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In and Out of the Matrix: Three Elementary Pre-Service Teachers' Reflective Journeys toward Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

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ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, IN AND OUT OF THE MATRIX: THREE ELEMENTARY PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' REFLECTIVE JOURNEYS TOWARD CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY by TONIA DURDEN, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Education, Georgia State University.

The Dissertation Advisory Committee and the student's Department chair, as representatives of the faculty, certify that this dissertation has met all standards of excellence and scholarship as determined by the faculty. The Dean of the College of Education concurs.

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ABSTRACT

IN AND OUT OF THE MATRIX: THREE ELEMENTARY PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' REFLECTIVE JOURNEYS TOWARD CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY
by
TONIA DURDEN

Heeding Hillard's call for teachers to crack the walls of the matrix (inequitable schooling), this qualitative case study used Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory as a theoretical lens and methodological tool to investigate the reflections of three elementary pre-service teachers. The first research question examined participants' reflections as they were learning about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. The second question explored how these reflections connected to their developing culturally relevant beliefs and practices. To investigate these research questions the data sources collected for each participant included a pre/post Love & Kruger questionnaire, three individual semi-structured interview transcripts, eight written course documents, and two individual member written records. Cross case and within case analyses were conducted using a priori and open coding for all data and utilized the analytic strategy of *relying on theoretical propositions*. The theoretical proposition for this study was that teachers who reflected across systems of influences had more culturally relevant beliefs and practices. Findings from the cross case analysis suggested that (a) participants' had shared patterns of reflectivity (b) drew upon multiple tools of references when confronted with less culturally relevant teaching in the field and program and (c) some course assignments facilitated participants' reflection across systems more

than others. The results from the within case analysis suggested that (a) participants' racial identity experiences were the lenses they used to reflect on what being a culturally relevant teacher meant (b) some participants experienced cultural dissonance in the teacher development program as they considered culturally relevant pedagogy and (c) critical reflections across systems of influence revealed more developed understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. This study offers insights about using critical reflectivity in developing pre-service teachers' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy.

IN AND OUT OF THE MATRIX: THREE ELEMENTARY PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' REFLECTIVE JOURNEYS TOWARD CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY

by

Tonia R. Durden

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2009

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ABBREVIATIONS

CLD	Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students
CRCA	Culturally Responsive Change Agents
CRP	Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
ECE	Early Childhood Education
EXO	Exosystems of Influence
MACRO	Macrosystems of Influences
MESO	Mesosystem of Influences
MICRO	Microsystems of Influences
PSTs	Pre Service Teachers

CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM

> I hope that the madness of the matrix has run its course, and that the new teachers will not come to it seeing their task mainly as getting *credentialed*, or *qualified* simply to serve in it. Who is asking for *character, critical consciousness*, and *social responsibility*? I dream that the new teachers will crack the walls of the matrix, to go over and beyond, around beneath, and far above those of us who are stuck in neutral and spinning our wheels in a bad place. Teaming millions of our genius children, some wearing the false labels of "retarded," "at-risk," "attention deficit disordered," "oppositional defiant disordered," etc., are waiting for the next generation of teachers. I have already seen many in the next generation of teachers who are ready now for a new space, place, mission, and who will settle for nothing less. They will be free. They will be human. They will be connected, not aliens. They will demand a place to stand. They are the ones for whom our children are waiting. (Hilliard, 2006, p.98-99)

Esteemed educational scholar Dr. Asa Hilliard referred to the 'matrix' as educational influences, practices or beliefs that contribute to inequitable schooling experiences and argued that many teachers, pre-service teachers and teacher educators are stuck in educational reforms, mandates, instructional and assessment practices that negatively impact the educational experiences of many children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Hilliard, 2006). Like other multicultural scholars, Hilliard (2006) calls upon a new breed of teachers, who are eager to and trained to awaken the natural genius and brilliance of children of color by implementing practices and beliefs that are culturally relevant and affirming (Cochran-Smith, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1999). Doing so, asks teachers to teach "against the grain" (Cochran-Smith, 2001, p.3) by being an advocate for student rights and responding to scripted

programs and standardized testing. Moving in and out of the 'matrix' requires careful cultivating of a new generation of teachers who reflect about their practices in relation to the world of learners and the worlds that influence that learning. In this study, researchers examine the reflective practices of three elementary pre-service teachers as they journey towards culturally relevant pedagogy and become teachers for the 21st century.

My focus in this study on exploring pre-service teacher's development of culturally relevant pedagogy and Hilliard's call for action is significant to how teacher development programs train our future teachers because teaching in the 21st century requires more attention on developing teachers who are prepared to teach children who may be culturally, linguistically and economically different from them. For example, 43% of the public school population includes children from ethnically and linguistically diverse backgrounds (i.e., African American, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaskan Native). On the other hand 84% of the teacher workforce and pre-service teachers are White, middle class and female (Zumwalt & Craig, 2008). Multicultural researchers argue that this cultural mismatch is problematic for two reasons. First, when European American elementary pre-service teachers (PSTs) enter teacher development programs most bring with them little cross cultural awareness of diverse student populations and hold fairly naïve, deficit and stereotypical beliefs about children from diverse backgrounds (King, 1991; Larke, 1990; Sleeter, 2001b). Even when introduced to issues of racism, discrimination and inequality in schooling and education within their teacher education programs these teachers often dismiss such issues as not applicable in today's' society and therefore believe that being colorblind is affirming to diverse students instead (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; McIntyre, 2002;

Valli, 1992). By contrast, the multicultural literature tells us that pre-service teachers from diverse backgrounds come with more affirming beliefs about CLD students than their European American peers and have firsthand knowledge about the barriers diverse students face (Irvine & Armento, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1991; Sleeter, 2001b; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). These pre-service teachers tend to be more committed to multicultural teaching and providing children from diverse backgrounds with more challenging and rigorous academic experiences (Irvine, 1990; Villegas & Davis, 2008).

Second the cultural mismatch is problematic because once pre-service teachers have a classroom of their own such beliefs inevitably transfer into their practices and interactions with CLD students. For example, many European American teachers are unfamiliar with the home experiences and realities of children from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, tend to consider European American and Asian children more teachable (Sleeter, 2008) and therefore more likely than teachers of color to have lower expectations of diverse students and have difficulty forging relationships specifically with their Black and Latino students (Hauser-Cram, Sirin, Stipek, 2003). Multicultural scholars argue that the result of the combination of lower expectations and cultural mismatch is higher referral to special education and poor educational experiences for CLD students (Harry & Kilnger, 2006; Sleeter, 2008).

Such cultural mismatch could also explain how an achievement gap still exists between European American children and their ethnically diverse peers. For example, the National Assessment of Educational Progress results in reading and mathematics show that European American students in fourth and eighth grade had higher average scores than their African American, Hispanic or American Indian peers (National Center for Educational

Statistics, 2008). Specifically in the area of reading, African American fourth graders scored on average 27 points lower than Whites while Hispanics scored 56 points lower than Whites (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2008). However, my dissertation explores how teacher education programs can better prepare **all** pre-service teachers with a diverse range of understandings in reversing such statistics.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

How then can we prepare teachers who are able to teach outside of the 'matrix' and 'against the grain' once they are teachers (Cochran-Smith, 2001; Hilliard, 2006)? Cochran-Smith (2001) argue that it is the responsibility of teacher educators to "prepare teachers to challenge the inequities that are deeply embedded in systems of schooling and in society" by teaching "against the grain" to intentionally and positively impact the life changes of children (p. 3). As one of the theoretical lens for my study, preparing teachers who will positively impact the lives of children from diverse backgrounds requires a focus on teaching that is culturally relevant to children. Such teaching is known in the multicultural literature as culturally relevant pedagogy and one of the most popular frameworks of teaching used in teacher education programs to prepare pre-service teachers for teaching CLD students (Irvine, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Culturally relevant pedagogy "empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural references to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997, p.18). Gay (2000) and Howard (2003) add that culturally relevant pedagogy involves teachers connecting classroom experiences and learning to children's home experiences and native language. To effectively do this Ladson-Billings (1994) reports that schools and teachers must first believe that all students can succeed

and maintain an affirming student-teacher relationship. Hilliard (2000, 2006) further argues that schools should abandon the use of terms such as ‘at risk’ and disadvantage’ that are labels for diverse students and instead adopt beliefs that speak to the brilliance and cultural tools that children from diverse backgrounds bring with them to the classroom.

Secondly, culturally relevant pedagogy sees excellence as a complex standard that takes student diversity and individual differences into account. Therefore teachers and instructional programs that implement culturally relevant pedagogy help students make connections between their community, national, and global identities. It also encourages students to work collaborately and expects them to take responsibility for each other (Ladson-Billings 1994, 1995). I have described culturally relevant pedagogy because it has evolved as one of the leading foundational framework used in teacher education to train teachers for their future work with culturally and linguistically diverse students (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 1996; Hollis & Guzman, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Programs focus on introducing concepts of culturally relevant pedagogies in hopes of developing their current recruits as future culturally relevant teachers. Arguably developing teachers who are responsive to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students maximizes the opportunities for equitable and high quality learning experiences for these students.

Reflection as a Mechanism for Change

One way that teacher education programs are attempting to develop more culturally relevant teachers is providing opportunities throughout the program for them develop as reflective practitioners who constantly reflect on how their beliefs and

practices are affirming and/or subtractive to their students (Cochran-Smith, 2004). The focus on developing teachers who become reflective practitioners is nostalgic of the educational aims of teacher development programs as far back as the early 1900s. Since that time, many teacher educators across the United States are committed to developing pre-service teachers who have a thirst for critically examining their teaching and learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1990; Dewey, 1903; Schön, 1983, 1987; Valli, 1992). In its simplest form, to reflect is to think back on or about a phenomena, event, or experience (Valli, 1997). However, noted as the early proponent of developing teachers' reflective practice, John Dewy asserts that it consists of "active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends" (1903, p.9). Dewey differentiates between routine action and reflective action. He charges that routine action refers to teachers engaging in impulsive, mundane, and routine teaching practices because they are familiar and comfortable to them. Instead, he argued for reflective action in which the teachers intentionally inject doubt into routine activities and then create a viable and logical solution (Dewey, 1933). Nevertheless, a reflective person is a deliberate thinker who engages in solving problems, creating analogies, and making evaluations and generalizations (Birmingham, 2003; Mezirow & Associates, 1990). Specifically in the area of teacher development, as addressed in Standard #9 of the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium Standard (INTASC[1]) teacher as a reflective practitioner is one that "continually evaluates the effects of his/her choices and actions on

[1] INTASC is a consortium of national educational organizations and state educational agencies dedicated to support teacher licensure, professional development and program approval. There are ten standards issued that serve as a rubric from which teachers must show competence in order to become certified to teach (Council of Chief State School Offices, 2007).

others (students, parents, and other professional in the learning community) and who actively seeks out opportunities to grow professionally" (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2007, p. 30).

Since Dewey's era, inexorably as classrooms have become more diverse, the focus of teachers' reflection has evolved over the years. Multicultural scholars argue that when preparing teachers for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students, teacher development programs must allow elementary pre-service teachers to move even beyond Dewey's call for reflective action to more critical examinations of one's ideology as it specifically relates to diverse students and its influence on pedagogy (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Johnson, 2001). Such criticality in reflectivity can be defined as a teacher's close examination of the multiple constructs that impact teaching and student learning such as instructional pedagogy, children's prior knowledge, and educational mandates (Griffin, 2003; Valli, 1997). In practice, critical reflectivity requires teachers to closely question routine and habitual classroom practices by analyzing how teaching is actually a highly contextual and complex act (Schwartz, 1996; Zeichner & Liston, 1987). Furthermore, critical reflectivity can challenge teachers to explore personal, professional, and larger systematic influences that impact student learning and development.

Over the past two decades, encouraging critical reflectivity in teacher development has become an inevitable agenda as diverse student populations rapidly increase (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2008). Previously, reflection has been an instrumental practice in teacher development programs as future teachers learn to differentiate instruction for students with multiple learning abilities. For example, teacher education programs focused on helping teachers understand the complexity of the craft

and multiple realities of teaching such as teacher as caregiver, educator, researcher, nurse, friend, and advocate (Schwartz, 1996). However, teaching in the 21st century now requires more than teachers reflecting on strategies and instruction related to technical components of instruction at multiple ability levels. Because classrooms are more diverse, teachers are now faced w with considering how socio-cultural and linguistic elements of the classroom influence teaching and learning for diverse student populations (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

Purpose and Significance of the Study

As discussed in the previous section, the increase of students from diverse backgrounds is becoming a reality in classrooms across America (Lippman, Burns, & McArthur, 1996; Hollins & Guzman, 2005). However, while classrooms are becoming more diverse, the teaching force remains ethnically and linguistically homogenous (Zumwalt & Craig, 2008). As a result, multicultural scholars argue that the disconnect between teachers and students is one explanation for the low performance of these student groups (Hilliard, 2006; King, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Sleeter, 2001b). Therefore, to address the achievement gap between diverse students and their European American peers, researchers and educators have shifted the focus from how students contribute to low school performance to how teacher education programs have contributed to the low performance of students (Gay, 2000). This shift has spurred a convergence of literature on strategies for preparing teachers to teach culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. The current literature and research suggest that there are two primary approaches programs use to address the cultural divide between teachers and diverse student populations. The first is to recruit more prospective teachers

of color (Becket, 1998; Brennan & Bliss, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Guyton, Saxton, & Weshce, 1996). The premise behind this approach is that teachers of color bring richer perspectives and experiences to multicultural teaching than most European American students who numerically dominate teacher education programs and the workforce (Ladson-Billings, 1991; Zumwalt & Craig, 2008). Therefore, by recruiting more minority teachers, teacher educators have opportunities to further develop these perspectives into culturally relevant pedagogy

The second strategy most commonly used is to develop the multicultural knowledge base of elementary pre-service teachers (Sleeter, 2001b). As mentioned previously, most elementary pre-service teachers come to teacher education programs with deficit beliefs about diverse student populations which inevitably impact how they interact with these students (King, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Sleeter, 2008). Therefore, strategies noted in teacher education programs to develop more affirming and positive images of diverse student populations includes completing an action research project in a communities or schools that are culturally diverse, reflective journaling on racism and inequitable schooling experiences, and engaging elementary pre-service teachers in school- based inquiry communities where they assist in reforming culturally diverse urban schools (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1992; Olmedo, 1997).

To develop a more affirming ideology and pedagogy among elementary pre-service teachers, the most prevalent strategy used throughout teacher education programs is providing opportunities for pre-service teachers to reflect on their prejudices, bias, and beliefs about diverse student populations (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Howard, 2003). However, critics charge that the current research that examines how to develop culturally

relevant teachers is a collection of small scale research studies that are piecemeal and fragmented which therefore produces "disjointed and somewhat repetitious knowledge base" (Sleeter, 2001b , p. 102). Furthermore, while the current multicultural research explores critical reflectivity as a strategy for helping to develop culturally relevant teachers, there is a gap in the research that explores in depth the connection between the process of this development to critical reflection itself (Howard, 2003; Webb, 2001). In other words, how do elementary pre-service teachers' reflections relate to their current beliefs about culturally and linguistically diverse student populations? And further, how do these reflections relate to their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy? In examining these inquiries, the current study explored how three elementary pre-service teachers' reflections exhibit elements of critical reflectivity and how these reflections revealed their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. The guiding research questions for this study were

- How do elementary pre-service teachers reflect when learning about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students?
- What do these reflections reveal about participants' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy?

Unique to the current literature, I examined three elementary pre-service teachers' reflections as they were learning to teach culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. I then analyzed their reflections to see what they revealed about each participants' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. As will be discussed in detail in chapter two, I examined participant's reflections using Bronfenbrenner's ecological system's theory. From this perspective, learning and development is mediated directly and indirectly by various environmental and personal systems of influences (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). He identifies systems as those in which the individual is directly

a participant within (mico and meso) such as work and home life and those he/she is not actively engaged in but impacts him or her nonetheless (chrono, exo, macro) such as healthcare reform policies. Therefore, I applied Bronfenbrenner's theory to examine how pre-service teachers reflected on the multiple systems of influences that impact the teaching and learning of diverse students (i.e. educational policy and teacher's pedagogy) but also those influences (i.e. teacher education program) that shaped their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. The focus on investigating participants' reflectivity across systems of influences to their development of understanding culturally relevant pedagogy was inspired by findings from a pilot study I conducted in spring 2007. In the next section I briefly describe the connection between the findings from my pilot study to the development of my dissertation research inquiry. Refer to Appendix A for a more detailed description of the pilot study data collection, analysis and results.

Pilot Study

The purpose of the pilot study was to critically examine the teaching and learning processes in a cultural diversity course for first semester teacher education students. The guiding research question for the study was: *How is teaching and learning constructed in a cultural diversity course?* The following section briefly explores the research design of the pilot study and presents how the findings led to the current research inquiry.

Research Design and Procedures

For the pilot study I used case study methodology to explore the teaching and learning in a mandatory multicultural course for elementary pre-service teachers (PSTs).

The participants included 26 PSTs and the course instructor, Dr. Davis[2]. I observed twelve course sessions; conducted four semi-structured group interviews with PSTs and two individual interviews with the course instructor; and collected course syllabus, readings and PSTs weblogs. I analyzed each data source by first engaging in open coding which involved continual reflection about the data, writing reflective memos that identified emergent codes and themes, and asking analytical questions throughout the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Lastly, I collapsed the codes to determine final emergent themes and patterns.

Findings

After analyzing data from the multiple data sources (course observations, group and individual interviews, weblog reflections), findings were categorized according to three main categories: (a) construction of diversity topics, (b) PSTs response to instructor's critical discourse and pedagogical choices, and (c) connectivity to topics and liberatory praxis. I present only the findings from the first two categories because they helped to inform my dissertation inquiry.

Construction of Diversity Topics

To better understand how knowledge was constructed in the multicultural course, I attempted to first make parallels between the instructor's ideological stance of critical pedagogy and consequently how PSTs responded. Findings indicated that Dr. Davis maintained a critical perspective throughout the semester when teaching PSTs about cultural diversity issues. A critical perspective was represented in her class readings and discussions which focused on introducing pre-service teachers to social, historic, and political influences that impact the teaching and learning of diverse students.

[2] Pseudonyms are used when identifying participants from the pilot and current study.

Furthermore, her discourse or language used in the course during class discussions and activities challenged pre-service teachers to consider implementing critical pedagogy in the classroom and to reflect on how they could become an advocate for children who have been historically oppressed and subjected to inequitable schooling experiences. Pre-service teachers responded to Dr. Davis's attempts to have them 'push the envelope' and become agents of change in their future classrooms with resistance and uncertainty.

Pre-service Teachers' Response to Instructor's Critical Discourse

Consistent across all data sources, pre-service teachers' displayed resistance towards the application and relevance of diversity topics to teaching children. I coded participants' reflections as resistant if they rejected and/or challenged the ideological frameworks presented during class discussions and readings by the instructor. It is important to note that pre-service teacher's resistance to topics doesn't particularly suggest that they are resistant to the beliefs of culturally relevant pedagogy nor closed to negotiating their current beliefs that may counter culturally relevant ideology. They were uncertain with how issues of racism, oppression and societal labeling had any relevance to teaching children reading, writing and arithmetic. Their reflections revealed frustrations in not understanding the 'So What' connection of societal issues to those found in the classroom.

Pilot Study and Dissertation Inquiry

When I reflected on these particular findings from the pilot study, I began to consider what else pre-service teacher's reflections could reveal about their development and understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Also, I became interested in why there seemed to be a disconnect for participants as they reflected on larger constructs

such as SES and racism. I further inquired about the influence of the teacher education program in facilitating the growth and development of our pre-service teachers who bring with them multiple experiences and prior knowledge related to culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP). These inquiries led me to the current study of examining pre-service teachers' reflections to see whether and how they considered classroom, community, and societal influences that impact the teaching and learning of culturally and linguistically diverse students. I was also interested in exploring the connections between pre-service teachers' reflections beyond the classroom to their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Naturally Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory became the ideal framework to examine participants' reflections for evidence of reflecting across systems of influences as well as those influences that impacted their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. In the next chapter I detail how I used Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory as a framework for understanding pre-service teachers' development towards culturally relevant pedagogy. In chapter three I then describe how I used Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems' when analyzing participants' reflections about learning to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. In chapters four and five I present in detail the results of my analysis of the data collected. Lastly, I leave the reader with final discussions and implications for understanding how to further develop elementary pre-service teachers' understandings of CRP using reflectivity. I end this chapter with a definition of terms used in the following chapters.

Defining of Terms

1. Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Systems theory: theoretical framework that suggests understanding individual development entails identifying the various layers of influences between the individual and his/her environment. These layers are called microsystem, mesosytem, exosystem, macrosystem, and chronosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)
2. Chronosytem of influence: level in Bronfenbrenner's ecological model that represents the process in which the entire system moves through time and includes the impact of historical events on the individual (Thomas, 1996)
3. Critical reflectivity: reflections (written or verbal) about teaching and learning beyond "routine action" to deeper examinations of the multiple constructs (racism, prejudice, oppression, etc.) that impact ideology and pedagogy in the classroom and beyond (Dewey, 1903; Freire, 1973; Howard, 2003)
4. Culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students: students whose native language is not English and/or whose ethnicity represents diverse populations (i.e. African American, Latino, Asian, Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaskan Native) (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997)
5. Culturally relevant pedagogy: "an approach to teaching and learning that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural references to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997 p. 62).
6. Culturally relevant teachers: teachers who position themselves to implement culturally relevant pedagogy and strategically seek ways to transform curriculum,

instructional practices, staff development and even community alliances such that they are equitable and offer students quality educational experiences (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1994,1995)

7. Diverse student populations: students who are distinguished from mainstream society by their ethnicity, social class, and primary language
8. Elementary pre-service teachers: students who are currently working towards a teaching certificate in a teacher development program
9. Exosystem of influence: level in Bronfenbrenner's ecological model that refers to the settings that do not involve the individual as an active participant
10. Macrosystems of influence: level in Bronfenbrenner's ecological model that refers to the overarching attitudes, ideals, and beliefs of society that impact teaching and learning
11. Mesosystem of influence: level in Bronfenbrenner's ecological model that is noted as a process rather than an actual system of influence and refers to the interplay between two or more Microsystems (Thomas, 1996)
12. Microsystem of influence: level in Bronfenbrenner's ecological model that refers to the settings that are directly influenced by or influences the individual (i.e. classroom, prior knowledge, etc.) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979)
13. Racial identity: how a person internally identifies him or herself according to personal and physical characteristics. These racial labels could include: Black, White, Asian, Hispanic, etc. (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997)

14. Reflection: “active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends” (Dewey, 1903, p.9)
15. Teacher development: the education of teachers at all levels unless specifically identified as pre-service teacher development (Fuller, 1969)

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

For over 30 years, there has been a vast number of inquires and scholarly conversations on how to improve the educational experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse students. These conversations were sparked by the increase in diverse students, the discontinuity between the experiences of the teaching force and the students they teach (Swartz, 2003), and discontinuity between students' home and schooling experiences (Gay, 1993, 2000). Therefore, teacher preparation programs face the challenge of preparing primarily a European American-middle class female work force to teach students who may be culturally, linguistically, economically, and ethnically different from them (Ladson-Billings, 1991; Zumwalt & Craig, 2008).

Multicultural scholars argue that before elementary pre-service teachers can teach in culturally diverse contexts, there must be efforts such as self-reflective opportunities throughout the teacher education program for pres-service teachers (PSTs) to examine their beliefs and perceptions about student who are culturally and linguistically different from them (King, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 1999). When reflecting on these beliefs they should consider how using the cultural and linguistic capital and tools children bring with them to the classroom accelerates, enhances, and affirms children's' educational experiences (Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, 2003).

For this study I examined three elementary pre-service teachers' reflections about influences in the classroom and beyond that shape the teaching and learning of diverse

students. Such reflectivity was considered critical because it required a deeper examination of how the teaching and learning of diverse student populations is influenced even by the 'matrix' or factors outside of the classroom such as educational policy, cultural and linguistic assimilation, and inequitable resource distribution, etc (Hilliard, 2006; Webb, 2001). By examining participants' reflections about learning to teach culturally diverse (CLD) students I hoped to uncover insights into pre-service teachers' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. In this chapter I present the review of related literature that shows how I used Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory as the lens and methodological tool in my study.

Conceptualizing Bronfenbrenner's Ecological System's Theory

In the late 1970's Bronfenbrenner introduced a new theoretical perspective on human development to the field of education and psychology. This perspective looked at individual development as an evolving interaction between the developing person and his/or her environment (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). This lens of viewing human development became known as the Ecological System Theory. Bronfenbrenner argued that to understand a person's development requires an observation and examination of how he/she "perceives and deals with his or her environment" (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, p. 3). Although mostly cited in the literature and research on child development, Bronfenbrenner defined the individual as a child or adult and therefore development as spanning from childhood throughout adulthood. While his theory suggests that the individual is being influenced by multiple environmental factors, Sink 's (2002) analysis of Bronfenbrenner's theory found that it is transmissive and there is little evidence to suggest that individual herself can influence or shape environmental factors; especially

those in which she is not an active participant. In this study however, I adapted Bronfenbrenner's work to consider both the influences that impact an individual's development and those influences that she could herself impact. The individual is the pre-service teacher and the 'development' is understanding culturally relevant pedagogy. Therefore, when explaining and providing examples of the precepts of the ecological systems theory I will use the pre-service teacher as the developing individual.

The distinctive characteristic of this theory is how Bronfenbrenner conceptualizes 'environments' in relation to individual development. For example, a person's development is not only influenced by settings in his/her immediate surroundings such as the teacher education program and field experiences, but also by settings or environments in which they are not actively engaged, such as educational policy and school reforms. Bronfenbrenner identified these as 'systems' that influence the development of the individual and labeled them as: micro, meso, exo, macro and chrono.

The microsystems of influences refer to settings that are directly influenced by or influence the pre-service teacher. Examples of settings in this system are the classroom itself and the teacher's personal beliefs and values about teaching and learning. The mesosystem is described as the connection between two settings (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Thomas, 1996) such as the relationship between a pre-service teacher's personal beliefs and professional life. On the other hand, the exosystem refers to settings that do not involve the individual as an active participant (Cassidy, Vardell, & Buell, 1995). This system of influence may include national mandates such as No Child Left Behind or educational school reforms. Furthermore, macro systems refer to the overarching attitudes, ideals, and beliefs of society that impact teaching and learning. This could

include adopting an American meritocracy belief that people in society are successful because they work hard and deserve to be where they are, whereas those who are not successful did not work hard enough (Leman, 1999). Lastly, according to Bronfenbrenner (1979) the chronosystem is the process in which this entire system moves through time and includes the impact of historical events on the individual. For example, a chronsystematic influence that impacts pre-service teacher's development and one they should consider is the change in student demographics in the 21st century and therefore a change that has occurred in teacher education programs and classrooms to meet the needs of diverse students.

Nevertheless, in the following sections I detail how I adapted Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to examine pre-service teachers' reflections when learning to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. In theory, throughout the study I held the position that the individual's (pre-service teacher) development (culturally relevant pedagogy) is influenced by multiple settings across systems (i.e. teacher education program, national mandates, and societal beliefs). Therefore in practice (research), the methodology included considering how these systems influenced the development of the three elementary pre-service teachers who held diverse perspectives and beliefs about culturally relevant pedagogy. I also analyzed participants' reflections to see whether and how they reflected across systems of influences that impact the teaching and learning of diverse students and what these reflections revealed about their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. To guide this discussion, a summary of both the influences that impact the development of pre-service teachers towards culturally relevant teaching

and what I argue that they should also be reflecting upon when learning to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students are depicted in Figure 1.

Chronosystems and Reflectivity

Chronosystems of influences are those historical events that inevitably impact the developing individual. There are multiple historic events that have evolved over time that impact the preparation of our current recruits such as the cultural shift in student populations and the evolution of teacher training over time. In the following sections I detail how teacher education has evolved over time to become more inclusive of focusing on multicultural education. I present such chronosystems of influences first because it establishes a historical context for which teacher education programs have been and continue to be challenged by multicultural scholars to not do business as usual.

History of Teacher Education

Teacher education as we know it today has evolved since its introduction in America some 200 years ago. During the post-civil war years an intense period of urbanization occurred which spurred demand for skilled workers, brought a wave of immigrants to the U.S. and therefore a call for professionally trained teachers (Schwartz, 1996). It was during this time that the normal schools were created to train a new breed of teachers who would focus on reading, ‘ritin’ and ‘rithmetic’ in order to prepare children for factory work (Labree, 2008).

Of course, the settings and programmatic focus for teacher education have changed over the years to meet the cultural and economic needs of our country. First, for the past fifty years, universities and academic departments took over the work of teacher education. Therefore, the focus decreased from practical approaches to teaching to more

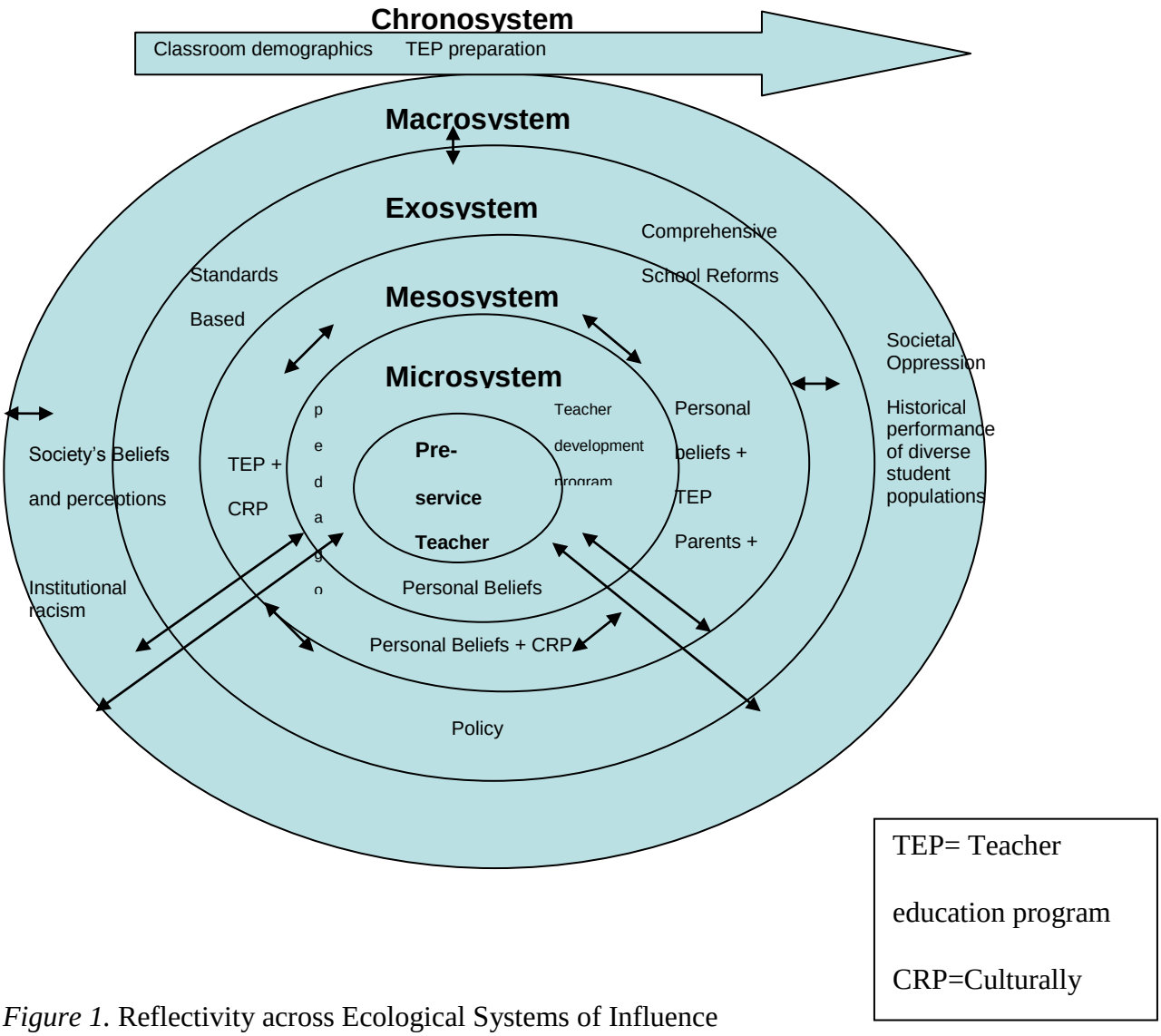

Figure 1. Reflectivity across Ecological Systems of Influence

theoretical and conceptual aspects of teacher education (Houston, 2008). Secondly, when universities first began to take interest in teacher education these institutions trained and prepared European American females (Urban, 1990) and later in the 60s European American philanthropist began to develop schools for Blacks who were interested in pursing a career in education (Urban, 1990). It wasn't until 1980s that teacher education

programs that served only European American pre-service teachers were pressed to recruit and prepare more people of color for the profession (Villegas, 2008). Thus began the efforts for teacher education programs to diversify the teaching workforce.

This evolution of what we know teacher education to be today is an important chronosystematic influence because it allows us to examine how the structures and program focus can include components that prepare teachers from all backgrounds for the increasing population of culturally and linguistically diverse students in American classrooms.

Multicultural Teacher Education

In the early 1970s educational activists began to push for a documented focus in teacher education on " cultural diversity, alternative and emerging lifestyles, multiculturalism, and multilingualism" (Irvine, 2008, p. 675). This document became known as the *No One Model American* statement by American Association for Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE)[3] which marked the beginnings of teacher education programs focusing on diversity issues. At its early inception, multicultural education training introduced pre-service teachers' to ways of reforming the curriculum towards affirming diversity. For example, Banks (2004) a noted multicultural scholar, identified the early trainings of multicultural education as the lower level of 'content integration' which provides pre-service teachers will illustrative examples of key concepts and generalization of people from diverse cultures. As multicultural research evolved, critics like Louise Derman-Sparks and the A.B.C. Task Force (1989) labeled such curriculum as

[3] AACTE is a national alliance of teacher education programs committed to developing high quality teachers and school leaders to enhance PK-12 student learning (AACTE, 2008).

tourist practices. A tourist curriculum is defined as one that patronizes and trivializes a group of people. The real life experiences and everyday realities of people from different cultures are not captured (Banks, 2004; Sparks and A.B.C. Task Force, 1989).

Multicultural education has evolved to now focus on helping pre-service teachers examine their beliefs about working with diverse students so that they can then create a school culture that is inclusive of the students' culture and is empowering and equitable for students from diverse ethnic, racial and cultural groups. Banks (1993) defines this comprehensive level of multicultural education that is empowering to school culture in which teacher education should strive to prepare pre-service teachers to achieve in their teaching and work with diverse students.

A Call for Action in Teacher Education

However, Howard and Aleman (2008) argue that despite Banks' recommendation, a call for action thirty years ago and years of task force, multicultural research and consortiums, more attention and commitment by teacher education programs is still needed in preparing pre-service teachers for the changing demographics in our schools. Since 1972, there has been a 22 percent increase of public school students considered a part of an ethnic or racial minority group, (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008) while only 15.7% of the teaching force and pre-service teachers represent such diversity (Zumwalt & Craig, 2008). Therefore, because diverse student populations are continuing to increase at a faster pace than the efforts to diversify the teacher work force (Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 1996) teacher education programs must respond to the challenges this chronosystematic influence may bring to the educational achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Grant, 1997).

An unfortunate challenge teachers face today is reversing the current performance of children from diverse backgrounds who historically and currently have had little access to quality and culturally relevant educational experiences. For example, the reading and mathematical achievement of diverse groups such as African American, Hispanic, Pacific Islander, and American Indian/Alaskan Native students was not measurably different in 2006 than it was decades ago (NCES, 2008). Furthermore, these groups continue to perform at lower rates than their European American peers.

Responding to Historical Cultural Shifts

In response to increases in CLD students in American classrooms and the access to quality educational experiences, teacher education programs have begun to question what they can do to ensure that pre-service teachers will teach out of the matrix when they have a classroom of their own (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Hilliard, 2006; Irvine, 2003; King, 1994). How programs can prepare teachers who develop an understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy is a critical question and has created a surge of research initiatives in the multicultural education community dating back to the beginning of the multicultural movement some thirty plus years ago.

Since the teacher education program typically consist of four general components (field experience, general and content knowledge, methods and professional knowledge) (Zeichner & Conklin, 2008), efforts have been made to ‘fit’ diversity within this structural framework. For example, some programs offer a stand alone multicultural course that focuses on raising pre-service teachers’ awareness of issues related to culture or race or combines this course with a field experience that allows pre-service teachers to apply course work on diversity topics to experiences teaching and working in the field

with diverse students (Sleeter, 2001b). Another way programs have infused a diversity strand is by offering interventions throughout the program that infuses understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy in content and field experiences (Howard & Aleman, 2008). In non-traditional programs, the focus has been on recruiting candidates who have multiple experiences working and interacting with diverse people who are culturally and linguistically diverse (Rhee & Oakley, 2008; Haberman, 1996). In these alternative programs, teacher educators aggressively recruit career changers who are committed to specifically teaching in urban areas with culturally and linguistically diverse students. Therefore, the program is structured to allow for intense teacher certification and field experiences directly focused on the teaching and learning of CLD students (Rhee & Oakley, 2008). Haberman (1996) argues that focusing on recruiting teachers who are committed to working with diverse students and who already come with affirming dispositions is the most logical approach towards developing culturally relevant teachers.

Nevertheless, the research on which approach is best in preparing teachers for teaching CLDs is inconclusive (Sleeter, 2001b). What is known is that there is an overwhelming presence of research that explores how European American pre-service teachers begin to develop an understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy (Sleeter, 2001b); understandably so since over 80% of the teacher work force and pre-service teachers are European American. However, if research and practice move towards exploring all pre-service teachers' development of culturally relevant pedagogy and connect these understandings to an increase in CLD student performance, then teacher education programs can become a chronosystematic influence that transforms how pre-service teachers are trained and thereby equalizing opportunities and success for diverse

student populations (Bell, 2001; Guzman & Hollis, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Sleeter, 2008). In this study I looked at how a strategy used by teacher educators such as critical reflectivity could provide greater insights into their understandings of and journey towards culturally relevant pedagogy. Using an ecological framework it was my position that pre-service teachers' consciousness of such chrono-systematic influences presented in this section reveal their understandings of how best to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Microsystems of Reflectivity

One could argue that reflecting on chrono-systematic influences is too abstract for pre-service teachers who are just beginning to grapple with understanding culturally relevant pedagogy. In turn they may not be able to conceptualize and visualize how they could change such chrono-systematic influences. Teacher education programs can instead begin by examining what Bronfenbrenner (1979) calls micro systems' of influences that impact the teaching and learning of diverse students because here is where the pre-service teacher is an active participant. These settings could include the classroom, community local school, and their personal life. Therefore, developing understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy would include pre-service teachers first reflecting during and back on their teaching and classroom practices to ensure that they are implementing affirming practices. Schön (1983) refers to this as *reflection in action* (reflection while teaching) and *reflection on action* (reflection after teaching). This systematic level is also parallel to what van Mannen (1991) calls technical reflectivity which involves teachers reflecting on general class instruction such as classroom management or students' skills acquisition (Valli, 1997). Reflectivity at the microsystem can be critical if pre-service teachers are

required and expected to question routine teaching activities and then create viable and logical solutions that are informed by best practices (Dewey, 1903). For example, as teachers reflect they begin to analyze children's learning experiences and reconstruct pedagogy in response to the students' cultural and linguistic needs. This reconstruction of pedagogy draws on pre-service teachers' knowledge about what constitutes as culturally relevant practices. However, some multicultural advocates suggest that a pre-requisite in introducing pre-service teachers to such practices includes a critical examination of their beliefs, experiences and expectations of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Howard, 2003, King, 1991; Sleeter, 2008).

Examination of Personal Beliefs

Multicultural scholars argue that in order for pre-service teachers to begin to understand then teach their future students, they must first examine their own racial identities as well as their personal views, biases and prejudices of children who are culturally, linguistically and economically different than them (Darling-Hammond, 2005; Howard, 2003; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This personal reflection about ones' racial identity, positionality or privilege in society is especially critical for the European American middle class pre-service teachers who enter programs with little exposure and experience with people from many European American pre-service teachers who enter programs with 'dysconscious' beliefs about how racism presents itself in the classroom and in society or rather sees racism as a problem that is solved when one interacts with another respectfully. Therefore, when programs offer opportunities for these teachers to reflect on how racism in schools is more institutionalized and intentional, they feel attacked and resist notions that schools today are not equitable for CLD students and

therefore questions whether culturally relevant pedagogy is even needed and applicable in schools today (Sleeter, 2008).

In addressing such misconceptions about racism and inequity in schools, critical reflectivity can serve as the catalyst for helping pre-service teachers explore their personal beliefs and biases towards diverse student populations (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Milner, 2003). There is documented research suggesting how teacher educators can use strategies such as critical reflectivity to allow pre-service teachers the opportunity to examine how their beliefs and biases influence the teaching and learning of diverse student population. For example, in her study, Olmedo (1997) investigated sixteen, European American college juniors who were completing requirements for their first field experience and course in elementary education. The purpose of the study was to explore the ways the field work (two hour class once a week and one day a week in the field) and related readings (i.e. *European American Teacher* by Vivian Paley*)* affected European American pre-service teacher's views about teaching in an inner city school with culturally, racially, and ethnically diverse student populations. After conducting a content analysis of pre-service teachers' reflective journals of field work experiences, essays and reflections on their class readings, Olmedo found that participants in the study began to question and examine their beliefs about racially diverse students as they were given opportunities to reflect, discuss then consider alternative viewpoints in the reading. Their examinations was further supported by assignments that pushed them to connect their critical reflections to their experiences in their field with diverse students. For one participant, after reflecting on the work of Vivian Paley in *European American Teacher,* he began to consider and examine how his interactions with his students were different

across racial groups and the critical implications for this differentiation in treatment. The findings from this study demonstrated how critical reflectivity can be helpful, particularly for European American pre-service teachers, in examining how one's perceptions and beliefs about diverse students can impact his/her interactions with and teaching.

Pre-service teachers from diverse backgrounds also should engage in critical reflectivity on their biases, beliefs and prejudices although the literature suggests that pre-service teachers of color tend to bring multiple perspectives to multicultural teaching than most European American students who dominate numerically (Haberman, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1991, 1994; Rios & Montecinos, 1999). These scholars suggest that as members of culturally and linguistically diverse groups these pre-service teachers share a world view of interdependence, cooperation and collective responsibility with their students which is counter to those of individual rights, independence and separateness which is often helped by their European American peers (Haberman, 1996; Hilliard, 1997; 2000). However, while they do have more exposure to and experiences with diverse people, teachers of color do not have more knowledge about how to implement culturally relevant pedagogy. Therefore critical reflectivity could be used to help these teachers further examine their beliefs to ensure that they are representative of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Influence of Teacher Education Program

While one strategy teacher educators can use in helping pre-service teachers to develop understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy is to provide opportunities for critical personal reflections on their personal beliefs about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students, teacher educators must be cautious that such commitment

does not exacerbate any deficit views pre-service teachers may bring with them. For example, Davis's (1995) conducted a two-year ethnographic study of the beliefs and attitudes towards minorities of undergraduate elementary pre-service teachers and their instructors. The data collected for the study included observations in the teacher education courses (language development, multicultural education, and reading and writing methods) and individual interviews with the course instructors and pre-service teachers. To obtain comparative data on pre-service teachers' attitudes towards minorities, Davis (1995) engaged in analytic induction of interview transcripts and observational field notes. She found that the pre-service teachers' adoption of the cultural deficit explanation for minority student failure was spearheaded by the variation of attitudes and beliefs about minorities held and transmitted by instructors across the teacher education program. Such research demonstrates how a teacher education program can negatively transmit deficit beliefs about diverse student populations which create a barrier to their programmatic efforts towards developing future culturally relevant teachers.

To counter such transmission of deficit ideology teacher education programs can start by (a) training faculty to be more culturally relevant themselves, (b) developing a shared mission towards culturally relevant pedagogy, and (c) teacher educators engaging in critical reflection about their beliefs and values (Hilliard, 1997; Irvine, 2003; Freedman, 2006; Obidah, 2000). As a result, programs can help to minimize the potential of unconsciously perpetuating and promoting negative and stereotypical beliefs about diverse student populations to future teachers. Furthermore, it is the assumption that if all stakeholders (faculty, cooperating teachers, and pre-service teachers) have a shared

journey towards being culturally affirming and responsive, inevitably future teachers will be given the tools to become teachers who are culturally responsive to their students. In turn, the teacher education program can become a positive micro-systematic influence in such development.

Mesosytems and Reflectivity

Once pre-service teachers have an opportunity to engage in such personal reflection they can then begin to consider how their personal prejudices and beliefs may influence their developing understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Sparks-Langer & Colton (1991) refers to this type of critical reflective practice as narrative in which the teachers tell their own stories and describe the personal circumstances that influenced their decision-making in the classroom. This reflectivity can be characterized as a merger of personal and professional beliefs; representing a meso system of influence. Again, the mesosytem of influence refers to the interactions of two or more settings (i.e. personal belief + classroom). In the case of teacher development this includes the interactions between their personal and professional identity and therefore between the settings of family and classroom. As Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1990) argue, "what is missing from the knowledge base of teaching…are the voices of the teachers themselves, the questions teachers ask, the ways teachers use writing and intentional talk in their work lives, and the interpretive frames teachers use to understand and improve their own classroom practices" (p.2). In programs that mirror Cochran-Smith and Lytle's claims, opportunities are created for pre-service teachers to constantly and critically connect their personal and professional lives. Relational issues and personal growth becomes the central mode of reflection. They are encouraged to question their beliefs and attitudes towards teaching

and students and strive towards being an empathic and compassionate educator (Noddings, 1984; 1987). Therefore, at this level of reflectivity, teacher educators would focus on helping pre-service teachers connect their personal and life experiences with their role as a teacher. Pre-service teachers come to understand that their personal beliefs about diversity issues such as cultural and linguistic assimilation may subconsciously influence how they react to their students. For example, a pre-service teacher may believe that since this is America, English Language Learners need to speak English only in their classroom and at home. This belief conflicts with multicultural literature that suggests how using children's native language supports their language acquisition (Flores, Cousin, Diaz, 1991; Truscott & Watts-Taffe, 2003). In another example, a pre-service teacher's pre-conceived biases and negative perceptions of ethnically diverse student populations could prevent her from making appropriate and relevant interventions for a student who may be struggling academically. For example, she may apply stereotypical deficit beliefs about the abilities of an African American male in her class who may be 'acting out' or performing at a lower level than his peers and therefore makes the professional decision to refer him to special education without considering the social-cultural context of the child's behavior and academic achievement (King, 1994; Sleeter, 2008). In both examples, the pre-service teacher is challenged with negotiating her personal beliefs and professional responsibility with providing the most culturally and linguistically affirming practice to her students. The personal beliefs represent the microsystem of influence whereas the professional decision made as influenced by her personal belief represents a mesosytem of influence. Therefore, as pre-service teachers are given opportunities to

reflect on the interaction of these identities (personal and professional) they become aware of the inevitable relationship between the two.

Since the 1980s a major source of data on how pre-service teachers develop and negotiate their personal and teacher identity was provided by written and spoken reflective narratives (Johnson, 2001). Specifically, teacher educators have used journals, diaries, supervisory conferences, and class discussions to gain a holistic understanding of the actions, intentions, and personal voices of pre-service teachers (Gipe & Richards 1992; Halen-Faber, 1997). In her qualitative analysis of the content and quality of seventy-four pre-service teachers' reflections on their practicum experiences, Parkinson (2005) used friendly letter writing and open prompts not only to facilitate critical reflection about the practicum experiences, but also to create a platform for pre-service teachers to express their emotional response to teaching. After analyzing the pre-service teachers' letters by coding and collapsing emergent themes, the researcher found that students' reflection exemplified a heightened sense of awareness about the multiple realities of a teacher's life and how to integrate their personal self into the various domains of teaching. Nevertheless, friendly letter writing became an expressive vehicle for pre-service teachers to situate themselves in the dynamic interplay between their personal and professional selves. Thus the program could offer such experiences and thereby serve as an agent of influence in pre-service teacher's development of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Exo-systems and Reflectivity

As mentioned earlier, exosystems refers to the linkages of two or more settings in which at least one does not contain the developing person but indirectly impacts the

individual (Thomas, 1996). In contrast to the microsystem and mesosytem of influences, which arguably can be tangibly manipulated by the teacher, the exosystems of influences requires a more conscious, strategic level of reflectivity and action to evoke change. Examples of exosystems of influence that does not directly engage the teacher would include local, state and national mandates and policies that are implemented in many schools with culturally and linguistically diverse students. With the signing of the No Child Left Behind Law (NCLB) in 2002, national officials have mandated that schools show evidence that they are meeting the needs of all their students. Particularly, the political lens has focused on children who have been labeled as 'at risk', 'disadvantaged', and 'minority'. These students are primarily schooled within high-poverty, low performing schools (Lippmann, Burns, McArthur, 1996). To address the demands for an equitable and quality education for students in these low performing schools, NCLB created the Comprehensive School Reform Program in 2002.

Comprehensive school reforms (CSR) include curriculum models and strategies implemented typically in low performing schools in an attempt to standardize the curriculum and pedagogy to raise achievement (The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center, 2005). In fact, forty-five percent of the schools with comprehensive school reform models had a poverty rate of at least 75 percent and 47% of the CSR schools had high concentrations of minority students (Tushnet, Flaherty, and Smith, 2004). Although these reforms are implemented in predominantly schools with large diverse student populations, the research conducted on popular school reforms such as Success for All, Direct Instruction, and Core Knowledge do not specifically address how these models support and implement culturally affirming and relevant practices (Durden,

2008; Slavin, Madden, Dolan, Wasik, Ross, Smith, Dianda, 1989; The Comprehensive School Reform Quality Center, 2005; Tushnet et al., 2004).

Arguably, for pre-service teachers who take a position working in schools with comprehensive school reforms, they should have opportunities to begin to critically reflect on such exosystem influences and possibly complete internships in schools with school reforms. Such reflectivity and experiences will prepare them for how to negotiate what they have learned about the best practices for diverse students when faced with curriculums, mandates, and reforms that may be culturally subtractive to students. Currently the multicultural literature suggest that teacher education programs do not provide pre-service teachers with the analytical skills and strategies to critique such exosystems of influences and the resources to function as reforming teachers throughout their career (Cochran-Smith, 2004). Cochran-Smith refers to this approach as "collaborative resonance". In this approach teacher education programs make deliberate attempts to provide pre-service teachers the opportunities to reflect on and experiences ways to link what they are learning in teacher training to their experiences in the field. Examples of ways programs can implement collaborative resonance experiences would be to (a) require pre-service teachers to work collaboratively on action research projects with their cooperating teacher, (b) place him or her in schools where restructuring efforts are underway, or (c) provide university seminars that specifically address ways to teach "against the grain" when educational policy or curriculums are not meeting the instructional needs of students (Cochran-Smith, 2004). It is essential to allow pre-service teachers opportunities to explore the exosystems of influences of policy, education

curriculums and reforms that could inevitably impact their efforts in seeing themselves as culturally relevant teachers.

Macrosystems and Critical Reflectivity

Scholars argue that preparing teachers for teaching diverse student populations demands opportunities for critical reflection on how macrosystems of influences such as wider cultural, social, and political constructs impact teaching, learning and student achievement (Banks, 1993; Freire, 1973, 1998; Hilliard, 1997; King 2004). Accordingly, Brazilian scholar Paulo Freire (1973) notes that critical reflectivity situates ones thinking, beliefs, and values within the political, economic, and social contexts of teaching. Without such expansion of reflectivity, teachers run the risk of perpetuating and justifying personal actions and beliefs that could be harmful to children (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). Furthermore, Freire (1973) argues for a critical lens that focuses on injustices and justices in society that directly and indirectly impact teaching and learning in schools. Critical reflection at the macro system entails a teacher consciously questioning not only their personal and professional beliefs about teaching and learning but also how societal beliefs and practices could be oppressive to others. Likewise, Johnson (2001) proclaims that the critical narrative practice mentioned earlier could be extended to include macrosystems of influences by helping pre-service teachers reflect on the political and ideological under currents or implications of what they consider the ‘truth’ in their personal reflections. At this system, reflection is geared towards helping pre-service teachers recognize the oppressive beliefs and values of society and how they subconsciously impact a teacher's personal beliefs and values about teaching and student learning.

Furthermore, to understand if pre-service teachers could connect how their beliefs possibly reflect beliefs in society that are deficit, Johnson (2001) interviewed 19 pre-service teachers in their final year of the teacher education program. During these unstructured interviews, the students shared written and visual narratives about some aspect of their professional teaching experiences. After sharing their narratives, the researcher extended the interview by asking the students to move beyond their personal accounts to the political and cultural implications of their reflections. The researcher's multiple analysis of the narratives found that in a majority of the narratives, pre-service teacher's displayed a dominant, hegemonic worldview of teaching. Even after explicitly questioning them about their view about the political and cultural hegemony in teaching, the interview intervention did not prompt students to challenge their assumptions about teaching and society (Johnson, 2001). The implication of Johnson's findings is significant because they present the challenge to teacher educators to implement strategies that help pre-service teachers to understand how their personal and professional beliefs could be shaped by the macrosystems of society and how in turn these beliefs possibly foster pedagogies that could be subtractive to their future students. Providing specific prompts that require pre-service teachers to reflect on the connections of oppressive to education is essential.

It can be argued then, that helping pre-service teachers move toward critically reflecting on the macro systems of influences entails also a shift in beliefs then practices. For example, proponents of critically reflecting at the macro system generally support critical theory and critical pedagogy as the ideological and practical foundation for all teaching and learning. For example, critical theorists see knowledge as socially

constructed; that is determined by the customs, contexts, culture and historical era (Foucault, 1972). Critical theory considers how voice, culture, power, and ideology intersect to either facilitate or hinder the collective and reciprocal constructions of knowledge and reality between teachers and students (Giroux & McLauren, 1986). When engaging in critical reflection teachers who espouse a critical theoretical lens consciously and constantly questions whether (a) students' voice is being respected and affirmed, (b) how the teacher's and school's culture can create dissonance for students and their families, (c) how power is exerted by the teacher, curriculum, schools, and policies to perpetuate oppressive systems in society and (d) how he or she can transmit a dominant ideology or belief that is detrimental to students (Hilliard, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sleeter & Bernal, 2004). Furthermore, adopting a critical theoretical lens requires pre-service teachers to examine and reflect on systems of domination and develop an awareness of how social injustices occurs (Milner, 2003; Sleeter & Bernal, 2004). Teacher educators can provide multiple opportunities that will help shape the development of such critical lens using reflectively as a vehicle then to explore how such lens connects to helping pre-service teachers develop understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Critical Reflection and Agency

By shifting towards critical reflectivity during training, pre-service teachers may become more knowledgeable about and reflective on how educational practices and actions are equitable, just, culturally relevant and affirming to students. Thus peering into the matrix rather than working within the matrix of inequitable and subtractive educational experiences. Furthermore, critical reflection begins to locate teacher self-

reflectivity from the classroom to the macrosystems of influences then back to the classroom. Therefore, teachers who begin to reflect critically at this level should then be challenged to take action at the classroom level **and** beyond.

Such effort at the classroom level is known as critical pedagogy (Zeichner & Liston, 1987). A contemporary scholar who emulates the precepts of Freire's work and the concept of critical pedagogy is Bell Hooks. She argues that critical pedagogy embodies a reflective search for wholeness (Hooks, 1994). Reflectivity enables teachers to begin questioning the status quo and how to further liberate others from injustices in society such as racism, sexism, and classism (Florence, 1998; Irvine, 2003). One way a teacher can become a change agent in the classroom is to promote social justice and liberation by infusing critical pedagogy such as structuring the curriculum to enable students to view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspective of diverse ethnic and cultural groups (Banks, 1993). To implement such critically pedagogy effectively in the classroom, teachers must in turn have the capacity to be reflective on the multiple constructs that impact and influence which perspectives are presented in the curriculum in order to implement critical pedagogy and scaffolding students as they examine societal and educational injustices (Freire, 1998; Hooks, 1994).

Another approach could be for teachers to allow students the opportunity to make decisions on social issues such as healthcare, voting and immigration rights, and affirmative action and then to take action to solve them (Banks, 1993; Nieto, 2000). Teachers can extend this action to the community and society by joining local advocacy groups or petitioning for equitable education resources for marginalized students and their families. Also, teachers can be encouraged to disseminate counterviews about

diverse student populations through media appeals, research publications, and legislature campaigns (Nieto & Bode, 2008). Therefore, by fostering critical reflectivity on the macrosystems of influences teacher education faculty can help facilitate pre-service teacher's understandings and potential implementation of culturally relevant pedagogy in their future classrooms.

Reflection across Systems and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

As teacher education programs respond to the growing diversity student populations in American schools, developing culturally relevant teachers becomes essential to minimizing the academic impact of the current cultural and social gap between teacher and student (Hilliard, 1997; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1999). In developing such teachers, teacher educators must allow pre-service teachers to reflect on and examine their personal beliefs about children from diverse backgrounds that positively and negatively impact their teaching and learning of these students (Tatum, 1997). One noted mechanism for developing culturally relevant teachers is to encourage critical reflectivity (Gay and Kirkland, 2003; Webb, 2001). Therefore I designed the study to consider the position that critical reflectivity across all systems of influences (micro-, meso-, exo-, macro-, and chrono-) is instrumental in the development of pre-service teachers understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Pre- service teachers who can reflect critically on the multiple systems of influences that impact the teaching and learning of culturally and linguistically diverse students can begin to see themselves as the culturally relevant teacher who can come out of the matrix by evoking change in the classroom was the proposition that I used in this study. As I have presented in this literature review, there is an abundance of research that examines how critical reflectivity

have served as a tool to help pre-service negotiate their personal beliefs with their developing teacher identities. However, further research is needed to examine why pre-service teachers have such difficulties considering the exosystems and macro systems of influences that impact teaching and learning of diverse students (Cochran-Smith, 2004).

Therefore**,** in this study I aimed to contribute to the current literature by examining whether and how pre-service teacher's reflections across systems revealed their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Furthermore, I also examined what settings influenced the three pre-service teacher's development as culturally relevant teachers to better inform the work of teacher education programs. In the next chapter I will present the methods of this study and continue the discussion on how Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory was used to analyze the data collected.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Teacher educators face the challenge of preparing our current recruits for teaching students who may be culturally and linguistically different from them (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). One strategy often noted in the multicultural education literature is using critical reflectivity to help pre-service teachers develop understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Howard, 2003). In this study, I examined the three participants' reflections using an ecological framework of understanding how their reflectivity revealed understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. The theoretical proposition that was the foundational framework for this inquiry was participants who reflect across systems of influences (e.g. micro, meso, exo, macro, chrono), have more understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. This theoretical proposition was applied as I investigated the following research questions:

- How do elementary pre-service teachers reflect when learning about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students?
- What do these reflections reveal about participants' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy?

This chapter (a) describes the research design and analysis, (b) details the setting and sampling procedures; (c) presents the data sources and data collection and analysis procedures; and (d) discusses the trustworthiness of the study.

Research Design

To address the research questions, I engaged in a naturalistic exploration utilizing qualitative methods in the participants' natural setting. According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), qualitative research holds the view that knowledge and reality are socially mediated and constructed. Therefore, a naturalistic paradigm was selected for this study because it was flexible and evolved contextually in response to the lived realities and experiences encouraged in the field setting (Merriam, 1998). Additionally, the conceptual lens that framed the study was the Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). In chapter two, I discussed how explorations of individual development must consider how multiple societal and environmental influences impact one's learning and lived experiences for students (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). For this study, such a contextual lens was applied towards exploring and analyzing participants' reflectivity and how they compared or contrasted to their current and developing understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy.

The type of qualitative approach for this study was case study because of the unique opportunities case studies provided for the researcher to capture the individual process and development of the investigated phenomenon. Furthermore, using case study methodology allowed me to examine in-depth how three participants, with varying culturally relevant beliefs, reflected when learning about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. In case study methodology, as with this study, researchers collect volumes of information to investigate. The distinguishing features of case studies include (a) the process of conducting the inquiry, (b) the unit of analysis and (c) the end report of the case study investigation (Merriam, 1998). To offer a rationale for why the

case study approach was the best fit for my research study, I will briefly explore these three characteristics of a case study design and I will conclude with the analytic procedures that are suggested for case study research.

Case Study Research: Design

In the field of education, case studies have been used to capture a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context and are used to contribute to the current knowledge base of individual, social, political, group, or organizational phenomenon (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003). In this study, I examined three pre-service teachers' reflections as they navigated through course and fieldwork to gain insights into how reflectivity can be used as a mechanism towards understanding how best to teach children from diverse backgrounds. I selected three participants in order to examine the experiences and reflections of pre-service teachers with three varying culturally relevant beliefs and having a larger sample would not afford me the opportunities to explore in-depth these experiences. Furthermore, case study methodology allowed me to critically examine how participants with varying culturally relevant beliefs navigated towards developing a teacher identity that represented culturally relevant pedagogy.

Case study methodology also uses a variety of data collection methods such as documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, questionnaires, participant observations, and physical artifacts (Yin, 2003). Because I focused on exploring the reflections of participants and the experiences that inform these reflections, I utilized a questionnaire, documents and interviews. While questionnaire data is not commonly used in case studies, rather than quantify the questionnaire results, I provided a descriptive account of the three participants' culturally relevant beliefs and practices,

which supported the purposeful sampling used and helped to develop the protocol for interview number one.

Also, researchers who choose to conduct case studies are interested in the process rather than the outcome of the phenomenon under investigation (Merriam, 1998). For this study, I explored the *process* of reflectivity, not the reflections themselves individually and in isolation. Instead, this study explored participants' reflections using an ecological theoretical context and provided plausible connections for how these reflections were influenced by or related to their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Unlike ethnography, this research was not intended to explore the socio-cultural experiences and interactions of participants but rather to examine their individual patterns of reflectivity in order to investigate the research questions, hence suggesting a case study design.

The second defining aspect of a case study is that it delimits the object of the study. In other words, one of the most distinguishing characteristics of a case study is that the case is a bounded system or single entity from which there are boundaries (Stake, 1995). For example, a case could be a person, school, program, principal, or a specific policy that is the center of the investigation. Therefore, if the phenomenon under study is not intrinsically bound, then it is not a case. The current study represented a bounded system of three individual cases (elementary pre-service teachers) within a particular context (teacher education courses) and time (semester three).

Lastly, the end product of the case study should be descriptive; that is it includes a rich, thick description of the phenomena under study. For this study, to explore how participants' reflected across systematic levels of influences, I provide rich, literal, descriptions of these reflections and connections to culturally relevant pedagogy that

occurred. Providing rich descriptions of participants' reflections and experiences offered insights into how participants' capacity to reflect across systematic levels of influences related to their current beliefs about diverse student populations. The product of a case study should be heuristic in nature as well. In other words, the case studies should bring about a discovery of new meaning, confirm what is known, or extend the reader's experience. By examining reflection within an ecological context, my study offers the reader insights into the ways participants with diverse beliefs and experiences reflected when teaching and learning about diverse students and how these reflections mirrored their current beliefs about these students. Table 1 presents a summary of the characteristics of case study design and how they met the methodological needs of my study.

Case Study Research: Analysis

There are also important considerations when analyzing case study data. For example, as described above, since case studies are a holistic, intensive description of a single unit, conveying a clear understanding of the case is paramount to data analysis. Arguably to allow for such clarity development case study researchers must have an efficient data management system in place. In case study research, the management of multiple data sources becomes a challenge to researchers as they begin analyzing of the volumes of data collected (Yin, 2003). Therefore, in my study, the data management system included a case study database that organized data so that it was easily retrievable and therefore analyzable (Yin, 2003). The case study database included interview transcripts, course assignments, questionnaires, member checking written records and my reflective and descriptive memos. The format of the case study databases was both an

Table 1

Case Study Design and Current Study

Case Study Characteristics	Application to Current Study
Explores contemporary phenomena in real life context and contributes to the current knowledge base of individual, social, political, group, or organizational phenomena (Yin, 2003).	Investigated participants in the context of their teacher training experience to capture the contemporary phenomena of culturally relevant beliefs and practices.
Case study methodology uses diverse data collection methods. (Yin, 2003)	Used multiple data sources to explore the research questions including multiple assignments from 4 courses over time, 3 individual interviews, pre/post questionnaire.
Case studies are interested in the process rather than just the outcome (Merriam, 1998)	Explored not only how participants reflected across levels of influences but the process of participants' development as culturally relevant change agents.
A case study is a bounded system, single unit (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003)	Consisted of three individual cases bounded by context (same teacher development courses) and time (courses in the third semester).
Case studies are descriptive and heuristic (Merriam, 1998).	Focused holistically and descriptively on capturing how each individual reflected across systems of influences and how these reflections related to their current beliefs about diverse students.

electronic file and a hard copy were stored in a locked, password protected place to ensure security and confidentiality of data. The electronic case study database helped to sort and organize interpretations, responses, and analysis from the four data sources in order to identify emergent patterns and themes (Merriam, 1998).

Moreover, according to Yin (2003) there are three basic strategies for analyzing data in case studies: *relying on theoretical propositions, thinking about rival explanations, and developing a case description.* One of the distinguishing elements of this research was applying Bronfenbrenner's ecological theoretical framework towards analyzing data sources to inform understanding of how to help develop pre-service teachers understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy. Therefore, *relying on theoretical propositions* was the best strategy for analyzing data in this study. Relying on theoretical propositions to analyze data entailed using theory propositions as the foundation for the research question, review of literature, and new hypothesis/proposition. Using a specific theoretical orientation in turn allowed me to focus attention on certain data and to ignore other data. This is essential to case study research because it allows for the management and meaning making of the voluminous amount of data collected within and across cases. In this study I focused on instances in which participants' reflected across systems and evidence of culturally relevant pedagogy. Therefore, relying on theoretical propositions was the most appropriate analysis tool for this study because I was interested in specifically examining the relationship between participants' reflectivity across systems and culturally relevant pedagogy.

For the context of this study the theoretical proposition I used was participants who critically reflect across systems of influence have more developed understandings of

how best to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students than those who have difficulty extending across systems. This theoretical proposition was applied throughout the study when interpreting the analysis of participants' reflections and how they provided insights into their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Details of the data analysis coding and procedures are described later in the chapter. Furthermore, all data sources were coded individually as illustrated in Table 2.

Setting

This study took place in the elementary teacher education program at Crescent State University. Crescent State is an urban university located in a metropolitan city in the Southeast. The teacher education department is located within the college of education and offers six degree programs: Bachelor of Science in Education (BSE), Collaborative Masters Program, Urban Accelerated Certification and Master's Program (UACM), Educational Specialist program, and Doctor of Philosophy program.

The BSE initial certification program faculty admits undergraduate students with an interest in obtaining a P-5 teaching certificate. Students entering the program have met admission requirements of (a) successfully completing core college curriculum courses, (b) maintained a grade of C or higher upon entering the program, (c) has a grade point average of 2.75, and (d) received a passing score on the Basics skills portion of the state's assessment for the certification of educators. Once these initial admission requirements are confirmed, students are invited to participate in an interview with department faculty and complete a required writing sample. Students who successfully complete the interview, writing sample and admission requirements are invited to enter the two-year elementary teacher program.

Table 2

Data Sources and Identification Codes

Data Source	Identification Code
Interview #1	IV1
Interview #2	IV2
Interview #3	IV3
Pre-Love and Kruger Questionnaire	LKQ1
Post-Love and Kruger Questionnaire	LKQ2
Good Citizen's Essay	GC
Positive Discipline	PD
Assessment Policy Paper	APP
Assessment Midterm	AM
Social Studies PTLS Lesson Plan	LP
Literacy Brief Write	LBW
Individualized Behavior Change Plan	IBC
Literacy Final Exam	LF
Member Checking #1	MB1
Member Checking #2	MB2

The elementary education program strives to use field based experiences and coursework to "develop candidates knowledge and ability to select and implement developmentally appropriate resources and activities for teaching and learning in diverse

settings" (Crescent State University, 2008 Undergraduate catalog 2008-2009). Also the program is committed to preparing pre-service teachers for teaching in a diverse society. Therefore, candidates engage in field experiences in schools serving culturally and linguistically diverse student populations and take a cultural diversity course during their first semester that introduces them to ways to make learning responsive and affirming to diverse students.

Pre-service teachers take classes together in a cohort throughout their two year tenure in the program and participate in a developmentally sequenced field placements in grades Pre-K -5th which align with coursework (Meyers & Collier, 2000). Students are given feedback about their field placement performance by university supervisors who supervise teaching. For example, in the first semester of the program students take 18 credit hours and engage in pre-kindergarten and kindergarten field placement experiences twice a week. During these field placement experiences, students apply theory to practice and begin to learn how to implement transitions and small group activities with four and five year olds. In semester two, students take Math, Literacy, Science method courses and management methods classes (integrated across first three semesters) while also attending field placement twice a week in first, second, and third grade classrooms. Students at this level begin to extend their classroom experience to teaching whole group sessions and aid in planning. During semester three, students continue with methods and assessment courses and have field placements in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. By this semester students will have had a full year of content and field placement experience. Therefore, they have higher accountability and assume more responsibility in instructional delivery and management than first and second semester students. Semester four marks student

teaching experiences in which students are in the field five days a week and engage in a two week role reversal experience in which they assume complete responsibility for teaching and learning.

Moreover, students have an opportunity to either join the Metro Cohort which is the traditional certification in Early Childhood (P-5) or enroll in the Dual Certification cohort where they earn initial certification in Special Education (P-12; mild disabilities) and Early Childhood Education (P-5). There are also opportunities to receive an ESOL Endorsement (K-12) which requires students to take two additional courses focusing on instruction, assessment and language acquisition of English Language Learners and participate in ESOL field placements.

According to data collected from 2005-2007, students who are admitted into and complete the BSE program have a mean age of 25.5 and are 94% female. Additionally, the racial characteristics of students include: 74% White, 23% African American, and 4% Asian. Among the students who enter the program 61% are transfer students and 39% entered Crescent State as freshman students. Less than one percent of the students are asked to leave the program and/or school placement assignments (Kesner, 2007).

Participants

Sampling Procedures

The sample pool for this study included twenty-two semester three pre-service teachers (PST) completing coursework and field requirements in the elementary education program at Crescent State University. These pre-service teachers were previously a part of a pilot study I conducted during the Spring of 2007. As mentioned in chapter one, the pilot study examined how pre-service teachers constructed multicultural

topics and experiences in a mandated cultural diversity course taken during their first semester in the program. There were originally twenty-six students who participated in the pilot study. However at the time of this study, three students were no longer apart of the cohort and one student had to repeat courses in semester three. Therefore, there were twenty-two students who were left in this semester three cohort. The data collected from the pilot study was used in the sampling procedures to select the three participants (cases) for this study. There were two steps to the sampling procedures; (a) examination of pilot study data and (b) identifying Love and Kruger questionnaire results (questionnaire will be discussed in the following section). Because, I was interested in exploring how participants with varying culturally relevant beliefs reflected across systems of influences and how these reflections related to their culturally relevant beliefs and practices, I selected participants with three varying levels of beliefs: culturally relevant (CR), culturally relevant and assimilationist (CRA), and culturally assimilationist (CA). To begin the sampling procedures I reviewed and examined the group interviews, reflective bogs, and observational data from the pilot study by coding participants' responses as either CR, CRA, or CA. I then recorded the number of CR, CRA, and CA to determine which category each participant would fall under. For example, if the pilot study data suggested that participants' had mostly culturally relevant or assimilationist beliefs they were placed in either the CR or CA category. On the other hand if participants had a balance of both assimilationist and relevant beliefs they were categorized as CRA. Of the twenty-two people sampled, four were identified as culturally relevant, eleven as culturally relevant and assimilationist, six as assimilationist and one as inconclusive due to incomplete data sets. I used a color coded chart to place participants' in hierarchal

order according to number of data sources available and category. For example, participants who had three sources of supporting data were placed first for selection. Having a sufficient number of data sources to validate categorical placement of participants was integral to ensure that the three participants who were to be selected had three different levels of culturally relevant beliefs.

To proceed in the sampling procedures, I then referred to the pre-Love & Kruger beliefs questionnaire data to corroborate the categorical placements beginning first with those who had three sources of supporting data in each category. The Love and Kruger questionnaire statements were either culturally relevant (CR) or culturally assimilationist (CA). Therefore, when scoring pre-service teachers' responses I could easily identify the number of CR and CA statements they selected as strongly agree in order to make a comparison with the pilot study data categories. In each category one person was selected (Ronald, Jody, and Carla) whom fit this criteria (questionnaires data supported category placements and participant had at least three sources of supporting data from pilot study to provide evidence of categorical placements). Only the culturally assimilationist category had two participants' who both met the criteria outlined above. Therefore, I used the variable of age to select Carla in order to have a sample that represented the age diversity of the Cohort **(**21-49**)**. An alternate from each category was selected using the same criteria in case the three selected declined to participate in the study or had an early withdrawal. It is also important to note that I used interview number one as opportunity to further confirm the degree of culturally responsiveness of the participants' selected. Most importantly however, the first interview allowed opportunities for those selected to expand and explain their responses from the questionnaire.

In summary there were two steps in the purposeful sampling procedures. The first included examining the pilot study data to place participants into three categories that represented various culturally relevant beliefs. I then prioritize those who had at least three sources of supporting pilot study data available using a color coding system of identification. The final step included examining the pre-questionnaire data to first confirm the categorical placing from the pilot study data and then to finalize the selection of the three participants who I would investigate. Therefore, the sampling criteria included (a) participation in the pilot study, (b) evidence from at least three data sources from the pilot study of culturally relevant beliefs (c) questionnaire data that aligned with the categorical placing from the pilot study examination, and (d) representing one of the three categories of responsiveness (CR, CRA, CA). Using the two steps just mentioned and criteria developed, the following are descriptions of the three participants selected (pseudonyms used) for the case study.

Preservice Teachers

Carla. Carla was a 29-year-old self-identified African American female born and raised in Covington, Georgia by her mother and father in a lower class neighborhood. Carla was the middle child of three siblings. As the middle child of four siblings, growing up, Carla's home and school community consisted of African Americans, Whites and Latinos. She currently lives in the same home town she grew up in with her toddler and finance. Carla notes that the area is still as diverse as it was twenty years ago. Prior to enrolling in the teacher education program, she served as a detention officer for a local sheriff department and was on active duty with the United States Navy serving as an air craft carrier on national and international naval ports. At the completion of her

enlistment, Carla decided to continue her education and pursue a career in education. Her decision to become an early childhood education major was solidified after engaging in several elementary substitute teaching experiences.

Ronald. Ronald was a 21-year-old self-identified African American male born and raised in Atlanta, Georgia by his grandmother and mother in a lower-middle class neighborhood. He is the oldest of three siblings and often shared the advantages and disadvantages of growing up in a majority African American community and having primarily African American peers. Ronald lives near the community in which he was raised and is single with no children. As a traditional college student, two years ago after graduating from high school, Ronald attributed his interest in pursing an early childhood education degree to his quest for serving as a change agent for his community and an advocate for children. He often shared how his grandmother inspired and encouraged him to pursue a college education and his interest in teaching and advocacy.

Jody. Jody was a 39-year-old self-identified White female born and raised in Michigan by her mother and father in a lower class household (when Jody was three her mother and father divorced and her mother later remarried). The oldest of two siblings, Jody grew up in a primarily White, Lutheran community. In 1990 she moved to Atlanta in which she worked for 16 years in business administration. At the time of the study, she was married and had adopted a six year old daughter. Jody's initial interest in education was to pursue a counseling degree however she felt that she could reach and serve more children as an elementary education teacher.

The Researcher

I am a 28 year old African American female born and raised in Decatur, Georgia by my mother and father in a lower middle class household. I am the oldest daughter of three siblings. I grew up and attended schools with predominantly African Americans. My exposure to people from diverse backgrounds occurred during my tenure at Crescent State University and while in the elementary teacher education program. After earning my teaching certificate I taught second and first grade, and served as math facilitator, and earned a Masters degree in curriculum and instruction before returning to CSU for my doctorate. Currently, I am a doctoral student in the department and serve as a graduate teaching assistant.

My role as the researcher in this study was to collect meaningful and authentic information from participants in order to address the proposed theoretical proposition and respond to the research questions (Merriam, 1998). In this role a characteristic of qualitative research is that researchers have the capacity while collecting data to build rapport and trusting relationships with participants in order to fully capture their voice and experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, throughout the study I was a good communicator who empathized with participants, listened intently and asked probing, purposeful questions. I listened for and was cognizant of the explicit and implicit references and statements as well as silences that occurred during data collection.

In addition to my role as an intent listener and communicator, to capture authentic experiences and reflections of the participants I conducted two member checking conversations; one occurred during data collection and another after the final data analysis. These member checking conversations involved allowing opportunities for the

participants to respond to and authenticate the creditability of patterns that emerged from the multiple data sources (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). They also became new data sources as well. Details regarding the member checking conversations are noted in the following section.

Data Sources

As discussed previously, a case study researcher engages in an in-depth, intensive exploration of a phenomenon within a bounded unit. For this study, to holistically capture how pre-service teachers reflect across systems of influences and the relationship of their reflections to their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. I uniquely and purposefully selected the data sources. The four data sources were the pre/post Love & Kruger Beliefs Questionnaire (2005), eight course assignments, three individual interviews, and two member checking written records. Because the two member checking conversations with participants' yielded new data I added them on as a new data source and analyzed them accordingly. Some of the data sources were static while others represented the iterative nature of this study. For example, the focus and content of interviews and member checking conversations developed from the data collected and analyzed previously. On the other hand, the course assignments and pre/post questionnaire weren't influenced by the information gathered from the study. The following section describes the four data sources and identifies how each contributed to my investigation of the research questions.

Love & Kruger Beliefs Questionnaire

The 48 item questionnaire I used in the beginning and end of this study was created by Love (2001) to measure the culturally relevant beliefs of teachers and was

adapted from Ladson-Billings (1994) ethnographic study of highly successful teachers of African American students. In this ethnographic study, Ladson-Billings conducted classroom observations and teacher interviews and after collective interpretation and analysis identified common ideological and behavioral characteristics of teachers who display culturally relevant teaching (see Appendix B for further details about culturally relevant teaching). Love and Kruger (2005) therefore used the results of Ladson-Billings research and created questionnaire intended to measure the culturally relevant beliefs of teachers. On this 48 item questionnaire, 25 represented culturally relevant beliefs and practices. The remaining 23 statements are identified as ‘assimilationist” beliefs, which is the anti-thesis of culturally relevant teaching. Examples include teachers believing that failure is inevitable for some and the teacher encouraging students to learn individually, and in isolation (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Love, 2001; Love & Kruger, 2005).

Furthermore, the questionnaire is organized into six dimensions of related beliefs: (a) knowledge (whether teachers view learning and knowledge as a reciprocal exchange between teacher and student); (b) student’s race, ethnicity, and culture (statements that questions how teachers regard students’ ethnicity, culture, and race in planning and teaching the curriculum); (c) social relations in and beyond the classroom (measures how teachers view parental involvement in education and their ability to connect with all students, and beliefs about social relations in and beyond the classroom); (d) teaching as a profession (explores whether teachers believe that teaching is a way to contribute to the good will of society); (e) teaching practices (measures beliefs about particular teaching practices); and (f) students’ needs and strengths (examines whether teachers believe that students’ individual needs are important in curriculum and instructional planning). In

each section there are 5, 7,12, 8 and 9 number of statements respectively and are answered according to a Likert scale of strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree, to strongly disagree. The questionnaire begins with participants including demographic information such as ethnicity, number of years teaching, gender, sex, etc. To reduce response bias, the questionnaire creator randomized the item order to infuse both assimilationist and culturally relevant responses (Love 2001; Love & Kruger, 2005). The internal consistency of all forty eight questions was α .75 which was slightly less than adequate according to Nunnally and Bernstein's (1994) .80 recommendation. The standardized alpha for items that reflected culturally relevant beliefs were .85 and .72 for those identified as culturally assimilationist (Love, 2001; Love & Kruger, 2005).

I used the questionnaire at the beginning and end of the study and created a descriptive memo of the results. I used the Love & Kruger beliefs questionnaire at the beginning of the study because it offered an opportunity to identify participants who represented a range of culturally relevant beliefs and practices and therefore was an essential component of sampling procedures. The descriptive memos created from the pre-questionnaire data also helped inform the content of interview number one, which in turn provided an opportunity to holistically capture within each case the unique experiences, prior knowledge, and process of belief development that led to the selection of a particular culturally relevant or assimilationist statement. The questionnaire was used at the end of the study to determine whether participants' culturally relevant beliefs had changed over the course of the semester. Such change would have spurred further examinations of what influenced transformation of beliefs during the semester for participants.

Documentation

I also collected two documents from each course participants were taking at the time of the study. These courses and assignments include:

- Reading and Language Arts in Early Childhood Education (ECE): Literacy Brief Write and Literacy Final
- Assessment of classroom learning in ECE: Assessment Midterm and Assessment Policy Paper
- Classroom Management ECE/Field Placement: Positive Discipline and Individualized Behavior Change Plan
- Social Studies Methods in ECE.: Good Citizen's Essay and PTLS SS lesson plan

I decided to collect documentation data in this study because they offered an authentic opportunity to explore and analyze participants' written reflections for evidence of reflecting across systems of influence. Unlike the questionnaire data, examining documents gave insights into the 'how' and 'what' participants decided to reflect upon, then allowed for a closer examination of the levels (micro meso, exo, or macro) presented in these reflections. To decide upon the criteria for the documentation selection I met with committee members and then with the four course instructors to discuss the assignments that allowed participants to reflect on their teaching and learning. The first criteria to select the documents was identifying whether they allowed participant's opportunities to reflect on course work and/or field experiences in a written format. In other words, documents that required students to present on a topic, write a children's book, evaluate a peer, etc. were excluded from consideration in the study. Also, with the

assistance of the course instructors, I selected assignments that either explicitly asked participants to reflect on the teaching and/or learning of culturally and linguistically diverse students or whose focus was broad enough to potentially warrant participant's reflections on diverse students. It is important to note that I met with course instructors either in person or via e-mail to discuss the course assignments and prompts.

During these discussions instructors invited me to help revise the prompts and assignments so that they focused on the teaching and learning of culturally and linguistically diverse students. For example, at the beginning of the semester the Literacy instructor and I met to create the prompts for the two course assignments I collected as documentation. These assignments asked participants to specifically consider the experiences and realities of diverse students in their reflections. I also assisted the Assessment instructor in revising the question on the midterm assignment which asked students to reflect on culturally relevant assessment practices. We also decided together which articles the pre-service teachers would read and respond to that represented culturally relevant policy decisions. This assignment (Assessment policy paper) became the other assessment document I collected from participants. Additionally, after discussing the focus of my study with the management instructor she created a written prompt for one assignment (Individualized Behavior Change Plan) that asked participants to consider influences beyond the classroom and added a verbal prompt (Positive Discipline) for participants to consider the teaching and learning of CLDs. Lastly, the social studies instructor suggested two assignments to consider for my documentation that provided reflection opportunities for students (See Appendix C for detailed descriptions of prompts and course assignments).

If possible, documents were to be collected across time within each course to examine participants' growth. However, as with the natural proclivity of modifications in course assignment scheduling and because the primary focus was to select assignments that allowed participants to reflect on their teaching of diverse student populations, the documents occurred sporadically throughout the semester across courses.

Interviews

In this study I also conducted three semi-structured individual interviews. All interviews were audiotaped for accuracy and transcribed verbatim to include participants' words and all intelligible utterances. I created a descriptive memo for each interview that included (a) a summary of the interview's content; (b) my reflections and questioning of the data, and (c) any emergent patterns and themes (Merriam, 1998). The first interview used a mixture of both structured and open-ended questions and lasted approximately one hour for each participant (Merriam, 1998). Selecting a semi-structured format allowed for an extension of knowledge gained from the questionnaire data and opportunities to establish rapport with the participants (Patton, 1990). Examples of questions answered during the first interview included: *What have been your experiences with people from diverse backgrounds? When you hear the word diverse student populations, what are your thoughts? What knowledge do you think children bring with them to the classroom?*

Interview number two lasted approximately one hour to an hour and twenty minutes for each participant. The focus of the second interview was to further capture participants' understanding and beliefs about diverse students as connected to culturally relevant pedagogy. Participants were asked to select and bring to the interview a lesson plan that they had created and taught which represented culturally relevant pedagogy.

Using the lesson plan course assignment therefore as a prompt, the interview questions allowed participants' the opportunity to explain their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy within an assignment. For example, questions from the second interview included: *Why do you think it [lesson plan] represents culturally relevant teaching? How did or didn't this lesson help you understand more about how to teach CLD? Are there any barriers/challenges to implementing culturally relevant teaching/assessment in the classroom?*

Lastly, the third interview lasted approximately 40 minutes to one hour. It was a final attempt to capture the voice of the participants by probing further about their beliefs, values and practices with culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Interview questions utilized all data collected to allow participants to expand on and clarify the content of their reflections. Examples of questions I asked during this interview included: *Share an experience you have used this semester with learning about or teaching culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Explain how this experience has or hasn't informed your teaching. Tell me more about your beliefs about teaching CLDs.*

Moreover, interviews are cited as the best technique to use when conducting a case study because it allows for intensive exploration of the research question directly with the participant (Merriam, 1998). As discussed so far, the questionnaire data was key because it offered an opportunity to identify participant's culturally relevant beliefs and practices while also providing insights into any development of these beliefs over the course of the semester. The data collected from the course assignments allowed for a clearer portrait of how participants reflected across systems of influences and how these

reflections connected to their beliefs about culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. However, while the documentation and questionnaire data were essential to gathering the immediate, observable 'what' of participants' beliefs and reflections, interviews allowed me to actually enter into the participants' realm of prior knowledge, beliefs, and experiences through a dialogical exchange. Through probing and questioning, I asked participants to expound upon and share the experiences behind what was shared in their reflections and their responses to the Love & Kruger (2005) questionnaire. This data in turn allowed for a more in-depth portrayal of the process of how each individual developed their current beliefs about culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Therefore, unlike the data collected from the questionnaire and documents, the interviews provided a more intensive portrait of participants' stories and journey towards developing an understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy and allowed opportunities for me to explore how and why these stories were inclusive of multiple systematic influences. (See Appendix D for complete interview protocols.)

Member Checking Written Records

Lastly I conducted two 30-minute, individual member checking conversations with participants which resulted in two member checking written records. The purpose of the member checking conversation was for me to share with participants' preliminary findings and emergent themes and to confirm or refute my interpretations of the data collected. During these conversations, participants' expanded and extended information from the other data sources and therefore 'new' data emerged. I captured this 'new data' by writing a record of participants' responses. These member-checking written records became an important data source because it allowed further chronicling and

understanding of participants' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Refer to Appendix E for a list of the questions asked during the two member checking conversations.

Data Collection

This section now explores how the data sources mentioned above were used during data collection over a forty week period. I will first detail the data collection methods then identify the analysis strategies and techniques that were used. The information is presented in 'phases' or chronological order according to when the data was collected and analyzed during the course of the study. While they are presented in phases, the data collection and analysis in this study were iterative in which I referred back and forth between and among data sources in order to inform probing and content for future data to be collected and to inform data analysis which also occurred throughout the study.

Phase I (Week 1-8)

During the first phase of the study I administered the pre-Love and Kruger Beliefs questionnaire, conducted the first interview and collected four course documents. I used the questionnaire data to first confirm the categorical placements completed during the first part of the sampling procedures. I scored participants' responses based on the percentage and their total number of culturally relevant statements. For example, if a participant had a score of 33% or 16 responses, 33% or 16 out of 48 responses reflected culturally relevant beliefs and/or practices. This information was an important part of sampling because it provided supporting evidence for categorical placements of Carla, Ronald, and Jody's culturally relevant beliefs. The questionnaire data was not analyzed

to identify and code levels of influence or evidence of culturally relevant beliefs and practices. Rather I used the questionnaire data to descriptively identify participants' culturally relevant beliefs prior to the collection and corroboration of other data sources.

Immediately following the administration and examination of the questionnaire data, I asked the three participants selected to participate in the first individual interview which lasted approximately one hour for each participant (Merriam, 1998). I conducted all interviews on campus in the Early Childhood Education department. The information collected from the first interview was used to (a) provide an opportunity for participants to expand and clarify responses from the questionnaire (b) as a source of data for analysis of the beliefs and experiences of each participant/case, and (c) to develop deeper understandings and insights into the foundation of participants' beliefs and practices.

Furthermore, also during the first phase I collected four course documents from each participants: Good Citizen's Essay, Positive Discipline, Assessment Policy Paper, and Assessment Midterm. I collected then analyzed each document for how participants reflected across systems of influence (e.g. micro, meso..), coded according to how and whether the assignment itself allowed for reflectivity across systems and examined for evidence of culturally relevant pedagogy. A descriptive memo for each set of documents per course was created to summarize the findings from the documents collected.

Phase II (Weeks 9-13)

During phase two of the study I conducted the second interview (weeks 11 and 13), collected the Social Studies PTLS lesson plan document (weeks 11 and 13), and conducted the first member checking conversation (weeks 10 and 11). Lasting approximately one hour to hour and twenty minutes, I asked participants during the

second interview to bring a lesson plan from their Social Studies PTLS unit they had implemented and felt best represented culturally relevant pedagogy. This lesson became the focus for the interview questions and was one of the documentation data sources for the Social Studies course. Interview two was unique because it served as a data source for me to identify how participants defined culturally relevant teaching and permitted me to explore how participants actually engaged in culturally relevant teaching practices when teaching students. To summarize the results of the information collected and notate my interpretations a descriptive memo was completed. I also collected and analyzed the lesson plan using the same procedures as the other course assignments; that is it was examined for how participants' reflected across systems of influences and for evidence of culturally relevant beliefs and practices.

The conclusion of phase two included conducting the first member checking conversation with participants. Using the information from the three descriptive memos completed thus far (pre-questionnaire data memo, interview #1 memo, and documentation memo) I contacted participants via phone and shared data and preliminary interpretations to get feedback on whether the results were plausible and representative of their experiences and beliefs. The sessions lasted on average thirty minutes for each participant. As they shared information I took written notes both using participants' exact words and phrases. These notes would become the written records of the new data emerging from this member checking conversation. All participants confirmed my initial interpretations of the data and emergent themes as well as clarified and extended questions that developed as I examined the documentation and interview data.

Phase III (Weeks 12-40).

During phase three of the study I collected and analyzed three documents (Literacy Brief Write, Individualized Behavior Change plan and Literacy Final Exam), administered the post-Love & Kruger Beliefs Questionnaire, conducted interview #3 and held the final member checking conversation. At week 18 the entire Cohort of eligible participants (now 21 because one student took a leave of absence mid-semester) completed the post- Love & Kruger beliefs questionnaire. The questionnaire was scored again and I wrote four descriptive memos using the post-questionnaire results. The first memo included descriptions of the questionnaire responses of the entire Cohort whereas the other three memos included individual descriptions of the questionnaire data for Ronald, Jody and Carla. For the three cases, I noted whether there were any changes in beliefs/practices from the beginning of the semester until the end. The information from the descriptive memos then led to the decision of whether to probe participants on post-questionnaire data during the third interview.

Interview three lasted about forty minutes to an hour and was conducted during the 17th and 18th weeks of the study. During this interview I probed participants further to examine and confirm their beliefs about teaching diverse students and experiences throughout the semester that helped to inform these beliefs. After the interview I wrote a memo describing new information gathered and noted any final patterns that had emerged from each case (participant).

Lastly, during week 40 I contacted by phone the three participants and held individual, member checking conversations to share results from the final data analysis. For this member checking conversation I shared with participants' the major findings from the within case analysis and allowed them opportunities to confirm, expand and

clarify on these results. Like the first member checking conversation, as participants' expanded on these findings, the written records became a new data source.

Furthermore, as in multiple case study research, the culmination of these data collection procedures provided a holistic portrait of not only ways each individual participant critically reflected but also how these reflections connected to their culturally relevant beliefs and practices. The following section will now explore how data analysis was conducted throughout the study to develop categories across the data that would eventually address the research questions.

Data Analysis

In this study data analysis was ongoing and occurred throughout data collection procedures. As discussed at the beginning of the chapter, the analytic strategy used for this study was *relying on theoretical propositions.* The theoretical proposition that directed the research was that participants who critically reflected across systems of influences develop more understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy than those who have difficulty extending across systems. Also for the analytic procedures I engaged in both within case and cross case analysis. I conducted the within case analysis during all phases of the study whereas cross case analysis occurred during the final phase of data analysis. The following section details the data analysis procedures as they occurred during data collection.

Within Case Analysis

For the questionnaire data I used the information descriptively to inform questions for interview #1 and corroborate categorical placements of potential participants during the sampling procedures. On the other hand, I analyzed all documents, interviews, and

member checking written records using a two tier coding scheme to identify participant's reflectivity patterns and also a two tier coding scheme to explore their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy within these reflections. It is important to note I analyzed data for each participant one at a time or within case first. In other words, I analyzed and coded Jody's data first, then Carla's, followed by Ronald's. Analyzing participants' data separately allowed me the opportunity to develop categories of patterns and themes for each case analysis which allowed for a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of each participants' reflectivity patterns and culturally relevant beliefs. I did not conduct a cross case analysis until the final data analysis stage in phase three (weeks 16 -18). Nevertheless, the two tier coding scheme to analyze for participants' reflectivity and culturally relevant beliefs included first applying a *priori* coding system followed by open coding phrases. This coding scheme was applied for all documentation and interview data collected throughout the study.

Coding Scheme for Reflectivity

Coding refers to the process for assigning abbreviated designations such as phrases, numbers or letters to different aspects of your data to allow for retrieval of specific pieces of data (Merriam, 1998). Because I employed an analytic strategy of relying on theoretical propositions, I first looked at each set of data for evidence of reflecting across systems of influences. For example, the first level of analysis included an *a priori* coding to represent the five systems of influences: micro, meso, exo, macro, chrono. Therefore I went through the data and coded each meaning unit (complete thought/sentence) as either MICRO, MESO, EXO, MACRO or CHRONO (refer to chapter two for descriptions of each system). Take for example Jody's micro level

reflection: “I worry that I won’t be able to look past my own filters as a WASP from the Midwest….can I get past my own backgrounds and my own biases?” (IV1).

The next level of coding was more inductive, it involved open coding in which I developed codes based on patterns extracted from the data that provided more descriptions of the nature of these reflections at the various levels. For example, a second level of coding analysis from a MICRO code was Micro-personal which means that the participant reflected at the micro level about some personal experience, belief or identity. The Micro-personal code was identified further as Micro-personal-biases to represent that the participant reflected at the Micro level on her personal biases. Therefore the second level of coding was in the form of phrases instead of single word codes. Taking the example above, the coding ‘phrase’ MICRO-personal-biases is now more descriptive and captures the essence of her descriptions which allowed for a more in-depth examination of what and how Jody was reflecting within each of Bronfenbrenner’s level (Merriam, 1998). The result of these codes was later placed in a table for each participant according to levels to allow for the next analysis stage of collapsing codes then later as a tool during cross case analysis.

Coding Scheme for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

To explore evidence of culturally relevant pedagogy of participants’ reflections I then completed a similar two tier process as described above. I began by going back into the data and open coding meaning units to capture the evidence of culturally relevant pedagogy of these complete statements or phrases .The codes that developed from this open coding process included CRP (culturally relevant pedagogy), CRI (culturally relevant ideology), CAP(Culturally relevant assimilationist pedagogy); and/or CAB

(culturally relevant and assimilationist belief). Definitions of these terms can be found in chapter one. I then engaged in a second tier coding scheme in which I identified, then coded the meaning unit according to systems of influence (micro, meso, exo, and macro). Take for example Ronald's reflection on teaching a lesson about the Holocaust in which he allowed children to use multiple forms of artistic expression to connect their personal experiences and understandings of racism and oppression with the victims of the Holocaust. Ronald reflected:

> During our lesson about the ideology of om Adolf Hitler a lot of kids raised you know things that they've experienced some types of racism so I was happy to see they were able to make that connection also during our concentration camp lesson they thought about you know they related some of the experiences they've heard about you know immigrants and living where they lived to concentration camps…and in the future when I have my own classroom we could compare you know Japanese concentration camps that were happening here to in Germany just in case I did have some Asian students in my class. (IV2)

In this example, Ronald's culturally relevant pedagogy of connecting the lesson to children's personal experiences with racism and use of multiple forms of expression was situated within the macro level. To descriptively capture the analysis of participants' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy I created a table for each participant listing the meaning units that represented culturally relevant practices and ideology and the respective systems of influences. I referred to this table of statements during cross case analysis procedures and when presenting the findings in the following chapter.

Descriptive Memos

Furthermore, the descriptive memos that were written of each data set were not analyzed themselves but rather used as references to inform the content of member checking conversations and track emergent themes and findings. Again the steps just mentioned were conducted throughout the study across phases. There were however steps

in the analytic procedures that were unique to different phases of the study. For example, the conclusion of phase one data analysis included looking at the documentation and interview descriptive memos and pulling out patterns of reflectivity and evidence of culturally relevant pedagogy. Having this information was essential as I began phase two because I held the first member checking conversations with participants to confirm and extend these preliminary findings. During this conversation participants confirmed my interpretations of the data thus far and also provided 'new' data as they extended and clarified information from the document and interview data. Such extension and clarification allowed for a deeper and more exhaustive analysis of participants' reflectivity and culturally relevant beliefs. The 'new data' from the member checking written records were analyzed using the two tier coding systems described in the previous section.

Also to further ensure that the data analysis and coding was trustworthy during phase two, I engaged in the first peer coding session (Yin, 2003) with a peer coder (Lily) who was knowledgeable of qualitative analysis as evident by her qualitative research experiences. She also had expertise in the teacher reflectivity literature and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory and its application to this study. During this phase of data analysis, Lily engaged in first level coding of participants' assessment policy paper document. After she had completed coding we met to discuss and compare our results. We went through each meaning unit to compare codes. When our codes were dissimilar we discussed our individual rationales and came to a consensus on how to code the meaning unit. All of the peer coding sessions were audio-taped and used as references during the final stages of data analysis. The results from this coding session indicated that

meaning unit codes were primarily congruent and those that differed were revised and coded accordingly for future analytic procedures. For example, during one session we created a new category called “multiple” to represent participants’ reflections on two or more systems not including micro + micro (micro + micro reflections are categorized as meso reflections).

Lastly, phase three data analysis included construction of categories and themes across data sources which contributed to categorical saturation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Since all data had been collected, coded and a descriptive memo created, I developed a coding table that became a comprehensive visual data display/reference (see Table 3). The table allowed for a more cogent and thorough examination of the voluminous amount of data collected so that I could easily identify emergent themes and patterns. For example, the reflectivity table was divided into six categories: MICRO, MESO, EXO, MACRO, CHRONO, and MULTIPLE. I then combed through the data and placed codes within the respective categories for each participant. Afterwards, to further allow for the construction of categories across the data sources I began the process of collapsing codes to further synthesize the data. Table 3 shows a sample of Carla’s reflectivity table.

Table 3

Excerpt of Carla’s Reflectivity Coding Table

MICRO	MESO	EXO	MACRO	CHRONO	MULTIPLE
Peers	Personal	Media	Deficit	Race and	Personal +
peer deficit	Personal	*(CRI)* media	labels/Media	Language	Macro
beliefs-p.6,7	feelings + TD	p. 11, 12, 15	Educational	LD in	Personal
(IV1), IV3	instructor, p.	(IV1), p. 7	statistics of	classroom p.	racial

p.3, 7-9, MC2 p. 2	5 (IV1), p. 10, 11 (IV3); PDz	(IV1); MC1p.1; MC1 p.3 (GC)	Blacks p. 14 (IV1); p. 7 (IV3); APP p.4; p. 4 (MC1/PD),	12, IV1; p.2, 3(APP)	relationships, p. 4,5,16 (IV1); p.3 (MC1/GC); p. 1 (MC2)
Personal Beliefs/-stereotypes: p. 2,4, (IV1); p. 1,2 (BW); p. 8 (IV3)					

A separate table was created to address the second part of the research question in which I listed the culturally relevant/assimilationist practices and beliefs of participants. A written narrative of each participant was created to capture how each reflected across systems of influence and the relationship of this reflectivity to their culturally relevant beliefs and practices.

After I wrote a narrative for each participate during the within case analysis, I then engaged in a second peer debriefing session with Lily. Prior to our conversation, Lily was given Jody's reflectivity table and asked to write a descriptive memo summarizing findings and noting any interpretations and questions about the data. I also wrote a descriptive memo of the results of Jody's reflectivity and culturally responsiveness. Lily and I met for one and a half hours and compared our descriptive memos and understanding of Jody's reflectivity and beliefs. This peer debriefing session confirmed my preliminary understandings and interpretations of Jody's reflectivity as well as presented additional insights that I considered during the final phases of data analysis. This peer debriefing session provided evidence that my interpretations of the

data and therefore findings were representative of the authentic experiences and beliefs of the participants. I will discuss in the final sections how I further established trustworthiness in this study.

Cross Case Analysis

Also during phase three I began the cross case analysis process. I was interested in identifying the similarities and differences of participants' patterns of reflectivity to gain further insights into participants' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. The cross case analysis conducted extended beyond a unified description across cases to consider themes and categories that conceptualized the data from the within case analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 1998). For example, using the visual display, a constant comparative method was used in which I first collapsed codes across cases then compared by level 'like' coding phrases. These comparative coding phrases were then used to describe similarities of reflectivity between each participant. Therefore, the first step in the cross case analysis included collapsing the codes from each participant's reflectivity table then identifying similar patterns and categories of reflectivity. Once similar ways of reflecting across levels were identified, the same process occurred using the culturally relevant beliefs and practices tables that had been created during the within case analysis. I then created a cross case analysis table to visually display the results.

To ensure consistency and validity in this constant comparative coding analysis I engaged in a final debriefing session with Lily (peer coder). Prior to our meeting, I gave Lily the tables of each participant, which identified their patterns of reflectivity and culturally relevant beliefs pedagogies across levels. She then engaged in a constant comparative method of identifying the reflectivity patterns that were similar across cases

(I explained to her the process I used in collapsing codes across cases and comparing the results). We also discussed further the explicit and implicit variations in the content of these reflections for each participant drawing on our conversations and inquiries from previous peer debriefing sessions. Our discussions helped to further validate and confirm my findings on how participants reflections across levels of influences revealed their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. This peer debriefing session and the cross case analysis procedure, allowed me to examine and extend beyond a unified description across cases to themes and categories that conceptualized the data from the within case analysis (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Schram, 2003).

Lastly, participants were contacted for the final member checking conversation. During this conversation I shared with each participant the major findings from the within case analysis to validate whether the interpretation of the data represented their reflectivity and development as a culturally relevant teacher. I also asked open ended questions from the major findings of the cross case analysis to further substantiate these results. Each participant confirmed the major findings of the cross case and within case analysis as well as clarified reflections and experiences that further substantiated the results.

Trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985) have outlined the means from which trustworthiness can be established in a qualitative design. First they suggest prolonged engagement in the setting. In my study, data collection occurred over the course of the semester. This allowed me the opportunity to holistically understand the complexities of the participants' experiences as extracted from multiple data sources. Secondly, I triangulated

multiple data sources (questionnaire, interview transcripts, course assignments, and member checking written records) to offer supporting evidence for the findings.

Furthermore, Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that to establish trustworthiness researchers must present a diverse case analysis in which multiple perspectives are included in the study. Again, to authentically capture the voices of participants, I constantly reflected on how my biases and beliefs influenced interpretation of data and the meaning making that occurred during data collection through personal and descriptive reflective memoing (Creswell, 2003). My personal reflective memoing occurred as I was creating the descriptive memos for each data source. These personal reflections included inserting questions, comments and reactions I had to the data and emergent findings. For example, below is a summary extracted from the descriptive memo of Jody's Assessment Policy Paper followed by my personal reactions and reflections (in italics) on her response:

> Jody begins addressing the question by defining culturally appropriate assessment as developing an assessment that is a 'true gauge of a student's knowledge regardless of any English-language limitations or cultural differences.' *This is an interesting statement that has what I believe to be deficit undertones and provides a counter definition of culturally appropriate assessment with the use of the word 'regardless'. Maybe I should probe Jody on her thoughts about CAA.*

As presented above to ensure that I was authentically capturing the experiences and voices of participants I constantly engaged in personal reflective memoing throughout data collection and analysis. Additionally, throughout the study I engaged in two member-checking conversations with the three participants in which I shared tentative interpretations of the data to ensure that their experiences were authentically captured (Merriam, 1998). This was a noted strategy in qualitative research to enhance trustworthiness (Merriam, 1998).

To further establish trustworthiness during each phase of the data analysis, I utilized a peer who was trained in qualitative analysis to confirm coding within case and cross case analysis (Yin, 2003). During these peer debriefing/coding sessions we discussed the findings noting points of diversion and conversion then established consensus. Feedback from the peer coder led to further development of new codes and clarification of the themes. Lastly, congruent with case study research, in the proceeding chapters, findings are presented in a descriptive and detailed manner that clearly shows the simultaneous interplay between data collection and analysis and gives an accurate portrayal of the beliefs and reflections of each participant (Merriam, 1998).

Influences and Considerations

There were five influences to consider when interpreting the results of this study. First, the findings from the three cases studies cannot be generalized to represent how **all** elementary pre-service teachers will reflect across systems of influence. However, instead of generalizing the findings, the intent of qualitative research is to holistically capture the experiences of participants in order to gain deeper understandings of the phenomena being examined (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Exploring how three elementary pre-service teachers reflected about diverse students allowed me to examine the process each participant used in developing an understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy. Another limitation of the study was that it was bounded by time (one semester) and context (one group of elementary pre-service teachers). Therefore by extending the time frame of the study across the teacher education program and following them into their first years of teaching would have allowed for further analysis of the influences involved in pre-service teacher's understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Furthermore, the Love & Kruger Questionnaire was used during the sampling procedures to substantiate the categories of culturally relevant pedagogy (culturally relevant, culturally relevant and assimilationist and culturally assimiliationist) for each participant based on the pilot study data. A limitation of the study was that the questionnaire data inaccurately categorized the participants and did not fully capture their understandings of and beliefs in culturally relevant teaching. Therefore, using only the questionnaire data to draw conclusions about the participants' beliefs should be considered with caution because of a researcher's inability to explore the meaning behind the responses. Triangulating data however did allow me to engage in a more in-depth exploration of the complex process of developing towards culturally relevant pedagogy.

Fourth, the participants in the current study are the same as those from the pilot study conducted in spring 2007. Therefore, a limitation of the study was researcher bias because of my prior knowledge of participants' beliefs and experiences as gleaned from the pilot study data. Because of prolonged engagement with participants, I forged relationships with each of them. Also my experiences as an African American graduate student, former pre-service teacher in the same program and knowledge of culturally relevant pedagogy are important considerations in how data was analyzed in this study and the prompting that I used with participants. However, through personal reflective memoing on these biases, engaging in two peer analysis sessions and two member checking conversations, my voice was minimized and therefore experiences of participants were authentically captured (Merriam, 1998).

Lastly, by working with course instructors to develop assignments that prompted participants to consider the teaching and learning of diverse students I influenced the

natural phenomenon of the research environment that could have provided different results. Thereby, seeking reflective assignments that directly addresses the teaching and learning of diverse students inevitably impacted what and whom pre-service teachers may have actually reflected upon. Additionally, the interviews not only prompted participants to consider influences that impact teaching and learning of diverse students but also allowed them to give ‘voice’ and ‘reflective consideration’ on how best to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. Therefore, consideration should be made of the impact the interviews may have had in capturing pre-service teachers’ natural proclivity towards critical reflectivity.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS: CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

In this study I examined the reflections of three elementary pre-service teachers' to develop insights into their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. I investigated (a) how elementary pre-service teachers reflect when learning about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students and (b) what do these reflections reveal about participants' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. To explore these research questions I collected data from a pre/post questionnaire, three individual interviews, two member-checking transcripts, and eight course documents. A cross case and within case analysis was then conducted using Bronfenbrenner's ecological model as a theoretical guide when examining participants' reflections and culturally relevant pedagogies. Analysis was also guided by the theoretical proposition that pre-service teachers who critically reflected across systems of influences are more likely to develop more understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy.

The findings from the first research question are based on the results from the cross case analysis. These findings represent the shared voices of reflectivity among Jody, Ronald and Carla. It is important to note that the cross case analysis utilized information gathered from the within case analysis of each participant. In the next chapter I present findings of the second research question which are the results from the within case analysis. These results are presented in the next chapter because they reveal how participants' reflectivity across systems connected to their understandings of culturally

relevant pedagogy. The findings from both chapters are presented using supporting data from the interviews and documentation sources. The data sources used are abbreviated according to its code (refer to chapter three for data source codes).

There were three major findings from the cross case analysis of the first research question *How do elementary pre-service teachers reflect when learning about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students.* These findings were that Ronald, Jody and Carla had shared patterns of reflectivity, used tools of references when learning about teaching diverse students and there were course assignments that facilitated participants' reflection across systems of influences. The results of these findings are presented in this chapter accordingly.

Shared Patterns of Reflectivity

Across cases I noticed that all participants had similar patterns of reflectivity. The findings suggested that all participants (a) reflected on influences in the classroom and beyond , (b) these reflections were concentrated at the micro and macro systems and (c) the content of Jody, Carla and Ronald's reflections were similar. This section presents the results of these shared patterns of reflectivity.

Reflecting in the Classroom and Beyond

Evidence from the interviews and documentation data suggested that participants' were able to extend their reflection about teaching and learning to influences and settings beyond the classroom. For example they all reflected on issues ranging from classroom pedagogy to standardized testing to the influence of an American identity on diverse students' educational experience. There was also evidence in which Carla, Ronald and Jody situated teaching and learning within a historical perspective. Their ability to reflect

across systems is important because the theoretical proposition stated that **if** participants are able to reflect across systems they will have more understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. However as will be discussed in the next chapter, the within case analysis of participants' reflections revealed that those who **critically** reflected across systems had more developed understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Concentration of Reflections

When reflecting across systems, Jody, Ronald and Carla's reflections were concentrated at the micro and macro levels. They mostly reflected on issues and concerns within the classroom and school community (micro) while also discussing how current and historic American belief systems (macro) influenced teaching and learning in the 21st century. Their focus on micro issues is reflective of their egocentric lens as a learner applying practice and theory while developing a teacher identity. Participants' concentration of reflections at the macro level however was a culmination of their experiences in the teacher education program and their personal knowledge, experiences and awareness of socio-historical and political events that impact teaching and learning of diverse students. The focus of reflectivity at the meso, exo and chrono levels was limited to their engagement and experiences within the teacher education program (i.e. information learned in their coursework and observations in the field.)

Focus of Reflections

The last shared pattern of reflectivity among Carla, Jody and Ronald was that they all reflected on some of the same influences across systems. For example, Carla reflected how "today's classrooms are becoming more diverse than ever…students are coming into the classroom with cultural and linguistic differences" (APP). Ronald further charged

that "The educational world in the 21st century has changed a great deal from our parent's generation. Teaching to the middle is not sufficient any longer and we are now responsible for the education of students that may be culturally, linguistically, economically, physically and cognitively different from ourselves" (APP). Jody agreed with both Carla and Ronald about the cultural and linguistic shifts in student populations and therefore argued that "educational practices must change rapidly in order to meet the new cultural paradigm" (APP). Such chronosystematic reflections demonstrated their shared consciousness that classrooms have changed dramatically over the past decades and therefore teachers must also change their practices and interactions to meet and accommodate the needs of these students.

Furthermore, participants also reflected in similar regards on multiple personal and school settings that influence teaching and learning of diverse students. Examples of such micro systems of influences they all reflected on was their personal experiences, the teacher, the student, the parent, and their teacher education program. When reflecting on their personal experiences, Ronald, Carla and Jody described how their racial identities, experiences interacting with people from diverse cultures and family beliefs about diversity impacted their understandings of how to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. When reflecting on the teacher, all participants' argued that it is imperative that teachers hold the belief that children are capable learners regardless of their cultural and linguistic identity and implement a pedagogy that is interactive, challenging and connects to students' reality. Likewise, they all viewed students in primarily affirming regards and championed for student voice in the classroom. They also reflected on the importance of forging authentic relationships with parents. However,

such relationships included traditional forms of parental involvement such as “if I send home homework I expect for it to be sent back” (Ronald, IV1); or parents to “go to PTA” (Jody, IV1) and “showing up to parent teacher conferences (Carla, IV1). These relationships did not represent multiple forms of parental involvement that families may value.

In connection to their experiences engaging in coursework in the teacher education program, Jody, Carla and Ronald reflected during the interviews on the class discussions and activities in their Literacy, Assessment, and Social Studies courses as those that explicitly allowed opportunities’ for them to explore the perceptions, realities, and experiences of students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. They also all reflected on how the teacher education program as a whole did not provide specific ways to not only implement culturally relevant pedagogy in the classroom but also how to negotiate these practices and beliefs in schools that encouraged less responsive curriculums. Participants shared such reflections on their personal experiences, the teacher, student, parent and teacher education program because the development of a teacher identity is shaped by such micro level influences due to their active engagement with them throughout the teacher preparation process (Schwartz, 1996; Feiman-Nemser, 2008).

Additionally, Ronald, Jody and Carla also all reflected on their personal beliefs about teaching as compared and contrasted to what they were learning and observing in the field and teacher education program. It is at this meso systematic level in which the merger and collision of their personal and teacher identities allowed them to examine

how teaching is a personal work that involves their emotions, identity, and knowledge of pedagogy.

Thus far I have presented shared focus of reflectivity for Carla, Ronald and Jody at the classroom level. However, there was shared focus of reflectivity beyond the classroom as well. Jody exclaimed that she didn't think she could "teach fifth grade until No Child Left Behind is repelled" because she would like to "feel like I can let go of the [local standardized measure] review sheets" and replace them with more "cool and interesting" activities that are relevant to children's experiences and captures their attention. Carla agreed that teachers are under so much pressure to push the testing agenda they tend to look beyond children's actual ability and year long performance to "[local standardized measure] scores, school and county statistics". As a result, Carla questioned "How do you know if a child is disadvantaged by just looking at their scores which may be less than perfect?" Ronald further explained that one way of moving towards accuracy in testing is for educators to "understand the whole child and use collected data to provide suitable educational programs" and "try to think of better policies in assessing all students". All of the participants felt they had a professional responsibility to respond to the test driven curriculum in schools today by instead implementing more responsive and engaging experiences for their students. Such shared focus on these exosystematic influences suggest that they all considered how to negotiate the accountability of mandated local testing policies with culturally relevant pedagogy.

To extend such reflections on standardized testing, to macro systems of influences, Jody, Ronald and Carla also all reflected issues of (a) equity in standardize testing practices, (b) the concept of an American identity that counters the reality and

experiences of diverse students and (c) student access to resources and knowledge. For equity in standardized testing practices, they considered the limitations of using such tests as the only measure of students' knowledge. For example, Ronald argued that standardized testing was inequitable because "Sometimes standardized test are the only tools available to assess students" (AM) while Carla agreed that they are also limiting because "…society, political and educational politics play a huge role on how the standardized tests are used." (AM) Likewise, Jody then argued "how do you possibly come up with any standardized test that is going to itself accurately measure what all the kids in the country know. You can't that's the short answer!" (MCI). As these examples demonstrate, participants all reflected on and challenged whether standardized tests actually assess student knowledge.

In addition to reflections on the accuracy of standardized testing, all participants also reflected on the power of the 'American belief and culture'. This American culture was referenced when Carla, Jody and Ronald discussed throughout the data how the cultural disconnect in the classroom influenced a student's success and failure. In the next chapter I detail the important distinctions between each participant's perception of how an 'American culture and belief' influences teaching and learning of diverse students to their developing understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Lastly, participants all reflected on the lack of access to resources and knowledge children from low income families receive in their schools and communities. They however, held less affirming beliefs about low income children and their families. For example, participants noted how compared to their middle class counter parts, students from low SES backgrounds have

less knowledge and educational experiences. When reflecting on her field placement community Jody observed

> …in that particular community there are very high resource students who probably have all the books that they need and all of the conversations that they need and all that kind of things and then there are kids that don't have anything you know. No books, no you know they, they live from one apartment to the next with as much furniture as they can pack in their car so they can sneak away when the rent is due (IV3)

Similarly, Carla took the position that students from less fortunate backgrounds would benefit from being exposed to realities and experiences in communities beyond the 'projects' to "help them develop an understanding of the world" (LF). She elaborated:

> …kids need to be exposed to everything. You know just because kids are less fortunate than others I should not only limit them to things that go on in the projects…they should be exposed to things that happen…all over the world in all the different cities, different neighborhoods… that way they can have dreams and hopefully they can see themselves in a better place one day (IV3)

Ronald felt there were differences in the knowledge children from each economic backgrounds bring with them to school. He reflected,

> I think they [higher income schools] are provided with the adequate support they need and they I guess I don't know, I think their children may be exposed to more, to coming into school compared to lower performing schools which are more sometimes geared towards poorer or you know unprivileged students. So I think that could also play a huge part in their exposure before school too. (IV1)

While participants' acknowledged that there are disparities in resources for children in low income families, instead of supporting a system that is inclusive of valuing the experiences children from these families bring to the classroom, they all proposed equalizing resources in order to help low income children acquire the skills of their middle class counterparts. While the pedagogy (equalizing resources and opportunities) was culturally relevant, the ideology was not. The ideology espoused by

each participant were culturally deficit because students from low income backgrounds were viewed as lacking knowledge as compared to a White middle class standard of learning. According to culturally relevant belief, children from low income areas also bring with them a wealth of knowledge and experiences that can be used to maximize their learning experiences. Therefore, the standard is towards excellence *not* a White middle class benchmark of achievement (Durden, 2008; Hilliard, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Perry, Steele, & Hilliard, 2003). In summary, as Table 4 presents, when reflecting across systems there were some settings and influences that they all focused on such as their personal experiences, testing and student access to resources.

Table 4

Similarities of Reflectivity

	Chrono	Micro	Meso	Exo	Macro
Ronald Carla Jody	Cultural and linguistic shift = pedagogical shift	Personal self Teacher Student Parent Teacher education program	Personal Pedagogy + Teacher pedagogy	Standardized Testing Media	Equity in standardized testing, access to resources, challenge of American identity concept

As presented in the table above, the common focus of participants' reflections demonstrated a shared experience engaging in coursework that focused on the teaching and learning of diverse students and being placed in schools that challenged culturally relevant pedagogy. They also shared an identity of being a pre-service teacher developing towards understanding how best to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. Arguably these findings demonstrate how such shared experiences in the teacher education program will inevitably result in shared patterns of reflectivity. Therefore the teacher education program can potentially steer the focus of their reflections on teaching and learning about diverse students in the classroom and beyond. In the next section I discuss the findings of how Ronald, Jody and Carla drew upon experiences in the teacher education program and their personal experiences as they made sense of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Tools of References and Influences

As presented, participants had common patterns of reflectivity across systems when learning to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. One may ask, why did they all reflect about the teacher, testing, or an American identity? Another finding from the cross case analysis was that they all drew upon certain knowledge and experiences, whether personal or programmatic, when they were reflecting across systems about the teaching and learning of diverse students. For example, at the micro and meso systems Jody, Carla and Ronald's reflections were directly influenced by their personal beliefs and background knowledge, experiences engaging in coursework activities and teaching and observing in the field. For example, Ronald noted how the Literacy course helped him to "make sure that every student in your class has access to

the information that you're teaching…whether it's using technology whether it's using different types of books, book clubs….journal writing using sketch books" (IV3). Carla reflected how an assignment in the literacy course helped her to understand that "you can have kids whose lifestyles and living conditions are totally different and that as a teacher you should be aware of I guess where your students are and how they live...to reach out to them and connect with them" (IV3). For Jody the assessment course explored why having "diversity in assessment" (IV3) was essential when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students.

However, while they all referenced course experiences that contributed to their understanding of teaching diverse students, Carla and Jody expressed how they needed more support with implementing culturally relevant practices. Jody critiqued that " a lot of what we learned in coursework this semester was a little bit more esoteric or… theory" and therefore "was not hands on work" (IV3). Carla agreed that she didn't feel that "we've been taught to deal with any I guess different cultures". She often expressed how instead courses presented a lot of negative statistics about diverse students and focused on "making connections with different students at different levels" rather than explaining how she could connect to students' cultural and linguistic identities. Here Carla and Jody reflected on their thirst for having more practical ways to 'do' the culturally relevant ideology that seemed to be encouraged in the program. While Ronald did not reflect on a need for more practical applications to the culturally relevant ideology promoted in the program, during the final member checking conversation he did express his challenge in his new field placement implementing such practices and beliefs. Therefore for all participants, at some point, they needed more tools of references in culturally relevant

pedagogy as they faced more assimilationist practices in their field placement. Unfortunately in some cases they had to draw upon other tools of references beyond the program during this challenge.

Moreover, as participants' extended their reflections beyond the classroom they had to draw upon other tools of references; especially to propel these reflections to a more critical stance. One tool participants' used included drawing upon their personal awareness of socio-political and historical events to implement critical pedagogy in their classrooms. They all for example, shared in the belief that teaching children about historical oppression such as slavery and the Holocaust will help advance race relations in America. Jody charged "I believe in teaching history. I believe in understanding, I've told kids several times those who forget the past are doomed to repeat" (IV2). Ronald agreed that by teaching about not only historical but current oppression and discrimination, children will understand that they "have the power to make sure that this never happens again." (IV2). Likewise, Carla's rationale for implementing a lesson on slavery was because she felt "slavery is a very important part of the history of the United States and that knowing this history will help them to understand and appreciate the freedoms that we all have today" and because slavery continues to exists today in other parts of the world, people are "still fighting for freedom and a better way of life" (LP). These reflections represented that participants drew upon their personal background knowledge and beliefs about historical oppression with what they were learning and observing in their courses and field. As they extended reflections beyond the classroom, they had to draw upon other tools of references beyond their experiences and training in the program.

In summary, each participant drew upon some tool of reference whether it was from prior knowledge and experiences, personal beliefs, from the ideological positions of the program or conflicting experiences in the field. Nevertheless, having access to multiple tools of references when learning about teaching diverse children is essential to pre-service teachers' growth and developing understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. The next section reports the findings of how some course assignments helped to facilitate all of the participants' reflectivity across systems of influences. Understanding why some assignments were more effective in facilitating pre-service teachers' reflection in and outside of the classroom provides important insights in the role of coursework in developing their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Reflection and Course Assignments

In this study I analyzed eight course assignments to determine how participants' reflected across systems and how these reflections revealed culturally relevant pedagogy. The course assignments that were selected held the criteria of having some type of prompt (written or verbal) for participants to reflect in writing on the teaching and learning of diverse students. There was one course assignment that used a verbal prompt and seven that used written prompts. Also, the written prompts varied across assignments. For example, there were three types of written prompts. These written prompts asked participants to either (a) reflect on the teaching and learning of diverse students, (b) reflect on influences in the classroom and beyond that impact teaching and learning or (c) reflect on the teaching and learning of diverse students and on influences beyond the classroom that impact teaching and learning.

When analyzing these course documents I considered the role of prompting in whether and how participants' were reflecting across systems as they were learning about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. As one might expect, all of the course assignments were intended to have pre-service teachers to reflect on applying theory to practice in order to encourage their development as a teacher. Therefore, I found that Ronald, Carla and Jody reflected at the micro and meso systems for all course assignments. Subsequently these reflections were on school-related settings and influences such as the teacher, student, and community and the interactions of these microsystems. Interestingly however, the course assignments that allowed participants to move beyond the classroom and community had two shared characteristics. These assignments provided a written prompt that asked participants' to reflect on the teaching and learning of diverse students and/or on influences beyond the classroom that impact learning. Also the assignment asked participants' to draw upon course readings and discussions that focused on the teaching and learning of diverse students. It is important to note that Jody, Ronald, and Carla identified the Assessment, Literacy and Social Studies course instructors as theoretically connecting course content throughout the semester to teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students. In the following section I describe how the prompting and course connections to culturally relevant pedagogy influenced participants' reflections across systems. On the following page Table 5 provides summary of these findings and will be used to guide this discussion.

As presented in the table, the Assessment Policy Paper was the only course assignment in which participants' reflected across all systems. The focus of this assignment was for pre-service teachers to read, summarize, critique and reflect on an

Table 5

Summary of Prompting and Reflectivity

	Prompting	Across all Systems	Across 3−4 systems	Across 2 systems	CRT course emphasis across semester
Assessment policy paper	Written:	Carla			
	Diverse students	Jody			x
	Classroom influences and beyond	Ronald			
Assessment Midterm	Written:	Ronald	Carla		X
	Diverse students	Jody			
	Classroom influences and beyond				
Literacy Brief Write	Written:		Carla		X
	Diverse students		Jody		
			Ronald		
Literacy Final	Written:		Carla		X
	Diverse students		Jody		
			Ronald		
PTLS SS lesson plan	Written:		Carla	Jody	X
	Influences beyond the classroom		Ronald		
Positive Discipline	Verbal:		Carla	Jody	
	Diverse students			Ronald	
Individualized Behavior Change Plan	Written:			Carla	
	Diverse students			Jody	
	Classroom influences and beyond			Ronald	

article related to issues of assessing culturally and linguistically diverse students. The written reflection included the following written prompt:

> Your summary should briefly and clearly communicate the main ideas in this article (Be careful not to plagiarize as discussed in class) and your reflections should include your response to/thinking about issues raised. Do you agree or disagree? Do you think good points have been raised? What in particular do you think is good or problematic about them? Are the issues too idealistic-that is, has an unrealistic standard for assessing children been set by this writer?

As the prompt details, the course instructor asked pre-service teachers to consider the teaching and learning of diverse students. The article participants' critique explored issues beyond the classroom that impact the teaching and learning of culturally and linguistically diverse students. As mentioned earlier participants' shared how the instructor for this course often discussed the importance of considering students culture and language when implementing assessment practices in the classroom. Therefore, participants' uses the article as a reference and drew upon what they learned in the course about culturally responsive assessment practices as they reflected on the teaching and learning of diverse students for this assignment. As a result they reflected across all systems of influences. The Assessment Midterm also provided specific prompting about diverse students and systems beyond the classroom however, only Jody and Ronald reflected across all systems. Interestingly however, Carla reflected on influences at each system except for the chrono system. Not reflecting on this system in this assignment is not consistent with other supporting data of Carla's focus on chronosystematic influences such as changes in linguistic and cultural diversity in classrooms and the historic oppressive beliefs and actions on minorities in America.

Nevertheless, as presented in table five, all participants reflected across 3-4 systems for the Good Citizen's Essay, Literacy Final and Literacy Brief Write

assignments. Unlike the assessment policy paper and midterm, these assignments (a) either asked participants to reflect about diverse students or to consider both classroom and societal influences on teaching and learning, (b) the assignment required them to reference course readings that focused on the teaching and learning of diverse students and (c) the course instructors held ongoing conversations of how to apply the content knowledge to teaching diverse students. For example, the Good citizen's essay asked participants to explore the meaning of a good democratic citizen. They were assigned to read articles that focused on developing democratic citizens and assigned to outline in a three page essay what they believed to be the most important characteristics of good democratic citizens generally and citizens of our country specifically as connected to teaching social studies. Therefore while this course assignment did not specifically prompt participants' to reflect on diverse students, it did require them to go beyond the classroom to see how American democracy and ideals influence teaching and learning. Also participants expressed how the instructor often discussed the importance of exploring history and current events using diverse perspectives. Therefore, because the course instructor made culturally relevant pedagogy a focus in class discussions and the assignment prompted pre-service teacher to extend beyond the classroom to consider other systems of influences using a supportive reading, participants therefore reflected beyond the classroom to consider exo, macro and chrono systems of influences.

On the other hand, the Literacy Brief Write and Literacy Final assignment specifically prompted participants' to consider the teaching and learning of culturally diverse students but did not prompt to move beyond the classroom and community. For example, the Literacy Brief Write was a reflective short essay which was part of a

semester long course project that focused on pre-service teachers examining the multiple literacy in children's community. The assignment specifically asked participants to consider their prior experiences, perceptions and beliefs about the children's community before observing then reflect on how these expectations were similar to and different from the actual observations. Therefore, since the focus was on micro level settings and applications to teaching they all reflected at this system along with the interactions of these settings (meso). However, the third system of reflectivity they considered represented their unique observations in the community. For example, Carla reflected on the chronosystem of generational poverty as she observed the low income families in the community whereas Jody reflected on the exosystematic influence of educational accreditation since the community she observed was in the midst of losing it. Ronald, on the other hand, reflected on the macro influence of society's stereotypes about wealthy families as he considered his personal beliefs about the families in the affluent community he observed. Arguably, participants were able to extend their reflections beyond the classroom because the assignment allowed an opportunity for them to observe the community and inevitably how factor such as SES and educational accreditation influences the families and children in that community.

As for the Literacy final, I analyzed the essay prompt which asked participants to discuss the challenges, advantages, and arguments for and against using children's home and community literacy as a teaching tool in their literacy development. Here the assignment asked Carla, Jody and Ronald to reflect on the teaching and learning of diverse students while also considering references from course readings and discussions

on making learning affirming and responsive to young children. As a result participants reflected at the micro, meso and exo levels and Ronald and Carla at the macro as well.

As presented, both literacy assignments asked students to consider the teaching and learning of diverse students' situated within classroom pedagogy of literacy development. Also all participants' reflected on how the community observations, readings, and discussions in this course helped them to begin to see through the lens of the child because of the constant focus on developing an affirming belief about children and their communities. These two assignments present an example of how having a prompt about diverse students and having a course committed to encouraging affirming beliefs about diverse children and their families allows for extended reflection across systems. Also the instructor provided explicit tools of references the pre-service teachers could use such as course discussions, readings and community observations.

It is important to interject here that for the PTLS lesson plan assignment I asked participants to select a lesson plan that they felt best represented culturally relevant pedagogy. This was not considered a verbal prompt because it was not given prior to participants' writing the lesson plan. However, as part of the standard lesson plan template, pre-service teachers are required to identify the "real world connection" of the lesson. Ronald and Carla identified the 'real word connection' while Jody instead identified the "relevance to daily lives". The results of the analysis of the lesson plan indicated that Carla reflected across four systems, Jody two and Ronald three. Using two different prompts may have been the reason for Ronald and Carla's reflecting beyond the classroom while Jody reflections remained at the micro and meso level. Also these results are aligned with the focus of their lesson plan. For example, the focus of Ronald and

Carla's lesson was on macro and chrono-systematic influences of the historical oppression and racism of slavery and Holocaust. Therefore their reflections extended to these systems respectively. On the other hand Jody's reflections remained at the micro and meso system because her lesson focused on introducing elements of poetry to her students. While one can argue that Jody still could have focused on systems beyond the classroom when teaching about poetry, I argue that the differentiation of reflectivity for this assignment could also be representative of each participants' understanding and application of culturally relevant pedagogy. These distinctions are presented in chapter 5.

As for the final two assignments, participants' reflected across two systems for the Positive Discipline and Individualized Change Plan. The Positive Discipline assignment asked participants' to consider the teaching and learning of diverse students. For example, the course instructor gave participants and their classmates a verbal prompt to think of how the chapter they were to read related to teaching diverse students. As a result of this verbal prompt, only Carla explicitly applied the reading to the teaching and learning of diverse students. She did this not within the assignment but as an attachment. Also, Carla was the only person who reflected beyond the classroom in which she challenged using a pedagogy mentioned in the reading when an exo-systematic influence such as overcrowding in the classroom exists. This reflection represents her consideration of what she was experiencing in her field placement rather than the assignment or course facilitating this reflection which is an important distinction to keep in mind. Therefore, an explanation for why this assignment was not represented across systems was because of the absence of a written prompt that asked pre-service teachers to explicitly connect to the teaching and learning of diverse students within and beyond the classroom or a

connection they could draw upon whether from course readings or discussions. The individualized change plan did however provide a written prompt that asked participants to go beyond the classroom to consider "any environmental issues that impact behavior. Situations such as family background, transiency, neighborhood or community, parents' educational background and ESL issues all impact classroom behavior" of the student in which they selected to observe (all participants selected a culturally and/or linguistically diverse student). However, participants' reflections on their focal student remained within the micro and meso systems. Again an explanation would be that the course itself did not maintain a focus on culturally relevant pedagogy and provided few opportunities to discuss issues beyond the classroom that impacted student behavior and learning. Therefore participants did not have a foundation of association to draw upon when considering how cultural, linguistic and environmental factors impact student behavior and teachers' responses to their behavior. Instead, participants' focus remained on the 'task' of observing influences on student behavior at the micro system only.

Moreover, the course assignments that encouraged participants' to reflect across systems were those that used specific written prompts and required them to refer to course experiences that promoted culturally relevant pedagogy. These findings are supported by the documentation data in which participants' reflected beyond the classroom for six of the eight assignments collected. The distinguishing factor of why there were two course assignments that did not encourage movement beyond the classroom was because of few other experiences in the course that focused on the teaching and learning of diverse students and factors that impact their experiences beyond

the classroom. As a result, when completing the assignments they did not have such references or funds of knowledge to apply to and associate with the assignment.

Summary of Findings

As I engaged in the cross case analysis of the research question: *How do elementary pre-service teachers reflect when learning about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students*, there were three primary findings from this analysis. First, all participants' were able to reflect across systems and these reflections were concentrated mostly at the micro and macro systems. Also, the reflections across systems had similar patterns of reflectivity. Secondly, when reflecting across systems participants drew upon multiple tools of references such as experiences in the teacher education program and personal background knowledge which they used when confronted with less culturally relevant pedagogy in the field. Lastly, there were some assignments that facilitated participants' reflection across systems because they utilized specific written prompts about diverse students and asked them to consider influences beyond the classroom, required them to refer to course experiences that promoted culturally relevant pedagogy, the instructor provided multiple opportunities throughout the semester for participants to explore and examine culturally relevant pedagogy.

While the results of this cross case analysis holds promise that pre-service teachers are capable of considering factors beyond the classroom that impact the teaching and learning of our students from diverse backgrounds, the findings do not however suggest whether these reflections represented a critical stance and culturally relevant pedagogy. In the next chapter I present the findings from the within case analysis which

explored in depth the reflections of each participant to determine the criticality that then evidenced culturally relevant pedagogy.

CHAPTER 5

FINDINGS: WITHIN-CASE ANALYSIS

In this chapter I present the findings from the within case analysis of how Jody, Ronald, and Carla's reflectivity in the classroom and beyond were critical and represented culturally relevant pedagogy. Examining the research question *What do these reflections reveal about participants' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy* entailed an in-depth within case analysis of the content of Jody, Carla and Ronald's' reflections across data sources. As discussed in the previous chapter the theoretical proposition of this study was that pre-service teachers who reflected across systems of influences have more developed understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy and practices. As mentioned in chapter three to apply this theoretical proposition I used the pilot study data and Love and Kruger questionnaire to purposefully select participants' with varying levels of culturally responsiveness. Accordingly, one participant had mostly culturally relevant beliefs, another had both culturally relevant and assimilationist beliefs while the third participant had primarily culturally assimilationist beliefs. Therefore, if the theoretical proposition proved to be true, then the results of my within case analysis of the person categorized as culturally assimilationist beliefs would reveal that he or she did not to reflect critically across systems of influences. However, the within case analysis proved otherwise. The findings instead suggested that the initial categories of responsiveness were inaccurate and not representative of the complex and dynamic process of developing understanding s of culturally relevant pedagogy. Therefore the use

of the Love and Kruger questionnaire during the sampling procedures to support these categorical placements did not capture such complexity and variability of participants' beliefs and experiences with culturally relevant pedagogy. The theoretical proposition did, however, prove to be true with noted modifications. These modifications are discussed later in the chapter.

In this chapter I detail the three major findings from my investigation of how participants' reflections revealed their unique development towards culturally relevant pedagogy. First, analysis of participants' reflections suggested that their racial identity experiences were influential to their understandings of being a culturally relevant teacher. Secondly, when reflecting about implementing culturally relevant pedagogy, some participants were faced with cultural dissonance in the teacher education program and their field placement. Lastly, the criticality of participants' reflections revealed their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. I present these findings in the following sections.

Racial Identity Experiences Matters

Ronald, Jody and Carla's racial identity experiences served as an influential lens from which they explored and examined the teaching and learning of culturally and linguistically diverse students; but in uniquely different ways. For Ronald his identity and experiences as an African American became the lens from which he examined what his role as a culturally responsive teacher meant. As a European American, Jody often reflected on how her racial identity and personal experiences influenced her growth and understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. When faced with assimilationist beliefs and practices, Carla's identity and experiences as an African American became the center

and focus for her identification as a culturally relevant teacher. For all however, they used such lens when reflecting on what being and becoming a culturally relevant teacher meant personally and professionally.

Ronald: Racial Identity = Advocate of Change

Ronald's personal and educational experiences as an African American (AA) had the most impact on his perception of and reflections on how best to teach children from diverse backgrounds. He often reflected on how his former teachers made few attempts to connect instruction to his linguistic and cultural identities. He mentioned how although his classmates were also primarily African American, both his White and AA teachers didn't connect learning to his home reality and experiences. As a matter of fact he reflected on how these teachers held such low expectations for him that he was often told in elementary school that "I won't make it to middle school" (MC2) and attributed these low expectations to him being an African American male. He also reflected on as an adult, being a victim of racial profiling in stores by being followed around by store clerks. Furthermore, Ronald shared how his grandmother's multiple stories about her challenges with racism and segregation as inspiration for him to continue to promote equity and have respect for people of different races even though he experienced low expectations from his teachers and discriminated against by some people in society.

The within case analysis suggested that these 'racial' identity experiences became the rationale for his quest of being an advocate for change in instruction and interactions with racial minority students. It is important to note that Ronald's definition of being an advocate for change in the classroom was not synonymous with what has been defined in this study as a culturally relevant teacher who evokes change in his/her classroom. For

Ronald, an advocate of change was exclusive to changes in instruction he would do in his classroom as a teacher. On the other hand, a culturally relevant teacher who is a change agent transforms practices and beliefs within and beyond the classroom that will potentially benefit his students and those in other classrooms, schools and states. Ronald's perception of a culturally relevant teacher was a person who advocated for (a) implementing instruction that draws on the racial and linguistic talents of students, (b) having high expectations for all children and (c) using critical thinking experiences to challenge students. He charged that " by helping them [racially diverse students] gain critical thinking or build on these skills can give them an equal chance in the world because the world is becoming and moving more towards using critical thinking skills" (MC1). Such equity in educational experiences was nostalgic of his own personal reflections as he noted how "you can still have schools which you say all have books, and they all have lunch, and they all have these programs but then you can treat them unfairly by having teachers that really don't understand the kid" (IV1). As the quote suggests, Ronald's commitment towards excellence and equity in teaching diverse children directly relates to his racial identity experiences.

Jody: Racial Identity =Non-Prejudicial Interactions

Throughout the data, Jody constantly reflected on her racial identity as she discussed ways to connect to and teach particularly African American children[4]. She shared how growing up in a small Midwest rural community of predominately European American, lower class residents offered few opportunities for her to interact with people

[4] Jody's references to her future and current students were primarily African American because at the time of the study her field placement served mostly African American children.

from diverse backgrounds. She often reflected on how her father's prejudicial behaviors and usage of racial slurs (conscious and subconscious) influenced her beliefs that also may be prejudice and racist. As a result, Jody expressed fear of not being able to connect with her African American students in an affirming way. For example, Jody reflected:

> Om I worry that I won't be able to look past my own filters, as a WASP from the Midwest. You know, when it comes right down to it, I'm not that cool, I'm not that hip, I'm a nice girl from the Midwest, you know who was raised Lutheran and you know can I do what needs to be done for them, can I get past my own background and my own biases? (IV1)

As evident in the quote above, such focus and consciousness of her 'biases' and Whiteness became the center of her reflection on what it means to be a culturally relevant teacher. She constantly reflected how she could potentially create a wall between her and her students in her attempts to connect with them. She exclaimed how:

> …if I as a White woman cannot put myself in their shoes and I can't. I am never going to pretend I can. I can at least convince them that I care about them and be a place where they can come and we can talk openly if there's something that I'm missing if there's something going on that they need to talk about I can't pretend that I'll ever really understand their world but I can care about them. (MC1/PD)

Here one can see how Jody was deeply concerned with how her racial identity would inevitably influence her interactions with future students from diverse backgrounds. Therefore, the within case analysis revealed how her reflections centered on her negotiation between her racial identity experiences with developing understandings of how best to teach children who were racially different. Jody's multiple reflections on her 'Whiteness' directly influenced her goal as a culturally relevant teacher to be non-prejudicial and responsive to her future students. She was determined to be a teacher who provided quality and culturally relevant interactions and practices, which as

presented was influenced by her consciousness and reflection on her identity as a European American female teaching diverse students.

Carla: Racial Identity = Affirming Beliefs

Lastly, the within case analysis suggested that Carla's racial identity experiences within the teacher education program influenced her definition of what being a culturally relevant teacher entailed. For example, reflected on how she grew up in a multi-racial family and neighbors. She was raised to embrace the excellence and diversity of all and applied this belief in her travels internationally during her service in the Navy. However, when entering the teacher education program Carla's positive views about African Americans were challenged by her peers' beliefs and those subconsciously projected in the program. For example, Carla shared experiences of peers' reactions and comments to class discussions on teaching 'urban children' that she found offensive and insulting. She reflected

> Om, about two weeks ago one of the students, we were talking about teaching in the urban school settings or whatever and one of the girls was saying but if I don't feel safe there you know if I don't want to live there and I don't want to deal with those type of people then why would I you know want to teach there, why would I want to work there, why would I want to be around them? And of course any time you mention urban, you're not talking about a bunch of upper class White people, you're talking about poor Black people or you know minorities. (IV1)

Carla goes on to reflect that she could possibly understand her peers' beliefs since many hadn't interacted with children from diverse backgrounds and didn't plan to teach in 'urban' settings. However, she goes on to question how her peers viewed her if they held such assumptions about teaching in urban settings. For her urban meant Black and therefore she felt personally attacked whenever any negative references were made to 'urban' children and families. She also felt that the deficit beliefs of some of her peers

were reinforced and supported by the negative statistics presented in the teacher education program about urban and minority students. Carla therefore adamantly reflected on how the program could instead encourage more positive beliefs and assumptions about teaching 'urban' children by implementing discussions, readings and activities that are "a lot less of the stereotypes and the labeling..." because

> …in my class we do have people who have not gone to school with Black students. They went to all White elementary schools, all White middle schools, and all White high schools. All they know about Black people is what they see here at Georgia State University and what they here and what people tell them and what they see on TV and all that which is most of the time not good. So why put that out, so you know if they get a little Black kid in the classroom what are they going to refer back to? The statistics, and the stereotypes and all that. (IV1)

As expressed above, Carla obstinately believed that the over reliance of the teacher education program in using educational statistics to teach about urban children was a determent to some of her peers' development of affirming beliefs about these students. Furthermore, she shared her frustration of the lack of information on how children from diverse backgrounds and urban schools are excelling and have the potential and ability to succeed. Her frustrations and goal in dispelling myths about racial minorities is, as one might expect the result of her understanding and experiencing how racial minorities are often stigmatized and stereotypically labeled.

Cultural Dissonance and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

The next findings from the within case analysis demonstrated how Carla and Jody faced cultural dissonance as they developed understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. I present these findings to compare and contrast the unique challenges these two participants' had as they learned to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students and how their reactions to these challenges demonstrated their understandings and

applications of culturally relevant pedagogy. This section examines how Jody and Carla experienced moments of dissonance when challenged with teaching and less affirming practices and beliefs. Cultural dissonance is a term used by Cochran-Smith (2004), which describes how pre-service teachers are faced with challenges as they negotiate beliefs and practices espoused by the teacher education program with the 'reality' and experiences in schools. She argues how it is imperative that teacher education programs provide future teachers will strategies and tools that help them be successful in their walk towards diversity even when the road is bumpy and filled with potholes and roadblocks. In the next sections I describe how Jody and Carla's reflections on cultural dissonance experience represented their preparedness to move forward along the path towards culturally relevant pedagogy.

Jody

Imagine being at a cross roads towards your path of culturally relevant pedagogy and seeing on one side a smooth trail of vocal supporters and another path that is bumpy, rocky whose supporters are less vocal. Which path do you trust to take? This scene describes Jody's journey in developing understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. In this development, she was influenced by multiple factors including her concerns with the influence of her racial identity on teaching diverse students. She was further conflicted with how to implement culturally relevant pedagogy within a standards based, test-driven curriculum. Her dilemma involved a cultural dissonance between culturally relevant pedagogy and a field placement that valued more test focused instruction compounded by her developing understandings of what culturally relevant pedagogy and beliefs truly entailed.

For example, Jody often reflected on how teachers, particularly those in her field placement, were stuck in the 'good ole methods' of teaching. Her concern was that teacher's complained that "kids aren't the way they used to be, they don't show up ready to work, sit still, you know open their minds to receive these pearls of wisdom I'm going to give them" (MC1/APP). Jody exclaimed how instead of referring back to classroom environments where children conformed to school rules teachers "may have to work a little harder now to captivate them and make it relevant to their lives now" (MC1/APP). Such awareness of making instruction relevant to children is an important position towards developing a belief that supports and implements culturally relevant pedagogy in the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

However, data suggested that Jody struggled in understanding how to apply culturally relevant pedagogy in the field as she faced opposition with her field teacher and considered possibly being challenged by school leadership. She often questioned "What if you have an administration that is more concerned with instructional time? How would you sell this?" (PD). Jody constantly expressed this concern that administrators had to be convinced of the validity and effectiveness of culturally relevant pedagogy and assessment. She concluded that since administrators were not supportive of such teaching practices she was reluctant to deviate from the test-driven and scripted curriculum. Jody's concern can be interpreted as her uncertainty of knowing how to negotiate with administration implementing more responsive practices in the classroom. Cochran-Smith (2004) charged that this is a valid concern for pre-service teachers as they connect and apply what they are learning in the program to the field. As a result a 'cultural disconnect' occurs when teachers struggle with implementing practices

encouraged in their pre-service programs within schools that do not support such practices. I also argue however that Jody's uncertainty was the result of a culmination of efficacy in implementing such practices in the classroom, unexamined assimilationist beliefs about children, and the need for further understandings of the beliefs of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Jody also wrestled with her belief in the validity of testing with her experience seeing students struggle in her field placement, teacher pressures to teach the test and the teacher education program's position of having more culturally relevant assessment. She seemed to be stretched in all these different areas, uncertain of which route to take; the path towards more culturally relevant assessment practices or the path towards scripted, standards based expectations. As she is at her crossroads of negotiation, Jody struggled with understanding why and how national politics contributed to inequitable learning and assessment experiences for diverse children. Arguably, while Jody's challenge was understanding how to negotiate culturally relevant pedagogy in a classroom that did not support such practices, a large part of the struggle for Jody was truly believing in the power of culturally relevant pedagogy then taking steps towards understanding and applying its principles. Without a doubt, Jody's journey towards culturally relevant pedagogy represents moments of her standing at the crossroads and not really certain whether the path towards culturally relevant pedagogy is best especially when it is not being modeled in schools. Therefore I discuss in the final chapter how these findings hold important implications for teacher educators and their role in supporting pre-service teachers who are at such cross roads and may be willing to teach out of the matrix but are

not yet convinced of the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy in today's' classrooms.

Carla

As Jody stood at the crossroads she was unsure about which path to take and therefore became more influenced by the subtractive schooling experiences in her field placement. Now imagine being at the cross roads of diversity and unsure which path is culturally relevant and which is not; for they both are saying that they represent culturally relevant ideology. Your compass is broken so you therefore rely on your personal 'instincts' to lead the way. You confidently press forward even when facing the first, bumpy pothole. This scene represents Carla's meeting at the crossroads of diversity. Unlike Jody, for Carla the cultural disconnect that occurred was between her beliefs about diverse students and those espoused in the teacher education program. This cultural dissonance was uncovered when I noticed that she became very uncomfortable and resistant to the term culturally relevant pedagogy. Carla's belief that, "For the most part I don't see color I do see children" (IV1) is the antithesis of culturally relevant pedagogy which contrasted to her within case analysis results. However, to uncover the foundation of this belief, I asked Carla whether there were any advantages to seeing color in the classroom. Her response was

> Absolutely not. Because you should not assume anything about any child just because of their race. If you want to know where they came from, you want to know anything about them, if you want to know if they're 'twice as disadvantaged' get to know them, find out where they're family comes from, find out they're background. Find out who they are. Because I really hate… for you know like stereotypes or whatever…for people just to see you and say oh, she's Black so oh she's probably poor maybe single parent you know. All those stereotypes all those statistics they've been giving us, none, not one has ever been a stereotype or statistic that makes Black people even remotely human…And even if , even if you

> know…both of their parents are high school drop outs that's still doesn't give you the right to okay label him as a failure or stupid or dumb. I mean you have to get to know the child and see what he is capable of…how he presents himself [and] how well he works. But you should understand if he is having problems and why he is having problems. You should not just automatically just write him off or whatever. (IV1)

It is evident from this quote and supported by the results for the within case analysis that Carla's resistance to the term culturally relevant pedagogy was because of the detrimental consequences of seeing color in the classroom. She felt that such consequences for students included being stereotypically labeled and subjected to low standards of achievement. It therefore became her quest to dispel deficit labels for minority students in the classroom and beyond. As she was faced with cultural dissonance between her ideological beliefs and those by the program and her peers she was also at the cross roads of diversity. Carla could have taken the road of adopting beliefs about diverse students or the path towards supporting more affirming beliefs. Not only did she elect the path towards affirmation but it became her aim to advocate for others to change their beliefs as well.

Summary of Findings: Racial Identity Experiences and Cultural Dissonance

Thus far I have presented how there was a clear connection between participants' reflections on their racial identity experiences and their definitions of a culturally relevant teacher. The findings of these connections therefore suggested that for Ronald his personal, past schooling and familial experiences as an African American became the lens from which he was determined to be an advocate of change in his classroom and community by equalizing opportunities for minorities by having high expectations and providing critical thinking and culturally connected experiences for his future students. As he began to develop what he believed to be a culturally relevant identity Ronald did

not reflect on any cultural dissonance experiences that may have challenged such development. On the other hand, for Jody the influence of her family beliefs about diverse people and present fears of perpetuating these beliefs served as a constant struggle for her as she negotiated her racial identity with her role as a teacher of minority students. Culturally relevant pedagogy therefore included providing non-prejudicial, affirming and culturally relevant experiences for her African American students. However, such beliefs and practices were challenged by more subtractive practices and beliefs in her field placement. On the contrary, for Carla who grew up with an affirming African American identity and embraced the excellence of all races, was challenged as she engaged in course activities and dialogues with peers who espoused more deficit and stereotypical beliefs. As a result, she often reflected on her quest to dispel negative stereotypes in the classroom, teacher education program, and in society. These findings are important in examining how participants' reflections reveal their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy because they provide greater insights into **why** participants may or may not have been challenged at times to critically extend across multiple systems of influences as they consider the teaching and learning of diverse students. In the next section I present the findings of how participants' critical reflection across systems revealed their understanding and applications of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Non-Critical and Critical Reflection across Systems

How can teacher reflectivity be used to identify pre-service teachers' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy? If pre-service teachers reflect about influences beyond the classroom does that mean they are developing towards becoming a culturally relevant teacher? According to the theoretical proposition for my study

elementary pre-service teachers who can reflect across systems of influences are more likely to develop culturally relevant beliefs and practices. Therefore the answer to these questions would be that their reflections do reveal teachers' capacity to develop into culturally relevant teachers who become change agents. However, the within case analysis of each participants' journey towards culturally relevant pedagogy, proved that the theoretical proposition needed to be modified. Analysis proved that the criticality of these reflections **and** participants' ability to reflect within and across systems was more representative of their understandings and ability to implement culturally relevant pedagogy. For example, the participants who were able to critically reflect on how a micro system setting (students) was influenced by a macro systematic phenomenon (societal oppression) and then reflect on how this macro setting (societal oppression) can be influenced by a micro influence (teacher) displayed more culturally relevant beliefs and practices. Therefore, the pre-service teachers who extended their reflections outside of the classroom then back, had more developed understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. It is important to clarify that culturally relevant pedagogy was determined by whether participants' reflections revealed an understanding of **and** belief in culturally relevant ideology and teaching. Because developing understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy is not static but dynamic and complex the findings suggested that all participants fell into the first category whereas the latter category represented those who had more developed understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Non-Critical Reflection across Systems ≠ Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

This level of analysis indicated that participants' reflections did indeed demonstrate that they were able to reflect within or across systems but that these

reflections weren't critical or representative of culturally relevant pedagogy. The within case analysis determined instances in which participants' reflections represented the language of diversity rather than a true understanding of the beliefs and practices associated with culturally relevant pedagogy. The following presents how Ronald, Jody and Carla did not reflect critically across systems and how in turn these reflections influenced their developing beliefs (Jody), practices (Ronald), and applications (Carla) as they learned to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Jody: Non-critical Reflections Influenced Developing Beliefs. For Jody, her primary goal in developing as a culturally relevant teacher was to develop anti-bias interactions and culturally relevant learning experiences for her AA students. She was very conscious of how her identity as a European American could project harmful interactions with her students. As one might expect, the focus of her reflections were centered at the micro level because of her current dilemma of negotiating her racial and teacher identity. She constantly reflected on her role pedagogically in connecting to her AA students. She reflected on culturally relevant pedagogies such as (a) introducing students to AA role models and inspirational quotes, (b) connecting AA history to current events, and (c) using community music and poetry to capture students' interests. While she reflected on such affirming practices, she did not critically reflect on and examine her beliefs about diverse children. For example, Jody believed in the Bell curve ideology, which arguably represents IQ deficit theory. According to IQ deficit theory, "genetic deficiencies of students of racial/ethnic minority and lower socioeconomic backgrounds explain why they do poorly in school" (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 39). In the following

quote Jody explained why she felt that students from low SES or diverse backgrounds couldn't all be classified as 'brilliant'

> There's a bell curve for IQ scores for a reason. Not everybody is going to be a CEO. You know and I said before about something specific and it is a terrible thing to say but if you knew me you'd understand somebody have to drive the trucks and bust the tables. I mean, it, you know it's the whole is it natural selection? (IV1)

When prompted further about her beliefs on the bell curve ideology during the final member checking conversation, Jody reflected how maybe diverse children were not taught the information assessed on the IQ test. However, any hint of moving towards critical reflection of influences beyond the child (micro level) diminished as she went on to state how children 'under the curve' can however boost their IQ scores through "perseverance, hard work, and parental support" (MC2). First we see that Jody does not critically examine her deficit beliefs about children within this micro setting. As a result, associating students' intelligence with the bell curve ideology countered her other reflections that affirmed and value the knowledge that children from diverse backgrounds bring with them to the classroom; thus making one question whether she actually believed in culturally relevant pedagogy. Also, Jody doesn't extend across systems to consider the inequity (macro) and biases in standardized intelligence scores (exo) for minority students, which explained her struggle with understanding why and how to implement culturally assessment practices in classrooms that favor standardized testing.

When Jody explicitly reflected on influences outside of the classroom she was further challenged to reflect critically. For example, she often argued that a major influence on children was the media. She expressed how the popular TV shows and commercials contributed to their low attention spans and lack of interest in education and schooling. She therefore proposed to introduce students to the ways media and

advertisement can shape one's opinion about a product, image or perspective. Here Jody has taken an exosystematic influence (media) and applied it to a micro setting (the classroom). While she has demonstrated her ability to reflect across systems, this reflection is not critical because it doesn't include how the media can be used as a vehicle to perpetuate deficit beliefs about children and encourage cultural assimilation. In turn the pedagogy presented is not representative of culturally relevant pedagogy because it lacks a direct connection between recognizing how the media could serve as a determinant to the identity development of young children and ways to use media criticism instead to affirm the images and diversity of children.

Ronald: Non-critical Reflections Influenced Developing Pedagogy. To be a culturally relevant teacher for Ronald was synonymous to being an advocate of change in his classroom. In his pursuit of being an advocate for change he often reflected on using parents' cultural knowledge to implement culturally relevant pedagogy in his future classroom. He was interested in inviting parents into the classroom to provide multiple perspectives, cultures and experiences. Ronald recognized that he needed to first build an authentic relationship with parents to garner their support and expertise. He therefore proposed to use effective, multiple modes of communication with parents such as phone calls, e-mails, written notices, and home visits. As presented here Ronald considers the valuable role parents can be in aiding him in considering his goal of providing transformative educational experiences for his students. However, within this system (micro) he does not critically reflect on *why* parental partnerships are essential to schools and to teachers. As a result the missing element here was understanding that culturally relevant pedagogy involves teachers truly understanding *why* parents are valuable assets

and voices to the school, their children and the community beyond serving as instructional aids.

The previous example shows how Ronald did not reflect critically within the micro level on the value of parental voice and partnerships in schools and classrooms. There were also instances in which his reflectivity across levels were non-critical and therefore did not reflect culturally relevant pedagogy. For example, it was Ronald's position that he also had to be an advocate of change in his classroom because the focus on standardized testing resulted in the push for scripted teaching in high poverty low performing schools. He reflected how schools were 'tricked' into believing that scripted programs will boost test scores when these schools needed quality teachers who implemented critical thinking experiences for students that go beyond basic skills assessment instead. As a result, Ronald reflected that students in these schools are not prepared to survive in a society that is globally connected and focused on higher order thinking and development. He instead challenged teachers to capitalize on students' knowledge by providing opportunities for them to think critically about themselves and the world around them. While Ronald reflected on an influence beyond the classroom that impacted the teaching and learning of diverse students, he was challenged in considering how exactly to implement culturally relevant pedagogy in scripted programs. Ronald's reflection did not consider how scripted programs could be culturally subtractive to students, thereby representing his challenge in applying culturally relevant pedagogy in such schools. A more direct connection between societal oppression and education would further develop Ronald's understanding of why culturally responsive

advocacy is key for diverse students who have been marginalized in our society and schools beyond preparing them for a 'global society'.

Carla: Non-critical Reflections Influenced Applications. Carla's quest as a culturally relevant teacher was to dispel deficit labels about children from diverse backgrounds and encourage others to do the same. She felt a professional responsibility to be affirming and to capitalize on the knowledge children bring with them to the classroom. Interestingly however, the within case analysis suggested that at times although Carla may have critically reflected on her biases and deficit beliefs about children and families who lived in low income areas, she did not extend or apply this critical reflection beyond the community and families themselves to 'explain' the poverty that exists. For example, when describing her observations of the community in which her field placement students lived, she noted expectations of seeing families living in poorly maintained trailers, "broke down cars" and "trash lying around and a stray dog here and there" (LBW). Carla goes on to reflect how she assumed that "education would not be a priority, because survival and trying to make it day to day may seem more important than planning for your child's future" and expressed her belief that "education as a whole would not be a priority to many of the families because they are probably uneducated and may not know how to change the situation they are currently in (LBW.)" Here Carla admitted to a stereotypical and deficit ideology about parents and families in low-income communities not valuing their child's education. However, when further examining Carla's quote along with other findings, it is determined that at first she was conscious of her assumptions and deficit beliefs that she has of children in low income or urban areas and often questioned why she has them personally and why these beliefs are

also held in society. However she did not critically reflect beyond to consider institutional and societal reasons for generational poverty beyond the control and influences of the family. As a result she was challenged in considering pedagogy and advocacy that would be responsive to children and families who live in poverty.

Critical Reflection across Systems = Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

In the previous section I presented how the within case analysis suggested that there were times when Jody, Ronald and Carla did not reflect critically across systems and therefore were challenged in demonstrating understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Jody's journey in understanding how best to teach culturally and linguistically diverse children required that she critically examine her beliefs about diverse children so that she could extend beyond the classroom more critically and implement pedagogy that is relevant and affirming to her students whereas Ronald held affirming beliefs but was challenged in implementing culturally relevant pedagogies because he did not critically reflect on why such practices are integral. Lastly, by not considering the systematic and societal influences of poverty, Carla's application of having affirming beliefs for children in low-income families was not actualized.

As these findings suggest when participants' did not reflect critically within or across systems, their developing culturally relevant beliefs (Jody), practices (Ronald), and applications (Carla) were compromised. On the other hand, the final major finding from the within case analysis was that when participants reflected critically on influences inside the classroom and beyond, their reflections represented culturally relevant pedagogy. It is important to note that for the context of this finding critically reflecting 'across systems' is moving back and forth between systems (micro↔macro). The

culturally relevant pedagogy was revealed because at some point participants had to situate the larger systematic influence back to the teaching and therefore learning of diverse students. The following are the results of how the within case analysis suggested that Carla and Ronald reflected critically across systems of influences and these reflections revealed culturally relevant pedagogy. Jody is not presented in this section because the results of the within case analysis concluded that there was not evidence of her reflecting critically within or across systems of influences. Findings instead suggested that she was developing an understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy and therefore occupied with negotiating her personal and professional identities with micro-systematic influences such as students, administrations, classroom pedagogy and personal beliefs.

Carla: Critical Across: Culturally Relevant Beliefs and Practices

Carla's experiences learning about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students in the program has been one that forced her to examine and defend her ideological positions about diverse children. She adamantly rejected deficit labels on children and therefore her focus towards culturally relevant pedagogy became to dispel such beliefs about diverse children among her peers, colleagues and in society. She explained how and why inequity occurs then brings the focus back to the classroom to represent culturally relevant pedagogy. Take for example Carla's reflections on the equity in assessment (macro) of English Language learners. Throughout the study she questioned the accuracy and practice of standardized testing in schools serving students whose native language was not English by asking: "Is it feasible that every student who is a second language learner will be given the same opportunities to achieve academic success or do you only choose those who are at most risk for failure? " (APP). After

considering how the opportunity of success for students with lower levels of language acquisition was compromised, Carla then moved back to the classroom to argue that teachers must believe all children are capable of moving beyond the minimal standards assessed once efforts are made to explore the knowledge they bring with them to the class. She also urged teacher education programs to prepare future teachers for working with students from diverse backgrounds because of the "lack of training and experience these teachers' have been given, it is not uncommon for second language learners to be assessed then labeled or misdiagnosed as having a learning disability" (APP). She therefore challenged teachers to develop more culturally relevant instruction and assessment for ELLs such as using student portfolios, testing students in their native language, and allowing ELLs additional time to complete assessments. Carla therefore argued that "If changes are made regarding how second language learners are assessed, it could have a huge impact on the negative statistics that has burden the educational system in the United States"(APP). Here Carla represents how she is able to consider a macro-systematic setting beyond the classroom such as statistical labeling and misdiagnosis within the educational system (exo) and reflect on how a micro systematic influence like teachers and teacher education programs can reverse such trends while subsequently maintaining a culturally relevant lens.

In another example, while Jody focused on media from the perspective of teaching all children about media biases in advertisement, Carla described the media's influence using a socio-cultural context. For example she argued that the media contributed to the perpetuation of stereotypical images of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Carla shared "an example of an assumption and stereotype that I heard

from the news, jokes on TV shows like Hispanic men as being landscapers and having odd jobs" (MC1/IV1). Here she has critically reflected on how the media can project stereotypical images of certain groups in our society. She then situates such media stereotypes back to the classroom by sharing an experience in which she made efforts to get to know the familial background of her Hispanic students during one of her lunch chat sessions:

> The school that I was at for my third grade placement had mostly Hispanic students and so when I ate lunch with them and talked with them I found that none of their parents were landscapers, cleaning people...they worked in factories, day care centers, restaurant cooks, had their own businesses. And as far as being a maid, it wasn't true at all. (MC1/IV1)

In addition to her reflections about negative media images she also reflected on how these images are therefore the result of the power and privilege of those in charge who represent how exploitive and elitist American culture can be. Carla adamantly believed that those in power were intentionally oppressing others. She exclaimed:

> Another thing is the underdogs like Jewish people, Blacks are always one group that are the underdogs. *Q: Why do you think people of color are the only underdogs?* Well anything other than White, minority, less than perfect, less than good, the way things are on TV, essays we have to read, articles in the journal, all these things say that everyone has to catch up with the middle class Whites. And Whites still run the country. So they will make the laws and rules to protect them and in their favor. Also a way to put out to stir up hate and uneducated people, I saw a commercial about Mexicans taking jobs away from Blacks. This is ridiculous. It is just a way to put minorities against one another. I feel that this takes the attention away from the other issues. (MC1)

In this quote, Carla reflected on how the institutional structures such as schooling, laws, and the media were intentionally used to maintain the status quo of continuing a society in which those in power are privileged and minorities who are not continue to be oppressed. There are three revelations about Carla's reflectivity. First, what becomes apparent is her awareness of the media's role in projecting and promoting

deficit beliefs about diverse populations. Freire (1973) referred to this as indication of a critical conscious mindset. Secondly these quotes reveal her ability to then connect how teachers can refute such beliefs by implementing pedagogy such as lunch chats to learn first hand about students. Her ability to connect theory to practice is evident here. Lastly, by taking an exo-systematic mechanism (the media) and applying **both** macro systematic influence (stereotypical beliefs) and microsystematic influences (teachers/students), Carla demonstrated how she is able to revert back and forth between systems when considering the complex art and influences of teaching and learning in the 21st century. Arguably such reflectivity is an indicator of her understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy and therefore ability to connect how things beyond the classroom directly influenced the teacher's perception, which ultimately impacts teaching and therefore student learning.

Ronald: Critical Across=Culturally Relevant Belief

Like Carla, the within case analysis suggested that Ronald critically reflected across systems and these reflections revealed an understanding of culturally relevant beliefs. However, the criticality of his reflections was at a different level. For example, he expressed his concerns with the inequity of standardized testing and therefore the need for more culturally relevant assessment measures. He reflected,

> . . . one limitation that affects our diverse students is the fact that these tests are nor med on populations which are significantly different from our students. By norming tests on the experiences of one set of individuals, we neglect the rich experiences of others, which results in these students not doing as well as their counterparts. (AM)

Here Ronald recognized how access and limitations disproportionately impact the assessment of diverse students. He charged that diverse students are not accurately assessed because of the lack of support for using multiple forms of assessment and because the tests are normed towards a White middle class perspective. He references this

as the economic privilege and advantage of those in power. Ronald adamantly exclaimed that " How will I know what a saucer is if I don't have it in my house? Norming standards to children who have privilege than those who don't overlook diverse student populations in this country" (MC1). Instead Ronald reflected on the need for more supporting culturally relevant assessment measures such as having assessments in the child's native language with considerations to dialect variations, teachers' being informed of the difference between language difference and language difficulties and forming a multidisciplinary assessment team whose members bring diverse cultural, linguistic and educational experiences that are helpful to the child.

In another example of critically reflecting across levels, Ronald reported throughout the study his dislike for the term 'urban' to describe and label children from marginalized populations. He expressed that labeling children from certain populations inevitably impacted their opportunity for quality educational experiences. He charged,

> I think it [urban] came from our government's need to label our children. And I don't like that because it separates you know, I guess you could see, this is quality education then you have urban education and I don't like how people like to separate the two. (IV1)

Ronald extended this macro level influence to connect back to how instruction and assessment was therefore impacted by societal views and labeling of diverse students. For example, when responding to an article that promoted policy for implementing culturally relevant assessment practices (Salend & Salinas, 2003), Ronald reflected,

> As an intern in mostly urban schools, I have experienced students in the classroom whose primary language was not English and were mostly labeled as ESOL students. After reading this article, I think back to those students and wonder if they had been evaluated by a multidisciplinary team which used the recommendation of Salend and Salinas, would the results be different? (APP)

Here Ronald situated a macro systematic influence within the classroom to demonstrate his understanding of how labeling students based on deficit beliefs about their cultural and linguistic diversity inevitably impacted the assessment procedures implemented and therefore influences access to quality and equitable educational experiences. In the examples above, it is evident that his affirming belief about the teaching, learning and assessment of diverse students is thereby supported by culturally relevant pedagogy. In turn, Ronald has connected the relationship between economic power, dominant perspectives, and access in testing to explain the dilemma culturally and linguistically diverse students face in classrooms today. Therefore by moving from a micro setting (classroom) to macro influences (testing equity) then **back** to how teachers can invoke change at the classroom.

While Ronald alluded to many of the societal influences that are discriminatory and oppressive, he avoided using this language throughout his reflections. I examined how his navigation around using terms such as the oppressed, the oppressor, racism, discrimination, etc. to describe the current educational conditions for diverse students, connected to his development towards culturally relevant pedagogy and advocacy. Interestingly, while he reflected on the inequities that occurred due to access to quality teachers and curriculum and the influence of the media, his consciousness of the **hidden** oppressive agendas in education was not apparent in his reflections.

Summary of Findings

At the end of this chapter table six provides a summary of the findings on how Jody, Ronald, and Carla's reflections revealed their understandings of what it meant to be a culturally relevant teacher. As the table six details, there were three major findings for

the within case analysis. These findings suggested how participants' racial identity experiences became the lens used to reflect on what being a culturally relevant teacher meant. Also Jody, Ronald, and Carla's reflections on influences in the classroom and beyond that impact teaching and learning of CLDs revealed their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy.

For example, for Jody, culturally relevant pedagogy meant to have an affirming belief about her African American students as influenced by her fear of having and projecting prejudicial beliefs. However, her reflections revealed that she did not critically examine her beliefs that may have been deficit about her African American students and therefore her culturally relevant beliefs were not fully developed. Furthermore, Jody was challenged in implementing culturally relevant pedagogy when faced with more assimilationsit practices in her field placement. As a result, Jody's reflections revealed cultural dissonance between what she was learning to be culturally relevant and what she was experiencing in the teacher education program. Her development became further challenged by not critically reflecting within and across systems of influences that impact the teaching and learning of diverse students.

On the other hand, Ronald's vision of a culturally relevant teacher was one who was an advocate of change and therefore he became committed to ensuring that his future students would not experience subtractive schooling experiences like he did. Although Ronald did not face cultural dissonance as he began to put into practice his understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy, implementing it became a challenge when his reflections were non-critical about **why** for example parents were essential to creating an affirming classroom environment for CLD students. However his reflections that were critical

revealed his understandings of how he could be an advocate of change in his classroom against the influences of inequitable testing and labeling in society and schools.

Lastly, Carla was firm in her position that culturally relevant teachers were those who held affirming beliefs about children and when faced with cultural dissonance from peers and experiences in the teacher education program, remained grounded in her position. However, applying this belief to children from low-income families became a challenge when she did not critically reflect on the systematic and societal influences of poverty. When she did consider influences beyond the classroom that impact the teaching and learning of diverse students such as an oppressive American identity, her connections back to the classroom represented culturally relevant practices and beliefs.

Jody's, Ronald's, and Carla's reflections revealed their understandings and applications of culturally relevant pedagogy. They revealed the potential for each of these participants to move out of the matrix of culturally assimilationist beliefs and inequitable schooling practices towards affirming the linguistic and cultural tools children bring with them to the classroom. In the final chapter I present the important implications for teacher education programs in using reflectivity as a tool to develop culturally relevant teachers who are ready and prepared to teach outside of the matrix!

Table 6

Summary of Within Case Analysis Findings

	Racial identity experiences & CRP	Cultural Dissonance and CRP	Non Critical≠ CRP	Critical=CRP
Jody	Racial identity experiences = non-prejudicial interactions	Culturally relevant pedagogy ≠ Teacher development program	Non-critical within (IQ deficit) and across (media) ≠ culturally relevant beliefs	N/A
Ronald	Racial identity experiences =advocate for change	N/A	Non-critical within (parent) and across (scripted teaching) ≠culturally relevant pedagogy	Critical across (inequity in testing and deficit labeling)=culturally relevant belief
Carla	Racial identity experiences = affirming beliefs	Teacher development program ≠culturally relevant pedagogy	Non-critical across (poverty)≠culturally relevant pedagogy	Critical across (media, privileged American identity and labeling) = culturally relevant pedagogy

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION

I began chapter one with Hilliard's (2006) educational quest to awaken a new breed of teachers who were committed to teaching outside of the matrix. Teaching **inside** of the matrix consists of unconsciously and/or consciously supporting and implementing educational practices and beliefs that are inequitable and subtractive to culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. A critical question in teacher development then is how to prepare teachers who are able to move out of the matrix and provide more culturally relevant teaching experiences for these students. The theoretical proposition I used in this study was that if pre-service teachers are conscious of influences within and outside of the classroom that impact the teaching and learning of diverse students, they have more developed understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. When examining the research questions I situated this proposition using Bronfenbrenner's Ecological systems' theory and culturally relevant pedagogy.

The findings from this study hold important implications in teacher education and future research on multicultural education. To present how, I have collapsed the findings from the within and cross case analysis into three categories for discussion: critically reflecting within the classroom and beyond, race and personal resources matter, and influences of the teacher education program.

Critical Reflectivity Within and Beyond the Classroom

Reflecting across and within the system means that pre-service teachers are conscious about the multiple influences inside and outside of the classroom that impact teaching and learning of diverse students. Findings from the cross case analysis suggested that participants reflected on issues in the classroom such as a teacher's pedagogy, parental involvement, students' academic performance as well as those outside of the classroom like the media, standardized testing, and an American identity. There was also evidence that Carla, Ronald and Jody considered how the teaching and learning in the 21st century now requires a shift in pedagogy to meet the needs of the growing culturally and linguistically diverse student populations in schools today.

Feiman-Nemser (2008) argues that research on teacher learning suggest how teaching involves reflective considerations of the multiple roles of 'thinking', 'feeling', 'knowing' and 'acting' into a responsive teaching practice for children (p. 698). Therefore, it is expected that pre-service teachers would reflect on phenomena such as classroom practices and student learning because within the teacher education program they are expected to connect course content knowledge and learning theory to practice in the field with children. However, King's (1991) research on dysconscious racism tells us that most pre-service teachers, particularly those who are White, have difficulty understanding how influences outside of the classroom such as mainstream societal beliefs, inequity in standardized testing and racism impacts teaching and learning of diverse students. Whereas, Villegas & Davis (2008) argue how most pre-service teachers of color are more likely to have a heightened consciousness of such inequities that influence teaching of diverse students because of their past schooling experiences and/or

experiences as a culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) person. Interestingly, my study found that when provided the reflective opportunities in their courses to do so, both the European **and** African American participants did reflect on such influences in society. This is an interesting finding because the pilot study I conducted a year earlier suggested that Ronald, Jody and Carla were challenged in understanding the relevance of macro issues such as racism and inequities in society to teaching diverse students. Possible explanations could be that over the past year these pre-service teachers have engaged in multiple courses and field experiences that have offered opportunities for them to begin to see and learn about how influences outside of the classroom impact the experiences of CLD students.

Furthermore, as these findings suggest, when provided the opportunities to do so, the pre-service teachers did consider influences in the classroom and beyond that impact the teaching and learning of diverse students. However, it was the criticality of these reflections and ability to reflect within and across systems that actually revealed participants' understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. For example, the within case analysis suggested that Jody, a European American pre-service teacher, did reflect on macro systems of influences such as inequitable standardized testing but the reflections did not include how testing could potentially serve as a systematic and intentional bias against CLD students. Therefore, when she was placed in a school that valued more standardized instruction and assessment, Jody begin to doubt and question whether more culturally and linguistically responsive assessment was needed and could be actually implemented in classrooms today. On the other hand, Ronald and Carla identified inequity of standardized testing as being oppressive and biased against children

whose culture and language was different from mainstream society. Therefore, they recognized how this outside influence could potentially result in culturally and linguistically diverse children being labeled as low achievers and not provided with quality educational experiences. In turn, they proposed more culturally and linguistically affirming practices they were convinced could undermine the macro systematic influences that negatively impact the educational opportunities for diverse students. Therefore, an important finding in this study was that the **critical** nature of participants' reflections was an indicator of their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy and provides empirical support to Gay and Kirkland's (2003) argument that engaging pre-service teachers in critically conscious reflective practices will help develop their understandings of how to teach culturally and linguistically diverse children.

In considering these findings, Sleeter (2008), Gay and Kirkland (2003) and Cochran-Smith (2004) already tell us how teacher educators should engage pre-service teachers in reflecting on the prejudices and biases they bring with them to the classroom as one way to develop more affirming beliefs about children who are culturally and linguistically different from them. Whereas, King (1991), Freire (1998) and Howard (2003) further urge more considerations of critical consciousness of issues beyond the classroom that also impact the teaching and learning of diverse children. However, findings from my study extends these foci to urge teacher educators to also consider issues such as educational policy, the media, equity in programmatic funding parent-teacher relationships that also impact the teaching and learning of diverse students. By also attending to these meso, exo, and chrono systematic influences, pre-service teachers

can move further outside of the classroom and therefore really consider the complexity of teaching in the 21st century and how to address these issues

Race and Personal Resources Matter

Another important finding in this study was that participants' racial identity experiences were important influences on their developing understandings of how best to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. Currently the multicultural literature suggests that pre-service teachers' immediately draw upon their own experiences as a racial majority or minority when introduced to issues of racism and equity in schooling practices when engaging in coursework discussions (King, 1991; Sleeter, 2008). Interestingly, the findings from my study suggest that Ronald, Jody and Carla drew upon their racial identity experiences even when they were not given opportunities in their courses to reflect critically on such issues. As a matter of fact, participants' racial identity experiences were **the** foundation of what they defined culturally relevant pedagogy to be and not particularly those defined and promoted in their coursework or field experiences. For example, Ronald's experiences growing up as an African American student encountering low expectations from many of his elementary and high school teachers directly influenced his definition that a culturally relevant teacher was one who had high standards for diverse children and provide them quality and rigorous learning experiences. On the other hand since Carla felt that she was discriminated against and encountered deficit ideology in the teacher education program, she became determined to challenge teachers to have more affirming beliefs about children from diverse backgrounds. In Jody's case, her racial identity experiences were connected to understanding how to negotiate her 'Whiteness' with developing understandings of

culturally relevant pedagogy. In other words she was beginning to examine what it meant to be a teacher of African American children and to truly consider her prejudices, biases and stereotypes. As a result, for her a culturally relevant teacher was one who constantly considered how to have non-prejudicial interactions with her students. Nonetheless, these findings suggest that participants' racial identity experiences played a much larger role in their understanding and application of culturally relevant pedagogy and therefore should be further examined in future coursework reflective experiences and multicultural research.

Influential Factors in a Teacher Education Program

If we know that critical reflectivity across and within systems of influences reveal pre-service teachers understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy, how then can the teacher educator program facilitate this understanding? According to Sleeter's (2001) meta analysis, research is inconclusive on how influential teacher education programs are in shaping PSTs affirming beliefs about diverse children and there is an overwhelming presence of studies that look at the development of European American pre-service teachers' awareness of how best to teach CLD students. However, my study reveals ways in course and field experiences both facilitated and challenged the developing understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy while also capturing the experiences of both European and African American pre-service teachers. For example, I found that there were course assignments that encouraged Jody, Ronald and Carla to reflect across systems of influences. These assignments, (a) used specific written prompts that required participants to reflect on the teaching and learning of diverse students (b) prompted participants to consider influences in the classroom and/or beyond (c) required them to

refer to course experiences that promoted culturally relevant pedagogy and (d) the instructor provided multiple opportunities throughout the semester for participants to explore and examine culturally relevant pedagogy. One possibility as to why some course assignments did not encourage reflections beyond the classroom level was due to the fact that few other experiences in the course focused on the teaching and learning of diverse students. As a result, when completing the assignments pre-service teachers did not have many references or funds of knowledge (Gonzalez, Moll, Floyd-Tenery, Rivera, Rendon, Gonzales, & Amanti, 1993) to apply to and associate with the assignment. If the pre-service teacher came to the program with limited personal experiences with diverse populations and the field experience did not provide access to prompt reflectivity, the assignment alone was not enough**.**

This is where Jody was most challenged in her journey towards understanding culturally relevant pedagogy because she needed further scaffolding on critically reflecting within and beyond the classroom on issues that impact her culturally and linguistically diverse students. Jody's dilemma was further compounded by the fact that all participants reported how many of the courses espoused a culturally relevant belief but did not specifically discuss how to implement such pedagogy in the classroom. Ladson-Billings (1999) confirms that pre-service teachers need both an understanding of culturally relevant ideology *and* understanding of how to implement culturally relevant teaching in the classroom as well. Therefore since the criticality of the reflection (at whatever system) revealed more developed understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy, teacher educators must go further and examine whether pre-service teachers are actually critically examining these influences then connecting them back to the

classroom. By doing this, pre-service teachers can begin to move beyond the practicality of teaching to considering how the "why" better informs practices that are responsive and affirming to children.

What then is the role of teacher educators if pre-service teachers are critically reflecting across systems of influences and therefore showing developing understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy? Arguably, my study tells us that mediated learning and scaffolding is still needed for pre-service teachers who have more developed understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy and whom already reflect critically across systems of influences. One example comes from Carla who reflected on ways instructors inadvertently supported deficit beliefs about culturally and linguistically students when attempting to promote culturally relevant pedagogy. She reflected on how the instructors' use of statistical data that demonstrated the low achievement of diverse students challenged her affirming beliefs about the academic abilities of diverse students. The research shared in class made her question, reject and challenge the use of statistics in establishing a rationale for culturally relevant pedagogy. Therefore this further demonstrates the importance of scaffolding pre-service teachers' understanding of the connection to influences outside of the classroom to creating more affirming and equitable educational experiences for students in the classroom.

Implications for Teacher Education and Future Research

My study is unique to the current multicultural literature because it situates critical reflectivity within an ecological framework to suggest that pre-service teachers develop understandings of culturally relevant practices because they are conscious of the multiple influences in the classroom and beyond that impact the teaching and learning of

diverse students. Findings from my study suggest that when provided the opportunity to do so participants' reflected on issues beyond the classroom that impact the teaching and learning of diverse students. However, it was the criticality of these reflections that revealed their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. To facilitate such reflectivity, the course assignments that challenged the pre-service teachers to think beyond the classroom were those that used explicit prompting about diverse children and multiple influences as well as provided them with references from their coursework experiences to draw upon. However, although some courses provided multiple opportunities for reflectivity across systems on the teaching and learning of diverse students the fact that some information was presented in courses and field experiences without extended opportunities for discussion, connection, and application resulted in inhibiting one participant's developing understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy and yet for another strengthened her passion for more culturally affirming beliefs about diverse children in teacher education instructional experiences.

Therefore, teacher educators are encouraged to support pre-service teachers in three ways: (a) allow them to reflect on exemplary teaching in high poverty high performing schools to ensure that there is not a perpetuation of deficit beliefs and stereotype about diverse children's intellectual ability and capacity; (b) consider using written and/or verbal prompts that explicitly ask pre-service teachers to reflect on issues beyond the classroom that impact the teaching and learning of diverse students and (c) all pre-service teachers to reflect on how they could evoke change in the classroom using the field placement as the setting to be reformed. Considerations should also be made on the how teacher educators scaffold pre-service teachers' critical reflections within and

beyond the classroom. Such scaffolding experiences leads to future research in exploring whether teacher educators actually understand the concepts of culturally relevant pedagogy and can themselves critically reflect across systems of influences.

Furthermore, although my study examined participants' experiences throughout one semester within four courses, there was evidence that these experiences helped shape and develop their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Therefore future research and practices might extend this study by implementing and exploring how opportunities to critically reflect throughout the teacher education program further enhances their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Having multiple opportunities to critically reflect throughout the program can also help teacher educators understand the knowledge and experiences pre-service teachers actually bring with them to the program. For example, an important finding from my study was that the racial identity experiences of the participants were an important factor in developing their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. Therefore teacher educators should consider that the role racial identity may play in their development as a culturally relevant teacher. Research could also examine how racial identity experiences across and within ethnic groups influence the development of a culturally relevant identity. Such questions can investigate whether, for example, Jody's racial identity experiences would have been less influential if she had not been exposed to prejudicial beliefs growing up and had more interactions with children from diverse backgrounds. Also, what if Ronald and Carla had never experienced racism and subtractive schooling? Would their racial identity experiences have also been less influential in developing their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy? What if one of the course instructors was an African

American male who espoused culturally assimilationist beliefs? Future research could therefore explore how and if the instructors' racial identity experiences and/or beliefs shape pre-service teachers' developing understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Phenomenon of the Study

Needless to say, findings suggest that pre-service teachers' development of culturally relevant pedagogy is complex and involves consideration of multiple factors that influence this development. By using Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory, I was able to capture much of this complexity. Therefore, future research can investigate how this theory can be applied further in understanding the development of a teachers' culturally relevant identity over time and other ways in practice or methodologically to capture this complexity besides examining participants' written reflections and using a single observational instrument or questionnaire to determine their beliefs.

In addition, as I explored the research questions I had a particular lens from which I was using (culturally relevant pedagogy) and brought my own racial identity experiences and beliefs. Therefore inevitably through the questions I administered and data collection procedures I influenced the natural phenomena of the research environment. In other words, as a researcher I was constantly conscious of how my positionality and experiences as an African American female committed to promoting culturally relevant pedagogy influenced my interactions with participants and analysis of their data. I often questioned through reflective memoing whether and how I was silencing or giving voice to participants who had shared cultural, ideological or lived experiences. Therefore, future research can entail an examination of how a researchers' ideological framework and racial identity experiences shapes the research implemented.

Future multicultural research could also examine the methodological procedures and member checking measures that maximizes and minimizes such researchers' biases and influences.

Conclusion

This study examined Carla, Jody and Ronald's reflections to provide insights into their understandings of culturally relevant pedagogy. The results indicated how their development was influenced by multiple factors. One factor was whether they critically reflected within and beyond the classroom on issues that impacted the teaching and learning of diverse students. When participants did critically reflect across systems their beliefs and practices were culturally responsive. Ideally then all teacher educators need to do is provide more opportunities for PSTs to critically reflect across systems of influences. The dilemma here is that many pre-service teachers enter the program with multiple experiences, biases, and prejudices that may or may not have been examined (Sleeter, 2001b). Therefore, the findings from this study have important implications for teacher education because reflection **can** be used as a tool to help develop **and** better understand pre-service teacher's development towards understanding culturally relevant pedagogy. Secondly, by learning from pre-service teachers' reflections, teacher educators can model, present, and maintain across the course and teacher education program experiences that are culturally relevant and affirming. Furthermore, teacher education programs should offer opportunities for pre-service teachers to critically reflect on influences in the classroom and beyond while also allowing them to 'see' and experience the inequities that may occur. As mentioned previously, research that further extends and

replicates this study is also essential in further developing our knowledge base of how to further develop more responsive pre-service teachers.

Without a doubt, the results of this study confirm that teacher educators have a responsibility to ensure that pre-service teachers are equipped with the tools they need to develop as the culturally relevant teacher who “demand a place to stand” and teach outside of the matrix (Hilliard, 2006, p. 99). It begins with teacher educators believing that all PSTs *can* strive towards this standard in excellence of teaching. By having such beliefs coupled with using reflectivity, teacher educators too can teach outside of the matrix and therefore develop teachers who are culturally relevant and are eager to transform the educational experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse students. As I move towards a career in the academy I am charged with continuing forward in using reflectivity as a mechanism for developing future culturally relevant teachers who can reflect, teach, and advocate *outside* of the matrix!

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APPENDIXES

APPENDIX A

Pilot Study

As mentioned previously, teacher educators are challenged with preparing teachers to teach students who may be culturally, linguistically and economically different from them. According the literature and research, this challenge is exacerbated by findings that many pre-service teachers bring with them deficit beliefs and biases about diverse student populations and their families which in turn makes learning experiences for these students culturally subtractive (Haberman, 1996). Therefore, when faced with courses and experiences in their teacher development program that attempt to disrupt and challenge these beliefs, pre-service teachers typical responses include resistance, anger, benevolence, and fear. For the pilot study I was interested in engaging in an in-depth exploration of how these responses are mediated by the instructor as counter ideological beliefs are introduced. It can be argued that both the ideology and pedagogy of the instructor is instrumental in creating an environment where beliefs are challenged while also being responsive to pre-service teachers. Therefore, unique to the current literature, the pilot study explored the intersections of teaching and learning as both the instructor and students constructed understandings of multicultural topics. The guiding research question was, *How is teaching and learning constructed in a cultural diversity course?*

The research was situated within a socio-constructivist lens. According to Lev Vygotsky, learning is a socially and culturally mediated mechanism that requires the engagement not passivity of learners; how and what we think is governed by culture therefore the experiences, culture, and reality of the pre-service teachers must be taken into account as activities are created and constructed (Trawick-Smith, 2000). Therefore, in the pilot study, during data collection and analysis I examined how the instructor met students at their current level of consciousness and identity development throughout the

course. I looked for opportunities in which the PSTs could use their prior knowledge to make meaning or transform their current frames of reference into beliefs that could then be used to further advocate for social justice and equitable schooling experiences for children.

Also, since I looked at both teaching and learning in a cultural diversity course, a liberatory pedagogical lens was used. By adopting a liberatory pedagogical stance, teacher educators allow students an opportunity to consider alternative conceptions of themselves and society as well as introduce them to critical perspectives about the various constructs that influence schooling experiences for minority students (Freire, 1973; Hilliard, 1997; King, 1991; Lee, 2005). In this process, liberation also refers to the deconstructing of power systems between the instructor and the pre-service teachers so that shared conversations and reciprocity ensues to support a transformative learning experience for both teachers and the students they teach (Freedman, 2006; Freire, 1973; King, 1991).

Research Design and Methodology

The study was a naturalistic inquiry in which I used qualitative methods to address the research question. Utilizing a case study approach, the study explored naturally occurring behaviors that occur in the context of a mandatory multicultural course for elementary PSTs. Participants included 26 PSTs and the course instructor (Dr. Davis). The case study approach was selected for this study because it represents "…a intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single instance, phenomenon, or social unit" (Merriam, 1988,p.21) and is bounded or a single entity. In this study the bounded unit was the cultural diversity course.

Setting

Over 4 months, I examined naturally occurring discourse and interactions of pre-service teachers and the instructor in a cultural diversity course in the Early Childhood Department at Crescent State University. Crescent State is an urban university located in a metropolitan city in the Southeast. The Early Childhood Program admits undergraduate students with an interest in obtaining a P-5 teaching certificate. The program reflects a Cohort developmental model in which students take classes together throughout their two years in the program and participates in Pre-Kindergarten through Fifth grade field

placements (Meyers & Collins, 2000). One of the mandated courses was a cultural diversity course. The focus of the course was to "introduce the future teacher to the role of culture in child development, learning, and school success" (ECE 3031, Course syllabus). I strategically selected to conduct research in this class in order to gain insights on how the participants constructed understandings of multicultural topics.

Participants

Pre-service Teachers

The informants in the study included 26 students enrolled in the cultural diversity course and the course instructor. The racial makeup of the students in the course included 9African Americans, 16 Whites, and 1 Korean. There were three students who identified themselves as lesbian or gay; 23 females and 3 males. The students' ages ranged from 19-52. The socio-economic make-up of the students is unknown. However, as inferred by the class discussions and posts on social class, the majority of the students were middle class.

Course Instructor

The instructor, Dr. Davis[5] is female and was born in Tanzania. However, her racial identification is Indian. She was raised in a middle class home and at the time of the study was thirty-seven years old. Dr. Davis has also taught the cultural diversity course in the urban alternative certification program and the collaborative Master's program at Crescent State. The previous semester was her first experience teaching this course with undergraduate students.

Researcher

I gained access to my participants due to my status as a doctoral fellow in the Early Childhood Department at Crescent State and by serving as the teaching assistant for Dr. Davis the previous semester. My roles as the teaching assistant were to observe and help facilitate class instruction and assessment. Because of my relationship with Dr. Davis and experiences as the teaching assistant, I struggled throughout the study allowing my preconceived views about Dr. Davis's teaching dispositions not distort the current findings in the study. Therefore, to allow for a holistic and authentic emergence of Dr. Davis's ideology and pedagogy I engaged in several steps to ensure trustworthiness of the

[5] Pseudonyms were used for all names in this research

preliminary findings as outlined by Lincoln and Guba (1985) such as spending time in the setting, triangulating data, and presenting a diverse case analysis.

Data Collection

The qualitative methods employed included participant observations, semi-structured interviews, and document analysis. Participant observations were conducted during twelve of the fourteen class sessions. Each observation lasted between 2-2 ½ hours during the regularly scheduled class session (length of the class was 2 ½ hours) once a week. The role of the researcher was an *observer as participant;* that is participation in class activities was secondary to the role as information gather (Merriam, 1998).

Field notes of the observations included non- verbal and verbal interactions and dialogues during class sessions as well as descriptions of class activities, topics discussed and readings. In addition to class observations, I conducted 2 interviews with the instructor of the course at the 3rd and 9th weeks. These interviews lasted 1 ½ and 2 hours. Interviews were semi-structured and open ended in nature and served as a lens from which to identify and interpret the instructor's ideological stance about diversity topics and responses to how students were engaging in class discourse, content, and activities. Additionally, two sets of group interviews were during the months of February and April. Twelve students volunteered for the group interviews and were split into two groups; Group A (seven students) and Group B (five students). These two groups represented the diverse identities represented in the class such as sexual orientation, social class, and race. The purpose of the group interviews was to serve as a member checking strategy to inform data analysis and ensure that students' voices were accurately being portrayed and further understand from the students' perspectives how teaching and learning occurred in the course. The instructor's and group interviews were both audio-taped for accuracy and transcribed verbatim.

The final method of data collection was documents such as the course syllabus, readings, assignments and students' blogs. These documents allowed me to obtain the written language of the informants, served as an unobtrusive source of information, and provided supporting evidence for emerging patterns from the observations and group interviews (Creswell, 2003).

Data Analysis

In this research study, data analysis was an ongoing process involving continual reflection about the data, writing memos, and asking analytical questions throughout the study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Data analysis began by organizing and sorting the three sources of data: field observational notes, interviews, and documents. The next step involved reviewing and coding field notes, transcribing the interviews verbatim, and compiling students' blog postings in a single file to allow for analysis of the informants' verbal discourse.

As outlined by Bogdan and Biklen (2007), I engaged in open coding in which I first read through the data to look for similarities or patterns of behaviors, discourse, and beliefs of my informants. Next, I wrote down phrases and words that represented these patterns. A running list of the categories and corresponding codes collapsing and revising the initial codes as data was collected and coded. The next step in data analysis was using the coding to determine emerging themes and patterns and then to interpret the results.

Trustworthiness in qualitative research requires that the findings represent as closely as possible the experiences of the topic being studied. To ensure a trustworthy representation I included sufficient detail about the study's context and the multiple, varied data collection strategies. In the pilot study, data collection was persistent and reflective of case study approach (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation of findings among the observational field notes, interviews, and document analysis provided a convergence of data and allowed me to cross check my insights and conclusions.

Pilot Study Findings

The guiding question for the pilot study was *How is teaching and learning constructed in a cultural diversity course?* Marilyn Cochran Smith (2000; 2004) suggest that training teachers to teach for social justice requires an examination of the instructor's pedagogical choices, beliefs, culture, and prior experiences because if these beliefs could be explicitly and implicitly transferred to pre-service teachers; whether they are affirming or deficit (Freedman, 2006). This section provides a brief introduction to the context describing the teaching and learning that occurred in this multicultural course. I will then report the findings on the ideology of the instructor's discourse (critical race theory), instructor's pedagogy (lectures, small group discussions, videos, and

presentations), the construction of multicultural topics (instructors' socio-political and theoretical constructions), and pre-service teachers' responses to instructor's pedagogical choices (humor, resistance, denial).

Instructor's Discourse and Pedagogy

Research suggests that educators inevitably teach and transmit their beliefs about teaching and learning to their students as reflected in pedagogy implemented, readings assigned, and course goals and objectives (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Freedman, 2006; Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Obidah, 2000). In the context of teacher development and multicultural education, teacher educators who teach cultural diversity topics have an 'agenda' which is to have pre-service teachers refine, consider, and transform their beliefs and values about teaching and learning about diverse student populations (Hilliard, 1997; King, 1991). As a result, the beliefs and values that are encouraged are identified by the instructor. Therefore, to explore the research question I examined the instructor's discourse to understand the beliefs and values of and transmitted by the instructor in which I then examined how pre-service teacher's response.

Relying on the works of multicultural scholars such as Jackie Irvine, Gloria Ladson- Billings, and Carl Grant, Dr. Davis espouses an ideological stance that has roots in critical race theory in which she believes that there are hegemonic forces that impact the educational experiences and opportunities for marginalized populations. These forces are grounded in historical and socio-political constructs that invade and permeate within American society (Sleeter & Bernal, 2004). Therefore, her goal as a teacher educator has been to promote critical pedagogy in hopes of helping pre-service teachers transform into social change agents, particularly as they prepare to teach diverse student populations. While Dr. Davis is charged with transforming the beliefs of pre-service teachers, she often expressed her concern with not reaching some of her students, particularly the White students who she felt became angry and resistant. In response to students who evaluate her course as being racist and anti-American, Dr. Davis responds "instead of just taking that and saying oh everybody says that…I struggle with that and I think well how can I take and use that to improve the way I teach?..What is a better way for me to teach this?" (Dr. Davis, Interview #1, p. 32).

The dominant and most consistent form of pedagogical practice employed was the use of PowerPoint lectures in which for all class sessions observed the instructor used power point presentations to present content information from the assigned readings. The content of the presentations included background and supplemental information on the topics explored for the day. They usually occurred at the beginning of class and included some form of whole group discussion questions in which students were invited to respond to. As evident across all classroom observations, the power point presentations served as a vehicle to deliver information to students about the topics being discussed to increase pre-service teachers' knowledge base. She also used videos, whole and small group discussions, activities (simulation activity, talk shows, and stereotype activity), and student presentations. Each form of pedagogy was centered on the topics discussed for the class sessions. These topics included:

- Exploring identities
- Historical perspectives on diversity
- Race and bias
- Social class
- Cultural simulation
- Language
- Gender and sexual orientation
- Religion
- Exceptionality
- Marta transient field trip
- Intelligence and learning styles
- Educational opportunity, tracking and ability grouping
- Seeing with a cultural eye
- Looking forward

Construction of Diversity Topics

To better understand how knowledge was constructed in this course, I attempted to first make parallels between the instructor's ideological stance of critical pedagogy and consequently how pre-service teachers responded. The coding categories of instructor's discourse and students' responses offered an opportunity to examine how information was processed in this course. For example, as evident from the field observations and individual interviews with the instructor, her discourse and selected readings and topic discussions mirrored the tenants of critical race theory, refers to the macro systems of influences noted in Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Theory, and was grounded in historical

perspectives. Many of her statements were rooted in historical foundations of racism and society and the macro constructs such as educational policy, institutional racism, and cultural assimilation. Several examples show how such ideological frameworks presented itself in her verbal discourse and via selection of and discussion of course readings. Take for example the following conversation extracted from field notes taken on February 26th on a discussion about whether we should celebrate Black history month:

> Dr. Davis states that we have to consider culture and also how the language we use can further perpetuate the hierarchal systems in society. She then gives the example of the term inventor vs. scientist. Dr. Davis asks students about what they think the difference is between the two terms. Susan says that she thinks the term scientist has more prestige attached to it whereas the term inventor seems like a one time thing. Dr. Davis nods her head then says that the terms have different connotations whereas Dr. Carver could be considered a scientist in which he created what we know as peanut butter while others disagree and label him as an inventor (Field notes, 2/26/07, p.10-11).

In this example, Dr. Davis's position the discussion on having Black history month within a historical and socio-political context by exploring how the contributions of African Americans historically is inferiorly represented in American history. She asks students to consider how language and labeling done both currently and historically by society has established and perpetuates a hierarchy of systems. This focus therefore asks students to consider the macro systems of influences such as history and societal beliefs in even critiquing or examining the relevance and importance of having a Black history month.

In another example, a class discussion takes place on the validity and inequity in standardized testing. The following excerpt from another field note observation captures again how Dr. Davis's discussion with students is situated within a socio-historical context.

> Dr. Davis asks students whether they are anxious when they take tests. Almost everyone in the class raise their hands. Dawn says that in our society we have been trained that there is a right and wrong answer. Dr. Davis shakes here head then says 'we are taught to believe in right/wrong answers. In terms of history there are multiple perspectives but only one is presented on the test. Why not let children decide which one they prefer or decide to believe.' Susan then raises her hand and says that the point of standardized tests is it is the teacher's job to teach the test. Dr. Davis responds by saying 'You are not teaching wrong but rather for children to

> seek the truth. It is not incorrect facts when teaching critical and relevant pedagogy or developing critical thinkers". (Field notes for 3/26/07, p. 3-4)

In this example, Dr. Davis first ask students to consider personal application to test taking then challenges them to consider how historically testing has been used to represent only one perspectives. She then encourages students to take action as future teachers to take a critical stance towards presenting multiple perspectives instead of those only espoused by mainstream society.

Furthermore, the mandated course readings also reflect Dr. Davis's position towards critical pedagogy and examination of historical and socio-political influences on inequitable educational opportunities and experiences for culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. These readings were the primary focus of the PowerPoint lectures which therefore was the content of the Dr. Davis's lectures and class discussions. Examples of such readings include Ethnic Myth (presents a counter historical perspective on the conquest and exploitation of Native Americans, Hispanic and African Americans during the early years of development in America), Seeing with a cultural eye (socio-political explanations on the achievement gap between White and minority students), White privilege (critical race stance on how oppression and White privilege in our society contributes to inequality and injustice) and The Seven Lessons (critical pedagogy stance on how culturally affirming teaching is responsive and affirming to culturally and linguistically diverse student populations). The selection of these readings and being used as the foundation for class discussions and activities has important implications towards how pre-service teachers respond to the ideological stance reverberated in these readings and supported by the instructor because they became the guiding rubric for becoming culturally responsive.

Additionally the function of Dr. Davis's talk is to promote critical pedagogy and help students become social change agents in dispelling racism in society; that is for her students to consider how "the hard part is seeing ourselves as part of the problem as well as the solution. While racism can be very personal, the problem is not. The problem and the solution belong to all groups, not just White people. Your job is to understand the problem and use your positions as teachers to help find a solution" (Dr. Davis, 2/13/07 weblog reflection). Additionally, Dr. Davis constantly asks her students to "..ask yourself

where do you stand? Are you teaching just for reading, writing, science, social studies, and math or is your responsibility to be an advocate?" (Field Notes, 3/19/07, p.9) Lastly, reflective of her focus on developing social change agents, Dr. Davis charges students to

> think about is what do you believe in so strongly that you will not be able to do otherwise? Is it important for children to learn the truth? Multiple perspectives? Inequalities in society? Their own histories? Critical thinking? Environmental conservation? And if you believe in something so strongly then do you have a moral obligation to be true to yourself? As a teacher, do you have a moral obligation to serve your students the best…or simply what the State requires? (Dr. Davis, 2/26/07, weblog)

In summary I have presented how Dr. Davis maintained a critical perspective throughout the semester when teaching pre-service teachers about cultural diversity issues. The critical perspective was represented in her readings which focused on introducing pre-service teachers to social, historic political influences that impact the teaching and learning of diverse students. Furthermore, her discourse or language used in the classroom during class discussions and activities challenged pre-service teachers to consider implementing critical pedagogy in the classroom and reflecting on how they can become an advocate for children who have been historically oppressed and subjected to inequitable schooling experiences. In the next section I present how pre-service teachers therefore responded the Dr. Davis's attempts to have them 'push the envelope' and become agents of change in their future classrooms.

Pre-service Teachers' Response to Instructor's Critical Discourse"

Moreover, to capture the dynamics between the teaching and learning of multicultural topics I then looked for how students were responding to her attempts to develop them as social change agents. Across the field note observations and blog postings, the students responded in multiple ways to Dr. Davis critical discourse, course activities and readings. I found that students responded more positively to some activities and readings than others. For example, the most favorable activities among students was the Bafaa-bafaa simulation activity in which students split into two cultures (Alpha and Beta) and visited one another's culture. The following are a few of the statements used by students to describe the simulation activity as noted in the blogging statements, field notes, and group interviews.

> Are you kidding me? The cultural simulation activity was sooo interesting. . . . Time and again we are shown that people quickly establish comfort zones. And when those comfort zones are disturbed it is hard to function. These diversity activities have opened my eyes to a lot. It has really made me evaluate how I view people different from me and how those views impact my actions towards them. –(Lisa, 2/23/07, weblog reflection)

> It is interesting how a simulation such as the one we did in class today can relate to real life. It is almost scary how accurate that activity was. When I realized what was going on I was floored at how things were. Each "culture" was so attached to what they were supposed to be doing that they already felt like their way was the best. No one had anything nice to say about the other group. No one had any desire to switch their groups. When something is not familiar to us we are quick to judge it negatively. It is sad that as a population we are so intolerant of things that are not like what we know. - (John,2/23/07, weblog reflection)

Interesting however, is the opposite response to class discussions on White privilege and an activity on stereotypes in which students created lists of stereotypes of different ethnic groups. As acknowledged by Dr. Davis in interview #2, her goal for McIntosh's White Privilege article and stereotype activity was the same for the Bafaa-bafaa activity which was to help move students out of their comfort zones into understanding how racism and American discourse impacts the schooling and educational attainment of students of color. However, many students responded to the White Privilege article as being anti-White and not applicable to today's society and expressed their discomfort with the stereotype activity.

> I did not like this article. There is a line there saying, ""I was taught to think that racism could end if white individuals changed their attitudes." Why is it always the White peoples fault? Racism would end if everyone of every race changed their attitudes.-(Alice, 2/5/07, weblog reflection)

> Jody at the back table discusses with her group that she felt it [white privilege article] doesn't really apply to here in Atlanta with its many successful Black people and Ronald nods in agreement then says that maybe White privilege exists in the South. Judy shakes her head and states "Oh no, I am from south GA and I couldn't relate to this either". (Field observation, 2/5/07, p.23)

> After reading off the last poster, Karen says that at first she did not want to do it because she didn't want to hurt anyone's feelings and didn't realize how the stereotypes were actually there. Carla interjects and says " I don't care about this stuff, I didn't know about any stereotypes so I just thought about Life Time and what I could apply from there" (Field observation, 2/5/07, p. 20)

> Class was interesting on Tuesday. I guess I always say that. When we wrote the stereotypes on the wall, it was pretty uncomfortable. Even though the teacher said, "just write what you know is out there" I still felt like I didn't want anyone to see what I was writing for fear they'd assume that's what I thought. (Stephanie, 2/5/07, weblog reflection).

The differentiation of responses between the two activities thus led me to further consider how applying socio-historic constructs to course topics relate to how PSTs respond. In other words, in the Bafaa Bafaa activity, the activity itself forced participants to consider the experiences of English Language Learners throughout the simulation activity. Interestingly as a result of this activity they were receptive and affirmed the socio-historical influences such as racism and oppression that impact the experiences of English language learners. Similarly, the White privilege article and stereotype activity, address some of the same macro constructs. However, PSTs adamantly resisted its application to teaching and learning about culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Was it because the White privileged article did not position pre-service teachers at the focus of the conversation whereas the stereotype activity did by having them reflect on serotypes they have heard before? As I asked myself such questions I begin to consider whether the outcome would be different if the pre-service teacher was placed at the focus of the discussion and asked to critically reflect on how they are influenced by **and** influence systematic settings such as White privilege and racism, then connect it back to their identity as a teacher.

Considering participants' response to course activities, readings and discussion across the semester, many were congruent with the multicultural teacher development literature which state how students respond to topics with feelings of anger, resentment, and denial of the significance of cultural diversity in teaching children (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). Similarly, students' responses ranged from benevolent liberalism to humor when responding to discussions on racism, sexism, religion, and sexuality. Consistent across all data sources was students' expressions of resistance towards application of topics and

relevance of topics to teaching children. In establishing the rationale for the current study, I will present these findings only because the reflections of resistance led me to the current exploration of examining the context of pre-service teacher's reflections to gain a better understanding of how development of culturally responsive teachers occurs.

In the multicultural literature, resistance is defined as pre-service teachers' challenging the relevance and prevalence of exposing and addressing inequality in teaching and learning of diverse student populations (Grant & Ladson-Billings, 1997). They therefore resisted the need and applicability for a focus on diversity issues in teacher development. It is important to note that pre-service teacher's resistance to topics is a complex phenomena that is mutually exclusive to their development into culturally responsive teachers. In other words, if a student rejects or resists a concept or discussion on a diversity issue does not necessarily mean that they are not and do not have the capacity to negotiate their current beliefs to those more culturally and linguistically affirming. Furthermore, for the context of the pilot study resistance was applied to any statement that rejected and/or challenged the ideological frameworks of class discussions and readings. Take the following example of 'resistance' from one of the students during a group interview:

> Tonia: Well, yea ohm what do you think the purpose of the class is?
>
> Marsha: Well … I think I'm getting out of it is you know I feel open in there about things but ohm I guess kind a little more into what Carla is saying ohm you know we're studying ohm you know socioeconomic status you know we are studying race or something but I don't, I don't want to say it, but you know I guess I'll say it, who cares, you know what I'm saying like I mean there's like diversity as far as the student population but there's also diversity as far as you know learning styles and all that kind of stuff so I think you have to adapt and teach the way you are going to teach no matter what you know I have a really great job ohm not so great job you know Black, White, Hispanic whatever you just have to adapt one of the things I guess maybe this class is to look at ourselves and have an open awareness but I mean all you have to do is walk down the street to be aware. (Marsha, Group B Interview #1)

In this example, Marsha shared how the purpose of the course on exploring diverse issues has little implication towards teaching and learning and therefore the focus instead should be on exploring the diversity of learning styles. Her dismissal of the application of diversity topics to teaching was evident in her final statement "I guess

maybe this class is to look at ourselves and have an open awareness but I mean all you have to do is walk down the street to be aware". Upon surface examination this statement may have represented a novice teacher's affinity towards learning about the practicality of culturally relevant teaching. Therefore I question whether the topics Marsha mentioned such as SES was too abstract for her to apply to her development as a culturally relevant teacher? If so, is the resistance then better explained for as the disconnect between understanding such relationship OR resistance to culturally relevant teaching itself.

Well in examining another pre-service teachers resistance to the course topic I began to see the complexity involved in developing a culturally relevant identity and the role reflection across systems could potentially play in this development. For example, Bryan dismisses the applicability of cultural diversity in teaching by stating that the class is 'going no where' and remains in the comforts of his identity as an 'American'.

> The class today seemed to get nowhere. We all understand that children all have different views. Religion is a big reason that so many people get offended. As educators it is very difficult to please everybody. In my placement a lot of different religions are present, my teacher informed me. There is no way in hell that a teacher can please every single person's views. We can teach around them and make sure we let the whole class understand that everyone has different ways of going about things. I also feel that when you bring up the differences some of the students being singled out can feel upset or ashamed because of that. To think everyone can be satisfied at the same time is for the birds. Just do what you feel is right and do not let people get in your way. Bryan, 3/21/07, weblog; (SR-ANG, WP) I don't know about you guys but this "Whiteness" issue went nowhere yesterday. I got frustrated a couple times in class but never really had time to say anything. Some of you guys have mentioned that upon entering stores and at restaurants you have been either followed or been horribly served. The reason behind these problems are because ya'll are black. But on the flip side, If I receive bad service at a restaurant by a black server or if a sales clerk, who is black asks me if I need help I can't feel the same way as ya'll do. To me that is a problem that needs to be addressed. Feelings are feelings. White folks have the same feelings as black folks. Bryan, 2/13/07, weblog; (WP)

In the examples above Bryan's reflections reveal important information about how he is constructing meanings of the culturally diversity topics discussed. First they reveal how he situates the focus to his personal beliefs and feelings connected to the larger systematic constructs of White privilege and affirming religious diversity. It also reveals his frustration in understanding the connection between reflecting on such topics

to his future role as a teacher which to him means simply doing what's best for the students. Therefore, when reflecting on both Marsha and Bryan's resistance to the courses topics I began to consider what else pre-service teacher's reflections could reveal about their development and understandings of culturally relevant teaching? Also, I became interested in why there seemed to be disconnect for participants as they reflected on larger constructs such as SES and racism to the teaching and learning of young children. I further inquired about the influence of the teacher development program in facilitating the growth and development of our pre-service teachers who bring with them multiple experiences and prior knowledge related to culturally relevant teaching. These inquiries therefore led me to the current study of first looking at pre-service teachers' reflections on the teaching and learning of diverse students to see what they unveil about their development as culturally relevant teaching. I then was interested in exploring whether there were connections between pre-service teachers' reflecting across systems of influences and applying them to pedagogy in the classroom to their understandings of culturally relevant teaching. Lastly, I wanted to thereby investigate what were the influences that supported the development of these pre-service teachers.

Conclusion

Multicultural scholars contend that in a cultural diversity course, teacher educators are challenged with converting students' deficit beliefs about marginalized student populations into those that are culturally affirming (King, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1991, 1994, 1995; Sleeter, 2001). Therefore, I went into the pilot study with a lens of better understanding the complex interplay between the construction and negotiation of cultural diversity issues between the course instructor and pre-service teachers. For example, like most multicultural teacher educators, the language, readings, and activities Dr. Davis implemented were mostly rooted in critical race theory and were intended to develop teachers as social justice change agents (Hooks, 1994). Her discourse can be characterized as critical in which she challenged students' beliefs, values and understandings about culturally diverse populations and inequities in society. To capture how students responded to this critical stance, I found many parallels between the multicultural literature on pre-service students' response to how the participants in the pilot responded to class topics. These responses range from benevolent liberalism to

humor to resistance. When examining further those who seemed to resist the topics presented I noticed that pre-service teachers were actually struggling with understanding the larger picture or constructs such as societal oppression on the teaching and learning of culturally diverse students.

As a result of these findings, I begin to consider applying an ecological systems theory to understand the development of pre-service teachers as culturally relevant teachers. I questioned what if there was a connection between whether pre-service teachers are able to consider how larger systems of influences such as national policy mandates directly influences their teaching of culturally and linguistically diverse students? What would their reflections then reveal? Would they reveal a more conscious and affirmed stance of culturally relevant teaching? Or would pre-service teachers still not be able to connect these influences back to the classroom? Therefore, the current study examined the reflections of there elementary pre-service teachers with varying culturally relevant beliefs to uncover how their reflections across systems exposed their development as a culturally relevant change agent.

APPENDIX B

Excerpts of Culturally Relevant Teaching and Assimilationist Teaching

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dream keepers.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Conceptions of Self and Others
Culturally Relevant:
Teacher sees teaching as an art form and has a belief that all students can learn

Assimilationist:
A teacher sees herself as technician, teaching as a technical task

Teacher sees teaching as "putting knowledge into"-like "banking"

Social Relations
Culturally Relevant:
Teacher demonstrates a connectedness with all students and expects children to work

together

Assimilationist:
Teacher connects to individual students and encourages individual learning experiences

Conceptions of Knowledge

Culturally Relevant:
The standard is excellence and the teacher helps students develop necessary skills

Assimilationist:
Knowledge is in one direction and infallible

APPENDIX C

Course and Assignment Descriptions

ECE 3602 Reading and Language Arts in Early Childhood Education II (6)

Course Description:

Integration of reading and language arts instruction across the curriculum is emphasized. A variety of methods of instruction and assessment are explored. Field experiences in third grade through fifth grade are included. A minimum grade of "C" is required for this course.

Assignments Description:

Literacy Brief Write (Week 11-12)

As apart of a semester long course project that focused on the pre-service teachers examining the multiple literacies in children's community, the Literacy Brief Write was a reflective piece that asked them to reflect on the following:

1. Before your community observations, what expectations did you have? In your response, include any prior experiences, perceptions and beliefs of the community and home literacies.
2. Explain how these expectations were similar to and different to what you observed in the community.

Literacy Final Exam (Week 17)

Given at the end of the semester, the final exam included 14 short answer essay questions. I collected and analyzed two of the short answer responses. The essay questions collected and prompt were:

Teaching in the 21st century now requires teachers who are prepared to engage students who may be culturally, linguistically, economically, physically and cognitively different from themselves. Over the course of the semester, we have discussed the importance of a child's community, prior knowledge, and personal experiences in his or her literacy development. Thinking back on our readings and discussions throughout the semester, please answer both of the following prompts.

a. Discuss the challenges, and arguments against using children's home and community literacy as a teaching tool in their literacy development.
b. Discuss the advantages to using children's home language and community literacy in the classroom to foster literacy development.

ECE 3360 Assessment of Classroom Learning in Early Childhood Education (3)

Course Description

Students examine various teacher-constructed and standardized instruments used to assess student learning. Strategies for selecting and using assessment methods are emphasized. The role of instructional assessment as it relates to teaching and learning are discussed. Field experience in K-5th grades is included. Students must complete the course with a grade of "C" or higher.

Assignment Descriptions

Assessment Policy Paper (Week 6): The focus of this assignment was for pre-service teachers to find, read, summarize and reflect on an article related to issues of assessing young children's development and learning. The summary and reflection was then formalized into a typed double spaced report no more than 4 pages in length. PSTs were to include in their paper the following:

1. Summary
    a. Your summary should briefly and clearly communicate the main ideas in this article (Be careful not to plagiarize as discussed in class) and your reflections should include your response to/thinking about issues raised. Do you agree or disagree? Do you think good points have been raised? What in particular do you think is good or problematic about them? Are the issues too idealistic-that is, has an unrealistic standard for assessing children been set by this writer?
    b. Address issues that may relate to diverse students that may or may not have been discussed in the article. Does the author raise issues of contextual and cultural background as an important aspect of assessment? If not how might the author argument or position be viewed with this information in mind?

Assessment Midterm (week 8)

Pre-service teachers were given an in class exam mid semester that included 6 short answer questions and one essay. I collected and analyzed the one essay question. This essay question asked pre-service teachers to reflect on the following:

As a teacher in a diverse 4th grade classroom, you are keenly aware of the need for culturally appropriate assessment practices. Explain issues related to culturally appropriate assessment practices and what these practices look like in early childhood

classrooms. In answering the question, please include limitations or cautions with standardized tests in your argument.

ECE 3605 Social Studies Methods in ECE

Course Description:

Students examine objectives of various social studies programs and learn to use methods and materials appropriate for young children to accomplish these objectives. Field experiences in kindergarten through second-grade classrooms are included. A minimum grade of "C" is required for this course.

Assignments Descriptions:

Good Citizen's Essay (Week 3): This assignment asked pre-service teachers to explore the meaning of a good democratic citizen. In a three page short essay the PSTs were asked to outline what they believed to be the most important characteristics of good democratic citizens generally and citizens of our country specifically. The following is a detailed description of the assignment:

In order for democracies to work, what must the citizens of those democracies know, be able to do, and believe? (You might start by thinking about what a democracy is and what rights and responsibilities citizens have in a democracy.) We will be using "citizenship education" as the focal point of this course, and this assignment serves as a starting point for that discussion. What should you consider, and how should you start? Obviously you should do the reading on democratic citizenship *first (see reading assignments in your "schedule")*. These resources should stir up your own current thoughts and ideas of what a democracy is and what "life skills" are needed by people who live in such societies. Use your own life experience(s) here too. Think of good citizens you have known --- what makes them so? But I caution you not to be satisfied with a simplistic definition of a good citizen as someone who "follows the rules, is kind to children and elderly ladies, etc." What does it take to function as a citizen in a democracy? *(Potential Connections to INTASC: 1, 2)*

Social Studies PTLS Lesson Plan (Weeks 11-13). In semester three students engage in a project called the Planning Teaching Learning Sample (PTLS). The document collected and analyzed was the lesson plan implemented from this project. A description of the PTLS project as extracted from the course syllabus is as follows:

This assignment is a culminating project that focuses on integrating a content area (i.e. social studies) into literacy instruction. During your field placement, you will be responsible for collaborating with a small group or partner on your grade level to create a 2-week thematic unit that focuses on a social studies topic (e.g. American Revolution, Immigration, etc.). Then, with your field placement teacher, you will choose 2 sequential lessons from your 2-week (i.e. 10 day) thematic unit to implement in your field placement. Finally, after implementation, you will reflect on the results.

Ultimately, this project should assist you in experiencing a "trial run" of:

- PLANNING a thematic unit that integrates the social studies and literacy curriculum,
- COLLABORATING with peers and colleagues on grade level,
- IMPLEMENTING sequential hands-on/minds-on activities, and
- ASSESSING student knowledge before, during, and after teaching your 2 lessons.

More details will follow. *(Potential Connections to INTASC: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10)*

Classroom Management ECE/Field Experience III (6)

Course Description

Prerequisite: ECE 3662. Corequisites: ECE 3360, ECE 3602, and ECE 3605. Provides for the application of child management procedures to academic content. Emphasis is placed on instructional assessment as it relates to classroom management procedures. Field experiences in third, fourth, and fifth grades are included. A minimum grade of "B" is required for this course.

Assignment Descriptions

Positive Discipline (Week 4). The positive discipline document was an assignment in which pre-service teachers read the assigned chapters each week in the textbook, Positive Discipline in the Classroom, and completed a 'note taker' reflecting on the readings. The note taker for Chapter 3 "The message of Caring" was the document I collected and analyzed. Pre-service teachers were given a verbal prompt to consider how the chapter related to the teaching of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Below is a sample of the note taker template.

Notes for Positive Discipline in the Classroom

NOTETAKER, ECE 3663
(All sections must be completed for full credit.)
Responding "No Questions" does not suffice.

NAME_____ Class 2 3 4 5 6
(1-2) (3-4) (5-6) (7, 9) (10)

Big Ideas:	Big Ideas:
Personal Experience:	Personal Experience:
Questions:	Questions:

Individualized Behavior Change Plan (Week 16)

The individualized behavior change plan consisted of pre-service teachers observing and selecting one student in their field placement classroom with behavior challenges. The PSTs were then required to create and implement a management plan for the student. I collected and analyzed the entire individual behavior change plan report. The following is a description of the information that was included in this report:

III. Individualized Behavior Change Plan: 30 points. (See attached rubric and include it in the report. Please include your report in a folder with inside pockets and **do not** use plastic sleeves.
Select one student in your current classroom placement that demonstrates challenging behaviors or those that prevent learning to take place. Change the name of the student for confidentiality purposes.
You must include at least 6 weeks of data in your report. Tell me by the second class if you do not have students with behavior problems that inhibit learning, and you will be given another type of assignment.

I. Begin the report by describing the child. Include a description of his or her appearance, personality, ability to make friends and age. Consider any environmental issues that impact behavior. Situations such as family background, transiency, neighborhood or community, parents' educational background and ESL issues all impact classroom behavior.

Define the target behavior the student exhibits. In other words, exactly what is the child doing that is the problem. "Having a bad attitude" is not a defined behavior, but "calling out in class" is a common example of a specific behavior. Choose a student whose behavior has a high frequency, is visible and can be measured. This behavior at the least is very annoying or is of great concern to you and distracts either from the student's learning or from the classroom environment. There are five general categories of misbehavior: **(1) Noncompliance (2) Aggression (3) Self-management skills (4) Social skills (5) Academic skills**

Write a goal for the student that addresses the target behavior. Here are examples for the general categories: (1) **Noncompliance-**The student will not argue, or will follow posted classroom rules, or will follow a teacher's request within ten seconds. (2) **Aggression-** The student will not fight, or will not be verbally abusive, or will not destroy property or will not tantrum (scream, make threats, etc.) (3) **Self-management skills**: The student will follow directions, will exhibit problem solving skills, will follow rules, will accept "No" for an answer. (4) **Social skills:** The student will learn to have appropriate conversations or will demonstrate the skill of accepting negative feedback or will demonstrate cooperative behavior. (5) **Academic skills**: The student will finish assigned work and be on-task 85% of the time, will hand in completed homework, or will be a productive member of a group. Perfectionism and the problems associated with this need could fall into this category.

II. Each week note the following on your two charts:

A. Begin the scatter plot charting misbehaviors as often as they occur making one notation of the 2 days **each week** you are in the classroom.

B. Complete the ABC analysis noting antecedents, behaviors and consequences for both the first and last days. Hopefully your student will show growth! (You will have two of these completed reports.)

III. Weekly Paragraph Entries:

A. As stated in your syllabus, write a brief description of the child's behavior each week. What strategies are working and which ones appear not to be effective?

B. Analyze the information according to your observations and chart data.

C. Continue to analyze the apparent goal(s) of the student. (Attention, power, revenge, display of inadequacy) What leads you to this conclusion?

D. Demonstrate that you are using your collected data. What adjustments in the child's classroom environment can be made that might foster progress?

E. What behaviors can be taught to the student to help him or her act more responsibly?

IV. Academic Accommodations:

A. Each week describe a lesson you are teaching or is being taught to the class and tell

how you **could** or **did** accommodate your student's academic needs. (There are many situations where you may not be able to adjust the student's lessons.)

B. Tell what, if anything, is being done by the teacher. Do you agree with what is being done? Tell how you might change the teacher's approach if necessary.

V. Write a strong summary about your experience with this student. Be sure to include information from both the two ABC Analyses and the one Scatter Plot.

VI. Report in this final section what you learned from this experience.

APPENDIX D

Interview Protocol #1

** Each question was coded according to the categories identified in the questionnaire with general questions added in by the researcher. The codes included: GQ: general question, K-knowledge, SREC-students' race, ethnicity and culture, SR-social relations in and beyond the classroom, TAP-teaching as a profession, TP-teaching practice, SSN-student's strengths and needs.*

At the beginning of the interview participants were informed that the interview related to the teaching and learning of diverse student populations. Because the questions referenced the questionnaire responses, some questions in the protocols were different for each participant. Therefore I present below each interview separately.

<u>Carla's Interview #1 Protocol</u>

1. Tell me about Carla, how old are you? Where are you from? Siblings? Upbringing? Like to do in your spare time? Family?-GQ
2. What have been your experiences with people from diverse backgrounds?-GQ
3. Tell me a little bit more about a challenging cultural experience you have had?
4. Any bouts with any isms- racism, sexism, ageism, etc.-GQ
5. Any oops you've had with isms?-GQ
6. What is your greatest excitement and fear about teaching culturally & linguistically diverse students?-GQ
7. Why did you decide to become a teacher? Why are you currently undecided about whether teaching urban children where you belong?) TAP

8. When you hear the word diverse student populations, what are your thoughts? GQ
9. Explain what are your beliefs about how to teach diverse students? Provide some examples of making connections between the world and students' identity. K, SREC,
10. In what ways are you being prepared to teach diverse students in the program? K
11. When you hear the phrase "I don't see color in my classroom, I just see children" what are your thoughts? Also you stated in the survey that you strongly agree that cultural background of students plays an important part in teaching, how? How do you define cultural background? SREC
12. Share an experience of a child you have difficulty connecting with? A child you easily connected with? SRBC,K,
13. What do you think is the role of parents in children's education? Discuss some barriers to parental involvement. Can you think of other definitions of parental involvement? SRBC
14. Why is it important for children from diverse backgrounds to get a good education? TAP
15. Explain what you think contributes to student failure? Success? TP

    How would you describe the role of the teacher in student learning? How do children learn best? TP, SSN
16. What do you think is the role of peer learning and independent experiences in the classroom?-SRBC

17. Why do you disagree with the statement that children who fail do so because they don't try hard enough and vice versa? What factors then may contribute to a students' success or failure?-TP
18. Explain your thoughts about every child comes to you no matter how poor is brilliant and standard of excellence?-SSN
19. What knowledge do you think children bring with them to the classroom?-K

Jody's Interview #1 Protocol

1. Tell me about Jody, how old are you? Where are you from? Siblings? Upbringing? Like to do in your spare time? Family?- GQ
2. What have been your experiences with people from diverse backgrounds?-GQ
3. Tell me a little bit more about a challenging cultural experience you have had?-GQ
4. Any bouts with any isms- racism, sexism, ageism, etc.-GQ
5. Any opps you've had with isms?-GQ
6. Greatest excitement and fear about teaching culturally & linguistically diverse students?-GQ
7. Why did you decide to become a teacher? Why are you currently undecided about whether teaching urban children where you belong?) TAP
8. When you hear the word diverse student populations, what are your thoughts? GQ
9. Explain what are your beliefs about how to teach diverse students? Provide some examples of making connections between the world and students' identity. K, SREC
10. In what ways are you being prepared to teach diverse students in the program? K

11. When you hear the phrase “I don’t see color in my classroom, I just see children” what are your thoughts? Also you stated in the survey that you strongly agree that cultural background of students plays an important part in teaching, how? How do you define cultural background? SREC
12. Share an experience of a child you have difficulty connecting with? A child you easily connected with? SRBC,K
13. What do you think is the role of parents in children’s education? Discuss some barriers to parental involvement. Can you think of other definitions of parental involvement? SRBC
14. Why is it important for children from diverse backgrounds to get a good education? TAP
15. Explain what you think contributes to student failure? TP
16. How would you describe the role of the teacher in student learning? How do children learn best? TP, SSN
17. What do you think is the role of peer learning and independent experiences in the classroom?-SRBC
18. Why do you disagree with the statement that children who fail do so because they don’t try hard enough and vice versa? What factors then may contribute to a students’ success or failure?-TP
19. Explain you thoughts about every child comes to you matter how poor brilliant and standard of excellence?-SSN
20. What knowledge do you think children bring with them to the classroom?-K

Ronald's Interview #1 Protocol

1. Tell me about Wayne, how old are you? Where are you from? Siblings? Upbringing? Like to do in your spare time? Family?-GQ
2. What have been your experiences with people from diverse backgrounds?-GQ
3. Tell me a little bit more about a challenging cultural experience you have had?-GQ
4. Any bouts with any isms- racism, sexism, ageism, etc.-GQ
5. Any opps you've had with isms?-GQ
6. Greatest excitement and fear about teaching culturally & linguistically diverse students?-GQ
7. Why did you decide to become a teacher? Why are you currently undecided about whether teaching urban children where you belong? TAP
8. When you hear the word diverse student populations, what are your thoughts? GQ
9. Explain what are your beliefs about how to teach diverse students? Provide some examples of making connections between the world and students' identity. K, SREC
10. In what ways are you being prepared to teach diverse students in the program? K
11. When you hear the phrase "I don't see color in my classroom, I just see children" what are your thoughts? Also you stated in the survey that you strongly agree that cultural background of students plays an important part in teaching, how? How do you define cultural background? SREC
12. Share an experience of a child you have difficulty connecting with? A child you easily connected with? SRBC,K

13. What do you think is the role of parents in children's education? Discuss some barriers to parental involvement. Can you think of other definitions of parental involvement? SRBC
14. Why is it important for children from diverse backgrounds to get a good education? TAP
15. Explain what you think contributes to student failure? Success? TP
16. How would you describe the role of the teacher in student learning? How do children learn best? TP, SSN
17. What do you think is the role of peer learning and independent experiences in the classroom?-SRBC
18. Why do you disagree with the statement that children who fail do so because they don't try hard enough and vice versa? What factors then may contribute to a students' success or failure?-TP
19. Explain your thoughts about every child comes to you matter how poor is brilliant and standard of excellence?-SSN
20. What knowledge do you think children bring with them to the classroom?-K

Interview #2 Protocol

The guiding questions for this interview referenced the Social Studies PTLS lesson plan participants were asked to bring with them to the interview. They selected the lesson plan they each felt represented culturally relevant teaching.

1. Tell me about the lesson plan you brought with you today? Focus, procedures, assessment
2. What materials and resources did you use or refer to when planning the lesson?
3. How did the students respond to the lesson?
4. Why do you think it represents culturally relevant teaching?
5. Which part(s) of the lesson do you think really encouraged culturally responsive teaching?
6. Would you do anything differently if you had the chance to teach and plan this lesson again?
7. What was your role as a teacher in this lesson? The students' role? Cooperating teacher's role?
8. How did or didn't this lesson help you understand more about how to teach students from diverse backgrounds?
9. Do you see doing such activities/lessons in your classroom? Why or Why not?
10. Are there any barriers or challenges to implementing culturally relevant teaching/assessment in the classroom?

Interview #3 Protocol

By interview 3, all document and questionnaire data had been collected. Therefore, participants were asked to expand on information extracted from the data collected and analyzed. Like interview #1, the protocols for each participant had similar content questions but were reflective of their individual reflections from data collected. As a result each individual interview protocol is presented below.

Carla's Interview #3 protocol:

1. Share an experience you have had this semester with learning about or teaching culturally or linguistically diverse student populations. Explain how this experience has or hasn't informed their teaching.

   -Tell me about the home literacy project. What did you learn about culturally and linguistically diverse students, and insights?

   -From the Literacy final is there anything you would want to add in discussing the challenges and arguments against using children's home and community literacy? What did you mean by " Some believe that children need to be exposed to and experience cultures, languages, have a knowledge of those that are economically different than themselves to help them develop an understanding of the whole world"? Who are some?

   Also anything want to add about advantages? Any other outside of immediate advantage for the student? Who or what else could reap the rewards of using children's home and community literacies?

2. Tell me about your beliefs about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse student populations
3. In exploring the behavior management plan, tell me about Billy: were there any environmental issues or influences that may have impacted his behavior? Were there any cultural or linguistic accommodations made for Billy?
4. Define for me your definition of culturally relevant teaching.
5. Tell me about what you think the role of a child's cultural background in teaching and learning about them.
6. Reflect back on the cultural diversity course you took with Dr. Davis (pseudonym) your first semester in the program, have your beliefs about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse populations changed over the past year? How so? What do you still have questions about when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students?

Jody's Interview #3 protocol:

1. Share an experience you have had this semester with learning about or teaching culturally or linguistically diverse student populations. Explain how this experience has or hasn't informed their teaching.

   -Tell me about the home literacy project. What did you learn about culturally and linguistically diverse students, and insights?

   -What did you mean by "left me with the impression that everything would be accepted exactly as it was; perhaps it was just my own willingness to turn away from the hidden meanings or messages." Tell me about how the mixed messages

you speak up directly influences or impacts diverse students. Any other hypocrisy (specific to diverse students) you can share?

-From the Literacy final is there anything you would want to add in discussing the challenges and arguments against using children's home and community literacy? What did you mean by " DLP is a great argument against using community literacy?" how do you define community literacy? What is 'cultural literacy? Also anything want to add about advantages? Any other outside of immediate advantage for the student? Who or what else could reap the rewards of using children's home and community literacy's?

2. Tell me about your beliefs about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse student populations
3. In exploring the behavior management plan, tell me about Ameen: where there any environmental issues or influences that may have impacted his behavior? Were there any cultural or linguistic accommodations made for Ameen?
4. Define for me your definition of culturally relevant teaching.
5. Tell me about what you think the role of a child's cultural background in teaching and learning about them.
6. Reflect back on the cultural diversity course you took with Dr. Davis (pseudonym) your first semester in the program, have your beliefs about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse populations changed over the past year? How so? What do you still have questions about when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students?

1. Share an experience they have had this semester with learning about or teaching culturally or linguistically diverse student populations. Explain how this experience has or hasn't informed their teaching.

   -Tell me about the home literacy project. What did you learn about culturally and linguistically diverse students, and insights? How was the community diverse?

   -From the Literacy final is there anything you would want to add in discussing the challenges and arguments against using children's home and community literacy? What did you mean by " Our schools are in state of tests and test scores that many would argue that these homes and community languages work against the literacy that is developed within the walls of the school?" Who are 'many'.

   - You mentioned that for the advantage would be making a connection between what takes place in the community and home will lead to lasting understanding. What is 'lasting understanding"?
   - Tell me more about how using children's home and community literacy will help children see how literacy is important within the classroom and outside the classroom?
   - What are the positive results you referred to?
   - What are the goals of the tests?
   - Tell me what you meant by 'age of the new student'?
   - Also anything want to add about advantages? Any other outside of immediate advantage for the student? Who or what else could reap the rewards of using children's home and community literacy's?

2. Tell me about your beliefs about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse student populations
3. In exploring the behavior management plan, tell me about Juan: where there any environmental issues or influences that may have impacted his behavior? Were there any cultural or linguistic accommodations made for Juan?
4. Define for me your definition of culturally relevant teaching.
5. Tell me about what you think the role of a child's cultural background in teaching and learning about them.
6. Reflect back on the cultural diversity course you took with Dr. Davis (pseudonym) your first semester in the program, have your beliefs about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse populations changed over the past year? How so? What do you still have questions about when teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students?
7. From interview #2 you talked about lower performing schools being mislead into thinking test driven rote learning is the way. Who is misleading low performing schools towards test driven curriculum?

APPENDIX E

Member Checking Protocols

Ronald: Member Checking #1 and 2 Protocols

Member Checking #1: 3/13/08

To develop the following questions/prompts I went through all of the data collected thus far (Interview, Good Citizen's Essay, Assessment Policy Paper, Assessment Midterm, and Classroom Management note taker) and pulled out elements that needed further clarification to ensure that I was understanding the meaning of the participant.

1. Strands in the data collected so far is: current events, advocacy, multiple perspectives, promotion of critical thinking. Am I in the right ballpark?
2. Tell me a little bit about this concept of promoting critical thinking. Why do you think it is important? Is it particularly important for diverse students?

   Q: Is it particularly important for diverse students?
3. Why is it important to discuss current and historical events in your classroom?
4. From your assessment policy paper you mentioned biases of ELL students. Want to share what these are?
5. Any additions you want to add to the assessment policy paper? Main point(s) you were trying to stress
6. Tell me more about how you can be an advocate for your students and why this is important?

7. Why is it important to introduce to students and have as a teacher multiple perspectives? So What? What is the significance?

   Q: Are there any perspectives that are shown more than others?

8. From Good citizen's essay, what are the core values of our democratic society?
9. On the midterm in Assessment you talked about norming standards. Who are the standards normed to?

   Q: Other children are?

10. Anything you want to further discuss about culturally appropriate assessment?

Q: Anything beyond the classroom that may make it difficult for you to implement culturally appropriate assessment and teaching?

Q: Anything out of school?

11. From note taker in your Management class on caring chapter, what did you mean by "their are certain barriers and builders can affect the relationships of students and their teachers?"

Member Checking #2: October 3, 2008

Member checking conversation occurred over the phone in which I asked participant questions to confirm major findings and interpretations from the within case and cross case analysis. I recorded participant's responses accordingly.

1. What to you does it mean to be a culturally relevant teacher?
2. Your goal was to become an agent of change for your students and develop them as agents of change. Focus on infusing multiple perspectives in the curriculum is this correct?

3. What are your thoughts about the media influence of the teaching and learning of diverse students?
4. Any cultural dissonance experience when learning to teaching students.
5. Courses or assignments most contributed to understanding of diverse students. What about the SS course?
6. Expand: :these kids that are in our classes can actually leave and go to college and come back and build better things and find new ways of doing things.
7. Expand: How will I know what a saucer is if I don't have it in my house? Norming standards to children who have privilege than those who don't overlook diverse student populations in this country.
8. Expand: I think it urban came from our government's need to label our children. And I don't like that because it separates you know. I guess you could see, this is quality education then you have urban education and I don't like how people like to separate the two"
9. Tell me about scripted teaching in schools and culturally relevant teaching
10. What tools of references do you think you have to help prepare you for working you're your AA students?
11. What tools would you like to have?
12. How could CSU supported you?
13. Anything want to add about your development as a responsive teacher?

Carla: Member Checking #1 and 2 Protocols

Member checking #1: 3/19/08

To develop the following questions/prompts I went through all of the data collected thus far (Interview #1, Good Citizen's Essay, Assessment Policy Paper, Assessment Midterm, and Classroom Management note taker) and pulled out elements that needed further clarification to ensure that I was understanding the meaning of the participant. First wrote down responses then immediately typed into Word document

1. Strands in the data collected so far is: providing meaningful connections between the classroom and school as well as making school fun and exciting; negative statistics and assumptions about children; exploring individual differences/uniqueness
2. Tell me a little bit more about making assumption about a child based on their race.
3. Why do you disagree that children who fail do so because they don't try hard enough and vice versa
4. When you say the role of the teacher is to make connections with students, what do you mean?

   Q: Why?
5. What major issues do you think our country currently face?
6. Tell me more: A good citizen should be understanding and tolerant of all the different cultures that exists in the world. Why do you think it is important for a citizen to recognize and respect all cultures in the world? Expand

Q: Like what?

7. Also you stated that information that is meaningful and connects to their life. Is their children?
8. Tell me more about how a teacher can write a test and it be at a disadvantage to the student
9. You stated that the limitations of standardized testing was that 'society, political, and educational politics play a huge role on how standardized tests are used. How so?
10. "is it really fair to all? I think not" Why? *The reason you stated above were why you think they were not fair?*
11. Tell me about what is means to appreciate uniqueness. Also from the attachment you said stop assuming things about kids. What do you mean? Also what does freedom with order mean to you?

Member Checking #2: October 2, 2008

Member checking conversation occurred over the phone in which I asked participant questions to confirm major findings and interpretations from the within case and cross case analysis. I recorded participant's responses accordingly.

1. What to you does it mean to be a culturally relevant teacher?
2. One of your focus was to dispel stereotypes about children from diverse backgrounds and you reflected a lot about your experiences in the program with deficit labels and negative statistics particularly about Blacks. Is this accurate?
3. I called this cultural dissonance because there was a clash between your affirming beliefs and those transmitted in the program and by peers. You therefore believe that seeing color in the classroom meant seeing such stereotypes. Right?

4. Expand on this sentence from the literacy project: “education as a whole would not be a priority to many of the families because they are probably uneducated and may not know how to change the situation they are currently in”
5. Anything want to add about your development as a responsive teacher?

6. Any courses or assignments most influential? What about the SS course expression of history and current events?
7. What tools of references do you think you have to help prepare you for working you’re your AA students?
8. What tools would you like to have?

Jody: Member Checking #1 and 2 Protocols

To develop the following questions/prompts I went through all of the data collected thus far (Interview #1, Good Citizen’s Essay, Assessment Policy Paper, Assessment Midterm, and Classroom Management note taker) and pulled out elements that needed further clarification to ensure that I was understanding the meaning of the participant. The following is a summary of the information provided. Because this information was gathered after interview #2 it is the only of the three participants that was audio-taped. Below is a summary/paraphrase of participant’s response.

3/18/08

1. Strands in the data collected so far is: standardized testing and CRCT prep as important and unavoidable measures of success, good old methods of teaching not working, and policy/politics impacts the field of education/classroom. Am I in the ball park?

2. And what does standardized testing truly measure?
3. Talk a little bit more about politics in education/education changes anything want to add? Does politics have an agenda when it comes to education and if so what is that agenda and how is it impacting or influencing children?

   Q: When you say liberal what do you mean*?* Who should they be listening to about what is important for children?
4. Do you think there are certain populations of children that are targeted more than others? Or that benefit more than others?
5. There are statistics that show us that Latinos African Americans, particularly African American boys have the highest referrals in special education, they perform the lowest compared to their peers. So what are some explanations for that? Why? Why do you think that's the case? In relation to standardized testing or not

   Q: Tell me about that
6. Why is that important? Build relationships with children? I don't see CRCT anywhere in there.
7. In your interview you talked about America as the 'melting pot'. Tell me what you mean by that.
8. What do you mean by 'good ole methods' not working any more? Behavior, assessment, and teaching. What are the old methods and what should be the 'new' methods?
9. Tell me more about how the Presidential elections and educational change (Policy Paper)

10. You expressed concern in the policy paper about the ‘rose colored’ lens view of the authors. It is possible to have CRA while also appeasing administration and standardize testing requirements? Why?
11. Provide an example or tell me how teachers today already are sensitive to their individual students and go out of their way to provide the support these students need.
12. Why send concrete examples/suggestions to policy makers? Anything else you want to add to policy paper?

    Q; Anything else you want to add to the assessment policy paper?

13. In Good Citizen’s essay you stated that the voting was based on issues facing the country, what are these issues?

    Q: Issues in education?
14. Do you think you would incorporate some of this issues societal or education in your classroom as teaching lessons.
15. Why do you think it’s important to bring in current events?
16. How do you define a democratic classroom?
17. Tell me what you meant when you said: “The idea of having a truly democratic classroom is frightening in some ways as it means bucking the current system and facing the questions of your school’s administration, not to mention your fellow teachers?
18. Anything want to add further now reflecting on your Good Citizen’s essay?

19. From Midterm, you used China example (avoids eye contact, girls avoid boys), why Americans would assume that the child is dishonest or not trustworthy?

    Q: And do you think that's across racial barriers like when you say American who do you think about when you think American?

    Q: And so when you say American you are talking about?

20. Tell me a little bit about why you 'cringe when you listen to teachers' (Management). What do you mean by that do you mean their tone, the words they were saying to children?
21. What connections of caring to teaching diverse students?
22. Didn't have any questions about creating a caring environment, any questions now?

Member Checking #2: October 2, 2008

Member checking conversation occurred over the phone in which I asked participant questions to confirm major findings and interpretations from the within case and cross case analysis. I recorded participant's responses accordingly.

1. What to you does it mean to be a culturally relevant teacher?
2. Tell me about implementing CRP along with standardized testing
3. Expand on your statement about how in the Assessment course you stated that there was 'diversity in assessment' any other courses or assignments that contributed to your learning about diverse students?
4. What about the SS course?

5. You were committed to providing affirming experiences for your AA students but was fearful about as a White woman injecting beliefs that may be bias or prejudice. Is this correct?
6. I have a part that talks about cultural dissonance in which participants are challenged with implementing CRT. One challenge was good ole methods in the classroom? Correct? Also barriers with administration? Actually implementing culturally relevant teaching, do you feel confident in what it means to be a culturally relevant teacher?
7. Tell me what your thoughts are about this sentence:

   For Jody, her primary goal in developing as a culturally relevant teacher was to develop anti-bias interactions and culturally responsive learning experiences for her AA students. She was very conscious of how her identity as a White female could project harmful interactions for her students.
8. Tell me a little bit about the influence of the media on children. You noted: the popular TV shows and commercials contributed to their low attention spans and lack of interest in education and schooling.
9. Do you believe in the bell curve IQ theory that children . What does that mean to you? Reflect on this statement:

   ‘There’s a bell curve for IQ scores for a reason. Not everybody is going to be a CEO. You know and I said before about something specific and it’s a terrible thing to say but if you knew me you would understand. Somebody have to drive the trucks and bust the tables. I mean it, you know it’s the whole is it natural selection?”

Tell me about how the education machine can be harmful to diverse students.

10. What tools of references do you think you have to help prepare you for working you’re your AA students?
11. What tools would you like to have?
12. Anything want to add about your development as a responsive teacher?