued.

Overwhelming Power Structures

All participants also expressed concerns regarding federal and state government interference in their teaching. The biggest challenges teachers face is connected to standardized testing pressures. Every student has to be tested on reading and listening skills every 40 hours in the program. Many participants agree that there is too much emphasis

placed on testing, and they are stressful about constant changes in testing requirements. For example, Suzy explained,

I feel like sometimes there's a little too much emphasis on testing. Um, and methods of testing tend to shift from time to time. For a long time, there was a reading test, then it changed to listening test, which I think was really difficult for a lot of students. And then there was another shift to do both reading and listening. So my only concern is that sometimes I think the, the folks that are making these decisions are not really in the classroom to see, what is going on and the different challenges that, that we face.

Participants reported anxiety about students' level gains because every teacher's performance is measured by reaching a certain passing rate. While being nervous about constant testing, participants explained how they deal with that. They simply conform to the testing standards and guidelines by infusing test practice in class. Thus, even though teachers use many culturally responsive strategies and resources, testing standards and guidelines inform their instruction, materials, and activities. They use many reading passages, multiple choice activities, and software that prepares students for testing. They do that in order to improve students' testing skills. Thus, they balance their instruction by providing culturally responsive teaching and test preparation, so that they address students' personal goals as well as meet academic requirements. This finding confirms research by Mortenson (2015) and Parhar and Sensoy (2011), who found that language teachers face tremendous standardized testing constraints, but they still find ways to be creative and use culturally responsive pedagogy. For example, Agnes shares how she complies with testing

standards and integrates them in her teaching, but also makes sure she chooses materials that are relevant to students' needs,

Students are tested on CASAS tests, so it is important that I use materials that have content that will be on the test. Once I choose a textbook that is appropriate for the level I teach, and that fits with the CASAS standards, I go through the book and decide what topics are relevant to my students.

In addition, some participants shared that government policies get in their way of successfully teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students, especially for participants working with refugee students who learn English to prepare for the citizenship exam. Suzy and Tim have noticed that it is harder to pass the citizenship exam and feel disappointed about it. In that situation, they conform to the citizenship text requirements and use more practice tests in class to help students improve their language skills. For example, Suzy shares her frustration about students failing the citizenship exam by commenting,

Um, from what I'm hearing, there is less emphasis on government history and civics types of questions, reading and writing. Um, and there's a lot more emphasis on the English speaking and comprehension and I'm seeing more students fail. Um, and I have several right now. He had taken the citizenship test for the second time and they have not passed. It's been very frustrating and discouraging since I feel like I have two or three students right now that could have easily passed it. Um, in the not so distant past and now it's a whole different story and I am so discouraged right now.

Recognized Curriculum Tension

Another tension some participants experience when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students pertains to the continuous dilemma between using prescribed, mandated curriculum and addressing students' real needs. Participants recognize that the current curriculum that focuses on work skills does not match all students' needs. Not all students need to learn English to get a job as some of them need more life-oriented practice that would help them be successfully integrated in the new community. Mary, for example, explains her frustration with the curriculum that is currently promoted in the program. That finding relates to the finding by Biesta et al. (2015) who assert that a prescribed curriculum may be irrelevant to students' everyday experiences and narrows the purpose of teaching by constraining teacher creativity. Sleeter (2012) adds that standardization of curricula and testing maintain institutional and social hegemony instead of nurturing students' diversity. Taking that into consideration, Mary's concerns relate to that assertion as she stated,

It changed our whole curriculum from civic space to work based. It's like instead of teaching them English and how to think and how to be part of society, we're teaching them these discrete skills that not all of them need. We're teaching warehouse skills to people who are not working in warehouses and we have, by the way, a lot of students who are not warehouse workers; they were professionals in their country. They're doctors, they're lawyers, they're scientists. They need a different kind of English.

Even though participants have to use prescribed curriculum, they do make sure students' needs, backgrounds, and interests are validated by supplementing and adding a variety of activities and resources. Thus, they try to find a way to make sure they stay within the curriculum guidelines of what is covered in class, but they also create lessons that are culturally responsive. Therefore, this finding confirms research by Alford and Kettle (2017), who found that teachers remain committed to being creative despite the limitations of mandated curriculum. For example, Andrew explains how she combines using prescribed curriculum while giving students a collective voice in choosing what to learn by commenting,

I decide to teach material primarily based on the students' collective needs along with following the official core texts and recommendations from the instructional staff.

Ultimately, this research study sheds light on ongoing administrative burdens, power structures interference, and curriculum dilemmas that participants experience when teaching culturally responsive pedagogy. Their reflections during the interviews and journaling reveal that such institutional pressures make them compliant, but at the same time they maintain creative in addressing students' needs. Participants make sure they balance their teaching practices with abiding by the institutional requirements and meeting the unique needs of their ELLs.

Shortages that Stimulate Resilience

All participants agree that they have limited funding in their program. They are aware of this limitation but show a strong sense of agency in helping students have an enriching learning experience by providing additional resources and experiences in and

outside classroom. Thus, they are resilient in finding ways to create an engaging and culturally responsive classroom environment.

Revamping Limited Resources

Similar to the findings in Parhar and Sensoy's (2011) study, most of the participants report that they have limited resources; for instance, they do not have enough funding for copies or extra textbooks. Others, such as Tim and Suzy, who work in community locations, raise concerns about limited access to technology in their classrooms. They also have limited access to the Internet in their classrooms. They wished they had iPads, computers, and projectors that would help students practice for citizenship test. Instead, they bring copies for the students, play audio, and show pictures and maps to substitute for digital tools. Many participants go an extra mile to provide interesting resources. For example, Andrew shares that he purchases supplies because he cares about students' having handouts in class by stating,

Our finances, they don't have the money for it or it has to go through three different levels of authorization and sometimes it's not worth going through those levels because of the time factor. I would sometimes just go out and purchase it myself.

All participants also agree that one textbook cannot be helpful in teaching all of their culturally and linguistically diverse students, and thus, they see a need to supplement materials that are relevant to the needs of their students. They provide additional worksheets, show videos, bring a variety of books, and create Powerpoint presentations to enrich students' learning. For example, Sebastian shares that he continuously supplements textbooks with additional materials throughout his teaching career,

Rarely have I found textbooks to be so well-constructed that there is not a need for me to add or subtract. Having begun my teaching life with absolute beginner level students and in classes of fifty, and with no materials to use, I was faced with a challenge that I readily welcomed. From the beginning I have often and consistently created my own materials. I continue to do this weekly if not daily. Two points have guided me: that the students should want to study in the class – want to return to class each day – and that I build on what I previously taught, the day before or recent past in any given class.

Most of the participants in this study are critically conscious about the gap in the curriculum and take action to deliver lessons that match the needs and cultural backgrounds of their diverse students. This indicates their resistance against a “hidden curriculum” in educating adult ELLs (Hutchison, 2011).

Building Diverse Community Inside and Out

Participants also share that they have limited access to the community resources and take an active effort in reaching out to the community themselves. Whether it is through inviting guest speakers, promoting community events, or connecting student with community organizations, participants show a strong sense of agency in building strong partnerships that can help students integrate into the community. This finding is valuable as it pertains to the importance of building strong communities in diverse classrooms. That relates to the finding by Parhar and Sensoy (2011) who found that ESL teachers who are active in the community are committed to building meaningful relationships with students. For example, Sebastian during one of the classroom observations invited a college employee who talked about the American education system and explained to students how

they could enroll in the credit-hour college classes. Such an enriching learning experience offered an opportunity to ask questions, take notes about additional resources, and feel more comfortable about pursuing further educational goals. In addition, Suzy and Tim who work in the community also make sure they stay connected to community by promoting events and celebrations. For example, Suzy stated,

So, um, those of us that work in the refugee community and teach the community classes, um, we also, um, communicate with refugee support services and whenever they have some kind of, uh, celebration or activity, then we will take that information to the classrooms and let them know about it and to, and encourage them to come.

Another way to sustain a learning community in the classrooms is to provide experiences that allow all students to be valued and validated and feel like they are part of the community in the classroom, so none of the students feels left out. For example, Mary, Cici, and Agnes form circle time in the beginning of each lesson where students share their personal stories, updates, and news. They feel encouraged by exchanging information and feel part of learning community. Similar to DeSilva Iddings and Katz (2007) these participants allow for linguistic hybridity, connect students' community lives, and cherish their cultural differences to create strong communities. Each student is unique, and participants acknowledge that and make active efforts in creating a welcoming and respectful classroom community. For example, Suzy shares,

Sometimes classes can be 'top heavy', meaning that one culture can dominate the makeup of the class. For example, the majority of students in a class may be from the same country or speak the same language. If these

students are allowed to dominate, other students will feel left out and discouraged. Therefore, it is extremely important to recognize and include all students. Respecting and learning about each other's cultures is extremely valuable and a great learning experience for all. Each student deserves and must be given the same amount of attention and opportunity to learn and contribute toward the classroom community.

Some participants allow students to share their knowledge and thus, they become insiders of their ethnic communities. Some participants explain that using textbooks is insufficient in learning about language, culture, and society; thus, they offer many activities that facilitate discussions to encourage learning about topics and concepts that students do not find in the books. In particular, Andrew, Agnes, and Mary, since they have higher-level students, engage students in discussions that involve critical thinking, perception sharing, and cultural differences learning. Students have opportunities to clarify misunderstandings, explain their own cultural practices, and thus, raise awareness on the importance of learning about other cultures rather than judging or assuming. They report that this effort creates a stronger classroom community. That finding strengthens the assertion by Shim and Shur (2018) who state that "allowing student voice and perspective to be heard in school is a prerequisite for student-centered learning" (p. 21). For example, Mary shares how she engages Muslim students in explaining Ramadan by commenting,

I build in a lot of inquiry, sharing, and cultural inclusion throughout the class. Students can feel comfortable sharing their views, culture and traditions with others. My class respects each other's diverse culture. For example, before Ramadan, observant students explained the holiday during

discussion time. They detailed the fast, prayers, challenges etc. There were a lot of questions and comparisons made to other faiths. They also discussed common greetings and messages that are appropriate to send during that time.

Ultimately, participants experience shortages at work that pertain to limited funding and outreach to the community. They are aware of these challenges and are creative in taking steps to remedy these. They readily create interesting, enriching, culturally responsive materials and seek partnerships in the community that help them create a learning community inside and outside the classroom. Thus, they show resilience in providing resources and experiences that validate students' various backgrounds and needs.

Adversities that Encourage Action

Participants also share that certain adversities that they experienced or understanding students' adversities have prompted them to take action in transforming their teaching, relationships and dispositions. Some participants experienced marginality by seeing their partners going through hardships as immigrants in the United States. Some of them also report feeling like outsiders in their programs, actively sustaining empowering relationships, purposefully avoiding sensitive topics, and appreciating reflective practice. Such experiences have shaped their agency in energetically supporting their culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Marginality Through Significant Other

Some participants share that their relationships with immigrants have impacted their teaching. Seeing their partners' struggles with language learning, immigration status,

and acclimation to the community impelled them to be more empathetic to the needs of their students. For example, Cici shares that her partner showed her the real challenges immigrants experience, and she is invested in helping students learn English so they can be successful members of the community by commenting,

That thing probably had the biggest impact on me with my teaching because he showed me how they see the world.

Agnes also shares a story of her husband's barriers. She met him in Spain and when they arrived in the U.S., he knew little English. He struggled to learn English and get a job, experienced microaggressions due to his accent, and had to deal with the hectic process of getting citizenship. She said it was a very stressful time for both of them. That experience empowered her to advocate for ELLs and become an ESL teacher. She explains that seeing her husband's experience deeply affected her teaching. She works hard to understand students and support them not only academically but also emotionally. That finding strengthens research that shows the role of negative experiences affecting teaching. Kayi-Aydar (2017), for example, reveal how the agency of one of the teachers in her study was affected by her own negative experiences with learning a language and feeling unsupported. She exhibited a strong sense of agency to support her students, for example by showing compassion, modifying teaching content and strategies, and building genuine relationships with students. Agnes reflects on similar experiences during one of the interviews,

And that has really affected how I teach like emotionally and how I connect with the students and understanding that it's difficult and it's something that they really want to learn to. Um, for that reason, those emotional things. I

really try to make a connection with the students and that comes from my personal experience, like with my husband and myself.

Feeling of Outsider

Five out of seven participants work part-time at this college and mention that being a part-time instructor has some limitations. They feel disconnected from many activities, do not have many professional development trainings like the full-time instructors, and have limited resources. Agnes and Mary, in particular, wish they were engaged more in teacher collaborations that would improve their teaching. Mary, for instance, shares her concerns about lack of cohesiveness in the department, where part-time instructors feel isolated by stating,

I would have more cohesiveness throughout the department so that you have an actual team of people working together so you don't feel like you're out on an island working all by yourself.

Those who feel like outsiders in their program, take active steps in updating their teaching skills and strengthening their relationships in the department. For example, Tim reflects that he watches videos and searches for resources online in order to improve his teaching. He and Suzy often have conversations about their classes and share resources when they see each other at the senior center, where both of them teach twice a week. Thus, even though they may feel disconnected, they find opportunities after class to exchange experiences and materials. Mary, as well, actively pursues upgrading her skills as a teacher and that indicates her strong sense of agency in being effective teacher. This finding shows a resemblance to the findings by Edwards and Burns (2016), who show that Rory, one of the language teachers in their study, exhibited a strong sense of agency in his ongoing

participation in professional development and research activities even though his efforts were unrecognized by the institution. Similarly, Mary explained,

There is scarcity of resources and professional development for teachers.

To overcome, I stay current on research, seek out PD opportunities and stay focused on the goal of student achievement.

Empowering Relationships

All participants agree that they care deeply about their students, seek to nurture them and help them grow academically and personally. They exhibit a strong sense of agency in learning about students' unique challenges, histories, needs and goals. They are aware of students' adversities, journeys, and circumstances. For example, Cici shares that it is crucial to support students in sharing their experiences by commenting,

I ask a lot of questions to find out their prior knowledge and experience to adjust my lesson's level. I relate the lesson to their personal needs and experiences. I try to let them share about difficulties here in the U.S. and maybe how they are having a hard time adjusting or feel left out. I also try to stay positive to encourage them.

Teachers also are active agents in learning about students' uniqueness. They make sure they build relationships with every student. For example, Sebastian shares the importance of approaching each student individually by stating,

Of course, every person has their own individuality, and this should serve to draw another's attention. Yes, you speak French, but I think I hear a little different accent. Yes, you're from Mexico, but there are so many different regions of Mexico, and the spelling of your last name is a little

unusual. People in your country don't keep pets? Hey, but in some cases having a pet really helps a person dealing with a difficult situation. And so on. I think our classroom environment is welcoming, and a broad range of life experiences and points of view are prized.

Such knowledge helps teachers provide enriching and transformative lessons that help enable student agency. The classes are purely student centered, where the teacher authority is minimized by encouraging a safe environment for sharing experiences and perceptions. For example, Sebastian is an active agent in ensuring that his instruction is focused on developing students' communicative skills while at the same time encouraging students' engagement by stepping back to allow students to work in groups. Andrew, on a regular basis, changes the arrangement of the class and pairs students with different classmates to empower students to work with students of various cultural, professional, and linguistic backgrounds. Some participants, such as Mary, Agnes, and Andrew engage students also in more critical discussions that allow for sharing cultural backgrounds, expanding understandings, and challenging common stereotypes. Those findings relate to research by Lopez (2011) and Alford and Kettle (2017), who also used critical literacy strategies, such as discussing inequalities connected to cultural and societal differences in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. Similar to Alford and Kettle (2017), these participants' practices indicate that they strive for "legitimizing students' experiences and viewpoints; empowering students to talk back to texts and not accept them at face value, and engaging students affectively to understand values and ideologies" (p. 206). For example, Andrew shares that he is an active agent in building strong relationships and

engaging students in critical discussion about common misconceptions that enable student agency by stating,

Building a diverse classroom across many tiers can help foster diverse perceptions and help realign realities away from a false narrative.

This findings indicates participants active role in resisting Eurocentric pedagogy (Banks, 2001) that “reinforces the status quo, makes students passive and content, and encourages them to acquiescently accept the dominant ideologies, political and economic arrangements, and prevailing myths and paradigms used to rationalize and justify the current social and political structure” (p. 130). Participants, such as Andrew offer empowering experiences, where students feel safe to raise concerns, question readings, and share challenges.

Avoiding Politics for a Reason

Some participants also exhibit a strong sense of agency in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students by avoiding discussing sensitive topics. For example, Sebastian and Cici, actually, show a strong sense of agency in avoiding sensitive topics in their classrooms, especially politics, religion, and immigration. They explain that their actions stem from putting their students’ feelings first. They do not want to cause embarrassment or conflict. They are aware of the fact that some of the students live in the city undocumented and recognize that this is a sensitive matter. For example, Sebastian commented,

One of the issues I do not bring up in class by way of discussion is immigration, in so far as it leads to mention of the documented vs. undocumented status of students. This becomes too personal too quickly.

That finding confirms research by Arongna (2017) and Johnson and Chang (2012), who found that adult ESL teachers avoid discussing certain topics in class because they are afraid to make students uncomfortable or ignite tensions among different students during discussions. Amos (2016), Sleeter (2001), and Williams and Evans-Winter (2005) also found that teachers show resistance to fully engaging in culturally responsive teaching by avoiding difficult conversations.

Making a Conscious Choice of Change

Some participants also exhibit a strong sense of agency in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students by doing something that transforms their career. Some participants felt empowered to make a change in their career during this research study. For example, Mary has dedicated her whole teaching career to help refugee and immigrant student integrate into the society. However, after working in the refugee program and then teaching on-campus classes, she felt discouraged by the bureaucracy of teaching and decided to quit teaching in the college. Instead, she started tutoring students who needed help learning English as well as understanding American norms so that they can become more successful members of the community. This finding relates to a finding by Tao and Gao (2017), who show an example of lack of agency during pedagogical challenges as one of the language teachers in that study felt discouraged during a new curriculum implementation process and stopped teaching English for Specific Purposes. Thus, Mary shows lack of agency when teaching in the institution that seems to have a constraining environment. However, she took an agentive stance to make a change in her career because she thinks she can serve ELLs in other ways.

In addition, Agnes, who has been an advocate for ELLs for a long time, decided to apply to a PhD program during the research study. She was successfully admitted to a PhD in education program this semester. She was contemplating how she could help her students more than teaching them in the classroom and volunteering in the community. She reflects that such educational experience will allow her to continue advocating for her students by raising awareness of their struggles and triumphs. That finding provides important insights into the role of agency in educational goals. Like Danni from Edwards and Burns' (2016) study, Agnes felt empowered to become a professional researcher and pursue a PhD degree as a way of continuing her efforts in supporting ELLs.

Ultimately, a variety of difficulties that teachers and students experienced throughout their lives have shaped participants' agency in taking steps to be understanding, supportive, and caring teachers. Participants exhibit a strong sense of agency in validating students' various backgrounds, learning goals, and needs. Some of the agentic moves stem from personal experiences of marginalization, isolation, frustration, discomfort, or defeat while others from empowerment and encouragement. These findings confirm research by Jacob et al. (2014) who assert that teachers face barriers in schools, such as accountability, isolation, lack of support, and stressful school environments.

Enriching Experiences Improve Understanding

There are also positive experiences that enabled participants to support their culturally and linguistically diverse students. For example, traveling abroad, learning a language, and engaging in critical reflection increased their awareness of students' struggles, needs, and their own teaching and dispositions.

Traveling and Language Learning Opened My Eyes

Some participants also share that their traveling and learning another language enabled them to understand ELLs unique needs and challenges. Because they had an opportunity to travel to various countries, experience how it is to be in unknown place, and learn a new language, they recognized that the journeys ELLs take are complex and intimidating. Such experiences prompted them to be more empathetic and understanding. Agnes, Suzy, Sebastian, and Tim all share that traveling abroad was helpful in becoming accommodating and flexible teachers. For example, Suzy explained,

Through travel, language and study abroad opportunities, I was able to step outside my bubble and experience what it feels like to be in a very different environment and be surrounded by people different from me. These experiences have greatly influenced my work as a teacher with ELLs since it helps me to better understand what it might be like to walk in their shoes, not understanding the language, culture, or how to navigate a very complicated system.

Also, Agnes, Mary, and Suzy share that learning Spanish showed them how difficult it is to learn a language, and now they are agentive in sustaining linguistic pluralism in their classrooms. For example, Agnes stated,

One of the other ways I help students feel supported is the use of their L1. I encourage the students to compare English to their L1 when they are struggling with vocabulary or reading comprehension. I think this helps with negotiating the power structure as well, because the students know that their culture and L1 is important too.

Critical Reflection Enabling Agency

All participants also agree that the reflective process they underwent during this study was helpful for them in analyzing their own teaching practices and dispositions. They took the time to think about their challenges, practices, experiences, and relationships with students. All participants noted that critical self-reflection encouraged them to improve their teaching. That finding strengthens research by Brooks and Adams (2015) who assert that teachers developed a strong sense of agency when they have time and space to critically evaluate their teaching and ELLs' challenges. Particularly, Sebastian and Cici have experienced a transformation in their teaching during the reflective process. They were aware of some of the shortcomings of their promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy and indicated in their last reflection that they would like to engage in more meaningful culturally responsive teaching. For example, Cici commented,

This has been good for me. It has validated me a lot because I didn't see all the things I was actually doing. Also, it has challenged me to do more and be more aware and sensitive to diversity. It has encouraged me to improve my lessons and the way I am teaching them. It has encouraged me to try to always consider where the students are coming from. That is really important. It's also made me look at my own ways or biases in teaching or thinking. I still have a lot to learn as a teacher but am thankful I have also learned a lot throughout my years! It makes me want to be better.

Ultimately, this chapter illustrated an array of challenges teachers experience while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. It also revealed various ways teachers deal with these challenges. Therefore, one needs to be aware of a range of factors

that affect teacher agency. Some adult ESL instructors exhibited agency in the face of institutional constraints, others decided to comply. In other instances, adult ESL instructors exercised agency in being creative and resourceful. There are also negative and positive experiences that enabled them to take stances in their professional and personal lives. These findings point to the importance of understanding agency from the ecological perspective as a variety of experiences, contexts, and interactions influence teacher agency at different points of life, and thus, it is never static and understood as a continuum.

Conclusion

This research study sheds light on ecological factors that shape teacher agency in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Thus, it contributes to research on teacher agency from an ecological perspective (Priestley et al., 2015). Participants' agency is affected by the interplay of past and present personal and professional experiences, current power structures, institutional resources, and their institutional environment, as well as their hopes and future goals (Priestley et al., 2015). In general, participants demonstrate a varied sense of agency when they face challenges. The thematic analysis reveals that participants decide to comply with institutional pressures by adopting administrative requirements, testing standards, and mandated curriculum, but they also adapt them because they are agentive in staying committed to addressing students' needs. In other instances, they show resilience in finding ways to bring in additional materials and experiences despite limited funding. There are also constraining experiences and contexts, where participants still felt empowered to take action in pursuing their goals and decisions in order to support their ELLs. In addition, participants have gained valuable experiences that improve their understanding of culturally and linguistically diverse students'

backgrounds and needs. Therefore, the findings reveal that teaching adult ESL is a complex undertaking that is woven with multiple challenges that are never straightforward to overcome or dismiss.

This study reveals that all participants are persistent in meeting students' needs. In spite of various challenges that participants experience in their teaching of ELLs, they show different degrees of agentive moves in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Some of them, such as Sebastian, Cici, and Tim prefer playing safe by conforming to institutional pressures more than others. Agnes, Andrew, Mary, and Suzy go beyond conformity and comfort. They build empowering relationships that help students' feel not only valued and validated, but they also create a space for students to challenge stereotypes and contribute to meaning making. They are transformative practitioners who "play the role of change agents raising educational, social, cultural, and political consciousness in their learners" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 56). These teachers recognize the relations of power and dominance as well as challenge hegemonic pedagogies and 'hidden curriculum' by promoting equitable and transformative education. They use their agency to resist hegemonic ideologies and advocate for ELLs in their diverse classrooms and communities. Thus, as Gay (2002) asserts, those teachers who ignore delving deeper into "cultural orientations, values, and performance styles of ethnically different students" (p. 25), contribute to "cultural hegemony, personal denigration, educational inequity" (p. 25). Agnes, Andrew, Mary, and Suzy are those who are not afraid to take risks and work towards social justice in education.

This study also shows that having a strong sense of agency in supporting ELLs can also prompt one to take a stance in two different directions. Mary, for example, decided to

quit her teaching position because she felt tired of fighting for her ELLs whereas Agnes decided to enroll in the PhD in education program because she felt this would help her find more ways to advocate for her ELLs. Both of them showed motivation in continuous learning and complained about lack of teacher collaboration and professional development, but Mary has been teaching in that institution for over ten years while Agnes only for more than a year. Their various stages of teaching might be the reason of their divergent decisions. The further research on their professional lives would shed more light on their agentive moves.

CHAPTER 7: SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Throughout this study, I attempted to tell the stories of seven adult ESL teachers working in complex contexts and discussed findings that illuminated patterns that were identified during analyzing participants' interviews, reflections, and field notes. I used my theoretical framework to investigate three research questions that pertained to teachers' identities, practices, and challenges. This research study drew on critical theory to bring awareness of power and agency in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The exploration of language teachers' enactment of agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy revealed challenges language teachers face when teaching ELLs and the actions they take to support their diverse students. In each chapter that discussed the results, I connected my findings to the body of literature from the TESOL, English linguistics, and education field. In this chapter, I review the major findings of the study and how the findings of this study add to the knowledge to the existing literature. Later, I provide implications for the practice in the adult ESL field and suggestions for further research in the TESOL field. Finally, I end with a brief conclusion.

Contribution to the Literature

This chapter summarizes the findings using the three main research questions that guided the research study. The three research questions are as follows: What is the role of teacher identity in shaping a sense of agency for promoting culturally responsive pedagogy?; How do ESL teachers understand and enact culturally responsive pedagogy?; and How have the various contexts and experiences shaped ESL teachers' sense of agency in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners? The findings of this study make a significant contribution to the existing body of literature by shedding light on adult ESL

instructors' unique experiences and practices as explorers, their active quest to deliver culturally responsive pedagogy, and various limitations they face when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Research on Language Teacher Identity

This study explored the role of identity in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. In relation to the body of research on teacher identity, this study offered an insight into a complex identity negotiation of adult ESL instructors. The narrative analysis revealed that participants negotiated various identities throughout their lives. For example, Agnes's explorer identity was developed during her educational journey, studying abroad experience, and building international friendships and relationships. Her language teacher identity shifted to an ELL advocate in the local community after seeing her husband, who is from Spain, struggle in learning English, finding a job, and getting citizenship after arrival to the United States. These hardships empowered her to get a master's degree in TESOL, become an adult ESL teacher, and pursue a PhD degree.

Andrew, on the other hand, exhibited an explorer identity by being a curious, transformative practitioner who regularly finds opportunities for students to learn not only the English language, but also enhance their knowledge of social and cultural norms and issues. As an African American, he believes his diverse and sometimes challenging experiences helped him relate to students, and he developed an identity of a navigator who equips students with the necessary skills to be successful members of the community.

Cici's cultural heritage influenced her identity formation. In addition to being an explorer who loves to learn about other cultures and languages, her teaching reflects her identity as a moral agent who explores students' needs and works hard to help diverse

students learn English to get better jobs and teachers them the importance of values and respect.

Mary's cultural and religious background also impacted her identity formation. She is of Jewish heritage, traveled to many countries, and learned Spanish. These culturally diverse experiences empowered her to become an adult ESL instructor and a social justice advocate. She related her experience of anti-Semitism to challenges immigrants experienced and became an active social justice worker who fights for students' rights and ensures they are part of inclusive community.

Sebastian's explorer identity is visible in his continuous quest to learn about different countries and languages. He is a life-long learner who is invested in learning about students' unique backgrounds, needs, and interests. Suzy also continuously builds international friendships, travels to distant places, but she also became a cultural broker for immigrants in the community. She creates bridges between her students and the community by connecting students to local agencies, organizations, and resources. Tim, on the other hand, is an extrovert who views teaching as a rewarding profession that provides opportunities to meet people, see the world, and be constantly on the go. He loves to explore inside and outside the classroom and builds positive, lasting relationships with diverse people.

As this summary of teachers' narratives illustrates, the findings of this study revealed that teacher identity is dynamic and changes over time as participants' in this study defined themselves not only through their past and present identities but also through their beliefs and hopes. Thus, this study contributes to the large body of research that problematizes identity as never constant (Bachanan, 2015; Bukor, 2015; Day et al., 2005;

Miller, 2008; Mockler, 2011; Olsen, 2008; Sachs, 2005; Walkington, 2005; Varghese et al., 2005).

In addition, a large body of research focused on language teacher identity being shaped by various contexts and factors, including a role in pre-service language teacher education (Yazan, 2017), novice language teaching (Kanno & Stuart, 2011), personal experiences, (Bukor, 2015), emotions (Song, 2016), community of practice (Liu & Xu, 2011), and study abroad experience (Trent 2011). This study confirmed that identity is dynamic and that multiple factors contributed to language teachers' identity negotiation (Kayi-Aydar, 2015c). However, what this study adds to the current body of literature is the insight into the common thread of the teachers' identity. Most of the research studies were case studies that focused on fewer than three participants, in which language teacher identity formation and negotiation was discussed in separate sections. This narrative inquiry looked at participants' language identity development by analyzing data holistically and comparing and contrasting participants' stories. Thus, both analyses revealed that the common aspect of participants' identities was exploration even though they exhibited multiple identities throughout their lives and experienced shifts in their identities.

Given that the narratives revealed that participants are unique individuals whose various personal experiences influenced their work with ELLs, the thematic analysis revealed commonalities among the participants and pointed to the crucial aspect of their personal identity that impacted their teaching: exploration. The data analysis revealed that participants shared international connections, such as having international roots, partners, friends, as well as traveling abroad. Participants also openly share their own diverse

experiences, validate students' backgrounds, and promote transformative discussions in their classrooms. They also engage in a variety of agentive strategies that facilitate exploration in the classroom, for example, by exploring their own dispositions, being curious about students' backgrounds, prioritizing students' goals, creating diverse materials, and adjusting instruction. Their quest to explore students' needs is also visible in promoting community resources, inviting students' food in the classrooms, and taking students on field trips. Adult ESL instructors are seen as explorers because they take action in providing interesting, enriching, and culturally responsive experiences for their ELLs so they can feel welcomed, valued, and validated in their classrooms and communities. Thus, these findings support research that discussed the interconnection between the personal lives of teachers with their professional roles in the classrooms (Bukor, 2013; Day, 2006; Olsen, 2008; Palmer & Christison, 2007). Participants drew on their personal experiences of traveling, diverse friendships and relationships, and cultural heritage when teaching. It is evident that all participants enjoy exploring inside and outside of the classrooms.

Even though participants constructed themselves as explorers, only a few of them exhibited identities that relate to being transformative practitioners who "play the role of change agents raising educational, social, cultural, and political consciousness in their learners" (Kumaravadivelu, 2012, p. 56). Only Agnes, Mary, Suzy, and Andrew go beyond exploration and work towards transformation in their classrooms. For example, these adult ESL instructors take an active effort in empowering students to speak up, share views, be critical, challenge misconceptions, and be tolerant and supportive to classmates. They include students' perspectives, opinions, and experiences in critically dismantling common stereotypes in readings that are in the textbooks and openly discuss discriminatory practices

in the society to raise awareness on inequality. That finding adds to the literature about transformative teachers being active agents of challenging Eurocentric pedagogy (Banks, 2001; Kumaravadivelu, 2012; Wiggan, 2012). Banks (2001) asserted that a Eurocentric pedagogy “reinforces the status quo, makes students passive and content, and encourages them to acquiescently accept the dominant ideologies, political and economic arrangements, and prevailing myths and paradigms used to rationalize and justify the current social and political structure” (p. 130). In their reflections, Agnes, Mary, Suzy, and Andrew shared that their curriculum did not include diverse students’ experiences and voices and that they actively worked to expand the mandated curriculum by giving students a voice to transform perspectives, and thus empowered them to be active, agentive learners. The reflective process allowed for critically analyzing themselves, their practices, and power relations, and such processes contributed to identity work (Miller et al., 2017). In addition, since critical reflection provided a safe space for critical analysis of self, various contexts, environments, interactions, and experiences, it also allowed for transformation. Sebastian and Cici both agreed that such reflective processes helped them see their practices and improve them, so they can deeply engage in culturally responsive pedagogy. Thus, even though their reflections during reflective writing and interviews revealed they did not engage in activities that promoted social change, at the end of the research they showed their interest in promoting more meaningful culturally responsive strategies. That indicated they may transform from explorers who actively explore in the classroom and beyond into transformative practitioners who also take risks in challenging Eurocentric pedagogy.

Research on Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

This study explored how adult ESL instructors understand and enact culturally responsive pedagogy. The narratives revealed that participants are unique teachers who use a variety of culturally responsive practices whereas the thematic analysis revealed commonalities among the participants and pointed to three ways culturally responsive teaching is embraced in their classrooms. Some practices pave the way to the successful promotion of such practices, and other strategies and practices reveal meaningful engagement in culturally responsive pedagogy. However, there are some cracks in the teachers' effective promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy. Some of the ways to facilitate the promotion of culturally responsive teaching are being attentive listeners, being flexible facilitators, ensuring effective language teaching, providing enriching and positive learning environment, and gaining high quality teacher preparation experiences.

The adult ESL instructors also engaged in various culturally responsive practices that closely relate to Gay's (2002, 2010), Ladson-Billings' (1995), and Paris's (2012) research. During the first interview, participants of this study explained culturally responsive teaching as cultural sensitivity, but their reflections, interviews, and classroom observations revealed they do go beyond that in their teaching. They focus on building genuine relationships, empathizing and understanding students' needs, learning about their backgrounds, creating diverse curriculum, promoting critical literacy, giving students a voice, using transformative learning, affirming students' diverse languages, and bridging communities. Nevertheless, the data analysis revealed some gaps in effective promotion of such practices. Some participants stay away from sensitive topics and politics, hold deficit views on literacy students' educational backgrounds, experience conscious teaching

dilemmas between teaching language skills and incorporating culturally responsive practices, and are concerned about their own limited training to enhance their understanding of culturally responsive teaching. These findings provide insight into the importance of using a critical self-reflection process on teacher pedagogical practices, interactions, and dispositions. This study showed that when asked about culturally responsive teaching during the first interview, teachers did not explain the meaning of such pedagogy in a sufficient manner. Only while engaging in critical self-reflection, they shared various practices that related to a more meaningful promotion of culturally responsive pedagogy. That confirmed argumentation by Bartolomé (2004) and Pantić and Florian (2015) who asserted that teachers need to critically evaluate practices in diverse classrooms in order to develop critical consciousness and understanding of the impact of social, political, and economic influences on their practices.

This study contributes to the body of research that revealed the importance of culturally responsive teaching when teaching English language by providing additional insight into successful practices and cracks in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. Similar to the extensive body of research on culturally responsive pedagogy in mainstream K-12 education (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Milner, 2010; Moore & Lewis, 2012; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), this study provides evidence of successful promotions of culturally responsive pedagogy in adult education. It also provides similar evidence as a study that shows language teachers' meaningful promotion of culturally responsive teaching by following tenets such as incorporating diverse perspectives, giving students a voice, having an inclusive curriculum, encouraging a community of learners, creating a climate of caring and respect, promoting

critical thinking and questioning social issues, and building strong relationships (Parhar & Sensoy, 2011).

This study also provides hope in the research of adult ESL teaching. Studies in adult ESL teaching found that adult ESL teachers did not have sufficient knowledge about their students, avoided incorporating cultural topics, relied only on surface level culture values, rarely supplemented curriculum, and did not regularly promote student autonomy (Arongna, 2017; Johnson & Chang, 2012; Rhodes, 2013). But, most of the participants of this study did. On the other hand, Lew and Nelson (2016), Nelson and Guerra (2014), Sleeter (2012), and Young (2010) argued that culturally responsive pedagogy is not often fully incorporated in diverse classrooms, and this study provides some evidence for that, for example, due to teachers' avoidance of politics, following mandated curricula, teaching in accordance with standardized testing, holding deficit beliefs, and having insufficient professional development. These gaps indicate the prevalence of societal, cultural, and institutional hegemony in education (Sleeter, 2012; Wiggan, 2012), and thus, it was crucial to understand participants' sense of agency in dealing with such hegemonic practices. The findings of this study add to this research by highlighting strategic moves the adult ESL instructors were taking in order to support their ELLs, and thus they resisted hegemonic practices. For example, Agnes, Andrew, Mary, and Suzy actively challenge students in analyzing, questioning, and sharing own perspectives while reading and discussing prescribed texts in the textbooks. They also empower students by giving them a chance to voice their concerns and opinions. Thus, such findings indicated that researchers need to incorporate a critical lens in studying culturally responsive teaching. It is not only looking at teachers' pedagogical practices that embrace students' cultures and experiences, but also

about investigating their choices and actions they take while promoting culturally responsive pedagogy and various factors that impact that.

Research on Language Teacher Agency

This study also sought to explore how various contexts and experiences affected adult ESL instructors' sense of agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. The narratives revealed that participants deal with unique challenges whereas the thematic analysis revealed several common limitations they encounter as adult ESL teachers and indicated that some participants comply, are resilient, and others take agentic stances against some of the pressures they experience when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The data analysis revealed that participants work in a challenging institutional environment in which the context is continuously changing in response to shifting testing requirements, citizenship regulations, and mandated curriculum. As such, each adult ESL instructor has been constrained by these institutional pressures, but still shows a strong sense of agency in addressing students' needs by staying creative, accommodating, and supportive. Participants show resilience in continuously providing additional resources and reaching out to the community, so their instruction is culturally responsive to students' backgrounds, needs, and goals. There are some experiences that also affect participants' sense of agency that relate to the feeling of marginalization, isolation, discomfort, defeat, and empowerment. In addition, enriching experiences such as traveling, learning a language and critical self-reflection empowered participants to be understanding and supportive teachers.

This study adds to the body of research by discussing ecological factors that shape teachers' sense of agency when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students

(Biesta & Tedder, 2007; Biesta et al., 2017; Priestley et al., 2015). It confirmed that teaching is a complex undertaking, where teachers' sense of agency is shaped by multiple experiences, contexts, beliefs, and hopes intertwined with in their past, present, and future. This research study is of paramount importance because it provided empirical data on multiple factors that affect agency that relate to the iterative, the practical-evaluative, and the projective dimensions of agency (Priestley et al., 2015). As far as the iterative aspects of agency are concerned, this study provided evidence of the influence of teachers' life histories, beliefs, and values on their agency. Some participants' extensive traveling and language learning background and their beliefs and values of sustaining inclusive communities influenced their advocacy efforts, and thus, they became resilient in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. As far as the practical-evaluative dimension of agency is concerned, the participants' pressuring institutional environment and social structures constrained their sense of agency. However, in the face of such challenges, participants still showed commitment in promoting culturally responsive practices. As far as the practical-evaluative dimension of the agency is concerned, participants' aspirations for change in resources and students' circumstances lead to participants' actions to transform their classrooms into welcoming and culturally responsive spaces. Thus, this research shows the interplay of various dimensions in achieving agency. The findings indicated that participants exhibit a strong sense of agency in supporting their ELLs as they gathered many diverse experiences that opened their eyes to celebrating diversity and inclusion, and their current practices and actions show continuous commitment of that.

The findings of this research also provided evidence to support research that highlights the interconnection between teacher agency and identity (Buchanan, 2015;

Edwards & Burns, 2016; Kayi-Aydar, 2015a; Kayi-Aydar, 2015b; Kayi-Aydar, 2017). Because participants of this study have had numerous opportunities to explore other cultures, countries, and traditions, they have been open, curious, innovative teachers who currently have a strong sense of agency in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. That finding adds to the current research by illustrating an interwoven link between an explorer identity and a strong sense of agency. The data analysis showed that participants as explorers took risks in going to foreign places and learning new languages, showed commitment to building diverse relationships, and were creative teachers. These traits of being explorers inside and outside the classroom shaped participants' strong sense of agency in supporting their learners. Currently, they take risks and are strategic in their teaching and provide stimulating learning environment in spite of the institutional constraints. This study also adds to the literature by illustrating participants' various personal and professional contexts, interactions, and experiences that affected their identity and agency. For example, Agnes developed an identity of an advocate after seeing her husband struggle. That identity shift also impacted her agency in working with ELLs in the community. She started actively searching for opportunities to help immigrants and becoming an adult ESL teacher was a result of that. Her strong sense of agency for advocacy continued when she decided to apply for a PhD in urban literacy because this program would allow her to extend her advocacy efforts in the academic context. And, even though her agency appeared to be restricted by standardized testing and the mandated curriculum, she found ways to balance the institutional requirements with culturally responsive teaching. Therefore, her identity and agency were never static but depended on

various experiences, interactions, and environments, but a significant observation in this study is that a strong sense of self goes with a stronger sense of agency.

This research study also illuminated various constraints language teachers experience during teaching adult ESL. Similar to Edwards and Burns (2016), Fleming (1998), Mortenson (2015), Parhar and Sensoy (2011), and Tao and Gao (2017), many of the obstacles language teachers in this study face relate to structural or institutional constraints, such as constraining curriculum, limited community-based engagement, imposed standardized testing, scarce resources, and lack of ongoing professional development. This study also contributes to the research that discussed the importance of resisting Eurocentric pedagogy by incorporating culturally responsive teaching (Banks, 2001; Gunderson et al., 2014; Wiggan, 2012). While participants of this study experienced various challenges, they were agentic in resisting the “hidden curriculum” and Eurocentric pedagogy by supplementing textbook materials, engaging students in decision making, and bringing community resources into the classroom. Some participants in this study are transformative practitioners, such as Agnes, Andrew, Mary, and Suzy who are cognizant that the current curriculum focuses on certain language and skills instead of helping students develop their unique skills. Thus, they exhibit a strong sense of agency by going beyond supporting their ELLs’ needs and language goals, as they actively work towards social change in education.

Research on Adult ESL Pedagogy

Adult ESL has been a fast-growing field due to the continuous growth of the immigrant population in the United States. However, the research in that field has not been flourishing as much as the research in ESL teaching in K-12 education. According to

Cronen et al. (2005), Burt et al. (2008), Mathews-Aydinli (2008), and Snell, (2013) there is limited research on successful strategies for teaching adult English Language Learners. Burt et al. (2008) conducted a review on research, practice, and professional development of adult ESL teachers. His compilation of research spanning over two decades reveals that research is still needed “on the knowledge and skills essential for practitioners working with adult English Language Learners and on effective means of providing adult ESL teachers with appropriate professional development” (p. 5). Therefore, this research study offers valuable insights into successful strategies of seven adult ESL instructors, who are creative and strive for addressing various needs of their adult English Language Learners.

Even though this study reveals successful pedagogical practices, it also supports the research on challenges adult ESL instructors face when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners, such as stressful mandated assessment that often does not portray students’ real needs, stressful accountability measures, constraints regarding funding, sparse professional development, and limited access to resources (Eyring, 2014; Schaetzel, 2010; Snell, 2013; Tucker, 2006). This research study contributes to the research in adult ESL pedagogy by revealing the ongoing struggles adult ESL teachers experience in their profession. It confirms that adult ESL instructors still experience little recognition as professionals and adult ESL programs are undervalued and underfunded (Brown & Waters, 2010; Florez, 1997; Mathews-Aydinli, 2008).

This study also raises awareness of the long debate about teaching language and culture in adult ESL classrooms. Auervback (1993), Canagarajah (1999), Griswold (2010), Johnson (2005), Philipson (1993), and Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) assert that adult ESL teaching and materials promote hegemony in terms of instilling values of the target culture.

For instance, Griswold (2010) asserts that adult ESL teachers show the United States as “an ideal democracy” (p. 489) and propagate linguistic and cultural assimilation in adult ESL citizenship preparation classes. Johnson (2005) adds that adult ESL teachers experience dilemmas in integrating culture in adult ESL classrooms. In addition, Mathews-Aydinli (2008) conducted a research review of twelve studies in adult ESL teaching and adds that “although culture and cultural understanding is emphasized in many studies as something for teachers and program administrators to pay attention to, it seems that the adult ELL population presents a still-undertapped resource for research on culture and second-language learning” (Mathews-Aydinli, 2008, p. 202). This research study provides a significant contribution to the research on adult ESL pedagogy by revealing various pedagogical strategies adult ESL teachers incorporate to promote a culturally responsive classroom environment, in which they resist linguistic ideologies and validate adult ELLs’ cultural backgrounds and experiences. Thus, this study provides hope in the direction adult ESL teaching is going.

Implications for Practitioners and Further Research

The lessons learned in this study provide new knowledge in terms of teacher preparation, teacher professional development, and community outreach. Thus, the findings of this study provide practical implications for adult ESL teachers and educators, and also point to the importance of continuous research on this topic in order to learn more about culturally responsive practices in the TESOL field.

TESOL Teacher Preparation

In order to inform aspects of teacher education, this study has examined the adult ESL teachers’ experiences and practices that help us understand the complexities of

teaching. Gaining insight into participants' unique skills and challenges informs approaches to methods of teaching adult ESL. Thus, the findings of this study point to the importance of preparing pre-service language teachers to take active roles in promoting welcoming, safe, and culturally responsive classrooms. As most of the methodology courses provide pre-service teachers with knowledge of second language acquisition theory and teaching methods, participants of this study also highlighted the importance of making conscious connections between theory and practice as well as having enriching experiences during the TESOL program. That indicated that pre-service language teachers who major in TESOL need to be exposed to teaching experiences that help them understand the intricacies of teaching both in the community and on-campus classes, learn about adult ESL students' circumstances, and be aware of current language policies and regulations. This study points to the importance of exposing pre-service language teachers to diverse experiences, for example, making sure pre-service language teachers have an opportunity to learn about diverse adult learners during their clinical field experiences or incorporating critical self-reflection assignments in the methodology courses where pre-service teachers can make connections between their experiences and teaching practices. The findings of this study point to the importance of teacher critical self-reflection in order to deeply analyze their own experiences, dispositions, and practices. This study is important because it highlights that reflecting on identities, experiences, practices, as well as social, political and economic environments "helps teachers recognize that inclusive practices are not isolated from the structural and cultural contexts of their workplace that might encourage or impede such practices" (Pantić & Florian, 2015, p. 345).

Adult ESL Teacher Professional Development

Some participants also voiced their concerns about limited professional development opportunities and collaboration with other faculty and staff. Effective teachers need experiences that involve expanding their own knowledge and skills, co-teaching, co-planning, and opportunities for critical dialogue and reflection about their teaching and culturally responsive practices. Although the teachers in this study seem to successfully engage in culturally responsive teaching to some degree, a few participants noticed a training gap. Providing professional development on multicultural education for full-time and part-time staff is crucial in making sure all adult ESL instructors understand how to embrace diversity in their classrooms and feel confident in using practical culturally responsive strategies in their classrooms. However, professional development should also go beyond expanding knowledge to challenging persistent hidden ideologies in language teaching. Adult ESL instructors should have a safe space for questioning mandated curriculum and be included in collaborative decision making. When adult ESL instructors experience collaboration in meaningful and productive ways, both students and teachers feel less marginalized and isolated, and thus the institution creates an inclusive climate and provides a space for agency development. Professional development is not just about gaining knowledge but also a factor in enhancing teacher agency through helping teachers build their professional identities.

Adult ESL Teaching and Community Outreach

This study also points to the importance of community outreach when teaching adult culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Participants shared that sometimes they might not know what is happening in the community because they work part time, others

have a strong sense of agency in being involved in the community. Such involvement enriches their understanding of the local communities, immigration agencies, and resources that adult ELLs need in order to be successful members of society. It is critical, then, that language teachers learn about local agencies and organizations that support adult ELLs and help them connect with them. However, teachers should not be the only ones who reach out to the community. The administrative staff who works with language teachers should also take an active role in building relationships in the community. Such collaborations would help them understand students' needs, their life circumstances, and challenges. Strengthening these connections would help teachers and administrative staff be better advocates for their students and their ESL programs.

Further Research in the Adult ESL Field

Further research is also necessary to deepen knowledge about adult ESL instructors' experiences, practices, and challenges. Currently, this research study provides much needed empirical data on adult ESL teachers' culturally responsive practices as most of the research on that topic focuses on K-12 educational settings. This study raises a few opportunities for future research. Since this study was conducted during one semester, it could be extended to longitudinal and comparative ways. It would be beneficial to conduct longitudinal studies to gain a deeper understanding of adult ESL teachers' activities that promote culturally responsive teaching. Continuing this research as a longitudinal study could also focus on analyzing students' academic achievement in culturally responsive classrooms and add insight into how culturally responsive teaching improves diverse student outcomes. It could also be of great value to include students' and administrators' voices and compare them with the language teachers' practices. In that way, having diverse

voices represented could enhance the understanding of the complex challenges teacher experience when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. In addition, further research on the cracks in promoting culturally responsive teaching would help enhance the knowledge of teachers' actions and inactions that relate to teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Scheduling follow-up interviews with Sebastian and Cici, who avoided difficult topics, or Mary, who quit her job, would provide more insight into the complexities of their decisions. Conducting a mixed methods study would also provide an additional insight, such as distributing a survey about teachers' implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy, which would be beneficial in discerning specific strategies teachers use in their classrooms. Combining qualitative and quantitative research methods would strengthen the findings of the study. Such knowledge would be disseminated in various publications and future teacher professional development training so teachers could serve their ELLs more effectively.

Conclusion

The purpose of this narrative inquiry study was to explore language teachers' sense of agency in promoting culturally responsive teaching. The participants were seven adult ESL instructors working in the community college in the Southeastern region of the United States who teach lower and higher-level students at community and on-campus locations. Face-to-face interviews, reflection journal entries, and classroom observations revealed various pedagogical strategies, experiences, and classroom interactions that pertained to supporting the ELLs' learning and community engagement. This study yielded culturally responsive practices that adult ESL instructors promote to enhance ELLs' cultural knowledge, critical consciousness, and academic success, but also exposed some gaps that

need to be addressed in the future research. The findings of this research have the potential to serve as a premise for efforts that call for social change in language education and advocacy for ELLs' unique needs. I am motivated to pursue my goals of helping language teachers critically analyze their teaching, experiences, and interactions in the classrooms to enhance their skills, knowledge, and relationships with students. This study has given me hope that as an educator I have gained insight into language teachers' triumphs and challenges that allow me to advocate for culturally responsive teaching in adult ESL education more effectively and confidently. This study has validated for me that such practices are crucial in sustaining welcoming, validating, and supportive language teaching.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Project Timeline

Appendix B: Permission Email

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Appendix I: Theme 2 Codebook

Appendix J: Theme 3 Codebook

Appendix K: Word Frequency Search Level 3 List

Appendix L: Word Frequency Search Level 4 List

Appendix M: Word Frequency Search Level 5 List

Appendix A: Project Timeline

Appendix B: Permission Email



Cato College of Education
9201 University City Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001

Email Permission Letter

Dear [program director],

My name is Anna Sanczyk and I am a Doctoral Student in the Department of Education at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte.

I am currently beginning the research phase for my doctoral dissertation entitled, “A Narrative Inquiry of Second Language Teacher Agency in Promoting Culturally Responsive Pedagogy”. The goal of this study is to explore whether and how ESL teachers exercise agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students.

I am hoping to gain your permission to contact adult ESL instructors working in your college who meet the following criteria:

- (a) are currently employed as an Adult ESL instructor at the community college in North Carolina;
- (b) have a degree/certificate in TESOL;
- (c) have a minimum of three years of teaching experience; and
- (d) work with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Participants who are selected will be invited to participate in this research study to share their perceptions of and experiences with culturally responsive practices.

What is the project about?

This project is about language teacher agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. This narrative inquiry research can reveal how culturally responsive pedagogy is enacted, what are ESL teachers’ beliefs, values, and attitudes about fostering culturally responsive environment, how they build relationships with ELLs, what constraints they experience while working with ELLs, and how they develop a sense of agency for teaching and advocating for diverse students in ESL classrooms. This research study has the potential to contribute to the limited body of research on culturally responsive pedagogy in adult ESL classroom settings and teacher agency work in culturally and linguistically diverse educational contexts.

What does participating involve?

Participating involves taking part in three face-to-face, semi-structured interviews, journal writing, and two classroom observations over the course of one semester. The purpose of the interviews and critical self-reflection is to ask questions related to the adult ESL teachers' personal and professional experiences, instruction practices, and various constraints their face while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Each interview will be audio-recorded and is projected to last approximately 30 to 60 minutes. Participants will also receive a prompt every two weeks (ten in total) that encourages them to critically reflect on their teaching, interactions, and experiences in the classroom and community and to write brief journal entries. In addition, I will observe each participant's lesson twice to collect the data about the instructor's practices, activities, and interactions. One class period will be observed in the beginning of the semester, and the other in the end of the semester. During the observations, I will maintain hand-written field notes that document teaching and learning that occur within the classroom as well as the interaction between the instructor and students. The purpose of the classroom observation is to describe the setting that will be observed, the activities that take place in that setting, interactions between instructor and students, and verbal and nonverbal communications.

I understand that participation in this research might be time consuming for busy teachers. In return for their invaluable participation in this study, I will provide personally created culturally responsive classroom materials, point teachers to additional online resources, and provide additional instructional support as requested by the teacher participants.

Please let me know at your earliest convenience if I can proceed with the study by contacting the adult ESL instructors in your program by email, inviting them to participate in the study.

For questions about this research, you may contact Anna Sanczyk, asanczyk@uncc.edu and faculty advisor Dr. Elizabeth R. Miller, ermiller@uncc.edu. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Anna Sanczyk
asanczyk@uncc.edu

Appendix C: Invitation Email



Cato College of Education
9201 University City Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001

Email Invitation Letter

Dear [name],

My name is Anna Sanczyk. I am a Doctoral Student in the Department of Education at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. I am writing to invite you to participate in my dissertation research study. You have been recommended by your [program director's name] to be a participant in my doctoral research study entitled "A Narrative Inquiry of Second Language Teacher Agency in Promoting Culturally Responsive Pedagogy". I do hope you might be interested in participating because your experiences as an adult ESL instructor are invaluable for my study.

What is the project about?

This project is about language teacher agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. I would like to explore how you conceptualize culturally responsive pedagogy, how you build relationships with ELLs, what constraints you experience while working with ELLs, and how you develop a sense of agency for teaching and advocating for diverse students in ESL classrooms. This research study has the potential to contribute to the limited body of research on culturally responsive pedagogy in adult ESL classroom settings and teacher agency work in culturally and linguistically diverse educational contexts.

What does participating involve?

If you choose to participate in this study, you would be asked to:

- Participate in 3 face-to-face, semi-structured interview sessions with me regarding your instructional practices, classroom interactions, professional and personal experiences, and constraints you encounter while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Each interview would last from 30 to 60 minutes and would be conducted at the time that is convenient for you. Interviews would be audio recorded, and data would remain secure and confidential.
- Complete 10 journal entries that you would submit to me in response to provided journal prompts that would ask about your instructional practices, classroom interactions, professional and personal experiences, and constraints you encounter while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. You would receive a critical self-reflection prompt every two weeks for one semester (about five months). There is no length limit of your response to the prompts. Your answers can be as long or short as you feel comfortable sharing with me. In addition to the prompt question, you would also receive a follow-up question that refers to the

previous response. This would allow for an on-going, open communication between us during your reflection process. I would be the only person reading the journal entries and your responses would remain secure and confidential.

- Let me observe 2 classes you teach. I will observe each participant's lesson twice to collect the data about the instructor's practices, activities, and interactions. One class period will be observed in the beginning of the semester, and the other in the end of the semester. During the observations, I will maintain hand-written field notes that document teaching and learning that occur within the classroom as well as the interaction between the instructor and students. The purpose of the classroom observation is to describe the setting that will be observed, the activities that take place in that setting, interactions between instructor and students, and verbal and nonverbal communications.

I am truly grateful for your time. I understand that participation in this research might be time consuming.

In return for your invaluable participation in this study, I will provide you with personally created culturally responsive classroom materials, point you to additional online resources, and provide additional instructional support as requested by you.

Your participation is voluntary. You can withdraw from the study at any time and you do not have to give any reasons for why you no longer want to take part. For questions about this research, you may contact Anna Sanczyk, asanczyk@uncc.edu and faculty advisor Dr. Elizabeth R. Miller, ermiller@uncc.edu.

Sincerely,
Anna Sanczyk

Appendix D: Consent Form



Cato College of Education
9201 University City Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001

Consent to be Part of a Research Study

Title of the Project: A Narrative Inquiry of Second Language Teacher Agency in Promoting Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.

Principal Investigator: Anna Sanczyk, UNCC

Faculty Advisor: Elizabeth R. Miller, UNCC

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. 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 explore whether and how ESL teachers exercise agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Why are you being asked to be in this research study.

You are being asked to be in this study because you: (a) are currently employed as an Adult ESL instructor at the community college in North Carolina; (b) have a degree/certificate in TESOL; (c) have minimum of three years of teaching experience; and (d) work with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

What will happen if I take part in this study?

If you choose to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in three aspects of data collection over the course of one semester: 1) three face-to-face, semi-structured interviews, and 2) critical self-reflection journal writing, and 3) two classroom observations.

Your time commitment will be between 30 and 60 minutes in each interview. The interviews will be conducted at your convenience on the college campus or at other location of your preference. You will also receive a critical self-reflection prompt every two weeks over the course of one semester (ten in total) that will ask you to critically reflect on your teaching, classroom interaction, professional and personal experiences and challenges you experience while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. Each critical reflection will be completed using a shared Google Document. I will create a separate Google Document for each participant and give you access to your individual Google Document to complete your reflections. I will also observe two of your classes: one class period will be observed in the beginning of the semester, and the other in the end of the semester.

The project will not include participants' names, specific geographic locations, or institutional affiliations. Data of this research will be analyzed and stored in a secured, password protected place.

What benefits might I experience?

You will not benefit directly from being in this study. However, others might benefit because your participation in the study will help inform growing scholarly interest in language teacher agency work in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy. In addition, in return for their invaluable participation in this study, I will provide personally created culturally responsive classroom materials, point you to additional online resources, and provide additional instructional support as requested.

What risks might I experience?

There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this project. If you become upset by questions, you may stop at any time or choose not to answer a question.

How will my information be protected?

I plan to publish the results of this study. To protect your privacy I will not include any information that could identify you. All information about your participation, including your identity, is confidential. The following steps will be taken to ensure confidentiality: a) you will be assigned a pseudonym for de-identification purposes; b) all digital files will be secured with a password; and c) all data will be destroyed 3 years after the completion of this project.

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 may be needed as part of publishing my results. The data I share will NOT include information that could identify you.

Will I be paid for taking part in this study?

You will not be paid for being in this research project. This project offers no financial benefits for participation.

What are the costs of taking part in this study?

You will not have any costs for being in this project.

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. Even if you decide to be part of the study now, you may change your mind and stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer.

Who can answer my questions about this study and my rights as a participant?

For questions about this research, you may contact Anna Sanczyk, asanczyk@uncc.edu and faculty advisor Dr. Elizabeth R. Miller, ermiller@uncc.edu.

If you have 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)

Signature Date

Name and Signature of person obtaining consent Date

Appendix E: Interview Protocol



Cato College of Education
9201 University City Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001

Interview Protocol

INSTRUCTIONS: Good morning (afternoon). My name is Anna Sanczyk. Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. The purpose of this interview is to understand language teacher agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. There are no right or wrong or desirable or undesirable answers. I would like for you to feel comfortable with honestly saying how you think or feel in reaction to my questions.

TAPE RECORDER INSTRUCTIONS: With your permission, I will record our conversation. The purpose of this is so that I can get all the details, but at the same time be able to carry on an attentive conversation with you. I assure you that all your comments will remain confidential. I will be compiling a report which will contain all participants' comments without any direct reference to individuals.

CONSENT FORM INSTRUCTIONS: Before we get started, please take a few minutes to read this consent form (read and sign this consent form).

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Interview Questions

Interview 1
Tell me about your teaching background.
What made you want to become a teacher?
How would you describe your philosophy of teaching?
Tell me about your role as a teacher in teaching ELLs.
Tell me about your school, classroom, and students.
Tell me about a typical day at your school.
What experiences in your personal background, teacher preparation, and professional life contribute to how you teach?
How do you presently seek out ways to improve your teaching and classroom environment?
What do you know about culturally responsive pedagogy?
Tell me about what you think it means to be a culturally responsive teacher?
Interview 2
What do you do to meet the needs of each of the student in your classroom?
What do you do to learn about your students' backgrounds as well as their home and

community experiences?
What do you do to encourage a welcoming, respectful, and nurturing learning environment in your classroom?
How would you describe your classroom interactions with your students?
Have you taken initiatives to advocate for your diverse students? Tell me about them.
Describe your participation in the selection and development of curriculum you are currently using in your instruction?
How much control do you have over the selection of instructional materials?
How can teachers in your program negotiate what is taught in order to meet the needs of diverse ELLs?
Tell me about an incident that led you to take an action towards changing your teaching routine/prescribed curriculum in order to meets your students' needs.
How do you address the barriers students encounter in reaching academic success?
Interview 3
Tell me about the kinds of support your staff/administration offers in pursuing your teaching goals?
What barriers or pressures have you encountered in your efforts to accommodate to the needs of your diverse ELLs?
What is your perception on the efforts taken in your institution to meet the needs of diverse students?
How do your teaching beliefs intersect with current state and national reform efforts?
During your career, what educational issue or event has had the greatest impact, positive or negative, on your teaching diverse ELLs?
During your career, what political issue or event has the greatest impact, positive or negative, on your teaching diverse ELLs?
During your career, what social issue or event has the greatest impact, positive or negative, on your teaching diverse ELLs?
If you could make changes to your school or classroom environment, what would you do?
How has your perception of your teaching and your students changed over the course of critical self-reflection in the journal writing?
How has your understanding of yourself as a teacher shifted during critical self-reflection in the journal writing?

Thank the participant for his/her participation.

Appendix F: Critical Self-Reflection Protocol



Cato College of Education
9201 University City Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001

Critical Reflection Protocol

INSTRUCTIONS: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. The purpose of this critical reflection is to understand language teacher agency in promoting culturally responsive pedagogy while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. You will receive a critical self-reflection prompt every two weeks over the course of one semester (ten in total) that will ask you to critically reflect on your teaching, classroom interaction, professional and personal experiences and challenges you experience while teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. It is expected that you write a paragraph to answer the main prompt. Please remember there are no right or wrong or desirable or undesirable answers. In addition to the prompt question, you will also receive a follow-up question that refers to the previous response. This will allow for an on-going, open communication with you during their reflecting process. All the journal responses will be recorded on a Google Doc document that is shared with each of you. This will help me read each journal response regularly and sustain continuous communication with you.

Critical Self-Reflection Prompts

What is my cultural identity and history? How does my cultural identity/ background influence my work as a teacher with ELLs?
To what degree is my role as a teacher and my experiences different to the experiences and expertise of ELLs, and is there knowledge to be learned from my constituents?
How do I, as a teacher, situate myself in the education of others, and how do I negotiate the power structure in my school and class to allow students to feel supported?
How do I decide what I'm teaching and how I'm going to teach it? Are there any topics that I don't teach even though I believe they would be relevant to my students' needs, and why?
What challenges do I face as an adult ESL instructor (social, political, institutional, cultural, etc.)? How do I deal with these challenges?
How do my instructional materials connect to the students' experiences? To what extent do I question and engage with evaluating instructional materials to connect with the lived experiences of my ELLs?

How do I effectively use resources and community members to enhance students' learning about diversity? What are some specific activities I use in the classroom that address the complexities of diversity?
How do I build genuine relationships with students and foster classroom community? How can I reduce stereotyping and generalization of ELLs in teaching diverse learners?
After reading CRP tenets, have I incorporated CRP in my classroom so far? If yes, how have I done it? How confident do I feel about promoting CRP in my classroom? What difficulties have I experienced in embracing culturally responsive practices?
Reflect on the totality of the reflective experience of journaling. In what ways has this experience influenced my views on teaching ELLs? What aspects of the critical self-reflection process do I consider least/most beneficial? Why?

Thank the participant for his/her participation.

Appendix G: Observational Protocol

Observation Field Notes Template

Instructor's Name	
Observer's Name	
Date of Observation	
Time of Observation	
Setting	Room Number: Institution: Location: Classroom Arrangement:
Participants	Makeup of the students' present: Content being taught during the Observation: Role of the Observer:

Field Notes:	Observer's Comments:
<p style="text-align: center;">Activity:</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Observations:</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Observations:</p> <p>Time:</p> <p>Observations:</p> <p>Time observation concluded:</p> <p>Reflections following the observation:</p>	

Appendix H: Theme 1 Codebook

Categories	Codes	Raw Words/Phrases
Having International Connections	International Roots	my cultural identity is Swiss German, My families migrated here many years ago, I am a 3 rd generation American with European roots, My cultural identity influences my work in that I know my roots were from another place also, My families migrated here many years ago but still have a lot of the same cultural values
	International Partners	I met my husband who was Spanish, it really helped him learn English, my experience with my husband, because I considered switching to Esl in high school, my experience with my husband being a language learner in the United States , I think that seeing what my husband went through learning English, And I dated a person from another country. really impacted my teaching, um, was I dated a, um, an immigrant
	International Friends	some of our friends and neighbors were Jewish, Catholic, and Greek; One of my friends was of Cuban ancestry and we had neighbors who had lived in Africa, I had a lot of international friends, like, you know, pretty much my whole life, feeling for international people, meeting people from different places
	International Traveling	rural Thailand, Japan, China, Spain, Germany, I traveled a lot. South America, a variety of countries, some work and I was going to go to China. go overseas, I lived in a few countries, lots of little lessons in other countries, So you mean like your travel experience, travel interaction, living, working in school systems, uh, knowing that in other countries, studied abroad in Spain, , I had the opportunity to go to Thailand, get accepted into that China program, work in China, My parents enjoyed traveling, so my sister and I were able to experience being in other countries and meeting internationals, I've travelled and taught in two other countries (Canada and Italy), I moved from the South to New England and Quebec, I was interested in traveling and being able to travel and live in a place

Seeing Through Your Eyes	Sharing Own Experiences	by sharing from my heart and allowing them to share from their hearts authentically, sharing information with students, then we will take that information to the classrooms and let them know about it, I share stories about different cultures, different casts, different religions, different everything where there's a lot of diversity, we often share information, general sharing of culture
	Validating Students' Experiences	respect and empathy for people and to respect people's differences and their opinions, um, and stay focused on what the main thing that we're discussing all the time, having a discussion and the discussion seems to be getting heated based on people's opinions and, and their opinions based on their experience; people have opinions and you don't have to agree with the opinion, but I want you to understand where they're coming from and it seems to work out, So I learned more about their families, about their work, about what some of their beliefs are, the students tend to bring in their opinion or the differences from their opinion if they lived in their country, I always try to show my students different perspectives
	Transformative Discussions	inspirational, um, sayings and things for the students to be inspired, do couple scenario learning where, we had discussion on controversial issues where people are conflicted between religion, politics and daily living and marriage and things of those stories, There were a lot of questions and comparisons made to other faiths, Of course there still is stereotyping sometimes that comes out. When that happens I try to carefully talk about it and ask the student themselves what they think, They also learn about the struggles of others including slavery, discrimination, the fight for freedom and justice, the right to vote, and gender equality. Many can personally relate to these issues and understand that, in many cases, these are issues that we still struggle with today

Teaching as Agentive Expedition	Exploring Own Dispositions	so I think the bias that people have, I think the, um, the, I'm biased, So there's the implicit bias that they think all the ESL students are Spanish, how students can learn when we talk about that diversity, bias, all those complex issues that we just talked about, Some arrive as refugees with nothing except hope and others enjoy the privileges of wealth, I have not had those same experiences and can only understand their lives through observation, communication and reflection. Regardless of their experience, every student has something to share and I learn from all of them, It has encouraged me to try to always consider where the students are coming from, It's also made me look at my own ways or biases in teaching or thinking, I try my best to listen and learn but not having lived it, it can be difficult to understand everything
	Inquisitive Teachers	I ask a lot of questions to try to understand what their experiences, I often ask students, individually, if they are happy in their groups, I ask them in multiple ways. I'm always like taking in new information, what can I do differently?, can I add something or grow from this, like I do trial and error, I also want to go to the professional developments; So I've been trying to do different techniques each day; I would go to people's houses and ed centers and different things, it's a lot of constant checking in and, um, getting feedback from the students in different ways to find out if they're getting it or not, I can ask questions, um, sometimes about their backgrounds, I always learn from my students. I believe we can learn from each other. They bring new ideas, different experiences, different education and I have learned a lot from my students. They bring a lot to the table.
	Creating Diverse Materials	because I like to create materials, we're in a pretty good place now for materials, making decisions about content, curriculum, materials, I have to bring in a lot of my outside materials, have more materials that I use, a high degree of influence in the

		curriculum, supplement with materials, 'missing' piece of information to be supplied, consistently created my own materials, Instructional materials are contextual and need to be chosen carefully and adapted to backgrounds and capabilities of students
	Prioritizing Students' Goals	I put together just like a learning like questionnaire, they would tell me kind of what they need, needs assessment. they really need it or they don't want to learn about that, they would rather have speaking and like real life situations, engage students with the particular texts so you know that there will be engaged, important to kind of assess the needs; prepare them for it, what they would like to do
	Adjusting Instruction	then adjust my instruction and class management to produce positive outcomes from the students and myself, experience to adjust my lesson's level, adapting my teaching style accordingly, modify the textbook to fit my students' needs, I've had to adjust, I have to change the way I teach or adjust my teaching based on what happened, So just adjusting that like, okay, we should switch gears
Bringing Outside In	Promoting Community Resources	I bring in different exercises, um, that are academic but somewhat applied to the community, and learning more about community resources, Creating this sense of 'community' is very valuable, at the community, at the refugee center, at the senior centers, the international learning center, I know Catholic charities, communicate with refugee support services, refugee support services, together a lot of events and activities, the senior center puts together a lot of different activities
	Inviting Students' Food	Inviting students to share food from their countries is another way to create interest along with a sense of community, And people bring food from their countries, we have little celebrations and people bring food and we learn about each other's food and try different types of, um, dishes and things

	Going on Field Trips	We went to the public library, uh, talked about library cards., a little field trip downtown around Christmas time, we walked by museums, we went to the, is it the IMAX, we watched a movie, They were totally fascinated by the IMAX, we were free to kind of explore it; to the park, We have toured museums, libraries, watched documentaries at the cinema about pandas in China and about African landscapes and taken in many sites as part of our all-encompassing walking tour
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Appendix I: Theme 2 Codebook

Categories	Codes	Raw Words/Phrases
Paving the Way for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy	Attentive Listener	I think of as a listener and listening, I try my best to listen and learn, listening to students, listen, I try my best to listen and learn but not having lived it, I do a lot of listening. I listen and then try to find solutions or teach based on needs. I try to help the students feel supported by listening and responding with suggestions or teaching
	Flexible Facilitator	I'm a facilitator, but it's better when they're doing more of the talking, I think my role is to encourage them, encourage them, helping them realize that they want to learn, more facilitating their learning, I'm roaming around a bit, teacher can give support and then step back, I am careful not to be the center of attention
	Language Teaching for Communication	I'm deeply involved with the language, I'm dealing with language, helping them better communicate, Communication, everything, I'm going to enable students and their expression ability to express, trying to inspire people and giving them tools to communicate, I really just use like a community cause I've approach where they talk, I get at creating an authentic communicative environment
	Enriching and Positive Learning Environment	it's a welcoming place, Everybody is always interacting, getting them used to working together in groups, I interact with students, I always think about it later, like how my students interact and how I with them, we've been together for a long time, it's more like a community, way to talk about that is a discussion again, like either in groups or as a whole class and for some, very content to converse with others, be enriching for most of the students, it's life enriching, I hope for the, for the students in rewarding, value setting, exercise has some value for the students, pretty good environment, it's pretty comfortable, it's a welcoming place, classroom environment is welcoming, an environment and atmosphere where their efforts can flourish

	Effective Teacher Preparation	that was key to my teaching, a methodology course, take some courses, My professors were great and I got a lot of the thing I think it did for me the most. It opened my mind a little bit to like what we're going to talk about, diverse learners, I really enjoyed the program and that really helped me learn to love Esl as well, had a positive experience in your master's program, masters is in Tesol K-12, UNC UC to study my masters in Tesol, help has helped me a lot that the class, the methodology class, instructor was very engaging, there's a methodology course and TESOL
Embracing Culturally Responsive Practices	Cultural Sensitivity	being sensitive to where students come from, about trying to get to know them and understanding their background and using what they know, their background knowledge, I'm thinking of being sensitive, I'm sensitive to the students' backgrounds and using that to help them succeed, And then I try to be like more sensitive, like, okay, that I see their point, I see what they're saying
	Genuine Relationships	to build genuine relationships with students and foster classroom community, I really tried to make a connection with the students and that comes from my personal experience, I try to really genuinely connect with the students, main belief about teaching is to first have that relationship with the students, consider all of my relationships genuine
	Empathy and Understanding	caring also places teachers in an ethical, emotional, mean I feel a caring toward them. I feel caring like genuinely, understand everything, trying to be empathetic, I am a very compassionate person though and feel deeply for other people and their experiences, Having experienced this to a slight degree, I am empathetic to the needs of an ELL and try to think of ways to make language and life skills learning not only useful, but empowering and enjoyable

	Diversity Knowledge Base	so many countries, from South, lot of varied languages and backgrounds, everyone has a name from every culture, Burma, Central America, students from different countries, different levels, we have different cultural perspectives from my students, many different countries, I got to about 40; it's a range of backgrounds. It's a range of students, their fascinating backgrounds
	Diverse Curriculum	because I like to create materials, making decisions about content, curriculum, materials, I have to bring in a lot of my outside materials, have more materials that I use, a high degree of influence in the curriculum, supplement with materials, 'missing' piece of information to be supplied, consistently created my own materials, Students must be able to relate to the ideas presented and be capable of interacting with the materials and delivery. I supplement with topics that are relevant to student's lives, try to make the lessons in the material relevant, teach topics and lessons that are practical and that they can actually use a lot of, a lot of survival type English, I include lessons that are relevant, I supplement with topics that are relevant to student's lives, Instructional materials are contextual and need to be chosen carefully and adapted to backgrounds and capabilities of students
	Giving Students a Voice	Students are empowered by the continuous communication and sharing information in a authentic manner, sharing their knowledge, experiences, cultural norms and personal feelings about many subjects and ideas, allowing students to respectfully talk about many things, I try to carefully talk about it and ask the student themselves what they think, I try to teach from different perspectives and learn from my students, I think that incorporating different perspectives in each thematic unit helps my students to understand diversity better, I think that incorporating different perspectives in each thematic unit helps my

		students to understand diversity better, generalization I always try to show my students different perspectives and let them share theirs, I try to teach from different perspectives and learn from my students
	Critical Literacy	engaged thinking, thinking in English, critical, very careful in understanding what an author is saying, but I want them to experience what it's like to read something that's like southern and new to them and that they're responsible for somehow understanding it and answering questions, I support my liberalizing, you know, time to pursue their own broad thinking and open it up to writing and wherever we go with that, encourage students to think critically about knowledge, social issues and media, I would hope different degrees of critical thinking
	Transformative Learning	challenge teaching many ideals, subject areas and language norms, I use historical resources that highlight diversity and introduce bias intent, common stereotypes and discussing the actual facts that diminishes or eliminate a negative perception, help foster diverse perceptions and help realign realities away from a false narrative, inspirational, um, sayings and things for the students to be inspired, do couple scenario learning where, we had discussion on controversial issues where people are conflicted between religion, politics and daily living and marriage and things of those stories, There were a lot of questions and comparisons made to other faiths, Of course there still is stereotyping sometimes that comes out, I try to carefully talk about it and ask the student themselves what they think, They also learn about the struggles of others including slavery, discrimination, the fight for freedom and justice, the right to vote, and gender equality. Many can personally relate to these issues and understand that, in many cases, these are issues that we still struggle with today

	Affirming Multilingualism	one of the other ways I help students feel supported is the use of their L1. I encourage the students to compare English to their L1 when they are struggling with vocabulary or reading comprehension. I think this helps with negotiating the power structure as well, because the students know that their culture and L1 is important too
	Bridging Communities	I bring, I bring in different exercises that are academic but somewhat applied to the community, and learning more about community resources, Creating this sense of 'community' is very valuable, at the community, at the refugee center, at the senior centers, the international learning center, I know Catholic charities, communicate with refugee support services, refugee support services, together a lot of events and activities, the senior center puts together a lot of different activities
Culturally Responsive Teaching Slipping Through the Cracks	Avoiding Sensitive Topics	some topics I may not teach are really controversial topics like religion, I do not shy away from teaching any given topic unless it is a subject that I think would lend itself to highlighting some students' life experiences in a negative way, This too is a highly sensitive and personal issue, I do not bring up in class by way of discussion is immigration
	Staying Politically Neutral	I said, um, my, without getting too much into immigration, I don't really like politics, so I'm, therefore what happens with me is I really don't pay attention to how much, which is like, therefore it doesn't really affect me too much, it kind of keeps me more neutral because I'm a frayed, but I think it helps me to stay more neutral, I am not a real political person so I stay very neutral
	Deficit View on Education	some of them don't have much formal education and that can be challenging, ELLs are older and disabled and come from cultures where their education level is zero or close to zero, and the language they

		<p>speak has no connection to English. Naturally they are not going to go out and practice English, the fact that many of them do, did not have any education in their own, um, countries. And there are basically, many of them are just old farmers. And so teaching them a language at this point in their lives is, uh, you know, is the probably the biggest challenge</p>
	Conscious Teaching Dilemma	<p>it's college and career, but not everybody's going to go to college, I would take the, uh, I would take college and career readiness and refashioned it in some way, This is a challenge and it is always necessary to stay in tune with our goals as a class and what is happening at any given moment, teaching to what they need to learn their interests and what will help them succeed in their, either the career or the, where, whatever they're doing, the career focus, it's college and career, but not everybody's going to go to college, I would take the, uh, I would take college and career readiness and refashioned it in some way, This is a challenge and it is always necessary to stay in tune with our goals as a class and what is happening at any given moment</p>
	Lack of Professional Development	<p>ESL staff, you know, faculty here would benefit from a professional development that would be on the subject, No, I think it's a, it's a, it's a good thing and it would be valuable. I think theirs would be some objection, We don't really have a lot of those so or professional development.</p>

Appendix J: Theme 3 Codebook

Categories	Codes	Raw Words/Phrases
Institutional Pressures Cause Imbalance	Constant Administrative Burdens	sometimes I suppose administration, they have an idea about schedule or course offerings that haven't been discussed enough with, with teachers or we're not on the same page, that's sometimes a takes away from probably what students need, I've had probably 10 supervisors maybe over quite a few years and you know, I do think though that sometimes the staffing, We have people who are in the wrong levels. Um, so that's a kind of local administration, We forget it is about the students. I think administration forgets this in a profound way, definitely schedule, it's a lot of work. It's hard work, , but everybody has a busy schedule, Because of the schedule and the schedule, seeing like the challenges, the schedule, your workload, Sometimes a lot of paperwork, like a lot of data that we have to see, okay, they have this many hours and this score, so we need to send them here, things like that
	Overwhelming Power Structures	changes in government and things clearly gets in the way, and we have to get, we have our testing, which is tied to funding, I think there's good funding, programs that are sometimes temporary that are grant driven, like working in America, could lose all the funding for, conflicts a little bit with funding and making sure that we reached 39% have moved up two levels by this time, and we have to get, we have our testing, which is tied to funding, talk for a second about testing, Testing didn't dictate in large measure and what I did, although you hear it's all about testing, it's not all about testing, for testing and things like that because we have to do listening testing that costs us test and the cost is reading is we're starting this semester new, books are aligned to the Casas test, the pressures of testing, pressure to have everybody move up, And the, the immigration office has said that's it. Go home, you failed. So I think the are making, it may be making it more difficult to uh, and you know, keep the numbers of citizens new citizens down. And sometimes

		<p>that affects. So then we have to sort of get the teachers I think need that I had to work harder to, to get the students up to snuff, both in speaking English and also in their writing. just things like what I said about people pass a failing the tests for things that are, um, you know, there's been some changes coming down and that and, and so sometimes that affects would affect the way I teach. I think the election of Donald Trump to president probably has affected the way I teach. I'm only in the sense that, um, maybe I work a little harder to, to help them to try and make sure that they can become citizens. Because I think it's becoming more difficult because of the political environment</p>
	<p>Recognized Curriculum Tension</p>	<p>teaching to what they need to learn their interests and what will help them succeed in their, either the career or the, where, whatever they're doing, the career focus I think is, is government driven, it's college and career, but not everybody's going to go to college, I would take the, uh, I would take college and career readiness and refashioned it in some way, This is a challenge and it is always necessary to stay in tune with our goals as a class and what is happening at any given moment, teaching to what they need to learn their interests and what will help them succeed in their, either the career or the, where, whatever they're doing, the career focus I think is, is government driven, it's college and career, but not everybody's going to go to college, I would take the, uh, I would take college and career readiness and refashioned it in some way, This is a challenge and it is always necessary to stay in tune with our goals as a class and what is happening at any given moment, We're warehouse skills to people who are not working in warehouses and we have, by the way, a lot of students who are not warehouse there, they were professionals in their country. They're doctors, they're lawyers, they're scientists. They need a different kind of English</p>

Shortages Stimulate Resilience	Revamping Resources	Limited	I think using videos might be more, I think more could be done through the use of videos. Um, but you know, where I teach at sailboat, I know we're going to have anything there and there's nothing on the walls. I would use a much more variety of resources like newspapers. I would use a much broader range of resources to help me, And, um, like this computer over here is sorta connected but it's not connected. want to be able to incorporate more technology, Sometimes it can be difficult because I do not have as many resources as I would like, I would like to have more resources to better meet the needs of my students, because I do not have as many resources as I would like, No one text book can meet the needs of all students in a class. Textbooks usually include very basic topics such as personal information, housing, work, money, food, etc. Instructional materials are always a challenge since there is no 'one size fits all' textbook, scarcity of resources, I also supplement the textbook material with other books and online resources, I have to provide many of the materials for my class, I find ways to supplement it with articles, videos, and music that they can connect with, Supplemental activities like this help me to modify the textbook to fit my students' needs, If I find that the text does not show different perspectives, I find other resources to supplement it, So I found different videos on YouTube and readings that showed a more diverse perspective of medicine
	Building Community and Out	Diverse Inside	mentioned about building those relationships with the community partners were organizations that they can provide that right answer, interaction with community organizations. I know we have some contact with, uh, our community classes, but probably could be just more tied in to some of those, organizations, um, that it can be good resources for students, they have been few, like the world refugee day. Uh, they had some celebrations in January. They have those birthday celebrations, put together a lot of

		<p>events and activities. then we will take that information to the classrooms and let them know about it, annual birthday party, the senior center puts together a lot of different activities, Some of them have to do with celebrating holidays or special occasions. might be arts and crafts activities, field trips, things like that, a lot of different types of activities here at the senior center, if there's some culture things going on in the community, I put it on the board. I let the students know that this is available, . I feel like we do a good job connecting people, keeping the lines of communication, open building community</p>
Adversities Encourage Action	Marginality Through Significant Other	<p>I met my husband who was Spanish, it really helped him learn English, my experience with my husband, because I considered switching to Esl in high school, my experience with my husband being a language learner in the United States , I think that seeing what my husband went through learning English, I went through the immigration process with my husband, And I had never dated anybody from another country before. So until him, and it just so happened that we were crossing paths, So for me, what really impacted my teaching, um, was I dated a, um, an immigrant, I had a lot of international friends, like, you know, pretty much my whole life. So I had a feeling for international people, um, and sensitivity, fell in love with my wife who is from Colombia, he other life changing experience I had was meeting my husband in Spain, Seeing how some Americans treated my husband for not speaking perfect English opened my eyes to the growing prejudice, I can personally relate to these issues and understand that, in many cases, these are issues that we still struggle with today</p>
	Feeling of Outsider	<p>pretty individual I don't feel like there's like a whole, like a lot of collaboration, have more time to collaborate with the other teachers, but I find the time to have someone come in. I think that would be beneficial not only for me but for everybody, pretty individual I don't</p>

		<p>feel like there's like a whole, like a lot of collaboration, have more time to collaborate with the other teachers, but I find the time to have someone come in. I think that would be beneficial not only for me but for everybody, in the past, we've been our own little world that's sorts of, to a much less degree. I think we're working now more toward connecting closer to the other parts of the college, I would have more cohesiveness throughout the department so that you have an actual team of people working together so you don't feel like you're out on an island working all by yourself</p>
	Empowering Relationships	<p>Having experienced this to a slight degree, I try to think of ways to make language and life skills learning not only useful, but empowering and enjoyable, every person has their own individuality, and this should serve to draw another's attention, heart of planning, and often it is tied with individual difference in background and culture, I really tried to make a connection with the students and that comes from my personal experience, I try to really genuinely connect with the students, main belief about teaching is to first have that relationship with the students, consider all of my relationships genuine, and we're just sitting around just asking them about their family and things like that, I think the best part of teaching is the relationship part and getting to know them, we make it very personal and I get to know them actually what their job interests is and things like that, I connect as much with them, I was able to connect with the students of all of the students from all over the world, there is a cultural connection, So that's how I was able to connect. we're doing small talk, dialogue, greeting the students. I greet every student every day, no matter what time they come in. I make sure every day that I greet each student. 20 minutes socializing where they're socializing, they're greeting each other, they're talking, they're eating. Um, they're asking me questions maybe about what happened yesterday.</p>

	Avoiding Politics for a Reason	I said, um, my, without getting too much into immigration, I don't really like politics, so I'm, therefore what happens with me is I really don't pay attention to how much, which is like, therefore it doesn't really affect me too much, it kind of keeps me more neutral because I'm a frayed, but I think it helps me to stay more neutral, I am not a real political person so I stay very neutral, This too is a highly sensitive and personal issue, I do not bring up in class by way of discussion is immigration
	Making a Conscious Choice of Change	I kind of bounce around from one location to another and then sometimes I tutor in between, I took opportunities where I would do tutoring, where I would, um, they had things in my church, I tutor students who want to learn more about advanced job skills, I have been setting goals for the future, and I am encouraged to continue my studies and study my PhD, I was admitted to PhD, I transitioned from teaching to professional development, I left teaching
Enriching Experiences Improve Understanding	Traveling and Language Learning Opened My Eyes	my most influential experience with other cultures and diversity began when I studied abroad in Spain my sophomore year of college, Living in Spain, I was living in Avila, which is not a big city like Madrid or Barcelona, I also traveled to several others countries around Europe, One of the experiences in Spain, Throughout my six months in Spain, When I had to leave Spain, I spent time living outside of the United States, My parents enjoyed traveling, so my sister and I were able to experience being in other countries and meeting internationals, Through travel, language and study abroad opportunities, I experienced what it feels like to be in a very different environment and be surrounded by people different from me, I was exposed to others of other religious and cultural backgrounds since I lived in a larger city, These diverse experiences have greatly influenced my work as a teacher with ELLs since it helps me to better understand what it might be like to walk in their shoes, not

		understanding the language, culture, or how to navigate a very complicated system
	Enabling Critical Reflection	I will try to plan materials more deliberately recognizing that, it provides a lot of details that makes you just think and reflect on, I think it's made me become even more aware and more sensitive to them, And I think this is really helped me to try to look at their point of view more, more, This week, reading the article "Preparing for Culturally Responsive Teaching", has helped me to focus on the many points of CRP, It has stirred me to think about the topics that surround me every day and to take a tack at times that I perhaps spent less direct time looking at than I might have, Sometimes there are gaps and it becomes a learning moment for future classes. Those moments I believe are the greatest benefit from self-reflection

Appendix K: Word Frequency Search Level 3 List

Word	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
know	2159	2.53	acknowledge, acknowledgement, cognizant, experience, experiences, experiment, intent, intention, intentionally, know, knowing, knowledge, knowledgeable, knows, learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, live, lived, lively, lives, living, love, loved, loving, recognize, recognized, recognizing, wise
see	1720	2.14	assure, attend, attendance, attended, attending, catch, check, checked, checking, consider, considered, considering, considers, control, date, dated, dating, determination, determining, encounter, encountered, encountering, encounters, escorting, examined, experience, experiences, experiment, figure, figured, figures, figuring, find, finding, findings, hear, hearing, insurance, insurer, interpret, interpretation, interpreted, interpreters, learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, look, looked, looking, looks, meet, meeting, meetings, meets, picture, pictures, picturing, project, projects, realization, realize, realized, realizing, regard, regards, see, seeing, sees, understand, understanding, understands, view, views, visit, visited, visual, visualization, visualizing, visuals, watch, watched, watches, watchful, watching
get	1387	1.75	acquire, amazed, amazing, arrest, arrivals, arrive, arrived, arriving, baffling, become, becomes, becoming, begin, beginning, begins, bring, bringing, brings, capture, catch, cause, caused, causes, causing, come, comes, coming, convey, develop, developed, developing, development, developments, draw, drawing, drive, drives, driving, engendered, experience, experiences, experiment, father, find, finding, findings, fix, fixed, generate, generation, generations, get, gets, getting, going, grow, growing, let, lets, letting, make, makes, making, mother, mothers, mystifying, pose, produce, puzzled, received, start, started, starting, starts, stick, sticks, stimulants, stimulate, suffered, take, takes, taking
going	1254	1.28	belong, break, breaking, breaks, cracking, cracks, department, departments, extended, extends, fail, failed, failing, fit, fits, function, functional, functionality, going, last, lasts, lead, leading, leads, leave, leaves, leaving, live, lived, lively, lives, living, loss, move, moved, moving, offer, offered, offering, offerings, offers, pass, passed, passing, release, releasing, run, running, sound, sounded, sounds, spelled, spelling, start, started, starting, starts, survival, survive, tour, toured, travel, traveled, traveling, travelled, turn, turned, turns, work, worked, working, works
teaching	1189	1.25	educate, educated, educating, education, educational, educator, instructing, instruction, instructional, instructions, learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, pedagogy, teach, teaches, teaching
class	1079	1.22	category, class, classes, course, courses, division, families, family, form, formed, forming, forms, grade, grades, grading, separate, separated, separately, sort, sorts, year, years
students	1016	1.64	student, students, students', students'
make	1015	0.56	build, building, builds, cause, caused, causes, causing, clear, clearly, constitutionality, constructed, construction, cook, create, created, creates, creating, draw, drawing, earn, earning, establish, established, fix, fixed, form, formed, forming, forms, gain, gained, gains, give, gives, giving, hit, hits, hitting, hold, make, makes, making, name, names, pissed, preparation, prepare, prepared, preparing, produce, reach, reached, reaching, readiness, ready, realization, realize, realized, realizing, score, scores, shit, take, takes, taking, throw

work	919	0.54	act, acting, acts, bring, bringing, brings, employ, employment, exercise, exercises, form, formed, forming, forms, function, functional, functionality, influence, influenced, influences, make, makes, making, mold, plants, play, played, playing, plays, process, processes, processing, run, running, shape, shaped, solve, solved, studied, studies, study, studying, turn, turned, turns, work, worked, working, workplace, works
take	903	0.42	accept, acceptable, acceptance, accepted, accepting, acquire, admit, admitted, adopt, assume, bring, bringing, brings, carried, carry, carrying, charter, choose, chooses, choosing, claim, conduct, conducting, conducts, consider, considered, considering, considers, convey, deal, dealing, deals, direct, directed, directing, direction, directions, directly, drive, drives, driving, engage, engaged, engagement, engaging, exact, exactly, fill, filled, filling, guide, guided, guides, guiding, hold, issue, issues, lead, leading, leads, pick, picking, read, reading, readings, reads, remove, return, select, selected, selecting, selection, shoot, shooting, strike, submit, take, takes, taking, train, trained, training, trainings, trains, win
good	898	0.50	adept, beneficial, depend, dependent, depending, depends, effective, effectively, estimation, full, good, goodness, healthy, honest, honestly, honor, honored, near, nearly, practical, practice, practices, practicing, proficiency, proficient, respect, respected, respectful, respectfully, respecting, respective, respects, right, rights, safe, secure, security, serious, seriously, skill, skills, sound, sounded, sounds
feel	851	0.52	belief, beliefs, experience, experiences, experiment, feel, feeling, feelings, feels, find, finding, findings, finger, flavor, look, looked, looking, looks, notion, notions, opinion, opinions, sense, senses, tone, touch, touched, touching
need	836	0.59	ask, asked, asking, asks, demand, demands, involve, involved, involvement, involves, involving, motivate, motivated, motivates, motivating, motivations, motivator, necessarily, need, needed, needing, needs, require, required, requirement, requirements, requires, take, takes, taking
want	829	0.94	absent, desires, lack, miss, missed, misses, missing, missing', need, needed, needing, needs, needy, precious, private, require, required, requirement, requirements, requires, want, wanted, wanting, wants, wish, wishes
learn	750	0.88	acquire, acquisition learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, memorable, read, reading, readings, reads, scholarships, studied, studies, study, studying
talk	587	0.78	dialogue, dialogues, dialoguing, lecture, lectures, lecturing, mouth, negotiate, negotiated, negotiating, negotiation, peach, sing, speak, speaking, speaks, talk, talked, talking, talks, verbalize, verbally
different	557	0.88	conflict, conflicted, conflicting', conflicts, differ, difference, differences, different, differently, differing, otherwise, unlike
come	547	0.38	amount, approach, approachable, approaches, approaching, become, becomes, becoming, come, comes, coming, decorated, decorating, decorations, derived, fair, fairly, fairness, fall, falling, falls, fares, follow, followed, following, follows, number, numbers, occurred, seem, seemed, seems, totality, totally

think	518	0.77	believe, believed, believes, consider, considered, considering, considers, guess, guessing, imagine, intelligence, intelligent, intend, intended, mean, meaning, means, reason, reasons, recall, recalling, remember, remembered, suppose, supposed, think, thinking, thought, thoughtful, thoughts
things	481	0.75	matter, matters, thing, things
use	469	0.55	applied, applies, apply, applying, employ, employment, enjoy, enjoyable, enjoyed, enjoying, exercise, exercises, function, functional, functionality, habit, manipulate, manipulation, practical, practice, practices, practicing, purpose, purposely, purposes, role, roles, usage, use, used, useful, using, utilize, victim
question	459	0.71	head, headed, heads, inquire, inquiry, inquisitive, interview, interviews, motions, question, questionable, questioning, questions, wonder, wondered, wonderful, wondering
help	416	0.52	assist, assistance, assistant, assisted, available, facilitate, facilitates, facilitating, facilitator, facilitators, help, helped, helpful, helping, helping', helps, portion, serve, service, services, serving, support, supported, supporting, supportive, supports
tell	399	0.36	assure, distinguish, narrative, order, ordered, ordering, recount, relate, related, relates, relating, relational, relations, relative, relatively, relatives, reveal, revealed, saying, sayings, separate, separated, separately, several, severe, sing, state, stated, states, tell, telling, tells
people	397	0.64	people
cultural	370	0.50	civil, cultural, culturally, culture, cultures, ethnic, ethnicities, ethnicity, finish, finished, finishing, polish, political, politically, politics
understand	356	0.40	agreement, apprehensive, clear, clearly, comprehensibility, comprehension, comprehensive, intelligence, intelligent, interpret, interpretation, interpreted, interpreters, perceive, perceived, perceiving, read, reading, readings, reads, reason, reasons, translate, translation, understand, understanding, understands
teacher	335	0.54	instructor, instructors, teacher, teachers, teachers'
kind	327	0.51	form, formed, forming, forms, kind, kindness, kinds, sort, sorts, variety
personal	286	0.43	individual, individuality, individualized, individually, individuals, person, personable, personal, personalities, personality, personally, portrayed, pose, somebody, someone
language	284	0.38	language, language', languages, lyrics, speech, terminology, word, words
community	280	0.41	communicate, communicated, communicating, communication, communicative, communities, community, community', convey, national, nationalities, nationality, nations, pass, passed, passing
sometimes	270	0.42	former, formerly, old, olds, sometime, sometimes
little	253	0.37	little, short, slight, slighted, small
classroom	250	0.40	classroom, classrooms
time	249	0.42	clip, clock, multiple, sentence, sentences, time, timely, times, timing
something	231	0.37	something, somethings

just	182	1.39	bare, barely, exact, exactly, fair, fairly, fairness, good, goodness, hard, just, justice, justifiably, merely, right, rights, simply
one	149	0.52	one, ones, single, singling
part	148	0.42	break, breaking, breaks, component, components, constituents, contribute, contributed, contributions, department, departments, divide, division, function, functional, functionality, leave, leaves, leaving, office, officers, part, parts, percentage, piece, pieces, portion, region, regions, role, roles, section, separate, separated, separately, share, shared, sharing, split, start, started, starting, starts, voice
way	145	0.37	agencies, agency, direct, directed, directing, direction, directions, directly, manner, mean, meaning, means, modes, path, paths, room, rooms, style, styles, way, ways
speaker	144	2.33	speaker, speakers, verbalize, verbally
well	136	0.33	advantage, advantageous, comfort, comfortability, comfortable, consideration, considerations, easily, good, goodness, health, intimate, well
try	128	0.47	attempt, effort, efforts, essay, examined, hear, hearing, sample, seek, seeking, stress, stressed, stressful, taste, test, testing, tests, tried, tries, try, trying
okay	125	0.37	alright, approval, fine, okay
lot	110	0.35	bunch, circle, circles, circumstances, deal, dealing, deals, distribute, dozen, draw, drawing, fortunate, fortunately, hat, lot, lots, luck, messed, mountain, much, plenty, portion, pot, score, scores, set, sets, setting, setting', settings, stack, ton, tons
yeah	86	0.62	yeah
now	78	0.53	direct, directed, directing, direction, directions, directly, immediate, immediately, now, nowadays, present, presentation, presentations, presented, presenting, presently, presents, today
really	72	0.22	actual, actually, genuine, genuinely, real, really, truly
even	58	0.19	equal, equality, equally, equals, even, evening, evenings, level, levels, regular, regularly, still, tie, tied, ties, tying, yet

Appendix L: Word Frequency Search Level 4 List

Word	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
change	8610	1.28	access, acclimate, accommodate, acquire, adapt, adaptation, add, addition, address, adjust, adopt, advance, affect, age, align, alternate, appreciate, appreciation, approach, approaching, assimilate, assist, assume, attrition, back, become, beginning, better, black, block, blue, blur, break, breaking, bring, bringing, bubble, buckle, build, burn, call, calm, camp, career, carry, catch, change, changed, changes, changing, charge, check, circle, clarify, cleaning, clear, close, closure, cloud, code, color, combination, combine, come, comfort, coming, compare, complete, completion, concentrate, conform, confusion, connection, cook, cool, correct, correction, corrupt, cover, cracking, crossing, culture, cup, curve, customize, cut, cutting, damage, death, decide, delivery, descent, develop, development, difference, dish, disorder, division, doctor, dose, dot, double, draw, dress, drive, driving, drop, dry, dwindle, dynamic, ease, eat, edit, elaborate, empty, enable, encounter, end, ending, enhance, enrich, enrichment, equal, even, exchange, exchanges, expand, expense, experience, fail, fall, fatigue, felt, figure, fill, filling, find, finish, fit, fix, flood, flow, fly, focus, following, form, format, fortify, foundation, founding, freeze, full, gain, gather, gear, gel, get, glass, going, gradient, green, grow, guy, habit, hack, hang, hat, heat, help, hit, hurt, ice, icebreaker, immersion, immigration, impact, improve, improvement, inclination, inclusion, incorporate, increase, inform, infuse, initiative, ink, inspiration, institution, integrate, interrupt, involve, journey, jump, key, kill, know, labor, let, level, lift, light, limit, line, live, loosen, lose, loss, lower, make, map, march, market, mat, match, maximize, melt, minimize, mix, mixture, mobile, modify, mold, move, movement, narrow, negate, nick, nod, number, opening, organization, orient, overflow, parallel, pass, passage, passing, people, perfect, perfection, phenomenon, piece, pitching, play, point, polish, pollution, prejudice, preparation, prepare, process, produce, progress, promote, provide, purple, purse, push, raise, reach, reaching, readjust, ready, realign, realize, recommend, redouble, reduce, reform, register, reinforce, relax, release, relief, relocation, replacement, replacing, resolve, resume, return, reverse, riding, right, roll, root, round, run, running, scale, scroll, separate, service, set, shade, shape, shift, shifted, shifts, shock, shrink, sitting, size, slide, sliver, slow, socialize, soften, speed, split, spot, spotlight, spring, square, stage, standing, start, stay, steady, step, stew, still, stimulate, stop, stretch, strike, stuff, sub, submit, subtract, surf, surprise, sweep, switch, switched, switching, sync, tack, take, teach, tense, test, thin, think, tie, time, tip, tone, top, touch, transcribe, transfer, transferred, transformed, transition, translate, translation, transportation, travel, traveling, treat, trouble, true, try, tune, turn, union, updating, upgrade, upset, utilize, varied, variety, vary, varying, verbalize, visit, walk, walking, wane, warm, wash, waste, water, weaken, wear, weather, weld, white, wind, work, yellow, zero, zoom

community	5505	1.21	account, acknowledge, addition, address, advise, agent, alert, appeal, apply, ask, author, bare, begin, book, break, call, canary, carry, cat, challenge, channels, chant, chat, chatter, check, claim, clap, clarify, clock, coach, comment, common, communicate, communicated, communicating, communication, communicative, communities, community, community', contact, continue, converse, convey, cover, cut, day, debate, deliver, demand, demonstrate, describe, develop, dictate, direct, discuss, drill, drone, educate, email, exact, excuse, expect, explain, express, expressive, fence, finger, fluency, get, give, grass, greet, ground, guest, hack, hall, hold, house, hum, indicate, inform, inquire, interpret, interview, introduce, invite, issue, joke, journalist, key, kid, learn, lecture, lens, level, , liaison, lie, , line, link, lower, luce, mail, manifest, masters, measure, medium, message, minimize, mouth, narrative, national, nationalities, nationality, nations, neighborhood, network, nod, nonverbal, note, order, orient, pace, page, pass, passed, passing, pay, phone, place, point, porter, post, pray, prepare, prescribe, present, presume, project, prompt, publicize, quest, question, radio, raise, reach, read, record, recount, register, reinforce, relate, remind, repeat, report, representative, require, restate, return, reveal, reward, ring, scale, service, share, shift, shit, shop, show, sign, signal, signed, slang, smile, snow, sound, spark, speak, speaker, spiel, step, stone, street, style, submit, talk, teach, telephone, tell, throw, time, tone, train, transcribe, trump, turn, tutor, type, verbalize, verse, visit, vocal, vocalize, volunteer, want, west, white, wish, write, writer, young
act	5226	1.09	abuse, acceptance, achievement, acquisition, act, acting, action, activity, acts, administration, agency, aggression, antagonism, application, arrest, art, assembling, assessment, assignment, assist, assistance, assume, attempt, attendance, attending, attention, bat, behavior, best, bounce, bound, bowling, break, breakthrough, business, calling, calming, campaign, capture, cards, care, career, caress, cast, catch, causing, celebration, change, charge, choice, claim, class, closure, collaboration, collecting, collection, comfort, commitment, competition, conduct, conflict, confusion, consideration, contact, control, course, cover, covering, dance, dancing, dangling, deal, dealing, decision, dedication, delivery, demand, determination, development, dig, direction, discipline, discrimination, dish, draw, drawing, drill, drive, ease, economy, education, effort, election, employment, encouragement, engagement, entering, entertainment, error, essay, estimation, evaluation, exchange, exercise, exploration, exposure, failing, failure, farming, fault, favor, fight, fighting, find, finding, fingerprinting, fit, fix, fly, followup, force, freeze, fun, game, gap, gathering, getting, gift, giving, going, government, grab, grading, grant, grouping, guidance, hand, hanging, hell, help, hit, hitting, hostility, identification, impact, influence, instruction, interaction, interest, investigating, involvement, issue, job, joke, judgement, judgment, jump, justice, kindness, labor, lag, last, laughter, lead, leadership, leading, leave, leaving, lift, line, location, looking, loss, make, making, management, manipulation, market, means, measure, measurement, medium, meeting, method, ministration, mission, mistake, model, modeling, motivating, move, movement, music, neglect, negotiation, objection, observation, offense, offer, office, option, order, ordering, organization, orientation, ownership, pairing, paperwork, pardon, part, participation, pass, path, pattern, pause, pedagogy, perception, performance, pick, picturing, pitching, place, placement, planning, play, playing, politics, portion, position, post, practice, praxis, preparation, presentation, press, pressing, pressure, presume, procedure, process, project, protection, protest, pull, punctuation, purchase, push, pushing, quest, raise, rating, reaching, reading, recession, record, recreation, reference, refuge, registration, reinforcement, release, relief, relocation, repeating, repetition, resistance, resolution, resort, respect, responsibility, rest, return,

			revoke, rising, road, role, roll, rolling, routine, run, seeking, segregation, selection, sending, service, set, share, sharing, shift, shoot, shooting, shy, situation, skip, slavery, sleeping, smooth, spot, spring, stand, start, starting, stay, stop, struggle, substituting, suggestion, supply, support, supporting, surveying, survival, switch, switching, taking, task, teaching, temporary, test, thanks, thing, throw, tool, tooth, touch, touching, training, transfer, transportation, trial, trick, trigger, try, turn, updating, usage, use, violence, visit, voice, vote, wait, waiting, walk, war, wash, washing, waste, way, wear, willing, work, works, writing
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content	5093	0.92	abuse, account, acknowledgement, address, admission, advance, advertisement, advice, afternoon, agenda, agreement, answer, appeal, application, appreciation, approach, approval, area, arguing, arts, aside, basics, belief, bite, blur, blurb, body, book, business, bye, call, capacities, card, category, center, challenge, charge, circular, claim, collection, comment, commitment, commonplace, competition, competitions, complaint, concept, confidence, consent, content, contents, controversial, converse, copy, core, counsel, coverage, culture, curriculum, cut, dark, deal, dedication, definition, demand, description, design, details, dictate, dig, direction, discipline, disrespect, division, documentation, education, encouragement, end, engagement, error, example, expectation, experience, expression, eyes, fact, feedback, feeling, feminism, field, fight, figure, food, format, foundation, front, fun, funny, generalization, goal, greeting, ground, grounding, guarantee, guess, guidance, guide, hand, head, heart, hello, hope, humanities, humor, idea, ideal, information, input, inspiration, instruction, intelligence, intent, intention, interpretation, issue, joke, judgement, judgment, justification, laugh, law, lead, learning, leave, lesson, lie, life, list, living, love, major, material, matter, meaning, meat, memorial, memory, mention, message, messages, mind, mistake, misunderstanding, model, moral, morning, mother, narrative, news, note, notice, notion, objective, observation, offer, offering, okay, ology, opinion, order, original, paganism, part, particular, pass, passion, passport, pattern, perception, perfection, philosophy, picture, plan, play, point, politics, position, praise, pride, problem, program, project, proposition, protocol, purpose, question, reading, reality, realm, reason, record, reference, reflection, regard, region, reinforcement, release, religion, reply, report, resolution, respects, response, result, resume, reward, round, rule, sake, schedule, section, sense, shade, shape, shit, side, solution, sophistication, spec, special, standard, story, study, stuff, style, subject, suggestion, survey, target, teaching, technology, term, thanks, theme, theory, thing, thought, tip, topic, touch, tradition, trust, truth, understanding, value, values, version, view, visa, visualization, welcome, whole, wind, wish, word, world, wow
evaluating	5031	0.79	accept, acknowledge, admit, adopt, align, allow, anticipate, array, assess, assume, bank, believe, buy, call, challenge, charge, choose, clear, consider, critical, critique, delete, develop, disapprove, disrespect, edit, embrace, esteem, evaluate, evaluating, evaluation, except, expect, favor, feel, figure, find, grade, grading, guess, hold, identify, ignore, imagine, include, know, lift, like, make, measure, mind, order, place, praise, presume, prioritize, prize, project, promote, pronounce, push, range, rate, rating, recognize, recommend, regard, respect, rethink, reverse, review, revoke, rule, score, see, sequence, slight, stand, submit, suppose, suspect, think, trust, understand, upgrade, value, view
see	4192	0.75	appreciate, assure, attend, attendance, attended, attending, call, card, carry, case, catch, check, checked, checking, come, consider, considered, considering, considers, contrast, control, count, cover, cross, date, dated, dating, determination, determining, disrespect, encounter, encountered, encountering, encounters, enjoy, escorting, esteem, examined, expect, experience, experiences, experiment, favor, feel, figure, figured, figures, figuring, find, finding, findings, glass, hear, hearing, hold, identify, include, insurance, insurer, interpret, interpretation, interpreted, interpreters, intersect, learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, like, look, looked, looking, looks, make, meet, meeting, meetings, meets, minister, perceive, picture, pictures, picturing, prize, project, projects, proofread, read, realization, realize, realized, realizing, regard, regards, respect, see, seeing, sees, sense, skim, survey, take, tend, test, understand, understanding, understands, value, view, views, visit, visited, visual, visualization, visualizing, visuals, watch, watched, watches, watchful, watching

going	3800	0.50	active, advance, alight, angle, approach, arise, back, belong, boat, boom, bounce, break, breaking, breaks, bridge, bubble, bus, career, carry, cast, change, charge, chatter, chime, circle, clear, clip, close, come, continue, correct, course, cover, cracking, cracks, cross, crowd, cut, cycle, department, departments, dog, double, draw, drive, drone, drop, duck, ease, extended, extends, fail, failed, failing, fall, fell, file, fit, fits, fly, follow, foot, founder, function, functional, functionality, going, head, home, hum, inch, joint, journey, jump, lag, last, lasts, lead, leading, leads, leave, leaves, leaving, lift, light, live, lived, lively, lives, living, loss, make, march, move, moved, moving, near, negotiate, offer, offered, offering, offerings, offers, open, pace, pass, passed, passing, pedal, pink, plane, play, plod, post, process, progress, pull, pursue, push, quest, race, range, recession, release, releasing, resort, return, ride, ring, roll, round, run, running, scale, school, scoot, see, seek, serve, set, ship, shoot, sit, skim, slide, sound, sounded, sounds, speed, spelled, spelling, start, started, starting, starts, step, surf, surface, survival, survive, swim, take, thread, tip, tool, top, tour, toured, track, train, transfer, travel, traveled, traveling, travelled, tree, trump, turn, turned, turns, walk, well, wind, wing, work, worked, working, works, zoom
get	3514	0.58	accept, acceptance, access, acquire, acquisition, address, admit, adopt, alight, amazed, amazing, arrest, arrivals, arrive, arrived, arriving, assure, baffling, become, becomes, becoming, begin, beginning, begins, benefit, break, bring, bringing, brings, bully, buy, capture, catch, cause, caused, causes, causing, charter, clear, collect, come, comes, coming, convey, course, cut, decide, deliver, develop, developed, developing, development, developments, draw, drawing, drive, drives, driving, drop, earn, encourage, engage, engendered, enter, experience, experiences, experiment, express, fall, father, feel, fence, find, finding, findings, fix, fixed, force, gain, generate, generation, generations, get, gets, getting, give, going, grab, grow, growing, hit, honor, influence, inspire, lead, let, lets, letting, light, make, makes, making, market, mother, mothers, mystifying, net, outsource, pay, poll, pose, process, produce, prompt, purchase, puzzled, reach, realize, received, return, run, secure, serve, share, shop, spring, start, started, starting, starts, stick, sticks, stimulants, stimulate, strike, suffered, take, takes, taking, turn, wash, welcome, win, work
event	3352	0.58	achievement, acquisition, act, acting, action, activity, administration, agency, aggression, antagonism, application, assessment, assignment, assist, assistance, attempt, attendance, attending, behavior, breakthrough, business, calming, capture, case, cases, catch, causing, change, choice, collaboration, commitment, competition, conduct, conflict, contact, control, course, deal, dealing, dedication, delivery, demand, determination, dig, direction, discrimination, dish, drive, ease, economy, education, effort, election, employment, engagement, error, estimation, evaluation, event, events, exchange, exercise, failure, fault, fight, fighting, find, finding, fit, follow, fun, game, gathering, getting, giving, going, government, grab, grouping, hell, help, hit, hitting, hostility, important, influence, instruction, interaction, involvement, job, judgement, judgment, jump, justice, kindness, last, laughter, leadership, leading, leave, leaving, lift, line, lively, location, making, management, manipulation, market, means, measure, measurement, meeting, mistake, motivating, music, neglect, negotiation, objection, option, organization, participation, pattern, pause, pedagogy, performance, pick, placement, play, playing, politics, position, practice, praxis, preparation, procedure, process, protection, protest, pull, push, pushing, raise, rating, recreation, reference, release, resistance, responsibility, rest, return, rising, role, roll, rolling, segregation, selection, sending, service, sharing, shooting, stay, stop, struggle, supply, support, supporting, taking, teaching, thing, throw, touch, touching, training, transfer, trigger, try, turn,

			usage, use, visit, vote, wait, waiting, war, waste, way, wear, work, works, writing
connect	3347	0.47	appeal, articulate, associated, attached, bearing, bell, bridge, buckle, catch, chain, clip, close, code, cohesiveness, communication, comprehension, connect, connected, connecting, connection, connections, connectivity, contact, continually, continue, continued, continuing, continuous, correlate, couple, cover, encounter, engaged, enter, fair, fix, generalization, ground, grounding, hang, hit, identify, inclusion, input, introduce, involvement, joint, know, lead, link, love, match, mean, meeting, mention, mismatch, name, neighboring, node, online, pair, paste, piece, point, post, raise, refer, relate, related, relates, relating, relational, relations, relative, relatively, relatives, relevance, remember, ride, ring, secure, series, serve, service, stay, stick, supplement, tack, tape, tie, tied, ties, tying, unit, united, units, weld, wired
tell	3108	0.45	account, add, advance, advise, advocate, answer, articulate, assure, bare, break, call, charge, claim, comment, contrast, convey, counter, demand, direct, distinguish, distribute, dwell, edit, effective, explain, express, field, guarantee, hold, indicate, intend, interpret, introduce, isolate, issue, know, lift, look, mean, mention, move, narrative, note, notice, observe, order, ordered, ordering, page, peach, point, present, proposition, protest, publicize, reason, recall, recommend, recount, relate, related, relates, relating, relational, relations, relative, relatively, relatives, release, repeat, rephrase, reply, require, respond, restate, resume, return, reveal, revealed, reword, saying, sayings, send, sentence, separate, separated, separately, several, severe, sex, show, signal, sing, spread, spring, state, stated, states, submit, summarize, supply, support, take, talk, tell, telling, tells, thank, translate, vocalize
process	2984	0.43	acquisition, action, advance, advanced, advancing, appreciation, assessment, attending, attention, awareness, breathing, career, choice, closure, combination, connection, consideration, construction, control, crying, culture, deciding, determination, developing, development, discrimination, distraction, dose, education, eye, feeling, file, fingerprinting, identification, inspiration, intake, judgement, judgment, ken, know, knowing, language, learning, march, memory, neglect, notice, observance, observation, option, perception, phenomenon, pick, planning, preparation, prepared, procedure, procedures, process, processes, processing, progress, progressive, push, quest, reading, recall, regard, resolution, response, rising, routine, run, rut, seeing, selection, serve, serving, sex, sleeping, sort, study, suggestion, taste, thinking, thought, thread, ticket, touch, transfer, treat, treated, understanding, wash, work
information	2801	0.41	account, acquaintance, advise, agenda, alert, average, background, bare, basics, book, break, calendar, call, canary, card, case, casual, check, clarify, clear, coach, comment, common, concern, confidence, consideration, contents, conversation, conversational, conversations, converse, conversing, convey, copy, cover, coverage, curriculum, daily, data, demographic, demonstrate, describe, detail, details, develop, direct, distribute, documentation, drill, dwell, ease, educate, educated, educational, elaborate, elicitation, enlightened, enlightening, everyday, example, excuse, expand, explain, fact, familiar, familiarity, finger, format, friendly, gas, general, grass, ground, headache, indicate, inform, informal, informally, information, informed, informs, infuse, input, inspire, instance, instructing, instruction, instructional, instructions, intelligence, interpret, intimate, introduce, inventory, issue, item, justification, key, knowing, knowledgeable, lead, learn, lecture, lie, list, manifest, material, minimize, moment, news, newsletter, notice, observation, offer, orient, particular, peach, point, pose, post, prepare, present, presentation, presume, program, prompt, publicize, read, reading, reason, record, recount, reflect, regard, register, reinforce, reinforcement, relate, release, remind, repeat,

			rephrase, report, representative, respect, restate, resume, reveal, revelation, reward, reword, roll, sample, schedule, score, send, shit, shop, show, signal, sing, slang, slate, snow, specific, spread, spring, stack, standing, stimulus, story, strike, stuff, summarize, talk, teach, tell, telling, ticket, track, train, translate, trump, truth, tutor, verse, volunteer, wise, word, worry
know	2795	0.40	acknowledge, acknowledgement, anticipate, appreciation, awareness, breakthrough, cognizant, comprehension, control, educated, experience, experiences, experiment, feel, find, grasp, hold, informed, intended, intent, intention, intentionally, ken, know, knowing, knowledge, knowledgeable, knows, learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, light, live, lived, lively, lives, living, love, loved, loving, master, orientation, realization, realize, recognize, recognized, recognizing, revelation, sense, smattering, take, taste, understanding, wise
concept	2749	0.39	absolute, access, admission, amount, aspect, base, basics, basis, beginning, category, claim, color, complex, component, concept, concepts, constant, constructed, construction, correlate, description, design, designed, designing, designs, dictate, division, due, element, end, fact, factor, feature, fertile, flavor, floor, form, foundation, fundamentals, given, grant, innovate, innovative, kind, law, like, make, manner, middle, model, multiple, notion, notions, one, parameter, part, perception, point, product, quality, right, rule, section, sort, style, teacher, term, texture, theory, thing, title, type, unit, value, variable, variety, vote, way, whole, zero
move	2742	0.36	access, act, acting, acts, advance, affect, affected, affecting, affects, approach, approaching, arrange, array, arrest, assist, assume, ball, bank, block, boot, bounce, bound, box, break, bring, brush, build, bus, capture, career, carry, cast, catch, center, chain, charge, charleston, chatter, check, church, circle, clap, clip, close, closure, cloud, clue, combine, coming, communicate, completion, conduct, connect, control, convey, corner, course, create, crossing, crowd, curve, cut, dance, date, deal, deliver, descent, develop, dig, direct, disorder, disrespect, distribute, divert, divide, double, draw, dress, drill, drive, driving, drop, duck, engage, exchange, face, fall, fan, fell, fight, figure, filter, fix, flood, floor, flourish, flow, fly, flying, following, foot, force, forward, founder, gather, get, give, grab, ground, guard, hack, handle, hang, harass, hit, immigration, impact, inclination, inter, interact, invite, joint, journey, juggle, jump, juxtapose, kill, labor, lay, leave, lift, light, list, lose, lower, mail, manipulate, march, measure, meet, middle, mobile, motions, motivate, motivated, motivates, motivating, motivations, motivator, move, moved, movement, movements, moving, nick, nod, offer, opening, overflow, pace, paint, pair, park, parking, part, participate, partner, pass, passage, perform, pick, pink, pitching, place, plane, play, plod, porter, pose, position, post, practice, press, presume, progress, project, prompt, prompt#1, prompt#10, prompt#2, prompt#3, prompt#4, prompt#5, prompt#6, prompt#7, prompt#8, prompt#9, prompted, prompts, pull, pursue, push, put, race, raise, range, reach, reaching, reduce, refer, relate, release, relocation, remove, rest, return, reward, ride, riding, roll, root, run, running, saw, scroll, seat, see, send, separate, set, shade, shell, shift, ship, shock, shoot, shrink, shy, sick, sign, single, sit, site, sitting, situate, skim, skin, skip, slide, socialize, space, speed, split, spread, spring, square, stack, stage, stand, standing, start, steal, step, stirred, stretch, strike, struggle, stuff, surprise, sweep, switch, take, thread, throw, tie, tip, top, touch, touched, touching, tour, train, transfer, translate, translation, travel, traveling, tree, trick, trickle, trip, trouble, turn, upset, use, volunteer, walk, walking, wash, waste, way, wind, work, worry, wow, wrap, zoom

make	2716	0.31	access, accomplish, act, action, add, adopt, arrange, attempt, author, bring, build, building, builds, burn, capture, cast, cause, caused, causes, causing, clear, clearly, conduct, constitutionality, constructed, construction, cook, copy, create, created, creates, creating, cross, customize, cut, design, develop, devil, direct, double, draw, drawing, dream, drive, earn, earning, elaborate, establish, established, evoke, express, facilitate, figure, find, fix, fixed, follow, force, form, formed, forming, forms, found, frame, free, fruit, gain, gained, gains, generate, get, give, gives, giving, grip, ground, heat, hit, hits, hitting, hold, hurt, imagine, incorporate, innovate, inspire, interest, interpret, introduce, invite, kill, lay, layer, machine, make, makes, making, map, model, mold, motivate, move, name, names, net, occasion, offend, organize, overcome, paint, paragraph, pattern, pay, peak, pen, perform, pick, picture, piece, pissed, place, plan, play, precook, preparation, prepare, prepared, preparing, present, press, print, produce, profile, program, project, prompt, put, rag, raise, reach, reached, reaching, readiness, ready, realization, realize, realized, realizing, reference, release, repeat, return, rough, run, scale, score, scores, see, set, sex, shame, shape, shell, shit, short, show, spark, spiel, stage, stale, start, stimulate, strike, style, support, table, tack, take, takes, taking, tat, think, throw, tie, tissue, top, track, trigger, trip, upset, verse, work, write
thought	2523	0.39	absolute, address, agenda, amount, attention, beauty, beginning, belief, bubble, category, complex, component, concept, consideration, considerations, constant, control, decision, design, determination, division, element, end, error, example, eyes, fact, factor, feature, feeling, form, generalization, heart, idea, ideal, ideas, inspiration, itinerary, judgement, judgment, kind, law, lost, meaning, middle, mind, mistake, misunderstanding, model, mother, notion, opinion, opinions, parameter, part, pattern, perception, perfection, plan, policy, politics, product, profound, program, project, quality, reference, reflect, reflected, reflecting, reflection, reflections, reflective, right, rule, schedule, section, serious, sophistication, sort, standard, strategy, study, suggestion, system, teacher, term, theme, theory, thing, thought, thoughtful, thoughts, unit, value, variable, variety, view, views, way, whole
work	2346	0.36	act, acting, action, acts, analysis, answer, application, assignment, assist, attention, baby, bank, break, bring, bringing, brings, brush, busy, campaign, care, carry, cast, cause, charge, collaborate, color, comparing, comparison, count, covering, danger, difficulty, dig, diligence, dominate, drive, effort, employ, employment, engagement, exercise, exercises, experiment, facility, farm, fatigue, fill, fix, followup, form, formed, forming, forms, function, functional, functionality, guard, guess, hat, healthcare, help, influence, influenced, influences, inquiry, investigating, job, labor, layer, machine, make, makes, making, man, manipulate, medical, minister, mission, model, mold, movement, office, page, paperwork, part, picking, place, plants, play, played, playing, plays, poll, position, pottery, practical, press, pressure, procedure, process, processes, processing, project, proposition, pull, ranch, recount, research, resolve, review, risk, role, run, running, serve, service, services, shape, shaped, shop, shower, slavery, solve, solved, spread, strike, struggle, studied, studies, studio, study, studying, substituting, survey, take, tally, task, tell, temporary, testing, throw, till, tool, treatment, trouble, turn, turned, turns, upset, volunteer, wait, wash, washing, work, worked, working, workload, workplace, works, workshop
want	2330	0.32	absent, ambition, care, dearth, desires, hope, hot, lack, like, long, loved, miss, missed, misses, missing, missing', need, needed, needing, needs, needy, please, precious, private, quest, require, required, requirement, requirements, requires, seek, trust, want, wanted, wanting, wants, wish, wishes

period	2222	0.38	administration, afternoon, age, annual, april, bit, bloom, chapter, childhood, christmas, daily, dark, date, day, days, dead, december, downtime, eighties, even, evening, extra, fall, february, festival, fifties, flow, forties, full, generation, halloween, holiday, hour, hours, issue, january, journal, june, leave, life, majority, march, may, minority, minute, moment, month, morning, night, number, occasionally, october, pass, past, peak, period, periodic, periodically, periods, piece, quarter, rag, ramadan, reign, review, rule, run, school, second, semester, sentence, september, series, session, seventies, shift, sixties, sleep, spring, stage, stretch, summer, tenure, term, thirties, time, times, tour, twenties, vacation, value, watch, week, weekend, weekly, window, winter, year, years, youth
category	2197	0.32	category, color, description, flavor, form, kind, like, make, manner, model, nature, sort, style, type, variety, version, way
whole	2131	0.34	access, all', animal, approach, area, art, article, balance, ball, basic, bell, blank, block, board, body, bridge, bubble, building, cake, canvas, cell, complete, completed, completely, completing, completion, complex, composition, connection, corner, course, covering, cross, design, door, duck, entire, entirely, extra, fabric, face, facility, felt, field, figure, finger, floor, fly, folder, full, future, gap, good, ground, guide, hanging, healthy, host, housing, individual, intake, integrate, integrated, issue, item, layer, lead, leading, level, life, lift, line, marker, master, material, means, memorial, mine, native, one, original, parent, pattern, person, product, relative, ring, row, scale, shell, solid, somebody, someone, story, test, totality, totally, unit, united, units, wear, whole, works
teaching	2104	0.41	class, coach, course, develop, drill, educate, educated, educating, education, educational, educator, elective, ground, infuse, inspire, instructing, instruction, instructional, instructions, learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, lecture, lecturing, lesson, orientation, pedagogy, prepare, reinforce, reward, seminar, shop, spoonfeeding, talk, teach, teaches, teaching, train, tutor, workshop
kind	2050	0.35	address, color, consideration, description, favor, flavor, form, formed, forming, forms, kind, kindness, kinds, like, make, manner, model, nature, pardon, sort, sorts, style, turn, type, variety, version
organizations	1949	0.39	academy, adult, agency, alignment, animal, army, arrange, arrangement, arrangements, ball, bank, beings, blue, bureaucracy, business, cell, chain, chapter, choir, church, class, club, coalition, collective, college, combination, combine, committee, community, concern, conference, coordinator, coordinators, core, corporate, country, court, cross, detail, division, dog, egg, europe, eye, family, fellowship, female, five, force, form, formed, forming, forms, foundation, friendly, game, government, grading, guard, hands, head, heart, hierarchy, home, hospital, host, house, incorporated, individual, industry, institution, integrated, intelligence, inventory, labor, law, lens, lip, machine, male, member, men, methodical, military, mission, native, nonprofit, offense, office, opening, order, ordering, organic, organization, organizations, organize, organized, organizing, parent, partnership, party, person, pet, police, relative, religion, ring, school, section, sequence, service, shift, side, society, somebody, someone, staff, state, structure, structured, survivor, team, tool, trust, union, unit, university, workforce, young
entities	1919	0.35	amount, cause, change, communication, draw, entities, event, form, group, grouping, individual, knowledge, location, lot, man, matter, measure, need, person, phenomenon, process, rarity, shape, somebody, someone, space, state, thing, time, unit, whole, world
leader	1759	0.33	administrator, begin, better, boss, chair, coach, counselor, edward, father, general, god, green, guide, hack, head, ideal, job, john, king, lady, leader, leaders, leadership, lewis, major, manager, master, minister, model, monitor, north, peel, president, representative, senator, seaward, shape, sir, speaker, supervisor, wise, young

education	1699	0.35	academic, assimilation, coach, derived, develop, developed, developing, development, developments, drill, educate, educated, educating, education, educational, educator, elicitation, enlightened, enlightening, evoke, experience, foundation, grounding, head, informed, instruction, instructor, knowing, knowledgeable, learned, learning, lecture, lecturing, lesson, literate, master, pedagogy, preparation, prepare, prepared, preparing, principal, prof, professor, school, socialize, sophistication, spoonfeeding, talk, teacher, teaching, train, trained, training, trainings, trains, tutor, white
like	1681	0.42	approval, care, cared, careful, carefully, caring, compare, compared, compares, comparing, comparison, enjoy, esteem, favor, inclination, like, liked, likely, likes, love, please, potential, prefer, preference, probably, reflection, similar, similarities, similarly, taste, weakness, wish, wishes
class	1485	0.48	agent, case, caste, category, center, chosen, class, classes, course, courses, division, elective, estate, families, family, form, formed, forming, forms, future, gender, grade, grades, grading, group, isolate, labor, market, number, orientation, past, patient, person, pick, present, refer, result, section, seminar, separate, separated, separately, sex, shop, size, society, sort, sorts, tense, woman, workshop, world, year, years
talk	1205	0.35	advise, begin, call, chair, chant, chat, chatter, consider, continue, converse, counsel, debate, deliberate, deliver, dialog, dialogue, dialogues, dialoguing, dictate, discuss, drone, fence, hum, interview, lead, lecture, lectures, lecturing, level, mouth, negotiate, negotiated, negotiating, negotiation, peach, place, present, question, read, sing, slang, speak, speaking, speaks, spiel, talk, talked, talking, talks, tone, verbalize, verbally, visit, vocalize, wind
language	1198	0.34	accent, basic, chat, chatter, conference, conversation, debate, dialog, dialogue, discussion, exchange, expression, greek, indian, interview, language, language', languages, latino, lyrics, negotiation, phrase, pronunciation, question, reading, saw, saying, sentence, session, signing, slang, speech, talk, talking, talks, terminology, usage, wind, word, words
need	1170	0.41	ask, asked, asking, asks, cost, dearth, demand, demands, draw, involve, involved, involvement, involves, involving, lack, motivate, motivated, motivates, motivating, motivations, motivator, necessarily, necessary, need, needed, needing, needs, press, pressure, require, required, requirement, requirements, requires, take, takes, taking, want
students	1078	1.49	ELL, ELLs, senior, student, students, students', students'
activities	978	0.37	abuse, acting, action, active, activist, activities, activity, advocacy, agency, aggression, agile, alignment, analysis, application, approval, art, assembling, assignment, assist, assistance, attempt, attention, attrition, baby, back, bat, behavior, best, bet, boring, bowling, bridge, building, bullying, business, busy, calling, campaign, capture, cards, care, career, catch, celebration, center, chair, charge, check, childcare, claim, class, collecting, collection, comfort, composition, conduct, construction, control, copying, count, course, cover, covering, cracking, cutting, damage, dance, dancing, dangling, demand, design, designing, development, dig, direction, discipline, dish, distraction, doctor, drawing, drill, drilling, driving, dynamic, dynamics, education, effort, elective, employment, encouragement, end, energy, engagement, entertainment, enthusiasm, essay, excitable, excited, exciting, exercise, existent, exploration, facility, familiarity, farming, feedback, festival, fight, fighting, filling, fingerprinting, first, fit, flow, followup, forward, freeze, fun, function, game, gather, gathering, going, grading, graduation, grasp, grip, grouping, guard, guidance, habit, hand, hanging, harassment, healthcare, hearing, hell, help, hold, hot, house, hum, inquiry, instruction, intelligence, interest, inventory, investigating, involved, irritation, issue, job, joke, keeping, labor, last, laughter, lead, leadership, leading, leeway, life, lift, line, listening,

			literature, live, location, look, looking, lying, manual, market, measure, measurement, medium, melt, melting, mercy, method, ministration, mission, model, modeling, mold, move, music, neglect, negotiation, observation, offense, offer, office, open, order, ordering, organization, orientation, origin, ownership, pairing, paperwork, part, participate, participating, participation, pass, patience, pattern, pedagogy, perception, period, phrase, picturing, pinball, place, placement, planning, play, playing, politics, position, post, pottery, practice, preparation, presentation, procedure, process, progressive, project, proposition, protection, providence, punctuation, quest, quick, race, reading, realization, recording, recreation, reducing, refuge, registration, reinforcement, release, relief, repeating, repetition, replacement, research, resort, retention, review, riding, role, round, routine, row, rowing, run, running, rut, sea, second, seeking, selection, seminar, sequence, service, services, set, sevens, share, shop, short, show, situation, slavery, slight, song, spark, sparked, specialty, spoonfeeding, spot, start, starting, strike, struggle, substituting, supply, support, supporting, surveying, survival, tally, task, taste, taxonomy, teaching, technology, test, testing, thanks, third, throw, timing, training, treated, treatment, trial, trick, trigger, trip, trips, try, turn, union, usage, use, using, vice, walk, warming, wash, washing, waste, work, workload, works, workshop, writing, wrong
accepted	972	0.27	accept, acceptable, acceptance, accepted, accepting, acknowledge, acknowledgement, adopt, agree, allow, approval, assume, bank, bearing, bears, believe, bet, buy, certificate, clear, consent, content, count, depend, embrace, fit, give, good, know, let, look, okay, open, pass, pay, received, receptive, recognize, recognized, recognizing, stand, standard, submit, suffered, support, trust, understand, welcome
think	944	0.28	absorb, accept, acknowledge, add, admit, adopt, agreement, align, allow, analysis, anticipate, arrangement, array, assess, assume, average, believe, believed, believes, book, budget, calendar, call, carry, center, charge, choose, class, compare, concentrate, connect, consider, consideration, considered, considering, considers, construction, correlate, count, critique, deal, design, direct, disapprove, disrespect, divide, drink, embrace, engineer, esteem, estimation, evaluate, expect, experiment, experimentation, exploration, factor, favor, feel, figure, figuring, find, focus, frame, gather, give, grade, guess, guessing, hold, hope, idea, identify, ignore, imagine, include, inquiry, integrate, intelligence, intelligent, intend, intended, interpretation, introduce, key, know, like, line, link, make, mean, meaning, means, measure, mention, mind, mistake, name, offer, order, organize, pay, place, plan, planning, play, poll, praise, preparation, presume, prioritize, prize, process, program, project, pronounce, purpose, question, range, rate, reason, reasons, recall, recalling, recognize, refer, reflect, reflection, regard, relate, remember, remembered, research, resolve, respect, rethink, review, schedule, score, see, separate, sequence, slate, solve, sort, stand, study, submit, subtract, suppose, supposed, survey, suspect, take, theory, think, thinking, thought, thoughtful, thoughts, thread, time, trust, type, upgrade, value, view, wonder
country	928	0.49	afghanistan, america, angola, area, areas, armenia, belarus, bhutan, block, bosnia, burma, canada, center, china, clear, colombia, congo, corner, countries, country, croatia, danger, dark, england, ethiopia, eye, georgia, germany, heart, honduras, india, italy, japan, key, laos, light, mexico, micronesia, middle, moldova, myanmar, national, nationalities, nationality, nations, neighborhood, nepal, north, oman, open, outskirts, paint, paraguay, place, poland, power, refuge, resort, romania, russia, safety, scene, seat, section, see, singapore, slovakia, somalia, space, spain, stage, state, stated, states, sudan, sultanate, switzerland, thailand, turkey, ukraine, union, usa, venue, vietnam

happened	915	0.21	abortion, accident, advance, adversity, alignment, anticipate, appear, approach, approaching, arise, attrition, background, beginning, bell, bit, bite, boom, bounce, bouncing, break, breakers, brush, case, cause, change, chapter, chatter, clap, clash, clip, combine, come, contact, cracking, cycle, damage, deal, death, decision, delivery, descent, develop, development, difference, drama, draw, encounter, end, ending, engagement, entering, error, example, experience, failure, fall, fault, finish, flood, flow, generation, give, going, growth, happen, happened, happening, happens, head, hell, hit, hum, hurt, immersion, impact, improvement, incident, increase, independence, instance, intervene, issue, jump, knocking, last, lift, loss, meeting, milestone, miss, mix, mixture, morning, movement, occasion, occurred, open, opening, origin, outbreak, outcome, pass, passage, passed, passing, phenomenon, piece, play, progress, punctuation, release, relief, repeat, repetition, replacement, report, result, return, reverse, ring, rising, roll, rolling, run, scene, scratch, scratching, seek, sequence, shame, shift, shock, sign, song, sound, spark, spread, stand, start, step, stop, success, surf, surprise, sweep, switch, taste, thing, throw, tie, time, touch, touching, transition, translation, travel, treat, trial, trip, triumph, trouble, turkey, turn, union, voice, win, wonder
question	667	0.34	case, challenge, curious, funny, head, headed, heads, inquire, inquiry, inquisitive, interview, interviews, motions, problem, problematic, question, questionable, questioning, questions, seek, supposed, suspect, test, wonder, wondered, wonderful, wondering
figure	614	0.35	add, allow, assess, average, base, bearing, branch, budget, charge, check, colors, computer, computers, count, couple, cross, design, designed, designing, designs, divide, eight, enter, entered, entering, enters, estimation, extended, factor, fellow, figure, figured, figures, figuring, five, foot, form, four, give, guess, guessing, heart, idea, integrate, make, nine, one, pair, parallel, pattern, patterns, pencil, place, poetic, process, put, quarter, raise, resolve, set, seven, single, six, solve, square, subtract, survey, three, tree, two, zero
really	572	0.81	actual, actually, genuine, genuinely, real, really, truly
affirmatively	552	0.38	affirmatively, approval, assure, charge, claim, complain, hold, maintain, positive, possible, protest, take, tax, tell, yes
speaker	444	0.60	speaker, speakers, verbalize, verbally
articulate	442	0.58	articulate, articulated, fluency, fluent, joint, jointly, lip, speaker, vocal, vocalize
yeah	386	0.62	yeah
sometimes	298	0.41	former, formerly, old, olds, past, sometime, sometimes
number	260	0.35	100, add, balance, base, constant, count, counted, denominator, difference, dozen, duck, eight, factor, fifty, figure, figured, figures, figuring, first, five, four, game, hundred, lead, list, love, majority, match, million, minority, nine, number, numbers, numerous, one, page, population, real, record, recount, root, score, seven, seventeen, single, six, square, tally, ten, thirty, thousand, three, twenty, two, yard, zero
something	231	0.37	something, somethings

Appendix M: Word Frequency Search Level 5 List

Word	Count	Weighted Percentage (%)	Similar Words
change	8766	0.81	<p>abortion, absorb, access, acclimate, accommodate, acquire, action, adapt, adaptation, add, addition, address, adjust, adopt, advance, affect, age, align, alternate, appreciate, appreciation, approach, approaching, assimilate, assist, assume, attrition, back, become, beginning, better, black, block, blue, blur, break, breaking, bring, bringing, bubble, buckle, build, burn, call, calm, camp, career, carry, catch, change, changed, changes, changing, charge, check, circle, clarify, cleaning, clear, close, closure, cloud, code, color, combination, combine, come, comfort, coming, compare, complete, completion, concentrate, conform, confusion, connection, cook, cool, correct, correction, corrupt, cover, cracking, crossing, culture, cup, curve, customize, cut, cutting, damage, death, decide, delivery, descent, develop, development, difference, dish, disorder, division, doctor, dose, dot, double, draw, dress, drive, driving, drop, dry, dwindle, dynamic, ease, eat, edit, elaborate, empty, enable, encounter, end, ending, enhance, enrich, enrichment, equal, even, event, exchange, exchanges, expand, expense, experience, fail, fall, fatigue, felt, figure, fill, filling, find, finish, fit, fix, flood, flow, fly, focus, following, form, format, fortify, foundation, founding, freeze, full, gain, gather, gear, gel, get, glass, going, gradient, green, grow, guy, habit, hack, hang, happening, hat, heat, help, hit, hurt, ice, icebreaker, immersion, immigration, impact, improve, improvement, inclination, inclusion, incorporate, increase, inform, infuse, initiative, ink, inspiration, institution, integrate, interrupt, involve, issue, journey, jump, key, kill, know, labor, let, level, lift, light, limit, line, live, loosen, lose, loss, lower, make, map, march, market, mat, match, maximize, melt, minimize, mix, mixture, mobile, modify, mold, move, movement, narrow, negate, nick, nod, number, opening, organization, orient, outcome, overflow, parallel, pass, passage, passing, people, perfect, perfection, phenomenon, piece, pitching, play, point, polish, pollution, prejudice, preparation, prepare, process, produce, progress, promote, provide, purple, purse, push, raise, reach, reaching, readjust, ready, realign, realize, recommend, redouble, reduce, reform, register, reinforce, relax, release, relief, relocation, replacement, replacing, resolve, result, resume, return, reverse, riding, right, roll, root, round, run, running, scale, scroll, separate, service, set, shade, shape, shift, shifted, shifts, shock, shrink, sitting, size, slide, sliver, slow, socialize, soften, speed, split, spot, spotlight, spring, square, stage, standing, start, stay, steady, step, stew, still, stimulate, stop, stretch, strike, stuff, sub, submit, subtract, surf, surprise, sweep, switch, switched, switching, sync, tack, take, teach, tense, test, thin, think, tie, time, tip, tone, top, touch, transcribe, transfer, transferred, transformed, transition, translate, translation, transportation, travel, traveling, treat, trouble, true, try, tune, turn, union, updating, upgrade, upset, utilize, varied, variety, vary, varying, verbalize, visit, walk, walking, wane, warm, wash, waste, water, weaken, wear, weather, weld, white, wind, work, yellow, zero, zoom</p>

community	5964	0.58	<p>account, acknowledge, addition, address, advise, agent, agreement, alert, appeal, apply, ask, author, bare, begin, book, break, call, canary, carry, cat, challenge, change, channels, chant, chat, chatter, check, claim, clap, clarify, clock, coach, comment, commitment, common, communicate, communicated, communicating, communication, communicative, communities, community, community', connection, contact, continue, converse, convey, cover, cut, day, debate, dedication, deliver, demand, demonstrate, describe, develop, dictate, direct, discipline, discuss, drill, drone, educate, email, exact, excuse, expect, explain, express, expressive, fence, field, finger, fluency, gathering, get, give, grass, greet, ground, guest, hack, hall, hold, house, hum, indicate, inform, inquire, interpret, interview, introduce, invite, issue, joke, journalist, key, kid, learn, lecture, lens, level, lewis, liaison, lie, lindsay, line, link, lower, luce, mail, manifest, masters, measure, medium, message, minimize, modify, mouth, narrative, national, nationalities, nationality, nations, neighborhood, network, nod, nonverbal, note, order, organization, orient, ownership, pace, page, pass, passed, passing, pay, phone, place, point, porter, post, pray, prepare, prescribe, present, presume, project, prompt, publicize, quest, question, radio, raise, reach, read, record, recount, register, reinforce, relate, remind, repeat, report, representative, require, restate, return, reveal, reward, ring, scale, service, share, shift, shit, shop, show, sign, signal, signed, slang, smile, snow, sound, spark, speak, speaker, spiel, step, stone, street, study, style, subject, submit, talk, teach, telephone, tell, throw, time, tone, train, transcribe, transfer, trump, turn, tutor, type, verbalize, verse, visit, vocal, vocalize, volunteer, want, west, white, wish, write, writer, young</p>
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act	5865	0.50	<p>abuse, acceptance, achievement, acquisition, act, acting, action, activity, acts, administration, agency, aggression, antagonism, application, arrest, art, assembling, assessment, assignment, assist, assistance, assume, attempt, attendance, attending, attention, bat, behavior, best, book, bounce, bound, bowling, break, breakthrough, business, calling, calming, campaign, capture, cards, care, career, caress, cast, catch, causing, celebration, change, charge, choice, claim, class, closure, collaboration, collecting, collection, comfort, commitment, competition, conduct, conflict, confusion, consideration, contact, control, course, cover, covering, dance, dancing, dangling, deal, dealing, decision, dedication, delivery, demand, determination, development, dig, direction, discipline, discrimination, dish, draw, drawing, drill, drive, ease, economy, education, effort, election, employment, encouragement, engagement, entering, entertainment, error, essay, estimation, evaluation, event, exchange, exercise, exploration, exposure, expression, failing, failure, farming, fault, favor, fight, fighting, find, finding, fingerprinting, fit, fix, fly, followup, force, freeze, fun, game, gap, gathering, getting, gift, giving, going, government, grab, grading, grant, grouping, guidance, hand, hanging, hell, help, hit, hitting, hostility, identification, impact, influence, instruction, interaction, interest, investigating, involvement, issue, job, joke, judgement, judgment, jump, justice, kindness, labor, lag, last, laughter, lead, leadership, leading, leave, leaving, lift, line, location, looking, loss, make, making, management, manipulation, market, means, measure, measurement, medium, meeting, method, ministration, mission, mistake, model, modeling, motivating, move, movement, music, neglect, negotiation, objection, observation, offense, offer, office, option, order, ordering, organization, orientation, ownership, pairing, paperwork, pardon, part, participation, pass, path, pattern, pause, pedagogy, perception, performance, pick, picturing, pitching, place, placement, planning, play, playing, politics, portion, position, post, practice, praxis, preparation, presentation, press, pressing, pressure, presume, procedure, process, project, protection, protest, pull, punctuation, purchase, push, pushing, quest, raise, rating, reaching, reading, recession, record, recreation, reference, reflection, refuge, registration, reinforcement, release, relief, relocation, repeating, repetition, resistance, resolution, resort, respect, responsibility, rest, return, revoke, rising, road, role, roll, rolling, routine, run, seeking, segregation, selection, sending, serve, service, set, share, sharing, shift, shoot, shooting, shy, situation, skip, slavery, sleeping, smooth, spot, spring, stand, start, starting, stay, stop, struggle, substituting, suggestion, supply, support, supporting, surveying, survival, switch, switching, taking, task, teaching, temporary, test, thanks, thing, throw, tool, tooth, touch, touching, training, transfer, transportation, trial, trick, trigger, try, turn, updating, usage, use, violence, visit, voice, vote, wait, waiting, walk, war, wash, washing, waste, way, wear, willing, work, works, writing</p>
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content	5133	0.66	<p>abuse, acceptance, account, acknowledgement, address, admission, advance, advertisement, advice, afternoon, agenda, agreement, answer, appeal, application, appreciation, approach, approval, area, arguing, arts, aside, basics, belief, bite, blur, blurb, body, book, business, bye, call, capacities, card, category, center, challenge, charge, circular, claim, collection, comment, commitment, commonplace, competition, competitions, complaint, concept, confidence, conflict, consent, content, contents, controversial, converse, copy, core, counsel, coverage, culture, curriculum, cut, dark, deal, dedication, definition, demand, description, design, details, dictate, difference, dig, direction, discipline, disrespect, division, documentation, education, encouragement, end, engagement, error, example, expectation, experience, expression, eyes, fact, feedback, feeling, feminism, field, fight, figure, food, format, foundation, front, fun, funny, generalization, goal, greeting, ground, grounding, guarantee, guess, guidance, guide, hand, happiness, head, heart, hello, hope, humanities, humor, idea, ideal, information, input, inspiration, instruction, intelligence, intent, intention, interpretation, issue, joke, judgement, judgment, justification, laugh, law, lead, learning, leave, lesson, lie, life, list, living, love, major, material, matter, meaning, meat, memorial, memory, mention, message, messages, mind, mistake, misunderstanding, model, moral, morning, mother, narrative, news, note, notice, notion, objective, observation, offer, offering, okay, ology, opinion, order, original, paganism, part, particular, pass, passion, passport, pattern, perception, perfection, philosophy, picture, plan, play, point, politics, position, praise, pride, problem, program, project, proposition, protocol, purpose, question, reading, reality, realm, reason, record, reference, reflection, regard, region, reinforcement, release, religion, reply, report, resolution, respects, response, result, resume, reward, round, rule, sake, satisfy, schedule, section, sense, shade, shape, shit, side, solution, sophistication, spec, special, standard, story, study, stuff, style, subject, suggestion, survey, table, target, teaching, technology, term, thanks, theme, theory, thing, thought, tip, topic, touch, tradition, trust, truth, understanding, value, values, version, view, visa, visualization, welcome, whole, wind, wish, word, world, wow</p>
see	5071	0.58	<p>appreciate, assure, attend, attendance, attended, attending, believe, bet, call, card, care, carry, case, catch, check, checked, checking, come, consider, considered, considering, considers, contrast, control, count, cover, cross, date, dated, dating, debate, deliberate, determination, determining, disrespect, encounter, encountered, encountering, encounters, enjoy, escorting, esteem, examined, expect, experience, experiences, experiment, favor, feel, figure, figured, figures, figuring, find, finding, findings, glass, hear, hearing, hold, identify, imagine, include, insurance, insurer, interpret, interpretation, interpreted, interpreters, intersect, invite, learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, like, look, looked, looking, looks, make, meet, meeting, meetings, meets, minister, notice, observe, perceive, perception, picture, pictures, picturing, play, prize, project, projects, proofread, read, realization, realize, realized, realizing, regard, regards, respect, seat, see, seeing, sees, sense, skim, survey, take, tend, test, think, tour, understand, understanding, understands, value, view, views, visit, visited, visual, visualization, visualizing, visuals, watch, watched, watches, watchful, watching</p>

evaluating	5060	0.50	accept, acknowledge, admit, adopt, align, allow, anticipate, array, assess, assessment, assume, bank, believe, buy, call, challenge, charge, choose, clear, consider, critical, critique, delete, develop, disapprove, disrespect, edit, embrace, esteem, evaluate, evaluating, evaluation, except, expect, favor, feel, figure, find, grade, grading, guess, hold, identify, ignore, imagine, include, judgement, judgment, know, lift, like, make, measure, mind, order, place, praise, presume, prioritize, prize, project, promote, pronounce, push, range, rate, rating, recognize, recommend, regard, respect, rethink, reverse, review, revoke, rule, score, see, sequence, slight, stand, submit, suppose, suspect, think, trust, understand, upgrade, value, view
make	4732	0.38	access, accomplish, acquire, act, action, add, adopt, amount, appear, arrange, assure, attempt, author, become, bring, build, building, builds, burn, capture, cast, cause, caused, causes, causing, change, charge, clear, clearly, come, component, conduct, consider, constitutionality, constructed, construction, cook, copy, create, created, creates, creating, cross, customize, cut, design, develop, devil, direct, double, draw, drawing, dream, drive, earn, earning, elaborate, element, eliminate, establish, established, evoke, express, facilitate, figure, find, fix, fixed, follow, force, form, formed, forming, forms, found, frame, free, fruit, gain, gained, gains, gather, generate, get, give, gives, giving, grip, ground, grow, guarantee, guess, head, heat, hit, hits, hitting, hold, hurt, imagine, incorporate, innovate, inspire, interest, interpret, introduce, invite, kill, kind, lay, layer, look, machine, make, makes, making, map, model, modify, mold, motivate, move, name, names, net, number, occasion, offend, organize, overcome, paint, paragraph, pass, pattern, pay, peak, pen, perform, pick, picture, piece, pissed, place, plan, play, precook, preparation, prepare, prepared, preparing, present, press, print, produce, profile, program, project, prompt, pull, put, rag, raise, reach, reached, reaching, readiness, ready, realization, realize, realized, realizing, reference, regard, release, repeat, return, rough, run, scale, score, scores, secure, see, seem, set, sex, shame, shape, shell, shit, short, show, sort, spark, spiel, stage, stale, start, stimulate, strike, style, support, table, tack, take, takes, taking, tat, think, throw, tie, tissue, top, track, trigger, trip, upset, variety, verse, view, work, write

take	4684	0.41	accept, acceptable, acceptance, accepted, accepting, acquire, action, address, admit, admitted, adopt, apply, appropriate, arrest, assume, bare, base, become, bite, board, bring, bringing, brings, brush, bus, buy, capture, carried, carry, carrying, catch, change, charge, charter, choose, chooses, choosing, claim, clean, clear, collect, conduct, conducting, conducts, consider, considered, considering, considers, convey, cover, cross, deal, dealing, deals, decide, define, delete, detail, direct, directed, directing, direction, directions, directly, draw, drink, drive, drives, driving, drop, drug, eat, eliminate, employ, engage, engaged, engagement, engaging, enter, exact, exactly, experience, farm, feature, field, fill, filled, filling, find, finish, fix, get, grab, grip, ground, guide, guided, guides, guiding, hand, hit, hold, honor, income, interpret, issue, issues, kill, know, lead, leading, leads, level, lift, limit, love, lunch, move, name, net, peel, pick, picking, piece, place, play, point, position, pull, purchase, raise, range, read, reading, readings, reads, recall, record, remove, return, roll, sample, scale, see, select, selected, selecting, selection, set, shell, shoot, shooting, show, snack, steal, stone, stop, strike, stuff, submit, take, takes, taking, target, taste, test, tip, touch, track, train, trained, training, trainings, trains, try, turn, use, utilize, wash, welcome, win, work
information	4340	0.59	account, acquaintance, advise, agenda, alert, average, background, bare, basics, book, break, calendar, call, canary, card, case, casual, change, check, clarify, clear, coach, collection, comment, common, communicate, concern, confidence, consideration, content, contents, conversation, conversational, conversations, converse, conversing, convey, copy, cover, coverage, curriculum, daily, data, demographic, demonstrate, describe, detail, details, develop, direct, distribute, documentation, drill, dwell, ease, educate, educated, educational, elaborate, elicitation, enlightened, enlightening, everyday, example, excuse, expand, explain, fact, familiar, familiarity, finger, format, friendly, gas, general, grass, ground, headache, indicate, inform, informal, informally, information, informed, informs, infuse, input, inspire, instance, instructing, instruction, instructional, instructions, intelligence, interpret, intimate, introduce, inventory, issue, item, justification, key, knowing, knowledgeable, lead, learn, lecture, lie, list, manifest, manner, material, message, minimize, modify, moment, news, newsletter, notice, observation, observer, offer, orient, particular, peach, point, pose, post, prepare, present, presentation, presume, program, prompt, publicize, read, reading, reason, record, recount, reflect, regard, register, reinforce, reinforcement, relate, release, remind, repeat, rephrase, report, representative, respect, restate, resume, reveal, revelation, reward, reword, roll, sample, schedule, score, send, shit, shop, show, signal, sing, slang, slate, snow, speaker, specific, spread, spring, stack, standing, stimulus, story, strike, stuff, summarize, talk, teach, tell, telling, ticket, track, train, translate, trump, truth, tutor, verse, volunteer, wise, word, worry

move	4091	0.31	access, act, acting, acts, advance, advise, affect, affected, affecting, affects, approach, approaching, arrange, array, arrest, assist, assume, ball, bank, block, boot, bounce, bound, box, break, bring, brush, build, bus, capture, career, carry, cast, catch, cause, center, chain, change, charge, charleston, chatter, check, church, circle, clap, clip, close, closure, cloud, clue, combine, coming, communicate, completion, conduct, connect, control, convey, corner, course, create, crossing, crowd, curve, cut, dance, date, deal, decision, deliver, descent, determination, develop, dig, direct, disorder, disrespect, distribute, divert, divide, double, draw, dress, drill, drive, driving, drop, duck, engage, exchange, face, fall, fan, fell, fight, figure, filter, fix, flood, floor, flourish, flow, fly, flying, following, foot, force, forward, founder, gather, get, give, grab, ground, guard, hack, handle, hang, harass, hit, immigration, impact, inclination, inter, interact, invite, joint, journey, juggle, jump, juxtapose, kill, labor, lay, leave, lift, light, list, live, lose, lower, mail, make, manipulate, march, measure, meet, middle, mobile, motions, motivate, motivated, motivates, motivating, motivations, motivator, move, moved, movement, movements, moving, nick, nod, offer, opening, overflow, pace, paint, pair, park, parking, part, participate, partner, pass, passage, perform, pick, pink, pitching, place, plane, play, plod, porter, pose, position, post, practice, press, presume, progress, project, prompt, prompt#1, prompt#10, prompt#2, prompt#3, prompt#4, prompt#5, prompt#6, prompt#7, prompt#8, prompt#9, prompted, prompts, pull, pursue, push, put, race, raise, range, reach, reaching, reduce, refer, relate, release, relocation, remove, rest, return, reward, ride, riding, roll, root, run, running, saw, scroll, seat, see, send, separate, set, shade, shell, shift, ship, shock, shoot, shrink, shy, sick, sign, single, sit, site, sitting, situate, skim, skin, skip, slide, socialize, space, speed, split, spread, spring, square, stack, stage, stand, standing, start, steal, step, stirred, stretch, strike, struggle, stuff, surprise, sweep, switch, take, thread, throw, tie, tip, top, touch, touched, touching, tour, train, transfer, translate, translation, travel, traveling, tree, trick, trickle, trip, trouble, turn, upset, use, vary, volunteer, walk, walking, wash, waste, way, wind, work, worry, wow, wrap, zoom
get	4070	0.47	accept, acceptance, access, acquire, acquisition, act, address, admit, adopt, alight, amazed, amazing, arrest, arrivals, arrive, arrived, arriving, assure, baffling, become, becomes, becoming, begin, beginning, begins, benefit, break, bring, bringing, brings, bully, buy, capture, catch, cause, caused, causes, causing, change, charter, clear, collect, come, comes, coming, communicate, convey, course, cut, decide, deliver, develop, developed, developing, development, developments, devil, draw, drawing, drive, drives, driving, drop, earn, encourage, engage, engendered, enter, experience, experiences, experiment, express, fall, father, feel, fence, find, finding, findings, fix, fixed, force, gain, generate, generation, generations, get, gets, getting, give, going, grab, grow, growing, hear, hit, honor, hurt, influence, inspire, intend, lead, leave, let, lets, letting, light, make, makes, making, market, mean, modify, mother, mothers, mystifying, net, outsource, pay, poll, pose, process, produce, prompt, pull, purchase, puzzled, rag, reach, realize, received, return, run, secure, serve, share, shop, spring, start, started, starting, starts, stick, sticks, stimulants, stimulate, strike, suffered, take, takes, taking, throw, touch, transfer, turn, understand, wash, welcome, win, work

going	3898	0.44	achievement, act, active, advance, agree, alight, angle, approach, arise, attempt, back, belong, boat, boom, bounce, break, breaking, breaks, bridge, bubble, bus, career, carry, cast, change, charge, chatter, chime, choose, circle, clear, clip, close, come, compare, continue, correct, course, cover, cracking, cracks, cross, crowd, cut, cycle, death, department, departments, dog, double, draw, drive, drone, drop, duck, ease, effort, extended, extends, fail, failed, failing, fall, fell, file, fit, fits, fly, follow, foot, founder, function, functional, functionality, going, happen, head, home, hum, inch, joint, journey, jump, lag, last, lasts, lead, leading, leads, leave, leaves, leaving, lift, light, live, lived, lively, lives, living, loss, make, march, move, moved, moving, near, negotiate, offer, offered, offering, offerings, offers, open, pace, pass, passed, passing, pedal, pink, plane, play, plod, post, process, progress, pull, pursue, push, quest, race, range, recession, release, releasing, resort, return, ride, ring, roll, round, run, running, scale, school, scoot, see, seek, select, serve, set, shift, ship, shoot, sit, skim, slide, sound, sounded, sounds, speed, spelled, spelling, start, started, starting, starts, step, surf, surface, survival, survive, swim, take, thread, tip, tool, top, tour, toured, track, train, transfer, travel, traveled, traveling, travelled, tree, trump, try, turn, turned, turns, walk, well, wind, wing, work, worked, working, works, zoom
event	3852	0.37	achievement, acquisition, act, acting, action, activity, administration, agency, aggression, antagonism, application, assessment, assignment, assist, assistance, attempt, attendance, attending, behavior, breakthrough, business, calming, capture, case, cases, catch, causing, change, choice, collaboration, commitment, competition, conduct, conflict, contact, control, course, deal, dealing, dedication, delivery, demand, determination, dig, direction, discrimination, dish, drive, ease, economy, education, effort, election, employment, engagement, error, estimation, evaluation, event, events, exchange, exercise, failure, fault, fight, fighting, find, finding, fit, followup, fun, game, gathering, getting, giving, going, government, grab, grouping, hell, help, hit, hitting, hostility, important, influence, instruction, interaction, involvement, job, judgement, judgment, jump, justice, kindness, last, laughter, leadership, leading, leave, leaving, lift, line, lively, location, making, management, manipulation, market, means, measure, measurement, meeting, mistake, motivating, music, neglect, negotiation, objection, option, organization, participation, pattern, pause, pedagogy, performance, pick, placement, play, playing, politics, position, practice, praxis, preparation, procedure, process, protection, protest, pull, push, pushing, raise, rating, recreation, reference, release, resistance, responsibility, rest, return, rising, role, roll, rolling, segregation, selection, sending, service, sharing, shooting, stay, stop, struggle, supply, support, supporting, taking, teaching, thing, throw, touch, touching, training, transfer, trigger, try, turn, usage, use, visit, vote, wait, waiting, war, waste, way, wear, work, works, writing

know	3808	0.41	accept, acknowledge, acknowledgement, anticipate, appreciation, awareness, breakthrough, cognizant, comprehension, control, couple, distinguish, educated, experience, experiences, experiment, feel, find, grasp, hold, informed, intended, intent, intention, intentionally, ken, know, knowing, knowledge, knowledgeable, knows, learn, learned, learning, 'learning, learning', learns, light, live, lived, lively, lives, living, love, loved, loving, master, orientation, pair, realization, realize, recall, recognize, recognized, recognizing, remember, revelation, sense, separate, smattering, take, taste, tell, think, understanding, wise
connect	3755	0.32	acquaintance, appeal, articulate, associated, attached, bearing, bell, bridge, buckle, catch, chain, clip, close, code, cohesiveness, communication, comprehension, connect, connected, connecting, connection, connections, connectivity, contact, continually, continue, continued, continuing, continuous, correlate, couple, cover, encounter, engaged, enter, fair, fix, friend, generalization, ground, grounding, hang, hit, identify, inclusion, input, interact, introduce, involvement, joint, know, lead, link, love, match, mean, meeting, memory, mention, mismatch, name, neighboring, node, online, pair, paste, piece, point, post, raise, refer, relate, related, relates, relating, relational, relations, relative, relatively, relatives, relevance, remember, ride, ring, secure, series, serve, service, stay, stick, strike, supplement, tack, tape, think, tie, tied, ties, transfer, transportation, tying, union, unit, united, units, weld, wired
work	3255	0.32	acquisition, act, acting, action, activity, acts, analysis, answer, application, apply, assignment, assist, attention, baby, bank, become, break, bring, bringing, brings, brush, business, busy, campaign, capture, care, carry, cast, catch, cause, charge, collaborate, color, comparing, comparison, count, covering, create, danger, deal, difficulty, dig, diligence, dominate, drive, effort, employ, employment, energy, engagement, exercise, exercises, experiment, facility, farm, fatigue, fill, fix, followup, form, formed, forming, forms, function, functional, functionality, get, guard, guess, handle, hat, healthcare, help, influence, influenced, influences, inquiry, investigating, job, labor, layer, learning, line, machine, make, makes, making, man, manage, manipulate, medical, minister, mission, model, mold, move, movement, office, page, paperwork, part, pass, picking, place, plants, play, played, playing, plays, poll, position, pottery, practical, press, pressure, procedure, process, processes, processing, product, project, proposition, pull, ranch, recount, research, resolve, review, risk, role, run, running, serve, service, services, shape, shaped, shop, shower, slavery, solve, solved, spread, stimulate, strike, struggle, studied, studies, studio, study, studying, substituting, succeed, survey, take, tally, task, tell, temporary, testing, throw, till, tool, totality, treatment, trouble, turn, turned, turns, understand, upset, use, utilize, volunteer, wait, wash, washing, win, work, worked, working, workload, workplace, works, workshop

tell	3245	0.31	account, add, advance, advise, advocate, answer, articulate, assure, bare, break, call, charge, claim, comment, contrast, convey, counter, demand, direct, distinguish, distribute, dwell, edit, effective, explain, express, field, guarantee, guess, hold, identify, indicate, inform, intend, interpret, introduce, isolate, issue, know, lift, look, mean, mention, move, narrative, note, notice, observe, order, ordered, ordering, page, peach, place, point, present, proposition, protest, publicize, reason, recall, recommend, recount, relate, related, relates, relating, relational, relations, relative, relatively, relatives, release, repeat, rephrase, reply, require, respond, restate, resume, return, reveal, revealed, revelation, reword, saying, sayings, send, sentence, separate, separated, separately, several, severe, sex, show, signal, sing, spread, spring, state, stated, states, submit, summarize, supply, support, take, talk, tell, telling, tells, thank, translate, verbalize, vocalize
process	3149	0.30	acquisition, action, activity, advance, advanced, advancing, affect, appreciation, assessment, attending, attention, awareness, breathing, care, career, choice, closure, combination, connection, consideration, construction, control, crying, culture, deal, deciding, deliver, determination, developing, development, discrimination, distraction, dose, education, eye, feeling, figure, file, fingerprinting, handle, identification, impact, inspiration, intake, judgement, judgment, ken, know, knowing, language, learning, manage, march, memory, move, movement, neglect, notice, observance, observation, option, origin, perception, phenomenon, pick, planning, preparation, prepared, procedure, procedures, process, processes, processing, progress, progressive, push, quest, reading, recall, regard, resolution, response, rising, routine, run, rut, seeing, selection, serve, serving, sex, sleeping, sort, study, suggestion, taste, thinking, thought, thread, ticket, touch, transfer, treat, treated, understanding, walk, wash, work
concept	2852	0.49	absolute, access, admission, amount, aspect, base, basics, basis, beginning, category, claim, color, complex, component, concept, concepts, constant, constructed, construction, correlate, creativity, description, design, designed, designing, designs, dictate, division, due, element, end, fact, factor, feature, fertile, flavor, floor, form, foundation, fundamentals, given, grant, idea, innovate, innovative, kind, law, like, make, manner, middle, model, multiple, notion, notions, one, parameter, part, perception, point, product, quality, right, rule, section, sex, sort, style, teacher, term, texture, theory, thing, thought, title, type, unit, value, variable, variety, vote, way, whole, zero
like	2658	0.41	approval, care, cared, careful, carefully, caring, compare, compared, compares, comparing, comparison, consider, enjoy, esteem, favor, form, inclination, kind, like, liked, likely, likes, love, please, potential, prefer, preference, probably, reflection, regard, see, similar, similarities, similarly, sort, taste, variety, view, want, weakness, wish, wishes

think	2608	0.68	absorb, accept, acknowledge, add, admit, adopt, agreement, align, allow, analysis, anticipate, arrangement, array, assess, assume, average, believe, believed, believes, book, budget, calendar, call, carry, center, change, charge, choose, class, compare, concentrate, connect, consider, consideration, considered, considering, considers, construction, correlate, count, critique, deal, design, direct, disapprove, disrespect, divide, drink, embrace, engineer, esteem, estimation, evaluate, expect, experiment, experimentation, exploration, factor, favor, feel, figure, figuring, find, focus, frame, gather, give, grade, guess, guessing, hold, hope, idea, identify, ignore, imagine, include, inquiry, integrate, intelligence, intelligent, intend, intended, interpretation, introduce, key, know, like, line, link, make, mean, meaning, means, measure, mention, mind, mistake, modify, name, offer, order, organize, pay, place, plan, planning, play, poll, praise, preparation, presume, prioritize, prize, process, program, project, pronounce, purpose, question, range, rate, reason, reasons, recall, recalling, recognize, refer, reflect, reflection, regard, relate, remember, remembered, research, resolve, respect, rethink, review, schedule, score, see, separate, sequence, slate, solve, sort, stand, study, submit, subtract, suppose, supposed, survey, suspect, take, theory, think, thinking, thought, thoughtful, thoughts, thread, time, trust, type, upgrade, value, view, wonder
thought	2535	0.30	absolute, address, agenda, amount, attention, beauty, beginning, belief, bubble, category, complex, component, concept, consideration, considerations, constant, content, control, decision, design, determination, division, element, end, error, example, eyes, fact, factor, feature, feeling, form, generalization, heart, idea, ideal, ideas, inspiration, itinerary, judgement, judgment, kind, kindness, law, lost, meaning, middle, mind, mistake, misunderstanding, model, mother, notion, opinion, opinions, parameter, part, pattern, perception, perfection, plan, policy, politics, product, profound, program, project, quality, reference, reflect, reflected, reflecting, reflection, reflections, reflective, right, rule, schedule, section, serious, sophistication, sort, standard, strategy, study, suggestion, system, teacher, term, theme, theory, thing, thought, thoughtful, thoughts, unit, value, variable, variety, view, views, way, whole
kind	2417	0.32	action, address, category, color, consideration, description, favor, flavor, form, formed, forming, forms, good, goodness, kind, kindness, kinds, like, make, manner, mercy, model, nature, pardon, sort, sorts, style, turn, type, variety, version
class	2391	0.48	agent, case, caste, category, center, chosen, class, classes, collection, conference, course, courses, division, education, elective, estate, families, family, form, formed, forming, forms, future, gathering, gender, grade, grades, grading, group, instruction, isolate, labor, market, number, orientation, past, patient, pedagogy, people, person, pick, present, refer, result, section, seminar, separate, separated, separately, sex, shop, size, society, sort, sorts, teaching, tense, woman, workshop, world, year, years
hold	2362	0.37	acknowledge, admit, arrest, article, balance, bearing, bears, believe, belong, border, bound, call, carried, carry, carrying, clear, collect, consider, continue, control, cover, deal, deems, direct, drink, embrace, entertained, entertainment, estate, evaluate, exist, experience, feel, find, frame, grasp, ground, guard, hang, harbor, hold, husband, include, juggle, keep, letting, lift, maintain, money, nurses, obligations, pronounce, regard, retain, retained, reverse, revoke, rule, see, stop, store, stuff, table, take, things, think, train, trust, view, warehouse, wealth, weather

want	2334	0.49	absent, ambition, care, dearth, demand, desires, hope, hot, lack, like, long, loved, miss, missed, misses, missing, missing', necessary, need, needed, needing, needs, needy, please, precious, private, quest, require, required, requirement, requirements, requires, seek, trust, want, wanted, wanting, wants, wish, wishes
question	2303	0.57	ask, asking, case, challenge, converse, curious, funny, head, headed, heads, inquire, inquiry, inquisitive, interview, interviews, motions, problem, problematic, question, questionable, questioning, questions, reflect, seek, sentence, speaker, subject, supposed, suspect, test, theme, topic, wonder, wondered, wonderful, wondering
period	2250	0.51	administration, afternoon, age, annual, april, bit, bloom, chapter, childhood, christmas, daily, dark, date, day, days, dead, december, downtime, eighties, end, ending, even, evening, extra, fall, february, festival, fifties, flow, forties, full, generation, halloween, holiday, hour, hours, issue, january, journal, june, leave, life, majority, march, may, minority, minute, moment, month, morning, night, number, occasionally, october, pass, past, peak, period, periodic, periodically, periods, piece, quarter, rag, ramadan, reign, review, rule, run, school, second, semester, sentence, september, series, session, seventies, shift, sixties, sleep, spring, stage, stretch, summer, tenure, term, thirties, time, times, tour, twenties, vacation, value, watch, week, weekend, weekly, window, winter, year, years, youth
education	2153	0.31	academic, acquisition, assimilation, coach, content, derived, develop, developed, developing, development, developments, drill, educate, educated, educating, education, educational, educator, elicitation, enlightened, enlightening, evoke, experience, foundation, grounding, head, informed, instruction, instructor, knowing, knowledgeable, learn, learned, learning, lecture, lecturing, lesson, literate, master, pedagogy, preparation, prepare, prepared, preparing, principal, prof, professional, professor, school, socialize, sophistication, spoonfeeding, talk, teach, teacher, teaching, train, trained, training, trainings, trains, tutor, white
whole	2138	0.29	access, all', animal, approach, area, art, article, balance, ball, basic, bell, blank, block, board, body, bridge, bubble, building, cake, canvas, cell, complete, completed, completely, completing, completion, complex, composition, concept, connection, corner, course, covering, cross, design, door, duck, entire, entirely, extra, fabric, face, facility, felt, field, figure, finger, floor, fly, folder, full, future, gap, good, ground, guide, hanging, healthy, host, housing, individual, intake, integrate, integrated, issue, item, layer, lead, leading, level, life, lift, line, marker, master, material, means, memorial, mine, native, one, original, parent, pattern, person, product, relative, ring, row, scale, shell, solid, somebody, someone, story, test, totality, totally, unit, united, units, wear, whole, works
mentioned	2110	0.37	acknowledge, acknowledgement, appeal, comment, honor, input, lecture, mean, mention, mentioned, mentioning, name, names, note, notes, notice, observance, observant, observation, observations, observe, observed, observer, observing, pick, rag, raise, refer, reference, referred, remarkable, remember, round, speaker, state, tell

talk	1969	0.32	address, advise, begin, break, call, chair, chant, chat, chatter, comment, communicate, consider, continue, conversation, converse, counsel, debate, deliberate, deliver, dialog, dialogue, dialogues, dialoguing, dictate, discuss, discussion, drone, fence, hum, interview, lead, learn, lecture, lectures, lecturing, level, mouth, negotiate, negotiated, negotiating, negotiation, peach, place, present, question, read, reveal, sing, slang, speak, speaking, speaks, speech, spiel, talk, talked, talking, talks, teach, tell, tone, treatment, verbalize, verbally, visit, vocalize, wind, word
figure	1696	0.31	add, allow, amount, assess, average, base, bearing, branch, budget, charge, check, colors, computer, computers, count, couple, cross, design, designed, designing, designs, dig, divide, eight, enter, entered, entering, enters, estimation, evaluate, extended, factor, fellow, figure, figured, figures, figuring, five, foot, form, four, give, grasp, guess, guessing, heart, idea, integrate, make, model, nine, one, pair, parallel, pattern, patterns, pencil, perception, place, play, poetic, process, put, quarter, raise, reason, resolve, set, seven, single, six, solve, square, subtract, survey, three, tree, two, zero
meet	1638	0.29	accommodate, agree, alignment, answer, assembling, bank, border, bunch, cake, call, case, celebrate, check, concentrate, conference, contact, cover, crowd, date, deal, encounter, encountered, encountering, encounters, engagement, experience, face, fence, fill, filled, filling, fit, fits, fortify, frame, front, fulfilled, function, gather, gathering, glass, grass, interact, just, manage, march, match, matched, meet, meeting, meetings, meets, mold, party, play, played, playing, plays, press, provide, received, ring, round, satisfy, scratch, see, seminar, serve, session, sit, sitting, socializing, stay, stick, suffered, supply, surround, symposium, tally, touch, touched, touching, visit
number	1447	0.34	100, add, amount, balance, base, book, constant, count, counted, denominator, difference, dozen, drawing, duck, eight, factor, fifty, figure, figured, figures, figuring, find, first, five, four, game, hundred, identify, lead, limit, list, love, majority, match, million, minority, name, nine, number, numbers, numerous, one, page, population, real, record, recount, root, score, seven, seventeen, sign, signal, single, six, size, square, tally, ten, thirty, thousand, three, twenty, two, yard, zero
country	1327	0.45	afghanistan, america, angola, area, areas, armenia, belarus, bhutan, block, bosnia, burma, canada, center, china, clear, colombia, congo, corner, countries, country, croatia, danger, dark, england, ethiopia, eye, georgia, germany, heart, honduras, india, italy, japan, key, laos, light, mexico, micronesia, middle, moldova, myanmar, national, nationalities, nationality, nations, neighborhood, nepal, north, oman, open, outskirts, paint, paraguay, people, place, poland, power, refuge, region, resort, romania, russia, safety, scene, seat, section, see, singapore, slovakia, somalia, space, spain, stage, state, stated, states, sudan, sultanate, switzerland, thailand, turkey, ukraine, union, usa, venue, vietnam
need	1182	0.33	ask, asked, asking, asks, cost, dearth, demand, demands, draw, involve, involved, involvement, involves, involving, lack, motivate, motivated, motivates, motivating, motivations, motivator, necessarily, necessary, need, needed, needing, needs, press, pressure, require, required, requirement, requirements, requires, status, take, takes, taking, want
students	1080	1.37	doctor, father, intellectual, luther, major, master, scholastic, senior, student, students, students', students', undergrad

diverse	894	0.31	activity, bet, cast, catch, celebration, crab, dance, dancing, different, distraction, diverse, diversity, doctor, drawing, entertainment, fair, festival, fun, game, house, interest, joke, phrase, pinball, play, presentation, rag, recreation, recreational, riding, roll, row, rowing, running, show, showing, swim, throw, track, trick, turn, variety, various, wrestling
others	752	0.33	another, difference, different, distinct, early, former, formerly, new, opposite, others, others', otherwise, past, separate, separated, separately, strange, unusual
really	572	0.81	actual, actually, genuine, genuinely, real, really, truly
affirmatively	557	0.37	affirmatively, approval, assure, charge, claim, commitment, complain, dedication, hold, judgement, judgment, maintain, positive, possible, protest, take, tax, tell, yes
activities	500	0.32	abuse, act, acting, action, active, activist, activities, activity, advocacy, agency, aggression, agile, alignment, analysis, application, approval, art, assembling, assignment, assist, assistance, composition, conduct, construction, control, copying, count, course, cover, covering, cracking, cuttinn, facility, familiarity, farming, feedback, festival, fight, , last, laughter, lead, leadership, leading, leeway, life, lift, line, listening, literature, live, location, loo selection, seminar, sequence, service, services, set, sevens, share, shop, , spot, start, starting, strike, struggle, suse, using, vice, voice, walk, warming, wash, washing, waste, work, workload, works, workshop, writing, wrong
yeah	386	0.62	yeah
sometimes	298	0.40	former, formerly, old, olds, past, sometime, sometimes
something	231	0.37	something, somethings
maybe	206	0.31	maybe, perhaps, possibilities, possible, possibly
always	201	0.31	always, constant, constantly, ever, forever
also	189	0.31	also, besides