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Investigating Teachers' Self-Reported Efficacy in Instructing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners in Alternative Settings

Liane Kay Lancaster

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of

GRAND VALLEY STATE UNIVERSITY

In

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

Literacy Studies

College of Education

July 2014

Dedication

To the people of Kipnuk, Alaska: You taught me much, much more about cultural differences than I ever taught you. Your love has inspired me to travel this road. Bless you. To the dedicated teachers who also helped to make this study possible: I am indebted to you for your honesty and candor. We are making progress to close the achievement gap because we have opened our hearts, educated our minds, empathized, and resolved to change; however, our struggle for children has far to go.

Acknowledgments

This work was completed because of the constant encouragement of my favorite teacher, Nagnon Diarrassouba. He convinced me that talent can come from someone like me. Thank you to Dr. Monica Harris and Dr. Donald Mitchell for their valuable critique, encouragement, and constructive feedback of this project. This work would not be as thorough if it were not for their input. My gratitude to the Statistical Consulting Center at GVSU headed by Dr. Otieno for their guidance, support, and valuable input with the statistical analyses.

Life is sweet because of the following people: I would like to thank my parents, Dale and Lorraine Lancaster, who have literally followed Robert Frost's definition of Home. Without them I would not be a teacher. My children, Nick, Tony, Tina, and Vinny have made my journey in this life so utterly joyful. You are the sole reason I strive. I could not have finished this project if it were not for the laughs and entertainment of Doug, my best friend, who delivers on his promise to love me every day. My brother, Mark, has been the family example of bravado, proving the world is not as scary as it seems. My sister Jan has dedicated her life to reducing suffering in the world, including my own. I could not have lived as richly if it weren't for the influence of my sister-in-law, Lee Ann, who has allowed my brother to live his dream, nor would my life be as easy if it were not for my brother-in-law, Terry, who is my sister's rock. My nieces and nephews' technical support has been priceless as well. I love you all madly—to borrow a phrase from Erin.

Finally, college would not have been as fun without my besties: Heidi and Marina during my undergraduate education, and Tish and Sophia during my graduate work. Thanks for the laughs, gals.

Liane

Abstract

Teachers in alternative schools have limited to no knowledge of issues influencing students who are culturally and linguistically different. Current educational research lacks an in-depth examination of teachers' perceptions of their use of culturally relevant practices with this group.

Using an adaptation of Siwatu's (2007) Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale and drawing upon the theories of constructivism and multiculturalism, this study documents the perceptions of teachers' preparedness in an alternative high school in the Midwest. The investigator collected information that may assist teachers and teacher preparation institutions in delivering instruction that better suits students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. The study categorizes Siwatu's (2007) questionnaire and draws conclusions from teacher responses. The results expose the notion that work needs to be continued to insure that teachers are introduced to the theory and practice of teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Several practical recommendations for teacher training, curriculum modification, and classroom use are suggested.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Problem Statement

Many teachers experience difficulties being effective with students who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) (National Council of Teachers of English, 2013). In many places around the world, societies are becoming more multicultural. The increase of the percentage of people of color in the U.S. gives changing meaning to majority and minority. Those who are considered to be the majority currently are people of European descent who speak English and practice Christianity (Weinstein, 2003). As the percentages of people who are culturally, linguistically, and religiously diverse increases, it is conjectured that the majority will gradually become the minority. As a consequence, multicultural classrooms are becoming the standard and are characterized by diversity of race, religion, first language, cultural traditions, and ethnicity (Weinstein, 2003).

One of the problems of these multicultural classrooms is cultural misunderstanding. Teachers who do not share their students' backgrounds may find it difficult and challenging to carry out the duty to educate. Teachers in alternative educational models are no exception. From newly arrived immigrants, to citizens whose families have lived in the United States for centuries, CLD learners follow different cultural and linguistic patterns and have different experiences when compared to their European American peers and teachers. Since most teachers are of European descent, most schools operate following the norms of English speaking European American cultural rules (National Collaborative on Diversity of the Teaching Force, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education statistics, 2012). Despite the

growing immigrant population in schools, Delpit (2012) states that the customs of English speaking European American teachers are still culturally and linguistically dominant. U.S. school institutions are organized and influenced by European models. The curricula also follow a European epistemology. In doing so, schools are consonant with teachers' backgrounds. Conversely, students who may come from cultures different from the Europeans' may experience difficulties functioning in them. If one conceives that schools in general are to inculcate cultural values, the values that are taught are European American and those of other cultures are misunderstood and underrepresented (Diarroussba, personal conversation, February, 2014). Alternative schools, however, take a more flexible approach to inculcation, and alternative school teachers need to be prepared to be flexile (McGee, 2001).

Importance of the Problem and Rationale for the Study

Culturally and linguistically diverse students face the challenge of learning how to navigate the dominant culture, how to speak the dominant language, and how to understand subject-specific content all at the same time (Nieto, 2000). There is abundant literature that indicates CLD learners suffer academic underachievement as defined by standardized test scores (Carpenter, 2012; Raspberry, 2003; West & Pennell, 2003). Having to learn new traditions, new language, and new subject matter can explain why comparative standardized testing shows this group of students lag behind their European American peers (Luciak, 2006; Santoro, 2007). The National Education Association (2013) quotes the McKinsey and Company report (2009) which stressed that if education personnel are not provided with cultural awareness training and ways to involve all types

of learners in learning activities, the academic underperformance of CLD students is likely to continue.

Cultural awareness is critically important in both curricular instruction and in assessment. If teachers are not prepared well, they may not know both curriculum and assessment are known to carry bias and fair best when they pertain to the lives of the student (Ruklick, 2000 & Kendall, 2013). When tests are written without concern for cultural and linguistic differences, they are likely to contribute to the disparity in achievement between CLD and mainstream students. Ruklick (2000), as cited by The National Council of Teachers of English (2013), claims that standardized testing is unfair to black students because their linguistic and cultural practices are not considered when content is taught and tested. On standardized tests taken in 2005, CLD students showed a success rate of only 54% in mathematics at the 4th grade level and 29% at the 8th grade level (Fry, 2007). A number of reasons are provided to explain CLD students' underachievement, among which ineffective pedagogy is one.

Ladson-Billings (2011) wrote that teacher training programs encourage teachers to overcome cultural differences by making learning applicable and suited to students' lives, but training programs offer few to no examples of how to model or adjust teacher practice to meet the complicated needs of CLD students. She added that they also do not provide training related to the special approaches needed by students in alternative settings. Ladson-Billings (2011) uses culturally relevant pedagogy to describe instruction that considers the individual student's cultural differences as teaching points. The goal of culturally relevant pedagogy is to recognize the value of the behaviors and contributions of minorities and to bridge the home and family culture of CLD students to the school

culture of Euro-America. Unfortunately, many teachers still harbor prejudice toward CLD learners, and they are not properly prepared to alter the school experience to be more meaningful to these students (Santoro, 2007).

According to Oliver & Shapiro (2006), the under-performance of students who are CLD may be the result of ineffective pedagogy and curricula that are irrelevant. Ineffective pedagogy looks like Eurocentric subject matter that disregards the stories and contributions of minority groups. The lack of curricular inclusion may be a factor in drop-out rates because it exacerbates the disconnection between learners who are CLD and the education experience. When students drop out of school, they decrease their employment opportunities, stagnate their quality of life, and increase their inclination to socially unacceptable behavior (Oliver & Shapiro, 2006). The National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA) in 2012 states only 16% of all institutions that prepare teachers require some form of instruction in regards to the unique needs of ELL and CLD learners. The trend in the rate of CLD drop-outs can be reversed if teachers are successful in making instruction relevant to the lives and experiences of these students (Oliver & Shapiro, 2006.) When teachers pay attention to their students' unique academic needs and adjust their teaching methods, teaching looks different and it can create opportunities of success for CLD students (Oliver & Shapiro, 2006).

For the most part, there is scant literature related to ways to adjust curricula and instructional practices to meet the needs of students who attend alternative schools. The available research predominantly focuses on describing alternative school student populations and program characteristics rather than describing school effectiveness (Kleiner, Porch, & Farris (2002). As there is a dearth in literature related to practitioners

teaching in alternative schools, it is of utmost importance to study the teachers' perceptions of their training and effectiveness. There is a need to inform, not only in-service teachers and pre-service teachers, but also school administrators and teacher training colleges about how to adjust curricula and instructional practices to meet the needs of students of alternative schools. Knowing how teachers perceive their effectiveness in discovering the values and interests of CLD students in the alternative environment will add to the current body of research.

Background of the Problem

The issues related to the education of students who are CLD and attend both traditional and alternative schools dates back to ways people immigrated to the U.S. Ogbu (2008) states that Native Americans and involuntary immigrant populations, such as slaves, became politically and economically dominated by the aggression of Europeans. They were subjugated, colonized, and were pushed aside in both society and school. At the time of the Civil War, African Americans were not educated and their behavior and speech was different. After emancipation, they were expected to behave and speak like the dominant culture of European American English speakers, but were denied the educational experience to achieve that (Ogbu, 1995). His theory of oppositional culture is born from a frustration of being held to an academic standard at the same time begin denied ways to achieve that standard, and having a glass ceiling of opportunity imposed upon them. Involuntary minorities' in the U.S. today react to oppression and the lack of opportunity by resisting education (Ogbu, 2008). Banks (2007) states as an example of being pushed aside, involuntary immigrants and colonized peoples were given inadequate materials and were invisible in school textbooks, with

history slanting or expunging their contributions. Many involuntary and colonized peoples have different views of schooling when compared to voluntary immigrants because of their treatment in society and in school (Ogbu, 2008).

According to Ogbu (2008), schooling has not been a problem for voluntary immigrants. The most-often repeated stories of immigration into the United States are replete with struggle and hardship and the victorious attempts of those who have been successful. Some groups, namely white groups from Western European nations, have prevailed in their attempt for control, influence, and power because they colonized, conquered, and oppressed others. Ogbu (2008) added that the immigration stories that have been ignored are those of forced immigration groups and those who have been colonized, and schooling has been difficult for some of them. Ogbu (2003) pointed out that the immigration experience of culturally and linguistically different learners has a very different history than the victorious Western Europeans. He conducted extensive research on comparing cultures and, he stated, other groups like African Americans and Native Americans have become oppositional because they were "not rewarded for behaving like Anglo-European Americans, not permitted to act like Anglo-Europeans, and were punished for behaving like Anglo-European Americans" (p. 289). The fact that CLD learners' issues were not dealt with in curricula or in instructional processes, coupled with the frustration of being marginalized, have led these students to resist learning. Ogbu termed this phenomena *Oppositional Theory*. He used Oppositional Theory to explain why some CLD students have not been as successful as others and will go so far as to resist or oppose learning. Being educated, as believed by some young students of color, is a *white* thing (Ogbu, 1995). For instance, pupils believe that learning

Standard English amounts to *acting white.* These students are proud of who they are and show it be distancing themselves from all things *white* (Ogbu, 1995).

To promote success in school, enlighten the invisibility of colonized and involuntary people, and make their contributions known, educators are called upon to provide culturally relevant pedagogy. Culturally relevant pedagogy first took hold as part of multicultural education which began during the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s (Banks, 1989). Schools were segregated according to racial groups and this movement fought against that segregation. Segregation had been supported on a *separate, but equal* platform until it was proven to be unequal (National Assessment of Educational Progress, 1969). Eventually school integration was achieved, but very few changes occurred in curricula and teaching methodology. Making curricula and teaching practices relevant to students' lives became an issue after the NAEP published the results of a national standardized test in which there were disparities between White students and students of color (NAEP, 1969). Average scale scores for long-term trend mathematics for 13 year olds in 1978 showed Whites scoring 272; Hispanics 238; and Blacks 230. Education experts sought to understand the reasons why culturally and linguistically different learners were testing so poorly.

By 1973, The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE, 2011), determined bias in school curriculum might be a reason that explains the disparity in academic achievement. Curriculum favors students with Anglo-European backgrounds. For instance, only the stories of European immigrants are included in historical accounts of settlements of North America. The devastation caused to Native Americans and the experiences of other non-dominant groups are largely left untold.

According to the AACTE, curriculum favoring may have caused the issue of CLDs academic underperformance. In order to be inclusive to various cultures, school districts responded in several ways, including diversity training, multicultural art classes, Black History Month, and ethnic holiday observations (Banks, 1989). Efforts were made to incorporate some of the contributions of people of color and teacher-trainer institutions began offering multicultural classes to pre-service teachers in the 1980s.

Though noble, these efforts fall short of the underlying prejudice. Banks (2007), points out that there is an assumption that the nation's British heritage is the only important one. Minority ethnic groups are expected to see history through the eyes of Anglo-Saxon Americans which results in disregarding their own contributions. To include all contributors, Banks calls for different approaches to education and curriculum. Berliner (2009), suggests that both in-school and home, or community, factors impact students' academic achievement. These home and community factors contribute to the achievement disparity which suggests there are cultural factors that influence learning. Verdugo and Flores (2007) claim the use of students' culture and home language is an important part of the instructional process and must be present in the learning environment.

Alternative education established itself around the same time there was a call for multicultural education in public schools (Banks, 1989). They provide a different choice in experience for students whose education in traditional school has been interrupted due to illness, incarceration, pregnancy, violence, abuse, cannot be successful in traditional education formats, or other myriad reasons. They emphasize cultural pluralism and serve to alleviate the problems of cultural or ethnic bias that are so prevalent in our public

school system. This study is interested in ascertaining the perception alternative teachers have in regard to their preparedness in meeting the special needs of these students.

Statement of Purpose

This study seeks to investigate the feeling teachers have about their level of preparedness in delivering culturally relevant instruction to culturally and linguistically diverse learners in alternative schools and, concurrently, how they rate themselves in being culturally responsive. Understanding what is culturally relevant and pertinent in the CLD students' backgrounds may lead to a change in pedagogy and possibly bring about improved levels of education with improved levels of student performance. By surveying teachers at alternative schools, I hope to find information that can assist teachers and teacher preparation institutions to deliver instruction that will better suit students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. I believe the findings will help educators and educational training institutions understand the challenges that confront teachers and how prepared they are to deliver culturally appropriate instruction as they ready students to join mainstream society.

Research Questions

1. Do teachers at alternative schools feel prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse learners?
2. How do teachers of alternative schools rate themselves when using an adaptation of Siwatu's (2007) Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale?

Design, Data collection and Analysis

This study is a non-experimental quantitative descriptive study. Non-experimental research describes existing phenomena without changing any conditions

that will affect a subject's response and without proposing hypotheses. The investigator cannot manipulate or control a variable. This type of study is limited to describing or noticing relationships and it emphasizes numbers, measurements, and deductive logic (McMillan, 2004).

The survey data are intended to identify if teachers feel that they have been prepared enough, whether by initial education at a teacher training institution or by continued professional development, to teach to the unique cultures of CLD learners. The scaled questions are designed to provide a correspondence between what is suggested as best practices and what is actually performed in alternative classrooms.

This study is comprised of a Likert-scale survey modeled after the Culturally Relevant Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSE) followed by opportunities to comment, and demographic questions. The CRTSE was adapted from Siwatu's (2007) Culturally Responsive Teaching Competencies and administered, via an Internet link, to high school teachers in alternative settings in the Mid-west. Internal agreement and inter-rater reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha test. The 38 CRTSE questions ask to what degree teachers implement culturally responsive teaching habits in their classrooms. It is presumed that strong implementation of these teaching competencies results in teachers feeling prepared to teach CLD learners, and that these teachers rate themselves high on the scale - see appendix B for the complete questionnaire.

Permission was sought through the Human Research Review Committee of Grand Valley State University to comply with the requirements of research and to protect the human subjects involved. A consent letter was sent to principals requesting that access be gained to their teachers for the purposes of gathering research data. The consent letter

explained the purpose, the objectives, the risks, and the benefits of the study. Protocol for protecting participant's privacy was explained. The survey link was then funneled through school principals and distributed to teachers. The link was open for completion for two weeks so teachers could respond to the questionnaire within their own time. Once the data was collected, the responses were analyzed. Interpretation of the results were guided by the research questions and an analysis of the data was chosen. Tables were used to describe, organize, examine, compare and present the raw data.

Definition of Terms

Alternative education: education in a variety of settings, may be any public or private school, elementary or secondary, that offer a more flexible program of study than a conventional school (Alternative Education Resource Organization, 2014).

Anglo American: a term used interchangeably with Caucasian American, White American, and European American. Anglo American derives from the English speaking British colonists descended from the Angles tribes but refers to all English speaking White Americans (Lee, Mountain, & Barbara, 2013).

Color blindness: treating all students as if there are no differences among them (Hyland, 2005).

Culturally relevant pedagogy: teaching guided by the cultural customs of students, and sensitive to language and cultural contributions of diverse groups (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Culturally and linguistically diverse learners: students who identify with a culture, a language, or another form of communication divergent from the dominant

culture or language (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1994). In this study, the dominant culture is Anglo-European and the dominant language is Standard American English.

Culture of power: group of people whose customs are accepted and considered to be normal. The cultural standard by which all other customs are judged (Delpit & Perry, 1998).

Diversity: multiple social identities related to race and ethnicity, culture, home language, religion, gender, sexual orientation, social class, age, and disability (Higbee, Siaka, & Bruch, 2007).

English language learner: students who are not yet proficient in English. They may be bilingual, monolingual, or more, or have little proficiency in their first language. They may be US born, voluntary immigrants, involuntary immigrants, refugees, or migrant students (National Council of Teachers of English, 2013).

Equality: the state of being equal; uniform in character (Equality, n.d. Retrieved February 22, 2014, from http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/equality?s=t).

Equity: the quality of being fair or impartial. (Equity. n.d. Retrieved February 22, 2014, from http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/equity?s=t).

Funds of knowledge: historically developed and accumulated strategies (e.g., skills, abilities, ideas, practices) or bodies of knowledge that are essential to a household's functioning and well-being (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1994).

Multiculturalism: various practices associated with educational equity, gender, ethnic groups, language minorities, low-income groups, and people with impairments (Luciak, 2006).

Relevant: connected to; pertinent; significant to (Relevant, n.d. Retrieved February 22, 2014, from http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/relevant?s=t).

Students of color: students of K-12 education who are of Native American, Alaskan Native, African American or Hispanic descent who consider themselves connected to the cultural obligations of a minority group, socioeconomically considered working-class, low-class, or living in poverty, and belong to a group of people considered marginalized (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2010).

Socioeconomic difference: differences in values and beliefs as a result of social and economic factors (Berliner, 2009).

White teachers: teachers of K-12 education who are of European descent, socioeconomically considered middle-class, and belong to a group of people afforded institutional privileges (Campbell, Daniel, Portelli, & Solomon, 2005).

Limitations of the Study

Due to the small scale of the study, the data does not represent the perspectives of all teachers in high school alternative settings. The study could also be limited by the race, social class, and gender of the subjects. In this study, only one respondents volunteered their ethnic affiliation. The values and opinions of this one teacher do not represent the perspectives of teachers from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. It will be difficult to apply these results to the target population.

All subjects volunteered and were teaching in alternative public schools. Their bias may inflate their responses. The results may not represent the experiences or perspectives of educators who teach in conventional charter, private, or other traditional schools and the small number of subjects' experiences in this study may not be

representative of all alternative school teachers. The instrument used to garner responses has a Likert scale and is not inclusive of all responses, although open-ended comments were solicited. Likert scales do not include a number of parameters and they may not include a choice for the subject's precise degree of feeling. There is no opportunity for complete expression of thought. Responses could be limited by the gender, race, social class, age, and experience of the participants.

The Likert-type questions were chosen to directly speak to the research goals and were chosen for their convenience in gathering data in quantitative measures. Bandura (1997) pointed out, however, "including too few steps [in a Likert-type scale] loses differentiation information because people who use the same response category would differ if intermediate steps were given" (p. 44).

When subjects report their own behavior or emotional reactions, they often report in a more positive light than others see them (McMillan, 2004). Self-reported reactions by teacher subjects in this study may be biased, exaggerated, or underreported. Subjects may not have pondered deeply about each question and may have chosen a response that does not best describe how they understand an item. There is a possiblity that some subjects involved misunderstood the survey questions, did not take the survey seriously, provided inaccurate answers, or engaged in purposely aberrant responses. Finally, although all attempts to reduce bias have been taken by requesting peer review from several different sources and gathering a variety of perspectives, the researcher may have interpreted the results in a flawed way. What may be confounding variables are the researcher's lack of personal connection to this population and the researcher's personal philosophy and perceptions of alternative schools.

Organization of the Thesis

Chapter One is a description and identification of the specific problem: Teachers are rarely prepared to teach relevant content to students who are culturally and linguistically diverse and attend alternative schools. Chapter one begins with a description of the purpose of the study and is followed by the two specific research questions which will guide the study. Next came a description of the chosen research design along with descriptions of the data collection methods and the data analysis. After that, a list of major terms and their definitions precedes a statement of the study's limitations, and the chapter ends with an over-arching description of the organization of the thesis.

Chapter Two informs the reader what has been authored on the subject of Anglo-European American teachers and their difficulties in effectively teaching culturally and linguistically different learners. Many Anglo-European American teachers are unprepared to relate to students' lives and to make their teaching relevant to students' experiences. Multiculturalists note the importance that cultural awareness plays in the education of students. Their perspectives recognize the value of multiple cultural viewpoints and are balanced beside the constructivist theory that learners should be taught to question, challenge, and critically analyze information rather than blindly accept it.

Chapter Three provides a description of the research methodology chosen to gather data and investigate the research questions. It begins with the design and rationale of the study and is followed by descriptions of the sampled population and their backgrounds. The instrument is explained next. The chapter ends with a description of

how the data were collected and contains a thorough discussion about the process of data analysis.

Chapter Four focuses on the results of the study. The context of the study is reviewed and the researcher brings together the research questions and their answers. Two tables are presented as visual synopsis of the information gathered and processed. A summary of the major results are found in this chapter.

Chapter Five summarizes the study and draws conclusions by providing the author's interpretation of the results. A discussion of the twelve categorical divisions is provided and recommendations for the application of what has been learned are included.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

Introduction

This chapter begins with an explanation of the theoretical framework upon which the research is founded. Theories developed by Vygotsky, Krashen, and Bruner are discussed alongside those of multicultural theory supported by Banks, Gay, Ladson-Billings and others. The chapter focuses on what current literature has to say about effectively teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students, how barriers are built that prevent pertinent pedagogy, how emotional needs vary from culture to culture, how marginalized groups are left out of the telling of history, and how lowered expectations hurt minorities. The chapter ends by examining the necessity for and unique nature of alternative settings.

Theoretical Framework

Effective teaching, according to Krashen (1985), requires that teachers investigate the knowledge base of their students and scaffold their teaching to support the students' background knowledge. To establish a connection between a student's prior knowledge and new concepts to be acquired is challenging. Students bring various levels of background knowledge with them to school—what they have learned emotionally and cognitively before entering a classroom. Many practices that teachers use assume every student brings the same background and experiences with them (Haberman, 1996). However, students who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) bring sets of diverse cultural experience and prior knowledge that are unique (Siwatu, 2007). Many have backgrounds much different than their European American peers. Thus students

who are CLD require pedagogy that is cognizant of their unique backgrounds. According to Multiculturalists, whose theories follow, they require a pedagogy that is culturally relevant.

Culturally relevant pedagogy is teaching based on the philosophy that equity and social justice be used to develop the intellectual competencies of children from social groups who have been marginalized (Sleeter, 2008). It requires curricular adaptation on the part of the instructor, and is essential in alternative teaching situations (Sleeter, 2008). It is teaching guided by the cultural customs of students, and sensitive to language and cultural contributions of diverse groups (Ladson-Billings, 1994). The art of teaching this way becomes problematic if teachers have not been trained in what changes to make to suit students' backgrounds and learning needs. Heidke & O'Connor (2004) concur that mainstream, dominant European American culture in the United States sets the social rules considered to be standard and acceptable while all other cultures are considered aberrant. Kindergarten through high school curriculum values European American culture and its ways of knowing while ignoring the perspective and ways of knowing of African American, Native American, and other immigrant populations (Kendall, 2013). This disconnection becomes even more exacerbated when student frustration results in negative behaviors and students are sent to alternative schools. CLD students have the added complication of having to live in the culture of home and the different culture of school (Kendall, 2013).

The theoretical framework for this study is derived from two major theories: constructivism and multiculturalism. Vygotsky (1978) developed the theory of social constructivism. His belief is that learning occurs or is influenced by the social

environment as the child interacts with peers and adults. Acquisition of knowledge and language emerges from the social environment and learning is a process where the individual generates meaning in response to social input. In this paradigm, cultural milieus control the input the individual receives. What is considered important and what is expected of the learner is garnered through the specific cultural norms received from the social environment. Vygotsky's work in developmental psychology revolves around the premise that humans learn because of their practical activity in a social environment. He describes a Zone of Proximal Development, or ZDP, as the difference between what a learner can do without help and what a learner can do with help (Balaban, 1995). An actual developmental level is determined by independence in solving problems. A potential developmental level is determined by the potential to solve problems with adult coaching or with coaching by more capable peers. Vygotsky believed education's role is to give children experiences that are within their zones of proximal development, thereby encouraging and advancing their individual learning. This scaffolding process reveals the importance of knowing the subject's actual knowledge in order to assist in reaching the potential knowledge. For the acquisition of new knowledge to occur, it must be built on prior knowledge and scaffolded through comprehensible, explicit, and recognizable input (Vygotsky, 1978; Krashen, 1985).

In tandem to Vygotsky's ideas, Bruner (1974) proposed that children can learn concepts out of order and without prior connections or background. Bruner stated rather than delineated stages forming a string of stair steps, learning takes place much like a spiral. Learning material is revisited at intervals and it becomes more complex at each interval. Learning can take place in many contexts, with or without the benefit of

being provided background. The role of teaching, as seen through this philosophy, is to present material in increasingly complex manners and providing a background or relevance to students' socialization.

Krashen (1981) separated language learning into two avenues: language acquisition and language learning. Language acquisition is an unconscious process, which most often occurs naturally. Acquisition is associated with the first language, which is learned without conscious attention to language rules. As a student is acquiring his or her first language (L1), simple language is used by caregivers. Gradually, the simple language forms and structures are then extended (Krashen, 1981). .The input *i* (simple language in the beginning) and extension *1* (more complex language as time goes on) is what Krashen (1981) termed as *i + 1*. According to Krashen (1982) while first language is acquired unconsciously and in a natural context, learning a second language involves a conscious process which must attend to rules and nuances. He argued that when a language is learned, not acquired, very little is internalized. Consequently, when put into genuine communication, the second (L2) or foreign language learner, does not participate as naturally. As a solution to the difficulty faced when functioning in genuine communicative settings, Krashen proposed the natural approach hypothesis. For the second language (L2) learner to internalize the language system, the student needs to be exposed to natural samples of language. Krashen (1985) also developed the comprehensible input hypothesis. He stated that when the learner understands what he or she hears, learning occurs more rapidly. If given contextual clues, learners can understand materials that are somewhat above their true level of competence. He also noticed that in L2 learning situations students can be filled with tension. His affective

filter hypothesis stated that when learners are under stress or anxiety (high affective filter) very little learning occurs. To combat the high anxiety, the learning situation should be as stress free as possible (low affective filter).

Banks (2005), Gay (2002a), Ladson-Billings (2011), and Nieto (2002), among others, support a construct called multiculturalism from which culturally relevant pedagogy can arise. Multicultural theory claims that if material has no connection or relevance in a child's life, the child will not learn it. Banks (2005) describes multicultural education as a set of strategies and materials that have been developed to assist teachers when responding to the many issues created by the changing demographics of their students. Multiculturalism provides students with knowledge about the histories, cultures, and contributions of diverse groups. This theory concentrates on the need to include notions of race, class, and diversity while teaching, and to aim at giving CLD students an equal education in school that leads to equal chances in the job market (Gay, 2002a). The role of teaching, as seen through the eyes of a multicultural theorist, is to be democratically inclusive and pluralistic of student cultural capital (Nieto, 2002). It is to move beyond a role of simply honoring cultural differences to using differences as channels of learning in all aspects of the educational experience (Gay, 2002b).

Opposition to multiculturalists' theories of learning are played out on a political stage. Critics of a multicultural and a culturally responsive theory of education argue that multiculturalism undermines the unity of an Anglo-American heritage (Buchanan, 2011). Auster (2004) goes so far as to say the inclusion of other cultural thought into the education of Americans undermines the majority. He claims that allowing the culture of

minorities to become important demands that the culture of the majority be trivialized. The culture of European-American heritage is important to teach to American students. As multiculturalists point out, it is not the only heritage in America, however. Including and teaching about all diverse student experiences is important and provides a sense of inclusion rather than exclusion.

Milligan (1999) did not directly oppose multiculturalist theory, but he believed newly included representations of various groups in texts, and limited curriculum, only serves to bolster stereotypes. Multiculturalism seeks to represent all categories of people, but putting people in categories is a method used previously to exclude, not include, people. Therefore, Milligan (1999) stated, categorizations damage the goal of multiculturalists by calling attention to student differences. He added that the experiences of individual groups are vast and to include all, to be pluralistic, is staggering. Milligan is not the only researcher to point out the challenges of indoctrination of multicultural curriculum. Werkmeister & Miller (2009) argued that multicultural education and culturally relevant pedagogy, along with avoiding stereotypes, can be viewed as difficult to implement and can overwhelm teachers, administrators, and curriculum specialists.

Vygotsky's theory was chosen as a framework for this study because he supports the idea that learning comes from a social perspective. Multiculturalism was chosen because it refuses to present any one perspective as the authority. According to Gay (2002a) the most successful educational practices include Multiculturalist theory. Banks & Banks (2004) and Gay (2000) maintain that a culturally responsive teacher uses

student identities and community cultural bodies of knowing to connect classroom topics with lived experiences.

Synthesis of Research Literature

From forming meaningful relationships by understanding student behavior to recognizing personal bias, research supports the need for cultural awareness (Banks, 2004, Gay, 2002a, Ladson-Billings, 2011, and Nieto, 2002). There is much that teachers can learn about the socialization of students who are culturally and linguistically different from them. Research reveals that teachers who have had multicultural training are more successful with CLD students than teachers who have not had such instruction (Siwatu, 2007). Trained teachers are likely to form relationships of trust, which is followed by success amongst CLD learners (Brown, 2004).

Vygotsky's (1978) theory that learning is a social process means students learn from their environment, and the first setting of a social nature is engaging with family. When students come to school, they expand their knowledge by interacting in new environments with different people. However, if the social notions of home and school are different, confusion can result. Heath (1983) contends that the differences in the rules of home and school can cause turmoil in a child, and can be enough to disrupt a student's learning, cause frustration, and end in disconnection from the material. When students are disconnected, they tend to act out and give up (Heath, 1983). To restore instruction that is pertinent to the student, alternative methods can be offered and instruction can be delivered in many ways. Most U.S. students progress through the traditional public school systems (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). For many students, that setting does not work and they attend alternative, non-traditional education sites.

Knowing what constitutes effective teaching in traditional settings helps guide teachers in alternative settings. The first section looks at the notion of cultural influence on effective teaching and learning in a traditional setting. The second section examines the elements of teacher behavior that must be present in an alternative setting to ensure student success.

Effective Teacher Behaviors in School Settings.

Culturally responsive behaviors. Effective teachers in school settings understand that some student behaviors are cultural (Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004). For decades, researchers have documented how teacher perception of student behaviors is culturally biased (Weinstein, et. al., 2004). Children are raised with different expectations and culturally specific rules that apply to social interaction and, interestingly, those rules change from culture to culture (Weinstein, et. al.). Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran (2004) wrote that the possibility of widespread misunderstanding between students and teachers with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds can lead to student failure. From interacting with peers to interacting with elders, societies have unwritten rules that determine when, and what, actions are acceptable or taboo. What is acceptable behavior to a student's culture may be unacceptable behavior to a teacher (Weinstein, et. al, 2004). For instance, negative name-calling can be accepted among teenaged students when the exchange happens between friends. Negative name-calling is disciplined when observed by teachers. Consequently, when cultures clash, teachers might assume that students are misbehaving or disrespecting.

The above is an example of student behaviors being cultural. Allen (2013), in an ethnographic study of black males from middle and working class homes focused on how students maintain a balance of pressure from parents to do well and pressure from peers to resist education. He found in their act of trying to be *cool* to impress their peers, African American boys break the social rules of European American teachers. The author concluded that a student who breaks the rules is interpreted by teachers as being

detached from learning and aloof about education. In reality, the student is most likely preserving his honor in front of his peers (Allen, 2013). African American students perform better when their teachers understand their animated and vervistic behavior is not always disengagement or work avoidance.

Similarly, in her extensive ethnographic study of three communities, Heath (1983), recognized there was cultural value in African American boys being animated, spritely, and loud. Whoever attracted the most attention was given the most accolades. Entertaining peers and jocularity were encouraged by the culture. When African American boys entered classrooms in ebullient or disruptive ways—she found that was their culture. However it triggered a negative response with teachers who have an expectation that students be reticent and subdued in classroom settings. Heath stated the teachers in her study were punitive toward the entrance of an African American youth practicing his cultural norm.

The level at which verve is accepted varies from culture to culture, as in the above findings of Heath (1983), and in the level of interdependence versus independence. A comparative study by Boykin, Tyler, Watkins-Lewis and Kizzie (2009) focused on verve and communal learning. African American teachers and Anglo-European American teachers were examined to see if culture determines how teachers reported student behaviors. Researchers categorized behaviors into four areas: (a) individualistic, (b) competitive, (c) communal, or (d) *vervistic*. They sought to determine what part each behavior played in classrooms lead by European American teachers and what part each behavior played in classrooms lead by African American teachers. Individualism, or the importance of individual accomplishments, along with competition, or the attempt to

surpass the performance of others, were seen routinely in classrooms; especially those classrooms headed by European American teachers. However, the culture of classrooms headed by African American teachers emphasized the same degree of communalism, or interdependence, and verve, or enjoyment of high levels of stimulation, as the home cultures of students. In a similar vein, Boykin (2005), found that African American student performance was enhanced in situations where group and animated learning took place. He concluded when the teacher was of European American culture, individualism and competition were emphasized. Conversely, when the teacher was of African American culture, community and verve were emphasized. Culturally responsive behaviors include recognizing that classroom management and home culture are closely linked (Boykin, 2005).

Different perceptions of misbehavior and caring. Effective teachers understand students and teachers who come from separate cultures view discipline differently. Monroe (2009) conducted a qualitative research study which included both African American and European American teachers in urban public schools attended by mostly African American students. He studied the ways in which teachers interpreted and handled discipline issues. He found that teachers disciplined African American more often than white students in the area of subjective behaviors (i.e. behaviors that were not overt). He also found that teachers who tended to be overly concerned with minute adherence to rules were particularly egregious in disciplining students of color more often than white students. These teachers construed misbehavior as disrespect or detachment from the subject material. When teachers construed misbehavior as a reaction to barriers in learning (such as not understanding the material or misunderstanding directions), and

sought to remove the barriers, they were more successful in maintaining student interest and motivation. For instance misbehavior erupted as a reaction to not comprehending content and to not understanding directions. The teachers who chose to interpret that misbehavior as frustration, but not as naughtiness, were likely to explain again and gained less resistance in performing required work. Understanding that resistance to schooling may be due to barriers in learning is an attribute of teachers who are culturally aware (Monroe, 2009).

According to a study conducted by Downey and Pribesh (2004), teachers who temper their interpretations of student behavior and consider cultural differences will discipline culturally and linguistically different students less. They conducted a quantitative study that established students of color were rated as poorer classroom citizens by teachers who are white than they were rated by teachers of color. These researchers studied teacher race alongside teacher evaluation of student behavior and found a disparity. They provided two reasons for the disparity. First, white teachers' misunderstood and devalued the unique cultural style of students of color. Second, white teachers used classroom management techniques that did not motivate students of color to engage in learning. They noted that a strain between white teachers and students of color may begin as early as kindergarten and they concluded that the definition of *misbehavior* was a cultural one.

Along with misinterpreting behavior, misinterpreting the concept of caring can create barriers to effective teaching. Banks (2005) states the ways of thinking, behaving, being, and knowing are influenced by race, ethnicity, social class, and language. Showing how one cares is dependent upon social constructs and authentic caring has an

intent defined more by the recipient than the sender. Tosolt (2008) stated in an ex-post facto examination of Nodding's (2005) study that both sender and receiver must interpret an action as considerate; otherwise, the gesture's relevance is lost. Nodding's (2005) qualitative study of sixth-grade students points out that different definitions of caring may lead European American teachers to the wrong presuppositions. European American cultural thought presupposes that caring means treating all students the same. Douglas, Lewis, Douglas, Scott, and Garrison-Wade (2008) discovered, however, that African American boys have emotional needs different from white boys. At the onset of his survey, Tosolt noted that learners of color had less favorable conceptions of their European American teachers than did European American students and that schools with a majority of European American teachers were not as appreciated by CLD students. Surveying sixth graders, he divided caring into three distinct categories: (a) interpersonal, (b) academic, and (c) fairness. African American boys viewed interpersonal caring as most valuable. These students appreciated it when a teacher behaved in the manner of a friend or family member. Warm greetings, nicknames, teasing, and hugs were examples of interpersonal caring. Alternatively, African American girls appreciated academic caring. Academic caring was exercised by encouraging the student to improve or persevere by stating how the teacher believed the student could accomplish a task. For example, teachers demonstrated caring behaviors by writing helpful notes on student work and taking the time to provide additional explanations as needed. Hispanic students desired more compliments on academic performance, culmination of projects, and appearance of work. Juxtaposed to those definitions, European American students defined caring as fairness, teachers treating all

students as if there were no differences, encouraging them to help one another, and not moving on until all students understood the concepts. Tosolt (2008) stated most classrooms are operated by measures of fairness but concluded caring does not mean treating students fairly or equally, but rather it means providing equity to meet student needs.

Giving each student an equal amount of time, attention, affection, encouragement, and direction does not lead to improved performance for students of color. To prove that equality is not equity, Hyland (2005), conducted an ethnographic study of four self-identified unbiased instructors. She hypothesized that European American teachers were prohibiting equal access to education for students of color. She found that teachers did this by exercising *color-blindness,* or treating all students equally as if there were no differences among them. Color-blindness promoted the notion that teachers devote as much (or as little) time, attention, affection, encouragement, and direction to any one student as they did to any other student. Hyland concluded that supporting the notion of giving to students equally denied some of them adequate access to education.

Culturally relevant caring, as described by Parsons (2005), in a qualitative study, is being able to recognize that students have diverse cultural characteristics because they come from different ethnic backgrounds. The study, related to the behaviors and attitudes of teachers considered to be caring, took place at an urban elementary school with a large population of students of color. Parsons found that being able to adjust teaching methods so that each student could relate course content to their own personal cultural context was critically important to the notion of caring. Also, caring teachers had a non-judgmental acceptance of their students, envisioned the best possible outcome for

them, recognized students' experiences, and valued their cultural norms. Culturally relevant caring meant circumstances were judged on context, outcomes varied with the situation, and the personalities involved, and discipline was delivered with rapport.

Emotional differences. Along with different perceptions in misbehavior and in caring, effective teachers of CLD students have an awareness of different emotional needs. In a qualitative research study using retrospective interviews, Douglas, Lewis, Douglas, Scott, & Garrison-Wade (2008), sought to identify emotional needs of African American students. The need for respect from their teachers was foremost on the list, followed by needing to be perceived positively, to be understood, and to have a healthy school environment. Elaborating, they found students believed they experienced disrespect in school because of their skin and shared how being stereotyped hurt them. They stated the disrespect quite often came from teachers directly or from teachers allowing peers to engage in such behavior. First, African American students' prime need was to be respected. The second most identified need was to be perceived positively. Some students say that their teachers and European American peers had negative perceptions of them only because of their language use and dress. Students quoted teachers as saying that some students must be involved in gang activity because of the way the students dressed. The third need Douglas et al discovered was that students need to be understood. Students stated that their adolescent brains are still developing; they are still growing up, and they will make mistakes. They remarked that teachers and administrators need to act with understanding. The final discovery by Douglas deals with school environment. African American students who had attended different types of schools (i.e., predominately European American or predominately African American)

noticed teachers in predominately European American schools held African American students to a higher standard. The students respected those teachers' efforts and were satisfied with higher expectations. Teachers who are effective with students of color have awareness of these needs.

Having cultural awareness of the needs of students who are CLD improves the relationships teachers have with them. Teachers' approaches to their CLD students and their social relationships with them can positively impact school performance. Gehlbach, Brinkworth and Harris (2011) studied the relationships between students and teachers in a suburban middle school and found that when students had supportive and caring teachers, they were more motivated and paid more attention during class than when teachers were seen as unsupportive. This finding is supported by Allen and Pianta (2008) who stated that, at the secondary level positive relationships between adults and teenagers are the most important ingredient to promoting positive student development. When students have healthy, trusting relationships with teachers, they are more likely to experience a satiating sense of belonging and are less likely to drop out of school (Allen & Pianta, 2008). According to Coleman, Lewis, and Middleton (2011), Gay (2002b), and White (2011), the better a student relates to his or her teacher, the better the attitude about school becomes and the more likely the student is to have motivation to produce and excel. Urooj (2013), conducted a descriptive qualitative study of secondary public school teachers, which focused on relationships between students and teachers and found that students accepted disciplinary action, instruction, and motivation from persons in authority better when there was a preexisting healthy relationship. Additionally, she concluded that emotionally supportive relationships between teachers and students were

one of the factors that decreased the vulnerability of at-risk students' responses to stressful life events. When students had healthy emotionally supportive relationships with teachers, they were more likely to stay in school when stressful events happen.

Recognizing White privilege. Another behavior of effective teachers is recognizing the existence of white privilege. Picower (2009) in her qualitative study of eight white female pre-service teachers reported she found nine perceptions that hindered the formation of supportive classroom communities. She called these perceptions "tools of whiteness" (p. 204), or emotional mechanisms, and considered them to be protective of white privilege. Her study pointed out how these tools were used to perpetuate white culture as the culture of power, deny the existence of racism in the classroom, and derail cultural caring.

The first emotional mechanism reported by that Picower's (2009) teacher-participants used to perpetuate racism was to believe racism is represented only as a personal attack. For instance, her study supported the fact that racism is an insidious political tool, found to be widespread in institutions like schools, and not combated with enough zeal when it appears. The second way it was perpetuated took place when a personal attack was made and the teacher underreacted by telling the perpetrator to "be nice" (p. 207). The gravity of the situation was dismissed and neither the trespasser nor the trespassed were given a chance for redress.

Four other emotional mechanisms she found were to feel defensive, feel persecuted, reject responsibility, and deny racism's existence. By saying, "I never owned a slave" (p. 205), these teachers were defending their covert participation in institutional racism. Some of her participants were short-sighted in thinking that racism takes place in

only the obvious situations and the denial of participation in blatant racism can make European Americans feel better. The feeling of persecution led to one participant requesting that society, "Stop trying to make me feel guilty" (p. 205). Picower interpreted this reaction to mean that learning about historical racism in the classroom causes some teachers to interpret the lesson as a personal attack. She also found rejection of responsibility when her subjects thought that, "Racism is out of my control" (p. 207). Thinking that racism was "out of my control" (p. 207) absolved the participants from looking for it, educating others about it, and stopping it when it happens. The act of Rejecting responsibility made reacting to racism someone else's burden to carry. Denial was an emotional mechanism and was used to ignore racism in the classroom. Denial was used to say comments such as, "Now that things are equal…." (p. 206). Access to education is still not equal, but thinking it is equal absolved her participant-teachers of the duty to police their classrooms and pursue its end. If all is equal, the participants are absolved of the duty to adjust curriculum and make it culturally relevant.

Picower's seventh emotional mechanism related to how European American teachers refused to take jobs in urban districts with large populations of students of color because they carried the belief that "I can't relate" (p. 208). This tool allowed teachers to appear noble rather than racist. They found it hard to be culturally relevant and they used their self-professed ineffectiveness as something to hide behind. Hiding behind the excuse of cultural ignorance was a tool that she identified as being perpetuated racism in the classroom (p. 208). None of the participants in her study took it upon themselves to become educated in the ways of their linguistically and culturally different students. Moreover, they participated in cultural education only when it was offered by their

employer and they did not attempt to attend any ethnic activities in the communities where their students lived (p. 211).

The final emotional mechanism Picower discussed was the belief that multicultural adaptations are designed to "make whites feel guilty" (p. 205). Rather than viewing the celebrations of contributions of different cultures as a welcome to better relationships, participants viewed it as discipline for past generational ignorance. She ends with a conclusion: teachers seeking to create classrooms of equity and cultural caring need to examine their own practices to reveal and reflect on the use of any of these emotional mechanisms.

Campbell, Daniel, Portelli, and Soloman (2005), contended that white privilege is a reality and, therefore, regardless of the desire to relate or to understand what is relevant to students, European American teachers' lives are unlike their CLD students' lives. Therefore, teachers must meta-cognitively adjust their practices to consider cultural and linguistic differences. Sage's (2010) collection of case studies found teachers lack the knowledge necessary to serve their students who are culturally and linguistically different. Providing cultural relevance, she suggests, becomes a homework assignment for teachers to complete. Teachers are left to educate themselves about the cultural customs and contributions of those groups not represented in textbooks.

Recognizing deficit theory. In addition to understanding that white privilege makes equal education difficult, the effective teacher understands that deficiencies are in the system not the student. Teachers, along with dominant society, often take an attitude of negativity toward CLD students (Nieto, 2000). CLD students often get blamed as being deficient through what is known as Deficit Theory. Nieto (2000) defines deficit

theory as the belief that if one does not fit a preconceived, culturally created notion, then something is deficient in the individual. Toohey (1999), in an ethnographic study spanning over two school years, points out that deficit theory leads those in the dominant, privileged culture to *help* the marginalized to obtain the characteristics that will make them more acceptable to the dominant culture. The assumption is assimilation into the dominant culture is preferred, and CLD students just need to develop characteristics that will make them more acceptable. This is reflected in the thinking that CLD bring little of value to the classroom and need to be taught what is important. She suggests that teachers are contributing to deficit theory by trying to make outsiders fit in when what should be done is to make the group more inclusive.

To combat the idea that non-dominant culture members are deficit and to educate dominant culture members about the value and contributions of non-dominant culture members, Bawagan's (2010) qualitative study of highland aboriginal tribes in the Philippines uses reflective writing assignments. To help highland aboriginal students and lowland majority students to understand one another, students were required to write about and report on the cultural identity and community life of the aboriginal students. The assignment challenged the social norms of both the highland and the lowland students. After completing the assignment, Bawagan found 84.7% of the dominant culture students found value in and appreciation for the lifestyle and positive traits of the students from the non-dominant culture. Discovering that the students from the non-dominant culture observed cultural practices similar to 22.2% of the students from the dominant culture was astonishing to them. The assignment provided an opportunity to raise awareness and respect, and it reversed the dominant culture students' thinking that

the non-dominant culture students' were deficient. Challenging the social norms of the dominant culture can lead teachers to appreciate the positives about their students in the non-dominant. Differences are often defined as deficiencies by dominant culture.

The deficit theory is also reflected in the attitudes that teachers hold in relation to language registers. Dominant culture in the U.S. has its own language register, referred to as Standard American English. Users of other dialects such as Black English are considered deficient (Sriniwass, 2005). Although Black English more closely follows grammatical rules and has fewer exceptions than Standard English, its syntax is considered faulty and dyslogistic, and, although their messages may be clear, the use of phraseology by those who speak this dialect is considered broken (Hopkins, 2009; DeBose, 2006). The belief that Black English is broken places speakers of this dialect in danger of being judged as less intelligent and of being misunderstood by academics (Personal Communication-Lecture, Shinian Wu, July, 2013). In a study of 261 black and white participants, Billings (2008) investigated how Standard American English and Black English were perceived on 20 credibility measures. The results showed that although standard American English was preferred by all participants on several measures, dialect did not change the listener's perception of trustworthiness or likability. Dialect did change the participants' judgments of the speaker's competence. Those who spoke in Standard American English were judged to be more competent. In contrast to Billings' results, DeBose (2006) commented that the use of Black English should be accepted saying, "It is a dialect equal in status to any other dialect. Everyone speaks a dialect, and all dialects are equal" (p. 93).

Respecting students' speech as acceptable no matter the dialect or accent acknowledges they belong (Personal Communication-Lecture, Shinian Wu, July, 2013). According to Anya (2011), belonging is also demonstrated by teachers who adjust curriculum content. Anya's (2011) qualitative study of the motivations of successful black second language learners found these students, like any other, are eager to see any aspect of themselves and their interests in their academic pursuits. Students who are in the non-dominant culture want to see their cultural backgrounds reflected in their classroom and curriculum (Anya, 2011). For instance, black native English speakers in Spanish language classes wanted to see the inclusion of elements of Afro-Latin American culture. Likewise, in Bernal's (2002) qualitative case study of two Chicano undergraduate college students, their learning experiences lacked culturally competent pedagogy until they entered college. The two student participants did not identify with the history and the people studied in secondary school until taking specific ethnic classes in college. These students felt devalued in their previous school experiences because of the Eurocentric focus in the curriculum until they entered college where their cultural norms and contributions were discussed. To avoid what Bernal (2002) found, Arias, Garcia, Harris-Murri, & Serna (2010), stated instructing pre-service teachers in culturally competent pedagogy leads to teachers affirming student identities to form background. Funds of knowledge, or the knowledge students are given in their family and community socialization processes, are resources that culturally competent teachers use as foundations for learning (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1994).

Another way to promote value of all cultures involves classroom management. Brown (2003) studied teachers' knowledge about classroom management in American

urban schools. He interviewed 13 teachers who were considered effective by their principals, peers, and students' families. Those teachers found it important to develop caring relationships with their students and they have several attributes in common. First, they established and taught academic expectations and enforce rules consistently. Secondly, these teachers emphasize the need for knowledge about their student's communication styles. Knowing that communication styles were rooted in culture, these teachers recognize their students' learning and communication styles may be much different from theirs. Third, teachers who made concerted efforts to get acquainted with their students' backgrounds and to celebrate them, integrated these backgrounds into their curriculum, focused on cultural contributions, and responded to their individual academic, cultural, social and emotional needs were more effective in their teaching than teachers who did not acquaint themselves with their student backgrounds. Their students produced more work, persevered with long assignments, were more engaged in classroom discussions and reported liking school more often than students whose teachers remained distant.

Expectations. In addition to insinuating themselves into their students' lives, effective teachers believe their students are capable. Cooper's (2003) qualitative case study of effective white teachers of African American students makes these four significant points. First, effective teachers of black students hold high expectations of their students, irrespective of adverse reactions. They do not shy away from being firm or demanding. Cooper reported Irvine & Fraser (1998) called these teachers "warm demanders" (p. 421). Second, they noted effective teachers establish a routine. Effective teachers posted even minor changes to the schedule and made sure students were aware

of what is coming next in the day. Third, effective teachers underscored instructions and persisted in making them clear. They insisted that children know what is expected of them. Finally, European American teachers who are successful in teaching African American students use alternative teaching methods. For instance, African American culture values animated and vivid story telling (Heath, 1983). Effective teachers of African American students tended to employ more drama-based instruction along with opportunities for students to present what they have learned publically using drama (Cooper, 2003) .

Different cultures call for different teaching methods (Coleman, Lewis, & Middleton, 2011; Gay, 2002b; Hollins & Torres Guzman, 2009). Different methods may include using different curricula or different sources. Current curriculum favors European American students because it includes the stories of their ancestors, but it fails to include the stories of CLD learners (Gay, 2010). For example, in the fifth grade curriculum of a mid-west school district, American History is taught as *The Age of Exploration,* but Native Americans might see it as *The Age of Invasion* (Fox, 2010). In this particular instance, curriculum robs Native Americans of their story and denies others the benefits of attending to the perspectives and contributions of Native Americans (Banks & Banks, 2007). Given this situation, much is left up to the teacher to provide minority reflection within the curriculum and to establish relevance within the lesson.

According to Weinstein, et al., (2004) diverse students must also be taught how to socially navigate the dominate culture so that they can be prepared for success in all social and employment spheres. Weinstein et al. (2004) advised teaching culturally and linguistically different learners diverse ways to interact in social situations. For example,

in African American culture, it is acceptable to greet another with ebullience (Heath, 1983). Weinstein, et al. (2004) adds that Native American cultural greetings are done with reverence and a handshake, but some Asian cultures do not touch each other when greeting. When applying for a job in the U.S., however, most employers will expect a smile and a handshake. Teaching students how to greet in different circumstances prepares them to be culturally responsive (Weinstein et al., 2004).

Teaching cultural responsiveness also involves teaching resilience. People tend to relate well to those with whom they have common experiences, but the experiences of CLD students can be so different from those of Anglo-European American teachers that the disconnection creates a negative educational experience for the student (Ladson-Billings, 2011). School can become a place where many students of color have no sense of belonging, no connection, and no feeling of common struggle (Ndura, 2004). They can feel all alone. Anglo-European American teachers need to know how to cross cultural lines to relate to those students whose reality is different from their own and to know how to create connections (Ladson-Billings, 2011).

One way to create these vital connections is by teaching students they are not alone. According to Walton and Cohen (2007), a feeling of shared emotion inspires better academic performance. They conducted an intervention study with second-semester African American and European American college students. The intervention was designed to illustrate that the challenges encountered by the adjustment to college (e. g., homesickness, increased stress, and increased workload) were typical to all successful graduates. The intervention pointed out to the participants that the suffering they felt in their freshman experience had been felt by all of those who graduated before them. The

participating freshman were taught explicitly that they are not alone in their struggle and that they belong to a large group of people in the same situation. Control participants did not receive any of the messages of belonging. Students who received the intervention, with the message of a related common struggle, ended their college careers with better GPAs, and perceived a more hopeful future for themselves than the control group (Walton & Cohen, 2007).

Effective Teachers' Behavior in Alternative Settings. Teachers who chose alternative settings in which to practice their vocation, fare better when they practice culturally responsive behaviors (Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, & Curran, 2004), are aware of different perceptions of misbehavior and caring (Monroe, 2009, Downey & Pribesh, 2004), acknowledge that students have different emotional needs (Douglas, Lewis, Douglas, Scott, & Garrison-Wade, 2008), are actively aware of white privilege (Picower, 2009, Campbell, Daniel, Portelli, & Soloman, 2005), are actively aware of deficit theory (DeBose, 2006), and have high expectations for all students (Cooper, 2003). Because of the unique situations of the student body, teachers in alternative sites are met with more challenges than teachers in traditional schools (Alternative Education Resource Organization, 2014, McGee, 2001). Alternative education settings can be any public or private school, elementary or secondary that offers more flexible programs of study than a conventional school. Alternative schools implement special flexible curricula that meet the needs of students who do not find success in traditional schools. The A. E. R. O. (2014) defines alternative education as "education in which young people have the freedom to organize their daily activities, and in which there is equality and democratic decision-making among young people and adults" (p. 3). Students who have

a high probability of academic failure, as well as those who have participated in harmful, delinquent and criminal activities, are welcomed at these schools. They offer at-risk youth a second chance to learn and grow, acquire pro-social behaviors, and earn high school diplomas to help get their lives on a more positive track.

According to McGee (2001), the critics of alternative schools argue that they are merely "dumping grounds" for students with challenging problem behaviors (p. 588). These schools are seen, by many educators themselves, as places where students with disruptive behaviors are sent to protect their classmates who are left behind in traditional schools (McGee, 2001). He added, in his reflections as an alternative school administrator, the process of managing and placing students who exhibit extreme, challenging behaviors in these schools may contribute to a racial, gender, and class discrimination which already exists within the educational system. However, he has taken the case for alternative education options one step further noting, "Schools that seek to serve a variety [of needs] should not be singled out as *alternative*. Ensuring that all individuals have the opportunity to become successful is not an alternative, but a necessity (p. 588)." Non-traditional schools, when fortified with teachers strong in delivering culturally relevant pedagogy, are necessary because they provide a continuum and choice necessary to meet the needs of all students (McGee, 2001). Those successful teachers are flexible, supportive, and engaging.

Flexible. According to Dupper (2006), alternative schools offer choice and flexibility that makes a difference in graduation rates for at-risk students. When juxtaposed to traditional schools, alternatives that provide caring, flexible, and enriched academic programs are more effective at graduating youth at risk for dropout (Dupper,

2006). Teachers at alternative institutions are willing to develop their own additions to the curriculum and to offer flexible programing to their students. Teachers in traditional settings are either not willing to be flexible or they are pressured to accept work and assessments produced uniformly (Dupper, 2006). Both teacher groups have the same obligation of what to teach, but alternative settings lend themselves to allowing adjustable instruction and assessment (Kim & Franklin, 2009). Kim and Franklin (2009) found that students who attend alternative schools earn more credits and have higher graduation rates than do their at-risk peers who continue to attend traditional schools. The malleable way in which instruction is delivered contributes to their success (Kim & Franklin, 2009). In addition, Amin, Browne, Ahmed and Sato (2006) supported the finding that alternative teachers are flexible. The researchers used focus groups to compare pregnant and parenting teens who attend an alternative school to pregnant and parenting teens who attend conventional schools in Baltimore, Maryland. In their study, Amin, et al., found that alternative school attendees were more likely to have higher educational goals for the future than those attending traditional schools. Alternative school attendees attributed their success to various school factors such as the positive and nonjudgmental environment and the readily available social services. The positive and non-judgmental atmosphere created in alternative settings reaps benefits. According to Darling & Price (2004) in their qualitative study that included eight alternative schools in the state of Washington, the use of focus groups also found that most students reported feeling support from their teachers and the administration as well as feeling safe and cared for. As a result of this support system, their grades and behavior improved.

Supportive. Lagana-Riordan, Aguilar, Franklin, Streeter, Kim, Tripodi, and Hopson (2011), in their quasi-experimental mixed methods study, investigated levels of teacher support. They compared one alternative school to one traditional school in the same district. The student participants in this study had all attended the traditional school before transitioning to the alternative school. The study authors found the alternative schools teachers practiced the following: (a) recognition of students' strengths; (b) attention to individual relationships and individual student progress; (c) emphasis on student responsibility and choice; (d) commitment to achievement and success; (e) trust in students' evaluations of their own work; (f) focus on students' potential for success, (g) reliance on goal-setting activities, and (h) celebration of small steps toward success. Lagana-Riordan et al., (2011) concluded that individual attention and personal support from teachers is essential in the success of students who attend alternative schools.

Engaging. Another study which compared alternative and conventional school teachers in a quantitative study concluded there were differences in their practices. Parrett (1981) asked 76 teachers in five different U.S. states to rank instructional practices in order of their importance in the individual's classroom. Three of the top four choices for both groups were selecting appropriate learning activities, planning for those activities, and presenting subject matter both orally and visually. The differences Parrett found were that teachers in alternative settings tended to use community resources more frequently, prepared their own materials, used contracts for learning and behavior, used sources other than textbooks, and took notice of their students' feelings. Teachers in conventional schools were concerned more with quiet, orderly classrooms, lecture as a method used to teach, and tests as a measure of accomplishment.

Conclusion

Knowing what teacher attributes make instruction effective, sets the stage for answering the research questions. The foundation for being an effective teacher begins with understanding that students' educational values are learned as part of the socialization of culture. Different cultures learn differently. The teacher who seeks to know the student as an individual with unique needs and talents is likely to be effective. The process includes seeking to understand student behavior and to care for students in a way that is consistent with the student's cultural norms. Recognizing that white privilege is pervasive can bring teachers to the realization that CLD learners may have obstacles to overcome that are not of their making. The effective teacher does not expect students to conform to the dominant society and does not see them as defective when they learn differently. Teaching in a way that is culturally responsive and adapting curriculum to include all cultural voices makes the schooling experience more successful for everyone.

Chapter Three: Research Design

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a description of the research methods and steps used to investigate the research questions. Chapter three begins with the design and rationale of the study followed by descriptions of the subjects, instrumentation, and data. It ends with a description of how the data were collected and analyzed.

Study Design

The study is a non-experimental quantitative descriptive study. Non-experimental research describes existing phenomena without changing any conditions that will affect a subject's response and without proposing hypotheses (McMillan, 2004). There is no manipulation of any independent variable. This type of study is limited to describing or noticing relationships and it emphasizes numbers, measurements, deductive and inductive logic (McMillan, 2004). Both deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning were applied to this study. Deductive and inductive reasoning refer to two distinct logical processes. Deductive reasoning is a process in which a conclusion is drawn from a set of data which contains no added facts or assumptions. Inductive reasoning is a process in which conclusions are drawn that contain more information than the observations or experience on which it is based (McMillan, 2004).

Population, Sampling Procedures, and Samples

Teachers from alternative schools in Michigan, Alaska, Minnesota, and Saudi Arabia (American teachers with Saudi students) were asked to pilot the study. They were asked to answer the survey questions, but also to evaluate the quality and clarity of the questionnaire and to add comments to improve wording and avoid confusion. The

subjects included in the pilot were teachers who teach English to adults in prison who have never graduated from high school, Elementary homeless students, residents in a K-12 lock-down juvenile facility, students in K-12 schools that are a last step before lock-down facilities, and in a specialty high school. They each find themselves needing to use alternative instruction methods.

After finding the pilot to be clear, volunteers for this study were sought from the faculty of known secondary alternative schools in Kent County, Michigan. This type of sampling is called nonprobability purposive (Smith, 1993). In non-probable sampling, subjects are not chosen from a random population. The target population was secondary alternative teachers and the perceptions of teachers in instructional roles other than alternative would not have served to answer the research questions. Purposive sampling is a practical way to be assured the perceptions of teachers in alternative situations were represented (Smith, 1993). The first of two steps for recruiting subjects in non-probable purposive sampling was to contact four alternative high school principals to ask for their permission to send the survey link to teachers in their buildings. A consent letter, sent to the principals, explained the purpose along with the risks and benefits, the privacy and confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of the study. For the second step, the researcher asked the principals to introduce the study and web-based questionnaire to their teachers. Based on the information provided, teacher-subjects chose to participate or to decline.

The targeted population in this study consisted of teachers in high school (9^{th} to 12^{th} grade) who service students who are CLD in urban, suburban, and rural alternative settings in Kent County Michigan.

Instrumentation

A survey format was chosen because of its versatility, efficiency and generalizability and the Likert-type scale chosen to gather data is convenient when performing statistical analyses. The survey addressed a wide range of attitudes and perspectives, and questionnaires are less time-consuming and costly when compared to interviews and focus groups. Respondents took an average of 15 minutes to complete the survey.

The instrument used in the study included two types of questions. The first type was comprised of a Likert-scale survey modeled after the Culturally Relevant Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSE). The CRTSE has been adapted from Siwatu's (2007) Culturally Responsive Teaching Competencies. The items vary in their degree of difficulty of teaching practice from "easy" such as, *I am able to use a variety of teaching methods*, to "difficult" such as, *I am able to implement strategies that minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture*. The easy side of the continuum reflects general skills in managing effective learning environments, influencing student learning, and being instructionally effective. The difficult side contains the skills that are seen from culturally responsive teachers.

While the survey was intended to identify comparable responses that might emerge as significant, the comment areas were intended to give a more personal side of teachers' perceptions. The comment areas gave them an opportunity to add their professional interpretations. The survey asked the volunteer to rate his or her perceptions of their self-described preparedness to understand the needs, challenges, and obstacles of students who are culturally and linguistically different from them. The scale had five

choices which ranged from *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree*. The questionnaire was further divided into topical groupings and allowed respondents to add unstructured comments after each group. Respondents who stated they have not had experience in alternative settings with CLD learners were disqualified.

The second type of questions, developed by the researcher, asked demographic information. A deadline of two weeks was given for completion of the questionnaire so teachers could respond to the survey within their own time.

The survey was created using SurveyMonkey which offered convenience to collect, manage, and analyze survey data in a secure manner. The development of the Internet-based survey was assisted by Grand Valley State University's Statistical Counseling Center. The center assembled the survey provided by the researcher including the CRTSE and the demographic questions and provided the Internet link to complete the survey.

Questions were placed in topical categories. The 41-question survey was broken up into those categories and breaks were placed at the end of each category. Questions within each category were randomized as was the order of category presentation. Following each category, the subject was allowed a chance to comment in an open-ended way.

Once the data was collected from the actual participants, all identifying data from any section was redacted and the information from the surveys was analyzed into a statistical description of the responses. Descriptive statistics offer a framework to describe patterns and trends in a data set. Tables were used to summarize the described, organized, examined, and presented raw data.

Validity and Reliability

Although reliable researchers have deemed the CRSTE valid, a field test for this survey was required because of two major changes to the instrument. First, two of the original 40 questions were removed. Second, Siwatu (2007) had requested his subjects assign point values from 0 to 100. If teachers never practiced the culturally responsive teaching (CRT) item, they were to assign it a zero. If teachers used the CRT item in every lesson, they were to give it a 100. Siwatu's original scale was revised to a Likert-type which used five levels of differentiation.

Data Collection

The Grand Valley State University Statistical Consulting Center (GVSU SCC) meets with and discusses the drafting of web-based instruments for students working on theses. The SCC provided help to the researcher in revising the survey instrument. The SCC suggested categories of questions be formed that parallel the information in the literature review. They also made recommendations to reduce the survey in length. The researcher trimmed the original survey by 2 questions but found the remaining 38 questions to be imperative. The SCC set up the survey online and provided the researcher with a link to distribute to principals.

Permission from the Human Research Review Committee was obtained prior to distributing the live link. Clear directions and explanation of the purpose and risks of the survey were presented. Subjects were informed that there was no compensation for participating, that participation was voluntary, that subjects could withdraw at any time without penalty, that the survey was confidential and there were no risks associated with participation. Subjects were given the link to complete during two weeks in the month of

May, 2014 and were informed that they could complete it in their own time during that window. GVSU SCC was responsible for gathering the data and keeping it secure.

Data analysis

Descriptive and inferential statistics were difficult to use for the analysis of data in this study because, often, only one respondent fielded the question. Descriptive statistical analysis allows the presentation of data collected to be displayed in a meaningful way. When research has only one response, it is problematic to describe research findings and very little can be presented in tables, graphs, or discussion. It is important, when using descriptive and inferential statistics, to describe what is being compared, and to point out relationships. When one has few responses, comparisons and relationships cannot be described with certainty.

Descriptive statistics were used to draw conclusions based on facts and numbers and they served to describe the output data. The 38 questions of teacher practices did not include demographic questions. Those 38 were divided into 12 categories and are listed in Table 1. Many categories housed a different number of questions yet the questions were placed with each other because of the qualities they have in common. Values were assigned to each response: *strongly agree* reflected that the teacher understands the ramifications of that concept and practices it to its fullest, and was assigned a value of five. *Neither agree nor disagree* was assigned a point value of three. *Strongly disagree* reflected that the teacher does not understand the ramifications of that concept or does not practice it in the classroom. *Strongly disagree* received a value of one. The two intermediary steps, *agree* and *disagree*, were assigned 4 and 2 respectively. If a question was not answered, the value given was zero.

The values for each category were tallied and then divided by the number of questions in each category arriving at a mean value for each question. That value was then divided by the number of responses received. The resulting point value per person per question was reported. The higher the point value, the more likely those teachers felt prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The higher the point value, the higher those teachers rated themselves when using an adaptation of Siwatu's (2007) Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale. Any point value of 4 to 5 was deemed, by the author, as strongly prepared and shows that teachers understand and practice that concept; teachers feel they are prepared well in that area.

Inferential statistics were used to infer conclusions. They were a suitable method by which to examine relating variables in this study. They helped make judgments of the observed differences between variables and bring dependability to the probability that the observed differences result from an inferred conclusion rather than chance. Accuracy in inferring is complicated when inferences are made based on few responses. Narrative responses from the subjects were helpful in providing information about the human interpretation of answers to questions.

Summary

The methodology for the study was presented in this chapter. A non-experimental quantitative approach was used and survey questions were the primary source of gathering data. The survey questions were adapted from Siwatu's Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale. Subjects for the study were teachers from alternative schools in Western Michigan. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for analysis.

Chapter Four: Results

Introduction

The data results from the study are presented in this chapter. The context describes the set of circumstances in which the study took place and the findings have been addressed in two forms. The first form describes the results from the demographic questions and gives details about the respondents. The second form describes the results from the CRTSE in both deductive and inductive summaries. A short summary concludes the chapter.

Context

The data for this study was collected through an Internet-based questionnaire. The questionnaire included six queries designed to describe respondents' demographics and 38 queries designed to illicit each respondent's degree of self-reported efficacy in delivering culturally relevant pedagogy to CLD learners. The questionnaire was distributed to teachers in alternative settings.

Findings

The respondents were composed of teachers currently teaching in local suburban public districts within a county in Western Michigan. Of the total sample who volunteered to answer the questionnaire (N= 3), three indicated they teach in alternative settings and have more than five years of experience. Subjects were asked to indicate their race/ethnicity. Only one of the respondents reported White/Anglo racial identity, and, the other two respondents left the question blank. The other racial choices given were Black/ African American, Hispanic, Asian/ Pacific Islander, Native American/

Native Alaskan along with a space to specify any other identity. One of the subjects choose English as their first language, and the other two respondents left the question blank. One of them indicated they spoke Spanish, a prominent language in the area, and no one else offered another language proficiency. One of the subjects reported working in a suburban environment, and the other subjects did not respond.

The statistical analysis of the results for each of the CRTSE categories is given here. Due to the small sample size of the actual respondents, analyses of tests of independence using chi-square p-values were impractical. Table 1 reports the results of using Cronbach's alpha as an estimate of reliability. This form of statistical measurement increases as the inter-correlations of the items measure the same construct. As the correlation approaches one (1.0), it indicates that the level of internal consistency is high and there exists an unbiased estimate of generalizability. Cronbach's alpha accepts levels of 0.70 or higher as reliable.

Table 1

Cronbach's Alpha values

Categories	Number of Questions	Actual (n=3)
1. Student behaviors are cultural	4	.842
2. Communal learning and verve are cultural	3	.857
3. Perceptions of misbehavior are cultural	2	-
4. Definitions of caring are cultural	3	.857
5. Building healthy relations are cultural	3	.429
6. Deliver culturally relevant teaching	3	1.000
7. Deliver cultural inclusion	3	.918
8. Deliver appropriate scaffolding	4	-
9. Deliver appropriate classroom management	3	-
10. Deliver alternative teaching methods	3	-
11. Deliver curriculum adjustments	4	-
12. Effective alternative teachers create opportunities for success	3	-

Subjects were asked to rate how confident they were in their abilities to execute specific culturally responsive teaching practices by indicating a degree of confidence ranging from 5, strongly agree (completely confident), to 1, strongly disagree (no confidence). The value of each question answered was tallied and those in the same category were added together. The sum of the questions in each category was divided by the number of questions in each category arriving at a mean value for each question. The mean was then divided by the number of responses received. The resulting point value per answer per question was reported as a strength index in Table 2. This index, which ranges from 1 to 5, is a quantitative indicator of the strength of each teacher's CRTSE beliefs. The higher the point value, the more likely the responding teachers felt prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse learners.

Table 2

Descriptive statistics for categorized items on the CRTSE

Categories	Mean value per question	Actual Study Responses	Point value per person per question
1. Student behaviors are cultural	50/4= 12.5	3	4.1
2. Communal learning and verve are cultural	40/3= 13.3	3	4.43
3. Perceptions of misbehavior are cultural	23/2= 11.5	3	3.8
4. Definitions of caring are cultural	41/3= 13.6	3	4.5
5. Building healthy relations are cultural	34/3= 11.3	3	3.76
6. Deliver culturally relevant teaching	27/3= 9	2	4.5
7. Deliver cultural inclusion	15/3= 5	2	2.5
8. Deliver appropriate scaffolding	14/4= 3.5	1	3.5
9. Deliver appropriate classroom management	11/3= 3.6	1	3.6
10. Deliver alternative teaching methods	13/3= 4.3	1	4.3
11. Deliver curriculum adjustments	12/4= 3	1	3
12. Effective alternative teachers create opportunities for success	9/3= 3	1	3

Alternative secondary school teachers' self-efficacy strength point values ranged from 2.5 to 4.5. A rounded mean categorical score of 3.75 is produced when the scores for all 12 categories are added and averaged and the result is rounded to the nearest $1/100^{th}$. Comparisons of the categorical specific mean are presented in Table 2.

When individual categories are examined, the data shows that secondary alternative school teachers in this study had the highest mean score in understanding that definitions of caring are cultural, and in the delivery of culturally relevant teaching. Both categories produced a mean of 4.5 which suggests a high degree of confidence. The individual statements regarding cultural caring were: *I am able to build a sense of trust in*

my students, I develop a personal relationship with my students, and *I help students feel like they are valued members of the classroom.* The statements regarding delivering relevant teaching were: *I am able to adapt instruction to meet the needs of my students. I am able to obtain and use information about my students' academic strengths. I know how to obtain information about my students' academic weaknesses.*

Other areas where teachers in this study scored a high degree of efficacy were in understanding communal learning and verve are cultural, delivering alternative teaching methods, and understanding student behaviors are cultural. Respectively, these three areas received strength point values of 4.43, 4.3, and 4.1. These scores suggest that the teachers in this study feel confident in determining a student's preference for working independently or interdependently and in providing learning activities that allow both approaches. Delivering alternative teaching methods included confidence in using a variety of teaching different methods and strategies, modeling tasks, and designing instruction that matches students' developmental needs. Knowing whether their students prefer to compete or not is also an area of confidence. Identifying ways that school culture and communication can be different from home culture and communication is a strength as well, along with obtaining student academic interests and using those interests to make learning meaningful.

The area of least confidence for the teachers in this study was in delivering cultural inclusion. It received a strength point value of 2.5. This category included being able to greet English Language Learners with a phrase in their native language, design a classroom environment using displays that reflect a variety of cultures, and being able to

praise English Language Learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language.

Conclusion

This chapter has described the demographic characteristics of the participants in this study. It has encapsulated the factual results of the data and presented the findings. The goal of this chapter was to provide evidence on the perceived preparedness of secondary teachers in alternative settings to effectively deliver instruction to linguistically and culturally diverse students, and to provide evidence of how teachers in alternative settings scored on the CRTSE. High scores on the CRTSE scale indicate a greater sense of efficacy for engaging in specific instructional and non-instructional tasks associated with culturally responsive teaching (Siwatu, 2007). Chapter Five will draw conclusions and provide recommendations.

Chapter Five: Conclusions

Summary

Classrooms are becoming more multicultural while teachers are becoming more European American (National Collaborative on Diversity of the Teaching Force, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, 2012). Therefore, the above findings are important given the probability that tomorrow's teachers will teach students from linguistically diverse backgrounds (National Council of Teachers of English, 2013). One problem with this arrangement is cultural misunderstanding. Teachers who do not share their students' backgrounds may find it difficult and challenging to carry out the duty to educate, especially those who teach in alternative secondary schools (McGee, 2001). Students are also affected by this issue (Banks, 2007, Gay 2000, Ladson-Billings (1994), and Nieto, 2002). Culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students face the challenge of learning the dominant culture and American Standard English, as well as learning subject-specific content. Consequently, they suffer academic underachievement and need teachers who can reach them (Carpenter, 2012; Raspberry, 2003; West & Pennell, 2003). Ogbu (2008) points out that Native and involuntary immigrant populations have been denied equal access to education and their reaction, difficulty with, and resistance to dominant-culture education, is typical behavior found in cultures adapting to oppression and the lack of opportunity.

An answer to providing equal access to education lies in providing effective pedagogy. This study sought to investigate the feelings teachers have about their level of preparedness in delivering culturally relevant pedagogy to CLD learners in alternative

schools and, concurrently, how they rate themselves in being culturally responsive. The practice of teaching using methods that are accepted as best for CLD learners may lead to a change in pedagogy and possibly bring about improved levels of education with improved levels of student performance. By surveying teachers at alternative schools, the investigator collected information that may assist teachers and teacher preparation institutions in delivering instruction that better suits students who are culturally and linguistically diverse.

The questions in the survey examined how prepared teachers at alternative schools feel to teach culturally and linguistically diverse learners, and how teachers of alternative schools rate themselves when using an adaptation of Siwatu's (2007) Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale. The study was a non-experimental quantitative descriptive study. An Internet link was made available to teachers at alternative secondary schools and the data gathered therein was analyzed using deductive and inductive reasoning. The findings report teachers' perceptions of how they administer their craft and how they rate themselves in being culturally responsive.

Conclusions

The web-based survey questionnaire was sub-divided into researchable components and addressed each of the research questions. The first research question underlying this study was whether teachers at alternative schools felt prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse learners. The results suggest that teachers in this study felt prepared to teach CLD learners as indicated by the mean score of 3.75 on a one to five point scale. This result is surprising since many teachers report

The second question asked how teachers of alternative schools rate themselves when using an adaptation of Siwatu's (2007) Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale. Those results suggest that teachers in this study felt their teaching efforts were effective in most of the categories.

The investigator was able to report several culturally responsive constructs in which respondents in this survey see themselves doing well and several constructs that need attention. Each will be dissected in the following section. Recommendations for improved practice and further study will be offered. Areas of strength were knowing that student behaviors, communal learning and verve, and definitions of caring are all cultural. Delivering culturally relevant teaching and alternative teaching methods were areas of strength as well. Teachers in the study showed they felt confident in developing skills for dealing with barriers to learning, forming healthy relationships across cultures, investigating student background knowledge so scaffolding is more appropriate, managing classrooms appropriately, adjusting curriculum, and creating opportunities for success. The area where teachers felt most ill-prepared was in delivering cultural inclusion. Improvements could be made by learning to greet and dismiss students in their native languages and by including displays in the classroom which reflect students' native cultures.

The findings from this study suggest that secondary alternative teachers are more effective in their ability to help students feel like important members of the classroom and develop positive personal relationships with their students than they are in their ability to communicate with students with linguistic differences.

Discussion

Vygotsky (1978) supported the notion that learning is done in a social environment. A more able adult or peer assists a learner through the Zone of Proximal Development into independence. Family culture is any student's first social environment. Krashen (1985) supported the notion that effective teaching requires teachers to investigate the knowledge base of their students and scaffold their teaching with comprehensible input to support the students' background knowledge. Knowing students' family culture helps give teachers background so they can provide proper scaffolding and comprehensible input. Multiculturalists (Banks, 2005, Gay, 2002a, Ladson-Billings, 2011, and Nieto, 2002) bring these two theories together in support of their notion that culturally relevant pedagogy is key to effectively educating CLD learners. Siwatu (2007) created a way teachers could evaluate their efficacy in educating CLD learners. This study employed the work of Vygotsky, Krashen, and Siwatu to explore the self-reported efficacy of teachers in instructing CLD learners in alternative settings.

Category one asked teachers to consider the ways in which communication in student homes may be different from communication at school. Vygotsky (1978) theorized that the social world from which a student emerges is her or his first sphere of communication. Weinstein, Tomlinson-Clarke, and Curran (2004) wrote about the possibility of widespread misunderstanding between students and teachers with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Misunderstanding can interfere with both teaching and learning. Two-thirds of the respondents from the actual study group stated they can and

do identify differences in communication. A possible follow up question to this might be: What does a teacher do after identifying those differences?

Boykin, Tyler, Watkins-Lewis and Kizzie (2009) wrote about different styles of learning and different levels of verve. They stated that African American students performed better when the community and verve of home matched that of school. In category two, teachers in this study felt confident that they could correctly determine how each student feels about group work versus independent work, and cooperative activities vs. competitive activities. Teachers felt they know how to implement learning activities depending on the type of learner.

Along with differences in learning styles and verve between home and school, there are differences in culture between home and school (Heidke & O'Connor, 2004). Category three spoke to the ability to minimize the mismatch between home culture and school culture. Krashen's (1985) theory of the affective filter is significant here. Lowering the affective filter reduces the students' stressors. Heidke and O'Connor (2004) stated that dominant culture sets the social rules of school and Ladson-Billings (2011) suggested using culturally relevant teaching to diminish the incongruity. Two of the three respondents agreed and one was neutral (neither agree nor disagree) but all felt confident in gaining relevant information about their students' home lives.

Dissimilarities between home and school culture can be off-set by healthy relationships (Allen & Pianta, 2008). Teachers reported in category four that they felt they are performing well when it comes to building personal relationships within professional boundaries. Allen and Pianta (2008) discovered, at the secondary level, positive relationships between adults and teenagers were the most important ingredient to

promoting positive student development. Respondents reported they are successful in building trust, belonging, and community. One respondent remarked that he or she spends "40% of the time being a counselor" and encourages both students and parents to contact him or her outside of school hours.

Communication between teachers and parents and having positive home-school relations is that which category five explored (Brown, 2003). Brown (2003) found that teachers' immersions into the lives of their students, including their family life, can bring positive outcomes to student performance. The teachers in this study reported, in respect to reporting student achievement, progress, and behavior that they were either fully comfortable, or they were unsatisfied. A comment was made that "if I feel a language barrier is interfering with communication, I [seek] translation services." Perhaps those who are comfortable have this service to avail, but those who are unsatisfied with communication do not.

Adapting instruction and obtaining information about students' strengths and weaknesses is a perceived competency of the teachers who responded to this survey. Brown, (2003) established that teachers who integrated student backgrounds into their curriculum and focused on cultural contributions were more effective than teachers who did not alter instruction and curriculum. This study's subjects felt resourceful in their abilities to adapt instruction to teach to students' strengths and weaknesses. Several comments were made by teacher-subjects that supported the suggested best practices of modifying lessons both in advance and on the spot. One respondent reported that she or he uses small groups because "students learn at individual paces and in unique ways."

Multiculturalists' best practices have suggested modification of lessons (Banks, 2005, Gay, 2002a, Ladson-Billings, 2011, and Nieto, 2002). They also suggested the use of greetings and praise in students' native languages and the use of displays and artifacts that reflect a variety of cultures. Category seven asked teachers about their habits of communicating in students' home languages. Verdugo and Flores (2007) stated the use of students' culture and home language is an important part of the instructional process and, as far as possible, should be present in the learning environment. Anya (2011) found students are eager to see any aspect of themselves and their interests in their academic pursuits. The subjects of this study perceived this category as their weakest. One respondent stated, "I am slowly learning greetings and praise…" Perhaps teacher preparation institutions can take this to heart and provide pre-service teachers with proper phraseology and pronunciation.

Greeting students in their native languages is meaningful to them (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1994). Making learning meaningful to students is a goal in every lesson that instructors demonstrate (Banks, 2005, Gay, 2002a, Ladson-Billings, 2011, and Nieto, 2002). Using familiar examples and tapping into students' prior knowledge to explain new concepts are the subjects of category eight. CLD students have felt devalued in their school experiences because of the Eurocentric focus in the curriculum and the lack of discussion about their cultural norms and contributions (Bernal, 2002). In this study, answering, *I use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds* was met with intermediate scoring for the participants.

Teachers in this study expressed they need help in adjusting curriculum, but they felt confident building strong communities. Category nine inquired about the perceived

preparedness to create functional learning communities and develop positive relationships among students. Bawagan's (2010) work with differing cultures resulted in both sides gaining empathy and provided an opportunity to raise awareness and respect. The teacher respondents in this study acknowledged that they create community well, however, they do not use learning preference inventories to gather data about how students like to learn.

Category ten asked how teachers use some often-recommended teaching practices. The query solicited whether there is a use of a variety of teaching methods, demonstration, modeling, and designing instruction to match student's developmental needs. Krashen (1981) supports this with his $i + 1$ and Heath (1983) recognized there were different expectations in dissimilar cultures. When teachers model their expectations, there is less misunderstanding and less student disconnection. Engaging students in a variety of teaching strategies includes all learners. Teachers reported a feeling of strength in these three areas.

Revising instructional material to represent more cultural groups, examining curriculum for negative cultural stereotypes and providing lessons that highlight how other cultural groups have influenced specific content areas was the focus of category 11. In 1973, The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE, 2011) determined curriculum favors students with Anglo-European backgrounds. Banks and Banks (2007) defended that curriculum robs Native Americans [and others] of their story and denies students, Native and non-Native alike, the benefits of attending to the perspectives and contributions of Native Americans [and others]. Respondents reported feeling insecure about this category and revising materials is an area that needs support.

The final category sought answers to teachers' habits with assessing students. Assessments are made both formally and informally, and teachers make small assessments of student understanding daily while observing them work. Ruklick (2000), as cited by The National Council of Teachers of English (2013), claims that standardized testing is unfair to black students because their linguistic and cultural practices are not considered when content is taught and tested. Teachers responded that they feel comfortable instituting different assessments, but disagreed that they are able to identify ways tests can be biased toward culturally diverse students. Teacher training must include ways to identify bias on assessments and to make adjustments for it.

Recommendations

Creating belonging and positive learning environments is supported by receiving proper training. Bakari (2003) performed a quantitative study of pre-service teacher attitudes toward African American students. The study was conducted at both public and private institutions where he classified those institutions as either European American or African American depending on the majority of attendees. His hypothesis was that devaluing culturally and linguistically diverse students may be a result of inadequate training. The findings revealed those pre-service teachers who attend public and private, predominately European, universities did not receive cultural sensitivity training. Conversely, public and private historically African American universities required their pre-service teachers to receive cultural training. Teachers in his study, who were able to view culture as a tool in teaching, rather than a stumbling block, were more appreciated by students. Despite the teachers' ethnic backgrounds, scores on Bakari's *Willingness to Teach African American Students* subscale revealed pre-service teachers attending

universities requiring cultural training were more eager to teach CLD youth than those pre-service teachers attending universities without cultural training. He concluded by stating that the cultural sensitivity training Anglo-European American teachers received, prepared them how to positively respond to the challenges of teaching in environments different from their own cultures. Bakari is quick to point out that although desire to instruct CLD learners may be strong in some teachers, the positive attitude they possess may not translate into improved outcomes for the students. Teacher education programs must provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to cultivate positive attitudes toward students of color.

The study results in categories one, two, three, and four expose the notion that work needs to be continued to insure that teachers are introduced to the theory and practice of teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Awareness that the interpretation of circumstances is cultural can thwart misunderstandings, knowing there are different styles of learning and verve can circumvent misinterpretations of student behavior, and expressing caring as defined by the student can create belonging.

Category five explored the communication between teachers and parents. Translation services are available in some school districts and it is recommended that teachers take full advantage when and if they are available. When translations are not available, it is recommended that teachers send notes to parents using pictures, graphics, symbols, and very limited language. To deliver culturally relevant teaching in alternative settings it is recommended that novice teachers have exposure to mentors who are competent in effective instruction of CLD students. Ongoing professional development which extends the education of multicultural best practices is suggested.

The area of weakest confidence, as reported by the teachers in this study, involved bringing students' cultures and languages into the classroom. The researcher suggests that classroom teachers address this by assigning students the task of providing greetings and salutations along with other simple phrases. Students could author these posters in their native languages complete with pronunciation, or they could research others' languages. The posters could be displayed around the room and referred to by both teacher and students. This assignment could also be applied to cultural artifacts to help create displays that reflect student culture. Teacher preparation institutions could also assign the research of greetings and artifacts to pre-service teachers. Every new class could assemble them in a packet so teacher candidates would have them for future classroom use.

The researcher also recommends that getting teachers to recognize bias in tests and curriculum needs to happen early on in teacher training. Teacher institutes must also coach teachers in adapting curriculum and curriculum authors need to include the contributions and viewpoints of all groups. In the classroom, teachers can assign students to research the roles of underrepresented cultures.

The educators in this study reported being prepared to educate CLD students. Recommendations for future study includes identifying, specifically, how they became prepared. Were they prepared because of initial teacher training, professional development, mentoring, or on-the-job training? The researcher also recommends studying ways to assist educators in alternative settings in maintaining their confidence in delivering culturally relevant pedagogy.

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Appendix A

Study Introduction Letter

Date:
Dear Teacher:

You are being invited to take part in a research study designed to explore the perceived preparedness of teachers to instruct culturally and linguistically diverse learners in alternative settings.

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to respond to some questions about your current pedagogic practices. You will be asked your feelings about your preparedness to teach students who are ethnically, racially, linguistically, and culturally different from you. Your ethnic roots (i.e., White, Black/African American, Hispanic, Latino, Native American, Native Alaskan, etc.) compared to the ethnicity of your students might play a part in your interest and your performance as a teacher. By gathering this information, we can learn more about how the training experiences of teachers impact their teaching.

A link to the survey has been provided to you. Your consent and willingness to participate in the study will be evidenced by your answering the survey questions. Any information you provide will not identify you. You will remain anonymous. Participation is totally voluntary. You may contact me at lancasli@mail.gvsu.edu if you need any additional information. I look forward to hearing your responses. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Liana Lancaster
Graduate Student, M. Ed. Candidate
Grand Valley State University

Appendix B

Teacher Participant Information Sheet
Survey Questionnaire

Demographic Characteristics

What is your gender? ☐ Female ☐ Male

What is your ethnicity?
☐ White/ Anglo
☐ Black/ African American
☐ Hispanic
☐ Asian/ Pacific Islander
☐ Native American/ Native Alaskan
☐ Other (please specify) _____

What is your first language?
☐ English
☐ Spanish
☐ Other (please specify) _____

In what type district do you work? ☐ Urban ☐ Suburban ☐ Rural

Years of teaching experience? ☐ 1-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16-20 ☐ 20 or more

Grade level you teach? ☐ Elementary ☐ Middle School ☐ High School

Type of school?
☐ Traditional public ☐ Alternative public
☐ Traditional private ☐ Alternative private

The following are some questions about your learning experiences with students who are culturally and linguistically diverse. Read the statements and, based on your personal experiences, fill in the box that matches your best choice. Please feel free to add any comments you have.

1. I am able to adapt instruction to meet the needs of my students.
☐strongly agree ☐agree ☐neither agree nor disagree ☐disagree ☐strongly disagree

2. I am able to obtain and use information about my students' academic strengths.
☐strongly agree ☐agree ☐neither agree nor disagree ☐disagree ☐strongly disagree

3. I am able to determine whether my students like to work alone or in a group.
☐strongly agree ☐agree ☐neither agree nor disagree ☐disagree ☐strongly disagree

4. I know whether or not my students feel comfortable competing with other students.
☐strongly agree ☐agree ☐neither agree nor disagree ☐disagree ☐strongly disagree

5. I am able to identify ways that the school culture (e.g. values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home culture.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

6. I am able to implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

7. I am able to assess student learning using various types of assessments.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

8. I am able to gain relevant information about my student' home life.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

9. I am able to build a sense of trust in my students.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

10. I am able to establish positive home-school relations.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

11. I use a variety of teaching methods to help meet the needs of all students.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

12. I am able to develop a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse backgrounds.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

13. I use my knowledge of students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

14. I am able to use my students' prior knowledge to help them make sense of new information.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

15. I am able to identify ways how students' communication at home may differ from the school norms.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

17. I teach students about their cultures' contributions to the content area.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

18. I am able to greet English Language Learners with a phrase in their native language.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

19. I design a classroom environment using displays that reflect a variety of cultures.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

20. I develop a personal relationship with my students.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

21. I know how to obtain information about my students' academic weaknesses.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

22. I am able to praise English Language Learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

23. I am able to identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards linguistically diverse students.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

24. I regularly communicate with parents regarding their child's educational progress.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

26. I am able to help students to develop positive relationships with their classmates.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

27. I revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

28. I critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

29. I design lessons that show how other cultural groups have made use of my content area (math, science, social studies, language arts, etc.)
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

30. I demonstrate/model classroom tasks to enhance student understanding.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

31. I am able to communicate with the parents of English Language Learners regarding their child's achievement.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

32. I help students feel like they are valued members of the classroom.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

33. I am able to identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards culturally diverse students.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

34. I use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how my students like to learn.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

35. I use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

36. I explain new concepts using examples that are taken from my student's everyday lives.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

37. I obtain information regarding my student's academic interests.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

38. I am able to use the interests of my students to make learning meaningful for them.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

39. I implement cooperative learning activities for those students who like to work in groups.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

40. I design instruction that matches my student's developmental needs.
□strongly agree □agree □neither agree nor disagree □disagree □strongly disagree

Appendix C

Consent Form for Principal

Project Title: Investigating Teachers' Self-Reported Efficacy in Instructing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners in Alternative Settings

Principal Investigator: Liane Lancaster, College of Education, Grand Valley State University (GVSU)

Dear Principal,

Background Information

Your teachers are being invited to take part in a research study designed to explore the ways race and ethnic culture impact their teaching experience. They will be asked to reflect on their experience and understanding of the relationship between themselves and their students of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds. Education researchers, teachers, and I want to learn more about the preparedness of teachers who work with students of diverse ethnic, racial, linguistic or cultural backgrounds. You are being invited to allow the researcher access to your teachers who will take part in this study.

Purpose of Consent Form

This consent form gives you the information you will need to help you decide whether to allow the research to take part in your school building. Please read the form carefully. You may ask any questions about the research, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a principal, and anything else that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you may make your decision. If you choose to allow your teachers to participate, I will provide you a survey link. Your willingness to participate will be evidenced when you pass the link on to your teachers.

Procedures

I will be asking your teachers to respond to a number of questions based on the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self Efficacy Scale (CRTSE). It is an instrument built on Culturally Responsive Teaching Competencies by Siwatu (2006). The instrument used to gather demographic information has been piloted by reputable researchers and been proven to be valid and reliable. Likert style questions will be

used to ascertain the level of perceived preparedness teachers have when they work with CLD learners.

Risks and Benefits of the Study
The possible risks and/or discomforts associated with the study include: emotional or psychological discomfort. The interview questions ask for your teachers to be reflective and honest about their experiences and that may be uncomfortable for them. If they feel, at any time during the questionnaire, like reflecting on their education and experience is too difficult, they will be allowed to stop and exit the Internet site. I believe the risk of emotional or psychological distress is very minimal.

There may not be any immediate personal benefits from your teachers' participation in this study. I hope their experiences, however, will help me add to the existing body of knowledge about teachers who have culturally and linguistically diverse learners. If you are interested in the results of the study, I will be happy to share them with you.

Compensation
There is no monetary compensation to participants, however the benefit comes in helping the educational community at large.

Privacy & Confidentiality
The information your teachers provide during this research study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. Their names will not be on any of the data. Results will be reported in such a way that neither your teachers nor your building can be identified. However, federal government regulatory agencies and Grand Valley State University Human Research Review Committee (HRCC) (a committee that reviews and approves research studies involving human subjects) may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research.

Voluntary Nature of the Study
If you decide to allow your teachers to take part in the study, it should be because you really want them to volunteer. Your school will not gain or lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to allow your teachers to volunteer. You can stop the procedures at any time during the study and you will still keep the benefits and rights you had before allowing your teachers to volunteer. Neither your teachers nor you will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study. Your teachers also have the option of exiting the survey site if they choose to not answer. If you choose to withdraw your teachers from this project after it starts but

before it ends, I may keep information about their responses and this information may be included in study reports.

Contacts and Questions
If you have any questions about this research project, please contact:
Liane Lancaster (616) 301-8458 lianelancaster@yahoo.com

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, **you are encouraged** to contact:
HRRC (616) 331-3197 hrrc@gvsu.edu

I understand the risks involved in allowing my teachers to participate in this study. I give consent to allow the use of my school in Michigan as an interview site.

Appendix D

Consent Form for Teachers

PROJECT TITLE: Investigating Teachers' Self-Reported Efficacy in Instructing Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners in Alternative Settings

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Liane Lancaster, GVSU, College of Education

BACKGROUND INFORMATION
You are being invited to take part in a research study designed to explore the ways race/ethnicity impact your teaching experience. You are being asked to reflect on your experience and your understanding of the relationship between yourself and your students of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds. Education researchers, practitioners, and I want to learn more about the preparedness of teachers who work with students of diverse ethnic, racial, linguistic or cultural backgrounds in alternative settings. You are being invited to take part in this study because you work at an alternative setting and CLD learners in your classroom.

PURPOSE OF CONSENT FORM
This consent form gives you the information you will need to help you decide whether to participate in the study or not. Please read the form carefully. You may ask any questions about the research, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else that is not clear. When all of your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in this study or not. If you choose to participate, your consent will be implied by answering the questions.

PROCEDURES
You will be asked to designate a level of agreement that best matches your experience. i.e., I will be asking you to respond to a number of questions with choices like "a little," "a lot," or "not at all." The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes.

RISKS AND BENEFITS OF THE STUDY
The possible risks and/or discomforts associated with the study include: emotional or psychological discomfort. All of the questions are asked in a way that should not inflict any harm. However, the questions do ask for you to be reflective of your experiences and that may be uncomfortable. If you feel like any question makes you feel uncomfortable, you are allowed to stop answering questions. If at any point you decide that you no longer want to participate in the study, you can exit the survey. I believe the risk of emotional or psychological distress is very minimal. There are no anticipated social, economic, physical, or legal risks.

It is unknown if there will be any benefits to you because you participate in this study. However, I hope that I will learn from your experiences and that you will help me add to the existing body of knowledge about teachers who

have culturally and linguistically diverse learners. Quite often, the benefits of studies like mine lie in the importance of the knowledge to be gained, the contribution to science, and the contribution it will make to society in general. If you are interested in the results of the study, I will be happy to share them with you.

COMPENSATION

There is no monetary compensation to participants, however the benefit comes in helping the education community at large.

PRIVACY & CONFIDENTIALITY

The information you provide during this research study will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by law. Your name will not be on any of the data. All of the data will be held securely by the Statistical Consulting Center of Grand Valley State University. Results will be reported in such a way that neither you, your school, nor your students will be identified. However, federal government regulatory agencies and Grand Valley State University Human Research Review Committee (HRCC) (a committee that reviews and approves research studies involving human subjects) may inspect and copy records pertaining to this research.

VOLUNTARY NATURE OF THE STUDY

If you decide to take part in the study, it should be because you really want to volunteer. You will not lose any benefits or rights you would normally have if you choose not to volunteer. You can stop at any time during the study and still keep the benefits and rights you had before volunteering. You will not be treated differently if you decide to stop taking part in the study. You also have the option of exiting the survey at any time. If you choose to withdraw from this project before it ends, I may keep your responses and this information may be included in study reports.

CONTACTS AND QUESTIONS

If you have any questions about this research project, please contact:
Liane Lancaster (763) 219-2898 lancasli@gvsu.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact:
HRRC (616) 331-3197 hrrc@gvsu.edu

By answering the questions provided in the Internet link, you understand the risks involved in participating in this study and you give your consent to allow your responses to be used.

Appendix E

Categorical Divisions of Teacher Participant Survey Questionnaire

1. Student behaviors are cultural

I am able to identify ways that the school culture (e.g. values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home culture. (5)

I am able to identify ways how students' communication at home may differ from the school norms. (15)

I obtain information regarding my student's academic interests. (37)

I am able to use the interests of my students to make learning meaningful for them. (38)

2. Communal learning and verve are cultural

I am able to determine whether my students like to work alone or in a group. (3)

I implement cooperative learning activities for those students who like to work in groups. (39)

I know whether or not my students feel comfortable competing with other students. (4)

3. Perceptions of misbehavior are cultural

I am able to implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture. (6)

I am able to gain relevant information about my student' home life. (8)

4. Definitions of caring are cultural

I am able to build a sense of trust in my students. (9)

I develop a personal relationship with my students. (20)

I help students feel like they are valued members of the classroom. (32)

5. Building healthy relations are cultural

I am able to establish positive home-school relations. (10)

I regularly communicate with parents regarding their child's educational progress. (24)

I am able to communicate with the parents of English Language Learners regarding their child's achievement. (31)

6. Deliver culturally relevant teaching

I am able to adapt instruction to meet the needs of my students. (1)

I am able to obtain and use information about my students' academic strengths. (2)

I know how to obtain information about my students' academic weaknesses. (21)

7. Deliver cultural inclusion

I am able to greet English Language Learners with a phrase in their native language. (18)

I design a classroom environment using displays that reflect a variety of cultures. (19)

I am able to praise English Language Learners for their accomplishments using a phrase in their native language. (22)

8. Deliver appropriate scaffolding

I use my knowledge of students' cultural background to help make learning meaningful. (13)

I use examples that are familiar to students from diverse cultural backgrounds. (35)

I am able to use my students' prior knowledge to help them make sense of new information. (14)

I explain new concepts using examples that are taken from my student's everyday lives. (36)

9. Deliver appropriate classroom management

I am able to develop a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse backgrounds. (12)

I am able to help students to develop positive relationships with their classmates. (26)

I use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how my students like to learn. (34)

10. Deliver alternative teaching methods

I use a variety of teaching methods to help meet the needs of all students. (11)

I demonstrate/model classroom tasks to enhance student understanding. (30)

I design instruction that matches my student's developmental needs. (40)

11. Deliver curriculum adjustments

I teach students about their cultures' contributions to the content area. (17)

I revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups. (27)

I critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes. (28)

I design lessons that show how other cultural groups have made use of my content area (math, science, social studies, language arts, etc.) (29)

12. Effective alternative teachers create opportunities for success

I am able to assess student learning using various types of assessments. (7)

I am able to identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards linguistically diverse students. (23)

I am able to identify ways that standardized tests may be biased towards culturally diverse students. (33)