PRESERVICE TEACHERS' EXPERIENCES ON BECOMING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE EDUCATORS: AN ACTION RESEARCH CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Reflection on teaching and learning is considered one of the most essential elements of teacher development. With the rise of multilingual learners in U.S. public schools, the role of critical reflection has become even more prominent in teacher preparation programs to disrupt preservice teachers' (PSTs) biases and stereotypes regarding these learners and their families. Moreover, to address the widening educational inequities and to enact more equitable teaching practices, PSTs ought to reflect on their pedagogical practices with the guidance of an educator-mentor. Therefore, this qualitative action research case study explored how one teacher preparation program implemented reflective and experiential practices in their graduate Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages coursework to assist PSTs in systematically examining their understandings of culturally responsive practices. Our research was grounded in culturally responsive teaching. Our findings revealed that our PSTs had an awareness of culturally responsive pedagogy; they recognized the importance of learning from and with their students and families but still had areas for growth when implementing culturally responsive practices, prompting us to further explore how these PSTs enact culturally sustaining practices in their future classrooms.

KEYWORDS

HOW TO CITE

Highlights

- *The findings revealed PSTs' awareness of culturally responsive pedagogy, areas for growth, and the importance of learning from/with students and families.*
- *PSTs valued the one-on-one experiences of tutoring multilingual learners in order to become familiar with the complexities of their identities.*
- *Reflective practices are crucial to assist PSTs in recognizing ways they can better support multilingual learners' educational experiences.*

INTRODUCTION

Reflection on teaching and learning is considered one of the most essential elements of teacher development (Daniel, 2016; Ryken and Hamel, 2016). With the rise of multilingual learners (MLs) in U.S. public schools (Irwin et al., 2021), the role of critical reflection becomes even more prominent in teacher preparation programs (Koubek and Wasta, 2022) to disrupt preservice teachers' (PSTs) biases and stereotypes regarding their perceptions of these learners and their families. Moreover, to address the widening educational inequities and to enact more equitable teaching practices, PSTs ought to reflect on their pedagogical practices with the guidance of an educator-

mentor (Salerno and Kibler, 2015). Therefore, the purpose of this qualitative action research case study is to explore how one teacher preparation program implemented reflective and experiential practices in their graduate Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) coursework to assist PSTs in systematically examining their understandings of culturally responsive practices. To address this purpose, we first present a review of the literature on culturally responsive pedagogy and action research in graduate teacher education. Next, we provide our justification for the methodology chosen, including our data collection and analysis. Following this section are the findings of our study in which we uncover the

meanings our participants make regarding their perceptions of MLs and newly discovered understandings of culturally responsive practices. Finally, the discussion ties our findings back to the literature discussed previously, and our conclusion highlights the implications of this study for our program and any other similar programs in graduate teacher education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Our study is grounded in the tenets of culturally responsive pedagogy and action research. Therefore, prior to describing our study, theoretical underpinnings coupled with published research studies ought to be shared.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Our research is grounded in culturally responsive pedagogy that combines the body of research on culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2018; Villegas and Lucas, 2007) and culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014, 2021). Culturally responsive pedagogy offers theoretical underpinnings aimed at reducing opportunity gaps for diverse P-12 school student populations (Carter and Welner, 2013); however, helping PSTs translate this research into practice turns out to be a persistent challenge in teacher preparation programs (Allen et al., 2017; Fasching-Varner and Seriki, 2012; Warren, 2017).

Over 25 years ago, Ladson-Billings (1995) urged educators to critically challenge their thinking about students of color, which resulted in a new pedagogical model, called culturally relevant pedagogy. Culturally relevant pedagogy 'is designed to problematize teaching and encourage teachers to ask about the nature of the student-teacher relationship, the curriculum, schooling, and society' (Ladson-Billings, 1995: 483). At the foundation of this pedagogy lies three distinct components: student learning, cultural competence, and critical consciousness. Student learning prioritizes their intellectual growth, including their ability to problem-solve. Cultural competence emphasizes the importance of developing an environment where students appreciate their culture of origin while developing an appreciation for at least one other culture. Finally, critical consciousness focuses on teaching students how to identify, analyze, and solve real-world problems rooted in societal inequalities. Recently, Ladson-Billings (2014: 74) has advocated for "remixing" of her original theory in light of the new culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012) that takes into account evolving scholarship and changing student populations. Paris and Alim (2017) also posit that educators need to utilize student culture and language through pedagogy that improves student engagement and motivation.

A proponent of culturally responsive teaching, Gay (2018: 36) defines this teaching as 'using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them'. If educators ignore these student orientations and values, they may continue perpetuating educational inequity and viewing students from a deficit-based perspective instead of acknowledging their assets and strengths. Gay (2018) asserts that culturally responsive teaching has the following characteristics: it is validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering,

transformative, and emancipatory. It is validating because this type of teaching capitalizes on student assets and teaches to and through culturally and linguistically diverse students' strengths. It is comprehensive because it focuses on the whole child as these teaching practices help students preserve and value their identity and ethnic backgrounds, helps establish a sense of belonging, and promotes success. To accomplish common learning outcomes, these expectations should be woven into each classroom curriculum, and students should have ownership in decision-making and caring relationships, similar to what Ladson-Billings (2021) proposed in one of her components of culturally relevant pedagogy. Furthermore, culturally responsive pedagogy is multidimensional because it takes into account teaching and learning contexts, curriculum, relationships, instructional practices, classroom management, and assessments. Additionally, it is empowering because it promotes academic competence, builds the courage to act, and promotes self-confidence. To ensure students experience success, teachers should believe that their students can succeed and support their learning and growth. Defying conventions of traditional instruction and showing respect to the cultures and experiences of diverse students underscores the transformative characteristic because academic success is no longer tied to the white group of students but instead is shared with diverse students who are taught to be proud of their origin and cultures. The final characteristic of culturally responsive teaching is emancipatory, which implies that all students have access to knowledge about different ethnic groups. As Gay (2018) denotes culturally responsive teaching promotes student validation, and, as a result, allows them to feel liberated to focus more on academic endeavors. The ultimate goal is to produce winners among all students regardless of their origin, ethnicity, or cultural background.

Additionally, Villegas and Lucas (2007) outline six principles of their culturally responsive teaching framework. Principle 1 focuses on the need for teachers to understand how learners construct knowledge and to guide students to use their background knowledge to understand new knowledge and skills they learn in schools. Principle 2 emphasizes learning about students' lives. Without knowing students' family makeup, interests, strengths, and concerns, it is difficult for teachers to create meaningful bridges between students' experiences and school content. Principle 3 asserts that teachers ought to be socioculturally conscious, which implies being cognizant of students' and their own experiences being affected by factors, such as social class, gender, ethnicity, and race. Principle 4 stresses that teachers who affirm diversity hold students to high standards and make them accountable to those standards, provide intellectually challenging curricula, help students monitor their learning, and integrate students' individual and cultural resources into the curriculum. Principle 5 addresses the implementation of equitable instructional strategies. Culturally responsive educators should engage learners by activating their background and prior knowledge, incorporating their home languages to provide access to new material, integrating hands-on and visual supports, and incorporating students' examples from their lives in instruction. Lastly, Villegas and Lucas's (2007: 32) final principle asserts that educators should see themselves as part of a community of educators working to disrupt inequities and

'move toward greater cultural and linguistic responsiveness' by becoming advocates for their students.

Given the changing educational context with P-12 students becoming more diverse while the majority of PSTs continue to represent white middle-class educators, teacher preparation programs should play an instrumental role in challenging PSTs' preexisting ideas and notions of P-12 students' knowledge and skills by promoting PSTs' sociocultural awareness through reflection and self-evaluation. PSTs' reflections on their biases and beliefs provide opportunities for a critical dialogue that is essential for a transformation of thoughts and actions (Batchelor et al., 2019).

Research on preservice teacher preparation and their development of culturally relevant pedagogy is limited (Christ and Sharma, 2018). More research is needed to prepare culturally competent teachers for diverse students (Lewis Chiu et al., 2017). One qualitative study examined questions about how teacher preparation programs prepare PSTs to teach in culturally responsive classrooms (Lambeth and Smith, 2016). The researchers shared the difficulties their PSTs encountered when interpreting culturally responsive teaching methods through critical discussions about racial issues and the experiences of students of color. They all had the intention of helping their students succeed. Yet, while some PSTs emphasized the importance of building relationships with students and relating to them, only a few PSTs were able to identify how to make that happen in the classroom. The researchers acknowledged that teacher preparation programs need to do more to prepare PSTs to work with diverse students who are different from them.

Another study explored PSTs' challenges and successes with culturally relevant text selection and pedagogy for their literacy instruction (Christ and Sharma, 2018). When children saw themselves in books and these books mirrored their lives, they were motivated to read and thus had a higher engagement in literacy activities (Christ and Sharma, 2018; Nieto and Bode, 2018). Through readings of culturally relevant texts and professors' modeling of culturally relevant pedagogy and texts, PSTs were encouraged to implement both culturally relevant texts and pedagogy in their field-based practicum. However, Christ and Sharma (2018) discovered challenges, such as PSTs' resistance to implementing these texts, limited view of culture, lack of knowledge about students' cultures and interests, and lack of opportunities for their students to develop critical consciousness. They also discussed criteria for success, such as knowledge about the students' culture and interests, attention to multiple dimensions of text selection, and use of culturally relevant text selection and pedagogy in combination. The researchers posited, 'although readings and models of practice may be helpful, teaching practice and reflection on practice are key features of effective teacher preparation for culturally relevant text selection and pedagogy' (Christ and Sharma, 2018: 69).

Similarly, Skepple (2015) focused on the identification of culturally responsive practices and the perceived influence these practices had on PSTs' perception of their preparedness to teach diverse students in an urban setting. In the focus group, PSTs shared that they were less confident in their abilities to work with diverse students, thus calling for teacher education programs to

expand future educators' level of sociocultural conscientiousness. The researcher proposed that teacher preparation programs should include sociocultural consciousness awareness, modeling of culturally responsive instructional practices, dialoguing among PSTs on diversity topics, and exposure to diverse students and educators through their programs.

The above-mentioned studies underscore the importance of reflection and self-evaluation, mentorship, critical dialoguing, and experiences over time in preparing future educators to engage in culturally responsive pedagogy.

Action Research in Graduate Teacher Education

Many graduate teacher preparation programs grapple with adequately preparing their PSTs for working with MLs (Allen et al., 2017; Fasching-Varner and Seriki, 2012; Warren, 2017). Nieto and Bode (2018) call for educational reforms to prepare educators to become better equipped to support diverse students. Moreover, Allen et al. (2017) advocate that providing isolated coursework on diversity topics with ineffective field experiences tends to perpetuate the implicit biases and misconceptions among PSTs instead of preparing competent educators. Therefore, Daniel (2016) suggests that teacher education programs need to guide teacher candidates to enact culturally responsive practices across their coursework and field-based practicum experiences by engaging in self-reflective practices. Action or applied research as a methodology may serve as a conduit to develop these practices since it 'provides teachers with opportunities to build and sharpen the dispositions that create reflective and collaborative teacher leaders' (Vaughan and Burnaford, 2016: 286).

In a comprehensive literature review on action research in graduate teacher education from 2000 to 2015, Vaughan and Burnaford (2016) proposed that although action research studies varied, they had three goals in common: action research as reflective practice, action research as participatory inquiry, and action research as teacher leadership. Regardless of their foci, all three shared the same features. These included the recognition of individuals to actively participate in all aspects of the research process and to focus on making improvements in their practices and/or settings (Kemmis et al., 2014).

In our study, we focused on the first goal: action research as reflective practice (Vaughan and Burnaford, 2016). Since action research aims to promote systematic, intentional, and planned reflection to ensure a change in teachers and their educational contexts (Dana and Yendol-Hoppey, 2014), it has the ability to impact teacher professional growth and as a result further their professional development. By guiding PSTs in completing a research project with authentic reflection on their teaching practices, PSTs have the ability to develop their skills as reflective practitioners (Gujarati, 2018), which helps build their dispositions as effective educators and researchers.

In a study on graduate PSTs' participation in action research in a yearlong residency program in which they co-taught with mentor teachers in a high-need rural school, Schulte (2017) discovered that the majority of PSTs felt confident in their abilities to reflect on their teaching and student learning, analyze student data, and collaborate with others. Based on the survey data and focus group, many attributed their sense of preparedness

to their involvement with action research, especially as it relates to using student-level data to make instructional decisions. PSTs felt that they gained confidence and higher skill levels through action research projects compared to other PSTs who did not have this experience.

Furthermore, in an ethnographic study, Storms (2015) examined how graduate PSTs' action research projects demonstrated commitment toward change agency. Through a semester-long action research course in which PSTs learned about the stages of action research and how to collect and analyze data in their classrooms, the researcher discovered that PSTs focused on topics that were practical and emancipatory in nature. Their projects explored cultural and institutional factors that affect student learning and demonstrated democratic principles of the teaching and learning process. The author argued that PSTs showed their developing commitments toward change agency through action research and that more studies should be conducted to explore pedagogical practices in action research courses to support teacher educators in designing meaningful experiences for their PSTs.

Additionally, in a longitudinal study of teachers of English as a foreign language who were part of a master's degree program, Gomez (2020) determined that implementing action research in the classrooms provided these teachers with an opportunity to hone effective pedagogical practices to meet their students' needs. These educators continued putting students at the core of their instruction even after finishing their programs, thus demonstrating pedagogical content knowledge through reflection on and interrogation of their instructional practices. These findings concurred with Shosh and McAteer's (2016: 14) study, which revealed that in-service teachers, who conducted action research in their graduate programs, continued to 'talk of their continued reflective practice, the centrality of action research to their current practice, and to their hopes that this changed practice would impact positively on the lives and education of their students'.

Moreover, Honigsfeld et al. (2013) examined the impact of a master's program capstone action research experience at their college in which researchers collected data over a decade. Based on faculty and graduate student surveys, they found that professors believed in the role of action research as professional development but were unsure of its impact on comprehensive school reforms. Graduates appreciated that they were able to design a study based on their interests, grow professionally, improve instruction for students, and apply theory to practice. Ultimately, the researchers concluded that the action research requirement 'continues to be the hallmark feature of the graduate education program' (Honigsfeld et al., 2013: 21) because it fosters inquiry into one's own teaching and learning practices, thus stimulating professional learning of both graduate education students and their faculty.

As Hine (2013: 161) posits, 'the solutions-based focus, emphasis on fostering practitioner empowerment, and pragmatic appeal of action research collectively render this research methodology a worthwhile professional development activity for teachers'. He argues that due to the ever-present need for educators to become involved in professional development, conducting action research as part of their graduate education coursework provides these teachers with a systematic and reflective approach to address the needs of their respective educational communities. Therefore, our research aimed to add to the literature by utilizing action research to help us examine our graduate students' reflections and understandings of culturally responsive practices within a community-based experience in an effort to systematically evaluate our program. We investigated the graduate students' perceptions towards teaching migrant education students and their learning outcomes, utilizing reflective practices that asked them to apply two TESOL courses' content to their tutoring field experience with their assigned migrant education students. Our research question was: How did self-reflective practices on tutoring in a community-based experience affect PSTs' understandings of culturally responsive practices about teaching MLs?

MATERIALS AND METHODS

We employed action research methodology (Mertler, 2020) because we, two teacher educators, were interested in examining how our program affected PSTs' beliefs about teaching MLs to inform our future programmatic decisions. Additionally, our PSTs employed action research, as they worked with their MLs in one of our courses. Due to the collaborative and cyclical nature of action research, this research methodology was best aligned with our study because it explored PSTs' critical reflection on their instructional strategies and their students' learning. We incorporated a systematic approach by examining specific assignments and implementing regular reflective practices with the ultimate goal of improving our program and guiding our PSTs to be engaged in their own professional development. We employed Mertler's (2020) design of action research, which consists of four stages: planning, acting, developing, and reflecting. Planning consists of identifying a research topic, conducting Reconnaissance (reflecting on one's beliefs and gathering contextual information to set the stage for research), reviewing existing literature, and developing a research plan. The acting stage consists of collecting and analyzing data. The developing stage is the action plan with suggestions for the next cycle of action research. Finally, the reflecting stage takes place throughout the entire study in which researchers continuously reflect on the process and eventually share their findings with others. As part of this study, we reflected on every assignment and our students' attainment of knowledge and skills with the goal of continuously adjusting our teaching practices and assignments. Additionally, we as researchers collaborated with one another by sharing our experiences with the courses we were teaching at the time of the study and tapping into each other's expertise for language acquisition and cultural competence topics. Because of our trust and willingness to be vulnerable with each other, we honed our critical reflection skills as we collaborated together (McNiff, 2016; Norton, 2019; Schneider, 2019). To us, this reflective process is the core component of action research.

Additionally, our study was a qualitative case study as we explored the experiences of six PSTs who were part of our program and took a second language acquisition and diversity course along with a field-based practicum in which they tutored migrant education students. We were 'interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences'

(Merriam and Tisdell, 2016: 6), all hallmarks of qualitative research. Furthermore, in our research, the researchers were the primary instrument for data collection and analysis; we used inductive processes and focused on providing a rich-thick description in the write-up of the results (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Finally, our research represented a case study because we analyzed a bounded system; participants were from two cohorts of our graduate program.

SETTING

Our master's comprehensive university is located in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States and is considered primarily an undergraduate institution with over 20,000 students including 10 percent of whom are graduate students. Our program consists of M.Ed. in Equity and Cultural Diversity and MAT in TESOL, in which graduate students learn about second language acquisition theories, theories of cultural competence, language assessment, and other courses related to their specialization, such as immigration and education, methods for teaching MLs, and literacy courses among others. The students in our programs primarily come from middle-class families and are white and female corresponding to the sample in this study. Each cohort consisted of five to six students, thus enabling us to conduct rich and critical discussions with and among our students. As researchers, we are both white cisgender female teacher educators who have been working with graduate and undergraduate TESOL students. One of the researchers is a former language learner who is trilingual and who was born and raised outside of the United States and has 15 years of experience teaching TESOL-related courses in the U.S. The other researcher is bilingual and has 10 years of experience teaching TESOL-related courses and 20 years of teaching diversity-related courses in the U.S. Despite our combined 35 years of experience, we consistently strive to be abreast of the current research related to our field and refine our teaching practices to promote our student learning. Therefore, action research plays an essential role in our praxis.

Our program partnered with a state-run migrant education organization that has a branch in our town. This organization assists migrant families and their children with various support services to help them adjust to U.S. society. Approximately 110 families participate in a regular academic year. The program's goal is to ensure that all migrant students reach academic standards and graduate with a high school diploma or equivalency. To qualify for this program, families must have moved within the past three years in search of work in agriculture or raw food processing. The majority of families are Latinx, but there is a growing population of individuals from North Africa and the Middle East.

SAMPLE

The majority of our six participants were female, white, middle-class, and native speakers of English, corresponding with the demographics of typical U.S. teachers (Nieto and Bode, 2018). One of the female participants was of Chinese descent and considered herself multilingual, and the male participant was white and had experience teaching English in China. Two other female participants had undergraduate degrees in Spanish and study abroad/work experience in Spain. Another female participant had some international experiences due to mission trips and was also exposed to diverse student populations from her previous work as a teaching assistant in an elementary inclusive classroom. The fifth female participant engaged in a study abroad trip in Switzerland, Ethiopia and Rwanda. She later served as a resident advisor for the same study abroad experience. All PSTs had exposure to cultures different than their own. These PSTs took part in this study during the beginning stages of our graduate program.

Our PSTs were engaged in one-on-one tutoring of these migrant education students. To serve their students, our PSTs were required to do a background check and complete formal training in which they learned appropriate cultural norms and expectations. They conducted tutoring sessions once or twice a week for an hour each in the students' homes, schools, or public libraries. In our study, migrant education students were predominantly of Latinx background with Spanish being their home language. However, two students were of African descent. Table 1 provides the demographic information of our PSTs and their tutees.

Participant	Gender	Race/Ethnicity	Language Proficiencies	Tutee Information
P1	M	White	Native English, Intermediate Spanish, Beginner Mandarin	High schooler, male, Sudan, intermediate English proficiency, content - mathematics: algebra
P2	F	White	Native English, Beginner Spanish	Kindergartner, male, Cuba, beginning English proficiency, content - emergent literacy
P3	F	Asian	Native Mandarin, Advanced Japanese, Advanced English	Kindergartner, male, Puerto Rico, beginning English proficiency, content - emergent literacy
P4	F	White	Native English, Beginner Spanish	First grader, female, Mexico, beginning English proficiency, content - emergent literacy
P5	F	White	Native English, Advanced Spanish	Eighth grader, female, Dominican Republic, intermediate English proficiency, content - language arts and science
P6	F	White	Native English, Advanced Spanish	Second grader, female, Congo, high conversation English proficiency, low academic English proficiency, content - language arts, social studies, and science

Note: P = participant; M = male; F = female

Table 1: Demographic information, 2018-2020

Data Sources and Analysis

Our data sources consisted of 10 weekly practicum journals, an action research project, a philosophy of diversity paper, and an individual semi-structured interview upon completion of the courses for each participant. The weekly practicum journals (see Appendix A) prompted PSTs to provide a detailed summary of their tutoring experience and to reflect on one major course connection from either the second language acquisition course or the diversity course. As course instructors, we provided weekly feedback in which we asked questions and guided PSTs in making connections to content in our respective courses or reflecting more deeply about their understandings of these concepts. Related to the journals, PSTs orally shared aspects of their tutoring experiences as part of weekly class discussions in both the language acquisition and diversity courses. While the discussions were not considered a formal data collection source, they did serve as one way for PSTs to reflect on their experiences, raise questions, and gain insights from their peers about language acquisition and diversity-related topics.

In the action research project, PSTs were asked to pursue their "burning question(s)" related to their tutoring of a migrant education student and second language acquisition course. They were free to choose any questions connected to the teaching-learning process; however, these questions had to be measurable and observable to evaluate any potential changes in their instructional practices. First, PSTs were required to read and analyze 12 recent peer-reviewed journal articles to learn any evidence-based practices that could potentially be applied to their tutees. Second, they were asked to apply these practices during their tutoring sessions and reflect on their effectiveness (or lack of) as measured by their students' achievement and satisfaction in their weekly practicum journals in addition to formal observation papers. Additionally, they were asked to interview a language specialist to gain other insights into their research focus. PSTs were asked to submit individual papers based on these assignments throughout the semester, which eventually contributed to a culminating action research project paper at the end of the semester.

The philosophy of diversity was a summative assessment in which PSTs wrote a teaching statement grounded in texts about multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy. PSTs reflected on their concept of learning, the concept of teaching, goals for their students, instructional strategies, interactions with students, assessment, and their focus on professional growth. Within the project, they also added appendices that included their reflections on past journal posts to highlight growth in their development or key diversity-related points they chose to emphasize as evident in their migrant education experiences.

Finally, the individual semi-structured interviews took place after students had completed all coursework and received their grades. We created open-ended interview questions (see Appendix B) pertaining to their beliefs about culturally responsive and linguistically appropriate practices they implemented with their migrant education students. We also included follow-up questions about some of their written work in which we asked them to elaborate on their remarks. These practices helped us with the triangulation of data and ensured the validity of the themes we uncovered (Mertler, 2020).

We employed thematic analysis (Mertler, 2020) by first reading and rereading data multiple times as they became available and developing a preliminary coding list together prior to coding the rest of the data. Both researchers were involved in gathering data sources and their analyses and meeting frequently to review each other's analyses. This process served as a peer review to ensure the trustworthiness of the data categories (Merriam and Tisdell, 2016). Additionally, we conducted member checking with our participants to ensure the accuracy of our interview transcripts. We triangulated our sources to establish the dependability and credibility of our findings (Mertler, 2020). Our themes clustered around the following categories: teacher growth in awareness of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), asset-based perspectives, equity-oriented approaches, teacher expectations, and relationship building between teachers and students/families. When we analyzed our themes more carefully, we recognized a strong alignment between them and Villegas and Lucas's (2007) culturally responsive framework. Subsequently, we organized our codes under appropriate Villegas and Lucas's (2007) culturally responsive framework principles. Table 2 displays our original coding practices.

Theme	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	Total
CRP Teacher Growth	17	37	9	15	23	39	140
Asset-Based Perspectives	15	18	8	7	20	9	77
Equity- Oriented Approaches	11	20	10	7	17	7	72
Teacher Expectations	3	5	5	5	7	3	28
Relationship Building	8	24	6	12	6	6	62
Total	54	104	38	46	73	64	379

Note: P = participant; CRP = culturally responsive pedagogy

Table 2: Original themes and number of participant codes, 2018-2020

RESULTS

Our findings revealed PSTs' awareness of culturally responsive pedagogy, areas for future growth in their instructional practices, and a recognition of the importance of learning from and with their students and families. The predominant themes that emerged corresponded to Villegas and Lucas's (2007) research that we slightly reframed to the following principles: understanding how students learn, learning about students' backgrounds, becoming socioculturally conscious, holding affirming views about multilingual learners and their families, enacting equitable teaching practices, and advocating for multilingual communities. Because our participants were closely involved in supporting students

and their families, we focused on family connections in addition to student connections when examining Villegas and Lucas's (2007) framework.

Understanding How Students Learn

All six of our PSTs discussed the importance of striving to understand how their tutees learned best. Villegas and Lucas (2007) explain that this theme focuses on how teachers create bridges between the knowledge students possess and with new content they are learning. This principle stresses having students use prior knowledge and beliefs to assist with their learning process. We noticed our theme of asset-based perspectives also included codes related to building background knowledge and incorporating choice to build on student strengths. Some of our participants' remarks under the theme of CRP teacher growth also made reference to their awareness of how to support their students' learning processes more effectively. A few representative quotes are provided in Table 3.

Participant	Source	Quote
1	Interview	"I need to learn those types of things that are going on with the students, and that means asking questions or just trying to observe or talking to other educators".
2	Journal 7	"My goal in our weekly tutoring sessions is to enhance K.'s Spanish while also working towards English proficiency. Rather than reduce his use of his native language, I am using it to help him learn".
3	Journal 7	"I think it is good to try to build his background knowledge on this Latino culture and help him to feel kind of connected between two cultures".
4	Interview	"...when you're allowing them to use their native language in the classroom or you have visuals in the classroom that have their language that they can see it. And usually when you see something that's familiar, it's like a source of comfort".
5	Journal 9	"With the time that we had left we read more of Under the Mambo Moon. I think it is really important that B. is able to make connections from her life to the books that she reads".
6	Journal 3	She noted that her student struggled "because she does not have the basic vocabulary to understand the explanations".

Table 3: Representative quotes related to principle 1, 2018-2020

Our PSTs included different ways they sought to build bridges between their students' knowledge and the content they were teaching. Participant 1's comments are grounded in his awareness to collaborate with other educators to provide academic support for his student. In particular, he consulted with the math teacher to gain strategies to enhance his tutoring sessions with his tutee. Participant 1 also regularly noted that he needed to ask his student questions about how he learns best. Participant 6 was also reflecting on the learning challenges her student exhibited and recognized that she needed to implement other strategies to build from her student's knowledge base, the vocabulary she did know. In future tutoring sessions, she intentionally strived to make connections to her tutee's background knowledge by incorporating visuals and terminology she knew. Participant 2 went further and addressed the need to incorporate her student's home language in learning activities as one way to build on her student's prior knowledge understanding. For her, the student's home language was an invaluable resource that needed to be cultivated and maintained, so her tutee could learn at a high level. Participant 4 echoed these sentiments in her commitment to using the student's home language to serve as a source of comfort, which she believed would help her tutee learn more effectively. In a similar way, both Participants 3 and 5 intentionally sought out books that they hoped would be representative of their students' Latinx cultures to attempt to link those stories to their students' life experiences. Moreover, they were considering how their tutees learned by striving to create meaningful culturally and linguistically rich experiences for them. Both had some initial challenges in finding appropriate resources that resonated with their students, but ultimately, they were successful. Even with these positive examples, many of our PSTs remarked that this principle was an area that they needed to continue to learn more about. They recognized the importance of strengthening their own knowledge base from colleagues, workshops, and other resources to help their students learn at a high level.

Learning About Students' Backgrounds

Our PSTs' reflections demonstrated awareness of learning about students' lives when they described the importance of learning about their students' cultures, identities, and interests. Villegas and Lucas (2007) describe this principle as one that focuses on learning about the students' family makeup, their immigration history, favorite activities, and experiences that contribute to their funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005). The PSTs addressed connections to this principle in many of the statements we coded under asset-based perspectives, relationship building, and CRP teacher growth. Several participants mentioned the need to 'get an inside view of the student' and to 'learn more about her home country and culture' as well as the 'importance of listening' to students to gain insights about their experiences. Several representative quotes from this theme are provided in Table 4.

All of our participants discussed the importance of learning about their tutees' cultural or familial backgrounds. Some intentionally incorporated the tutee's home language in their instruction to affirm their student's cultural background, as evident in Participant 4's remarks. Even if PSTs were unable to incorporate their home language in instruction, they valued learning about their culture as noted in Participant 1's reflections. He took time to learn about C.'s traditions, showing a genuine interest in his culture. C., his student, reciprocated by sharing a traditional bread his family made with Participant 1 at one of their sessions. Our PSTs

Participant	Source	Quote
1	Action research	*"While I was unable to ask C. questions in his native language, we spoke about his cultural identity and other cultural aspects important to him".*
2	Interview	*"I think it's important to realize that you're not only working with students in an education setting, you're also working with their family or their parents or guardians that are also with them".*
3	Journal 2	*"When I read the page about reading picture books, I asked G., 'Does your dad read books to you too before bedtime?' G. said, 'Yes. My dad read books to me too!'"*
4	Philosophy	*"To include a student's language, is to welcome and accept more of the student".*
5	Philosophy	*"I gave my migrant education student a survey about reading preferences, to help guide me in choosing books that she might enjoy reading".*
6	Journal 4	*"I had a matching game for her to play in which she matched the animals to where they lived. She loved it so much she ended up playing 5 times".*

Table 4: Representative quotes related to principle 2, 2018-2020

valued these relationship-building experiences and felt they contributed to the effectiveness of their tutoring experiences. Some participants had the benefit of tutoring their students in their homes, affording more opportunities to learn about the students' families and home environment. Participants 2, 3, and 5 conducted their tutoring sessions in the students' apartments, which seemed to provide them with an enhanced awareness of the role of their tutees' families in their lives. Participant 2 demonstrated a firm commitment to collaborating with the entire family to support the child's needs in her interview a year and a half after the tutoring took place. She recognized that "it takes a village" to fully assist learners by incorporating their interests or culture in lessons. As she gained a stronger relationship with her tutee's parents, Participant 2 used that awareness to create literacy games that incorporated their son's interests and that the family could play with him to reinforce the academic content he was learning at school. Participant 3 also made an effort to incorporate familial connections in her lessons as evident in her journal response. She was interested in learning about her student's home life, especially when she read books that included characters and their families. Participant 5 knew she might have challenges finding books that included examples of Dominican Republic cultural

traditions and her student's ethnic background, so she created a survey to learn more about her student's interests as another way to try to connect to her life. Similarly, Participant 6 focused on creating activities that pertained to her student's interests in the game she developed. All of these examples convey the PSTs' attempts to learn about their tutees' backgrounds and to incorporate these understandings into their lessons.

Becoming Socioculturally Conscious

By tutoring students whose life experiences differed from their own, our PSTs grew in their sociocultural awareness that one's worldview is influenced by life experiences and these are mediated by a variety of factors. In our original theme of CRP teacher growth, we included codes in which our PSTs recognized they had a culture and biases, important aspects of this principle. Our PSTs' reflections also conveyed understandings of how status differentiation relates to differential access to power and most importantly that schools should play a role in mitigating these inequities (Villegas and Lucas, 2007). These ideas reflected our original themes of equity-oriented approaches and CRP teacher growth. Some representative quotes related to this theme are provided in Table 5.

Participant	Source	Quote
1	Interview	*"That teaching requires helping students gain cultural capital; they need cultural understandings and real life knowledge of the US".*
2	Philosophy	*"Due to this experience with K., I have now made a personal goal to look for signs of trauma or home stressors within all of my future students in order to provide any additional support they may need".*
3	Philosophy	*"After reflecting on my education journey, I am totally convinced by the fact that the sociopolitical context of China influenced significantly my education and teaching philosophy".*
4	Philosophy	*"Just like I did when substituting, I hope to place myself or be placed at a school where I am the minority so that I can push my biases and uncomfortability daily".*
5	Action research	*"This lack of availability [culturally relevant literature] sends the message to children that their cultures do not matter, and that is not something Mrs. S. or any EL teacher wants their students to think".*
6	Interview Journal 6	*"I'm still wrapped up in American culture. I need to open my lens".* *"In the future, I am going to try to pick books that will resonate more with J. and her experiences and try not to forget that her childhood has not been like all of the other American students".*

Table 5: Representative quotes related to principle 3, 2018-2020

Several of our participants discussed their own worldviews or the biases they held. Participants 3 and 6 made direct remarks about how they were greatly influenced by their own culture. By interacting with students who practiced different cultural norms from themselves, they recognized their own cultural practices and the need to "open

their lens". Participant 4 opined that she needed to address her own biases and would actively seek out other experiences where she was not in the majority to broaden her understanding of others. She recognized that she would need to feel uncomfortable to change her views and to become more socioculturally conscious.

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In other cases, our PSTs reflected on societal challenges their tutees experienced and articulated their awareness of these struggles. Participant 1 reflected on the Sudanese high school student he tutored who struggled with math in part because of the American cultural experiences (e.g., football) that were embedded in story problems. Without this type of cultural capital, this student was unable to complete the assignments. By tutoring in her student's home, Participant 2 experienced hearing prejudicial comments from neighbors and learning about police intrusions into the family's apartment. She realized these experiences could cause trauma and impact the child's ability to attend to his studies. To be an effective teacher, she would need to be attentive to various emotions the child could display. Additionally, both Participants 5 and 6 suggested that one way to acknowledge other worldviews and begin to mitigate one-sided curriculum was through the selection of culturally responsive literature.

Our PSTs seemed to recognize that developing cultural competence was a life-long endeavor and that they would need to continue to read multicultural literature, engage in professional development workshops, and constantly expand their understandings beyond their own experiences.

Holding Affirming Views About Multilingual Learners and Their Families

Holding affirmative views about multilingual students and their families also emerged as an important theme for our participants. As Villegas and Lucas (2007) suggest, this theme means that teachers need to have faith in students' abilities, challenge them in academic activities, and hold them to high standards in order for them to succeed in and out of the classroom. To assist students in reaching these goals, educators need to provide appropriate scaffolding that utilizes the background knowledge students bring to the academic experience. We noted many parallels in our themes of CRP teacher growth and teacher expectations. Several representative quotes related to this principle are provided in Table 6.

Participant	Source	Quote
1	Journal 4	"His energy may be lower during school, which his previous economics teacher mentioned, but he is an intelligent and hardworking student who wants to succeed".
2	Philosophy	"For English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) teachers to be all that teachers are, facilitators of language, and leaders in multicultural education they must be clear, considerate, and challenging".
3	Philosophy	"In my view, teaching is not just providing knowledge and skills that meet students' needs for learning, but also creating an inviting and culturally respectful and responsive learning environment in which every student feels proud, respected, and valued as a member".
4	Journal 11	"This time we took a picture of our mural and our adventure to the giant atlas book. Both times I allowed L. to take the photo. Empowering and trusting her with items, I hope, gives her validation".
5	Philosophy	"I hope that my belief in students' abilities will give them the confidence to do greater work than they ever thought possible".
6	Philosophy	"I believe that all students should be exposed to high expectations from educators who recognize and believe in their potential to find success in academic, personal, and social situations".

Table 6: Representative quotes related to principle 4, 2018-2020

This principle emphasizes teachers' belief systems, a necessary component to provide culturally responsive practices. Participants 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 provide comments that demonstrate their beliefs in student abilities, a need to value students' contributions, a commitment to promoting rigorous learning experiences. They want their students to feel proud, gain confidence in themselves, and find success in all aspects of their lives. An effective learning environment means creating a space in which students feel respected and have opportunities to thrive academically and personally. Participant 4 recognized that her tutee, L., who was in the silent phase for much of the semester, needed assistance in building confidence in her abilities. By giving L. opportunities to take photos of her artwork and other activities they completed in the public library, where they met for their tutoring sessions, Participant 4 hoped to empower her student. A key philosophical tenet for Participant 4 was the ethics of care (Noddings, 1984), a critical aspect of her beliefs for affirming students. She believed that through care, she demonstrated acceptance and affirmation of the child. All of the PSTs believed that their students could be successful, and by creating an environment where their students felt valued, challenged, and supported, they could achieve academic, personal, and social accomplishments.

Enacting Equitable Teaching Practices

In our themes of asset-based perspectives, equity-oriented approaches, and CRP teacher growth, our PSTs also mentioned instructional strategies and assessment practices that supported Villegas and Lucas's (2007) equitable teaching practices. The PSTs drew upon their tutees' home languages, used a variety of instructional strategies, and sought to use examples from their students' lives to bridge the content they were learning. A few representative quotes are provided in Table 7.

Since all of our PSTs were engaged in action research based on their tutoring experiences with MLs, they were intentionally asked to focus on the use of instructional strategies to support their students' language and content development. Many PSTs saw the results of their practices in students' improved literacy skills by using culturally relevant texts and bilingual books, as stated by Participant 5. Participant 6 observed vocabulary improvement with her tutee when she utilized instructional conversations. These types of oral practices replicate more typical conversations and can include opportunities for the teacher to think aloud and create meaning about content with the student. When students have a balanced partnership with the instructor, they gain autonomy to help direct the learning experience. Participant 2 emphasized the importance of student

Participant	Source	Quote
1	Philosophy	"Assessing students through different mediums and considering multiple intelligences can help students find their unique abilities and challenge others to step outside their comfort zone".
2	Philosophy	"I believe that the development of an individual's voice and identity is a significant indicator that an educational opportunity has taken place".
3	Philosophy	"My knowledge about the family makeup of G., a student whom I have tutored in the last two months, helped me better understand his situation and cultural background and make adjustments in my lesson plans for him".
4	Philosophy	"Also, we started each session with something she loved, drawing. I did not know much about her, but I could show care by always creating time for that. Eventually, I discovered she loved manipulatives and embraced her need to move around, so our activities started using these as learning methods more".
5	Journal 7	"I saw an increase in her abilities from the first time we read Día de los Muertos and even more to the second reading. I think that comprehensible input in the form of culturally relevant texts is working well".
6	Philosophy	"Throughout the remainder of the semester, as I was doing formative assessments, I noticed that the concepts and vocabulary set that J. seemed to retain most were those which we discussed in a more conversational sense....this reaffirmed my belief in the value of instructional conversation and has led me to be more cognizant of content and how to make it more comprehensible in the future".

Table 7: Representative quotes related to principle 5, 2018-2020

voices and identities being present in their work to indicate that learning had taken place. In essence, she believed that students needed to have ownership over their learning for it to be meaningful. Where possible Participant 2 incorporated her student's home language, even though she did not know it well, to connect to her student's identity. Participant 3 echoed these sentiments; one adjustment she made in her instruction was utilizing some of her student's home language later in the semester. She also inquired about her tutee's interests and created lessons that included drawing, movement, and music to tap into those strengths. Participant 4 employed similar strategies, first learning her tutee's interests and then incorporating them into her lessons. Participant 1 summarized the other participants' ideas well; they all were striving to

utilize a variety of instructional strategies to promote increased engagement and motivation of their students.

Advocating for Multilingual Communities

Finally, our findings revealed that becoming an advocate for students and their families was another important component of PSTs' reflections. They viewed themselves as part of a community of educators who were striving to create more equitable learning experiences for their students. They also perceived teaching as an ethical activity, another concept highlighted in Villegas and Lucas's (2007) definition of advocacy for students. In the PSTs' quotes from our themes of CRP teacher growth and equity-oriented approaches, we noted numerous connections to this principle, as shown in Table 8.

Participant	Source	Quote
1	Interview	"I want to advocate for my students and help give them the resources on whatever fields they're interested in or whatever things they are curious about and want to learn more".
2	Philosophy	"I seek to have students, colleagues, and community members challenge me and ask, "What are you going to do about it?" in order to find solutions to issues that arise and advocate for change that positively benefits all involved. Even if my initial answer is, "I don't know," I seek to be exposed to events, stories, and literature that assist me in gaining knowledge about an issue at question".
3	Action research	"Collaboration between ESL teachers and content teachers is a very effective and applicable way that many teachers and schools are practicing to better meet ELL students' needs".
4	Philosophy	"Care displays itself through acceptance, affirmation, and advocacy of students. These attributes are important since an ESOL teacher may have a representation of the whole world in front of them".
5	Interview	"She [tutee's mother] was definitely invested in her kids, and she cared so much about them. But if you weren't there and you weren't in that setting, you might not know that".
6	Philosophy	"I believe the physiological and safety needs of students, as set forth by Maslow (McLeod, 2022), must be met before a student can truly begin learning any of the content, whether it be standards based or life skills based... We must be there to support and advocate for a student".

Table 8: Representative quotes related to principle 6, 2018-2020

The PSTs' understanding of becoming part of a community of educators to disrupt inequities manifested in their desire to be challenged in order to grow in this area, as highlighted by Participant 2. She realized that she would need to intentionally reach out to others to acquire knowledge to better support and advocate for her students. In a similar manner, Participant 3 recognized the need to collaborate with other educators to effectively advocate for

MLs. Furthermore, Participant 1 felt that advocating for students would require him to learn about other topics that might not be directly related to his content. In his work with his high school migrant education student, he discovered that C. was interested in becoming a pilot. By broadening his 'own horizons' about pilot schools, Participant 1 was able to support his student's aspiration by explaining the requirements in a more comprehensive way.

Participants 4 and 6 demonstrated their beliefs of teaching as an ethical activity. Participant 4 focused on her beliefs about the importance of the ethics of care; she recognized that multilingual students represent the entire world and may need individualized support. Participant 6 held firm convictions in Maslow's hierarchy of basic needs and believed to advocate for students well, teachers and schools first needed to address their basic physiological needs before meaningful learning could take place. She acted on this principle by providing her student, J., with a snack at each tutoring session, once she realized her student was hungry after school. In another example, Participant 6 attended to her student's emotional needs by taking a walk around the school before engaging in academic tasks to help J. contend with that challenge in an appropriate way.

Finally, Participant 5 believed in advocating for the entire family. She recognized that educators may have limited knowledge of parents' commitment to their children's education because those actions are not revealed in typical ways such as attending parent-teacher conferences. In her example, Participant 5 witnessed her student's mother supporting her child, B., largely through care and commitment to her schooling. Participant 5 would not have been a tutor for B. had her mother not taken the initiative to be involved in the Migrant Education program. Yet, Participant 5 realized that as an ESOL teacher, she will need to advocate for the parents of her students and disrupt other educators' beliefs of them if she hears negative or degrading comments.

DISCUSSION

Our findings revealed that our PSTs had an awareness of culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2018; Villegas and Lucas, 2007), they recognized the importance of learning from and with their tutees and families but still had areas for growth when implementing appropriate instructional strategies, leading us to examine more fully the strengths and gaps in our program. Villegas and Lucas's (2007) framework served as an important starting point for recognizing strengths. We found clear connections to the themes of understanding how students learn, learning about students' backgrounds, becoming socioculturally conscious, holding affirming views about multilingual learners and their families, enacting equitable teaching practices, and advocating for multilingual communities as noted in our results.

Analysis using Gay's (2018) research also suggested that our PSTs implemented culturally responsive practices. Our PSTs' reflections indicated their beliefs in validating their students by teaching to and through their strengths. They incorporated the use of games, drawing, singing, movement, and the home language of their tutees to capitalize on these strengths. They wanted their students to learn and continuously tried different strategies until they could utilize students' abilities and interests. Because many of our PSTs had sessions in their students' homes, they were afforded ready-made opportunities to learn about their students' identities and create comprehensive connections to their ethnic groups and communities. They witnessed the foods they ate, family interactions and other cultural traditions. Yet, our PSTs still needed to engage more

in the discipline of noticing (Daniel, 2016) in order to realize these whole-child connections. As participant 6 acknowledged, she needed to 'open [her] lens'. We could have encouraged our participants to be genuinely curious and to give clearer accounts of their experiences (Daniel, 2106) to lead them to a deeper recognition of multiple perspectives. Our class discussions and journal assignments attempted to promote this act of noticing, but we need to be more intentional with this focus in the future. The after-school tutoring also lent itself to Gay's (2018) multidimensional characteristic of culturally responsive pedagogy because our students needed to consider student-teacher relationships, curriculum and instructional strategies to assist their tutees in learning effectively. Their tutoring was one-on-one necessitating the need for a meaningful relationship with the student, and the focus of the session was the remediation of curriculum concepts fostering their careful examination of the curriculum and instructional strategies. Many of our PSTs' reflections demonstrated their understandings of the intersection of all three. In particular, Participant 6 mentioned the value of instructional conversation to enable the content she was teaching to be more comprehensible for her tutee; this practice also promoted a stronger relationship between them. Likewise, the strategies our PSTs used were both empowering and transformative (Gay, 2018). Many PSTs mentioned their tutees' gains in self-efficacy and confidence over time. Participant 4's tutee was in the silent phase during much of the semester, at first not speaking at all or only in Spanish. Yet, after several weeks, her student began making simple requests to draw a picture or go to the bathroom, a big breakthrough in her agency. Other PSTs noted that their students reveled in 'being the teacher' and leading their tutoring sessions. These lessons did not follow traditional teacher-centered approaches and often included students' home languages where appropriate, giving them access to another strength and source of pride.

Our research also had parallels with other studies that stressed the need for teacher preparation programs to focus on sociocultural awareness through reflection and self-evaluation (Bachelor, deWater and Thompson, 2019; Skepple, 2015). Because our PSTs engaged in weekly reflections about their tutoring experiences and were asked to review their journal entries again as they developed their philosophy of diversity, they were prompted to self-evaluate and re-evaluate their initial beliefs. Our study compared with Bachelor, deWater and Thompson's (2019) research that PST reflections provided opportunities for critical dialogue and consequently led to a transformation of thoughts and hopefully actions. Participant 4 mentioned the need to constantly put herself in situations where she was the minority, so she could be uncomfortable and gain empathy. Several of our participants remarked that they would now focus on ways to utilize student capital and look for appropriate resources that would reflect their students' experiences and specific needs. These examples show that our PSTs were recognizing differences between their experiences and their students and the need to take action to provide more meaningful learning experiences for them.

Skepple (2015) focused on the importance of increasing the use of dialogue among PSTs on diversity topics. While our students had weekly discussions on their migrant education

experiences at the start of each diversity and second language acquisition class, we recognized that sociocultural awareness took time and intentional effort. Our study demonstrated that this process was slow and not a linear path. Participant 3 needed much of the semester to realize that she was focusing too much on her own culture and not the student's. Unlike Skepple's (2015) suggestion for multiple diverse experiences, our students were only exposed to the one student they tutored. This practice was a weakness of our study; yet, our students experienced a greater diversity of students in other practicum experiences later in the program.

Our study compared and contrasted with Christ and Sharma's (2018) research. Many of our participants focused on the importance of finding and utilizing culturally relevant texts with their tutees. Unlike Christ and Sharma's (2018) findings, none of our PSTs resisted using culturally relevant texts, yet some had challenges finding appropriate books. Similar to these authors' results, our participants needed to expand their understanding of culture. When Participant 5 could not find children's literature pertaining to the Dominican Republic, she instead sought out books with Latinx characters dealing with immigration, an identifiable experience for her tutee. Participant 3 came to realize that Latinx culture is varied and complex after some of her book selections that focused more on Mexican American heritage did not resonate with her Puerto Rican tutee. And perhaps equally important, some of our PSTs began to recognize that their tutees, the majority of whom were early elementary-aged students, were still forming their own understandings of their family's culture. Consequently, our PSTs needed a more nuanced and complex understanding of culture to better support their students (Hammond, 2015). This area was a gap in our instruction and deserves more attention in the future.

Nevertheless, our PSTs were successful in connecting to their tutees' interests. Several used interest surveys, and all discovered topics and activities that were motivating to their tutees. In this way, they incorporated Daniel's (2016) act of noticing and developed critical consciousness (Christ and Sharma, 2018) for guiding their students' learning experiences. In addition, our PSTs seemed to recognize the importance of incorporating appropriate pedagogy with the selection of meaningful texts. Some used instructional conversations, others incorporated music and movement, while others focused on their tutees' personal connections to the literature they read. Our study also contributed to the research of Lambeth and Smith (2016). Similar to their investigation, our PSTs had intentions of helping students succeed, but in our case, they were able to make a positive impact. Like Lambeth and Smith (2016), our PSTs emphasized the importance of relationship building with their students and their families. Our PSTs' one-on-one interactions with their tutees likely contributed to their abilities to foster genuine relationships. They gave undivided attention to their tutees, providing them with opportunities to cultivate meaningful interactions. They were dedicated to exploring various instructional strategies until they found some that resonated with their learners. They also embraced opportunities to talk with their students and learn together, key components of a learning partnership (Hammond, 2015).

Yet, the relationship-building with the parents took longer, even with those who tutored in their students' homes. Their attempts to use the families' home language often was the ice breaker, putting our PSTs in vulnerable positions, but paved the way for more authentic relationships (Bettez, 2017). Now the challenge for our PSTs is translating those relationship-building experiences into a classroom of students. Our PSTs aspire to embrace relationship building, as evident in their philosophy statements, but we do not have evidence that they will be able to accomplish this goal in their own teaching practices with larger groups of children.

Through critical, intentional, and systematic reflection on pedagogical practices and student learning, our PSTs were able to delve deeper into their analyses of their own beliefs and biases, an important component for becoming culturally competent educators (Ladson-Billings, 2021; Nieto and Bode, 2018). Since they worked one-on-one with their respective students, they gained more complex understandings of their tutees (Paris and Alim, 2017), and, as a result, were able to support their learning in affirming, meaningful ways. These practices also fostered individualized professional development for our graduate students due to the action research projects they conducted (Mertler, 2020). They implemented different types of instructional strategies to determine their effectiveness in supporting their MLs. The PSTs had autonomy in directing the focus of their research project and consequently agency in their own learning, making this professional development process relevant and meaningful to them (Honigsfeld et al., 2013).

To embrace the cyclical nature of action research, our findings propel us to further examine questions that go beyond culturally responsive pedagogy into the realm of culturally sustaining practices in our TESOL programs (Paris and Alim, 2017). How can we recognize and foster ways that young people 'are enacting race, ethnicity, language, literacy, and their engagement with culture?' (Paris and Alim, 2017: 7). How can we encourage those practices with our own students? What challenges do they face in enacting culturally sustaining practices? Therefore, further questions will explore PSTs' journeys in becoming reflective multicultural educators and the roadblocks they experience as they strive to enact culturally sustaining practices with their MLs in educational contexts.

CONCLUSION

Our community-based tutoring program provided an avenue for graduate PSTs to integrate theory into practice under our mentorship. Because this experience nurtured critical thinking and reflective practices in which our PSTs analyzed their teaching and student learning through the lens of culturally responsive pedagogy, it also served as their own professional development (Dana and Yendol-Hoppey, 2014; Hine, 2013). Additionally, our study addressed Daniel's (2016) recommendations for integrating coursework and field experiences with self-reflective practices to provide PSTs with a deeper awareness of culturally responsive practices. The findings of this study enabled us to reflect on our program's outcomes in order to assess its strengths and gaps in ensuring

that our graduate students are well-equipped to meet their culturally and linguistically diverse students' needs. We need more longitudinal studies to examine how well these PSTs transfer their understandings of culturally responsive practices to their daily instruction. Future studies need to explore ways graduate students and early career professionals enact culturally sustaining practices and the types of professional development that encourage their continued focus on equity work.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX A. JOURNAL PROMPTS

You may attach a Word or PDF document or upload your response in the textbox. Only use the first name of the participant when describing information about your experience. Limit your remarks to two (2) double-spaced pages.

In your post do the following:
1. Summary of visit: Describe in detail how you assisted the individual and how he/she responded.
2. Brief Reflections: What questions were raised for you? What were you left pondering? Think about concepts from your TESL classes or others that were evident during your time with the student. Highlight one connection and reflect on the meaning to you. Discuss *different* concepts each week. Where possible, incorporate concepts from the previous week's TESL courses. Cite the source of the course resource in your remarks following the current edition of APA.

Evaluation will be based on the ability to:
- Provide clear descriptions of the experience with details of what the tutor did and how the tutee responded. Give enough detail that others can "feel like they are there".
- Include reflections that go beyond descriptions and instead focus on thoughtful questions and issues raised about culture, language, equity, support of MLs, etc. Reflections show clear connections to course content by referring to key concepts and ideas, where possible.
- Follow APA 7th edition when making in-text citations. Example: (Nieto & Bode, 2018, p.___) for a direct quote. Remember to list your citations in the references, using APA 7th edition.
- This assignment will be assessed with the rubric.

APPENDIX B. INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell us about your experiences with a migrant education student.
   Probe: Who did you work with? Where? How long? What did you work on with your migrant education student, and why? Did you have a choice in choosing the age of your migrant ed student? And if yes, why did you choose that student?
2. Could you describe an experience you had with a migrant education student that you felt really influenced or impacted you?
   Probe: If so, tell us about this experience and why it was significant to you.
3. What cultural and linguistic knowledge, if any, did you gain through your experience with a migrant education student?
   Probe: If so, can you provide an example or experience that relates to your newly acquired knowledge?
4. What pedagogical skills, if any, did you gain through your experience with a migrant education student?
   Probe: If so, can you provide an example or experience that relates to your newly acquired pedagogical skills?
5. How did the experience with a migrant education student influence your attitude toward teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students? Explain.
   Probe: Has this experience made a change in your perceptions of teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students? If so, how? Please explain.
6. After reviewing your written work, we found this statement "_____". Please tell us more about how this statement relates to your views on supporting culturally and linguistically diverse students.
7. Is there anything else that you would like to share that we didn't ask you?