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Examining Elementary Teachers' Implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Katherine A. Silva

Eastern Illinois University

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Examining Elementary Teachers' Implementation
of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Katherine A. Silva

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EXAMINING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Abstract

The purpose of this research is to examine if elementary teachers in Central Illinois are implementing culturally responsive teaching (CRT) practices, since the United States and Central Illinois are becoming more diverse. Central Illinois is characterized by primarily White, rural communities and schools. Thus, some teachers may not have the theoretical or practical skills to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. A quantitative study utilizing a survey-questionnaire method was designed to examine if kindergarten through fifth grade teachers are implementing CRT in Central Illinois. The researcher examined which CRT practices teachers are doing the most and least, and if there was a relationship between implementation and student demographics, or implementation and teacher characteristics. Within 39 counties, 469 elementary teachers participated in the study. The results of the study revealed that teachers are doing CRT practices that are more general in nature and less specific to meeting CLD students’ needs or addressing diversity. There were a few significant correlations between the student demographics of “number of English language learners,” “number of Hispanic students,” and “number of non-Christian students” and CRT implementation. There was no significant correlation between teacher demographics, such as ethnicity, years of experience, or professional development and implementation of CRT practices.

Keywords: culturally responsive teaching, elementary education, English language learners
Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to Jake and my family. Your endless support and encouragement has helped me to get through some of the most challenging and testing moments in my studies. You have continually been there to lend a hand, ask, and encourage. I can’t thank you enough for your help in my success; I am truly blessed to have all of you in my life.
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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Central Illinois has typically been considered a White, rural area with little cultural and linguistic diversity (CLD); however, over the last few decades, culturally and linguistically diverse populations have been growing significantly in the United States (U.S.) and in Illinois (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). Federal accountability requirements hold all U.S. school administrators and educators responsible for the educational achievement of all students, including English language learners (ELLs) and minorities, by providing high quality education to each student (Every Student Succeeds Act of 1965, 2015). Currently, most CLD students in Central Illinois spend the majority of their instructional day in the general education classroom taught by teachers who may have had or have limited opportunities to learn how to address CLD students’ language, learning, and social-emotional needs (Gay, 2002; Plata, 2008, 2011), which are varied in nature (deJong & Harper, 2005). As a result, many teachers are unprepared or incompetent in how to address and teach CLD students (Ebersole, Kanahele-Mossman, & Kawakami, 2015; Tran, 2015; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Teachers may lack the knowledge and skills in discipline, social interactions or communication, views on school and teachers, gender roles, language, and expectations as they relate to diverse students and their families (Gay, 2002; Plata, 2011). Thus, administrators need teachers that pay special attention to recognizing and valuing these cultural differences to provide the most appropriate and meaningful education for each student (Chartock, 2010; Gay, 2000, 2002, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Plata, 2008, 2011; Saifer, Edwards, Ellis, Ko, & Stuczynski, 2011; Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), even more so because standardized tests
scores indicate an obvious achievement gap among Whites and CLD students (Ebersol et al., 2015; Hollins, 1993; Plata, 2008; Vavrus, 2008).

The noted achievement gap and quality of teachers within schools may not only impact the school’s reputation, but also the opportunity for funding that is given by the government. Further, administrators need to be aware of how changing student demographics in school can impact the school culture and learning through changes in socialization, counseling needs, and student interaction dynamics (Plata, 2008).

Culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is a theoretical framework that can be implemented to help improve the academic achievement (Bui & Fagan, 2013; Gay, 2010, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995a), and emotional well-being of all students (Hollins, 1993; Plata, 2008, 2011). There have not been many studies done that investigate if teachers are implementing CRT, more specifically in Central Illinois and in other rural areas. This study utilizes a survey-method design to give indication to how consistently Central Illinois teachers implement CRT.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine if Central Illinois elementary teachers are implementing culturally responsive teaching. The author became interested in this question during her student teaching experience, where she was placed in an urban school. She struggled to effectively engage some of the learners in her class, majority who had a different cultural background than her. The difficulties during student teaching inspired her to learn more about culturally and linguistically diverse students, so that she could better serve them in the future. After many classes centered around English language learners and cultural diversity in general, she concluded that the knowledge and awareness she gained should have been part of her undergraduate studies, as it would have
significantly helped her connect and engage the CLD students during her student teaching. This realization caused her to question if other regular education teachers, especially ones from and within rural Central Illinois, struggle to engage CLD students in their classrooms. She began researching culturally responsive teaching and recognized it was a theory of education that is truly applicable to all students, but could be especially helpful to CLD students. Thus, she wanted to study if teachers know about CRT theory and if they are practicing it. The lack of knowledge and experience with CLD students and CRT impacted the author's effectiveness in engaging and thus teaching the students, so she also wanted to know if teacher experience and professional development impacts the degree to which teachers implement CRT. She also wanted to learn if the demographics of the students make a difference in whether a teacher implements CRT practices.

**Research Questions**

An overarching research question for the study is: Do Central Illinois elementary teachers implement culturally responsive teaching? Three, more specific, research questions will also guide the study:

1. What aspects of culturally responsive teaching are teachers implementing the most and least?
2. Is there correlation between student demographics and the implementation of culturally responsive teaching?
3. Is there correlation between teacher characteristics and the implementation of culturally responsive teaching?

**Hypotheses**

It is hypothesized that teachers with more experience with diverse students, in the field, and in professional development will implement CRT more consistently and
frequently. In contrast, it is hypothesized that teachers with little experience with CLD students, in the profession, and professional development will implement CRT less consistently and frequently.

**Significance of the Study**

The study will be significant because the findings will pose implications for administrators, teachers, and parents. The findings of the study may give insight to administrators in how they can more appropriately meet the needs of CLD students in their schools and improve student achievement through changes in policy and procedures. Administrators may learn that they need to consider the types of assessments that are used for student placement measures in English as a second language and special education services as well as the validity of standardized assessments. The findings may also prompt administrators to contemplate how they are evaluating teachers’ effectiveness, and include evaluation measures specific to meeting CLD students’ needs. The evaluation of teachers’ effectiveness specific to CLD students may lead to administrators looking to increase professional development requirements or opportunities for themselves and teachers to enhance their knowledge of assessment and curriculum for CLD students. In addition, they may learn they need to work to create an overall more inclusive and representative school environment and climate. If administrators were to consider all of the implications from the study, then CLD student achievement may have better likelihood of improving.

Administrators are important because they lay the foundation and evaluation criteria for which teachers are to follow, but teachers are with students every day and have a direct impact on their achievement in school. The study will focus on teachers’ practices in curriculum and content, classroom environment, and actions that confirm an
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affirming disposition for students, so the implications will be especially pertinent to teachers.

The study findings will indicate the actions teachers are taking within pedagogy, curriculum, and content related to CLD students. The findings may show that some teachers are not considering CLD students when using supplemental texts and assessments, nor in the content they are including in instruction, such as history or art that includes perspectives that reflect CLD students in the class. Thus, an implication for the study will be to find ways for teachers to become responsive to students through their instructional methods, curriculum, and content.

The findings will also show that teachers may not be supporting an inclusive or inviting classroom environment, which is important to CLD students’ social and emotional well-being that affects their academic performance. If many teachers imply that they are not aware of their own cultural biases and stereotypes and find ways to combat those, then a major implication for the study will be to foster teachers’ development of sociocultural awareness as to promote affirming dispositions and regard for CLD students. Teachers that work to be unbiased and remove stereotypes about students are likely to create an inclusive and appropriate classroom environment for students that will help them achieve academically and grow socially and emotionally.

Teachers may not only be unaware of cultural biases, but they may not be culturally competent. If the findings from the study show that some teachers are not educated on the interaction styles and learning preferences of their students, then the need for professional development would further be supported to help teachers become culturally competent. An additional implication to the study could be that more family involvement is needed.
Family involvement is an important aspect of CRT, and teachers need to work with families as much as possible, as they are valuable resources in learning about students and their ways of life that can impact their education. Thus, CRT can serve as a bridge between CLD families and school. The study may shed light on what is needed in regards to family involvement and if teachers are viewing family as a valuable asset in the classroom.

Overall, CRT practices encompass pedagogy and curriculum, learning environment, and teacher dispositions that may include high expectations and the inclusion of family. If there is a correlation between teacher professional development and their implementation of CRT practices, then the central implication to the study will be that teachers who do not practice CRT may need more quality professional development. This can further be implied to teacher preparation programs that can work to enhance their programs to better prepare teachers to have the knowledge and skills to teach CLD students.

Ultimately the significance of the study is based on the idea that if administrators are not supporting CRT, and teachers are not implementing it, then CLD students may not be receiving appropriate and quality education. Thus, the study is significant because it will give insight to what areas need to be improved and how to address these possible shortcomings.

**Limitations of the Study**

There will be some limitations to this study. The major limitation will be the sample of the study. The findings of the study may not be generalized to larger areas or populations because the sample is limited to Central Illinois teachers. Also, not every single teacher within the designated counties of Central Illinois will be contacted by the
researcher and not every teacher will volunteer to take the survey. Though majority of the emails of public school teachers are accessible, a portion of the schools have teachers’ emails protected and are inaccessible. As a result, the findings of the study may not be comprehensively representative of Central Illinois teachers.

Another limitation is that only public school teachers will be invited to participate in the study; no teachers from private schools will be contacted. Further, the sample will only survey teachers teaching kindergarten through fifth grade. Thus, the results of the study may not be generalizable to sixth grade and above teachers in Central Illinois, either. A final limitation with the sample is that the study will be based on teacher volunteers who will self-report their answers on the survey; therefore, participant’s own biases may skew the truthfulness of their answers to survey questions. Finally, the researcher’s personal biases and lack of experience in the field may prompt questions of credibility.

Definition of Terms

**Culturally responsive teaching (CRT).** Using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them (Gay, 2000).

**Culture.** A social system involving values, beliefs, perspectives, behavioral expectations, attitudes, and habits that serve as a filter through which a group of people view and respond to the world in which they live (Shade et al., 1997)

**English language learner (ELL).** Students who are unable to communicate fluently or learn effectively in English, who often come from non-English-speaking homes and backgrounds, and who typically require specialized or modified instruction in
both the English language and in their academic courses (Great Schools Partnership, 2013).

**Culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD).** Used to describe learners whose culture background or environment and experiences encompasses more than the mainstream American experience. They may speak a variety of languages and come from diverse social, cultural, and economic backgrounds (Fernandez, & Acevedo, 2008; Roger, Gonzalez, Pagan, Wendell, & Love, 2011).

**Achievement gap.** A clear outperformance of one group to another group in scores on a standardized assessment (NCES, 2015).

**Sociocultural awareness.** The ability for one to analyze and reflect on one’s own beliefs and understandings about how culture, ethnicity, experiences, attitudes, and language influence education (Gay, 2000; Plata, 2008; Saifer et al., 2011).

**Critical theory.** Study of political, cultural, economic, and social relationships within a culture, particularly as they are related to what groups have power and which do not (Ward, 2013).

**Constructivism.** The idea that learners construct knowledge for themselves—each learner individually (and socially) constructs meaning—as he or she learns (Hein, 1991).

**Summary**

Culturally and linguistically diverse student enrollment continues to increase in both the U.S. and Central Illinois schools. Thus, administrators and teachers alike need to be knowledgeable and prepared in how to appropriately meet the needs of these CLD students to ensure that each child is receiving high quality education. Culturally responsive teaching is a theory of education that educators can implement to work to
improve the academic achievement and overall well-being of all students in school. The purpose of this study is to determine if Central Illinois elementary teachers are implementing culturally responsive teaching or not and the factors that may increase or decrease its implementation. The results of the study will pose implications regarding teacher and administrator practice and professional development in addition to the advancement of the theory of culturally responsive teaching. The following chapter will further outline research to support the implementation of CRT as well as research regarding the development and practice of CRT.
CHAPTER II

Review of Literature

Within this section, in-depth considerations for administrators and teachers regarding CRT according to the literature will be outlined. The CRT theoretical framework will be briefly explained before a more thorough explanation of CRT will follow. The latter half of the section will encompass discussions related to teacher knowledge, disposition, and practice.

Administration and Teachers

Federal mandates require administrators and teachers in U.S. schools to be accountable for their students’ achievement and the quality of education they receive, no matter the students’ socioeconomic status, race, gender, or ethnicity. The mandate is currently referred to as The Every Student Succeeds Act of 1965, which was recently amended in 2015 (Every Student Succeeds Act of 1965, 2015). Prior to the 2015 amendment, the act had been amended and was called The No Child Left Behind Act. Though changes have been made in the legislation, the standards for quality education and meeting standards have not changed. This is also related to the quality of teachers as perceived by administrators using the Charlotte Danielson Framework, which many of the schools in Central Illinois utilize (Matula, 2013). Various components of the Danielson Framework are related to culturally responsive teaching. As a result of these measures of quality education, the goal of school administration and teachers is to help students succeed academically, but also socially and emotionally in their schools. Consequently, administrators and teachers have to be cognizant of changes in student demographics, the achievement gap, and what constitutes a teacher as highly qualified in order to ensure that
all students have the opportunities to succeed and meet state and federal standards of achievement.

**Patterns of demography.** The demography of the U.S. fluctuates with time, but has shown consistent increases in the population of diverse ethnicities over the last few decades, such as with Hispanics and Asians (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). This population trend is also reflected in Central Illinois schools. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), from 2003 to 2013, the number of Hispanic students enrolled in public schools increased from 19% to 25%, and 4% to 5% for Asian/Pacific Islander students, while the percentages of African American and White students fell (NCES, 2016), indicating that a higher proportion of diverse students will be in classrooms across the country. In contrast to the increasing minority population, in 2012 White teachers comprised 82% of all teachers in the U.S. (NCES, 2012a) and White principals comprised 80% of all principals (NCES, 2012b). As a result, White middle-class Americans are the dominant culture around which most school curriculum and instruction is built (Delpit, 1988; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). There is also data that indicate minorities have the highest poverty rates, with Hispanics and African Americans having the highest rates (U.S. Census Bureau, 2015). The increases in CLD students in U.S. schools may be problematic for administrators and teachers who have not had experience or training to address CLD students’ needs, which may be contributing to the noted achievement gap between White and minority students (Saifer et al., 2011).

**The achievement gap and inequality in schools.** Administrators need to be aware of the achievement gap and how it affects the students in their school, since the government requires that administrators show student yearly progress and achievement based on standardized tests. Whether administrators or teachers agree on the use and
validity of standardized tests to determine student success, state and federal policy makers that regulate schools use them to determine student success; therefore, the reality is that all students need to achieve on them (Ladson-Billings, 1995a).

Achievement gaps occur when there is a clear outperformance of one group to another group in scores on a standardized assessment (NCES, 2015). In Illinois, the achievement gap between White and African Americans in 2007 was one of the highest in the U.S. in both mathematics and reading; in math, the gap was 32 points for fourth grade and 38 for eighth grade. In reading the achievement gap was 29 points for fourth grade and 27 for eight grade (NCES, 2009). The achievement gap between Hispanics and Whites has remained relatively constant from 1992 to 2009, being in the range of 28 to 25 point difference in scores in grade four, and 27 to 24 points in grade eight. There has not been a significant increase or decrease in the past two decades (NCES, 2011), showing a lack of improvement. Though some states are the exception and have shown a narrowing of the gap, Illinois is not one of them. The achievement gap has become so well-known and expected that it can be viewed as “common knowledge” within education (Hollins, 1993).

It seems that there is not a positive significant change occurring within the achievement gap, which some researchers claim is due to homogeneity in society that is disseminated into schools (Delpit, 1988; Ebersole et al., 2015; Gay, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Plata, 2011; Vavrus, 2008). Thus, most U.S. schools’ curriculum and instruction revolve around the White middle-class culture, which may contradict the experiences and culture that CLD students have out of school. Teachers of the dominant culture may unknowingly display and rely on White values and ideologies within their own classroom, especially since the culture, social class, and language of people influence
ways of thinking and doing, and with teachers, their way of teaching (Gay, 2013; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The expectation that CLD students will conform to mainstream curriculum and social structures even though it contradicts their cultural preferences and understandings limits the chances that these students will succeed in the classroom and on standardized measures (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The belief by administrators and teachers that all students can achieve based on a “one size fits all” approach, or that it only takes “just good teaching,” indicates that teachers are uninformed and lack training in how to meet the needs of CLD students (Gay, 2000).

**Lack of teacher preparation and competence.** Several researchers have proposed that teachers are not prepared to teach CLD students or multicultural education (Ebersole et al., 2015; Meadows, 2002; Tran, 2015; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), which may also be contributing to the lack of achievement of minority students compared to White students (Barnes, 2006; Gay, 2002, Plata, 2008, 2011). There is a wide range of ways that teachers can be ill-prepared to effectively teach CLD students. Teachers may not be culturally competent in the areas of discipline, interactions, perceptions about school and teachers, gender roles, language, and expectations as they relate to diverse students and their families (Gay, 2002; Plata, 2011). Teachers from the dominant, White culture may also not recognize or acknowledge their “whiteness” as an inherent part of their everyday behaviors and interactions (Meadows, 2002). The concept of “whiteness” and cultural competence is related to teachers’ sociocultural awareness to recognize the ways in which their own cultural values and biases, the school’s hidden curriculum, and the culture of individual students, diffuse into their teaching and learning environments that make an impact on learning. Further, teachers may not explicitly teach students or foster critical thinking about sociocultural awareness that is necessary for students to formulate versatile
perspectives about society and culture, which then further perpetuates White privilege (Gay, 2002). Many teachers may be under the impression that they are being culturally responsive simply by incorporating multicultural literature or a few lessons on a culture during a certain labeled month of the year, which is sometimes referred to as the “tourist approach” of multiculturalism (Banks, 1999). This perception of diversity and its place in the classroom leads to a superficial expression of the role culture plays in students’ lives and society (Gay, 2002). This perception of CRT and diversity is faulty and would show to be ineffective at improving students’ achievement or sociocultural awareness (Ebersole et al., 2015).

Lastly, teachers should have knowledge of the various contributions scholars and citizens from diverse groups have made to content areas and society, and explicitly share those with students; however, many do not (Gay, 2000, 2002). If the problems outlined above with teacher knowledge and disposition were to be counteracted with culturally responsive teaching, then the benefits to students would be substantial.

**Student Success**

Students are the reason why educators have purpose, and so the ultimate goal is to ensure that each student has success academically, socially, and emotionally. CRT is a framework that when implemented appropriately supports students to achieve academically, and can work to lessen achievement gaps between Whites and minority students. Of equal importance is students’ every day achievement and growth. Standardized tests are important because they are used by the government, but educators ideally want their students to be successful in the real world, now and later. Culturally responsive teaching implementation would grant every student equal access to resources, programs, and services. In addition, students would have opportunity to learn about the
world, the society they live in, and how to appropriately navigate within that society for ultimate success in life. Students could learn to evaluate and appreciate other perspectives than their own and formulate positive interactions among members of different ethnic groups (Plata, 2008). Subsequently, students would benefit socially and emotionally.

The Illinois Social/Emotional Learning (SEL) Standards support the notion of fostering growth socially and emotionally. The standards were created in response to the statute outlined in the Illinois Children's Mental Health Act of 2003. According to the Illinois State Board of Education, goal number one, standard B of the Illinois SEL standards outlines that students should be able to recognize personal and community strengths to understand how to gain support. Goal number two of the standards states that students should be able to “Use social-awareness and interpersonal skills to establish and maintain positive relationships” (2003a, p. 1). In continuance, each successive standard within goal number two (2003b) fully supports reason to implement culturally responsive teaching, with key words such as “perspectives of others” (p. 1), “cultural groups” (p.2), and “group effectiveness” (p.3). In order for students’ needs to be met academically, socially, and emotionally, educators must first obtain an understanding of what culturally responsive teaching is along with its implications.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

The terminology used to describe the concepts that ground the theory of culturally responsive teaching are far and wide. Among a few well-known terms associated, but not necessarily the same, are culturally relevant, centered, congruent, reflective, mediated, contextualized, or synchronized. Perhaps not identical, all the terms have the same underlying themes. For this research, the term culturally responsive teaching is used and defined as: “using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and
performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them” (Gay, 2000, p. 29). The remaining sections of this literature review will outline the framework and many facets of CRT, and finally, professional development implications of culturally responsive teaching.

**Theoretical framework of culturally responsive teaching.** Culturally responsive teaching has slowly progressed and developed for the past forty years and continues to be studied and refined today. Culturally responsive teaching was first identified as a theory of education in the early 90’s but is traced back to the 1960’s civil rights movement and thereafter the 1980’s multicultural education reform efforts. One of the main goals of those who support multicultural education is that teachers possess the knowledge and dispositions that are conducive to diverse students’ progression in society and academic success (Vavrus, 2008), which can also be considered “transformative multicultural education” (Banks, 1999). Transformative multicultural education is a paradigm that incorporates multicultural education in every aspect of learning and the environment so that they are essentially transformed. The CRT theoretical framework has continued to be refined by various researchers, including: Gloria Ladson-Billings (1994, 1995a), Geneva Gay (2000, 2002, 2010, 2013), Lisa Delpit (1988, 2006), Guofang Li (2006) and Kris Gutiérrez (1999, 2002, 2012). Though each researcher has used various forms of the term culturally responsive, their studies revolve around the underlying themes of culturally responsive teaching and critical theory. From these research perspectives, culture, language, and students’ academic, social, and emotional development are all intertwined with learning in the classroom. For diverse students, there may be a lack of coherency between “in school learning and out-of-school living” (Gay, 2010, p. 49); therefore,
dominant mainstream content and methods of teaching are not reliably meaningful for diverse students whose school experiences do not connect with their home experiences.

Culturally responsive teaching encourages teachers to challenge the stereotypes attached to students and recognize the unique cultural assets that contribute to the social constructs of a classroom. Culturally responsive teaching is grounded in the idea that all students can achieve, given that the teacher provides the most appropriate learning environment and instruction based on the unique assets the students' bring to the classroom. The teacher must understand the potential type of behaviors that children may display, the forms of interaction that occur, family roles, and not limited to the interests, hobbies, and everyday experiences of the students to create the most appropriate environment and learning experiences (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Vavrus, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The knowledge base a teacher possesses is at the foundation of implementing culturally responsive teaching.

**Teacher knowledge.** The knowledge that a teacher needs to successfully put CRT theory into practice is far and wide, because it involves understanding of learning, language, communication, culture, society, content, and history, to name a few. Teachers must also know and learn about their individual students’ experiences, culture, and interests (Toppel, 2015; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The knowledge about CRT that teachers have not only has pedagogical implications, but also plays a role in the dispositions that teachers develop. Teachers are likely to develop affirming dispositions when they have a true understanding of culturally responsive teaching theory and its various components (Ebersole et al, 2015; Gay, 2000; Plata, 2008). Cultural and linguistic competence is one component at the foundation of CRT.
Cultural and linguistic competence. Culture is an integral part of life and education, and can be thought of in multiple ways. For this research, culture is defined as a social system involving values, beliefs, perspectives, behavioral expectations, attitudes, and habits that serve as a "filter through which a group of people view and respond to the world in which they live" (Shade et al., 1997, p. 18). Culture is a broad concept that should not be minimized to only things that can be easily identified—it is affected by multiple contextual factors: time, socioeconomic status, history, location, language, religion, education, age, and gender (Gay, 2000; Shade et al., 1997; Vavrus, 2008). Consequently, culture is dynamic and can change as people's circumstances change. For example, certain variables like ethnicity and language may remain consistent over time, but as other variables change, such as age, social class, and education, the ways that one thinks, speaks, and writes may also change as a result (Gay, 2000). This concept of culture as a dynamic phenomenon is illustrated page 19.
It is essential that teachers have a well-developed understanding of culture, as well as knowledge about cultural characteristics of diverse ethnic groups (Gay, 2002). Race and ethnicity are only two variables in considering culture, but they are core variables that cannot change and can be common among large groups of people. Thus, knowledge of racial and ethnic groups can be helpful for teachers to understand and capitalize on...
students’ learning preferences and communication patterns (Gay, 2000, 2002). This statement is not to imply that every student with a particular racial or ethnic background will display those racial or ethnic traits or to encourage a teacher to stereotype or label students (Shade et al., 1997; Vavrus, 2008). Teachers can use ethnic group characteristics as descriptors to help form a basis for understanding, since many racial and ethnic groups have “core characteristics” that a large percentage of people of that racial or ethnic group display (Gay, 2000, p. 10). Though a large percentage may display the group characteristics, the expression of cultural characteristics is highly dependent on individual people—some people may display only some or none of the characteristics. Sometimes whether someone displays characteristics is due to their degree of affiliation with certain cultural attributes (Gay, 2000); however, the more interactions one has within a cultural group, the more that culture defines one’s concept of self and identity (Plata, 2011). Thus, it is in the best interest of teachers to develop a basic understanding of the cultural characteristics of various racial and ethnic groups, such as Asian, African, Latino, and Native American, and then continue to learn specific details of the culture of their individual students (Gay, 2002), since many racial and ethnic groups also have several subcultures, such as the cultures of Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Argentina when describing the Latino ethnic group (Chartock, 2010). Teachers who are culturally competent also acknowledge their own cultural identity. If even teachers are White, they need to perceive themselves as being part of a culture that has certain attributes and norms (Meadows, 2002). Language is a part of culture that is also a central part of teaching and learning that is in nearly every event in schools and classrooms (Gay, 2000; Gutiérrez, Baquedano-López, Alvarez, & Chiu, 1999). Even when students are native English speakers, they may have different ways of speaking and communicating than the English
used in school (Gay, 2000). As a result, teachers need to be knowledgeable about how language plays a role in culture and in the classroom (Gutiérrez et al., 1999), which may include topics in social interaction, language acquisition, the relationships between other languages and English, language instruction, and appropriate assessment strategies (Hernández- Finch, 2012). In addition to cultural competence, teachers also should learn about their students every day experiences and interests.

**Student backgrounds and experiences.** Culturally responsive teaching cannot occur if the teacher is not knowledgeable about his or her students. While race and ethnicity may give indication to a student’s culture, each individual is different. Thus, each student brings with them a sum of perspectives, abilities, and lived experiences that will affect how they learn, communicate, and behave. All students have various ways of learning, but some may or may not be connected to their culture (Vavrus, 2008). If a teacher wants to appropriately align lessons and objectives to be responsive to students’ needs and motivate them to learn, then they must truly know their students (Toppel, 2015; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Teachers can learn about students in creative ways, such as photo boards, discussion topics, self-disclosure, and interest inventories. When teachers can connect lessons and objectives to students’ interests, needs, and personal experiences, students will be more apt to put forth effort to learn, care about learning, and share that learning (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009). Teachers that work to build a repertoire of knowledge of various cultures and their individual students’ interests and lives, begin to develop a positive disposition and sociocultural awareness.

**Teacher disposition.** Teacher disposition is at the heart of culturally responsive teaching. Even if a teacher has all the knowledge about culturally responsive teaching and his or her students, it would not be beneficial without a positive disposition to accompany
it. Therefore, CRT cannot truly be implemented unless teachers hold an affirming disposition for all students and believe in the ideologies that support CRT and multicultural education (Gay, 2000). Among principles of the upmost importance are sociocultural awareness, a positive view of differences, and the safeguarding of all students.

**Sociocultural awareness.** A teacher that recognizes the need to implement CRT after learning about his or her students most likely has sociocultural awareness. Sociocultural awareness, or sometimes referred to as sociocultural consciousness, is the ability for one to analyze and reflect on one’s own beliefs and understandings about how culture, ethnicity, experiences, attitudes, and language influence education (Gay, 2000; Plata, 2008; Saifer et al., 2011). It also involves the understanding of how personal identity and culture can impact student learning and interaction in the classroom (Gay, 2000; Plata, 2008). Thus, it is a combination of one’s personal awareness of self and one’s professional examination of society, school, and culture (Gay, 2000). Developing sociocultural awareness is an ongoing process that requires an open mind (Chartock, 2010) and difficult self-assessment (Saifer, et al., 2011), but is essential for educators to do because each person is naturally “ethnocentric and believes that his or her pattern of believing, thinking, speaking, and behaving ...are superior to those of individuals from other cultural groups” (Plata, 2011, p. 50). In Central Illinois majority of the teachers are White, and many of the students are as well. It is imperative that White teachers recognize the notion of “whiteness” and how possible prejudices and biases can be present in the community and school (Meadows, 2002). Educators’ individual biases that are unchallenged may transcend into the school, classroom, and instruction, which can lead to misunderstandings, stereotypes, and false accusations of CLD students (Chartock, 2010;
Gay, 2000), that can negatively affect their social-emotional and academic well-being (Plata, 2008). Even if schools are primarily White, if teachers do not have sociocultural awareness or recognize the notion of White privilege in society, then they continue to perpetuate those norms which may contribute to institutionalized racism and a lack of respect for diversity (Meadows, 2002). Educators can develop their sociocultural consciousness by analyzing which of their values match those perpetuated by the dominant society and then consider the counter perspectives of those ideas. It is best when educators can bring their biases to the forefront of thought (Gay, 2000) so that a conscious effort can be made to avoid negative consequences, since even with the best intentions, implicit biases can still overlay conscious thoughts (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009).

The final piece of sociocultural consciousness is critical consciousness, which involves the assertion of a hierarchical society that is preserved through “systematic discrimination” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 22). Developing critical consciousness requires analyzing how and why the dominant culture in society “…directly affects public school goals, policies, and practices in ways that can undermine the academic achievement of students of color” (Vavrus, 2008, p. 52). In continuance, not only do teachers need to strive to develop critical consciousness through examining their own culture and society, but they also need to help their students to develop it (Ladson-Billings, 1995a); simply having critical consciousness is not enough. This involves teachers recognizing inherent privilege and disadvantage determined by race in society (Meadows, 2002), and actively working to change the current hierarchy and inform students about it. Teachers need to be proactive in educating themselves and helping their students and community to promote equal rights (Hand, Penuel, & Gutiérrez, 2012;
Villegas & Lucas, 2002). When teachers have sociocultural awareness, they also have an affirming attitude towards diverse students.

Perception of differences. The ways that educators perceive differences will impact the school environment, classroom environment, and student learning, so it essential that differences in culture and learning are acknowledged, but viewed in a positive manner. Viewing differences positively may be referred to as an “assets rather than deficits” model (Vavrus, 2008 p. 53). Each student brings with them valuable experiences, concepts, and languages that can be built on in curriculum and instruction to make learning more meaningful. The assets that students may bring with them can be in various forms of capital: aspirational, linguistic, familial, social, or resilience (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009). Teachers that recognize students’ differences as beneficial capital and use it in their teaching are more likely to have a positive impact on diverse students’ academic achievement (Gay, 2013; Shade et al., 1997). When educators view student differences in culture and communication as problematic, they are sending the message to students that their way of living and speaking is not valued. Students then must choose whether to acculturate to the preferred culture and possibly lose their identity, or maintain their cultural identity and not be accepted in the classroom and be at risk for academic failure (Plata, 2011). Culturally and linguistically students need not give up their culture and identities to conform to mainstream values to succeed; they need someone to grow and facilitate learning within the assets they bring (Gay, 2013). Further, teachers that respect and appreciate differences and perceive them as assets are more likely to hold high expectations for all students, even CLD students that may have significantly different ways of behaving, performing, and communicating than the teacher or other students (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).
High expectations and care. The expectations and views teachers have about students impact the decisions made for the classroom, such as when, where, how and why interaction takes place, subject matter, and assessment measures, that may advantage or disadvantage certain students (Gay, 2000). Teachers that hold high expectations for all students have "uncompromising faith in their students and relentless efforts in helping them meet high academic standards" (Gay, 2000, p. 76). High expectations need to be clear and communicated to all students, with more depth than a general statement of confidence (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane & Hambacher, 2007; Liang & Zhang, 2009). Teachers need to have specific expectations for individual students and systematically act to help students reach those expectations (Gay, 2000). When teachers do not possess high expectations for all students and establish them, students may develop or be amidst a "learned helplessness" that is the result of students internalizing and believing that they cannot do something, called the self-fulfilling prophecy (Gay, 2000). Some teachers may not be aware that they are treating students differently or may not have a high self-efficacy to teach CLD students, which ultimately affects the quality of learning for CLD students. Minority ethnic and racial students, females, and low ability students are more likely to experience decreased achievement outcome and opportunity because teachers do not always give fair attention and persistent effort to these students (Gay, 2000). A safe, positive, and inclusive classroom environment cannot occur without a teacher that holds high expectation and regard for all students, especially CLD students that are often marginalized. Teachers that have and grow a comprehensive knowledge base, sociocultural consciousness, and positive regard for all students and their cultures are able to apply the theoretical foundations of culturally responsive teaching to their curriculum and instructional methods to help all students achieve.
Curriculum and content. There is no prescribed curriculum that educators must follow to ensure that they are being culturally responsive. This is because culturally responsive teaching is not teaching ‘about,’ content but ‘through’ content (Ebersole et al., 2015). Culturally responsive teachers analyze the formal, informal, and symbolic curriculum in schools for misrepresentation or lack of representation of minority racial and ethnic groups, women, and people with disabilities. They then work to counteract those findings to include more representation of minority groups within the prescribed curriculum, instructional materials and resources, and messages and images around the school (Chartock, 2010). Though CRT is not centered on content, it is also suggested that teachers incorporate topics in the curriculum on the contributions of a wide range of ethnic individuals and groups, along with numerous different perspectives on the topics of study (Gay, 2002; Saifer et al., 2011). Teachers covering diverse perspectives within topics of race, gender, and social class may lead to discussions of controversial and taboo topics (Gay, 2002; Saifer et al., 2011). Controversial topics should not be avoided, rather they are encouraged to help students become “discerning consumers” and think critically, a facet of critical consciousness (Gay, 2002). Teachers should also work to include multicultural literature in the curriculum, but be sure that it is of quality and does not stereotype a culture (Bui & Fagan, 2013; Naqvi, McKeough, Thorne, & Pfitscher, 2012; Schrodt, Fain, & Hasty, 2015). Further, multicultural literature is only a component of a culturally responsive curriculum; solely incorporating multicultural literature is not enough to be considered culturally responsive (Ebersole, et al., 2015), unless it is relevant to students and then combined with other topics and the various other components of CRT. Teachers can be culturally responsive by analyzing their curriculum and materials and making sure to include content about the culture, history, and contributions of various
minority groups. Though curriculum and content are important, CRT can be more easily identified within instruction and pedagogy.

**Instructional pedagogy.** Teachers' pedagogy and instructional techniques used in the classroom indicate whether the teacher believes in and supports the theory and practices of culturally responsive teaching. Just as with curriculum, there is no prescribed pedagogy or implications for a teacher to be culturally responsive. This is because culturally responsive teaching requires teachers to design instructional techniques around their individual students' learning styles and cultural characteristics (Chartock, 2010; Gay, 2013). Some cultural groups have distinguishing learning styles that may revolve around the ways that information is organized and communicated, physical and social environment preferences, ways of showing comprehension, interaction styles, response styles, and motivation and rewards for learning (Gay, 2002; Shade et al., 1997). It is important for teachers to remember that characteristics of cultural groups and learning styles are not an indication of ability—they are an indication of the process of learning (Gay, 2002). It is also important that teachers do not stereotype CLD students and assume that because of certain physical characteristics they will display or prefer common cultural characteristics for learning styles, or that they do not possess capability (Gay, 2002; Plata, 2008). The ways that teachers assess students and reflect on their teaching is another component of CRT.

Culturally responsive teachers consistently evaluate their teaching and reflect on what they could be doing better or differently to meet their students' needs (Saifer et al., 2011; Vavrus, 2008). They do not participate in blaming students for lack of progress, rather they reflect on ways that they can further accommodate and help students learn (Ladson-Billings, 1995a).
The types of assessments that are used to judge student progress are also formative, varied, and authentic (Vavrus, 2008). Though standardized tests have a place in measuring achievement, culturally responsive teachers present opportunities for students to display their learning in ways that support students’ culture and interaction styles (Saifer, et al., 2011; Shade et al., 1997). A way to fairly measure students’ achievement also needs to be developed, such as rubrics, which provide opportunity for specific and helpful feedback for students. Feedback can also be informal and immediate, given throughout lessons and discussions (Aceves & Orosco, 2014). Feedback to students can also help students to develop their own reflection of their work and progress, which is another important aspect of CRT practice (Saifer et al., 2011). Encouraging students to think about their work and monitor their understandings fosters critical thinking that is supported by constructivist theory, an important component of CRT pedagogy. Along with constructivism in CRT is an emphasis on cooperative teaching and learning.

**Constructivist and student centered approach.** Constructivism can be defined as “the idea that learners construct knowledge for themselves—each learner individually (and socially) constructs meaning—as he or she learns” (Hein, 1991 para. 2). Thus, teaching and learning have a purpose that revolves around students’ experience and knowledge that they possess (Gay, 2002; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009), and does not involve a rigid framework (Vavrus, 2008). The teacher acts as a facilitator to help students make meaning, filling in the gaps between what students know and what they are trying to learn (Chartock, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Saifer et al., 2011). Lessons are set up to focus on hands-on problem solving within subject matter and real life contexts, so that the learning can be understood rather than memorized or regurgitated, where there is not always a right answer (Aceves & Orosco, 2014; Ladson-Billings,
1995a). Culturally responsive teaching also encourages teachers and students to be critically consciousness, which allows there to be a connection between the community, families, and the school. As a result, teachers can set up lessons to be interdisciplinary and in the context of the real issues students and their families’ face that may promote social change or better the community (Saifer et al, 2011; Vavrus, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This facilitation of learning also allows for students to choose topics of importance to them, create connections among content areas, and connect experiences with new knowledge (Saifer et al., 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The constructivist approach in culturally responsive teaching requires that teachers provide scaffolding through various techniques, including relevant examples and modeling.

Students in the classroom could all have varying cultures and learning preferences. Thus, the teacher needs to differentiate to appropriately meet the needs of all students. While some students may prefer cooperative learning, other students may prefer individual work. Topics of interest will not be universal either. Teachers have to find ways to appropriately support and differentiate the varying needs and preferences of students in lessons to create the most optimal learning environment for each student (Frye, Button, Kelly, & Button, 2010). This requires the teacher to think about learning activities and instructional techniques that may not be ideal for some students and find alternative options and ways of learning to build into the instruction (Toppel, 2015). Differentiating instruction could be in the form of numerous relevant examples tailored to specific students culture and experience (Gay, 2002), modeling for individual students or groups (Aceves & Orosco, 2014), or adapting materials and resources to match and be representative of students’ backgrounds, interests, and ability levels (Saifer et al., 2011).
**Collaborative teaching and learning.** The classroom environment should be inclusive and team-oriented, where collaboration and classmate accountability are essential elements of the larger classroom context; it does not exclusively occur within small groups (Gutiérrez et al., 1999; Ladson-Billings, 1995a). Students should also have a voice in establishing rules and what topics are studied in the classroom (Frye et al., 2010). A truly collaborative learning environment is constant and involves students sharing their “…linguistic, sociocultural, and cognitive resources…” to the extent that culturally different students can complete a task through “co-participating, co-cognizing, and co-problem-solving” (Gutiérrez et al., 1999, p. 87). The fostering of collaboration can occur when teachers make collaboration a part of the larger classroom context, through informal daily activities and through the inclusion of family and guests in the teaching and learning. Teachers ought to capitalize on the valuable knowledge of parents and family members when possible to help their students succeed (Plata, 2008; Saifer et al., 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). They can also include family and other members of the community from diverse cultures in learning activities, which creates an inclusive environment where students are modeled respectful interactions between people of different cultural groups, as well as the importance of education from different perspectives other than the teacher (Naqvi et al., 2012; Schrodt et al., 2015). These interactions can occur through informal and formal activities, such as parent volunteers to read dual language and multicultural books, speak about cultural traditions, or simply help with daily activities in the classroom. Collaboration, along with the numerous other components of CRT, are more likely to occur through the practice and ongoing professional development of teachers.
Professional Development

Culturally responsive teaching has been challenged to be considered ‘just good teaching,’ (Ladson-Billings, 1995b, p. 159), but the lack of implementation and knowledge of how to be culturally responsive by pre-service and in-service educators proves otherwise. Though the practices of CRT incorporate many research-based, effective strategies that are general in nature, there is more that is needed to help CLD students succeed and to promote diversity in school and society. Various research studies indicate that teachers, especially preservice teachers, are not adequately prepared within their dispositions to teach CLD students or multicultural education, nor have the knowledge base to do so (Ebersole et al., 2015; Milner, Lamont, Moore, Moore, & Flowers, 2003; Plata, 2011; Tran, 2015; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This could indicate a need to address diversity and reflection in education preparation programs (Cadiero-Kaplan & Rodríguez, 2008; deJong & Harper, 2005; Frye et al., 2010; Groulx & Silva, 2010), and needed professional development for teachers (Ebersole et al., 2015; Plata & Robertson, 1998; Plata, 2008, 2011).

A great deal of administrations in Illinois’ schools use the Danielson Framework to evaluate teachers (Matula, 2013), which contains various components related to culturally responsive teaching, such as “Demonstrating Knowledge of Students,” “Creating an Environment of Respect and Rapport,” “Communicating with Students,” “Demonstrating Flexibility and Responsiveness.” The framework also has a domain dedicated to the professional responsibilities of the educator, which involves reflection, communication with families, and participating in ongoing professional growth and development (Adams, Danielson, Moilanen, & Association for Supervision and
Culturally responsive teaching is a theory of education that cannot be learned or implemented in a day—it involves a comprehensive knowledge of students, culture, sociocultural and political consciousness, an understanding of constructivism and pedagogy, and competence to work with members of cultures that may be different or contradicting to one’s own. Ongoing professional development, practice, reflection, and research are required for one to accurately and consistently implement CRT. Further, teachers must value professional development and go on to accurately implement it for the professional development to make a difference in the classroom. CRT is dynamic and each new group of students a teacher has presents different characteristics. For this reason, teachers should not stop learning (Groulx & Silva, 2010), which also supports the requirements within the Danielson Framework surrounding professional development and growth.

**Summary**

In the U.S. today, there remains to be an achievement gap between White and minority students that has not decreased nor been addressed, even though the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students has continually increased. School administrators and teachers have a professional and moral obligation to work to help all students succeed in school, no matter race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, or gender. Administrators and teachers also have a professional and moral obligation to educate and promote about diversity in society. Culturally responsive teaching is a theory of education that asks teachers to react and respond to the individual students in their classrooms by acknowledging and incorporating those students’ culture and background experiences that
inherently impact the way they learn. The implementation of culturally responsive teaching is neither simple nor prescriptive, and requires a teacher that is willing to continually learn, reflect, research, and take action. Appropriately implementing CRT can present numerous challenges and possibly opposing forces; however, ongoing professional development and learning to implement CRT can produce results that help all students, especially CLD students, achieve. If there are no CLD students in the class, CRT can still be relative and help to promote a global, accepting society. There have been numerous studies that have evaluated the preparedness, attitudes, and knowledge of pre-service teachers, but fewer studies have evaluated whether or not teachers currently practicing are implementing culturally responsive teaching. The following chapter will outline the proposed methodology of the study.
CHAPTER III

Methods

The study used a quantitative approach and utilized a survey-questionnaire method. A quantitative approach focuses on using objective measures to analyze data in a statistical or mathematical way. Data is usually obtained through polls, questionnaires, or surveys. Quantitative studies may determine the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent or outcome variable (USC Libraries, 2017). A survey-questionnaire method is a way to collect data about a population of interest by using a predetermined series of questions. Questions on the survey may be closed-ended, where respondents choose an answer through various ways, such as with multiple choice or Likert scale items, or open-ended, which allow respondents to answer questions in their own words but are more difficult to count or analyze (Child Care & Early Education Research Connections, 2016).

The independent variable in this study was teacher and student demographics, and the dependent variable was the CRT practices. This study examined the associations between the two variables, specifically looking at the correlations between the independent and dependent variables.

The study intended to examine if Central Illinois elementary K-5 teachers implement culturally responsive teaching. The overarching research question was: Are elementary K-5 teachers implementing CRT? Three more specific research questions guided the study:

1. What aspects of culturally responsive teaching are teachers implementing the most and least?
2. Is there correlation between student demographics and the implementation of culturally responsive teaching?

3. Is there correlation between teacher characteristics and the implementation of culturally responsive teaching?

The study was a survey design; therefore, the variables were not manipulated. The independent variable was the teacher, and the dependent variable was the CRT practices.

Sample

The sample for the study was based on purposeful sampling. The sample was recruited by email, so it was made up of volunteer participants. The sample consisted of public school teachers that were teaching grades kindergarten through fifth grade. There were no restrictions on who could take the survey, except that the sample consisted of regular education teachers, teaching grades kindergarten through fifth grade, and were teaching in a public school within Central Illinois. Central Illinois comprised the following counties in Illinois: Adams, Bond, Calhoun, Cass, Champaign, Christian, Clark, Clay, Coles, Crawford, Cumberland, De Witt, Douglas, Edgar, Fayette, Fulton, Greene, Hancock, Jersey, Lawrence, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, Madison, Mason, McDonough, McLean, Menard, Montgomery, Morgan, Moultrie, Piatt, Pike, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, Shelby, Tazewell, and Vermilion. Initially Effingham, Jasper, and Richland counties were also included within the Central Illinois region; however, due to inaccessibility to emails, no teachers were emailed from these three counties.

The sample consisted of primarily Non-Hispanic, White teachers. African American teachers were the second largest group comprising the sample, but only
represented just over two percent. Table 1 illustrates the sample characteristics by race and ethnicity.

Table 1

*Frequency and Percent of Teacher Ethnicity and Race*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teacher Demographic</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>98.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>447</td>
<td>95.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
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<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The years of teaching experience of the sample ranged from 0 to 26. The largest portion of the sample comprised teachers with 6-10 years of experience, which represented 22% of the sample. The least represented teaching experience group was those with 26 or more years of experience, being approximately 16% of the sample. Over half of the sample had Master’s degrees, with about 26% having only a Bachelor’s degree. Only 7% of the sample indicated that they had an ESL endorsement or teaching certificate. These characteristics of the sample are detailed further in Table 2 on page 37.
Table 2

*Frequency and Percent of Years of Teaching, Highest Education Earned, and ESL Endorsement/Certificate*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Characteristics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years of Teaching</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-5</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>17.27</td>
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<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>21.54</td>
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<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>17.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>13.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>13.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26+</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>15.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Highest Education Earned</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor's</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>26.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some graduate level coursework</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>18.76</td>
</tr>
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<td>Master's</td>
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<td>54.80</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESL Endorsement/Certificate</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>92.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Instrument**

The instrument for the study was a self-developed survey questionnaire based on four previously established instruments: The Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (MTCS) (Spanierman, Oh, Heppner, Neville, Mobley, Wright, Dillon, & Navarro, et al.,
Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE), Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy (CRTOE) (Siwatu, 2007), and the Culturally Responsive Teacher Preparedness Scale (Hsiao, 2015).

The first instrument, The Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (MTCS) (Spanierman, et al., 2011), was developed in efforts to create a more comprehensive multicultural competence scale. The authors of the instrument wanted to ensure that it included questions surrounding multicultural awareness in addition to knowledge and skills related to multicultural interactions. The second and third instruments, Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy (CRTSE), and the Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy (CRTOE) (Siwatu, 2007), were created to evaluate if preservice teachers have the beliefs and self-efficacy to be culturally responsive teachers. If the teacher had a high score from these two instruments, then, based on social cognitive theory, they would be more likely to implement CRT practices. The author, Siwatu (2007), also wanted to examine the relationship of the scores between the two instruments.

The last instrument, The Culturally Responsive Teacher Preparedness Scale (Hsiao, 2015), was created to determine preservice teachers’ culturally responsive teaching competencies that could be used in teacher preparation programs. Hsiao’s study focused on factor analysis of the instrument.

Items from each instrument were analyzed and selected based on the current study theoretical framework, research questions, and design. Then the survey questions were analyzed to determine if they aligned with the foundational literature from Gay (2002), Villegas & Lucas (2002), and Chartock (2010) to develop the current study instrument items. Five example items from the current study instrument are given with the comparison items from the established instruments as follows:
1. I administer at least two methods of collecting data (i.e. phone calls, conferences, surveys) within the first month of school that only pertain to parents’ cultural practices and educational preferences.
   - Obtain information about my students’ home life (CRTSE).
   - Obtain information about my students’ cultural background (CRTSE).
   - Establish positive home-school relations (CRTSE).
   - I establish strong, supportive relationships with racial and ethnic minority parents (MTCS).
   - Know how to communicate with culturally diverse students and their parents or guardians (CRTPS).
   - Foster meaningful and supportive relationships with parents and families, and actively involve them in their students’ learning (CRTPS).

2. I analyze my curriculum and instructional materials for misrepresentation or lack of representation of culturally diverse groups.
   - Revise instructional material to include a better representation of cultural groups (CRTSE).
   - Critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes (CRTSE).
   - I examine the instructional materials I use in the classroom for racial and ethnic bias (MTCS).
   - Review and assess curricula and instructional materials to determine their multicultural strengths and weaknesses, and relevance to students’ interests and instructional needs, and revise them if necessary (CRTPS).
3. I use a variety of assessment tools other than tests, such as portfolios, projects, and presentations to determine how much students have learned.
   - Assess student learning using various types of assessment (CRTSE).
   - Assessing student learning using a variety of assessment procedures will provide a better picture of what they have learned (CRTOE).
   - Use a variety of assessment techniques, such as self-assessment, portfolios, and so on, to evaluate students' performance in favor of cultural diversity (CRTPS).

4. I model and teach students ways they can actively work to bring about social justice and equal opportunity for everyone within their school and community.
   - I make changes within the general school environment so that racial and ethnic minority students will have an equal opportunity for success (MTCS).
   - I often promote diversity by the behaviors I exhibit (MTCS).
   - Provide students with knowledge and skills needed to function in mainstream culture (CRTPS).

5. I develop standard-aligned rigorous learning activities for my students that include content in community, culture, language, and history.
   - Students will develop an appreciation for their culture when they are taught about the contributions their culture has made over time (CRTSE).
   - Using culturally familiar examples will make learning new concepts easier (CRTSE).
My curricula integrate topics and events from racial and ethnic minority populations (MTCS).

I am knowledgeable of how historical experiences of various racial and ethnic minority groups may affect students learning (MTCS).

Infuse the curriculum and thematic units with the culture of students represented in the classroom (CRTPS).

Communicate expectations of success to culturally diverse students (CRTPS).

The instrument for the study had a total of 35 questions. Of the 35 questions, 18 items were about culturally responsive teaching practices, and 17 were related to teacher and student demographics (See Appendix A). For all the questions regarding CRT teacher practices, a Likert scale of 1-5 was utilized. The sample indicated their consistency of implementing CRT practices by using the following Likert scale:

Never—I have not done this at any time nor attempted to do so

Rarely—I’ve attempted to do this, but only once or twice

Sometimes—I’ve done this on occasion, or partially

Often—I do/have done this but not as consistently or fully as I could

Always—I do/have done this fully and/or consistently

Example items on the instrument regarding culturally responsive teaching practices include:

I use supplemental materials to counteract the misrepresentations or lack of representations of culturally diverse groups in my curriculum and instructional materials.
• I evaluate how my cultural practices and beliefs are different or the same as my students’ cultural practices and beliefs.

• I identify and record the ways in which the schools culture and expectations are different than my students’ culture and at-home expectations.

Examples of questions regarding teacher and student demographics include:

• Please indicate the number of students you have by race in your classroom.

• How many English Language Learners, or students that speak English as a second language, do you have in your class?

• Estimate how many students in your class are non-Christian.

• Please indicate your ethnicity.

• Please indicate your location of current teaching position.

• Do you have a certificate or endorsement in English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction?

• Have you ever attended or presented at a conference related to multicultural education or culturally responsive/relevant teaching?

• If you have ever had a practicum student or student teacher, how often do you check over or evaluate their lesson plans for being culturally responsive?

The instrument was piloted on ten teachers, where changes were made based on the participants’ suggestions. The survey was then analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) to obtain the Cronbach alpha scores, which yielded a score of .785. After the instrument was finalized, it was created within Qualtrics Research Suite
survey software. Qualtrics is web based software that allows subscribed users to create and distribute surveys and collect data. The university in which the research was conducted provides free access to university students and faculty. The software enables users to send emails to a mass audience that each contains a unique link leading participants to the online survey. The software enables researchers to see how many surveys have been completed and by which emails; however, the responses are anonymous as there is no link between which responses belong to which emails (Qualtrics LLC., 2017).

**Data Collection Procedures**

Potential participants and their emails were accessed on district and school websites after the research was approved to commence through the Institutional Review Board (Appendix B). The researcher searched for regular education teachers that currently teach grades kindergarten through fifth grade in a public school within the designated counties of Central Illinois. The researcher sought out public schools within each county by using the National Center for Education Statistics website. Once public schools were identified, the researcher searched for the specific school district on Google. Emails that were accessible on district and school webpages were copied and pasted into an Excel document that was organized by county. A total of 2,905 emails were obtained. Counties that exceeded 50 emails collected were: Adams, Champaign, Christian, Douglas, Fulton, Hancock, McDonough, Macoupin, Madison, McLean, Montgomery, Piatt, Shelby, Sangamon, Tazewell, and Vermillion. The rest of the counties within Central Illinois had less than 50 emails collected. See Appendix C for the complete list of counties and the number of emails from each. These numbers were not completely representative of each county population; some schools had emails that were more accessible than others, while
some had completely no access to emails. Thus, a few of the counties with larger populations did not have an email count to be representative.

Initially 2,277 emails were uploaded into the Qualtrics software, where a mass email to the sample was sent out (See Appendix D). The Qualtrics software allows subscribers to send an email to a mass audience and then tabulates how many people have started, finished, and not opened the survey. The email sent out detailed the topic and purpose of the survey and instructions on how to take it. After one week of the link being open to the sample, a reminder email was sent to potential participants that had not finished or opened the survey. After an additional week, for a total of a two-week time frame, the survey link became inactive and a thank you email was sent to participants. As an incentive to participate in the study, participants were also informed that they would be in a random drawing to win one of ten $25 gift cards to Amazon. The money for the incentives was made possible by the College of Education and Professional Studies Development Grant for Student Research. The thank you email sent thanked the participant and reminded him or her of the procedures for winning the incentive. At the completion of the study, the winners for the incentive were randomly selected by the email list. The initial results yielded a total of 393 completed surveys. To increase the number of completed surveys, 673 more emails were obtained and another series of emails was sent. The second round of emails followed the same procedures as the first round and yielded a total of 76 completed surveys. At the completion of the data collection, a total of 2,950 emails were sent inviting teachers to participate, and a total of 469 survey responses were collected, making the response rate 15%. After all the data was collected, it was exported into SPSS to be analyzed which is outlined in the following section.
**Data Analysis**

Data was analyzed descriptively using SPSS. The mean and standard deviation for each of the dependent variable items was determined to answer which CRT practices teachers are implementing the most and least. The mean and standard deviation was also determined for the number of students that participants indicated they had in their class by ethnicity and race. The data was further analyzed using Pearson correlation to determine if there was a correlation between the independent variables of teacher and student demographics and the dependent variables of teacher CRT practices.

Items 1-16 and items 32 and 33 were analyzed descriptively using SPSS to determine the mean and standard deviation to determine which CRT practices teachers are doing the most and the least. The top three means indicated the teaching practices that teachers were implementing the most, and the lowest three means determined which CRT practices teachers were implementing the least. This analysis addressed research question one: What aspects of culturally responsive teaching are teachers implementing the most and least?

Items 17-22 were analyzed using Pearson correlation in SPSS to determine if there was a correlation between student demographics and items 1-16, 32, and 33, the CRT practices. This addressed research question two: Is there correlation between student demographics and the implementation of culturally responsive teaching? The correlation output was analyzed to identify significant correlations. The correlation coefficients were deemed significant if they had a \( p \)-value less than .01, two tailed. All the correlation coefficients were examined per each demographic variable to identify how many significant correlation coefficients existed. The demographic variables with multiple
significant correlation coefficients were determined to be strongly correlated with the CRT teacher practices.

Items 23-35 were analyzed using Pearson correlation to determine if there was a correlation between teacher demographics and professional development and items 1-16, the CRT practices. This addressed research question three: Is there correlation between teacher characteristics and the implementation of culturally responsive teaching? Research question three was analyzed in the same way as research question two; the output was examined to find multiple significant correlations between the demographics and the CRT practices.

The frequencies for student demographics other than race and ethnicity, such as number students that were ELLs, new to the school, and that were non-Christian, were calculated. Teacher demographic frequencies were also determined; they included teacher ethnicity and race, years of teaching, highest education earned, ESL endorsement/certificate, and professional development experiences. The frequencies for the items were enumerated by identifying the number of responses for each option that could be selected, and then computing the percentage that the frequency represented of the sample.

**Summary**

The study utilized a quantitative approach and a survey-questionnaire method. The instrument was self-developed using previously established instruments and information from the theoretical research. Elementary teachers teaching grades K-5 were contacted via email and invited to participate in the study. There was a total of 469 participants encompassing 39 counties in Central Illinois. Items were analyzed descriptively using SPSS to determine which practices teachers implement the most and
least. Pearson correlation was utilized to find correlation between teacher and student
demographics and CRT implementation. The frequencies of teacher and student
demographics were also examined to get a detailed account of the sample.
CHAPTER IV

Results and Findings

This chapter will discuss the results and findings of the study. The results of the overarching research question, are teachers implementing CRT, will be addressed, as well as the research sub questions one, two, and three. The results of research question, “What aspects of culturally responsive teaching are teachers implementing the most and least?” are given based on the mean and standard deviation of the CRT practices. To identify if there is any relationship between the six CRT practices that are implemented the most and least, Pearson correlations are also examined between the top three and low three CRT practices. The results of research question two, “Is there correlation between student demographics and teacher implementation of CRT?” and research question three, “Is there correlation between teacher characteristics and implementation of CRT?” are outlined by Pearson correlation data between teacher and student demographics and CRT practices. The remaining sections will further outline the results and findings from the study based on each research question.

Research Question One

The overarching research question sought to answer if Central Illinois elementary teachers are implementing CRT overall. Most the mean scores for the CRT practices were in the three range (CRT Items = 8), which represented the Likert scale item: “Sometimes—I’ve done this on occasion or partially.” There were no mean scores in the one range, “Never,” nor in the five range, “Always.” The remaining mean scores were equally distributed among selections two (CRT Items = 4) and four (CRT Items = 4) on the Likert scale, “Rarely—I’ve attempted to do this but only once or twice,” and “Often—
I do/have done this but not as fully as I could.” The CRT practices teachers scored a mean of four and above were for the following CRT practices:

- Use a variety of assessment tools other than tests, such as portfolios, projects, and presentations to determine student learning ($M = 4.1, SD = .84$).
- Reflect on teaching weekly to determine what worked and did not work well for students’ learning ($M = 4.5, SD = .65$).
- Provide a fair amount of attention and support to each student ($M = 4.6, SD = .52$).
- At the start of the school year set and communicate high academic expectations and goals for each student to reach ($M = 4.7, SD = .65$).

The remaining CRT practices ($n= 13$) had means of three or below. The practices that teachers had the lowest scores on were the following:

- Administer at least two methods of collecting data that only pertain to parents’ cultural practices and educational preferences ($M = 2.9, SD = 1.4$).
- Explicitly facilitate conversations about unpopular or taboo topics when grade appropriate ($M = 2.8, SD = 1.12$).
- Greet ELLs in native language ($M = 2.4, SD = 1.5$).
- Identify and record the ways in which the school culture and expectations are different than my students’ culture and at-home expectations ($M = 2.8, SD = 1.2$).

The complete list of CRT practice mean scores is reported in Table 3. Majority of the CRT scores were in the three and below range (CRT Items=$13$), indicating that overall, teachers only sometimes implement CRT practices. In addition, teachers rarely implement CRT practices that are more specific to culture and student identity.
Table 3

Mean and Standard Deviation of Teachers' Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices
(n=469)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRT Items</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Collect data on students' interest &amp; learning</td>
<td>3.71</td>
<td>.867</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Collect data on parents' culture &amp; preferences</td>
<td>2.98</td>
<td>1.429</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Analyze curriculum &amp; instructional materials for misrepresentation/lack of representation</td>
<td>3.11</td>
<td>1.165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Use supplemental materials to counteraction misrepresentation/lack of representation</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>1.181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Explicitly facilitate conversations on unpopular or taboo topics</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>1.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Evaluate the appropriateness of assessment tools</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>1.207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Use a variety of assessment tools other than tests</td>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>.842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Reflect on my teaching weekly</td>
<td>4.50</td>
<td>.649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Model and teach social justice and equal opportunity</td>
<td>3.59</td>
<td>.973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Help students identify how they are different and alike</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>.894</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Evaluate if cultural practices and beliefs are different or alike than students</td>
<td>3.52</td>
<td>1.003</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Provide a fair amount of attention</td>
<td>4.61</td>
<td>.518</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Greet ELLs in native language</td>
<td>2.39</td>
<td>1.469</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Identify school expectations &amp; culture different or alike than students</td>
<td>2.78</td>
<td>1.172</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Set and communicate high academic expectations</td>
<td>4.66</td>
<td>.645</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Develop standard-aligned rigorous learning activities</td>
<td>3.96</td>
<td>.862</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The lowest and highest means were analyzed to address research sub question one: What aspects of culturally responsive teaching are teachers implementing the most and least? The lowest three means were selected as the practices teachers implement the least,
and the highest three means were selected as the practices teachers implement the most. The top three items consisted of survey items 8, 12, and 15, all with scores in the four range on the Likert scale, indicating teachers practice those aspects of CRT more often than other aspects. The lowest three scores were items 5, 13, and 14 on the survey, which yielded means in the two range on the Likert scale, the selection “Rarely.” The scores with means in the two range on the Likert scale indicate teachers practice those aspects of CRT less often than other aspects of CRT, because higher scores on the Likert scale indicated a more consistent basis of implementation.

To examine if there was a relationship between the highest and lowest scores identified by research sub question one, the correlation between practices 8, 12, and 15 (the highest scores), and 5, 13, and 14 (the lowest scores), were analyzed. The results showed there were no correlations between the items, except for item 14 (a low item), “Identify how school expectations and culture are different or alike than students,” with all the high score items, 8, 12, and 15. The correlation coefficient between item 14 and item 8, “Reflect on my teaching weekly” was a .20. Item 12, “Provide a fair amount of attention,” had a correlation of .13 with item 14, and item 15, “Set and communicate high expectations” had a correlation of .18 to item 14. Thus, all the high scoring items had a positive correlation with only one of the low scoring items, “Identify school expectations and culture.” This indicates that there was a weak relationship between the high and low items.

**Research Question Two**

Pearson correlation was used to answer research question two: Is there correlation between student demographics and teacher implementation of CRT? The results of the study indicated that there were some significant correlations between student
demographics and teacher implementation of CRT practices. All the correlation output data is given in Table 4. The student demographic categories that had the highest number of significant correlations with CRT practices were: the number of ELLs with eight significant correlations, the number of Hispanic students that teachers had, with six significant correlations, the number of students that were two or more races that teachers had, with five significant correlations, and the number of students who were non-Christian that teachers had, also with five significant correlations. All the significant correlations had p-values less than .01, two tailed.

Table 4

*Pearson Correlation between Teachers’ Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices and Student Demographics (n=469)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRT Items</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collect student interests</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect info about parents’ culture</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-03</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze materials for misrepresentations</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-03</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>-.11*</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>.15**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use supplemental materials</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-04</td>
<td>.09*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.16**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicitly facilitate unpopular topics</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.14**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate assessments</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td>.14**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a variety of assessments</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reflect on teaching</strong></td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.11*</td>
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<td>.03</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>.03</td>
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<td>----</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Model and teach social justice and equality</strong></td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Help students identify how alike and different</strong></td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.10*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluate own culture how alike &amp; different</strong></td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.16</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.14**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.15**</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.20**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.11*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provide fair attention</strong></td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.15*</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Greet ELLs in native Language</strong></td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>-.10</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Identify school culture &amp; expectations same or different than students</strong></td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.12**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.13**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Set &amp; communicate high expectations &amp; goals</strong></td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.03</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.10*</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.04</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Develop standard aligned activities</strong></td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.00</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: 1= number of Hispanic or Latino students, 2= number of non-Hispanic or Latino students, 3= number of White students, 4= number of Black or African American students, 5= number of American Indian or Alaskan Native students, 6= number of Asian students, 7= number of Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander students, 8= number of students two or more races, 9= grade level of students, 10= number of English Language Learners, 11= number of students new to the school or district, 12= number of students non-Christian.

**p < .01, two tailed**

* p < .05, two tailed

The student demographic that had the highest number of significant correlations with CRT practices (8) was the number of ELL students a teacher had. The most significant correlations between the numbers of ELLs a teacher has and the specific CRT practices are outlined below. All the p-values were less than .01, two tailed.

- Greet ELLs in their native language ($r = .24$).
• Evaluate the appropriateness of assessments for CLD students \( (r = .24) \).

• Analyze curriculum and instructional materials for misrepresentation or lack of representation of diverse students \( (r = .23) \).

• Use supplemental materials to counteract the misrepresentations or lack of representations of diverse students in materials \( (r = .23) \).

The number of ELLs teachers have in their class seems to affect whether they greet the ELLs in their native language. Though “Greet ELLs in their native language” is among one of the lowest scoring items on the survey \( (M = 2.4, SD = 1.5) \), this is most likely because majority of the sample (66%) did not have ELLs in their classrooms, illustrated in Table 6. The correlation results show that there is a significant positive correlation between teachers that have ELLs, and if they greet ELLs in their native language. Thus, teachers that do in fact have a number above zero of ELLs in their class may be likely to greet them in their native language, since there is a significant correlation of .24. The raw numbers for those who have ELLs also demonstrate the relationship between more ELLs a teacher has and the increase in the consistency of the CRT practice of greeting them in their native language (See Table 5). Of those that have 16 or more ELLs, 100% of them sometimes or more consistently greet ELLs in their native language. Of those that have 1-5 ELLs, less than half, or 41%, sometimes or more consistently greet ELLs in their native language. Teachers that do have higher numbers of ELLs may also be more likely to evaluate the appropriateness of assessments for CLD students, analyze the curriculum and instructional materials for lack of or misrepresentation of CLD students, and then also supplement lack of or misrepresentations of CLD students in materials, all of which are supported by the significant correlations outlined above this paragraph.
Table 5

*Frequency of Teachers’ Ratings on Greeting ELLs in Native Language based on Number of ELL Students ELLs (n = 158)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Likert Scale</th>
<th>1-5</th>
<th>6-10</th>
<th>11-15</th>
<th>16+</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Never</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rarely</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Often</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Always</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There were also correlations (6) between the number of Hispanic students a teacher has and the implementation of CRT practices. The strongest correlations between the numbers of Hispanic students a teacher has and the specific CRT practices were:

- Greet ELLs in native language ($r = .19$).
- Analyze materials for lack of or misrepresentations of CLD students in materials ($r = .17$).
- Use supplemental materials to counteract the lack of or misrepresentations of CLD students in materials ($r = .15$).
- Explicitly facilitate conversations about unpopular or taboo topics ($r = .15$).

The results from these correlations show that the number of Hispanic students a teacher has may affect whether a teacher greets ELLs in their native language, analyzes materials for lack of or misrepresentations of CLD students, supplements the lack of or
misrepresentations of CLD students, and explicitly facilitates conversations about unpopular topics with students.

There were five correlations between the student demographic, “Number of students two or more races” and CRT practices. The strongest correlation between the number of students that were two or more races was with the CRT practice “Explicitly facilitate conversations about taboo or unpopular topics” at .17. Five correlations also existed between the number of non-Christian students a teacher has and CRT practices. The strongest correlation between the number of students that were non-Christian a teacher has with the CRT practices was between the CRT practice “Use supplemental materials to counteract the misrepresentations or lack of representations of CLD students” with a coefficient of .16. Table 6 illustrates approximately how many students that teachers had that were ELL and non-Christian. The race and ethnicity of students was based on numerical data input, not Likert scale data. As a result, only the mean and standard deviation are available to examine approximately how many students that teachers had based on race and ethnicity (See Table 7).
Table 6

Frequency and Percent of Number of Students that are ELL or Non-Christian

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Demographics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>English Language Learners (ELLs)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>66.31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>25.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>5.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Non-Christian</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>29.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>244</td>
<td>52.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6-10</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>13.86%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>3.41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16+</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7

*Mean and Standard Deviation of Number of Students by Ethnicity and Race*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Demographics</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ethnicity</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>2.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Hispanic or Latino</td>
<td>17.4</td>
<td>7.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black or African American</td>
<td>2.73</td>
<td>4.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>15.7</td>
<td>7.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>American Indian or Alaska Native</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>2.11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. Answers that were above 30 were taken out for calculations assuming the participant interpreted the question to mean school rather than individual class numbers.

There were only a few significant correlations between the number of students that were new to the district and CRT practices (3), the number of African American students and CRT practices (2), and the number of Asian students and CRT practices (1). There were weak correlations between student demographics of non-Hispanic, White, Native American, or Pacific Islander and CRT practices, which can be seen in Table 4. There was also no correlation between CRT practices and the grade level of the classroom, except for one CRT item, “Explicitly facilitate conversations about unpopular or taboo topics,” of .17. Thus, the only student demographics that seem to impact more of teachers’ implementation of CRT practices are if students are an ELL, Hispanic, two or more races, or are non-Christian.
Research Question Three

Pearson correlation was also used to analyze the survey item responses to answer research question three: Is there correlation between teacher characteristics and the implementation of CRT? The results are shown in Table 8, which illustrates a weak correlation between teacher characteristics and implementation of CRT. There were two characteristics that had significant positive correlations on nearly every CRT practice; characteristic 10, “Guide or instruct practicum students or student teachers on CRT” \( (r = .48, .46, .50) \), and characteristic 11, “Check over or evaluate practicum student lessons on CRT” \( (r = .50, .49, .52) \). Teacher race had two significant correlations that were both at .13 with the CRT practice “Use supplemental materials to counteract lack of or misrepresentation of CLD students,” and “Identify how the school culture is different or alike to students’ at-home culture.” Other than this, no other teacher demographics showed strong correlations with the CRT practices. These results indicate that teacher demographics, and characteristics such as attainment of higher education, professional development, and an ESL endorsement appeared to not influence teachers’ implementation of CRT practices.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRT Item</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Collect students' interest</td>
<td>-.17</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.18**</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.10'</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td>-.16**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.12'</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collect info about parents' culture</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.68</td>
<td>-.16**</td>
<td>-.12*</td>
<td>-.10'</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze materials for misrepresentations</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.11*</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
<td>-.24**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.48**</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.13*</td>
<td>.19*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use supplemental materials</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.46**</td>
<td>.49**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.24**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explicitly facilitate unpopular topics</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.13**</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>-.13**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.16**</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.27**</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.19*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate assessments</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>.50**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
<td>.12'</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use a variety of assessments</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.11*</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.10'</td>
<td>-.10'</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.32**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.12'</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reflect on teaching</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>-.01</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.12'</td>
<td>-.15**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.31**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.12'</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Model and teach social justice and equality</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.12**</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>.17**</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help students identify how alike &amp; different</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>-.10'</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.13**</td>
<td>-.10'</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.30**</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>-.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate own culture how alike &amp; different</td>
<td>-.09'</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.03</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>-.10'</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>.40**</td>
<td>-.17'</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXAMINING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Provide fair attention

|          | .06 | .02 | .04 | .02 | -.01 | -.02 | -.03 | -.04 | .24** | .23** | .01 | -.07 |

Greet ELLs in native language

|          | -.09 | -.01 | -.04 | -.10* | .03 | -.14** | -.16** | -.17** | -.07 | -.15** | .12* | .09 | -.07 |

Identify school culture & expectations same or different than students

|          | -.02 | .13** | -.10 | -.14** | .03 | -.09* | -.13** | -.13** | -.06 | .41** | .40** | .17** | .05 |

Set & communicate high expectations & goals

|          | .03 | .02 | -.01 | -.15** | .04 | -.00 | -.11* | -.16** | -.03 | .29** | .26** | -.15** | .02 |

Develop standard aligned activities

|          | .02 | .07 | .01 | -.06 | .00 | -.05 | -.13** | -.16** | -.05 | .34** | .30** | -.04 | .05 |

Note: 1 = teacher ethnicity, 2 = teacher race, 3 = total number of years teaching, 4 = location of current teaching position, 5 = level of highest education earned, 6 = certificate or endorsement in ESL instruction, 7 = attended or presented at a conference related to multicultural education or CRT, 8 = attended or presented at a workshop or training about multicultural education or CRT, 9 = ever had a practicum student or student teacher, 10 = guide or instruct practicum students or student teachers on CRT, 11 = check over or evaluate practicum student lesson plans for CRT, 12 = had a practicum or student teacher from a different racial or ethnic background, 13 = number of practicum students from a different racial or ethnic background.

**p < .01, two tailed
*p < .05, two tailed

Summary

The results from the mean and standard deviation of the survey scores show that overall teachers are minimally implementing CRT practices. The CRT practices that teachers are doing most are more general in nature than the ones they are doing less, which are more specific to considering individual student identity and culture. The results for research question two and three indicate that students’ demographics influence teachers’ implementation of CRT practices more than the teachers’ own demographics and
characteristics. Teachers that have students that are Hispanic, ELL, or non-Christian may be more likely to implement CRT practices. The number of students that were African American, Asian, or new to the district also may influence teachers’ implementation, but only with a few CRT practices. None of the teacher demographics seem to significantly impact whether they implement CRT practices. The only significant correlations were for the teacher characteristics “guide practicum students on CRT”, and “check over practicum students’ lesson plans for CRT.” Thus, the level of education, professional development, and race or ethnicity of the teacher did not seem to influence their CRT implementation. In the following section, the results are further discussed along with the study implications for the education profession.
CHAPTER V

Discussion and Conclusion

The current study sought to answer if Central Illinois elementary teachers are implementing CRT practices, and if student or teacher demographics influence the likelihood that teachers implement CRT. This section will discuss the findings of the study in more detail as well as address some of the mitigating factors for the findings. The implications, areas for future study, and limitations will also be discussed.

Discussion

The overarching research question was developed to answer if teachers are implementing CRT or not. The results of the study indicate that majority of the sample is “Sometimes” implementing CRT, signifying that teachers could be implementing CRT on a more consistent basis. The first research question more specifically sought to answer which practices teachers are implementing most and which ones they are implementing least. The results reveal that the practices teachers are doing the most are more general in nature and may be based on self-perception. For example, two of the highest scored items, “Reflect on my teaching,” and “Provide a fair amount of attention” are self-evaluation items; it would be difficult for an observer to measure that the teacher does indeed reflect on her teaching or provide a fair amount of attention to students without inquiring extensively. While the highest scored items are essential facets of CRT, they alone do not encompass truly implementing CRT. The items that scored the lowest were more concrete, pointing to observable practices specific to CLD students, such as “Greet ELLs,” and “Explicitly facilitate conversations about unpopular or taboo topics.” Hence, Central Illinois teachers are more consistently implementing practices of CRT that are less specific to CLD students, and more related to good teaching practices in general. To
denote that overall teachers are indeed implementing CRT, the scores would have needed to be high for majority or all the CRT items. Perhaps a reason that teachers scored lower on certain items and not others is because of the student demographics of their class. The results of the study show that there was a correlation between student demographics and teacher implementation of CRT, which answered research question number two, “Is there correlation between student demographics and teacher implementation of CRT practices?”

There were significant correlations between teacher CRT implementation and the number of students that were Hispanic, ELL, or non-Christian. These results suggest that within Central Illinois, teachers are more likely to implement CRT practices when they have a higher number of Hispanic students, ELLs, or students that are non-Christian. Further, the CRT practices that teachers with these students implement are specific to being inclusive of CLD students, such as analyzing materials for lack of or misrepresentation of diverse populations, evaluating the appropriateness of assessments, and helping students identify where they fit into the school culture. There was nearly no evidence of correlation between the other student demographic variables, such as number of White students, grade level, or number of new students with teacher implementation of CRT. This may signify that teachers without a population of diverse students in their class may not see a need to implement CRT practices, especially ones that are specific to analyzing materials and instruction for inclusivity and consideration of diverse populations. This inference further supports why the items that were more general, almost expected practices of good teachers despite class makeup, were among the highest scoring. Subsequently, it seems that the less diverse the class population is, the less likely the teacher is to use CRT practices that are specific to being inclusive of varying aspects of culture or diversity. Among one of the lowest scoring items was “Greet ELLs in native
language. Though this was one of the lowest, it is possibly because majority of the sample (66%) did not have ELLs in their classrooms, so it is logical that the scores were lower. Of those that did have ELLs, there was strong correlation with CRT implementation, especially with practices that are inclusive of CLD students.

Practices that had no correlation between student demographics and that also had low scores by the whole sample were: collect information about students’ interest and learning preferences to guide instruction, collect data about parents’ cultural practices and preferences, model and teach social justice, and identify the ways in which school culture and expectations are different than students’. Regardless of student demographics, it is still important and relevant that the teacher learns about the culture of the students by reaching out to parents, collecting information about students’ interest and beliefs, and identifying how the school culture is different than the students’ home culture, since CRT encompasses truly knowing about students and their interests. It is also important that even with a homogeneous class make up, diversity and multicultural education is a part of curriculum and instruction. Thus, there are various components of CRT that the sample could be doing on a more consistent basis. The reasons why teachers did not score well in these areas or may not feel compelled to implement them may be due to various factors.

Teachers that do not implement CRT may have a superficial understanding of multicultural education or CRT practices in general, and thus may not have the self-efficacy or motivation to implement it, which aligns with research from Fry et al. (2010) that points to self-efficacy being a determinant factor for CRT implementation. Another reason may be that teachers simply do not see a need or want to implement it, especially the facets related to talking about and including diversity in instruction, which could be related to the social hierarchy and how the community and school is structured around the
dominant society (Gay, 2002; Vavrus, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). It is understandable that primarily White, rural schools (majority of the sample) have instruction and curriculum that is conducive to that population; it would be expected since that is what works for those students. On the contrary, administrators and teachers also need to supplement the curriculum and instruction with aspects of culture and diversity to advance global and cultural awareness and competence that precedes a diverse, accepting, and equitable society. Consequently, administrators or teachers that do not recognize a need to supplement the curriculum and do not, may be continuing to perpetuate social constructs that favor the idea of White privilege and thus inequalities for diverse populations (Meadows, 2002). Perhaps teachers fear that if they incorporate multicultural education or foster sociocultural awareness they will receive opposition from community or administrators, which is a valid concern (Gay, 2013). It could also be that their own biases (Chartock, 2010; Gay, 2000; Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009; Plata, 2011) or unwillingness to confront the concepts of White privilege and dominance that may prevent them from implementing CRT or multicultural education (Meadows, 2002). Another possible reason teachers may not implement CRT is because they believe in the colorblind paradigm, which is where students are viewed as the same, despite race or ethnicity, and thus, it would be unfair or rude to acknowledge a students’ difference (Gay, 2013).

Overall, teachers that have higher numbers of certain diverse students, such as Hispanics and non-Christian students, implement some CRT practices on a more consistent basis than teachers who do not have those students; however, when examining all the results, it seems that majority of the sample is not implementing CRT as fully as possible, regardless of student demographics.
The third research question was developed to answer if there was correlation between teacher demographics and implementation of CRT practices. Teacher demographics varied from years of experience, an ESL endorsement, highest level of education earned, and professional development surrounding multicultural education or CRT. Teacher characteristics included if teachers guide or instruct practicum students on CRT and how often they evaluate practicum students' lesson plans for CRT. There was no correlation between teacher demographics and implementation of CRT practices. As a result, the years of experience, an ESL endorsement, highest education earned, and professional development specific to CRT and multicultural education do not seem to influence if a teacher implements CRT. Only the two characteristics of “guide practicum students on CRT” and “evaluate practicum students’ lesson plans for CRT” correlated with teacher implementation of CRT. These two teacher characteristics had a correlation with every CRT item on the survey. This is most likely because these two characteristics are observable actions, and can also be viewed as CRT practices in themselves. For the study, the researcher viewed the characteristics as components of professional development related to CRT, so the items were placed within the teacher demographic category; however, it is reasonable to conclude that these two characteristics had a higher correlation with the CRT practices because they are also forms of CRT practices. It is cogent that the more a teacher implements CRT, then the more likely they are to instruct a practicum student on it and evaluate their lesson plans for it. In contrast, based on the results, it is not evident that if a teacher is Hispanic, she will implement CRT more than a White teacher. So, when examining the true demographics of the sample, there was no correlation with CRT implementation. Varying reasons could be the cause of these findings.
A possible explanation why professional development does not influence teacher implementation of CRT is a lack of quality professional development around CRT. If the quality of the professional development was not comprehensive nor provided the necessary skills surrounding CRT theory, then the teacher may not feel confident in implementing it because they do not have adequate knowledge or the skills to do so (Frye et al., 2010; Gay, 2013; Milner et al., 2003; Plata, 2011; Tran, 2015; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). To further address this idea, a question could have been added to the survey that asked the sample to rate the quality of their professional development or their confidence with the concepts. The absence of correlation between professional development and CRT implementation could also be due to the lack of alignment between the professional development content teachers have completed compared to the CRT item content on the survey. The questions on the survey about professional development could have also been more specific to denote specially CRT rather than CRT and multicultural education in general terms; the participants could have had professional development, but could have received it in on a general or narrow topic around multicultural education versus the specific theory of CRT and its practical implications. Perhaps if the questions around CRT professional development were more refined and included a rate scale, the results regarding professional development would have been more telling.

Another consideration for the lack of correlation is that even with professional development, teachers may not feel compelled to change their instruction. Considering the professional development was comprehensive and of quality, the lack of correlation could be due to the teachers’ resistance or disagreement with the new information. This could be especially true for topics centered on culture and society, with which teachers may have personal conflict. If the teacher does not see a need to implement it or merely
does not want to, then the professional development would not be successful in motivating that teacher to implement it (Meadows, 2002). This idea is problematic not only because many teachers do not see a need, but also because they are evaluated using the Danielson Framework. Within the framework are domains that support the need for ongoing professional growth. The purpose of professional development is to promote teacher growth that will ultimately lead to higher student achievement. If teachers do not utilize professional development appropriately, or if it is not of quality to motivate a teacher to consider new pedagogy, then they are not meeting the evaluation requirements within the Danielson Framework. The implications of the research findings are discussed in the next section.

Implications

There are a few implications of the study for administrators and teachers. The first implication is that teachers who are implementing certain CRT practices when they have high numbers of ELLs, Hispanics, and non-Christian students need to keep analyzing instructional materials and assessments for lack of representations or misrepresentations. Even so, these teachers need to also work to implement the other aspects of CRT that may be more general in nature but still contribute to being culturally responsive. Support from administrators could also help teachers to develop more confidence in implementing CRT and could contribute to a more inclusive school climate. Further, Central Illinois administrators and teachers overall need to work to implement CRT practices and multicultural education on a more consistent basis, regardless of the student demographics in their school or class. This implies analyzing the curriculum and materials and also considering the social and emotional aspects related to CLD students and diversity in the school, community, and society. Hence, an additional implication is that teachers also
develop their own sociocultural awareness and foster it in students. This is related to the need for teachers to actively work for social justice and equality in society (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Meadows, 2002; Vavrus, 2008; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Professional development and reformed coursework is a possible way that teachers can work to develop sociocultural awareness and CRT competence; however, the professional development or coursework would have to be significant and comprehensive (Barnes, 2006; Ebersole et al., 2015).

Based on the current study, professional development does not influence teachers to implement CRT. Additionally, even in studies where professional development was given, some teachers still struggled to accurately and appropriately implement the material taught (Ebersole et al., 2015; Meadows, 2002). This may be because the issues centered on culture and identity are in-depth and cannot be appropriately or comprehensively addressed in one or two sessions of professional development. Subsequently, if professional development is a considered option, it must be comprehensive enough that it provides the time and resources to allow participants to truly develop and change. Furthermore, the topics should be organized in a manner that participants are not quick to resist the information. If the professional development is substantial enough that it allows participants time to grow and provides the necessary support, it could be an option for teachers to learn and feel confident about CRT, multicultural education, and sociocultural awareness. When these opportunities are given to educators, they are more likely to be more effective teachers for both CLD students and mainstream students while still meeting the standards of professional development within the Danielson Framework. A possible implication is for administrators to consider adding components of CRT to their evaluation measures so that diversity and multicultural education are shown to be valued.
and teachers are further motivated to implement it. Teacher preparation programs could also begin to scaffold CRT practices throughout their already existing curriculums and methods courses. Teacher preparation programs additionally could include more in-depth and comprehensive courses on cultural dynamics and culture identity. Suggestions for forthcoming study may contribute to additional implications surrounding CRT and future practice.

**Future Study**

To obtain more generalizable results, a future study suggestion could be to replicate this study in other geographical areas with more diverse populations. Conversely, the study could also be done again but specific to schools with primarily White students. Comparing the results could be telling of the effect of student demographics on teacher attitude and implementation of CRT. Another possible area for future study would be to compare student achievement with teacher implementation of CRT to determine if more consistent implementation of CRT does lead to higher achievement of CLD students, as suggested by the literature of Gay (2000, 2013) and Peterson (2014). Another area for future study could be to survey or interview teachers on their attitudes and perspectives about the CRT practices to more accurately interpret the reasons they do not fully implement CRT. Additionally, a study could be conducted that seeks to evaluate the effects of professional development. Participants could first be provided professional development on CRT and multicultural education. After the training, they would be evaluated on their implementation of CRT and overall dispositions, which could provide insight to the effectiveness of the professional development.


Limitations

Just as with any study, this study has limitations. The biggest limitation is the sample. The sample size was relatively small, and the results may not be truly representative of Central Illinois K-5 teachers. The results also cannot be generalized to other geographic areas. Further, the results are specific to K-5 teachers, so the results do not encompass all teachers within Central Illinois. Another limitation to the study was that there were very little to no representation of Pacific Islander or Native American students; thus, there was no data to determine if these specific student populations would have a relationship with teacher implementation of CRT.

A few limitations were also noted after the survey was completed by participants. Some questions were vague so teachers interpreted them differently—some participants interpreted the questions requesting data for the whole school while others interpreted it as class data. Thus, the results were not complete of the whole sample responses, since numbers above 30 were taken out of calculations so that they would not skew the results. In addition, the instrument was self-developed, so that presents another limitation that needs to be considered.

Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to determine if Central Illinois elementary teachers implement CRT in their classrooms. The literature reviewed for the study emphasized a need for more culturally responsive teaching in American schools. The researcher inquired about the implementation of Central Illinois teachers since the area is characterized by rural, primarily White communities that may have small numbers of CLD students. While this the case, the literature showcased the need for CRT for any number of CLD students, and to be relative to all students. Thus, the study examined if
Central Illinois teachers are in fact implementing CRT and if there was a relationship between student demographics and CRT implementation. Student demographics does have a relationship with teacher implementation of CRT. Further, the researcher hypothesized that increased experience and professional development would show a strong relationship with CRT implementation; however, this was disproved by the study results. The study utilized a self-developed survey questionnaire to survey 469 Central Illinois public school teachers. The results of the study showed that CLD students’ needs are being met in many cases, but overall teachers need to keep striving to implement CRT practices to create more relative and effective learning environments for their students.
References


https://www.researchconnections.org/childcare/datamethods/survey.jsp


EXAMINING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING

Educational Progress (NAEP). Retrieved from:

https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/sass1112_2013314_t12n_001.asp

https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables/sass1112_2013313_p1s_001.asp

https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/studies/gaps/


EXAMINING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING


Appendix A

Survey Instrument

The purpose of this survey is to examine whether teachers are implementing culturally responsive teaching. It will take approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Your answers to the questions will remain anonymous and will not be linked to you in any way. You may choose not to take the survey. If you begin the survey, you may stop at any point without penalty. Thank you for your participation!

Please use the following scale throughout the survey to determine your answers.

Consider your whole teaching career when answering.

Never-- I have not done this at any time nor attempted to do so.

Rarely-- I’ve attempted to do this, but only once or twice.

Sometimes-- I’ve done this on occasion, or partially.

Often-- I do/have done this but not as consistently or fully as I could.

Always-- I do/have done this fully and/or consistently.

Q1 I use information gained from data I’ve collected about students’ interest and learning preferences to guide the communication styles and examples I use in instruction.

Never (1)
Rarely (2)
Sometimes (3)
Often (4)
Always (5)

Q2 I administer at least two methods of collecting data (i.e. phone calls, conferences, surveys) within the first month of school that only pertain to parents’ cultural practices and educational preferences.

Never (1)
Rarely (2)
Sometimes (3)
Often (4)
Always (5)
Q3 I analyze my curriculum and instructional materials for misrepresentations or lack of representation of culturally diverse groups.
   - Never (1)
   - Rarely (2)
   - Sometimes (3)
   - Often (4)
   - Always (5)

Q4 I use supplemental materials to counteract the misrepresentations or lack of representation of culturally diverse groups in my curriculum and instructional materials.
   - Never (1)
   - Rarely (2)
   - Sometimes (3)
   - Often (4)
   - Always (5)

Q5 I explicitly facilitate conversations about unpopular or taboo topics related to the subjects I teach when grade appropriate.
   - Never (1)
   - Rarely (2)
   - Sometimes (3)
   - Often (4)
   - Always (5)

Q6 I consistently evaluate the appropriateness of the assessment tools I use for culturally and linguistically diverse students.
   - Never (1)
   - Rarely (2)
   - Sometimes (3)
   - Often (4)
   - Always (5)

Q7 I use a variety of assessment tools other than tests, such as portfolios, projects, and presentations to determine how much students have learned.
   - Never (1)
   - Rarely (2)
   - Sometimes (3)
   - Often (4)
   - Always (5)
Q8 I reflect on my teaching weekly to determine what worked and did not work well for my students learning styles and preferences as to improve my teaching.

- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q9 I model and teach students ways they can actively work to bring about social justice and equal opportunity for everyone within their school and community.

- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q10 I help my students identify how they are different and alike in terms of their past and present experiences and identities.

- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q11 I evaluate how my cultural practices and beliefs are different or the same as my students' cultural practices and beliefs.

- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q12 I provide a fair amount of attention and support to each student.

- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)
Q13 I greet English Language Learners in their native language.
- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q14 I identify and record the ways in which the school culture and expectations are different than my students' culture and at-home expectations.
- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q15 At the start of the school year I set and communicate high academic expectations and goals for each of my students to reach.
- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q16 I develop standard-aligned rigorous learning activities for my students that include content in community, culture, language, and history.
- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q17 Please indicate the number of students you have by ethnicity by writing the number in the box.
- Hispanic or Latino
- Non-Hispanic or Latino

Q18 Please indicate the number of students you have by race by writing the number in the box.
- White
Black or African American
American Indian or Alaska Native
Asian
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
Two or more races

Q19 Please select the grade level of your classroom.
- Kindergarten (1)
- 1st Grade (2)
- 2nd Grade (3)
- 3rd Grade (4)
- 4th Grade (5)
- 5th Grade (6)

Q20 How many English Language Learners, or students that speak English as a second language, do you have in your class?
- 0 (1)
- 1-5 (2)
- 6-10 (3)
- 11-15 (4)
- 16+ (5)

Q21 Estimate how many students in your class are new to your school or district this year.
- 0 (1)
- 1-5 (2)
- 6-10 (3)
- 11-15 (4)
- 16+ (5)

Q22 Estimate how many students in your class are Non-Christian.
- 0 (1)
- 1-5 (2)
- 6-10 (3)
- 11-15 (4)
- 16+ (5)

Q23 Please indicate your ethnicity by selecting the one that applies to you.
- Hispanic or Latino (1)
- Non-Hispanic or Latino (2)
Q24 Please indicate your race by selecting the one that applies to you.
- White (1)
- Black or African American (2)
- American Indian or Alaska Native (3)
- Asian (4)
- Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (5)
- 2 or more races (6)

Q25 Please select the choice that represents your total number of years teaching.
- 0-5 (1)
- 6-10 (2)
- 11-15 (3)
- 16-20 (4)
- 21-25 (5)
- 26+ (6)

Q26 Please select the location of your current teaching position.
- Urban (1)
- Suburban (2)
- Rural (3)

Q27 Please select your level of highest education earned.
- Bachelor's (1)
- Some graduate level coursework (2)
- Master's (3)
- Doctorate (4)

Q28 Do you have a certificate or endorsement in English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction?
- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q29 Have you ever attended or presented at a conference related to multicultural education or culturally responsive/relevant teaching?
- Yes (1)
- No (2)
Q30 Have you ever attended or presented at a workshop or training about multicultural education or culturally responsive/relevant teaching?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q31 Have you ever had a practicum student or student teacher?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If no is selected, then skip to end of survey. If yes is selected, then skip to “How often do you guide or instruct your…”

Q32 How often do you guide or instruct your practicum student or student teacher on culturally responsive/relevant pedagogy?

- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q33 How often do you check over or evaluate practicum or student teachers' lesson plans for being culturally responsive?

- Never (1)
- Rarely (2)
- Sometimes (3)
- Often (4)
- Always (5)

Q34 Have any of your practicum or student teachers been from a different racial or ethnic background than you?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

If Yes is selected, then skip to “How many practicum or student teacher” ...If No is selected, then skip to end of survey.

Q35 How many practicum or student teachers have you had from a different racial or ethnic background than you?
Appendix B

IRB Approval

November 16, 2016

Katherine Silva
EC/ELE/MLE

Thank you for submitting the research protocol titled, “Examining Elementary Teachers' Implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching” for review by the Eastern Illinois University Institutional Review Board (IRB). The IRB has reviewed this research protocol and effective 11/15/2016, has certified this protocol meets the federal regulations exemption criteria for human subjects research. The protocol has been given the IRB number 16-120. You are approved to proceed with your study.

The classification of this protocol as exempt is valid only for the research activities and subjects described in the above named protocol. IRB policy requires that any proposed changes to this protocol must be reported to, and approved by, the IRB before being implemented. You are also required to inform the IRB immediately of any problems encountered that could adversely affect the health or welfare of the subjects in this study. Please contact me, or the Compliance Coordinator at 581-8576, in the event of an emergency. All correspondence should be sent to:

Institutional Review Board
C/o Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
Telephone: 217-581-8576
Fax: 217-581-7181
Email: eiuirb@www.eiu.edu

Thank you for your cooperation, and the best of success with your research.

John Bickford, Chairperson
Institutional Review Board
Telephone: 217-581-7881
Email: jbickford@eiu.edu
Appendix C

Table of Counties and Number of Emails Sent

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Appendix D

Recruitment Email

Hi there!

My name is Katie Silva and I am a graduate student at Eastern Illinois University. As part of my graduate work, I am working on a thesis entitled “Examining Elementary Teachers’ Implementation of Culturally Responsive Teaching.”

For my study, I am conducting a survey for regular education K-5 teachers – and I need your help! Your participation in my survey would be very appreciated, as I know how busy teachers are and how much time they devote to their work.

The survey will take approximately 10 minutes of your time and can be completed from any computer or mobile device. Your answers can be saved for later if you can't complete it at one time. The survey will be open to take for 2 weeks, closing on December 21st, 2016. The survey and answers will not be identified with you, and all information obtained from the surveys will be kept confidential and only seen by me and my supervisor, Dr. Md-Yunus (smdyunus@eiu.edu). Participation is voluntary, and refusal to participate will involve no penalty. You may withdraw from the survey at any time.

As thanks for your participation, upon completion, your email will be entered to win one of ten $25 eGift Cards to Amazon. If you have any questions concerning the research or procedures, please contact me at kasilva@eiu.edu.

Follow this link to the Survey:
${l://SurveyLink?d=Take the survey}

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:
${l://SurveyURL}

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:
${l://OptOutLink?d=Click here to unsubscribe.