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Culturally Responsive Instructional Coaching : Accessing Student Voice during a Co-Generated Lesson Plan

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Culturally Responsive Instructional Coaching:

Accessing Student Voice during a Co-Generated Lesson Plan

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of

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by

Jacqueline Stone

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Dissertation Chair: Dr. Emily Klein

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DISSERTATION APROVAL

We hereby approve the Dissertation

Culturally Responsive Instructional Coaching:

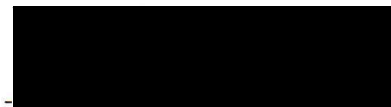**Accessing Student Voice during a Co-Generated Coaching Cycle**

of

Jacqueline Stone
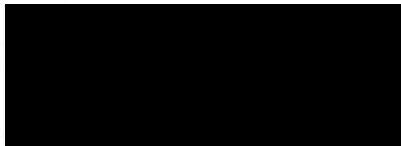
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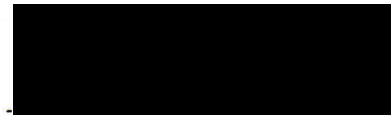Development

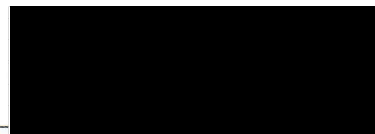Dissertation Committee:

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Abstract

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE INSTRUCTIONAL COACHING: ACCESSING STUDENT

VOICE DURING A CO-GENERATED LESSON PLAN

By Jacqueline Stone

In an increasingly diverse nation, rife with racial unrest and systemic inequities, it is the responsibility of educators to ensure the academic equity of all students. This participatory action research (PAR) sought to incorporate student voice into a culturally responsive coaching cycle in order to create equity and shared power between students and teachers. Through one phase of PAR and one coaching cycle (planning, observing, reflecting) that incorporated student voice, student-participants challenged traditional teaching structures and felt validation as a result. Additionally, teachers may have struggled with sharing power, but they demonstrated growth in their teaching practice. Finally, as an instructional coach, I helped to develop trust, interpret student voice into pedagogical strategies, while struggling with incorporating the components of cultural competency and sociopolitical consciousness.

Keywords: student voice, instructional coaching, culturally responsive, co-generated

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I could not have completed this without the help of my critical friends group and cohort companions Tom D'Elia, Rachel Ginsberg, and Kelly Lormand, who also rushed to help me see this through despite their own deadlines and frantic lives during the pandemic. To my husband, Khristopher Simpson, who celebrated my successes and listened when I struggled. Thank you for being there.

Finally, but most importantly, thank yous to the real Jolene, Nicole, Alaia, Eva, and Natasha. Your bravery, your time, your vulnerability, your wisdom, and your openness during this study inspired me every day and I look forward to our continued work together.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter, Savannah Diane Simpson-Stone, who will be joining our small family in a few short weeks. This was a labor of love, but I hope that it proves to you that anything is possible when your heart is in it.

Contents

Chapter 1: Introduction

The best feedback I received as a teacher did not come from my administrator or supervisor. Despite the confidence I had as a classroom teacher, the atmosphere of the class shifts when you know that you are being observed and the lesson is catered to the look fors of the person using the Danielson Rubric. The feedback often feels as if it comes from the administrator's own agenda—whether the use of technology or individual learning styles—or whatever is on trend for that year. The feedback rarely felt aligned to my needs or those of my students.

In my early years as an educator, I had a great deal of support and personalized feedback from two separate mentors. One gave me feedback on my lesson plans and advice on content-related skills which helped me break down my lessons into manageable portions for high school students. The other mentor, a literacy coach, helped me in my middle-school classroom by giving me feedback on managing a room full of seventh-graders. But when all of the adult support left the room, it was just me and the students.

However, the *best* feedback I received once I was comfortable in my "teaching skin," and I learned more about culturally responsive teaching: that feedback came from students. Using Gloria Ladson-Billings's (2009) *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* as my guidebook, I started to use my students as a sounding board for reflecting on my lessons and for creating future activities. At first, student voice came in the form of "safe" teacher-formed questions: "What worked for you in today's lesson? If I were to teach using this strategy in the future what would you change and why?" Eventually it turned into students co-creating the norms for the class, creating rubrics, and setting their own high expectations for their learning. Listening to students' opinions about how they learned and what they wanted to learn

informed my daily lessons—from choosing the novels we read to investigating topics that were meaningful to them and even writing to congresspeople and senators so that their voices could be heard beyond the classroom.

What I found by letting students have a voice in what and how they learned was that they were more engaged, more confident, and they rose to higher levels of expectations. Christopher Emdin (2016) refers to these "simple conversations between the teacher and their students with a goal of co-creating/generating plans of action for improving the classroom" as cogenerative dialogues, or cogens (p. 65). According to Ladson-Billings (2009), Gay (2018), Emdin (2016), and other culturally responsive educational scholars, student voice affirms student identity and makes the classroom a safer place to learn. When students feel safe in their learning, they are more likely to take educational risks and as a result, they meet higher standards because they are willing to take the risk of making a mistake (Hammond, 2015; Minor, 2019). By giving students a voice in the classroom, by co-constructing classroom norms and activities, it also creates a community in the class (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Leat & Reid, 2012; Reynolds, 2018).

However, as an instructional coach in the era of anxiety-inducing acronyms (SGO, SGP, VAM, etc.), I have noticed teachers retreating into their classrooms and closing the doors firmly behind them. Educators have been conditioned to work in isolation which make "feedback" and "observation" words that turn teachers off (Cook & Friend, 1995). Fearful of judgement, poor test scores, and teaching "outside the box," teachers retreat into the comfort of traditional, teacher-centered instruction and hide behind scripted lesson plans when they would benefit from collaboration with students, community members, and other educators.

In the spirit of self-preservation, teachers equate words such as "feedback" and "observations" from administration or colleagues to criticism and devaluation of their choices,

when they should be open to a variety of new ideas in our ever-changing world. However, instead of using student information to plan our lessons and guide our practice, data is (literally) a four-letter word in our profession. Lawmakers and politicians create mandates that are unrealistic and make us harried. In the decision-making, where are the teachers' voices? Where are the caregivers' voices? Where are the students' voices? Even current research fails to include the voices of students in curriculum, policy, or instruction in more than tokenistic ways (Cook-Sather, 2006; Leat & Reid, 2012; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015; Rodriguez & Brown, 2009). For these reasons, this study attempted to reframe our perception of data to not only include biased standardized testing and one-shot tests, but to include student self-reflection and feedback about their learning as well as anecdotal accounts of teaching guided by an instructional coach.

As our country becomes increasingly diverse, and overt bias is evident throughout the media, the social justice system, the workplace, etc., our schools need to become sanctuaries of change for all students regardless of race, gender, sexuality, ability, socioeconomic status, religion, etc. Schools across the United States continue to become more culturally and linguistically diverse while the teaching staff continues to be predominantly White (80% in 2015-2016) and female (89% in elementary schools and 64% in secondary schools in 2015-2016) (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2018). While student diversity is flourishing, teachers often are untrained and unaware of cultural and racial biases affecting many of our students of color (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Musu-Gillette, et al., 2016; Sleeter & Carmona, 2017). As a result, researchers have found there is a noticeable academic achievement gap between White students and students of color (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Hammond, 2015; Hollie, 2012; hooks, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Sleeter & Carmona, 2017; Stevens et al., 2002). That is,

White and certain groups of Asian students—those who fall victim to the model-minority

stereotype—tend to outperform students of color on standardized tests, such as the SAT, as well

as other measures of performance including placement in Advanced Placement (AP) classes

(Jaffe-Walter & Lee, 2011; Lee, 2005; Reeves & Halikias, 2017).

As an instructional coach in a culturally and linguistically diverse school district, I have

noticed similar gaps in student achievement. Situated in a suburban town in northern New Jersey,

Homestead High School's (pseudonyms used throughout) student body population student is

comprised of 57% Hispanic students, 21% Black/African American students, 15% White, 6%

Mixed, and 6% Asian, with 52% receiving free or reduced-price lunch, 33% first-generation

immigrants, and 9% English Language Learners (ELL). Despite this, an analysis of student

course placement demonstrates quite clearly that Black and Hispanic students are significantly

missing from our AP classes at Homestead, which are disproportionately White and Asian.

Since these data resonate with findings from a larger pool of U.S.-based research (e.g.,

Cochran-Smith, 2004; Hammond, 2015; Hollie, 2012; hooks, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2009;

Sleeter & Carmona, 2017; Stevens et al., 2002), the aim of this research study is to explore

students' accounts of their own learning—within a hegemonic system of power and privilege—

in order to better inform culturally responsive coaching practices. In order to mitigate, and

idealistically eradicate, disparities in student performance teachers must subscribe to culturally

responsive practices. Unfortunately, convincing them that traditional teacher-centered teaching

perpetuates and conserves social and hegemonic norms of Whiteness and middle-class ideals is

no small task, especially since traditional styles of professional development are ineffective, but

still abundant (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Carl et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Knight,

2007; Kohli et al., 2015; Korthagen, 2016).

As an instructional coach, I assist newly hired teachers in navigating away from traditional pedagogies (Knight, 2007) which maintain the hegemony and perpetuate deficit views of students of color. As my own philosophy of teaching is rooted in culturally and linguistically responsive pedagogy, I guide teachers towards student-centered learning and high expectations for all students. I am, however, a White, middle-class woman who navigated schooling well and was academically successful. Only recently have I stopped and asked students, who may or may not be navigating the Whiteness of the curriculum and hierarchical power structures that exist in schools, what they think about their school experience. Asking students about their experiences informs my coaching practice and creates a culturally responsive climate in my school building. Specifically, students have much to offer in shedding light on areas that need improvement in their education.

Unfortunately, in academia, student voice traditionally has been neglected (Cook-Sather, 2006; Leat & Reid, 2012; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015; Rodriguez & Brown, 2009). As a result, teachers' most important responsibility has been overlooked in research and the literature provides little information for using student voice to enact change in teachers' professional learning. On the other hand, copious research has indicated that traditional forms of the one-and-done professional development model have proven ineffective (e.g. Ball & Cohen, 1999; Carl et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond, et al., 2009; Knight, 2007; Kohli, et al., 2015; Korthagen, 2016). In fact, Knight (2007) posits that only 10% of traditional-style professional development is implemented in the classroom. Instead, Knight promotes instructional coaching as a more effective method of professional development. For the purposes of this research, instructional coaches are individuals who "work with teachers to help them incorporate research-based instructional practices" (Knight, 2007, p. 12). As a result, I conducted a participatory

action research (PAR) study to examine how student voice can influence the professional learning work that an instructional coach engages in with a group of teachers. It is my hope that this bottom-up approach will counter the hegemonic structures that exist in the school in which I work in order to expand teachers' repertoire of teaching strategies. My study is designed to investigate the following questions:

- What happens when an instructional coach invites student voice into a critical culturally responsive instructional coaching cycle with teachers in a diverse high school?

- How do the teachers experience this input of student voice in their instructional practice?

- How do students experience the collaboration with teachers in their instructional practice?

- What do I, the instructional coach, learn about coaching using student voice?

In the sections that follow, I provide both theoretical and conceptual frameworks for this study, respectively grounded in critical pedagogy and culturally responsive pedagogy, and examine how the main components are implemented in a coaching cycle. In addition to the frameworks, I present a review of the literature on instructional coaching for the implementation and sustainability of culturally responsive strategies in teachers' classrooms as well as the impact of student voice on the professional learning of teachers. Then, I provide a detailed description of my methodology and study design, and finally I present my findings from the study as well as implications of those findings.

Framework

Currently, there is no single framework that adequately explains how student voice informs teacher practice. Therefore, to explore how a student-driven coaching cycle might influence cultural responsiveness, I draw on two frameworks: one theoretical, the other conceptual. Each framework allows me to explore both the student and teacher perspectives of the coaching cycle. Expressly, Brazilian educator Paulo Freire's (1970) theoretical framework allows me to examine the interactions between the teacher and student participants, while Gloria Ladson-Billings's (2009) conceptual framework allows the examination of the outcome of the student-teacher collaboration. I outline these frameworks below and then explore how they can be linked to capture both student and teacher perspectives. I start my framework by delineating key concepts in Freire's (1970) theory of critical pedagogy in order to make sense of the literature surrounding instructional coaching for cultural responsiveness and student voice to inform teacher practice. Then I recapitulate the main points of Ladson-Billings's (2009) framework of culturally responsive teaching to provide a lens for how teachers are able to develop their understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy. Although these lenses are grounded in similar foundations of study (i.e. critical theories), the use of Freire in this study assisted me in examining the dialogue between teachers and students while Ladson-Billings helped me navigate the pedagogical strategies that occur as a result of the dialogue.

Theoretical Framework: Critical Pedagogy

Schools and classrooms are a microcosm of the culture of power that exists to maintain inequitable and unjust social relations in society. Traditional forms of educational policy and practice have historically silenced the voices of marginalized groups of students. Policies that promote English-only instruction, classwork that is remedial and unchallenging, and curricula

that omit any mention of disabled bodies and non-binary and LGBTQ+ histories submerge traditionally marginalized students into silence where they are stripped of independent and critical thought (Cammarota & Romero, 2006; Erevelles, 2000; Ferfolja, 2007; Fine, 1987). As a result, the hegemony in society is perpetuated in education by maintaining the status quo and leaving whiteness, cis-heteronormativity, ableism, etc. unchallenged.

In order to examine the intrinsic hierarchical structures in education, I chose a theory that directly addresses the systemic hegemony and oppression that is apparent in our schools. The term critical pedagogy stems from work by Freire in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970). The oppression that Freire witnessed and experienced spurred the formation of critical pedagogy in Brazil in the 1960s (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006), and his experiences of asymmetries of power and privilege ground the theory (Shudak & Avoseh, 2015).

Derived from critical theory, the term "critical" denotes a focus on the transformation or shift of oppression by analyzing, challenging, and rejecting oppression, injustice, inequity, authoritarianism, and the silencing of marginalized voices (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011; Ellsworth, 1989). Therefore, the goal of critical pedagogy is concerned with transforming relations of power within schools in order to empower learners (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011; Ellsworth, 1989; Kohli, et al., 2015). Over the decades, the theory has been critiqued by feminists for failing to engage with feminist perspectives and for replicating the same hegemonic principles that it espoused to combat (Ellsworth, 1989) and by critics, in general, for focusing on utopian ideals which do not make sense in developed settings (Shudak & Avoseh, 2015). Despite this, the foundational principles of the theory—banking model versus problem-posing, praxis, and dialogism—encapsulate the threads needed for my proposed study on incorporating student voice into an instructional coaching model.

Banking Model versus Problem-Posing Education. According to Freire (1970),

education—which is essentially political—can be a means of dehumanizing both the oppressed

and the oppressors and perpetuating hegemonic structures or as an instrument to bring about

freedom. He theorized that the way oppression happens is through the traditional style of

teaching he coins the "banking model." In this metaphor, "knowledge is a gift bestowed by those

who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing"

(Freire, 1970, p. 72). In essence, teachers deposit their knowledge into the empty vessels that are

their students, which annuls students' critical thinking and creativity. In contrast, Freire suggests

problem-posing education which involves uncovering reality by questioning the status quo

thereby leading to a critical consciousness (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011). In this version of

education, students develop their own knowledge rather than having it input into their minds.

Problem-posing education offers all content areas as products to be questioned rather than

knowledge to be accepted. It is the responsibility of the problem-posing educator to diversify the

curriculum and to use students' knowledge and dialogue as the basis for developing critical

thinking of personal experience and inequitable conditions in society (Boyce, 1996). By moving

from the banking model—which is oppressive—to a problem-posing model—which is

liberatory—it prepares students to engage in the larger struggle, develop a more accurate

perception of their experiences, and empower them to challenge hegemony and move toward a

more just society (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011). Therefore, Freire positions the banking model as

permanent and reactionary whereas the problem-posing model is dynamic and transformational.

Praxis. In its simplest form, praxis is defined as "the reflection and action which, truly

transform reality, [it] is the source of knowledge and creation" (Freire, 1970, p. 100-101).

Throughout his book, Freire insists that we cannot "think *for others* or *without others*, nor can

others think *for [us]*" (p. 108). In the same way, he asserts that in the process of revolution, we

cannot say that "someone liberates someone else, nor yet that someone liberates himself, but

rather that human beings in communication liberate each other" (p. 133). As a result, through

reflective dialogue and action towards a structure that is in need of a transformation, we have

praxis. He argues that praxis (and thereby transformation) cannot exist in reflection or action

without the other and that action and reflection occur simultaneously. Aliakbari and Faraji (2011)

propose that the purpose of praxis is "to implement a range of educational practices and

processes with the goal of creating not only a better learning environment, but also a better

world" (p. 82). It is through a dialogical process that the practice of praxis is likely to occur.

Dialogism. In his philosophical parlance, Freire (1970) defines dialogue as an existential

necessity, an act of creation. It cannot exist without profound love, humanity, faith, hope, or

critical thinking. In later works, he expounds on some of these ideas as indispensable qualities of

teachers. For instance, humility requires courage to admit that we do not have all of the answers;

"armed love" (without which teachers could not survive) is not only directed toward the students,

but also the process of teaching, and the injustice or the government's contempt of the

profession; hope—or joy of living—which persists despite the inequities in education to forge a

new present and future (Freire, 1998).

For the purposes of this study, I focus on three of Freire's iterations: (a) dialogue as

necessary; (b) dialogue as faith, and (c) dialoguers as critical thinkers. Freire asserts that "true

dialogue cannot exist unless the dialoguers engage in critical thinking . . . thinking which

perceives reality as process, as transformation" (p. 92). These features in particular are in

alignment with culturally responsive teaching as it insists on collaboration, care, and high

expectations. Additionally, the concept of transformation as a result of dialoguers participating in

critical thinking is of particular interest because this research proposes looking critically at the

dialogue between teachers and students in order to foster change in teaching practice.

In his didactic quest for liberatory education, Freire positions both the teacher and the

student as equal partners in a search toward conscientization (Shudak & Avoseh, 2015).

Conscientization is the "deepening of the attitude of awareness characteristic of all emergence"

(Freire, 1970, p. 109). This journey to emergence cannot come to fruition without authentic faith:

"Faith in people is an *a priori* requirement for dialogue; the 'dialogic man' believes in others

even before he meets them face to face" (p. 90–91). This is especially essential for marginalized

groups of people who have been historically deemed incapable of creating change to better their

situations (Miller et al., 2013). According to Miller et al. (2013) with humility and faith:

> Dialogue centers the contextual expertise of the people as active advocates for social
>
> transformation. This is done for both moral and pragmatic reasons as, from Freire's
>
> perspective, the oppressed deserve such humane engagement, but—more importantly—
>
> they are uniquely experienced and strategically positioned to instigate authentic change
>
> directed at widespread humanization (p. 1083).

Conversely, if faith does not exist or is inauthentic, then the dialogue results in domestication,

assimilation, and manipulation (Freire, 1970; Miller et al., 2013).

In the classroom, this demands less teacher talk and more learner voice. In a dialogic

classroom, teachers are meant to re-present a situation for investigation in the form of a problem,

rather than a lecture (Bowers, 2008; Freire, 1970). As students puzzle through these problems,

teachers are supposed to listen to their students, hear the problems that are meaningful to them,

and raise more questions to deepen students' understanding of the problems from a societal

perspective and then find ways to solve them (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011). Many of the classroom

structures founded on Freirean models use discussion and learner-centered classrooms to engage

students in learning (Bowers, 2008; Brown & Sekimoto, 2017; Miller et al., 2013). In learner-

centered classrooms, the objective to intellectual growth is teachers and students alike acting as

learners engaging in dialogue rather than consensus (Bowers, 2008). Students and teachers are

positioned as equal participants in learning because each person's social location is a source of

knowledge making them valuable contributors to the discussion (Brown & Sekimoto, 2017).

Finally, Freire (1970) asserts that in order for education to be authentic, it must be carried

out *with* one another, not *by, for,* or *about* someone else. By positioning both the teacher and the

student together as learners together, all participants have the possibility to transform their

thinking. This transformation is not a possibility in the banking model where teachers are

positioned as all-knowing and students as empty vessels. Instead, this level playing field allows

students and teachers alike to question and challenge the status quo thereby requiring and

generating critical thinking.

I chose critical pedagogy to frame my study even though culturally responsive teaching is

my end goal. While Ladson-Billings (1995) used critical race theory to frame culturally relevant

teaching, I chose not to use this framework for two reasons. First, I did not want to focus solely

on race; instead, I preferred an intersectional approach of all marginalized groups (including, but

not limited to race, gender, sexuality, ability, etc.). For instance, Freire does not highlight any

one group of oppressed people. Instead, in critical pedagogy, there is room for all groups to be

liberated through education. Secondly, critical race theory does not speak specifically to the

pedagogical implications of schooling. Therefore, I chose critical pedagogy to frame my study,

as it complements my research intent because students are not passive consumers of information;

instead, they actively make decisions that contribute to their learning. Additionally, teaching is

viewed as a way of engaging students in developing a critical consciousness to help them improve their living conditions and build a more equitable and just society (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011). In the same way, I am hoping that giving students a "place at the table" to make decisions about pedagogical choices during a coaching cycle will help them develop critical thinking about the education system that continues to marginalize some groups while elevating others.

As this framework assists in situating my study and the literature, it is insufficient for the outcome of the research. Therefore I use a conceptual framework that helps to determine patterns and themes as it pertains to analyzing the outcomes of the study. Next, I explain the aspects of culturally responsive pedagogy and the purpose it will hold in my study.

Conceptual Framework: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

The literature on culturally relevant pedagogy provides a conceptual framework in this study for identifying the important characteristics of instructional practices. I base my research questions, measures, analyses, and interpretations on this framework. This conceptual framework supplements Freire's (1970) critical pedagogy in my study as it allows me to examine the outcome of the study as they pertain to the components of teacher-student cogenerated lessons and the reflections of the lessons. Freire's framework, which insists that teachers and students are equal participants in learning, works for analyzing the relationship between student and teacher participants where I attempted to create an equitable space for discussion and planning. This equity of discussion and learning, however, is not apparent in the hierarchal paradigm that exists in the pre-established hegemonic classrooms and school structure in which my study takes place. The utopian ideals, for which this theory is often critiqued, falls short of the reality of public school restrictions. This second, conceptual framework helps me examine the theory from a more concrete and actionable lens of analysis.

The term culturally relevant pedagogy was coined by Ladson-Billings in 1995, in her book *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African American Children* and although other researchers have expounded on her ideas as well as created derivatives of the name (i.e. culturally sustaining pedagogy, culturally revitalizing pedagogy, culturally responsive, etc.) her ideas have remained relevant and applicable throughout the years. Culturally relevant responsive teaching was developed in order to contend with the deficit views of marginalized students, specifically African Americans, in the research literature (Ladson-Billings, 2017). She defines culturally relevant teaching as "a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 20).

Admittedly, Ladson-Billings (2014, 2017) agrees with critics that culturally relevant teaching should not be limited to one racial group and she subscribes to Paris's (2012) new terminology of culturally sustaining pedagogy. Paris (2012) asserts that "culturally sustaining pedagogy seeks to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling" (p. 93). As a result of the changing culture and climate, Ladson-Billings (2014) continues to "remix" her framework of culturally relevant teaching in response to the times. Therefore, I plan to use the foundations of culturally relevant pedagogy with a nod to the vision of cultural sustainability.

Foundationally, culturally relevant pedagogy consists of three major components: (a) a focus on student learning, (b) cultural competence (beyond the superficial), and (c) sociopolitical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 2009, 2014, 2017). Similarly, culturally sustainable pedagogy demands the following: explicitly pluralistic outcomes not focused on White, middle-class, cis heteronormative, ableist, etc. norms, culture as fluid and not static, and social justice-oriented

approaches to education. The components of the framework include: (a) focus on student learning, (b) cultural competence, and (c) sociocultural consciousness.

Focus on student learning. Culturally relevant pedagogy insists that all students, regardless of race, gender, and able-bodiness, are capable of academic success. Specifically when referring to student learning, Ladson-Billings indicates the "intellectual growth that students experience as a result of the experiences they have in the school, community, and classroom, especially with the help of a skilled teacher" (Ladson-Billings, 2017, p. 142). This skilled teacher must know their students in depth and maintain high expectations for them all in order to foster each student's individual intellectual growth (Delpit, 2012; Haberman, 1991; Hammond, 2015; Kinloch, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2009, 2014, 2017; Rodriguez, 2017; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Knowing one's students is essential to fostering the teacher's intellectual growth. It is contingent upon the culturally responsive teacher, considering the students' starting points, and moving them from where they are to where they need to be by building bridges or scaffolding both academic and functional skills (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Using these bridges teachers can connect what students know culturally to their academic lives. For instance, in Shirley Brice Heath's (1983) ethnographic study of language practices in Trackton and Roadville, she found that students possess important linguistic knowledge, but this knowledge did not always translate into their academic setting. Therefore, it is incumbent on teachers to access this wealth of knowledge and build bridges from students' home lives to their school lives. Ladson-Billings asserts that "a hallmark of the culturally relevant notion of knowledge is that it is something that each student brings to the classroom" (Ladson-Billings,

2009, p. 95); the knowledge of communities of color are valuable resources to be cultivated and

sustained in the classroom (Alim & Haupt, 2017; Gay, 2018, Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Freire (1970) warns educators that students are not empty vessels waiting to be filled with

the knowledge of their teachers; instead, students should be treated as critical co-investigators in

their search for knowledge (and thereby their liberation). It is essential for teachers to access this

knowledge in challenging and meaningful ways and learn to learn with and from students

(Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2009). Teachers need to present their ideas to students and then

reconstruct their own ideas based on student input. This requires teachers to exhibit a certain

amount of vulnerability in their teaching if they are asking students to take risks in their learning

(hooks, 1994). By listening to and learning from the students, teachers need to "rethink and

reenvision the curriculum" (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 57) to empower and liberate students

through education. Much in the same way, I want students to engage with teachers as co-

constructors of knowledge in order to build lessons that will contribute to the curriculum.

Cultural competence. Cultural competence comprises two components: (a) everyone has

a culture that is valuable for learning; and (b) all students should develop fluency in at least one

other culture (Ladson-Billings, 2014, 2017). Often misinterpreted, well-meaning educators use

students' native foods and holidays as substitutes for culture. The culture, however, that is vital

to student learning lies beyond the superficial (Delpit, 2012; Hammond, 2015; Ladson-Billings,

2014, 2017; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

In her book *Culturally Responsive Teaching and the Brain: Promoting Authentic*

Engagement and Rigor Among Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students, Zaretta

Hammond (2015) presents a Culture Tree Model broken down into three layers: surface,

shallow, and deep culture. First, the leaves represent surface culture or the observable patterns of

culture (i.e. language, art, music, hairstyles, holidays, cooking, etc.) which require low emotional

impact on trust. Second, the trunk represents shallow culture (including concepts of time, eye

contact, nonverbal communication, child rearing principles, etc.) which requires high emotional

impact on trust. Finally, the roots symbolize the deep culture of the collective unconscious or

beliefs and norms (decision-making, definitions of kinship, notions of fairness, relationship to

nature and animals, worldview, concepts of self, etc.) which demands intense emotional impact

on trust. Herein lies the vulnerability that teachers must exhibit in order to get to know the whole

child and validate their individual cultural experiences in a safe learning environment.

One way to validate students' identities is through collaboration. Culturally relevant

teaching "advocates for the kind of cooperation that leads students to believe that they cannot be

successful without getting help from others or without being helpful to others" (Ladson-Billings,

2009, p. 76). Essentially, when students work in a collaborative group structure, the teacher is

reinforcing that everyone in the class is knowledgeable and that their ideas and experiences are

valuable (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Another way to validate students' cultural experiences is to have their culture represented

in the curriculum. The curriculum should include both "windows and mirrors" (Style, 2013).

Therefore, educators need to reconstruct mainstream curricula and pedagogy so that they

genuinely serve the "full spectrum of students" so that no one is left behind (Connell, 2003). By

exposing students to windows, we allow students to break down stereotypes and build positive

representations of people with different identities from their own while the mirrors of the

curricula, helps students learn about themselves which ultimately promotes cultural

consciousness and connects them to their own identities. Again, reflecting students' lives in the

curricula creates better relationships between teacher and student. For this reason, students in my

proposed study will be asked to explicitly bring their perspectives and experiences into the classroom by incorporating them into a co-designed lesson. In this way, teachers will be able to learn what students perceive is important about their learning.

      Sociopolitical Consciousness. Finally, "culturally relevant teaching is about questioning (and preparing students to question) the structural inequality, the racism, and the injustice that exist in society" (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 140). Children naturally have the capacity and desire to reject the stereotypes used to maintain the hegemony (Lears, 1985). It is up to the teacher to help them build on that capacity. Moreover, it is the responsibility of the culturally relevant pedagogue to reveal the inequities in society and expose the interpersonal, disciplinary, cultural, and structural domains of power (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The difficulty is that teachers must first acknowledge that these inequities exist to question them. Therefore teachers must examine their own cultural lives as well as their implicit biases (Alim & Paris, 2017; Hammond, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2017; Thornton, 2017). Ultimately, this framework will help me better understand how students can move teachers closer to cultural responsiveness. Hopefully this framework will encourage teachers to begin to question the traditional teacher-centered learning structures in place in our schools. By using students to disturb the status quo of teaching, I hope that through this study teachers will begin to reevaluate how they teach, what they teach, and how they assess students in their classrooms.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review is to synthesize recent literature about both instructional coaching, specifically as it pertains to fostering culturally responsive practices, and student voice as it pertains to moving teacher practice towards cultural responsiveness. This is by no means an exhaustive review of the literature. As detailed below, I found very little in my searches on how student voice supports teacher learning. Because no query produced results, on student voice in coaching or mentoring teachers towards cultural responsiveness, I have broken the literature into two sections: instructional coaching and student voice. In the first section of the review, I have focused on empirical studies, literature reviews, and conceptual pieces written since 1995 (the inception of Ladson-Billings's cultural responsiveness) that explored how instructional coaching has been used to implement culturally responsive pedagogy. In the second, I also focused on empirical studies, literature reviews, and conceptual pieces that were written since 1990 (the burgeoning of research on student voice). Below I begin by providing a brief overview of instructional coaching, and an explanation of how I conducted my research, before exploring the themes that I uncovered.

Instructional Coaching

Research suggests that traditional professional development in the form of workshops and lectures is not adequate to improve teachers' practice (Aguilar, 2013; Garet et al., 2001; Kretlow & Bartholomew, 2010; Knight, 2007). As a result of inadequate professional development, as well as the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and the Common Core State Standards Initiative (2010), instructional coaching has been implemented in districts to help foster professional learning since the early 2000s (Galey, 2016). An instructional coach helps teachers realize their professional goals, implement research-based instructional practices, and

reflect on their classroom practices (Knight, 2007). Moreover, instructional coaches are "'linchpins' for successful change in school" (Knight, 2011, p. 12). As such, it stands to reason that instructional coaches should be used to support cultural responsiveness in schools in order to enact and support social justice reform.

I use the following search terms in ERIC: "DE culturally relevant education" AND "secondary education" and "DE culturally relevant education" AND "SU coaching (performance)." From there, I searched for pieces written after 1995 that address the use of instructional coaching to foster culturally responsive teaching. As a result, I found that the texts regarding cultural relevance and secondary education addressed a wide range of coaching strategies unrelated to cultural responsiveness. There were 19 articles pertinent to culturally responsive teaching and instructional coaching. Six discussed either concept as an implication of the study rather than how coaching was used to implement culturally responsiveness; three were dissertations which have not been peer-reviewed; one was a conference program; one discussed using cultural responsiveness to coach diverse teachers not to foster it; and one was of strengthening children's resilience after losing a parent to AIDS. The useful remains were seven peer-reviewed pieces which described the use of instructional coaching in the development of culturally responsive teaching. Since there has been no "rigorous test of coaching as professional development for promoting equity or culturally responsive practices," (Bradshaw et al., 2018, p. 122) the articles' reference lists did not prove helpful in locating more literature on the topic. Ultimately, I found one additional case study to supplement my review.

After reviewing the literature, I uncovered four qualities of coaching used to promote culturally responsive teaching: (a) trust, (b) opportunities to practice, (c) deep knowledge, and (d) collaboration. Coaching that included these qualities was more likely to help teachers

incorporate more culturally relevant practices into teachers' classrooms. Below I outline the

findings from the literature and apply the theoretical framework I described in the previous

section to these literature review findings to explore how an instructional coach can promote

cultural responsiveness in inservice teachers.

Trust

The foundation of any relationship is bound to crumble if it is not built on trust. In the

eight sources about coaching for cultural responsiveness, five of the studies mentioned trust as an

indispensable component for coaching for social justice. In fact, Pas et al. (2016) found that

(after coaching), coaches spend the majority of their time—specifically one third—trust and

relationship building. The objective of these activities was to "increase staff engagement in the

intervention and uptake of the culturally responsive classroom management content" (p. 483).

Additionally, the coaches in this study used a technique called motivational interviewing.

According to Bradshaw et al. (2018) and Pas et al. (2016), motivational interviewing "fosters a

non-evaluative environment, making the teacher feel safe to identify areas of weakness and

targeted skill development" (p. 470). Similarly, Ramkellawan and Bell (2017) stress the

importance of establishing trust when helping teachers examine their beliefs and implicit biases.

In this study, the coaches created norms that would guide their coaching conversations around

these difficult topics. After the first few meetings centered on building trust, the coaches spoke

directly and openly about uncomfortable situations which enabled teachers to be equally open

and increase effectiveness in their practice. Since teachers in the study often became emotional

during these uncomfortable conversations, the researchers caution to use observational data when

generating these dialogues. Furthermore, Ramkellawan and Bell (2017) posit that in order to

maintain trust, it is necessary not to make assumptions about a teacher's beliefs or biases.

In their unorthodox coaching strategy, Averill et al. (2015) conducted a study in which they coached student teachers to be more culturally responsive in mathematics by using "modelled rehearsals." During these rehearsals, the coaches "paused" the performance to act as directors of motivation, prompting the teachers to consider the pedagogical logic for the decision-making in the class. To create this learning environment that involved risk and vulnerability, the researchers stressed that coaches show care, listen, and talk with teachers so that they felt heard. They also noted that the coaches' use of humor during the rehearsals not only held teachers' attention, but also helped them feel comfortable about their own enactment of instructional activities. Comparatively, in Nathan's (2018) administrative affinity group, leaders meet with a coach to discuss complex issues of inequity. She admits that, in order to have these difficult conversations at all, there is the imperative factor of building trust. Also in an attempt to create authenticity for adult learning, Nathan believes that leaders must first create a safe space in which they are able to "try out ideas, to ask for understanding, to get angry, to propose problems without expecting any resolutions, to agree to disagree, and to be uncomfortable" (p. 268) without feeling judged or ridiculed.

The theoretical framework outlined above applies to the concept of trust as a necessary element for coaching for culturally responsive pedagogy, expressly, the components pertaining to Freire's (1970) praxis and dialogism. For instance, all of the scenarios revolved around coaches and teachers discussing difficult and problematic issues with the intent of moving towards more equitable teaching practices. A perfect example of praxis is Averill et al.'s (2015) modeled rehearsals. Not only did the participants take action by practicing to eradicate oppressive structures in education (such as teacher-centered learning as in the banking method), but they also paused the action to engage in reflective dialogue that made apparent the theory

behind the practice. It stands to reason that trust cannot be built if the oppressed—in this instance, the teacher—does not feel that they can speak freely to the coach—or the oppressor. Growth and transformation cannot occur if the two participants feel that there is a power dynamic in the relationship. Ultimately, it would dismantle, or fail to be realized, any trust between the two. Since this is such a vital component to fostering culturally responsive teaching, during the planning component (explained below) teachers and their student-coaches will engage in a relationship-building activity before co-designing their lessons.

Additionally, in Freire's (1970) explanation of dialogism, he insists that dialogue requires humility, faith in humankind, profound love, and hope. Specifically, he states: "Founding itself upon love, humility, and faith, dialogue becomes a horizontal relationship of which mutual trust between the dialoguers is the logical consequence" (p. 91). In these instances of coaches building trust with their teachers, both coaches and teachers need to exhibit these qualities in order to form bonds conducive to learning. Coaches and teachers need to humble themselves and admit that they do not know everything there is to know about teaching and education; they must be vulnerable and open themselves up to the possibility of failure as was evident in the literature (Averill et al., 2015; Bradshaw et al., 2018; Nathan, 2018; Pas et al., 2016; Ramkellawan & Bell, 2017). Without this vulnerability and trust, coaches and teachers will fail to grow. Therefore, in my proposed study, I specifically sought volunteers from a pool of teachers with whom I have worked and feel comfortable being vulnerable in their teaching. These volunteer teachers and I worked in a coaching relationship prior to the study and had built a trusting relationship during our time together. In the same way, I recruited volunteers from a pool of students who had also experienced vulnerability and empowerment as my former students. Their experience making decisions, as it pertained to my curriculum, had in part prepared them to work with other teachers

in informing lessons. I also hoped to create a safe space for teachers and students to be open to

asking questions and proposing answers, without the fear of ridicule. As such, I put in specific

protocols so that one group did not overpower the other, in addition to incorporating two rounds

of relationship-building sessions.

Opportunities to Practice

As with learning any new skill, participants need the opportunity to practice in order to

improve. Historically, Borko and Putnam (1996) assert that several features contribute to the

successful learning opportunities for teachers, including sustained opportunities to practice

classroom learning. In recent national and international studies, researchers also prompt coaches

to use various practice opportunities to engage in culturally responsive pedagogy. For instance,

Averill et al. (2015) used modelled rehearsals with student teachers to contend with the

disproportionality of Māori students in New Zealand. During these rehearsals, coaches and

teachers partook in reenacting classroom scenarios that practiced culturally responsive

pedagogical practices. The purpose of these experiences was to make clear that every decision a

teacher makes should be grounded in a pedagogical logic. For example, during the practice

teaching, the coach would "pause" the scene and ask the teachers about choices that the acting

teacher was making. Choices were examined using two of the five cultural competencies for

teachers of Māori students: *wānanga* (co-constructing learning and cooperative learning) and *ako*

(reciprocity of teaching). These rehearsals provided teachers with an opportunity to notice,

discuss, and make decisions about the culturally responsive practices in a mathematics

classroom. The researchers claim that using this methodology allowed for teachers to connect

theory to practice in a safe environment. Similarly, Garcia and Garcia (2016) used coaching as

an opportunity to explore one of the researcher's philosophies of teaching. Both the coach and

teacher team (also the researchers) "were motivated to find what worked best for native language-speaking students" (p. 177) and together they practiced and played with including learners' identities into the curriculum which had previously been grammar-based. It was through the use of her coach that the teacher was given the opportunity to experiment with a pedagogy that more closely aligned with her philosophy of teaching.

Problem Solving. An offshoot of opportunities of practice also presents itself as problem-solving or problem-working sessions in some of the literature. These opportunities to problem-solve with a coach provide more meaningful learning for all participants. As mentioned above, district-directed professional development is often adhered to in compliance with mandates from the top down (Knight, 2011). Therefore, in her affinity groups, Nathan (2018) centers the learning around problem-solving difficult situations in order to create agents of change. In the self-created affinity group, administrators each took a turn to work with the coach and facilitated a group session in which they presented a problem of practice in their districts. During these meetings, the facilitator presented the problem, a reading to deepen the group's understanding, and a protocol for how to unpack the problem. The other members asked probing questions before discussing the problem without the intervening of the facilitator. The facilitator listened to the discussion and once everyone had time to offer their opinion, the facilitator reflected out loud about the suggestions she heard. This use of problem-solving allowed principals to get various opinions before making decisions and taking action.

In a similar way, Pas et al. (2016) and Bradshaw et al. (2018) also used problem-solving as a method for coaches to encourage critical changes to teachers' practice. Drawn from data in the same study, Pas et al. (2016) and Bradshaw et al. (2018) attempted to provide traditional professional development coupled with instructional coaching to rectify classroom management

issues that led to achievement gaps and disproportionality. In order to mitigate the damaging effects of unresponsive classroom management, researchers used the Classroom Check-Up coaching method which aims to improve this issue by applying a structured problem-solving approach. Although the researchers did not elaborate on this structured approach, they did conclude that there were improvements made when teachers were coached opposed to ones that were not. Moreover, Hammerness and Matsko (2012) argue that it is imperative that coaches challenge teachers by pushing against the status quo. For instance, in their quest to learn more about context-based coaching, coaches prompt teachers to examine their own experiences (which may have been shaped by hegemonic practices) and consider instead the type of teaching that would better benefit their students' diverse perspectives. Coaches used contextual problems that teachers experienced in order to troubleshoot classroom management issues and low reading scores, using culturally responsive teaching and maintaining high expectations.

As mentioned above, Averill et al.'s (2015) study epitomizes Freire's (1970) considerations of praxis as equal parts reflection and action. Reminiscent of Boal's (1998) Theatre of the Oppressed (founded on Freire's theory), Boal promotes this idea in his creation of theatre to problematize real-life oppressive situations. During these performances, activists act out scenarios that reenact injustices and attempt to create alternative endings that can be used in the world beyond the stage. In the same way, the coaches in Averill's study use a form of theatre or practice and problem-solving to develop a transformative style of teaching mathematics to Māori students.

Additionally, intertwined throughout Freire's (1970) theory is dialogism. Without dialogue, problem-posing methods nor praxis are possible. All of the studies above employ a dialogic relationship between the coach and the teachers. By asking probing questions and

puzzling through a course of action together, coaches are using dialogism to engage their teachers and deepen their understanding of the questions raised. This is particularly evident in Nathan's (2018) conversations with her principals, where they ask probing questions of one another to deepen the understanding before enacting action (praxis).

Finally, all of the studies above employ a problem-posing approach to educating teachers as opposed to the banking method in which teachers would be viewed as an empty receptacle to be filled with knowledge from the coach. In the literature, coaches assist teachers in developing a more accurate perception of classroom experiences, empowering them to challenge the hegemonic status quo of their curricula and teaching practices, and move their teaching to a more just educational environment (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011). In my study, students were part of a collaborative partnership with teachers wherein helped teachers examine their classrooms from a different perspective. It was my goal for students to challenge teachers to think "outside the box" in terms of their teaching and propel them deeper into culturally responsive teaching.

Deep Knowledge

While coaches act as sources of support for teachers, they are also often positioned as the "more knowledgeable other" in the literature. To clarify, both Averill et al. (2015) and Teemant et al. (2017) couch coaches and teachers in Vygotskian archetypes. For instance, Averill et al. (2015) choose to use this terminology instead of "expert" to distinguish that coaches can still learn from the "insightful" teachers. The researchers in this study position the coaches as more knowledgeable in order to help teachers support a "deep understanding of the competencies and the cultural practices and contexts within which they are traditionally practiced" (p. 67). By using their knowledge, coaches are able to exploit moments of learning during the reenactment of teaching scenarios to inform teachers' future practice.

Additionally, Teemant et al. (2017) examine sociocultural instructional practices while positioning the coach as the more knowledgeable other. More in depth, they use Vygotsky's (1978) theory of the zone of proximal development to demonstrate how the coaches assist teachers in their learning about culturally responsive pedagogy. Namely, coaches collaboratively assist teachers in developing and implementing plans, providing "data-rich" feedback, and reflection. With a more knowledgeable coach, teachers are able to participate in cycles of reflection and action which "ideally quicken[s] professional growth beyond what the teacher could accomplish alone" (p.687). Similarly, yet without mentioning Vygotsky, Nathan (2018) also acknowledges that it is the coach's responsibility to be more informed regarding cultural responsiveness than her teachers. First, she asserts that it is the coach's job not only to provide perspective to a problem, but also to also be able to provide resources to maintain the difficult work of social justice. Moreover she propounds that, without deep knowledge of the problem, there can be no solutions. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the coach to probe deeper into the problem and encourage and instruct others to do the same to promote social justice. In the same way, the coaches in Hammerness and Matsko's (2012) case study are positioned as more knowledgeable as it pertains to the localized knowledge of the community and families of the students in the school. Hammerness and Matsko posit that coaching is most effective when it is contextualized in a certain school with specific students. They position the coach as the more knowledgeable other as it pertains to their "prior teaching experience through which they gain knowledge about the community and families there" (p. 569).

The concept of deep knowledge, although clearly more Vygotskian in theory than Freirean, can still be applied to the banking model versus the problem-posing model (Freire, 1970). An essential component of the problem-posing model for education is the positionality of

the teachers (oppressors) and students (oppressed). When teachers concede that they do not have

all the power or knowledge, they allow for students to engage in dialogue with one another to

problematize their worlds. In the literature, coaches having "deep knowledge" of education and

cultural responsiveness allows them to pose more questions for teachers to puzzle through which

in turn deepens the knowledge and understanding for the teachers—not as empty vessels, but as

dynamic and knowledgeable humans striving for educational equity. Much in the same way, the

students and coach in my proposed study will be positioned with having different types of "deep

knowledge." For instance, as the instructional coach, I am positioned with having pedagogical

knowledge specifically as it pertains to culturally responsive pedagogy. The students have a deep

knowledge of their lived experiences both as a member of the Homestead High School

community as well as products of their generation. Differently, however, was the position of the

teachers. They had their own "deep knowledge" as they were masters of their content. As a

result, all of the parties involved were able to contribute to collaboration of a culturally

responsive lesson.

Collaboration

Finally, apparent in seven of eight pieces of the literature, is the concept of collaboration.

It is apparent in the literature that coaching is not meant as a top-down approach, especially

when it pertains to fostering cultural responsiveness. The buy-in to the nuanced pedagogical

approach is contingent upon teacher participation and cooperation; after all, culturally responsive

teaching is not a program or set of strategies, but a mindset (Hammond, 2015).

In order for teachers to acquire this mindset, all participants must collaborate in co-

constructing goals and culturally responsive practices that are meaningful to the learner. For

instance, one of the components in Averill et al.'s (2015) framework of cultural competencies for

teachers of Māori students included *wānanga,* or the co-construction and cooperative learner-focused activities. In the same way teachers aspired to co-construct knowledge with their students, so did the coaches with their teachers. In their rehearsals of classroom scenarios, the group of student teachers' voices were heard and together they examined the practices of each teacher. Moreover, Hammerness and Matsko (2012) argue that collaboration begins at the inception of the coaching relationship when the outcome of the first session is "a collaboratively developed action plan for the first few months of school that builds on the candidate's stated strengths and identified areas of need" (p. 566). Similarly, Bradshaw et al. (2018) and Pas et al. (2016) assert that collaborative goal setting and pair-developed action plans for achieving the goal are essential for promoting positive behavioral classroom management and culturally responsive practices.

  Individual Goal Setting. Researchers agree that in order for coaching to be successful, it must be based on individual goal setting based on the teachers' actual experiences. For instance, Nathan's (2018) affinity group comprises principals who want to troubleshoot inequities in their schools. After collaborating with a coach, each principal facilitates a meeting to receive feedback from their colleagues. The collaboration with the coach and then with the like-minded group enhances the principals' opportunities to enact change in their buildings. Nathan critiques the traditional district-mandated professional development approach because of its lack of authenticity for educators. In contrast, her methodology combines collaboration with personal goal setting which she argues presents principals with much more meaningful learning. Similarly, Garcia and Garcia (2016) worked specifically from the teacher's desire to reestablish her philosophy of teaching. Together, with the assistance of her more knowledgeable coach, the pair co-designed culturally relevant lessons using students' backgrounds as the foundation of the

curriculum. In addition to the collaborative aspect of the planning, the underlying purpose was specific to the teacher's personal goal which ultimately made the learning with the coach more meaningful.

Finally, Teemant et al.'s (2017) sociocultural coaching model is steeped in the belief that learning is a social endeavor. Teachers in this quantitative, longitudinal study first collaborated with the coaches to create shared goals and expectations using the Five Standards Instructional Model. The Five Standards Instructional Model is a set of "sociocultural principles essential for teachers working with diverse learners" (p. 683) which includes: (a) joint productive activity; (b) language and literacy development; (c) contextualization; (d) cognitive challenge; and (e) instructional conversation. Next, in teacher-driven and coach-facilitated discussions, the pair co-planned lessons focusing on the principles in the shared model, after which the coach would observe the co-planned lesson. Finally, the coach and teacher would debrief, reinforce the performance targets, and create teacher-decided goals for improvement. Although they have a shared goal, the collaboration is still teacher-driven from the goals to the planning to the next steps. As a result, the researchers found that collaboratively co-constructing knowledge with the help of the more knowledgeable other helped to inform teacher improvement.

On par with sociocultural theory (Teemant et al., 2017), Freire (1970) also contends that learning cannot happen in isolation. Collaborative co-construction of knowledge, skills, and learning in general is in line with Freire's theory specifically as it pertains to dialogism. Dialogue and collaboration are acts of creation. Together the coaches and teachers create new methods of reaching their students and growing to be more culturally responsive. Also mentioned in the literature is that top-down, district-driven professional development is ineffective at creating culturally responsive teachers (Kohli et al., 2015; Nathan, 2018). As a result, Freire's theory of

the banking method similarly applies to teacher education and professional development. As the

coaches in the literature exemplified, coaches cannot expect to tell teachers what to do; instead,

they must problematize the situation and allow for dialogue among all participants to take place.

Based on these findings, the foundation of my proposed study is contingent upon student-

teacher-coach collaboration. At the bottom of the proverbial barrel, students and teachers will

collaborate together to determine the needs of the students rather than being instructed by

administrators, policy makers, or board members. Additionally, the course of action teachers

choose to take (although couched in cultural responsiveness) is determined by the teachers and

students in the planning phases of the research (explained below).

     Since I could not find research that specifically dealt with using student voice in an

instructional coaching relationship, I split my literature review into two portions: coaching for

cultural responsiveness and student voice to inform teacher practice. Next I outline the literature

I found on how student voice is used to inform teacher practice.

Student Voice

     Similar to the lack of attention given to coaching for culturally responsive pedagogy,

there has been uneven research attention about the ways in which students talk about their own

school experiences. This research focus gained ground in the 1980s and 1990s (Fielding, 2004;

Hicks, 1995; Knobel, 1999), but seemed to fall away in the 2000s. More recently, educators have

advocated for incorporating student voice in educational research, teacher practice, and policy

reform (Fielding, 2004). According to Ladson-Billings (2009), student voice is a key component

of culturally relevant teaching. Student voice allows teachers, administrators, researchers, and

policy makers the opportunity to acquire youth's "unique knowledge and perspectives on their

school and life experiences" (Kim & Searle, 2017, p. 143) and create spaces for students' social, cultural, and individual truths (Dudley-Marling & Paugh, 2010).

  To explore this area of focus, I used the following search terms in ERIC: "culturally relevant education" AND "student voice" and "professional learning" AND "student voice." From there, I searched for pieces written after 1990 that addressed how student voice was used to foster culturally responsive teaching. Of the pieces specific towards culturally responsive teaching and student voice, most discussed the importance of student voice and the impact that it had on students' education and growth. For instance, several articles, studies and conceptual pieces noted the importance of using student voice to bridge the gap between home knowledge and school learning (Dudley-Marling & Paugh, 2010; Kim & Searle, 2017; Reynolds, 2018; Wilder, 2015). The implications bridging these gaps and the use of student voice in education created more engaged (Cody & McGarry, 2012; Kim & Searle, 2017; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015), empowered (Bragg, 2007; Cody & McGarry, 2012; Kim & Searle, 2017; Rodriguez & Brown, 2009), and valued (Reynolds, 2018; Wilder, 2015) students. Therefore, I was left with several peer-reviewed pieces which hinted at how student voice might be used to develop more culturally responsive teaching. The reference lists at the end of each source proved helpful in locating a few more pieces.

  After reviewing the literature, I indicated three stages of student voice that may lead to teacher cultural responsiveness: (a) power struggle; (b) radical openness, and (c) change. Below I outline the findings from the literature and apply the conceptual and theoretical frameworks I described in the previous section to these literature review findings to explore how student voice can be used to promote cultural responsiveness in inservice teachers.

Power Struggle

Not all of the literature adheres to the idea of using student voice to encourage teacher practices. There were several critiques of using student input in this way, including adult resistance, manipulation of student voice, tensions within the student body (i.e. inequitable representation of voices), and ethical issues related to identity shifts (Bragg, 2007; Cook-Sather, 2014; Fielding, 2004; Leat & Reid, 2012; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015). Most prevalent in the literature was the concept of adult resistance as it pertains to power structures.

Although student voice is, in theory, supposed to give students power where they are traditionally powerless, the use of student voice is still contested because it is the teacher or research who gives students the power to share their voice (Bragg, 2007; Cody & McGarry, 2012; Cook-Sather, 2014; Kim & Searle, 2017; Rodriguez & Brown, 2009). Therefore, "students' rights and power cannot be assured" (Cook-Sather, 2014, p. 142). On the other hand, Rodriguez and Brown (2009) argue that power in the context of youth participatory action research is both "necessary and educative" (p. 28) claiming that without shared power among teachers, students, and researchers, student agency would fail to materialize. Moreover, the researchers contend that students' "challenge in influencing schools and society to better address their needs hinges not on a lack of voice but a lack of power" (p. 32). It is necessary then that as educators we relinquish some of our control over our classes to allow for other voices to be heard.

Unfortunately, the hegemonic hierarchy of power in school systems is ingrained in the foundation on which it was built. As a result, the research indicates that teachers push back against the shifts in power (Bragg, 2007; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015). For instance, Bragg's (2007) study in the UK found teachers reluctant to engage with the power shift that

would have to occur to give students the authority to speak and critically examine their education. In fact, some teachers deemed student input "silly" or they felt that having student researchers in their classroom was a disciplinary measure to reinforce norms of "good" teaching. Similarly, Mockley and Groundwater-Smith (2015) found teachers felt that student voice seemed to undermine teachers' power and knowledge. Therefore, this reluctance to share power prevents some teachers from exercising student voice in their practice. In contrast, although Fielding (2004) agrees that there are issues and vulnerabilities when it comes to changes in power structures, he also asserts that the more staff and students learn with and from each other, the more "traditional roles of teacher and student become much less firmly fixed, much more malleable, much more explicitly and joyfully interdependent" (p. 308) leading to implementation of students' ideas and identities.

Significantly, yet dishearteningly, Freire's (1970) banking method seems to still be ingrained in teacher practice. Teachers feel that their knowledge is being threatened by inviting students into the conversation of their learning is evident in the literature placing the teacher (oppressor) above the student (oppressed). This speaks directly to the oppressors in Freire's banking metaphor maintaining the status quo and perpetuating structures that keep the oppressed powerless. In my study, I hoped to break with this banking method of education by positioning students in the role of co-collaborator so that they could engage with teachers and share their voice as it pertains to teachers' lesson plans.

Moreover, Fielding (2004) accedes to one of critical pedagogy's main points: we cannot learn for, by, or about others, we must learn *with* them. Until teachers are able to relinquish their "power" and control, learning *with* students remains threatening and so classes remain teacher-

centered and the hegemony is perpetuated. As a result of this literature, my study was significant in examining how teachers and a coach learn with students.

Radical Openness

The adage "Great things don't come from comfort zones." applies aptly to using student voice in teacher practice. Researchers have found that there is a power struggle that partly comes from teachers' feeling a loss of power by incorporating student voice in their practice. In order to rise above these feelings, teachers must learn to lean into the discomfort. Mockler and Groundwater-Smith (2015) call this idea seeking "unwelcome truths," which may appear when teachers try to understand "professional practice from the perspective of the students" (p. 611). Their stance is that student voice can have transformative effects on teacher practice as long as teachers' professional identities are taken into account. As a result, their recommendation in anticipation for teachers hearing these unwelcome truths is creating safe spaces to allow for challenge and growth. By allowing student voice to enter the conversation, research has found that teachers reflect on and rethink their practice in more meaningful ways (Bragg, 2007; Reynolds, 2018).

Additionally, Leat and Reid (2012) relate a similar concept they call "radical openness." By engaging in dialogue with students about their learning, teachers in their study reported being more open to students' ideas and input as well as new teaching practices. For example, the researchers noticed that in at least one instance, this openness started to go beyond surface-level discourse to affect instructional decisions in the classroom. As a result of teachers' change in practice, they also noted the reciprocity of these dialogues with students and how this openness created stronger relationships not just between teachers and students, but also among the students as well. Reynolds (2018) expounds on this in his study by imposing a relational lens on

pedagogy which he found could lead to the deliberate prioritization of care as love, enhanced opportunities for reciprocity through more equitable power sharing, attention to the effect as well as the intent of one's actions as a teacher, and an increased sense of the importance of taking agency over the quality of the learning environment (Reynolds, 2018, p. 32). This would then lead to solidifying the second stage of using student voice by embracing discomfort and opening oneself up to radical openness in order to enact change.

This concept of radical openness aligns closely with critical pedagogy's praxis and dialogism. First, the literature indicates that by being open and receptive to the discomfort that may occur when asking students to share their voice about their education allows teachers to be reflective and through the reflection enact changes (praxis). Second, evident in the research is the concept of dialogism as it pertains to caring or love. By assenting to dialogue, both dialoguers open themselves up to faith and trust (Freire, 1970) similar to the findings in Leat and Reid (2012) and Reynolds (2018).

Change

In addition to increasing teacher openness and creating stronger teacher-student relationships, the use of student voice has had other implications on teachers' practice. In Fielding's (2004) article, for instance, he explored the theoretical underpinnings of student voice in the extant literature. Despite bleak warnings and caveats of using student voice in the first place, Fielding offers some glimmer of hope. For example, he briefly relates an instance in which an elementary school teacher in the UK engaged in research with her year 1 students in an attempt to learn more about how to teach the students about independence. During her engagement and dialogue with her student co-researchers, the teacher learned more about independence in student learning than she might have from other traditional methods such as

professional development. In another instance, Fielding mentions a study conducted on student voice in an English tutorial program. Through the implementation of dialogue between students and teachers, participants were able to challenge the then dominant pedagogy and the curricular models on which it was based.

In Reynolds's (2018) study, teachers in New Zealand learned about and from Pasifika students in their classes. From this collaboration, teachers deliberately began "adopting values which centre on care, responsiveness, relational closeness and acceptance" (p. 34) and rethinking their practice despite the initial discomfort. Additionally, teachers learned about a concept in their students' lives called "*vā*" (or mutual respect of each other's space). As a result, teachers reported modifying their practice to respect the spatial and environmental implications of *vā* in their classrooms. By making these changes, teachers also noted the potential that the inter-student relationships had in these spaces for increased learning. By extension, these supportive learning environments reshaped the power dynamic in the classroom. Reynolds (2018) disclosed other examples of changes in practice including addressing students individually, offering questioning strategies, and connecting students' home knowledge to school learning.

The ultimate goal of critical pedagogy is to engage in dialogue with students in order to transform relations of power in educational practices (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011; Ellsworth, 1989; Kohli, et al., 2015). The literature reflects this goal as a consequence of using student voice to transform teacher practice. As long as teachers are willing to relinquish their power and engage in radical openness with students, then students and teachers can collaborate together to transform teacher practice.

The results of this literature incite the premise for my study. Since there was not much research in the area of student voice in a coaching cycle for cultural responsiveness, the

information gained from my study contributes to the body of knowledge pertaining to the

incorporation of student voice into instructional coaching as teachers attempted to incorporate

pedagogical practices toward culturally responsive teaching. Based on the literature, I realized

that coaching for culturally responsive practice must involve: (a) developing trust; (b)

opportunities to practice; (c) deep knowledge; and (d) collaboration. Additionally, in order for

teachers to change their practice using student voice, they need to relinquish power and accept

radical openness. This study tries to support professionals on the value of incorporating student

voice into every aspect of education specifically, but not limited to, instructional practices. In the

next section, I develop a research methodology that includes a brief explanation of participatory

action research, data collection, analysis, and ethics.

Chapter Three: Methodology

In this study, I examined what happened when an instructional coach invited student voice into a critical culturally responsive instructional coaching cycle with teachers in a high school with a diverse student body. I was interested in using student input, feedback, and collaboration to drive pedagogy and instruction. Spurred by the potential student voice has for helping teachers be more culturally responsive, I sought to formalize the results I experienced in my classroom by conducting a three-part coaching cycle with teacher volunteers. Ultimately, the insights gained from the students and teachers in this study make a contribution to the importance and effectiveness of using student voice in teacher professional learning about culturally responsive teaching which I will explore in a later chapter. During this experience, students were asked to assume a new role in which they had authority and voice regarding what was taught and how it was taught in their school thereby disrupting some of the hegemonic structures inherent in education. Their participation in this work moved them from mere consumers of others' knowledge to creators of knowledge themselves.

In order to explore the overarching question "What happens when an instructional coach invites student voice into a critical culturally responsive instructional coaching cycle with teachers in a diverse high school?", I chose to conduct participatory action research using qualitative data collection. According to Anderson, Herr and Nihlen (2007), action research is "insider research done by practitioners using their own site (classroom, institution, school district, community) as the focus of their study" (p. 2) in hopes of addressing a particular situation to enact change. In particular, participatory action research "with its more emancipatory emphasis, tends to focus on a broader societal analysis… [and] is concerned with equity/self-reliance/oppression problems" (Anderson et al., 2007, p. 25). In contrast to traditional research in

which researchers hold tightly to the reins of power, "action research is conducted *by*, *with*, and *for* people, rather than as research *on* people" (Reason & McArdle, 2004, p.115) which aligns with critical pedagogy and cultural responsiveness. Participatory action research, in particular, uses a methodology that encourages collaboration and dialogue. For instance, community meetings and similar events are an important part of participatory action research methodology, as they serve to identify issues, build community, and emphasize the potential for liberation (Reason & McArdle, 2004). Another defining characteristic of participatory action research is the iterative cycles—plan, act, observe, reflect (explained below). Since the researcher is sharing control over her study by requesting teacher and student participation into each part of the cycle the researcher can make a "best guess as to what will transpire in the field" (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 76), but ultimately, the plan may change depending on the needs and desires of all participants.

Therefore, participatory action research was appropriate for the methodology of this study because it intrinsically included and empowered a greater number of voices as well as challenged the hegemony of traditional forms of educational instruction (Anderson et al., 2007; Brydon-Miller & Maguire, 2009). By using participatory action research, students, teachers, and an instructional coach were able to collaborate together on lesson plans in order to decide what action was taken in their classrooms.

Cyclical in nature, participatory action research traditionally works its way through iterations of planning, acting, observing, and reflection (See Figure 1) (Anderson et al., 2007; Herr & Anderson, 2005; Walker, 1993). However, for the purpose of this small scale study, we engaged in one modified cycle of participatory action research.

Figure 1
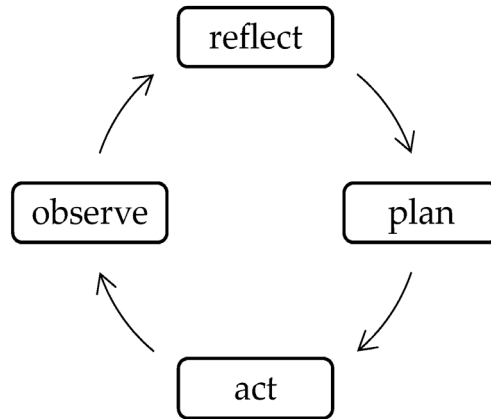
In the following section, I describe participant recruitment, data collection and analysis, and address ethical considerations for the study as it pertains to my positionality.

Setting and Participants

Situated in a suburban city, Homestead High School is a comprehensive high school serving 1,952 students. The year prior to the study, 52% of all 10th-graders failed to meet the reading standard, and 78% failed to meet the math standard as measured by the New Jersey State Learning Assessments (NJSLA). To combat these issues of poor performance on standardized testing, the inconsistency of implementation of culturally responsive practices, and teacher attrition, the high school scripted a NJ SMART goal which sought to support the indoctrination of culturally responsive professional development in the form of an instructional coach.

In accordance with the NJ SMART goal approved by the district's board of education, every new hire at the high school took part in a coaching-induction program regardless of their years of experience. The program consisted of conducting seven coaching cycles throughout the school year, 10 workshops focused on various components of culturally responsive pedagogy and four inspiration walks using culturally responsive lens modified from Powell et al.'s (2016) Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP). For the purposes of this study,

however, teachers in this group were asked to volunteer in participating in this recorded coaching cycle.

This study focused on two teachers hired at Homestead High School within the last five years who volunteered to participate in this study (Jolene Smith and Nicole Pitt, pseudonyms). Thus, this study consisted of a convenience sampling based on the availability that I had of the participants (Maxwell, 2010; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In hopes of acquiring a diverse group of teachers (ranging in age, experience, and cultural background), I sent out an email delineating the objective for the study as well as the commitments that were expected during the course of the study. Specifically, the email detailed the following:

- participation in two 1-hour get-to-know-you sessions with students
- one 1-hour afterschool meeting after school to discuss teachers' problems of practice
- one half-day professional development (PD) at which students and teachers co-created lesson plans
- one classroom lesson with student and coach observers with a list of look fors
- one 40-minute lesson debriefing with students and coach
- one written reflection
- one member checks for internal validity
- ongoing journal entries of participation

After two teachers agreed to participate, they were given a consent form notifying them of their rights during the study, including the usage of voice recording, some guarantee of the

person's anonymity, and a promise that they can quit the research at any time (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Below I introduce the two teachers.

Jolene Smith, 51, had been an educator for nine years at the time of this study. Previously a corporate executive, and then a math teacher in another district, she was currently in her fifth year of teaching business classes at Homestead High School. Jolene and I worked together during the previous year in a coaching capacity of her own volition; usually this relationship was dictated by Homestead High School administration. Her choice to work with me as her coach was evidence of her openness and willingness for professional support. As she stated at various times throughout the study, "I want to be the best teacher that I can be," realizing she might need the perspectives of a second voice and pair of eyes. Jolene demonstrated a genuine love and care for her students as well as a high level of respect for each of them. During our first relationship building session she stated: "I do love my students and I'm glad you think I hold the bar high for them. Sometimes I think I've gotten better with that over the years." She also acknowledged her privilege as a White, Jewish educator and was learning more about her whiteness through her role as an economics teacher at Homestead High School. Jolene joined my study as a result of her desire to aspire to be her best teacher-self and her willingness to try new techniques in her teaching. Again, in our first pre-planning session she admitted, "I always wanted to try new things and I always want to be the best version of myself that I can be, so I'm always… a work in progress."

Nicole Pitt, 23, was a first-year teacher at the time of this study. She attended a private university in Philadelphia, and completed her student teaching in mathematics at a private English-speaking school in Brazil. Student teaching abroad allowed her an opportunity to experience language and cultural barriers in a unique way, which helped her grow as a novice

educator. She stated, "It allows me to adapt to situations where I may not know much, but I can push myself out of my comfort zone." As her assigned coach this year, Nicole and I worked together from September until June during the year of this research. All new hires to Homestead High School are assigned an instructional coach to help acclimate them to the culture of the school and work on culturally responsive teaching strategies. Nicole was always eager to try new things and was open to the coaching experience. For instance, she admitted that even though she does not embrace change, she "never turn[s] an opportunity down to try something new." She volunteered for this study because she has kept the mentality from her time abroad that growth happens outside of one's comfort zone. In her own words, she said, "Any opportunity for me to get other people's opinions, whether it's the instructional coach that has been assigned, or the students who aren't even in my class, I feel like any feedback is good feedback."

Students were also asked to volunteer using convenience sampling. I sent an email delineating the purpose of the study to students who completed my Multicultural Literature English 3 College Preparatory class in the 2018-2019 school year. The students who took these classes represent the student body population in their diversity. Moreover, these students were chosen as part of the sampling because they were taught using culturally responsive pedagogical structures including, but not limited to, student choice, student-centered learning, learning within culture, providing input into the content and pedagogy of their class, social justice and societal reform, etc. Perhaps more importantly, these students had ample opportunities to reflect on the way that they learned and the way they were taught in order to make suggestions and changes to the class to better support their learning. Additionally, these students in particular collaborated in a project in which they designed a lesson using culturally responsive techniques. Since I was no

longer a classroom teacher at the time of this study, the students being recruited had moved on to different teachers.

In the email I drafted and sent out, included a Google Forms survey for students to indicate willingness to participate in the study. The email indicated that if they agreed to the study, they would agree to participate in the following: two one-hour relationship building sessions with teachers; one one-hour meeting after school to discuss how to answer teachers' questions regarding student learning and experience; one half-day PD during which they would present to teachers and collaborate with them to create lessons; one classroom lesson in which they would observe a teacher based on a list of look fors agreed upon by all parties; one 40-minute debriefing about the lesson with the teacher and coach; one written reflection; various member checks for internal validity; and journal entries of participation throughout. Ideally, I would have liked two students working with each teacher for a total of four students; although I initially received four students who were interested in participating, one did not return the parental permission stipulating the same conditions above (audio recording permission, anonymity, and option to leave the study at any time). In the end I had three student participants, with completed consent forms, able to participate in the study. Due to ongoing afterschool commitments such as band, dance, and home obligations, student-participants did not attend all sessions consistently. Initially, I had hoped to use referral or "snowball" sampling—when participants refer or recommend others to gain more participants if needed (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I hoped it would be effective in recruiting more student participants because interested students could propose others who fit the criteria that would benefit the study (i.e. knowledge of cultural responsiveness and an interest in social change). Unfortunately, this methodology did not produce any more student participants.

During the course of this study, there were three student-participants: Eva, Alaia, and Natasha (pseudonyms). All seniors at the time of the study, the three participants were former students in my Multicultural Literature class in their junior year. Alaia and Natasha both identify as Latina (their word) born in the United States whose families emigrated from Ecuador and Colombia respectively. Eva identifies as an African American female with a strong affinity for dance and art. Due to extracurricular activities and family issues, the student-participants did not consistently attend all of the sessions.

Inquiry Cycle

The following participatory action research study consisted of four phases: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. First, the planning phase was split into three parts: two relationship building sessions with students, teachers, and myself; a meeting with teachers to discuss their problems of practice, and then with students to discuss their perceptions on how to rectify teachers' problems of practice. Next, during a half-day PD, students presented their ideas to teachers and collaborated with them to create lessons for their respective subjects. Once the lessons were complete, teachers taught the co-generated lessons in their classes and the students and instructional coach observed the class using a list of agreed upon look fors. As a group, we debriefed with teachers after the lesson. Finally, there was space for student and teacher reflections on the experience as well as a semi-structured exit interview. Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and school closings, I was unable to conduct the student exit interviews in person. Instead I emailed students to complete the questions in writing, but only received two responses out of three requests. Below I expound on each part of the cycle and an outline of the following research cycle is included in Appendix A.

Often when educators and administrators consider making instructional shifts in the classroom, in hopes of improving the experience of our marginalized students, we tend to ignore the perspectives of the ones who will be most impacted—the students (Irizarry, 2017). However, research has shown that using student voice in the classroom validates not only students' funds of knowledge, but also their identity (Emdin, 2016; Hammond, 2015). As a result of this research on student voice, I conducted this study and asked for volunteers from teachers interested in developing the use of student voice in their classrooms with the prospect of enhancing their culturally responsive instruction.

First, I conducted two one-hour relationship building sessions to familiarize students with teachers in the study. At the first relationship building session, two of the three students participated and both teachers attended. At this session, we first reviewed protocols I borrowed from Christopher Emdin's book *For White Folks Who Teach in the Hood…and the Rest of Y'all Too: Reality Pedagogy and Urban Education (2017)* including: (a) only one person can speak at a time; (b) no voice is privileged over another, (all participants will have equal opportunity to talk as well as to challenge one another constructively); and (c) all dialogue leads to a cogenerated or agreed upon plan of action. Next, we conducted a "speed-dating" discussion protocol in which students and teachers had two minutes to share their beliefs on what makes a good teacher, a good lesson, and a good class before moving on and meeting the next person in the study. Then I introduced the teachers to a project that the student-participants had completed in my class the previous year. In this project, students had to choose a character from a chosen novel and write a lesson plan for them, keeping the character's challenges in mind. The objective was for students to create a lesson that would keep the characters in school using what they knew about them. After I introduced the project, I asked students to reflect on what they would change

in their lessons, what they would keep the same, and why. I asked teachers to consider the plans

as if they were data, and to determine what they noticed was similar and what was different and

then we discussed. Finally, I asked participants to write down in their journals what they learned

about the other people in the study.

     During the second relationship building session, in which all five participants were

present, my objective was to build relationships and trust by reflecting on our own cultural

identities and determine how our identities affect the way we see the world. First, we reflected in

heterogeneous groups (teachers with students) on our best and worst teachers. Then we reflected

on how those teachers had influenced either our teaching or our learning. Next, we conducted an

activity in which I read out loud various statements regarding various possibilities of being (e.g.

you feel lonely; you were born in the United States; you are White, [Latinx, African American,

etc.]; you are Catholic [Jewish, Muslim, etc.]; your parents are married, etc.). If the statement

was true for any of the participants, we stepped into the circle, took a moment to recognize one

another, and then stepped back out. Finally, we reflected on the experience. It was my intention

during this session to consider some parts of our identities and how they shaped our perspectives

of the world especially education. Unfortunately we ran out of time, so I moved this portion of

the session to our half-day PD which I explain below.

     After the relationship building sessions, I met with the teachers to ask how they might

best harness student voice in their lessons to foster more cultural responsiveness. In particular,

we discussed the three main components of cultural responsiveness, and then we delved into

their problems of practice, as well as what students might help them with in their work with

culturally responsive teaching, and how we might best learn about our practice from the

perspectives of students. Together we composed a list of topics suitable to engage students in

dialogue about their classes and their orchestration. My role as coach/researcher was to actively listen to teachers' needs, and hone in on actionable courses of discussion specifically as it pertained to culturally responsive pedagogy.

After teachers compiled a list of topics, I worked with two of the three students in part two of the planning phase. First, I reviewed with students the three main components of cultural responsiveness. I then presented them with the teachers' problems of practice and I asked them to reflect on instructional strategies that worked for them in the past and strategies that did not. After reflection, students discussed the strategies together. As the coach, I employed active listening techniques, such as restating and reciting back ideas, before I helped students put pedagogical language to their thoughts. Together we co-created coherent and concrete examples that they would present to teachers in hopes of making specific changes to their practice.

During the action phase, teachers and students were pulled for a half-day PD. Two of the three students attended, along with both teacher participants. At this time, we finished the relationship building activity from the second pre-planning session. We each created an identity web which identified five identity markers that shape our identities. Then we considered Edward T. Hall's (1976) Cultural Iceberg Model, and pondered and shared how each of the identity markers is a lens through which we view the world and make decisions.

In the next phase of planning, I reviewed the three components of culturally responsive teaching and the students presented their ideas and responses to teachers' problems of practice. Then using a combination of these ideas, we co-compiled a list of look fors (including environment, engagement, assessment, accountability, and style) for the students and me to use while we were observing the co-planned lesson. After deliberating on a list, we practiced using feedback techniques using the list of look fors on a video that I had made of me teaching a class.

All participants, including myself, participated in using the look for list to provide me feedback on my teaching strategies. This list of look fors is the first part of the Nominal Group Technique that we used during the reflection section (Center for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2018). Finally, student and teacher partners collaborated together to co-design a lesson plan while I sat with each partnership to ensure that culturally responsive pedagogical choices were being made.

During the observation phase, the teachers conducted the lessons that the students helped craft while the students and I observed the lesson using the agreed upon look fors. In one instance, I demonstrated the co-generated lesson for a teacher prior to students observing the lesson and we reflected on the class's feedback before she taught the lesson in front of the student-observers. In the second instance, I co-taught the class with the teacher while the student-participants were in the room.

The following day, the participants reflected together on the lesson using their notes on the look for sheet as well as feedback from the students in the class. Originally, I had planned to use the Nominal Group Technique (CDC, 2018), in which students, teachers, and the coach use the Round-Robin method with their feedback, regarding the look fors without questions or debate, while the coach notes all of the responses. Then I would have gone through each item and asked for any questions or comments giving all stakeholders an opportunity to clarify, defend, or question the importance of each item. Finally, using the list, we would consider our major takeaways from the lesson as well as possible next steps for future lessons. One of the benefits of this protocol is that it "balances the influence of individuals by limiting the power of opinion makers" (CDC, 2018, p. 2) which was my intended takeaway from this experience of using student voice. Instead, the conversation occurred more organically. Teachers asked probing

questions to which students clarified and offered suggestions about teaching in general. In these discussions, students' voices were the guiding voices, teachers asked questions, and I offered restatement of students' ideas in pedagogical terms to the best of my ability. After the debriefing with students and teachers, I conducted reflective, semi-structured interviews with each teacher. My intention was to conduct similar interviews with students; however, the COVID-19 pandemic forced school closings and lockdown mode. As a result, I sent the interview questions to each student via email with the option of completing them via Zoom or in writing. Two of the students replied in writing while the third student did not reply despite repeated attempts.

Data Collection

To best support the inductive process that qualitative research entails, I used several data sources in this dissertation study (Table 1). First, I collected data through the preliminary pre-planning relationship building sessions. Then I collected data through focus meetings with teachers and students. Each of the four meetings, in the pre-planning and planning stage, lasted approximately one hour. During the meetings, students and teachers were invited to act as researchers and experts offering their perspectives and opinions to their learning and teaching. During the meeting with teachers, I ascertained the needs of these particular educators as it pertained to students' experiences and perceptions as well as the areas teachers wanted to focus on in their practice. Meanwhile, with students, I uncovered the thoughts and ideas of students' perceptions and experiences as it pertained to their education and prepared ideas and notes to present to teachers. I audio recorded and transcribed each of the focus meetings and debriefings which provided opportunities to probe student voice and teachers' implementation of student ideas.

All participants were also asked during the pre-planning meeting to maintain a journal to document their thoughts, opinions, and ideas to be used throughout the research. I recommended that the participants keep this journal in a confidential marble-style composition notebook or on an electronic document shared with me only for ease of access. Additionally, I also kept an ongoing research journal in order to document my experiences, opinions, and thoughts in this process of facilitating teacher-student collaboration.

During the three-hour PD, observational field notes (Jones et al., 2010) and pedagogical artifacts including the co-created lesson plans, materials, and a list of look fors were collected and analyzed. During small group discussions between teachers and students, audio recordings were collected and transcribed. Similarly, observational field notes taken by both the student-observers and myself were collected during the 40-minute classroom observations. These notes afforded opportunities to observe the students' strategies being implemented.

During the debriefing with students, teachers, and the coach, I collected the list of takeaways as well as a transcribed audio recording of the interaction. Finally, I conducted a semi-structured interview as an exit reflection. In a semi-structured interview "either all of the questions are more flexibly worded or the interview is a mix of more and less structured questions" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 110). I also audio recorded and transcribed these interviews.

Table 1

Specific Purpose of Data Sources

Research Question: How can an instructional coach facilitate students' work with teachers to inform a culturally responsive instructional coaching cycle in a diverse high school

Stage	Data Collection	Purpose
Preplan Part A: Relationship Building January 23 (60 minutes)	Audio recordings of collaborative, field notes, reflective journals	To engage in dialogue about shared experiences about education with the intention of building relationships and trust between students and teachers
Part B: Relationship Building January 31 (60 minutes)	Audio recordings of collaborative, field notes, reflective journals	To engage in dialogue about shared experiences about culture with the intention of building relationships and trust between students and teachers
Plan Part A: Teachers February 6 (60 minutes)	Audio recordings of collaborative meeting with teachers	To gauge the needs of educators as it pertains to students' experiences and perceptions To better understand the areas teachers want to focus on in their practice
Part B: Students February 13 (60 minutes)	Audio recordings of collaborative meeting with students	To gauge the thoughts and ideas of students' perceptions and experiences as it pertains to their education To prepare ideas and notes to present to teachers
Act Collaborative Professional Learning February 27 (3 hours)	Artifact collection: Electronic, co-designed lesson plans Audio-recorded discussion	To examine the choices that students and teachers made during their collaboration specifically as it pertains to the three components of culturally responsive teaching. To examine how the students and teachers negotiate the components of the lesson To examine teachers' willingness and/or reluctance to using student voice

Observe Classroom Observations March 2-6 (40 minutes/ teacher)	Artifact collection: Look for notes (students and coach)	To determine the qualities of the co-planned lesson. To examine the components of culturally responsive teaching To determine the extent to which teachers used student input from the perspectives of the student and the coach
Reflect Debriefing March 2-6 (40 minutes/ teacher) Interviews March 9-20 (40 minutes/ participant)	Audio-recorded collaborative reflection section Semi-structured interviews Participant journals	To determine students' reactions (i.e. Was their voice heard in the way that the lesson manifested itself?) To gauge the teachers' level of comfort or discomfort incorporating students' ideas into their lessons To ascertain overall reflections To determine next steps with regard to using student voice To examine reactions, reflections, and observations

Data Analysis

Data collection and analysis were simultaneous and started immediately (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), with the first meeting notes with teachers ideally transcribed before meeting with students for the first time. Since data shapes the nature of qualitative research, data analysis must be ongoing in order to maintain focus, order, and manageability (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Additionally, simultaneous collection and analysis ties directly into the action research model of plan, act, observe, reflect (and revise). Analyzing and coding data as I collected them helped to guide subsequent actions and possibilities during the study (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

Using the conceptual framework lens of culturally responsive pedagogy (outlined above), I coded each transcript, field note, journal entry, and artifact in an attempt to make meaning to answer my research questions (Herr & Anderson, 2005; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Saldaña, 2016). According to Saldaña (2016), codes are a heuristic (a discovery) which allows the

researcher to link the data to ideas and the ideas back to the data. Therefore, as I found patterns in the data, I created an inventory of my data labeling and organizing it using the codes that appear in the data. Coding is also cyclical (Saldaña, 2016) and as during the coding cycles, I used analytical memos to recode and apply additional codes (Saldaña, 2009). By memo writing about specific codes at the end of the study, I was able to think more critically about my analysis and find an even more precise category of patterns (Saldaña, 2009, 2016).

Validity and Reliability

Inherently, qualitative research is based on assumptions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). As such, it is essential to consider the validity and reliability of our research and data analysis. Maxwell (2010) outlines a variety of strategies to mitigate threats to qualitative validity including triangulation and respondent validation.

Triangulation

Triangulation is the use of multiple methods, multiple sources of data, or multiple investigators to develop a comprehensive understanding of a topic in qualitative research (Golafshani, 2003; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Because I used multiple sources of data (observations, participant and researcher journals, transcribed audio recordings of student/teacher/coach interactions, and semi-structured interviews), triangulation increases the internal validity and reliability of my findings (Golafshani, 2013; Maxwell, 2010; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Respondent Validation

As an active employee in my research site, Herr and Anderson (2005) warn that my perspective was wrought with bias and subjectivity. As such, I took advantage of respondent validation that helped mitigate the subjectivity inherent in action research, also known as a

critical friend. This type of support is defined as a person, external to the study, who can provide support and objectivity to another person's work (O'Brien et al., 2014). I solicited assistance from a vice-principal in my building, a teacher/colleague, and a university colleague to act as my critical friends while sifting through my data and planning my study. Ultimately, however, it was the support of my advisor and my dissertation committee who helped challenge my biases and subjectivities as well as encouraged me to be more vulnerable in my research by admitting on the page my own shortcomings in this study. This result helps to ensure the trustworthiness of the data analysis (Herr & Anderson, 2005).

Another type of respondent validation, I employed one "member check." I conducted a member check after the first set of data was collected and transcribed. Due to the abundance of data, I was only able to conduct one member check-in at the beginning of the study, and one at the end, via email rather than in-person as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Member checks systematically solicit feedback from the participants in the study on emerging findings (Maxwell, 2010; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). According to Maxwell (2010), "this is the single most important way of ruling out the possibility of misinterpreting the meaning of what participants say and do and the perspective they have on what is going on" (p. 283). As a result, even with limited member checks helped to enhance the trustworthiness of my findings.

Ethics

Since the proposal for this study included volunteer adults and students, I sought permission of Montclair State University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). According to the contract mentioned above, if a participant chose to exit the study at any time, they were free to do so. Additionally, using the respondent validation, if a participant had asked to omit or change any information or observations during the study, I could not hesitate to comply. Finally, to

ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms of names and places were employed in the collection, analysis, and reporting of all data.

Additionally, all electronic data was stored on my research computer which was password-protected. In the electronic data, all metadata and identifiable information, such as names of people and places, were replaced with pseudonyms. All paper-based data including pedagogical artifacts, student-observer notes, and student-teacher debriefing notes were stripped of identifiers and kept in a locked filing cabinet in my home. Similar to the electronic data, all paper-based data was void of identifiable information by using pseudonyms for places and people.

Positionality

In my role as an instructional coach, I am positioned as a partial insider or an external insider (Chavez, 2008; Herr & Anderson, 2005). On the one hand, I have particular insight into the location of the research site as I had been an educator in the district for 10 years at the time of the study—which positioned me as an insider. I also previously taught the students participating in the study for one full academic school year and had previously been working with the teachers who volunteered. As a result, I already know the participants in terms of their learning and teaching styles, and a certain amount of trust has already been built.

On the other hand, as a White, middle-class female, almost 20 years older than the student participants, I was positioned as an outsider in terms of my age, race, and possibly socioeconomic status. As an outsider, I relied on the students to guide me (and the participating teachers) through their perspectives of teaching and learning in a school that they have been attending for four years and to engage in conversations about hegemonic structures and pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 2014). Additionally, I am also an outsider among the teacher-

participants in that I am no longer in the classroom and one of the two was mandated by the administration to work with me (but not to participate in the study). As a coach, this put me in a compromising position because the most successful coaching programs are on a voluntary basis (Knight, 2007, 2011). Although I was technically positioned adjacent to teachers—not above them in the hierarchical structure of the school system—and I used a collaborative method of coaching (Aguilar, 2013; Knight, 2007, 2011), I still worked closely with the administration in goal setting which despite my vow of confidentiality, had the potential to strain the relationship. Despite this positionality, I acknowledge that participatory action research in particular requires a fair amount of vulnerability (Chavez, 2008; Dickson-Swift et al., 2009; Paris, 2012). Therefore, building relationships and trust was essential to the implementation of this study.

Proposed Timeline

Table 1, in addition to the data collection tools, also includes a timeline of enacting the study and data collection. I chose dates approximately a week apart during the pre-planning, planning, acting, and observing phases. Initially, I hoped this would provide me with enough time to analyze and code data before enacting the next phase of the research in case there were any changes or unforeseen actions that need to take place. The observations and reflections of teachers' lessons happened immediately following the classes observed so that the information was fresh in participants' minds. This timeline also took holiday breaks and school closings into account. For instance, I planned the dates to fall between Martin Luther King Day and Homestead's winter break so as not to break the continuity of the study or allow too much elapsed time between meetings. I had not anticipated the COVID-19 pandemic resulting in the closings of schools and a shift to asynchronous remote learning. As a result, valuable face-to-face exit interviews with the students were not conducted and instead two of the three students

wrote out their responses to the questions while I was unable to contact one student after schools closed.

      In the next section, I delineate and analyze the themes that I found while coding my data.

Chapter 4: Findings

This study explored the interaction and experiences of students, teachers, and myself (in the role of instructional coach) during a student-driven coaching cycle aimed at developing culturally responsive teaching. I examined a bottom-up approach where teachers created lesson plans with input from students and the guidance of a coach to see if traditional classroom structures shifted during creation and implementation of the lesson. The overarching research question for this study was: What happens when I, an instructional coach, invite student voice into a critical culturally responsive instructional coaching cycle with teachers in a diverse high school? In order to answer this question, I created a series of subquestions:

- How do teachers experience the collaboration with students in their instructional practice?
- How do students experience the collaboration with teachers in their instructional practice?
- What do I, as the instructional coach, learn about coaching using student voice?

As I analyzed the data from the teachers (Mrs. Jolene Smith and Ms. Nicole Pitt), distinct themes emerged related to relationships, pedagogy, and voice, including:

- Caring about the whole student
- Faith in student knowledge
- Negotiation of power
- Limited problem-posing methodology, and
- Student-driven coaching cycle promoted professional growth

These themes intertwined with students' concepts of validation, a natural deviation from traditional styles of teaching, and use of their voice to interpret student behavior. They also

intersected with my own thinking about trust, interpreting student voice into pedagogical strategies, and struggles with incorporating the components of cultural competency and sociopolitical consciousness into a culturally responsive coaching cycle.

In this chapter I explore the ways in which these themes connect and deviate from the initial purpose of the study: To promote cultural responsiveness in a coaching cycle using student voice. In each of the sections, I analyze my findings from the teachers' perspective and, when appropriate, categorize each of the themes pedagogically and relationally—by which I mean both can be viewed through a lens that pertains to relationships with students and the caring aspects of teaching as well as a lens of pedagogy that pertains to the structures of the classroom, the teaching strategies employed, and the curricular choices made. Then I consider the students' perspectives and how their voices added to or complicated the experiences of the teachers. Finally, I incorporate my own thoughts as the instructional coach as I endeavored on this new professional learning venture. For each theme, I present and analyze the most prominent and consistently occurring subthemes I identified through multiple rounds of coding. In discussing these themes and findings, I draw on literature from culturally responsive teaching, student voice, and instructional coaching in order to foreground and discuss a number of important outcomes concerning each of these themes.

Caring About the Whole Student

Ladson-Billings (2009, 2017), Villegas and Lucas (2002), Delpit (2012), Gay (2018) among other culturally responsive experts emphasize the importance of relationship building and getting to know the whole student as a foundation for creating a culturally responsive classroom. Without building relationships and caring about the whole student, teachers cannot actualize caring in their practice. For instance, Delpit (2012) claimed that the insistence on "high

expectations and strong demands are insufficient. The other necessary components are care and concern" (p. 82). While Gay (2018) asserted that "caring must be translated into actions for them to be of much value in improving the achievement of culturally diverse students" (p. 63). Therefore, caring for or knowing about the whole student is the first step to making actionable changes in the classroom that will benefit all students including setting high expectations, incorporating student voice, and creating student-driven assignments and assessments.

Congruent with the literature, a key theme found in my data with both teachers and students concerned the importance of building relationships. Specifically, with teachers, the concept of knowing the whole student beyond what they were capable of in the classroom, included attempts at getting to know students' interests and family life. Jolene and Nicole demonstrated this importance both relationally (e.g. when Nicole engaged her students in discussions regarding their interests) and pedagogically (e.g. when Nicole assessed students' academic performance in her class).

Relational: Getting to Know Students

As previously mentioned, effective culturally responsive pedagogy is contingent on the relationships teachers build with their students (Gay, 2018; Hammond, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2009). During the course of the study, both teachers demonstrated instances of getting to know their students on various levels. For example, Jolene demonstrated instances of knowing about the students' social-emotional lives outside of school whereas Nicole focused more on students' day-to-day interests.

First, Jolene exhibited the relational aspect of getting to know her students as whole people in two ways: by learning about the social-emotional life of a struggling student and by

avoiding the use of stereotypes to learn about her students, such as the strengths and weaknesses of male versus female learners.

During our first pre-planning session where students and teachers were given time to learn about one another's beliefs about education, I asked participants to reflect on what makes a good teacher. Upon reflection, Jolene emphasized the importance of caring "about the whole person, so academics, social, and emotional issues." The relational aspect of the profession was in the foreground as she navigated the terrain of teaching. In fact, during the teacher-planning session with Nicole and myself, she worried about one student in particular when it came to changing seats in her classroom:

> She's someone who lost her mother last year, so she has some issues that she's clearly
>
> going through. She's very hard on herself, she's cried to me because she "failed" a test,
>
> she got a B…. She also moved from Jamaica, so she doesn't have a lot of friends.

Since Jolene understood the students' history and empathized with her perceived tenuous emotional state, Jolene worried about changing her seat as it might take away from the relationships that this student had built with her current group. In alignment with Gay's (2018) assertion that care must translate into action, Jolene used her knowledge of her student's social-emotional life to make decisions in her classroom concerned that it might affect the student's well-being and performance in her class.

In another instance, during our co-generated lesson planning session, the student-participants brought up the importance of carefully choosing seating arrangements in the class. While discussing seating arrangements with the group, Jolene acknowledged the dangers of relying on stereotypes to organize her classroom:

The stereotypes . . . used today are maybe women are creative and they're good writers.

Boys are terrible writers, but they're analytical, you know? But that's not true, but I would

like to get that mix in there, but it's not necessarily a boy-girl mix it's getting to really

know which kid is that kid kind of mix.

Jolene seemed to realize that there was a distinction between truly getting to know her students

and relying on stereotypes or generalizations to determine how she would organize her

classroom. While trying to arrange students in groups, she wanted to create an academically

diverse mix of students, but she recognized that she must not rely on generalizations. These

findings suggest that Jolene not only understood the importance of getting to know her students

beyond the superficial, but also that this understanding of her students translated into the

decisions she made in regards to her classroom structure.

Similarly, Nicole acknowledged the importance of getting to know her students in order

to build a relationship between teacher and student. During the half-day PD, the student-

participants and teachers collaborated on a list of look fors that they felt were important to pay

attention to during the classroom observations. During this collaboration, Nicole described how

she tried to engage in students' lives on a daily basis:

I like to ask them at the first couple of minutes . . . . 'Did you have a game last night?'

Like stuff like that? Just to see, you know? Yeah, that's usually when I take my time to do

that. Because they're still, you know, kind of getting ready to learn. So I like to just, you

know, 'Oh hey, I like your dress.'

This example provided an opportunity for Nicole to get to know the students' interests and catch

up on day-to-day events as well as build relationships with the students because she was showing

an interest in their extracurricular lives or their clothing choices. Nicole found getting to know

about students helpful when she was trying to manage her classes. For instance, during her exit interview, she elaborated on why it was important for her interaction with students to know about who they were as people:

"So, I think that the background of knowing. . . what class [the students] were in, and... how they were raised and what I can and cannot say to them. . . Like, I know what students I can say things to, and I know what students I can't say things to and how I should present myself."

To explain, when Nicole stated, "…what students I can't say things to and how I should present myself" she was referring to addressing students in the class using a humorous approach, a direct approach, or another type of approach to refocus students during a lesson for instance. Essentially, by getting to know students' personalities, she was gauging her own interaction with the students—I elaborate on this in the next section. Using knowledge of students to determine her own manner of being also speaks to her trying to find her teacher voice which I elaborate on later in this chapter.

Pedagogical: Knowledge of Students to Inform Teacher Practice

Learning about one's students and applying knowledge of one's students into teacher practice are two distinctly different skills. In my experience, teachers get to know their students best through icebreakers, questions, connecting life to content, and conversation. This knowledge of students' lives, however, does not always translate into teachers' curriculum, pedagogy, or assessment choices. Both Jolene and Nicole acknowledged and practiced getting to know their students and both applied this knowledge to their teaching. For instance, Jolene used her knowledge of students to determine seating arrangements (as explained in the previous section)

and to reflect on student understanding to modify or reiterate a teaching point, while Nicole used her knowledge of students to determine how to address different personalities in the class.

The distinction in how each teacher used student information was an interesting variation that may be attributable to classroom experience as well as age. On more than one occasions, 23-year-old Nicole mentioned trying to relate to her students using social media phenomena and popular youth culture (e.g. the latest TikTok dance, the Chris Brown debate). These instances could be indicative of her proximity in age to her students and common shared interests. She related almost on a social level, while 51-year-old Jolene did not mention any interest in students' day-to-day activities. Instead, she focused more on the academic and social-emotional wellness of her students which she transferred into pedagogy. The transference to a classroom decision is important to note. Her transference, however, might take time and experience to apply, whereas getting to know a student so that there is a relationship is important, but it is only a preliminary step in getting to know the whole student. This transference relates to Gay's (2018) distinction between caring *about* and caring *for* students. It is possible that Jolene was venturing into the caring *for* aspect which turns knowledge about the student into actionable classroom strategies. Nicole, on the other hand, was still mostly in the caring *about* stage which acknowledged students' lives on a culturally superficial level without considering the pedagogical implications of getting to know students.

One concern that Jolene appeared to focus on was knowing which students were struggling and which were understanding the material she was presenting. As mentioned in the methodology section, this study was broken up into parts inspired by PAR: (a) two student-teacher relationship building sessions; (b) a planning stage that occurred with the coach in homogeneous groups; (c) a half-day PD where students and teachers co-generated lesson plans;

(d) the implementation of the co-generated lesson with students and coach as observers; (e) a reflection session with students and teachers; and (f) the individual exit interviews. Jolene brought up her expectation for formative student assessments at the beginning of the study during the relationship building pre-planning session, during the co-generated lesson plan session, and during her reflection of the taught lesson with students. First, during the relationship building session, Jolene related what she should be able to do as a good teacher: "I should be able to identify who is a strong learner, who has issues, who needs additional help." She returned to this expectation while she and Nicole were collaborating on the creation of a list of look fors that students would use when they observed the lesson. She stated that an intention for her teaching for this study should include, "Making sure that we assess that everybody knows. . . Are we in touch with where everybody is?" Finally, after Jolene taught the co-generated lesson, she reflected with the student-participants about how the student-centered lesson allowed her more of an opportunity to assess students' level of understanding: "I also had a really good pulse on who understood and who didn't [by] listening to the conversations. . . In terms of assessment, it allowed me to assess by just listening to everybody." Jolene's attention to student performance throughout the study demonstrated that she felt it was important to know her students' academic strengths and weaknesses. She seemed to use knowledge of what her students understood as a means to readjust her teaching. For instance, during the co-generation of her lesson with one of the student-participants, Alaia, she recounted a time she changed her plans and rethought her teaching as a result of students not understanding the material: "I don't think you guys get this. . . Let's delay the test. I gotta figure out a better way to teach this." Monitoring student progress lent itself to Jolene's reflection of her teaching. This monitoring, coupled with her caring about her students, created a change in her teaching which ensured the success of her students on more

summative, formal assessments. Her constant informal assessment of student performance could act as an ideal entry point in my continued work with Jolene. Although this knowledge of students is not cultural, it is important for me as a coach to address because it is part of Jolene's values as an educator. By knowing that Jolene was dedicated to monitoring her students' progress and she noted that more student-centered work allowed her to better monitor her students' opposed to when she was in front of the room I could use this in future iterations of PAR to expand her level of awareness to include opportunities to create more student-centered activities, scaffold instruction, and maintain high expectations for all students despite where they are starting in the learning process.

Nicole's use of student knowledge, however, manifested differently than Jolene's, but still demonstrated her values as a first-year educator. Several times throughout the study, Nicole mentioned how she could address different students in her class, for instance, being direct with one student, but having to soften her approach with another. She talked about the importance of getting to know a student in order to gauge how she could address different personalities in her classroom:

> So I think that the background of knowing what class they were in and how they were raised and what I can and cannot say to them, it's just like . . . getting to know them. I know what students I can say things to, and I know what students I can't say things to and how I should present myself.

Nicole's examples appear to speak directly to the relationship that she was trying to foster with her students. Here she pointed out that the primary goal was about knowing them well enough to inform her interactions with them. For instance, by knowing the background of students she was

able to differentiate how she should speak to them whether through the use of humor, straightforwardness, or using a more soft-spoken approach.

As a young educator, Nicole attempted to relate to the students in ways that might have overlapped in her own life. For instance, during the half-day PD, she told Natasha—one of the student-participants—that she spent time over the week-long break to learn how to do the Renegade (a popular dance on TikTok). Another instance of relating to students through social media and popular culture was when she admitted to the group that she had engaged in a discussion with a student in her class about singer Chris Brown. After coding and consulting the research, I realized that this approach of getting to know her students only scratches the surface of knowing the whole student and providing insight into how their cultural identities might make its way into the class content and pedagogy. Reflecting on how important getting to know her students was for Nicole and how it was coming to her naturally as a new teacher will provide a future opportunity for me as her coach to begin encouraging her to use what she knows about students to incorporate it into her content, pedagogy, and assessment.

These data provide two access points that might be important to a coach. First, having teachers assess the ways that they are getting to know students is important. Perhaps using Hammond's (2015) Culture Tree Model—which illustrates the levels of cultural identity from superficial to deep—might be a place to start. Once I am confident that the teachers are learning about their students' cultural identities on a deeper level, the next step entails guiding them on how to use this information to build content, classroom strategies, and assessments which would move them from caring *about* to caring *for* their students.

Jolene's and Nicole's knowledge and acceptance of students and their lives outside the classroom is important to note, especially when considering the next three themes: faith in

student knowledge, negotiation of power, and limited culturally responsive pedagogy. The

teachers' willingness to know and care about their students seemed genuine and

passionate. Despite this, however, there were still natural instances of resistance and reluctance

when it came to incorporating student voice, as I detail below. Consequently, knowing about and

caring for one's students may not be enough to actualize the use of student voice. There may be

another layer to student cultural identity which is necessary for teachers in order to be able to see

their students as knowledgeable and thereby negotiate some of the power in the classroom. I note

this here, but discuss it further at the end of the chapter.

Building Teacher-Student Relationships is Essential for Incorporating Student Voice

Equally important to teachers' belief in the importance of building meaningful

relationships with their students, student-participants also had very strong feelings about how

they were taught and the relationships that were formed with their teachers. Students in this study

confirmed the value of building relationships with their teachers. In this section, I explore the

student-teacher relationships from the perspective of the student-participants.

In the beginning of the study, when teachers and students were getting to know each

another, I asked them to reflect on what makes a good teacher, a good lesson, and a good

class. Eva and Alaia, who attended this session, concurred that a caring teacher is important. For

instance, Eva mentioned that a good teacher is, "Someone who's a caregiver," later explaining

during a member check that she meant is someone "wanting the best for them

(students)." Similarly, Alaia characterized a good teacher as someone who "actually show[s]

how much they care about the students" which she also expounded on during the member check

by saying that "teachers should just respect the students' thinking." These sentiments align with

Ladson-Billings's (2009) characteristics of a culturally responsive teacher as well as Delpit's

(2012) attributes of warm demanders who "expect a great deal of their students, convince them

of their own brilliance, and help them to reach their potential in a disciplined and structured

environment" (p. 77). Eva and Alaia explicitly agreed with this sentiment, but the aspect of

relationships (as it pertains specifically to including student input into classroom practice) also

presented itself in more nuanced ways as I explain below.

The importance of relationship building emerged during the planning stage of the

study. During this stage, teachers and students were paired to collaborate on one 40-minute

lesson. Natasha worked with Nicole while Alaia worked with Jolene to co-generate lesson

plans. Prior to the study, Natasha and Nicole had never met; additionally Natasha had missed the

first getting-to-know-you session meant to help build relationships among the group of

participants. Conversely, Alaia was a current student in Jolene's economics class and attended

both relationship building sessions. This distinction was significant when I analyzed the resulting

data.

During the planning phase, students and teachers were to work together to create a lesson

plan. I left the directions open to interpretation on how that would look in order to observe what

would happen. The only restrictions were that participants consider the components of culturally

responsive teaching (which I had reviewed with all of them), students' suggestions during the

pre-planning phase, and the co-generated list of look fors that we created just prior to planning.

In the case of Nicole and Natasha, the collaboration seemed stifled. I say this because Nicole

focused on asking yes/no, either/or questions and mostly Natasha acceded to whatever proposal

Nicole made about the lesson. For instance, Nicole asked, "Do you think I should do an exit

ticket? That's like, a right triangle question, or do you think that I should do an exit ticket that's

more about their opinion? Or should I do a little bit of both?" Natasha responded, "A little bit of

both." The manner in which the questions were posed limited Natasha's response to three

possible answer choices, giving her little to no opportunity to contribute her voice in a

meaningful way.

One possible reason for Natasha's limited contribution might be because Nicole

maintained hierarchical control over the conversation by asking limited-choice questions which

might have prevented Natasha from problem-solving solutions to the lesson

independently. Another possible reason for Natasha's limited contribution to the lesson planning

might be a result of her limited relationship with Nicole. Her compliant one-word responses

could be indicative of her not feeling comfortable in this pairing. Consider the following

exchange:

>Nicole: Now, do you think that I should have some stations that are just more concrete
>
>math like this?
>
>Natasha: Yes.
>
>Nicole: And then others that are more real world problems?
>
>Natasha: Yes.
>
>Nicole: So do a little bit of both?
>
>Natasha: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Perhaps this monosyllabic contribution could be attributed to power dynamics kept in place by

Nicole's line of questioning as well as the hierarchal arrangements of school, but it could be

ascribed to an absence of a relationship in which both had faith that the other had something

meaningful to contribute (unfortunately due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the closing of

schools, I was unable to follow up with Natasha about her feelings about this encounter). At one

point during the planning phase, while I was sitting with Nicole and Natasha, I also commented

"I'm gonna move away from you though. Because I feel like I'm taking away Natasha's voice."

Natasha's hesitance to fully contribute can be attributed to various possibilities including power

dynamics, discomfort with the subject matter (i.e. she mentioned at the start of the planning with

Nicole, "geometry was not good to me"), vulnerability, or lack of relationship. Regardless, the

dialogue that took place during this interaction did not best capture Natasha's thoughts and

opinions. This stifled interaction was not apparent when she was in the presence of other

students. For example during the creation of the look fors earlier the same session, when she had

had time to discuss her ideas with Alaia before sharing out with the teachers, Natasha shared her

thinking and contributed a unique perspective. Again, this could be attributed to having power in

numbers or having confirmed her ideas were valid with a peer before sharing them out to a group

of teachers, comfort with the topic, or her relationship with Alaia could have prompted more

confidence. Conversely, since Nicole and Natasha had not had the opportunity to build a

relationship of mutual trust, Natasha may have been unwilling to take a risk of voicing her

opinion with someone with whom she had not formed a trusting relationship.

Positioned against this interaction was Alaia's experience with Jolene during the co-

generated lesson planning. Alaia exuded a lot more confidence, offering her opinion and coming

up with ideas more so than Natasha. Her willingness, again, could be partially attributed to how

Jolene phrased questions. For instance, at one point, Jolene handed Alaia some resources saying,

"So you . . . take a whack at it" which allowed space for Alaia to independently come up with her

own ideas for the lesson. By saying "take a whack at it," Jolene was positioning Alaia as an

equal partner in the co-construction of the lesson and changing the hierarchical power structure

which also may have contributed to Alaia's confidence in voicing her opinion during the lesson

planning.

In contrast to Natasha's experience, another possibility for Alaia's confidence could be attributed to the established relationship with Jolene prior to the study. This contrast was noted when Jolene asked an either/or question that was similar to those posed by Nicole: "Can we jump right into scenarios? Or do I still need to do more instruction?" Unlike Natasha, however, Alaia took the opportunity to explore her thoughts about this scenario and did not seem to acquiesce to one option or the other. Instead, she openly stated:

> It depends . . . I feel like you gotta give a little bit more instruction because based on, in our class, I, myself included, I just don't get it like that. I need you to explain a little bit further, so it would help the people that don't really understand the lesson . . . Or, once you're done, or once you believe that you're done and you've got your point across, then ask, do you guys have any questions? The problem is, not everybody likes raising their hand. That's the main problem.

In this exchange, Alaia did not limit herself to answering the either/or question; rather she shared information about how she learned and specified what she needed from her teacher. In addition, Alaia offered another possibility apart from the either/or options—which gave voice to the other learners in the class—by suggesting that Jolene ask the class if they needed more information from her before continuing. Finally, she ended with her own problem of practice by acknowledging that her suggestion may not work because students might be reluctant to raise their hand if they had a question. It seemed clear that Alaia's position as the student in Jolene's class, as well as her level of comfort with her teacher, allowed her the space to problem-solve and question the choices that were being made in the lesson.

The difference between the responses of the two student-participants might be attributed to other causes than the two I outlined above, including their personalities or their confidence in

the content of the class. The research on incorporating student voice, however, highlights the idea of radical openness or vulnerability—by moving from superficial dialogue to using dialogue to enact curricular and pedagogical change—from the perspective of the teacher (Bragg, 2007; Leat & Reid, 2012; Reynolds, 2018). The research does not mention this concept of radical openness from the point of view of the student. Therefore, one of the first aspects that I might have to take into account as the coach trying to incorporate student voice into a coaching session would be ensuring relationships between the students and teachers are built in ways that the students feel safe and open to vulnerability. This might also encourage the coach to consider different ways of accessing student voice both orally and written (perhaps anonymously) in the form of surveys or reflections. In an ideal setting, the students being asked to include their voice to teacher practice would be students in the teachers' classes where relationships are already established. By allowing students to contribute to the pedagogical thinking of the class in various ways, teachers may be able to get a more authentic view of the learning needs and wants of their students.

During the planning phase, the students and teachers were put in a vulnerable situation. In addition to asking participants to unlearn the traditional hierarchal roles in education, Natasha and Nicole's unfavorable experiences were compounded by not having a relationship prior to the study and Natasha's discomfort with the content. Conversely, Alaia and Jolene's prior relationship also may have caused vulnerability because they had an established relationship built on traditional roles. Both teacher and student data lean heavily on building meaningful relationships which seems to be where I need to focus my initial energy as a coach working to get teachers to incorporate student voice into their practice.

Accessing Students' Deep Cultural Identity and Pedagogical Values

In addition to encouraging teachers to trust that their students have pedagogical knowledge, are capable of higher order thinking, and can be held to high standards, a coach must also provide teachers with tools for how to access students' deep cultural identities as well as their pedagogical values. It is important to access these components of student identity and beliefs so that they can be actualized into culturally responsive teaching strategies (which I discuss in the next section).

During the study, there were instances where I attempted to get teachers to think more deeply about students' experiences in and out of their classrooms. For instance, I started with modeling a relationship building activity during one of our first sessions, asking students to reflect on their best and worst teachers and why. At the end of the study, during Nicole's exit interview when she was thinking of ways to better get to know her students, I referred back to why the information of students' best and worst teachers could be important:

> By asking them their best and worst teachers, you're essentially asking them their values and their beliefs about education, right? So, if you think about our cultural iceberg that we did, . . . that's getting a little bit deeper . . . And then using that, to formulate a lesson, is incorporating student voice into your plans.

During the coaching cycle, I was aware that Nicole was excited to get to know her students and relate to them on a personal level (i.e. learning a TikTok dance), but I also felt that it was insufficient for culturally responsive instruction as it pertained to deep cultural knowledge about students (Hammond, 2015) and it was not being used—at least during this study—to impact her instruction. Therefore, I felt that a simple question about students' best and worst teachers and their reasons could help her get at students' values about education. In addition to using the

Cultural Iceberg Model, we could have explored other options for her to get to know her students on a deeper level. Then, using the data coupled with the catalyst approach we could have tried to stimulate a change in her instruction.

During the same exit interview, I elaborated on how the information in student responses could be used to make pedagogical choices by bringing in an example from one of our student-participants:

> One of the things that I found interesting was . . . when I asked them about their best and worst teachers, and why. Eva, in particular, keeps coming back to me because she liked her art classes, her dance class and her actual painting, because she got to choose and she got to move around. And so, even though she can't articulate necessarily what it is that she might want to see in a math class, . . . taking what they do know, what does work for them, even in other subjects. . . . We do have the pedagogy in order to . . . make those connections.

Learning about Eva's best teacher helped both Nicole and me reflect on her values as a student and the methodologies that have helped her in the past. I realized during the course of the study that helping teachers make connections between students' values on education and the choices we make in the classroom are an important role of an instructional coach when teachers first begin to incorporate student voice into their practice which I discuss more later in the chapter.

Hammond (2015) insisted that supporting the cognitive development of independent learners hinges on getting to know students' deep culture (values, spirituality, world views) rather than just surface culture (dance, art, music) for the well-being and safety of students. She asserted knowing a students' deep cultural identity provides a means of creating a safe learning environment: "Our deep cultural values program our brain on how to interpret the world around

us—what a real threat looks like and what will bring a sense of security" (p. 37). Therefore, it is important that I continue to use tools such as Hammond's Culture Tree or Hall's (1976) Cultural Iceberg Models to reflect on how teachers are getting to know their students.

Part of accessing students' pedagogical values (part of their deep culture) is another way that a culturally responsive coach can assist teachers. Since this was the first cycle of a PAR study, I focused my coaching on simple tools that teachers could use continuously to get more student input about their lessons. One way that I attempted to encourage teachers to access student voice was through the use of feedback surveys. For instance, during the half-day PD when participants co-generated lesson plans, Jolene asked about how we ensure that the classroom is comfortable for everyone. Although there is no single answer to this question, my response promoted the use of surveys that probe students' opinions about pedagogical choices that teachers may have made:

> How do you make it comfortable for everybody? Keep asking them. And then you keep modeling, you keep modifying your instruction to try to hit everybody and say like, 'Okay, so I noticed in the last survey . . . you all said that you didn't like the time restraint that I put on this activity. So this time, we're gonna let the time restraint go and see how that works.' And then you ask them again, 'How did that go?' Right? And then you're getting the majority of [students] most of the time.

To some extent, my suggestion here mimics PAR: I was encouraging Jolene to try a strategy, get student feedback, and then make changes before trying it again. My own coaching cycle during this study, did not allow for this type of time or reflection. Instead my sense of urgency to facilitate change while working with Jolene and Nicole prevented me from seeing this work as the first step in a process rather than a solution to a problem. For this reason, I attempted to

provide teachers with tools that they could continue to employ in their practice that would help them access student voice.

Working within the construct of a teacher-driven classroom attempting to employ student voice, the use of surveys and an acknowledgement of students' choices and their rationales could move teachers into more student-centered, co-generated classroom settings. A safe and easy strategy a coach could employ to promote more teacher-student negotiation is feedback surveys which get teachers accustomed to hearing students' opinions about their learning and encouraging them to modify their lessons accordingly.

Coaching-Teacher Relationships

In the same way that teachers need to get to know their students, coaches need to get to know their teachers. Despite having worked with Jolene and Nicole prior to the study, I had not allowed myself to get too vulnerable with either of them. Both Jolene and Nicole speak openly about their lives and ask questions of mine, but I find being open with teachers uncomfortable and vulnerable. Reflecting back on my first years of teaching, I was also a closed book with my students. My instructional coach, during my sixth year of teaching, encouraged me to open up to my students (when appropriate) and I noticed a distinct difference in how they perceived me. As a result, I continued to open up to my students (where applicable to my teaching) in order to build relationships and make connections with them. In my first full year as a coach (during the course of this study), I realized that I struggle with this same vulnerability; however, the fear is compounded by the fact that these are my colleagues and not children who want to be loved by their teacher. During the exit interview with Jolene, for instance, I tried opening up and sharing about the different ways in which my siblings and I had all experienced high school (overachievers, dropouts, special needs, indifferent). In conversation, she offered her own

experience with one of her sons. Although I did not write about it afterwards, because I did not acknowledge the importance of the exchange, this was very uncomfortable for me, but it allowed me to get to know Jolene's experience better. Moving forward, as awkward as it might make me feel, I realize that I have to be more open with the teachers that I coach in order to build stronger relationships with them.

Although I was open to taking academic or pedagogical risks during my work with teachers—for instance, by recording a lesson of my teaching for critique during the half-day PD, demonstrating the lesson in Jolene's classroom, or co-teaching with Nicole—taking a step back I realize that I needed to approach my coaching in a more culturally responsive way which involves taking personal risks by getting to know the teachers I work with. As I would with students, I need to get to know the teachers that I work with better and apply that knowledge of the teachers to my coaching. For instance, using information about Nicole's student teaching experience in Brazil may help me relate to her cultural understanding of the world and apply it to the students' learning. If I could discuss with her the reasons she chose to do her student teaching abroad, it might help me better understand her values as an educator and then help her incorporate her values into her curriculum, classroom strategies, and assessments.

Ultimately, relationship building is paramount to the inception of culturally responsive teaching. It is not, however, the end point. Instead, caring about the whole student can provide teachers with the opportunity to shape the curriculum, create student-centered lessons, and bridge cultural gaps. In an interview with *Teaching Tolerance*, a project and journal of the Southern Poverty Law Center, Jacqueline Jordan Irvine (2010) explained that culturally responsive teachers are cultural bridge builders. One of the primary premises of culturally responsive teaching is "that teachers take students' everyday lived cultural experiences and make the

appropriate linkages between what the students know and do and understand and come up with

examples, comparisons and contrasts" (2:12). As was demonstrated by both teachers, just

knowing students is insufficient in creating culturally responsive classrooms. Instead, teachers

must use students' cultural identities to inform their practice through their curricula, pedagogies

and assessments. In the same way, coaches need to get to know their teachers' cultural identities

in order to bridge teachers' cultures to students' cultures as it pertains to their teaching. Coaches

also need to help teachers identify cultural filters that have been used to send messages from the

school frame of reference which is inherently oppressive so teachers can adapt classroom

practices to the students' home cultures in order for them to be successful.

Faith in Student Knowledge

Often combined with love and humility, faith is a foundational component of Freire's

(1970) concept of dialogue. Freire believed that teaching through dialogue empowered

marginalized students to transform their world. He asserted that "faith in people is an *a priori*

requirement for dialogue; the 'dialogical man' believes in others before he meets them face to

face . . . Without this faith in people, dialogue is a farce which inevitably degenerates into

paternalistic manipulation" (pp. 90-91). Much in line with the extant literature on the

incorporation of student voice (Bragg, 2007; Cody & McGarry, 2012; Cook-Sather, 2014; Kim

& Searle, 2017; Rodriguez & Brown, 2009), the following category depicts Jolene's skepticism

or lack of faith to recognize students' input as valuable or important. By this I mean that I noted

instances where teachers seemed hesitant to recognize students' ideas as important or valuable to

their teaching. With Jolene, this skepticism manifested both relationally (through students' lack

of compliance) and pedagogically (through the reluctance to incorporate students' ideas and the

use of hegemonic classroom practices [lecturing]). While with Nicole, her lack of faith in

students also presented itself in two ways: *relationally* as it pertained to her mindset and perception of students, and *pedagogically* as it pertained to the apprenticeship of observation. Additionally, as the coach, I also struggled with having faith in teachers' ability. Teachers' feelings of resistance were countered by students' feelings of validation when they felt their voices were heard by their teachers.

Both teachers struggled to have faith in students' self-awareness of the ways they learned and were taught. In both instances, there was the idea that students did not know more than what the teachers told them. Jolene questioned outright, "How much do they really, really know?" and Nicole blatantly stated, "They . . . didn't have any ideas, but it's not their fault because they haven't been exposed to any ideas." While Nicole's lack of faith in student knowledge seemed to stem from a deficit mindset of the students worrying about "horror stories" or them not "react[ing] well" during the class, Jolene's perception seemed to stem from students being "lazy" and perhaps unwilling to contribute their voice to her class. For Nicole, this notion may have shifted during the study because at the end she admitted "I didn't really realize how much of an opinion they had on what they were doing, specifically in a math class." Jolene, however, did not seem to budge on this issue and she declined to make changes to her lesson based on students' feedback. Although a glimmer of hope shines through for teacher-educators with Nicole's shift in mindset—which allows for the possibility that implementing various teaching strategies that promote student voice can change this mindset—it did not seem to have the same outcome with Jolene. In future work together, this could be an area of focus with Jolene.

Relational: Maintenance of Teachers as Knowers

Relationally, both Jolene and Nicole seemed to struggle with negotiating the traditional roles of teacher as the knowers and students as the learners. Moreover, both appeared to feel

frustration when students did not follow directions which manifested in negative talk about the students. In Jolene's case, she projected feelings of apathy on students while Nicole seemed to project deficit views of inability onto her students. A deficit mindset occurs when teachers focus on students' deficiencies rather than the potential that they possess. When teachers approach students with a deficit mindset, teachers limit what students can do by lowering their standards for them thereby perpetuating inequality especially among marginalized groups (Zhao, 2016). Characteristics of a deficit mindset include what students "can't" do rather than what they are "not yet" able to do (Achievement Network, 2020). A deficit mindset grates against the very hallmark of being a culturally responsive educator because a core tenet of cultural responsiveness mandates educators to maintain high expectations for their students and to believe that every student can be successful in their class (Delpit, 2012; Haberman, 1991; Hammond, 2015; Kinloch, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 2009, 2014, 2017; Rodriguez, 2017; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The distinction between the two teachers lies within their perception of their role in the classroom. As a veteran teacher, Jolene had established her role as the teacher whose job it was to make decisions for and about students while Nicole, as a first-year teacher was still trying to navigate this new terrain and find her role as educator.

One classroom practice with which Jolene admitted to struggling was the dissemination of instructions and students advancing at various paces. One instance occurred during our half-day PD with students. Together, we co-created a list of look fors that the student-participants and myself as the coach would use when we observed the teachers implementing the co-generated lesson plans. One area that teachers wanted student-participants and me to pay attention to was maintaining accountability. In this discussion, Jolene mentioned an example of students not following directions and her frustration with their noncompliance:

I gave instructions and then . . .10 minutes later they're like 'Well, we couldn't see the

board . . . I didn't know what to do.' 'What did you think we were doing for the last 10

minutes?' Okay, yeah. And that could be with me not giving clear instructions. That

could totally be. . . . And . . . it is exhausting because . . . I'll be running around to each

kid like, 'Did y'all listen when I did the full group instruction?'. . . And then, how many

times do I need to then repeat myself too? Or do you just say, 'Oops, sorry, you weren't

listening?' Or 'If you didn't understand, speak up right then and there.'

Jolene's frustration was apparent when she mentioned that repeating directions numerous times

was "exhausting." In this statement, she also mentioned that students not following the directions

could be a result of her not clearly stating the instructions in a way that the entire class

understood or had access to after she verbally articulated them ("that could be with me not giving

clear instructions. That could totally be.") This self-reflection was promising, but she did not

follow it up with ways that she could change her methods of giving instructions. Instead, she

questioned how to ensure student compliance. She offered two possibilities for students who did

not comply: refusal to repeat the instructions ("Oops, sorry, you weren't listening") or eliciting

questions about the instructions before moving into the activity ("If you didn't understand, speak

up right then and there.") Therefore, it seemed that the students' compliance took precedence

over her methodology.

After listening to Jolene's frustration, Alaia, a student in her class as well as a participant

in this study, tried to offer both another point of view of the situation Jolene recounted as well as

a methodological solution:

So I feel like going back to, let's say, calling on people [with] the wheel of names or

something like that, and let's say it lands on me and I was actually trying to pay attention

but I didn't get it. I would expect you to be like 'Oh, what don't you get?' and [then] your

focus is on. . . what they didn't know.

To this Jolene replied, "So you mean instead of saying 'You're a stupid idiot?'" Although this

was clearly phrased as a joke, I noted in my researcher journal feeling uneasy after her retort

when no one laughed. Jolene quickly stated that it was a joke, but no one "got it." Reflecting

back, I should have spent time here as her coach, but being both novice and uncomfortable, I

quickly brought us back to the topic we had been discussing. Another note that I made in my

researcher journal reflected the struggle I had regarding my dual roles as coach and researcher. I

noted that "some of the things [the teachers] mention I want to talk about as [their] coach, but

they don't necessarily apply to what we're doing in the study." At the time I noticed that Jolene

was struggling, but I was not able to identify or name the struggle, perhaps if I had been able to

identify that she was struggling with a conflict of power, I might have been better able to help

her.

Moreover, Alaia had provided me with the perfect opportunity to explore this scenario

from a students' perspective. From Alaia's point of view, she did not interpret her classmates'

inaction as noncompliance. Instead, she attributed their lack of compliance to a lack of

understanding either to the directions or the material. Then she offered a solution, suggesting that

Jolene ask a student to repeat the instructions in their own words and use the students' recounting

of the directions to troubleshoot any misunderstandings. In Jolene's frustration, however, she

rebuffed Alaia's contribution. As a result of this rejection, the implication of the interaction

suggested that not only was Alaia's contribution invaluable, but that Jolene may not have had

faith that the students in her classes could follow directions competently.

In Freire's (1970) book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed,* he discussed five components critical to dialogue. One component is faith. In order for dialogue to be successful and enact change, participants in the dialogue must have faith that the person or people with whom they are conversing can teach them something. This component dictates that participants entering the conversation must do so not as a judger, but as a learner (Knight, 2011). Jolene demonstrated that she could learn from the scenario by indicating that her directions might be unclear; however, her emotions, at that moment, seemed to prevent her from exploring her classroom practices from a perspective that did not put students at the center of the problem, thereby rendering her unable to see them as knowledgeable and their contributions valuable. At the same time, I may not have had enough faith in Jolene to take the time to work through this with her as her coach. In my uneasiness with the situation, I failed to see Alaia's contribution as a means to engage in dialogue with Jolene.

On more than one occasion, Nicole appeared to demonstrate distrust in her students' abilities in terms of following directions and participating in activities. For instance, during the pre-planning phase with both teachers, we discussed various problems of practice. Jolene related a problem she had with students not following directions. As the coach, I proposed having students take responsibility for repeating the directions to their teams. Nicole's response was "Yeah, I'm not good at letting them . . . because [they]'re going to tell [each other] something wrong." Her comment seemed to be a direct denigration of students' knowledge thereby resulting in her resistance to allow them to take leadership roles in the classroom—even with something as minor as repeating directions to their classmates.

In another example, she reflected with the student-participants about the co-generated lesson that they observed. She related one instance where a student was not complying with the classroom activity:

> There's a lot of lower students, like this is the lowest class out of all of my three CPE courses. There's just some kids in there and I'm like, 'You have a 45 in my class, why are you not working? Even if you're not with someone who you like, particularly, not that you even don't dislike them, I can only guide you back to your group and back to a certain problem so many times.' There're so many people in here and that's something that I don't know how to fix.

This quote illustrated a number of important concerns. First, she started with a deficit view of the class and asserted that "this is the lowest class" academically of her other classes, directly positioning them as less capable than other students. (Looking back, if I had had more time, I would have liked to have the student-participants reflect on this statement and get their interpretation of how labeling her class in such a way affected them). From a Freirean perspective, her hierarchical placement is congruent with hegemonic school structures, where some students are positioned as significantly more capable than others. Beyond her control, she had been subject to these structures because the school used antiquated methods of tracking for math. College Preparatory Enrichment (CPE) classified students who were not proficient enough for advanced level mathematics thereby perpetuating an implicit deficit view in the mind of the teacher.

Next, there was Nicole's frustration with a student who was failing her class and not completing the activity as directed. There seemed to be a focus on the deficiencies ("a 45 in my class") rather than the strengths of the disengaged student. Her focus created a chasm between

the student and Nicole where she appeared to interpret the student's inaction as defiance, insubordination, and noncompliance while another interpretation could be that the students was acting in self-preservation or out of shame. For students who struggle, sometimes the shame associated with struggle is exacerbated in a group setting. Based on the students' inaction, it is clear that the learning environment was not conducive to her success. A culturally responsive teacher might decide to investigate this rather than locate the blame on the individual. This is a point where I might have been more helpful as the coach by pointing out various perspectives of why students do not comply with teacher-created norms and expectations. However, looking back at the data, I was focusing more on facilitating the discussion between the students and the teachers during this debriefing session about Nicole's lesson. At the time, I restated for the students Nicole's initial concern regarding grouping (student-chosen groups versus teacher-created groups) which after analyzing the data did not seem to be what was actually frustrating her. As a result, Nicole may have been left feeling frustrated because the underlying issues of why students were not working well in groups were never addressed.

Finally, there was a sense that Nicole was overwhelmed in her role as the educator in the room. She stated, "I can only guide you back to your group . . . so many times. There's so many people in here and that's something that I don't know how to fix." Nicole seemed to be negotiating her role and the role of the students in an attempt to be student-centered. She wanted to act as a guide to redirect behavior, but as co-teachers, we missed a teachable moment: modeling how students can act as coaches for one another. Although we demonstrated what the activity should look like in the beginning of the class, this group may have needed a more scaffolded approach. As the second teacher in the room, I could have sat with the students and prompted or modeled the discussion that was expected during the activity. Instead, I also

perceived the students' lack of interaction as a form of resistance to the activity rather than a

possible cry for help—the students helped both of us put this into perspective during the debrief

which I elaborate on later in this chapter. Additionally, Nicole admitted that she did not know

how to "fix" her students' reliance on her, but I think that what she did not see was the

underlying workings to get students to collaborate effectively in groups (which I address later in

this paper). Part of Nicole's frustration seemed to be a deficit view of this event, her role in

relation to the students, and the relationships among students, however, that is preventing her

from seeing the potential that students have to problem-solve and collaborate—and which, I

hindsight, I could have modeled for her during the class. Other important factors to consider are

the structural issues that exist in schools: large classroom sizes, limited instructional time with

students, mandated expectations for standardized testing. All of these factors perpetuate implicit

bias and deficit views as well as contribute to Nicole as a first year teacher feeling overwhelmed

when negotiating her role in the classroom.

Ultimately, it is possible that Nicole fell victim to a system that perpetuates perspectives

of students' noncompliance as defiant or insubordinate. Looking back, I did not note—and I

cannot remember—the race or ethnicity of the students who were not complying with the

activity, but that should have been data worth analyzing considering this is a study on cultural

responsiveness and educational oppression. Even though I did not include students' race and

culture in my data, my inkling is that may be a factor based on systemic practices such as

tracking that have been known to prevent students' upward academic and social mobility (Mayer

et al., 2018). Although more research is needed to support this, perhaps I could add background

knowledge about oppressive school practices into my coaching by first acknowledging the

hegemonic structures evident in the building which may support a deficit mindset and then

examining how deficit views of students exist and how they may be perpetuated in a classroom. Regardless of whether or not the deficit mindset stems from implicit bias or just a new teacher who is attempting to not be taken advantage of in her first year of teaching, it is evident that implicit bias and deficit mindsets need to be addressed and we must "work from the assumption that [students] hold within them wisdom, knowledge, ideas, and gifts" (Knight, 2011) before we can expect teachers to effectively incorporate student voice.

Pedagogical: Grain of Salt

In three separate instances Jolene and Nicole both uttered the idiom: "Sometimes you have to take their comments with a grain of salt," an expression that means to accept something while maintaining a degree of skepticism about its truth (Martin, 1997). Although Freire (1970) cautioned the "dialogical man" to be critical of their dialogic partner when practicing faith, he did so to prevent hierarchical power structures from maintaining the hegemonic structures of society, not to assume that the person with whom they are conversing cannot be learned from or that their ideas are invaluable.

For Jolene, her skepticism prevented her from implementing student as well as maintaining traditional, teacher-centered classroom structures. The reluctance or skepticism noted during Jolene's conversations with and about students and student-participants, however, seemed to indicate an initial lack of willingness to accept students' ideas as valuable. For instance, during her exit interview with me she questioned the validity of student input: "How much do they really, really know? What is their area of expertise?" In her first attempt to incorporate student voice into her lessons, these are natural questions which demonstrate the traditional, hierarchal power structures inherent in education. This preliminary data of Jolene attempting to unlearn a way of being that is a typical teacher way manifested itself in two ways:

first, when she chose not to implement changes to her lesson plan after student feedback; and second, when she discussed presenting materials through lecturing. Nicole, on the other hand, recognized that students' lack of "ideas" may be attributed to a lack of exposure to various student-centered methodologies.

Dismissal of Student Input. Part of Jolene's co-generated lesson plan consisted of a worksheet with brief scenarios of inflation. With a group, for each scenario, students had to determine who benefited from inflation and who did not (payer or borrower) and justify their reasoning. At the end of teaching the co-generated lesson, teachers were asked to present students with two questions to answer in order to provide feedback to the teacher and student-participants: (a) What was beneficial about today's lesson?; and (b) If you were to do the same lesson again tomorrow, what would you change and why? Through this feedback, Jolene's students suggested she make the scenarios in the lesson more challenging, or at the very least, more varied. As a result of this feedback, Jolene offered her students an opportunity to contribute examples that were more challenging. Here is her recounting this response to the student-participants during the debrief of the lesson:

> We got the feedback of the scenarios as being either too simple or always the same, you know? Let's see if I get any, but I said, 'If you guys have a scenario . . . Give it to me. I will incorporate it.'

Conversely, however, during the exit interview with me, I asked if she would change the lesson for next year based on the feedback from her students. She responded:

> To be honest with you, I probably won't change it because . . . the biggest comment was that it was too simple. But the funny thing is when I did a little bit of a tiny twist on it today, they were lost.

Her observation might indicate that the material was, in fact, not too simple. However, students getting "lost" after a "tiny twist" in the content might indicate that they had not learned the concepts well enough to transfer them. Either way, her observation could spark a change in the methodology of how she taught the material, and yet there was no apparent change during this study. Moreover, simplicity was not students' only critique; they also noted repetitiveness. Despite student feedback, a possible explanation for her unwillingness to change her plans could be a lack of faith in students' motivation for change or knowledge about their learning. I say this for two reasons: First, in the initial quote with student-participants, even though she opened up the classroom to allow for student input on the content of the class—which ultimately is what I had hoped for in conducting this study—she added in the comment "let's see if I get any." Her response seemed to connote disbelief or skepticism that students would take the opportunity to offer suggestions to improve the lesson on their own time. Her utterance could have been made for myriad reasons, including a lack of faith that students were capable of creating scenarios that were more challenging than the ones she provided for them, or student apathy.

This idea of student apathy presented itself on two other occasions. One instance occurred during a one-on-one conference I had with Jolene. Before Jolene taught the co-generated lesson in front of student-participants for observation, she asked that I demonstrate the lesson in her first period class (which is a coaching strategy I explain later in this chapter). After I conducted the demo lesson we looked at the feedback from the students. The co-generated lesson consisted of a mini-jigsaw activity in which students convened with an expert group to work through one of the scenarios on inflation before returning to their home group and coaching their group through their scenario. When she and I were reflecting on students' feedback, she

noticed that students did not mention moving around and switching groups which she attributed to "they're lazy."

A second instance where she noted student apathy was during her exit interview. She was reflecting on student-participants' suggestions on incorporating more student voice into her lessons in a more practical way without pulling them from class as we did for the study—which admittedly, is not practical with the restraints of traditional public schooling. The student-participants suggested that she ask her students to come voluntarily after school to help her plan lessons. Separately, with me, she praised the student-participants for their character, but doubted their idea that her students would participate voluntarily after school lamenting, "I hope they're right. But I'm thinking that . . . it's because [the student-participants are] unique . . . So I mean, I'm sure there's more Evas and Alaias out there, but I think it's . . . a much smaller population than they probably think." This reflection seemed to indicate a lack of faith in students' desire to be a part of the classroom decision-making. Although she is not necessarily wrong in stating that many students would not come after school to help her create lesson plans, the assumption that students are unmotivated and apathetic about their learning promotes a deficit view of students which perpetuates a hierarchical power structure of which Freire warned us.

A second indicator that Jolene lacked faith in students' knowledge was her rejection of changing the activity for the next year despite students' feedback. By renouncing student feedback, it seemed that she had understandable difficulty being vulnerable in relinquishing teacher-made decisions to the students. The literature acknowledges that engaging in work steeped in student voice requires an immense vulnerability on the part of the teacher (Averill et al., 2015; Fielding, 2004). Statements during the same conversation about students' ideas needed to be "taken with a grain of salt" seemed to indicate vulnerability in abdicating a hierarchy of

ideas that prevented her from fully acknowledging students as competent even though there was

more than one student with that same input. Her seeming disregard for student input perpetuates

the idea that at the beginning stages of her work with student voice, students do not hold enough

knowledge about their learning to meaningfully participate in the classroom decision making

process. Her lack of faith (Freire, 1970) in students' desire to contribute to their education or her

lack of faith that students had valuable insight into their learning impeded Jolene from making

changes to the content of her lesson and thereby entrenching her in the circuit of her own truth

(Freire, 1998). As a natural starting point in this work, however, this is another area in which I

can continue to work with her. Now that I notice the reluctance and vulnerability that Jolene was

exhibiting in the first round of PAR, I can help her focus on those areas moving forward perhaps

through dialogue or reflective journaling. At the time, these comments made me feel

uncomfortable. I did not know how to have her reflect on the situation and at the time I did not

recognize her comments as a place of vulnerability. Perhaps we were experiencing vulnerability

in our own way: Jolene pushing back against student voice, me acquiescing to the teacher. There

is a delicate balance involved in coaching encouraging teachers beyond their comfort zones and

respecting their values and philosophies of teaching. I find that I am still learning to navigate this

balance and its measures, which the next section depicts as well.

     Lecturing. As a possible result of a lack of faith in students as knowledgeable, Jolene

appeared to hold on to the traditional banking-method philosophy of teaching (Freire, 1970). On

several occasions, Jolene used the term "data dump" to denote either a lecture or a teacher

depositing information into the students' consciousness. For instance, during the teacher's

planning session where we discussed problems of practice, she stated, "There's a lot of

information that I have to data dump on them." This seemed to speak to her skepticism that

students can access information on their own. The "have to" may indicate that there is no other way for students to make meaning, interpret or grapple with the information independently. Personally, the word *lecture* makes me cringe, as it grates against every fiber of my teaching philosophy, and though I did push back on her philosophy (as I explain in a later part in this chapter), I also had to meet her where she was in her own learning. Her reliance on transmitting information directly speaks to Freire's banking method in which students are empty vessels waiting for all of the knowledge the teacher has to offer instead of using problem-posing methodologies such as inquiry-based learning and student-centered classrooms (Rodriquez & Smith, 2011).

Jolene defended her stance by pointing to the benefits of lecturing; she argued in her exit interview that "when they get to college, there's gonna be a lot of lecture. Is it not horrible for them to be exposed to some of that?" Again, she seemed rooted in a mindset that framed knowledge as something teachers or professors hold, instead of visualizing a methodology which allows students to problem-solve different ways of accessing knowledge. This inability to visualize a different methodology is expected if the teacher had never been exposed to problem-posing education (I discuss this lack of exposure to critical pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching practices in a later section of this chapter). Problem-posing education "involves uncovering reality, striving for the emergence of consciousness and critical intervention in reality" (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011, p. 78). Without knowledge of or models for this type of learning, lecture might be a comfortable methodology on which to fall back. Unfortunately, lecturing perpetuates a hegemonic classroom structure and maintains marginalization in educational settings. Therefore, in my journey as a coach, as I begin to recognize teachers' lack of faith in students regardless of its perceived forms (noncompliance, apathy, or ignorance) I

could enter into critical discourse with teachers regarding their beliefs and vulnerabilities and

how those beliefs and vulnerabilities translate into their teaching practice.

Freire (1970) posited that students are not empty vessels expecting to be filled with the

knowledge of the teacher, but instead should act as co-conspirators in their learning. Yet both

teachers in this study seemed to find it difficult to break from perhaps the generational and

systemic belief that children and teenagers are less knowledgeable than adults. Nicole attributed

students' lack of knowledge regarding pedagogical choices to a lack of exposure to various

teaching methodologies.

Apprenticeship of Observation. Another theme, related to the faith in students as

knowers, manifested itself pedagogically in a theory school sociologist Lortie (1975) coined the

"apprenticeship of observation." The apprenticeship of observation is the period of time students

spend in school as observers before they begin a teacher education program. Oftentimes, and

despite teacher preparation programs, new teachers perpetuate the "nature of academic content,

the structure of pedagogy, and what constitutes teaching practice" that they observed as students

(Boyd et al., 2013). Although this theory is generally applied to teachers, there were several

occasions when reflecting on the work with student-participants, Nicole alluded to this theory of

the apprenticeship of observation when referring to the limitations of student knowledge. For

instance, during a meeting with both teacher and student-participants, I handed back lesson plans

that the students had created in my class the previous year as a project for one of their

novels. For their project, students were asked to create a lesson plan for their character who was

failing school or had dropped out. Their objective for the project was to use what they knew

about the characters to ensure that they would be successful in their class given their interests,

family background, culture, conflicts, etc. Participants were asked to reflect on these lesson plans

first in small groups (teachers with teachers and students with students) before discussing as a

whole group. After perusing the lessons created by the student-participants, Nicole reflected to

Jolene in a one-on-one conversation:

> This is all they know . . . but you can also see them really trying . . . to do different
>
> things. They're really trying in that, in this. But they just haven't been exposed to
>
> anything which is why they're like, just a regular plain old like lecture day or but they're
>
> trying to get their point across really bad.

Nicole applauded the students' efforts to come up with an original lesson plan, but

acknowledged that since they have not been exposed to enough critical pedagogy that they do

not have enough background knowledge to come up with pedagogical strategies that deviate

from the traditional teacher-centered lessons.

In another instance, during her exit interview, I asked her to share her thoughts and

feelings about collaborating with students. She responded, "I was trying to listen to them, but

they . . . didn't have any ideas, but it's not their fault because they haven't been exposed to any

ideas. So, that's what I just thought was interesting." Her comment speaks directly to a lack of

faith in a dialogic conversation. Nicole admitted to "trying to listen," but without faith that the

students knew anything of value for her she failed to learn from them.

When introducing student voice into a classroom, the apprenticeship of observation could

be problematic since students have not been taught how to critically reflect on how they are

being taught and recognize the power structures that exist when learning is teacher-centered

versus student-centered. However, the lack of faith in what students know is apparent here. The

student-participants in the study did provide insights into their educational values consistently

throughout the study (which I further discuss in the next section on students). Therefore, it is not

fair to say that they "didn't have any ideas," but rather teachers must model other ways of

teaching and learning and have students think critically about how they are being

taught. Additionally, teachers must be able to recognize and critically interpret the ideas that

students do have about education and apply their knowledge of critical pedagogy so that they do

not continue to perpetuate the hegemonic classroom content and pedagogy.

This is an interesting revelation for me as a coach because it speaks to an area in which I

can help support teachers in accessing and interpreting student knowledge into actionable

pedagogy. Before this study, I took for granted that teachers would be able to see the pedagogy

in the ideas of students. For instance, two of the student-participants mentioned several times that

they are active and appreciate movement. My assumption was that any teacher would take that

information and include it in their practice. My assumption, however, was flawed as neither

teacher recognized students' interests or values as applicable to their pedagogy—at least not

during the course of this study. During the study, I remember being perplexed that the teachers

did not see these glimpses into students' educational values in the same ways that I did and even

though I pointed it out to them on several occasions, but it did not seem to transfer. Therefore,

moving forward with this work on incorporating student voice, I will continue to work with

teachers on translating students' values into actionable practices. I further this idea in the section

on teachers' lack of problem-posing methodology.

Students as Interpreters

It was evident that I was not alone in attempting to change teachers' perspectives of

student voice during the course of the study. In fact, the students attempted to change teachers'

perspectives of situations in their classroom. Here they offer insight into education that might be

important for coaches and teachers to consider. For instance, there were a couple of instances in

which the teacher seemed to be putting the onus of learning on the students, making statements that seem to blame students for not understanding the lesson or complying with the routines of the class. There were instances where both the coach and the teachers were interpreting students' actions in one way, but student-participants saw it differently. In these situations, both Alaia and Natasha, countered these perspectives and challenged the teachers' point of view by offering the same scenario from their experience.

The student-participants in this study were not afraid to challenge teachers' perspectives of their students, and Alaia and Natasha attempted to redirect teachers' thinking about students' lack of understanding and/or participation. For instance, Nicole mentioned some of her students do not complete the do now as they are supposed to: "A lot of them don't do [the do now] . . . They'll just sit there." Although Nicole did not indicate the reason for noncompliance was due to insubordination, Natasha offered Nicole an explanation from a student perspective: "that might just be because they don't get the problem because I know I do that sometimes. I will look at the problem and I'll be like, 'I don't get this. I'm just gonna wait until he goes over it.'" This insight might suggest that the students' lack of participation during the assignment is not a result of noncompliance, but rather a cry for help.

Similarly, Jolene voiced her frustration when asking students if they had any questions; "Nobody wants to be like, 'I don't get it.'" Alaia offered her perspective as well as a suggestion of a tool (online, spinning wheel of names) that is familiar to this teacher in particular:

> You're gonna think I'm in love with the wheel of names, but . . . when there are people who don't want to participate, you could do that and the people who don't like let's say it lands on me, right? And then I'm like 'I have no idea what just happened.' Then you could be like, 'Okay, what don't you get?'

Alaia's suggestion seemed to encourage the teacher to consider that students may not feel

comfortable admitting that they do not understand the material to the class, but if they are asked

specifically what they understand, they might be more forthcoming so that the teacher would be

able to clarify where students are getting confused in a lesson.

Finally, on the look for sheet, Natasha pointed out another possible misconception

teachers might have had while watching Nicole teach. In the back of the classroom during her

lesson, there were several students not following the directions. Instead of moving around the

room and engaging in the activity, they stayed in their seats and worked on one problem near

their tables. Natasha wrote her perspective on the situation: "some students not understanding

directions (doing problems on their own)→ Maybe a restatement of instructions halfway through

the activity can help for this problem." Both Nicole and I had viewed students' lack of

participation in the activity as some sort of resistance. For instance, I felt that it might be due to a

lack of comfort in the class with classmates or with the material and therefore were resisting the

activity in terms of self-preservation. Natasha, however, considered their lack of engagement or

compliance as a result of unclear directions. By gaining students' perspective about situations

that occur in the classroom, it forces teachers to reconsider how they are, or are not, reaching

each individual student and it could prevent misunderstandings of behavior.

The thinking revealed here reminds us that student insight can guide teachers and coaches

in their work, and is the missing piece of the professional learning process. From these three

students in this first iteration of a PAR cycle we learned that relationship building between

teachers and students and among students is crucial for students to feel safe and validated;

students' have pedagogical values that challenge hegemonic teaching practices including

communal seating arrangements, body autonomy, shared curricular power, skills-based learning

and student choice; and students can help teachers and coaches reflect on their perceptions of students by listening to their point of view of situations.

Teaching Faith and Having Faith

Faith and trust work simultaneously in building relationships and promoting change in education. In order for there to be change in education, we must engage in dialogue with all stakeholders in education including students, teachers, coaches, community members, administrators, caregivers, etc. For the purposes of this first cycle of PAR, however, I arranged for dialogue to take place with students, teachers, and a coach (myself) in hopes of creating more opportunity for student input into their education. Critical pedagogy asserts that dialogue empowers students and gives them voice. In this dialogue, "there is . . . a mutual acceptance and trust between the teacher and students. It is through this dialogue . . . that one can take critical actions to transform and change reality" (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011, p. 83). Therefore, we must build a relationship of trust when working with teachers towards social justice change. Freire (1970) posited that dialogue is built on the foundations of love, humility, and faith which logically converge into mutual trust. He warned, however, that "false love, false humility, and feeble faith in others cannot create trust" (p. 91). Much in the same way, in order for teachers to use student voice effectively, I should help them build trust with their students. In this study, the data suggested I focus on two areas of trusting students: first, as it pertained to students' pedagogical ideas and second, as it pertained to teachers maintaining high expectations in the content. Additionally, I need to learn to trust the teachers that I work with.

Trusting Students with Pedagogical Choices.

When it came to trusting students to make decisions about their classroom practices and teachers sharing some of the control in their classrooms, I noted earlier in this section that there was an expected amount of resistance. During the coaching cycle, I noticed that I attempted to push against this resistance and encourage teachers to trust the students. For instance, while Natasha and Nicole were co-planning their lessons, I observed that Natasha was opposed to lecturing, but since it was a part of Nicole's routine, there was some resistance to share this part of her lesson. As a result, I suggested that a student run her lecture while she coached from the back of the room: "What if you ask a student to come up and . . . they (the class) all kind of figure it out together with the student at the ELMO (overhead projector) instead of you?" This change in the classroom dynamic was possible for two reasons: first, all of the students had already been introduced to the day's topic of the Pythagorean theorem; and second, more than half of her class was in a parallel geometry class that had practiced with the theorem earlier the same day. As the coach, this indicated to me that students did not need the teacher to be the lead of this lesson. Instead, the teacher could step back and watch as students productively struggled through any misunderstandings of the concept together. It was also a small change for the teacher which may have pushed her out of her comfort zone, but did not completely overhaul the entire structure of her class. Therefore, I attempted to work within her zone of proximal development by guiding and trying new learning within her realm of knowledge (Vygotsky, 1978). There was still a lecture component, but she was shifting power roles to use student knowledge to teach the class.

Still, Nicole expressed some concerns about this and asked if it was putting the student at the board on the spot. I tried to explain that by having the student in the "teacher's seat" it modeled the Rally Coach activity in which they were all about to participate:

[The student at the board is] only writing with what the class is saying, so then you're practicing for that other activity where I'm writing while you're telling me the directions, right? So I'm going to be the one writing on the board, but I'm only going to write what you tell me. . . . So the rest of the class is giving it, so they're just being the teacher, instead of you saying, 'Okay, this is our triangle and this time we find the hypotenuse' or whatever. And you can ask questions.

In other words, student at the board was only responsible for writing down what the rest of the class explained to them, providing a learning opportunity for the student at the ELMO, as well as the students who were knowledgeable about the theorem. Students who were unsure of how the theorem worked were able to copy their classmates' explanations into their notebooks. Nicole reflected on the outcome of this strategy during her exit interview:

I didn't realize how beneficial [having a student model during the lecture] was going to be. They like going up and seeing their peers do this and . . . it's not stressful when one person is called out to go up there and just write down what everyone else is saying . . . There's no embarrassment.

There was an aspect here of negotiating control over her mini-lesson, but there was also the aspect of putting students in a position where they might be uncomfortable. Therefore, these data indicate that trust must be built in a number of different ways. First, the teacher has to learn to trust the students with their learning in order to create autonomy. Second, the students have to trust that their teacher will not put them in a situation that will make them feel stressed or

embarrassed. Additionally, the teacher has to trust that the coach has the knowledge and the pedagogy to bridge these two issues of trust by ensuring that students are given opportunities for more autonomous learning in an environment where they are not going to experience embarrassment or stress. Finally, the coach has to trust that teachers are not resistant to the change necessarily, but instead experiencing vulnerability to a strategy that might be outside of their comfort zone.

In this situation, as the instructional coach, I used a more informative approach to coaching. In this approach, "a coach imparts knowledge and information. We provide curriculum, lesson plans, templates for agendas, books, and so on" (Aguilar, 2013, p. 204). When I noticed Nicole's apprehension to step out of her formulaic classroom structure—imposed on her by the school and traditional mathematical teaching— I provided her with another option that promoted student voice by having the student lead the lecture. Acting as her "thinking partner," I explained how the teaching strategy would work and the reasoning behind the strategy.

Another strategy I used during coaching for student voice included encouraging teachers to explicitly invite student input into their lessons:

> I think it would be good feedback for us when we're reflecting together. Can we ask the students: What worked for you today, during today's lesson? And if you were to do the same lesson again tomorrow, what would you change and why?

My purpose in encouraging teachers to ask students these questions was to help them gather data about the pros and cons of their lessons from the student perspective. By inquiring about students' perceptions of the lesson, they provide teachers with a window into their deep cultural values with which teachers could use to tailor the next lesson. Using a survey tool should be coupled with the refining portion of a coaching cycle. During the refining component of

coaching, coaches "provide ongoing support to ensure teachers maintain use of and integrate the new practice into their repertoire of teaching methods" (Knight, 2011, p. 121). Therefore, the cyclical nature of coaching would continue using student feedback—in addition to teachers' reflections—to support changes to teacher practice.

Finally, trusting students with choice in pedagogy came up again in a discussion that I had with Jolene. Prior to Jolene teaching her co-generated lesson that she had created with Alaia under the observation of the student-participants, I taught the lesson to an earlier period as a demonstration lesson. (This strategy, also called model demonstration, is part of a partnership approach in which the coach practices the new strategy in the teacher's class first before the teacher tries it herself [Knight, 2011]). After the demonstration lesson, we reflected together in order to make changes before she taught for the observed portion of the study. During this conversation, Jolene and I looked over her students' reflections of the lesson and I noted that they all seemed to comment on the benefits of the collaboration. Jolene seemed a bit disappointed with how students discussed the lesson. She stated: "They're not going to use the words that we would look for. They . . . wouldn't know that the more responsibility put on [the students means] teachers are talking less, you know what I mean?" After acknowledging that there was a gap in students' ability to discuss the pedagogical choices made by the teacher, I encouraged her to explain her pedagogical choices to the students and trust that in doing so she would make students more knowledgeable about future choices that they are given to make about their education:

> Making that explicit to them saying . . . 'The reason I did it this way was because I
> wanted you to see this and I want you to see that . . . and I really wanted to see how . . .
> we're collaborating together. That was my purpose in addition to having you understand

inflation' . . . And sometimes making your why, like the choices that you make . . . clear

for them . . . then they start speaking in the language that you're looking for.

Part of my job during this study, while working with student voice, was helping teachers

provide students with language about educational choices. By explaining the pedagogical

reasoning behind certain choices to the teacher, but in order to include students in the

conversation, students also need to know why teachers are making the choices that they are

making. The coaching strategy I used here was to provide teachers with the language to explain

pedagogical theory to students because providing students with language empowers them to

engage in dialogue about their education (Freire, 1970).

Trusting Students' Learning and Maintaining High Expectations. The second aspect

of trusting students correlates with Ladson-Billings's (2009) promulgation of holding high

standards and expectations for all students. At points during this study, I felt it was my

responsibility as the coach to continue to push those high expectations, not only of students'

points of view, but also of their ability to demonstrate their ability to think critically in the

content. The high expectation for content knowledge could be demonstrated through the

teachers' implementation of critical thinking skills. However, when I felt that the students were

not being challenged cognitively (perhaps due to a lack of trust in students' intellectual abilities),

I stepped in.

For instance, during the co-generated lesson planning session with teachers and students,

I presented participants with a chart of Bloom's Taxonomy and stressed the importance of high

expectations as a component of culturally responsive teaching. I encouraged the participants to

use the higher end of Bloom's Taxonomy (analyze, evaluate, create) while creating their lessons.

At one point, I noticed that Nicole's lesson was missing this higher order thinking and in an

attempt to move her from problems of recall (typical of traditional math classes [Walters et al., 2014]), I employed a catalytic approach—offering questions to stimulate change (Aguilar, 2013).When it became apparent that that approach was not working, I switched to a more directive approach:

> I think you're just on the lower end of the continuum here. So I think we might need to
> rethink the activities. You said that they know the Pythagorean theorem . . . right? So
> maybe they're doing something with that to construct or to create something, or they're
> using it to compare different things. Then you're at the higher end of Bloom's Taxonomy.

Although there are a multitude of reasons for a teacher working with the lower end of Bloom's Taxonomy, trust is a factor. Teachers need to be able to trust that students can go beyond hegemonic curricular activities such as practice problems and memorization and move into more opportunities to problem-solve, create, and assess materials present in the content.

During Jolene's reflection with students, we revisited one of her problems of practice: groups of students finishing at different paces. At the time, I attributed this dilemma to everyone having the same answer and therefore moving on quickly without discussing: "Everybody just got it so they were probably like, 'Okay, we all have the same answer. You gave an explanation,'" but later in an analytical memo I considered why this might be the case and an alternative form of presenting the same material:

> This makes me think that the content was not challenging enough. Perhaps we could have
> presented it in a way that was more inquiry-based so that students had to struggle through
> it and really problem-solve the scenarios. For instance, if you were a financial advisor,
> how would you guide this person if the interest rate is at 5% . . . with a prediction of
> inflation being x.

By allowing for multiple correct answers and higher order thinking, I realized students might have had more to discuss. Since the worksheet that we gave students had single word responses (payer or borrower) with an explanation, students were still limited in how they thought about the problem. This could have caused higher level groups—or groups who got the answers quickly—to breeze through the discussion/teaching part of the lesson. Groups who did have students who struggled with finding the correct answer may have moved more slowly through the process. Creating scenarios that allowed interpretation of an answer with a mathematical justification might have promoted more discussion and might have increased engagement for groups who were done too soon. Part of the problem in this scenario was the fact that my background as an English teacher limited my ability to effectively coach a STEM teacher. I elaborate on this below.

       Learning to have Faith in Teachers. As evidenced in the data, the teachers had faith in me as their coach. They trusted me enough to enter into the study, take my suggestions when offered, and let me teach in their classes. They demonstrated vulnerability in engaging in a risky study, and by continuing on with me had faith that I would not let them fail. To a certain extent, I did not reciprocate this trust. Even as is evidenced in the methodologies—which I did not acknowledge until writing up my findings—I was using as a new coach, I tended towards more directive approaches rather than facilitative coaching conversations (Aguilar, 2013). Although directive approaches can be beneficial in helping to break mental models such as deficit views of students, it is also not putting enough faith in teachers that through dialogue, practice, and reflection that they will be able get there themselves. Part of this is attributable to being a new coach and learning how to listen better and engage in reflective dialogue rather than providing solutions, but another part may be attributable to the very real fact that I am passionate about my

agenda. I realized early on in the study that my own values were hindering my ability to hear teachers' concerns. In my researcher journal I noted: "I have a very clear agenda and I need to stop pushing it. I need to see where it goes—organically—not by me pushing a student-centered agenda. I am biased and I don't know how to be unbiased." This agenda may have prevented me from truly hearing Nicole and Jolene during the course of the study.

Trust is a concept that appears frequently in the literature on being an effective coach especially as it pertains to coaching for culturally responsiveness (Aguilar, 2013; Averill et al., 2015; Bradshaw et al. 2018; Khalifa, 2019; Knight, 2016; Nathan, 2018; Pas et al., 2016; Ramkellawan & Bell 2017). This concept of trust hones in on the relationship between the coach and the coachee, specifically as it pertains to the teacher trusting the coach which is essential to foster meaningful change; however, the literature is devoid of how coaches also need to reciprocate that trust as well as how trust between teachers and students impacts the use of student voice in the classroom. From the data above, it is evident that trust needs to occur in the form of teacher beliefs of students' ability to learn content and their pedagogical knowledge. It is also evident upon reflection that I need to trust teachers more too. I return to the relationships between students and teachers in chapter five when I consider the implications of my findings.

Negotiation of Power

As the literature about student voice indicated, when teachers attempt to incorporate student voice into their classrooms, there was an apparent power struggle that presented itself as teachers worked to implement students' ideas and identities into the classroom (Bragg, 2007; Cody & McGarry, 2012; Cook-Sather, 2014; Fielding, 2004; Kim & Searle, 2017; Leat & Reid, 2012; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015; Rodriguez & Brown, 2009). This theme depicts the teacher's struggle or negotiation to relinquish control over the choices in her classroom and as a

result of that struggle, traditional structures largely continue to be preserved in the classroom. Traditional classroom structures such as teacher-centeredness, Eurocentric curriculum, and competitive assessments often perpetuate hegemonic structures which marginalize oppressed groups of students (Yusuf et al., 2017) as well as traditional school expectations that teachers "control" their classes often manifesting in desks in rows, rote memorization, and standardized testing (both in the form of common assessments and statewide tests).

The power struggle that presents itself is an understandable, and not unexpected, road-block to incorporating student voice into a coaching cycle. If we consider the incorporation of student voice into a traditional classroom as a continuum, then completely teacher-controlled choices (curriculum, assessments, pedagogy) might be on one end of the spectrum while total negotiation of power would be at the other end. Moving from one end of the continuum (Table 2) to the other takes time and vulnerability. This vulnerability and resistance to incorporating student voice was apparent throughout the study, whether or not it was intentional or conscious. Despite her willingness to participate and be open, there were instances where Jolene seemed to push back against the students' input along this journey to begin incorporating student voice into her practice. This resistance occurred relationally as a means of controlling the classroom as well as pedagogically as a means of controlling the content of the course.

Table 2

	Power Struggle ←——————————————→ Radical Openness			
Explanation	Maintenance of hegemonic practices	Gradual relinquishing of hegemonic practices resulting in more student autonomy and co-generated goals, content, tasks, and evaluations		Complete teacher-student negotiation of curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment
Examples	Teacher-centered classroom, focus on order, standardization and social control, chalk and talk, students as passive recipients of knowledge (Cook, 1992; Lears, 1985)	Student feedback forms, attempts at collaborative learning, attempts of getting to know students beyond the classroom	Incorporation of student-choice regarding norms, content and/or assessment, attempts at problem-posing methodologies, attempts at incorporating student voice into the pedagogical and curricular choices	Co-created norms, student-choice with a sociopolitical lens, co-created rubrics and student-designed assessments (Bomer, 2017; Guadalupe & Curtner-Smith, 2020)

Although there were notable similarities in how teachers demonstrated faith in their students, teachers more distinctively deviated in how they attempted to negotiate power. For instance, Jolene appeared to struggle with relinquishing or sharing power in the classroom in terms of content and pedagogical structures, while Nicole seemed to struggle with identifying her own power in the classroom which added to the complexity of the negotiation of power with the students. Jolene's relational negotiation stemmed from her admitting to "being a control freak" and this was evident in how she negotiated assigning groups or allowing students to choose their own seats; she worried that if she let students choose their own groups they would be less "effective." Nicole, on the other hand, negotiated her relational power in a very different way, partly as a result of her navigating her own identity as a teacher. It is possible that she gave students an inordinate amount of power over her as a teacher, wanting them to "like" her, and she was "scared" that they would "get mad" if she made a choice that they did not like.

Jolene seemed to want pedagogical control over the content of her classes, as noted in her teaching style, her belief that "sometimes you gotta lecture," and when she chose not to make changes to the content of her lesson despite student feedback about its repetition and

simplicity. While another part of Nicole's struggle, she admitted was that she was not

"accustomed to change" and so listening to other opinions was difficult. Her resistance to

listening appeared to manifest itself in how she negotiated the pedagogical conversation with

Natasha, her student-participant, during the co-generative lesson planning. Her question strategy

(yes/no, either/or, validation) limited the opportunity for student voice and, as a result, Nicole

maintained almost complete control over the planning of the lesson. Below I elaborate on each of

these struggles relationally and pedagogically as it pertains to each teacher and complicate their

struggles further by considering students' points of view on each.

Relational: Running a Tight Ship

The first instance of relational resistance or negotiation of power appeared as Jolene

admitted to struggling throughout the study with grouping students. During the second pre-

planning, relationship building session with teachers and students, she solicited the input of the

group regarding students choosing their own groups. She expressed her reservations about

allowing students this choice: "So I'm just expressing my . . . wondering, you know, how all that

would play out because now, being a control freak, you know, I have no control, I have no

control over the groups and will they be as effective?" Part of this wondering relates back to a

lack of faith in students' ability to be effective at making decisions that pertain to their

education. Another part of this, however, may be a negotiation of power. She admitted that if she

allowed students to choose their own groups, she would "have no control" over the outcome of

the group. Reflecting back, part of my future work with Jolene might be to first build her faith in

students because "when we have faith in others, we let go of the notion that we need to control

them, tell them what to do, or hold them accountable" (Knight, 2011, p. 40). The other part of

this coaching work might be helping Jolene create structures in the classroom that would ensure

effective group dynamics such as norm setting, expectations charts and discussion protocols which would move us further along the continuum towards radical openness. By assisting teachers in building these structures, coaches, in general, can then help teachers reflect on students' abilities in hopes of fostering more faith in students which would allow for more incorporation of student voice.

In another instance during the half-day PD, when we were collaborating on the list of look fors, Jolene brought up the classroom environment specifically as it pertained to students shouting out answers during initiate-respond-evaluate questioning or discussions. She noted that in a classroom where students are allowed to shout out answers, quiet students "who are just as knowledgeable" may not be comfortable in that setting. She asked the group, "How flexible . . . should we be . . .? How tight do you run the ship?" Here the struggle was not necessarily about giving up her power as she noted benefits of students calling out answers, but it was a concern about more introverted students feeling included. However, the phrase she used "How tight do you run the ship?" relates to the above continuum of incorporating student voice and presents a valid question of how we relinquish control and move toward an environment that invites student voice and participates in culturally responsive teaching. First, in a negotiated classroom, students could choose the norms and protocols for classroom discussion to ensure that all participants in the class are heard and their voices valued even if they do not feel comfortable shouting out responses. Secondly, in a culturally responsive classroom, expectations for student collaboration are set early on in the year and students understand that they cannot be successful without the help of or without helping others (Ladson-Billings, 2009). In these two types of divergent classrooms, student-centeredness, autonomy, choice, and voice are fostered while the traditional power structures in education are broken. As the coach, I can begin to help educate Jolene on

cultural responsiveness (which I elaborate on later in this chapter) in hopes of continuing to move her along the continuum from power struggle to radical openness.

Students' pedagogical values reiterated some of Jolene's concerns specifically as it pertained to seating arrangements; however, their values of collaboration outweighed the possible obstacles groups might pose. (I use the term pedagogical values to recognize students' beliefs and attitudes regarding ways of teaching and learning). Throughout the course of the study, all three students insisted on the importance of intentionality when teachers group students as well as the seating structure itself. For instance, during the debrief of Nicole's lesson, similar to Jolene's concerns of seating, Nicole wondered about her grouping stating that for next time, perhaps she would "just assign groups and put the friends together." Eva, however, challenged this idea and noted the "trickiness" of having students choose their own groups or work with their friends: "When you give them the opportunity to pick their own groups or something like that, it becomes tricky because they'll start to find people that they usually associated with and then become off topic . . . more than learn." She seemed to be implying that students need to be put into academic groups where they are not necessarily friends with one another in order to avoid off-topic behavior. The value, then, is placed on the learning rather than the friendships in the class.

Similarly, during the student-planning session, Eva mentioned a concern she had about her classmates relying on her to give them the answers and not completing the work themselves. Alaia acknowledged Eva's concern, however, she also proposed the idea that the teacher might have intentionally created the groups in a way that was meant for her educational benefit:

> If I'm here and I know this person next to me is smarter than me, I know I can rely on
>
> them and ask them questions in order to learn more. . . . If I know the teacher organized
>
> those groups in that way, I know I can rely on this person or that person could rely on me
>
> too and we could help each other.

From this statement, Alaia seemed to value the reciprocity of learning that can exist among her and her classmates. Additionally, she acknowledged that both she and her classmates have knowledge that is worth sharing with one another. She appeared to trust that the teachers had her and her classmates' best educational interest at heart. This trust in her teacher seemed to allow her to be open with her group mates.

In addition to the intentional groupings of students, student-participants were also adamant about how teachers arranged their classrooms. Eva and Alaia specifically commented on rows versus groups. Eva, in particular, was vehemently against rows. After our first relationship building session, I asked participants if they had noticed anything in their classrooms that they thought was important to bring to the group. Eva reflected on her current classes that use rows:

> I definitely thought about some of my teachers and how they put their desks and how
>
> much I learn in each class. Like the ones that I'm closed off in or we're put in pairs, I feel
>
> like I don't learn as much as when we're put in groups.

Here she demonstrated a correlation between her ability to learn and how the teacher has placed students in the classroom. Although she did not elaborate on why she thought she learned better in groups than alone, we can turn to Freire's (1970) belief that "dialogue is . . . an existential necessity . . . it is an act of creation" (p. 89). One cannot create or learn if they do not have the opportunity to discuss ideas with one another. Additionally, Eva's sentiments mirror Ladson-

Billings's (2009) notions of cooperative learning which is "premised on the notion that students can and should learn together and from one another" (p. 65) which cannot occur if students are sitting in isolated rows. Coupling Eva's pedagogical values with the theories and practices of critical pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching might help elucidate students' ideas as valuable and pedagogically valid. By helping to make the connection for Nicole and Jolene, perhaps it will prompt them to be more open to student voice in the future and move them towards more radical openness.

Later in the study, when the student-participants met with me to discuss teachers' problems of practice, Eva brought up seating arrangements again, but this time she acknowledged the lack of interaction that it provided students thereby solidifying a teacher-centered classroom:

> But I don't get why teachers put their everyday classroom in rows. Because we would have rows for tests to isolate each other so that you're not copying. So every day you want to isolate each student? I don't get that. I don't get that.

This classroom arrangement seemed to truly perplex Eva as she navigated through this study. It appeared evident that she valued collaboration and sharing ideas with classmates. The use of the word "isolate" might also indicate that she was aware of the importance of building relationships with her peers in order to learn more effectively. Finally, it seems that her values of interacting with her classmates push against the cultural hegemony of teacher-centered learning visually indicated by rows in a classroom.

Instead of rows, both Eva and Alaia reflected on the choices they had made in terms of classroom organization for a mock lesson they had created in my Multicultural Literature class the previous year. For their class project, students collaborated in groups to create a lesson plan

meant to support the characters in their books. Each of the characters was either struggling in school or had dropped out. Students had to use what they knew about the characters' backgrounds and struggles (personal and academic) to create a lesson (in any subject area) that would keep them from dropping out of school. During our second relationship building session with teachers, students were asked to think about the choices that they made for these lessons and note what they would keep the same or what they would change. Eva pointed out her choice of seating arrangements:

> I . . . totally love the part where we chose to do the U-shaped classroom because I remember actually discussing with the students in my class on how we liked things like the Socratic Seminar when we're in circles and there's not really a back of the class kinda thing . . . for those who . . . basically doesn't [sic] feel uncomfortable, you're looking at people, engaging.

Her statement evidenced two pedagogical choices that Eva felt were important or useful to her learning. First, she reflected on our use of Socratic Seminar Method which had allowed students to create their own questions, negotiate rubrics, and discuss ideas without the interruption of the teacher. These qualities of a Socratic Seminar break from hegemonic classroom structures in which teachers are creating the questions, forms of assessments and controlling student dialogue (i.e. initiate-respond-evaluate). The second observation Eva noted was the apparent feeling of safety created in a circular seating arrangement. She explained that in her classroom design, there was no place for students to hide in their learning and therefore, they would be more comfortable and engage with their classmates. The nature of Eva's hypothetical classroom design was contrary to the hegemonic structures found in traditional, teacher-centered classes for this very

reason: students were engaging with one another and the teacher was physically not on center stage as she is when seats are in rows.

Similarly, Alaia followed with her own reflection of her group's lesson plan from the previous year. In her hypothetical lesson plan, Alaia's character was meant to participate in a history class in which students chose a topic (either discrimination or religion) and described what it meant to them through discussion and through art. Alaia reflected on the platform for discussion about two topics using the character's conflicts in her novel (discrimination and religion) in hopes of engaging her students:

> I would definitely keep the same about my lesson plan about making sure that the student speaks up about whatever [they] chose discrimination and religion, so making sure that they speak up. And what I would do different is instead of having them separate into two large groups, I would do a whole circle organization.

In stating this, Alaia touched on two aspects of cultural responsiveness that we have not yet seen displayed: cultural competency and sociopolitical consciousness. Her lesson showed evidence of these components through three pedagogical choices she made. Alaia's first pedagogical choice prompted student choice in which students were able to choose which topic (discrimination or religion) they wanted to address. Secondly, Alaia emphasized the centrality of discussion in her lesson plan. She reiterated students "speak[ing] up" twice and her choice of seating arrangements allowed students the opportunity to discuss with one another a topic that is meaningful to them. Finally, her choice in topic (discrimination and religion) and objective (discussion and self-expression) demonstrate cultural competence and sociopolitical consciousness.

Cultural competence speaks to the capacity with which teachers use students' culture, (thoughts, communications, actions, customs, beliefs, values and institutions of a racial, ethnic,

religious or social groups) to engage students in the curriculum (The Historic Journey,

2010). Moreover, the use of cultural competence should lead to a sociopolitical consciousness

where students challenge the status quo of the hegemonic culture and "link to the challenges the

students are confronting" (Ladson-Billings, 2017, p. 146). By choosing topics such as

discrimination and religion, that relate to students' deep culture (Hammond, 2015), Alaia seemed

to be attempting to engage her hypothetical class in a discussion about their world views and

core beliefs. This type of discussion demonstrated values of students' experiences and

knowledge of the world. As the instructional coach, I could have capitalized on Alaia's lesson

plan and the cultural competence component of cultural responsiveness when planning with

teachers and students in their lessons. I explore why I may have failed to do so in the final

section of this chapter.

      Additionally, Alaia chose to put students in groups and emphasized "making sure that the

student speaks up," indicating that she valued student voice and independent opinions on topics

that were meaningful to students. Her emphasis on students "speak[ing] up" might have allowed

these theoretical students an opportunity to explore personal anecdotes and experiences

pertaining to discrimination and religion thereby entering the realm of sociopolitical

consciousness in which students are linking the content of the class to their own lives and

pushing against the social power dynamics of whiteness and cultural hegemony (Ladson-

Billings, 2017). Cultural hegemony assumes "that the content and task is 'culture free' and,

therefore, implicitly discourage[s] bringing in personal cultural context" (Zaidi et al., 2016);

therefore, by asking students to specifically discuss their cultural beliefs and personal

perspectives on the topics of discrimination and religion breaks against this hegemonic

structure.

Relational: Establishing Teacher Voice

Nicole's relational struggle with power appeared to have an added layer of complexity as a new teacher. In addition to negotiating power with students, she also seemed to be struggling to identify her own role as an educator. Her identity struggle appeared to present itself in the idea of teacher voice—by which I mean comfortability in establishing consistent norms and routines (Hammerness & Matsko, 2012)—and authority.

For instance, after conducting the co-generated lesson—where students participated in a carousel activity—she reflected with me and the student-participants about asking students to move around the classroom in collaborative pairs:

So here's what my issue is . . . I like to hold them accountable. By all means, I love to hold them accountable. But then, I run into the issue where I don't want to force someone to do something, you know? Because that's such a big issue with students, you know? Will they go to someone and be like oh, like Ms. Pitt forced me to do this and I didn't want to do this like I just don't know. I've heard all these horror stories and I'm just scared . . . there's just that sort of disconnect where I don't know if that's something that I can say to you like, I don't know if you're going to get mad at me. I don't know if you're going to not react well.

There seemed to be two layers to these iterations of her uncertainty with this activity and students' reactions to it. First, Nicole seemed worried that if she made a change to the physical layout of the classroom then the students would be "mad" at her. Her reaction may speak to her perceived positionality in the classroom and the negotiation of being liked versus being respected. She also appeared to view holding students accountable as "forcing" them to complete the activity. By reiterating the word "force," she seemed to be negotiating her own dichotomy of

power in which she did not seem sure that she had it or that she could use it, but she understood that it existed. As a result, she may have been trying to negotiate this power structure within herself. The concept of finding one's teacher voice is not uncommon in novice teachers. In fact, novice teachers often struggle with their authority in the classroom (Hammerness and Matsko, 2012). As such, the negotiation of power while incorporating student voice in the classroom was compounded by Nicole's own struggle to negotiate or place her authority in the classroom.

Secondly, there is an underlying assumption that the students would act out or misbehave in some way which gives them power over her as the teacher. She stated, "I've heard horror stories" and "I don't know if you're going to react well." In a follow up email, Nicole explained that these horror stories had stemmed from her teacher education program which harped on students testing new teachers' authority. Twice in the email she mentioned students trying "to see how much they could get away with." This message from her preservice program might have supported an implicit bias about students resisting authority as well as a perpetuation that teachers are the only authority in the classroom. Neither of these cases would support the use of student voice in the classroom.

The fear of students not "react[ing] well," however, is a real fear when we discuss power dynamics in the classroom. If a student feels unheard or if they feel powerless about things that matter to them then they may exhibit aggressive or challenging behaviors (Tamm, 2019). If the teacher felt that she was exerting her power over the students by "forcing" them to participate then the reaction of students to feeling powerless in the classroom is a factor that might have provoked resistance. Again, there is a balance of power here that is critical to culturally responsive teaching and the incorporation of student voice. Students need to feel safe and secure in their learning, but they also need to be given opportunities for new experiences in their

learning such as movement around the classroom (Anthony et al., 2011). Therefore, the data I collected from Nicole as well as a return to the literature will help inform my future coaching practice. Specifically, I can help novice teachers, in particular, create structures for students so that they feel safe while engaging in student-centered learning.

Another significant aspect in the initial quote appeared to be Nicole attempting to wrestle with her role as an educator. In this passage, she seemed to position herself as an authoritarian who has the ability to "force" a student into compliance, but she was also "scared" that students would not succumb to her authority and rebel against her. She vacillated, trying to see the students' perspective, and stated "a lot of them realize that I'm there because I want them to do well, and I'm forcing them to do stuff, because I want them to do well," but she still used the word "forcing" when engaging students in their learning. A major part of using student voice, however, is allowing students into the conversation. I am realizing that on the continuum of student voice from teacher-centered to completely negotiated (Table 2), there needs to be some discussion about different types of activities and the pedagogical or theoretical benefits of those activities so that students can be an informed part of the choice in the activity. Part of this lack of dialogue might stem from being a first-year teacher or it could stem from a lack of faith that she had about student knowledge. Knight (2011) cautioned that "when we take an antidialogical approach and tell people what to do without listening . . . without their choice or voice, we show a profound lack of respect for their humanity" (p. 40). If students did in fact feel disrespected then acting out or not "react[ing] well" was a real possibility.

On the other hand, it might not have been an intentional omission of dialogue so much as Nicole's inability to articulate for herself the benefits of having students move around the room and engage in a Rally Coach activity. Rally Coach is a Kagan (1994) strategy that we had used in

a previous lesson which encourages students to work collaboratively to coach each other through various problems. This might have translated into her doubting student buy-in to the activity. If she had been able to explain to the students the pedagogical choices she made for the activity, then they could make informed decisions regarding their learning. Her sharing of information would be an example of Freire's (1970) dialogism where students are privy to the pedagogical choices made and can engage in reflective dialogue about their learning with the teacher. First, this is important for me as the coach, because I need to ensure that the teachers understand the *why* behind the choices that they are making and that they are able to connect theory to practice. Also, it would be helpful for me to model how to explain these pedagogical choices to students. By including students in the conversation of why certain pedagogical strategies were chosen they will be able to provide more informed feedback and they will also be able to contribute to more decision making.

Finally, Nicole seemed most content when the students "liked" her. For instance, during the same reflection when she was discussing her co-generated lesson implementation, she stated, "There's some students who are really comfortable with me. They tell me, 'I hate your class, but I like you and I do your homework' and I'm like 'Alright, fine.'" This recounting of students' sentiments seemed to connote compliance rather than excitement about learning. The students appeared to be saying that they were willing to comply with the rules in order to be successful, not because they found the learning valuable or important, but because there was a relationship with the teacher. Although we want culturally responsive teachers to have a relationship with their students, this relationship should move beyond a relationship for compliance purposes. The sentiment of "I hate your class" might speak to a lack of dialogism (Freire, 1970) with students. If the teacher is omitting the *why* of the content, students may not see the benefit of

learning about geometry. Ideally, if students understood the benefit of the content and the pedagogy of the classroom and if they had a voice in how the content and pedagogy were applied, there would be no need to "force" anything on them.

Another significant aspect of students' teaching and learning values that spoke to Nicole's concerns of power negotiation involved the idea of intentional distribution of power in the classroom. Alaia and Eva related instances in which students were permitted to share power in the classroom and acted as teachers in the class in order to convey information to their classmates.

Both Alaia and Eva wanted teachers to share their power over the content of the class and allow students to act as teachers to their classmates. For instance, during the student-planning session, Alaia suggested that teachers allow time for students to take a leadership role in the class and to teach one another the content "especially with math or economics." She related a time where she asked her accounting teacher to take over and explain a concept to the class:

> For example, my accounting class, I do it all the time 'cause for me accounting is very easy. But for others, it's really hard. And the teacher always explains to the students every single day for a whole week or two weeks, the same thing. But we do the same practices, but yet the students are still asking me for help. So, one day I did this, I was like, 'Mr. T., hold on.' And I just went up, I was like, 'Can I just show them? Can I teach them for a day?' He was like, 'Yeah, go ahead, if they could understand you better.' So I did that. And actually, they understood me a lot better.

Her example highlights how students can act as teachers in order to assist in peer learning. Alaia saw herself, or other students, as a source of knowledge and expertise and also suggests a desire to have the opportunity to be a student-leader in the class. Although the class structure seemed to

be traditionally teacher-centered (the teacher teaches the material and then presents practice opportunities to students), Alaia noticed that there was an opportunity for her to access some of the power in the classroom. By asking to teach, she was taking control of her and her classmates' learning. While Alaia's strategy still maintained the structure of the banking model, it challenged the power dynamic in the classroom by converting her into the expert who held the content knowledge in addition to the teacher. She also demonstrated what seemed to be a sense of pride that she felt after having conducted the lesson so that her classmates understood.

Eva concurred that teachers should allow for more student-on-student instruction, especially if the teacher's information is not being conveyed to the students. She suggested teachers recognize when this occurs and embrace students' methods into their teaching:

I know teachers go to school for how to communicate with their students and how to deliver the best information. But . . . I feel like when teachers notice a student is being more helpful to the class than themselves. . . I think they should take that into consideration and try to figure out what they're accepting about that method, rather than what they're already doing or what's not being accepted and focus on that in that class.

To apply Eva's suggestion, teachers would have to do two things: first, they would have to acknowledge that students are knowledgeable and are able to effectively demonstrate their knowledge to others; second, they would have to harness student knowledge thereby sharing their power or control over to the students in order to change their instruction to better suit the needs of the students. Sharing power could counter the passivity of traditional learning in which the student is the recipient of knowledge, not the provider. Her suggestion also puts the burden on the teacher to recognize the value of student voice in helping to convey the material. She is demonstrating a perspective which insists that students act as teachers and take responsibility for

their classmates' learning. This cannot be done in a traditional, hegemonic classroom because the onus of creating this community of learners falls on the teacher. It seemed evident, however, that students were craving this type of communal learning in which they could rely on one another, and not just the teacher, to learn well.

Much in the same way as the other student pedagogical values, as the culturally responsive coach, I should not only model strategies that allow students to act as experts in the classroom, I should also help teachers access data from these experiences in the classroom. By providing students with verbal and written opportunities to express how teaching their classmates made them feel or what they learned from doing so might help teachers realize the pride and value that students feel when they are permitted to demonstrate power and knowledge in their learning. If teachers allow students to take control of their learning and reflect on the benefits, they could also begin to change their beliefs about students' abilities which could, in turn, lead to more meaningful incorporation of student voice.

Pedagogical: Data Dumping

The negotiation of power also appeared in the pedagogy in Jolene's classes. While she was seemingly more open to allowing input into the structure of her classes (i.e. incorporating more collaborative activities), she was more resistant to share control over the content she taught.

During the first pre-planning, relationship building session, I presented teachers with lesson plans that the student-participants had made in my class the previous year. Students created a lesson plan for a character in their book who struggled in school, and failing or dropping out was imminent. Their objective was to write a lesson plan that would address the characters' struggles and create a scenario in which they stay in school. I asked teachers to read

and reflect on these student-created plans. Upon reflection, Jolene noted the student-participants' desire to interact with their peers in collaborative groups: "I just noticed how you all focused on the students interacting with each other and the group work opposed to the teacher just doing a 'data dump' and just standing there and talking the whole time." Despite her acknowledgement of students' input, these collaborative notions did not fully transfer into her everyday teaching. For instance, during her exit interview she contended that "sometimes you gotta lecture, you just kinda do." Even though Jolene recognized that student interaction was the students' pedagogical value, she still seemed to have difficulty negotiating this balance of power in the classroom as it pertained to who held the knowledge.

As I mentioned in the previous section, lecturing might be a result of the teacher feeling that she possesses important knowledge and it is her duty to transfer this knowledge to students; or it could be due to her lack of exposure to problem-posing pedagogical tools which would help her get her students to access and decode the information without her—something I discuss in the next section. Or, it could be because she did not wish to relinquish power of the content over to the students. Both of the previous possibilities contribute to the perpetuation of traditional, teacher-centered lecturing. However, Aliakbari and Faraji (2011) asserted that critical "teachers should challenge the current structure by rejecting long-standing cultural expectations and mores of their own and the system, additionally, they must give up much of the power which is given to them through their titles" (pp. 80-81). This challenge cannot be accomplished, however, if the teacher does not have opportunities to explore how the current and traditional methods of teaching perpetuate power structures in society. For this reason, I could use my role as coach as a bridge to help teachers reflect on their classroom practices and analyze how traditional pedagogies such as lecturing limit emancipatory knowledge and maintain power and privilege.

Contrary to Jolene's belief in lecturing, students' pedagogical values throughout the study contradicted the notion of power over content. Instead, another feature of student pedagogical values proposes that the teacher act as a guide or facilitator to student learning rather than the ultimate bestower of knowledge. Students proposed that teachers teach students the skills that will help them to access information rather than to provide them with the information by providing them with tools to learn.

As previously mentioned, one culturally hegemonic classroom structure includes the use of lecturing and teacher-centeredness, which suggests teachers have all the knowledge and power while students are passive, empty vessels. In the previous section on collaboration it became evident that students' own pedagogical values deviated from the traditional style of teaching by resisting lecturing by "zon[ing] out" and not "pay[ing] attention." According to Lindsey et al. (2019), "students and their families are capable of high levels of achievement if they are taught how to learn, provided with the resources to learn, and given a reason to believe that they can control their own destinies" (p. 71). The student-participants in this study seemed to concur with this statement. In the following examples, both Alaia and Eva described being provided with the resources to learn rather than being told the information through a traditional, banking-method style such as rote memorization and recitation. During the student-planning session with Alaia and me, Eva recounted a time in a science class where they were given autonomy to create their own lab:

> One time in a science class,. . . (the teacher) says, 'Create your own lab. Create questions. Create everything your own self' and that was our project basically. And personally, I did not like it . . . in the beginning. I'm like, 'I don't know what's going on. I don't know what you mean. What do you mean?' He was . . . having us ask questions. He would be like,

'Do you think that's the right question to ask?' He was literally pushing us to do it

ourselves. But in the end, I learned more because not only did I see what the teacher

would have to go through. I wasn't given any of the answers like I wasn't literally asked

the question that we get one answer.

The structure of the class she described epitomized the problem-posing methodology that Freire

(1970) advanced in opposition to the banking method. Eva acknowledged that it was frustrating

in the beginning, but she also mentioned later that the students had been given tools and practice

with creating a lab on their own. The instance she recounted was one where the teacher stepped

out of the role of teacher and moved into that of a guide, allowing students to problem-solve and

come to their own conclusions. By the end, Eva admitted that despite the initial frustration, she

"learned more" because she "wasn't given any of the answers." This breaks from the traditional

lecturing of hegemonic classroom structures and seems to demonstrate a new value that Eva

appreciated: the opportunity to struggle through a problem to arrive at the answer on her own.

Later on in that same meeting, Eva had a revelation (as she put it) about a characteristic

that all of her favorite teachers had:

I just realized something pretty cool. . . . It was like a lightbulb moment where I've

noticed... some of my favorite classes all have the same similarity of the teacher walking

with us through step-by-step in the beginning of the year. . . They walk us through it the

first time we do it. And they break it down . . . And then the second time we go through it

again. They allow us to do it by ourselves without the help of the teacher without the

teacher's hand asking like, 'Oh, what is this? What is that?' We have to do it ourselves,

basically . . . And it all just clicked for me.

Eva described teachers who modeled how to learn and provided students with the resources to learn in order to be successful in class. Her favorite teachers helped guide her to strategies and tools that enabled her to engage in her learning in a more authentic and autonomous way. Not only does this seem to illustrate a pedagogical value of learning autonomy, but it also seems to hint at feelings of accomplishment and pride that she felt when she had succeeded in learning the lesson on her own, "without the teacher's hand" directing her to the answer.

During the conversation with Eva, Alaia echoed Eva's ideas of creating more opportunities for autonomous learning:

> I feel like they (the teachers) should teach what has to be done. Then . . . to have the students feel more engaged or in charge of their own learning experience, I feel like they should allow the students to do what they did, basically . . . So I've given the examples. I want you to do exactly what . . . we did together, but on your own now.

Contrary to Eva's, Alaia's example continued to perpetuate the hegemonic classroom practices of recitation and an application of procedures ("do exactly what . . . we did together") rather than a true inquiry-based opportunity where students could struggle through a problem using tools and strategies with the help of a collaborative group. It is possible that Alaia had not had the opportunity to experience classes that used a similar inquiry-based approach like Eva had, which might have prevented a perpetuation of traditional pedagogy. Nonetheless, her values, like Eva's, appeared to focus on the autonomy of learning. She indicated that allowing students to conduct the activity on their own would make them "feel more engaged or in charge of their own learning." Earlier in the conversation with Eva, she had also stated that "the teacher should teach the skills. And then the students'll be able to try . . . what way they will portray their skills on the assignment." In both instances, despite the traditional style of teaching, Alaia seemed to indicate

that teachers should act as a guide by "teach[ing] the skills" or providing students with resources to engage in the material rather than by lecturing and dictating the content.

The students' valuing of autonomy and their desire to be given the tools that will make them successful in their learning correlate with the constructivist theory of education which breaks away from hegemonic, passive methodologies of teaching and instead, directly engages students in active learning (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006). In a constructivist classroom, the teacher becomes a guide to students by asking probing questions that help students build their own knowledge. The components of constructivism include: knowledge as constructed, not passively absorbed; learning as an active process, knowledge as socially constructed; and knowledge as personal (Educational Broadcasting Corporation, 2004; McLeod, 2019). These components overlap with culturally responsive values of education in that students should be engaged in the learning process with their peers and that teachers should act as facilitators of learning by allowing students to make personal cultural connections to the content. In a future PAR cycle, perhaps presenting teachers with a combination of literature and student voice would help move them along on the student voice continuum if they learned that students' ideas have pedagogical value by connecting with experts, they might be more willing to move away from a hierarchal power structure in the classroom. This examination of student voice and literature coupled with me demonstrating the lesson for the teachers and gaining feedback from the students after the class might further help teachers to share some of their titular power with students.

Pedagogical: Pseudo-Negotiation

The pedagogical negotiation of power also revealed itself during Nicole's interaction with her student-participant, Natasha, in a type of pseudo-negotiation. By pseudo-negotiation, I

mean that by asking questions, there seemed to be a collaboration or negotiation of ideas, but the types of questions still prevented authentic student input into the discussion. During the hour-long session that teachers and students worked together to co-generate a lesson plan, this pseudo-negotiation manifested itself in three question formations: yes/no or either/or questions, follow-up questions, or validation questions. The most common type of questioning that Nicole used while engaging in the co-generated lesson plans, were either yes/no questions or either/or questions. For example, she asked "Do you think that the stations [are] a good idea?" and "Do you think that I should give them the answers? Or do you think that I should just post the answers online?" These types of questions craft "limited choice" decisions because they do not offer student choice, nor do they allow the student to problem-solve on their own or offer their own interpretation of how they might create the lesson.

Secondly, when Nicole did ask Natasha a more open-ended question, she posed various either/or and yes/no questions before allowing the student to respond:

> How do you think I should model it? . . . Do you think that there's a way that I can, maybe the way that they're standing, should I make everyone stand up, go to a station, and then have one group model it that way they kind of feel like 'Oh, I'm in the same position as everyone else?'

Again, the manner in which she posed the questions limited Natasha's possibilities for answering the initial question with her own independent thoughts. Finally, she also used her questioning to validate strategies that she was already using: "Now I usually, when I do stations, I usually give them an answer sheet that they can put their answers on. Do you think that I should give them that or do you think they should copy it down in their notebook?" There might be a variety of

reasons that she posed questions in these ways including: lack of relationship building, lack of

faith in student knowledge, navigation of her teacher identity, or a resistance to sharing power.

First, Natasha and Nicole did not have an opportunity to build a relationship with one

another because Natasha had not been able to attend all of the relationship building meetings and

prior to the study, the two had never met. The literature indicates that in order for teachers and

students to trust one another enough to conduct co-generated lessons or engage in student voice,

there has to be a relationship built on trust and mutual respect (Reynolds, 2018).

Nicole's use of limited choice questions might also be due to her reluctance to

acknowledge that students "have any ideas" as previously analyzed above. Prior to meeting to

co-generate a lesson, Nicole mentioned twice that she did not feel that students had any ideas

beyond what they had been exposed to thereby exhibiting a deficit mindset. So perhaps these

questions were meant to expose Natasha to various ways of organizing the lesson.

Alternatively, it may be that as a novice teacher she herself was still trying to navigate

new ideas to incorporate into the classroom. She admitted to Natasha that "it often takes [her]

two hours to think of something that would be really creative." This is not unusual for a first-year

teacher as they are still trying to develop their toolbox of strategies that work for their classes

(Anthony et al., 2011). In fact, the questions that followed after she asked Natasha how she

should model the activity seemed to be her thought process on how she might work out this part

of the lesson.

A final cause of this line of questioning could stem from Nicole's power negotiations

during the co-generated lessons. For example, during the exit interview Nicole admitted a

resistance to change as well as an acknowledgement of using other's suggestions as confirmation

of what she was already doing:

I feel like I'm one of those people who is really not accustomed to change and doesn't like

giving other people, I'd rather do it myself and I don't like to hear other people's opinions.

Not in that sense, and then I am listening to other people and listening to their opinions

and their suggestions and stuff. I'm like, oh, I do this anyway. If someone suggests

something to me, like, of course, yeah, I'm gonna do it. So, I kind of realized that I had

already been doing it.

According to the literature, this could be seen as both adult resistance to student voice (Leat &

Reid, 2012) as well as manipulation of student voice (Knight, 2011). Nicole admitted that change

was difficult for her, and therefore, she conceded that she would "rather do it myself and I don't

like to hear other people's opinions;" she seemed to be resistant to student voice or students'

opinions. By openly, honestly, and vulnerably admitting to not wanting "to hear other people's

opinions" Nicole could have subconsciously posed questions which allowed her to maintain the

narrative of the lesson without allowing for student input beyond the affirmation of her

ideas. These types of questions could also be seen as manipulation of student voice where the

existing hierarchy of power between teacher and student is maintained and the teacher influences

students' decisions thereby resulting in pseudo-negotiation. By asking questions with limited

opportunities for independent thought, Nicole was still controlling the narrative by maintaining

the power over the possibilities of answers and only allowing Natasha nominal input into the

lesson.

Nicole also vacillated between accommodation and resistance when it came to

relinquishing power in her classroom. During the half-day professional development with the

students, she talked about this power struggle as it pertained to the students in her class:

It's like, I want this like power as a student, but then I also want the teacher to tell [us], to teach us and, I don't know, I feel like a lot of the times I struggle with what is something that I can do for them versus what is something they can do for themselves? You know, like, what can I expect them to actually be able to do for themselves? versus I have to tell them, that you have to do this.

This power struggle at the heart of negotiating between the banking method and problem-posing is one that speaks again to the idea of who holds the power and the knowledge to succeed. This struggle focuses more on the states of knowledge that is controlled by the teacher and the rigidity of hegemonic curriculum rather than on the ways of knowing which "privileges the status and perspectives of the students" (Leat & Reid, 2012, p. 203). The problem here, again, may be a lack of perspective about what a student-driven classroom truly looks like. If the teacher's own apprenticeship of observation (despite her teacher education program) consisted of teacher-centered classrooms perpetuating culturally hegemonic structures and curriculum, then without a model of what a student-driven classroom looks like, it might be difficult to calm her concern of how much power could she be willing to negotiate with students when it comes to their learning.

Although I found Nicole very amenable to coaching, resistance to change, coaching, and incorporating student voice are real struggles in teacher education. Moving forward, the two areas of work here for me include supporting Nicole in how to access student voice in meaningful ways (questions that do not limit student choice) so that they are able to contribute independent ideas to the curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment of the class. If we, as educators, continue to control the narrative by asking questions to affirm the strategies and content that we

are already teaching, then we are not truly accessing student input, but instead manipulating student voice to concur with our own practices.

The second area of work on which I can focus on based on these data is breaking Nicole away from culturally hegemonic classroom structures such as the banking method and teacher-centered classrooms. In many ways, I feel that this is the more complex aspect of the work of a culturally responsive instructional coach because it simultaneously involves addressing teacher bias or beliefs, critical theory, and actionable strategies that can be implemented in the classroom. Much of this work could be done by analyzing a model of a student-driven classroom because it is apparent in the examples above that none of these aspects of coaching can be done in isolation if we want to dismantle the educational hierarchy that exists in classrooms.

In contrast to Nicole's pseudo-negotiation approach, in which students were given the allusion of choice, Eva noted that students should be allowed to make choices about their learning. These findings may be somewhat limited because only Eva mentioned it during the study. Regardless, I thought it was important to analyze, not only because she mentioned it several times throughout the study, but also because of the depth of insight that she provided as to why students should be allowed choice in their classrooms. During our first relationship building session, Eva equated the opportunity to choose with "freedom." She reflected on an English class where she and her classmates had choice regarding a topic of study they wanted to engage in:

> We got to think of whatever we wanted . . . It could be about anything as long as it corresponded with the book . . . We were able to create partners and things like that. We were free, like the class was a free class, but I feel like I've learned more in that situation

when it was more of an open-mind [sic] kind of thing. I actually was intrigued and

wanted to learn more in that situation.

Eva discussed this concept of freedom in terms of the choices she was allowed to make about her

education, specifically as it pertained to assessment. She also compared traditional math and

English classes to her art class in which "there might be guidelines, like you have to use this

certain color for this, but honestly, it's whatever you want and I like the freedom of the class

more than other core classes."

By allowing student choice, teachers are enabling personal and cultural experiences to

demonstrate their learning. Eva also hinted at an important component of student choice:

structure. She mentioned this in terms of "guidelines" in her art class and "correspond[ing] to the

book" in her English class. Hammerness and Matsko (2012) cautioned that there is a context-

specific way to attend to the intersection of cultural knowledge and classroom

management. While freedom of movement and freedom of expression in a classroom are

important, more important is the misinterpretation of freedom as an absence of safety and

stability. Therefore, with the help of an instructional coach, teachers can find a balance between

freedom and structure.

In addition to the feeling of freedom that choice gave Eva, she recognized other benefits

of student choice including accessing student voice and educational investment. For instance,

during the student-planning session, in response to one of the teachers' problems of practice

regarding introverted versus extroverted students, I prompted Eva and Alaia to consider how to

create equity of student voice in the classroom. Eva responded:

I think that the whole, asking the students what they like more (in terms of instruction)

....I feel like that creates a sense of a voice in the classroom . . . I feel like that's literally

giving them a chance to pick how they learn. And that's the best way to give a voice to a

student that wouldn't usually have a voice. You know, they're picking how they feel like

they accepted the information and making that how they learn.

She reiterated this idea of asking students for feedback when she reflected with Jolene after we

observed her lesson. Jolene inquired of the student-participants how to continue incorporating

student voice into the creation of her lessons. Eva responded, "I say ask them. When you give

students choice, I feel like they listen more." Eva acknowledged that when teachers allow

students to choose, they "listen more" which can be translated into educational buy-in and

ultimately ownership of their learning. In his article, Bomer (2017) rated English curricula on a

spectrum of cultural values ranging from culturally colonizing to culturally sustaining. On this

spectrum, he rated student choice as culturally tolerant, just a step below culturally sustaining as

student choice without a sociopolitical agenda falls short of sustainability. Alaia's example

lesson that she created the previous year would be characterized as culturally sustaining as it

gave students choice regarding a cultural topic in which she was asking students to conduct

research and form opinions. Nevertheless, providing students with choice breaks from the

cultural hegemony of traditional teaching by allowing students to determine the content or the

method of their learning rather than being obligated to learn what and how they learn.

Although the teachers in this study questioned whether or not students' ideas were

valuable because of their lack of pedagogical knowledge, the coach can help teachers access and

analyze students' educational values. Natasha, Eva, and Alaia all had very clear ideas about what

they valued in their education including access to power, movement, choice, and collaboration. I,

as the coach, can help teachers turn students' educational values into actionable pedagogical

strategies that can be implemented in a culturally responsive classroom.

Limited Problem-Posing Pedagogy (and Culturally Responsive Teaching)

Part of teachers' power struggle may be attributed to teachers' limited exposure to culturally responsive teaching practices. Just as teachers cannot expect students to work effectively in a group without exposing them to collaborative strategies, coaches and teacher educators cannot expect teachers to teach in a culturally responsive way if they have never been exposed to examples, and dissected the theory behind the methodology. Both teachers demonstrated a need for more background and modeling on how to incorporate more student-centered methodologies in their classrooms in order to create conceptual shifts in their thinking about teaching and learning.

Moving forward, two areas that I will focus on modeling are culturally responsive teaching and problem-posing methodology. Ladson-Billings's (1995) culturally relevant pedagogy contains three criteria or propositions: "(a) students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order" (p. 160). The tenets of this framework for culturally responsive pedagogy include strategies that incorporate collectivism, high expectations, bridging students' home lives and academic lives, and critically examining the world. While culturally responsive pedagogy is a way of being in the classroom opposed to a strategy that can be employed that makes an educator culturally responsive, Freire's (1970) problem-posing methodology is more formulaic, the purpose of which is used specifically to critically examine injustices in our world. The problem-posing methodology allows students to problem solve issues that they view as problematic in society. Smith-Maddox and Solórzano (2002) explain the three stages of problem-posing methodology: "(a) identify and name the social problem, (b) analyze the causes of the social

problem, and (c) find solutions to the social problem" (p. 69). During the course of this study, I veered away from the sociopolitical and cultural aspects of these two methodologies and focused on student learning and inquiry (without the social problem). I explain later in this chapter why I think these two foundational aspects were missed as well as where I could have incorporated them.

First and foremost, both Nicole and Jolene needed strategies founded in inquiry-based learning and problem-posing methodology in order to prevent them from resorting back to the antiquated banking method of lecturing. Nicole also needed support when it came to creating an inclusive classroom environment where all students felt safe and respected and where they were not afraid to make mistakes. She needed tools that would help her create a community of learners so that students did not "fear" going to the board or "hate" group work.

In alignment with culturally responsive teaching, although Nicole valued collaboration among her students, she struggled to teach students collaboration. Unfortunately, arranging students in groups does not miraculously incite student collaboration. In fact, teachers often miss the hidden relational and pedagogical work that occurs to get students to collaborate effectively with one another. Nicole often conveyed a struggle to build a safe and collaborative environment during the co-generated lesson with Natasha and me. Comments such as "I just feel like a lot of these kids just hate working in groups" and "I've asked every single class and they all hate it. They don't like going up to the board. They don't like talking in front of other people because they have such a dire fear of being wrong" seemed to overlook the need for the teacher to strategically plan for safe and collaborative environments. Ladson-Billings (2009) notes that in a culturally responsive classroom, students must believe that they cannot succeed without getting help from or giving help to others. Moreover, she emphasized that "psychological safety is a

hallmark of each of these classrooms. The students feel comfortable and supported. They realize

that the biggest infraction they can commit is to work against the unity and cohesiveness of the

group" (p. 79). Therefore, the "dire fear" that students in Nicole's class conveyed might imply

that this psychological safety had not been established nor had the belief that giving and getting

help leads to success if students "hate working in groups." Ladson-Billings (2009) stressed these

relational classroom characteristics, but she did not tell us how to create such an environment

pedagogically. Consequently, it is important for me in my role as a coach to develop strategies

on how to instill trust and psychological safety in teachers' classrooms as well as create

structures for student-centered learning to ensure student safety.

     If collaboration does not appear on its own, then it should be my job to model how to

foster collaboration and student-to-student relationships. One resource to help with this is Kagan

Structures. Kagan (1994) developed a series of over 200 instructional structures that promote

team and classroom community building. In these structures, students learn how to collaborate as

well as how to rely on one another's knowledge to be successful in the class. For instance, in the

co-generated lesson that we created with Nicole, the students used a version of Kagan's Rally

Coach (mentioned previously in this chapter). In this structure, pairs of students work together to

solve a problem. During this collaboration, one pencil is shared by two students. If Student A

starts with the pencil, they cannot write anything until student B instructs them to. Student B

talks student A through their thought process about the problem. During this time, student A acts

as the coach, prompting their partner with questions to move their thinking along, or guiding

them to look at the problem in another way. Once both partners are satisfied with the response,

student A transcribes student B's thinking and then hands over the pencil and the roles are

reversed. After critically observing this activity play out in Nicole's classroom, I noted at least

two strategies that need to be pre-taught in order for the learning to be successful. First, students have to have practiced thinking through a problem out loud with a partner (again focusing on the students' ways of knowing rather than the state of knowledge [Leat & Reid, 2012]). Secondly, the teachers and/or coach have to have modeled how to coach a partner through a problem. We cannot expect that everyone knows how to teach and not tell a partner how to do the work. Therefore, this skill has to have been practiced either during or prior to the Rally Coach exercise. Moving forward, it is my responsibility as the coach to make these underlying skills visible to teachers and practice them with students to ensure that everyone can be successful in the learning. Using these strategies may help Nicole build the safe and collaborative environment she is looking for and that is necessary for culturally responsive classrooms. Unfortunately, the practice of these strategies had not been established in Nicole's class prior to teaching her lesson. With this class it was the first instance that they had practiced this strategy, so the data collected acted as a pre-assessment for us to reflect on what we need to do moving forward so that students have an opportunity to feel successful and confident working collaboratively.

Another area in which Nicole appeared to need more pedagogical knowledge was the lesson plan structure. In her defense, she was following the model that the majority of the math teachers at Homestead High School follow: do now (of a review problem), 15-30 minute lecture on a new math topic, and then the remaining time to practice the topic in "groups that they want" or "if they want to work alone, they can." Nicole was not a free agent in her teaching; there were conventions of schooling in place and institutional cultures and norms which may have accounted for decisions she might have made and pressures she might have felt as a first-year, non-tenured teacher. Unfortunately, this structure Nicole had been conditioned into not only

promoted the regurgitation of material, but also the hegemonic and oppressive pedagogical style that Freire warns educators about (Stigler & Hiebert, 1999).

The traditional, teacher-centered plan does not promote independent thinking or problem-solving methodologies. While relating her standard plan to Natasha during the co-generated lesson planning, Nicole defended her lectures in the following way: "I lecture, except it's not really a lecture, I give them notes, but they answer questions for me to say, okay, like, they basically do it for me. And they're yelling out the answers. So it's not just like they're all sitting there and being quiet." From the perspective of a culturally responsive, critical pedagogy lens, there are two problematic components of this lesson structure. First, lecturing in and of itself is the epitome of Freire's banking-method. Student-centered lessons—which break from culturally hegemonic practices—emphasize problem-solving and critical thinking, engage students in sense-making by connecting to personal experience, creating strong relationships built on trust, and a focus on individual learning through scaffolding, differentiation, and student choice (Walters et al., 2014). Secondly, in this teacher-centered approach, it is unclear whose voices are heard during the "yelling out" of answers. Leat and Reid (2012) suggested that even when given the opportunity to share their voices, traditionally marginalized groups of students will yield their voices to students with more dominance or social capital in the classroom. Therefore, marginalized voices may still be underrepresented in this traditional initiate-respond-evaluate type of questioning. In the same way, even students who maintain the cultural dominance in the class, but who are not strong math learners or who are simply more introverted may also be left out of this choral opportunity to shout out answers. If more culturally responsive approaches such as inquiry-based, student-centered math structures were employed, it would provide a greater opportunity for more voices to be heard. Although I yearn to break Nicole out of this

scripted math lesson structure, I felt inept at doing so because I do not have the content

knowledge necessary to help her rethink or reimagine what this might look like. For this reason,

it is important to consider the literature which states that a coach needs deep knowledge of the

content to best support the teachers (Knight, 2011). I would add that coaches need content-

specific, culturally responsive pedagogy in order to create classrooms conducive to allowing

student voice.

Jolene, on the other hand, needed support on how to teach students collaboration so that

she did not feel that she had to "come in" to problem-solve for students. Rather, she needed tools

that she could use to model how to engage students in problem-solving dialogue. Additionally,

teachers need a conceptual shift in how they view education. It is difficult to find buy-in or value

with student-centered learning without first-hand experience. As a result, it is important for me

as the coach to model student-centered learning and have teachers reflect on how the theory

works in practice.

Both Jolene's lack of faith in students as knowers and her resistance to sharing power

might be partially attributable to a lack of culturally responsive pedagogical strategies needed to

effectively include student voice in a classroom or a coaching cycle. By this I mean she may not

have had the relevant pedagogical tools to support a shift in her teaching. Rather than viewing

this as a critique on the teacher, we might see this as a critique of the system of education and the

inadequacy of teacher education programs. As an Alternate Route Program teacher, Jolene

related after the study that she was not taught how to engage in culturally responsive pedagogical

practices or problem-posing methodologies—she was taught how to manage a classroom.

Therefore, it is understandable that she would not have the tools necessary to engage in student-

led classroom activities. This lack of experience with various instructional strategies was apparent in several instances.

As mentioned in the prior two sections, Jolene discussed lecturing as a necessary pedagogical tool on a couple of different occasions often referring to it as a data dump. For example, Jolene stated "I mean sometimes you gotta lecture, you just kinda do or not really lect- well, more of a lecture then, then this"—"this" being a more student-centered approach; the research, however, does not support this belief. In fact, since the 1970s, Freire (1970) has promoted problem-posing education: "Problem-posing education bases itself on creativity and stimulates true reflection and action upon reality, thereby responding to the vocation of persons as beings who are authentic only when engaged in inquiry and creative transformation" (p. 84). Similarly, Ladson-Billings (2009) has been promoting culturally responsive pedagogies since the mid-90s declaring that the use of culturally relevant teaching "empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically" (p. 20). If, however, she had never been supported in learning to teach students how to access information or use problem-solving methodologies or culturally responsive teaching strategies, it is not a matter of indolence, but instead a lack of pedagogical knowledge and strategies as well as a possible next step in the PAR process. Again, this may be attributed to teacher education programs and teacher retention (Rodriguez & Smith, 2011) as well as hegemonic structures that keep traditional and oppressive forms of education (such as lecturing and competitiveness) alive and well (Yusef et al., 2017).

Jolene's strategies often seemed teacher-centered in her approach and based on questions and comments she made to me made me think that she might not have been exposed to student-centered learning previously. For instance, during the teacher-planning phase of the study she asked "How do you deliver certain instructions or guidance when people move at different

paces?" This question may reveal limited scaffolding strategies which is a tenant of culturally

responsive pedagogy. Another teacher-centered approach that Jolene seemed to rely on was the

initiate-respond-evaluate model of questioning, in which a teacher poses a question (usually with

one correct answer), one student responds with an answer, and the teacher evaluates the response

by confirming or denying the correct answer (Wilson & Smetana, 2011). Previously, Jolene and I

had worked on strategies that try to move out of this teacher-centered role by starting to

implement student sharing first before sharing out with the teacher. We discussed this dynamic

again during the planning phase. While I was sitting in with Jolene and her student-participant,

Alaia, Jolene reviewed their plan up until that point: Students would complete a do now and then

share out with the class. I asked "Sharing just out with you, or are they going to share . . ."

Having worked with me before, Jolene knew I was going to suggest students share with one

another first and she responded: "See I like that better, I love when you do that and you do their

shoulder partners. Can we do both? Again, it's time consuming . . . but I think it's worth it." By

only sharing out with the teacher, it inhibited the voices of students in the class, by limiting it to

only two or three voices, whereas if students discussed with one another first, everyone would

have had an opportunity to speak and share their voice. This second strategy is more conducive

to a culturally responsive classroom because students must be encouraged to share their

collective knowledge with one another and learn from each other. Jolene acknowledged the

benefit despite the time restrictions. In hindsight, I could have geared the conversation toward

her values as a teacher and encouraged her to spend time where she felt was most valuable (i.e. If

getting the correct answer quickly was most important, then asking two or three students for the

answer is effective; however, if getting students comfortable collaborating—in preparation for

more rigorous collaboration later on—was more important, then asking them to share in round-robin fashion would begin to build that foundation).

Another example of limited exposure to culturally responsive pedagogy was evident during our first preconference session after the lesson had been created, but before it had been taught. In the following example, we were discussing the expectations of the groups during her lesson. We had planned for students to read a scenario of a borrower and lender and determine who benefited from inflation first, independently and then come to a group consensus. I wanted to know specifically what this would look like for her in her classroom. I prompted her a couple of times, "What do you want to happen?" For instance, what does the conversation look like if they all agree on the answer the first time or what might the conversation look like if they did not agree? Below I gave her a classroom scenario and asked again:

> Jacqueline: What if three people say that the lender is . . . coming up good and the
>
> borrower's not? And then one person says the opposite. What do you want to happen?
>
> Jolene: I think that's where I have to walk around and guide them.

Although this example may be indicative of a resistance to relinquish control with the assumption being that if the students do not know how to navigate through a problem then she would have to show them, it also might demonstrate that she was not aware of a pedagogical strategy other than to guide them herself. In essence, she may never have been taught how to access student knowledge in meaningful ways which would hinder her from effectively using student voice to create collaborative instruction where groups problem-solve together with strategies from the teacher, but without needing the teacher to step in. As the coach in this first round of PAR, this could be another point of entry for me in our work moving forward.

Similar to Nicole's struggle, a final example of Jolene's limited pedagogical skills was her admitted struggle to get students to work in groups effectively. During the teacher-planning phase when we met to discuss problems of practice, Jolene stated that one area she would like to work on was with "the stronger personalities that tend to dominate, where I really would like, you know, to try to get equal contribution." It seemed apparent that she wanted to have a more collaborative classroom environment; she just did not know how to create structures to support that equity in collaboration or a classroom environment in which all students relied on each other to learn effectively. Part of creating a collaborative, student-centered environment does relate back to relinquishing control so that the teacher is able to step out of the spotlight and work as a facilitator, but another part of it is also having a variety of pedagogical strategies that support student-centered learning. Even though Jolene had been teaching for nine years, she may have never received support in how to create a collaborative environment which is helpful to note moving forward in our work together. During the second relationship building session, participants were asked to reflect on their best and worst teachers. She reflected with student-participants on her own school experience:

> We read, we answered questions, but there was no interaction with the kids. We also sat . . . in classic . . . rows and columns, there was no group work. But this is how I was taught mostly, to be honest with you, things have changed greatly since I was a student.

If we are to believe the theory of the apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) (in which a teacher perpetuates the teaching style taught to them) then Jolene is a product of her generation as well as a product of an alternate route program that threw her into a classroom without the opportunity to observe various teaching strategies and professionals in her field. In hindsight, part of my role as a coach should be to ascertain teachers' philosophies of teaching as well as

strategies that they use commonly and strategies that they remember learning in their preservice experience. By learning early on the gaps that teachers have I can better customize my instruction and provide resources for culturally responsive teaching—which is an apparent gap in my coaching practice.

In addition to offering a critique of teacher education programs, these observations provide coaches with an entry point with teachers. If coaches can model and provide background on culturally responsive strategies and equip teachers with a toolbox of student-centered strategies, then while teachers grapple with faith and power, at least there would be tools to fall back on which would help them begin to see that students are knowledgeable and will rise to the occasion and surpass expectations.

In addition to the literature, students' reflections on their learning also promoted problem-posing methodologies and student-centered learning. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, Eva felt academic success when she was given the opportunity in a science class to create her own lab. Despite the initial frustration, her perseverance made the learning experience more profound for her. Similarly, Alaia stated outright during the pre-planning phase without the teachers present, "I feel like the teacher should teach the skills. And then the students'll be able to try and in what way they will portray their skills on the assignment." Here not only was she promoting skills-based lessons which would allow the students to access content autonomously, but she was also hinting at student choice by allowing students to determine which skills or how they would demonstrate their knowledge on their assessment. By providing students with an opportunity to engage with the content, students are given a chance to think for themselves which is a step towards liberatory education.

Translating Student Input into Actionable Culturally Responsive Strategies

As was evident in discussions with teachers about students' pedagogical values, limited pedagogical knowledge prevented them from taking leaps to incorporate more student input into their lessons. Therefore, at the same time a coach is assisting teachers in how to access students' cultural identities, she must also help teachers interpret this information and connect it to teaching practices that could benefit students in a culturally responsive way. A large part of the work with culturally responsive teaching is a conceptual shift built on research and life experiences which help teachers see the world of education through the perspective of oppression. Since I fashioned this study to take place during one coaching cycle as I was contending with the restrictions of the public school system, as well as teachers' and students' schedules and home lives, I chose to coach with for cultural responsiveness by focusing on pedagogical strategies that make teaching more student-centered. Therefore, I chose to provide teachers with tools to carry out culturally responsive strategies that align with student input.

It became evident during the coaching cycle that teachers needed more tools and strategies to create a more culturally responsive teaching environment. Even with student input about learning strategies that have worked for them in other classes (i.e. Eva's dance and art classes), the teachers in this study seemed to struggle with what a student-centered classroom would look like. Since it seemed apparent to me that teachers needed more strategies and resources to build their background knowledge of culturally responsive teaching, I worked within their zone of proximal development through both an informative (acting as a "thinking partner") and a prescriptive approach (giving directions, recommendations, or advice to direct behavior). If the teachers had been further along in the practice of working with student voice, I

might have chosen other more facilitative approaches in which the coach helps guide teacher learning (Aguilar, 2013).

As mentioned in a previous section, the struggle to implement culturally responsive practices is expected when teachers have not had exposure to models of culturally responsive classrooms. As a result, I felt it was incumbent on me to provide those models. During the coaching cycle in this study, based on student input, I focused on teaching student collaboration.

As indicated previously, effective collaboration rarely occurs spontaneously. Therefore, educators must model discussion protocols and maintain high expectations for collaboration. For instance, during this coaching cycle, I mentioned three specific discussion strategies that could be used and modeled in a collaborative setting including "consensus protocol," "Rally Coach," and "Save the Last Word for Me." During the co-generated lesson planning, for example, Jolene asked how to model the conversation that she wanted students to have in her class. I suggested that she could "use a consensus protocol." A "consensus protocol" (modified from the School Reform Initiative list of protocols [School Reform Initiative, 2020]) consists of each student independently deciding on their answer, then systematically sharing and justifying their answers. As a group, students must work together and come to a consensus in order to choose the top answers to be representative of the group's final answer. One proviso is the one idea per person rule. The consensus protocol works best when there are multiple possible answers.

Rally Coach, a Kagan (1994) strategy mentioned in the section about teachers and used in Nicole's co-generated lesson, consists of two partners with one pencil and one paper. One student acts as the recorder, while the other talks through a math problem out loud. While the second partner is solving the problem, the first partner is writing down their ideas verbatim. If the first partner disagrees with the second partner or if the second partner is stuck then partner

one acts as the coach, guiding partner two through the struggle. After each problem, the students switch roles.

Finally, Save the Last Word for Me (Allen et al., 2018) is a common discussion protocol that I used in a demonstration lesson for participants. Prior to our half-day PD, I recorded myself teaching a lesson in an English class using the protocol so that participants could practice using the look for sheet that we created. Save the Last Word for Me consists of students sharing a quote from a shared text that they found particularly poignant or important while they were reading. The first student recites the quote to the group, sets two minutes on a timer and sits quietly listening to the group discuss what they think about the chosen quote. At the end of the two minutes, the group sits quietly as the first student recounts what they heard from the discussion as well as their own interpretation of the quote, thereby having the titular last word. After, the group rotates to a new student leader and the discussion begins again.

Protocols in the classroom foster collaboration while increasing equity in terms of how the collaboration happens. They provide structure and sequence to discussions that permit teachers to model for students. They also usually allow for many correct answers, something which highlights a variety of ideas from multiple perspectives thereby creating a culturally responsive classroom that depends on the voices and experiences of all students in order to be successful. These protocols are not "teacher-proof" though as we saw in Nicole's lesson. The protocols cannot stand on their own; a communal classroom environment and an element of safety need to be in place. In order for their use to be successful, students need to practice with the protocols and need feedback from the teacher.

The need to practice and refine protocols was also evident in the demonstration lesson that I presented to the participants when I used the Save the Last Word for Me protocol in

another teacher's classroom. When we reflected on my demonstration lesson using the list of co-generated look fors, I noted:

> What was happening was, I would read my quote and then Natasha would talk about what she thought and then . . . Ms. Pitt would talk about what she thought and it would just kind of go around. But it wasn't an authentic conversation. And that's what we were trying to get at. So I noticed that in the modeling here, that they were sharing answers, sharing answers, but there was no conversation. And so that's a skill that needs to be practiced more, or modeled better, so that the students realize that they're not just sharing answers that they're trying to have a dialogue.

This is another instance of how collaboration and academic conversations do not happen spontaneously, but instead, should be practiced and refined consistently throughout the course of the class.

At the same time, as educators using a structure for conversations, we have to be careful not to lose the authenticity of students' dialogue. While Jolene and Alaia were planning out their collaborative activity for their co-generated lesson, I attempted to help them avoid this problem of rigidity that I encountered during my demonstration lesson: "Again, the thing is if Alaia is writing or telling me, are [we] having a conversation or am I just listening so I can copy it down? Right? So how do we make that conversation more authentic?" Collectively, we tried to determine how one student would teach their problem to their group without the group mindlessly recording the information. These conversations put the *how* and the *why* of student collaboration in the forefront of teacher planning. Teachers often know *what* they are looking for from their students—in this case collaboration—but they may be lacking the *how* or the *why* to encourage or model effective collaboration that ensures all voices during the class are heard

equitably and authentically; therefore, I felt it was my responsibility to co-create strategies with the teacher in order to support them in teaching students to collaborate.

The final aspect that needs to be in place when teaching students how to collaborate is a clear expectation for the group. By maintaining high expectations for the discussion protocols, and providing students with clear steps and sequence, educators are highlighting for the students the importance of equitable collaboration. I mentioned the importance of providing students with clear expectations during the co-generated lesson planning session when Nicole and Natasha were working out how to model Rally Coach activity: "And what is the expectation for the group? You need to have clear guidelines . . . how you want to see the discussion." Again, Nicole knew *what* she wanted, but not *how* it was going to manifest itself in the classroom. By making the *how* explicit in teachers' plans and sharing the strategy with the teachers we were setting up a classroom environment that supports the success of every student. Additionally, by holding students accountable for the expectations of collaboration, we were promoting a classroom environment that was culturally responsive. It instilled in students that they cannot be successful without help from or helping their classmates (Ladson-Billings, 2009). During Nicole's reflection of her lesson with the student-participants, I suggested taking the expectations she had created one step further by holding students accountable for their own collaborative expectations:

> I think though, giving them a rubric, or . . . turning those expectations that you had on
>
> that on the interaction slide into . . . like one through five . . . And maybe even having
>
> them self-assess afterwards so that they're aware . . . making the purpose clear we were
>
> practicing how to talk to each other today . . . How did you do based on my expectations
>
> for you? Have them self-assess.

By having expectations (ideally, in a student-centered classroom, co-generated expectations) and asking students to reflect on how they worked with their classmates based on established criteria not only solidifies the importance of collaboration, but it also provides them with autonomy in their learning which creates higher motivation and achievement (McMillan & Hearn, 2008).

Although some may argue that the use of protocols restricts students' freedom of expression, I would argue that by teaching and modeling multiple protocols educators are providing various opportunities to engage in different types of conversations and that each protocol sharpens different skills. For instance, the consensus protocol forces students to learn how to compromise; Rally Coach promotes the verbal articulation of students' thought processes as well as teaches coaching strategies to support peers' learning; and Save the Last Word for Me promotes listening and synthesis skills. Additionally, after practicing multiple discussion protocols, teachers are then able to provide students with a choice on which protocol they want to use or modify given a particular assignment. Ultimately, this exposure to various methods of communication will provide students with more autonomy in their learning and strengthen their listening and speaking skills for higher learning and the workforce.

Moreover, by effectively engaging in protocols it ensures that all student voices are heard during the course of the class thereby creating equity in addition to autonomy. By removing teachers from student discussions, students are being encouraged to work through problems and come to agreements or solutions which prompts higher order thinking and critical analysis of the content with which they are engaging. Therefore, protocols may be one concrete pedagogical tool that helps teachers create equity, promote problem-posing, and develop critical, autonomous thoughts about the world in which we live.

Positioned as the "more knowledgeable other" in the literature (Averill et al., 2015; Hammerness & Matsko, 2012; Nathan, 2018; Teemant et al., 2017), the coach should have more culturally responsive pedagogical strategies in her metaphoric toolbox than her coachees. Therefore, while reflecting with teachers on students' input or values, coaches can introduce and model new culturally responsive strategies that may be unfamiliar to the teachers they are working with. In short stints of time, such as the one in this study, it was my hope that by employing these strategies teachers' mindsets will begin to shift regarding the value of student collaboration and student voice. This might be a precursor then to building on conceptual shifts that more specifically deal with oppressive systems of education.

Student-Driven Coaching Cycle Promoted Validation, Growth, and Reflection

Ultimately, one of the main reasons to incorporate student voice into our coaching and teaching practices is to validate students' ideas and empower them to take control of their education. Therefore, before delving into the growth that teachers demonstrated throughout the course of the study, I wanted to address the impact that listening to students has on them to solidify why this work is so vital. Then I detail the growth that the teachers showed in their practice.

Being Heard Creates Students' Feelings of Validation

Student-participants in this study noted how they felt validated when their voices were heard, but also reflected on instances with past teachers when they did not. Students in this study were very aware of when teachers had faith in their abilities and when they did not. Both Alaia and Natasha reflected on teachers that they had experienced during their schooling when they did not feel heard or valued. In these instances, one of Maya Angelou's famous quotes rings true: "At the end of the day people won't remember what you said or did, they will remember how you

made them feel." To capture this idea, I asked participants during the second relationship

building session to reflect on their best and worst teachers and explain how those teachers had

impacted their education. Alaia recounted her worst teacher:

> She was the worst because I felt like she didn't believe in me. She gave me so much work
>
> and she made me feel terrible in class or whenever I would ask for help or whenever I
>
> won't [sic] understand it she would just yell.

Contrary to a culturally responsive teacher who holds all students to high expectations and

believes that every child can learn (Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Lindsey et al., 2019), the

teacher in Alaia's past made her "feel terrible." She did not feel safe to ask for help for fear of

being yelled at and the implication of this is a lack of self-worth and a feeling of being

devalued. Natasha, during the half-day PD, also mentioned teachers who choose not to help

students: "there are some teachers that you'll ask them for help and . . . they'll be like 'You

should know this.'" It is possible to hypothesize from this statement that being dismissed by a

teacher for not understanding the material is demoralizing and can affect the students'

perceptions of whether or not their concerns are being heard.

Conversely, Alaia recounted another teacher she had during the first relationship building

session when I asked participants to explain a good teacher, a good lesson, and a good class:

> It was like the most I've ever speaken [sic] out and it just feels so great. . . . It was a
>
> English class which I wasn't that good at English, but I really enjoyed it 'cause I actually
>
> felt like I was speaking my mind out.

Specifically, Alaia felt that she had a voice in her past English class and in contrast to the teacher

who made her "feel terrible," this teacher made her feel "so great" because she felt as though her

voice mattered in that class. Students felt validated when they knew their voice matters and they may have been turned off to teachers they felt did not hear or appreciate them.

As noted in my methodology section, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and school closings, I was unable to sit down with students to discuss how they felt about sharing their voice during a student-driven coaching cycle; however, I did email them the exit interview questions that I had planned to ask. Natasha responded back to one of the questions where I elicited her thoughts and feelings of incorporating her voice into teachers' lessons: "I felt appreciated and heard. It also made me feel like I was doing something to help others and that was good for me." The result of this feedback may indicate that the act of engaging students in the co-construction of lessons increases the likelihood that they will feel heard and that their voice is powerful.

Finally, I received feedback from Alaia after her unsolicited critique of Jolene's lesson structure during the first relationship building session. During that session, Alaia offered Jolene a suggestion regarding the timing of instructional videos that she often used during her lectures. When I met with Alaia afterward during the member check, I asked her to tell me about the experience:

> I was kind of afraid of how she would take it but based on this study I felt more comfortable to speak up . . . But I felt great because I just, it was actually one of my few times I actually speak out to a teacher and give her constructive criticism about her teaching and stuff and actually it helped because she doesn't do that anymore and that we actually ended up doing a very interesting activity in class now it's differently we don't do the regular basic thing

Once more, Alaia mentioned feeling "great" voicing her opinion. The result of not only expressing her opinion, but also having her opinion impact the organization of the class demonstrated that she mattered. The concept of "mattering" is contingent on marginalized voices having power. For teachers, valuing students means genuinely listening to students, taking up their concerns in our teaching, and making sure that every voice in the classroom is heard (Love, 2019).

Teachers' Demonstration of Growth

With the exception of Natasha, I was unable to ascertain students' final feelings about their work with teachers during this study and if they felt the teachers had made changes as a result of their input. Despite students not having final input into teacher change, the data indicate that, despite some expected resistance to the incorporation of student voice into their lessons, both Jolene and Nicole demonstrated growth in their teaching. However, both changed in their own way—Jolene pedagogically and Nicole relationally. For instance, Jolene's change occurred more on the pedagogical level of incorporating more collaboration, while Nicole's focus was more relational in wanting to acquire more feedback from students on her lessons. Students also noted feelings of validation when they were heard by their teachers.

Jolene's growth in her teaching began from the very beginning of the study. On the first day Alaia, one of Jolene's students who happened to also volunteer for the study, spontaneously offered Jolene a suggestion regarding when to show a video in class:

> You know how whenever you give a lesson and then at the end you put a video? . . . We just tend to not pay attention to the video . . . and then the next day whenever you want to give us work we don't know what we're doing because maybe the video was the primary source you know what I'm saying? . . . So, I feel like if you were to put the video. . . in

the middle of the class . . . we'll pay more attention cause you're in the middle of the

lesson.

Alaia presented a critique of Jolene's lesson plan structure from the point of view of her

peers. During the next session a week later, Jolene recounted that as a result of Alaia's

suggestion, she petitioned the class before showing a video: "I said, 'Should I show [the video]

to you before or after, during or after?' and they're like 'Before' and I did, so thank you." Not

only did Jolene take Alaia's suggestion, she also then posed the question to her whole class so

that more students could have an input into the structure of the class lesson. This appeared to

demonstrate Jolene's willingness to incorporate students' suggestions into her lessons.

During the debriefing with students, after Jolene had taught the co-generated lesson and

reflected on students' feedback, Jolene commented on another change she made:

And even today I said . . . 'If you guys have a scenario, . . . give it to me. I will

incorporate it.' So it's just making me think about how I can get more student

involvement. Either from, not just from creating the lessons that way, but even having

students give me input into the lesson.

Jolene's cognizance of the importance of incorporating student voice seemed apparent. Although

there are hurdles to fully actualizing a student-driven classroom, the recognition of its

importance is a crucial entry point for a coach; the willingness to work towards students-centered

education may be a first step in working through a lack of faith, negotiation of power, and

limited pedagogical strategies.

Similarly, during the exit interview, Jolene reiterated that she kept the ideas from this

work with students in the back of her mind as she created her future lessons:

> To be honest with you, every lesson this is in the back of my brain . . . So every lesson I
> think about this. Part of this is going to be implemented every single lesson I do . . . I can
> subtly incorporate more student interaction, you know what I mean?

Jolene focused on the interaction of students and student-collaboration activities as the takeaway from this study. These student-to-student interactions demonstrate a move towards a more student-centered classroom. Additionally, her mindset demonstrated growth as it broke away from the traditional, teacher-centered banking model. Her focus on the interaction of students indicates some promise that with pedagogical strategies as well as dialogue with students about teaching she might be able to continue to move her practice into a more student-driven classroom paradigm.

Initially, as I analyzed the data from Jolene, I focused on her struggles with incorporating student voice into her practice. Although I did notice the successes she made throughout the course of the study, I tended to overlook the immense vulnerability that Jolene was showing and the courage that it took for her to engage in a study that was outside of her comfort zone. As a new coach, I was empathizing with the students when I recognized the power struggle, the perceived lack of faith or trust in student-knowledge. In addition to failing to focus on her vulnerability in this process, I also failed to recognize this study for what it was—an entry point into the incorporation of student voice into Jolene's teaching practice. Looking back, the findings from Jolene's data present three starting points for me as her coach: building background knowledge of culturally responsive teaching and student-centered strategies, building faith that students do know a lot about how they are taught and the ways that they learn, and building a capacity for letting students take more ownership and control in all aspects of the classroom.

Despite all of the hegemonic roadblocks that impeded Nicole from effectively incorporating student voice during a coaching cycle, Nicole demonstrated growth and development as an educator. Nicole's change occurred more relationally than pedagogically. During her exit interview with me, she acknowledged at least two tools that she could incorporate into her classes that would allow her to continue to access student voice.

For instance, Nicole mentioned that she was going to try a couple of strategies in her classes including asking students about their best and worst teachers—similar to the activity that we did in the getting to know you activity—and she wanted to incorporate more exit tickets that captured student feedback about the lesson. First, she mentioned wanting to try asking students more about their academic experiences using the getting-to-know-you activity: "Yeah, I'm curious to see (students' responses to the best/worst teacher question). I feel like a lot of them will have different answers. Yeah, no, I'm definitely gonna do that." Her curiosity about her students' pedagogical interests takes her a step further into getting to know them that extends beyond her previous superficial questions regarding their interests in music and fashion which we can then use to help inform her practice in future coaching cycles.

Also during the exit interview after she had had time to reflect on, digest, and make meaning out of students' responses, she noticed the benefits that student feedback had on the students in her class:

> I really like the exit ticket that I gave where I asked them, what is your opinion on this? Did you find anything beneficial out of this? And how would you like to change it if you were to do again? This was the second time that I did an exit ticket like that. You had pointed out to me, don't make it about myself . . . make it more about them so that they feel more important and they feel like they actually have an opinion, you know? Because

> I know that the purpose of this is to get their feedback, but if I word it incorrectly, they
>
> won't know that the purpose is for them to be sharing their opinion and their corrections
>
> with me.

Again, Nicole recognized the benefit of acquiring student feedback as a way to build their confidence that made "them feel important" and that they "actually have an opinion." By believing this, she was not only fostering confidence in her students, but she may have also been starting to build more faith in student knowledge. Although this statement only hints at the possibility of dispelling a deficit mindset about student knowledge, there was another instance during the exit interview when she recognized the value of hearing from students: "I really liked hearing from the students. I didn't really realize how much of an opinion they had on what they were doing specifically in a math class." Her response deviated from her previous statements earlier in the study that her students "didn't have any ideas." Even though Nicole did not seem to believe at the beginning of the study that students had "any ideas," she did, with my support, incorporate and reflect on students' feedback on her lessons. Afterwards, she seemed to shed some of her deficit views of student knowledge which would imply that the I do not necessarily need teacher buy-in with regards to students' knowledge about pedagogy, but rather, a teacher who is willing to be vulnerable and get student input whether they find it valuable or not. Another takeaway for me as the coach is that sometimes teachers need time and space in order for change to happen. Perhaps for more than just Nicole, the praxis (Freire, 1970) of incorporating student voice can impact teacher mindset and beliefs. Therefore, the incorporation of student voice may not move mountains and shift mindsets completely, but there are glimmers of change and movement that are promising.

As a new coach, Nicole's data taught me a lot and made me reflect on my experience as a first-year teacher. Similar to Nicole, I remember that negotiating the power hierarchy in the classroom was a struggle for me—finding my teacher voice and knowing my own boundaries took time, but I needed this before I was able to start relinquishing control over to the students. Much in the same way that Nicole learned to do the TikTok dance, getting to know and relate to my students, even superficially through music interests was important to me—I remember a Lil Wayne and Busta Rhymes song that was popular at the time that I wanted to learn the words for because I liked the song and so did all of my students, so I thought I could connect with them. In terms of pedagogy, Nicole at least has pedagogy fresh in her head from college. When I first started teaching in the United States, I was four years on from my bachelor's degree and learning theories and pedagogy and so I am sure I fell back on my apprenticeship of observation before I started my master's degree. I give Nicole a lot of credit for taking a risk and demonstrating the vulnerability that comes with not only being a first-year teacher, but also with being coached and getting feedback from me and the students. As a coach, with both of these teachers and for future teachers I work with, I realize that I need to take a step back and remember that they are at the beginning stages of incorporating student voice into their practice and that letting go of control is difficult especially when we have all been conditioned to believe that school students sitting in rows listening to and learning from teacher wisdom. I did not move on the spectrum towards radical openness (Table 2) overnight, why should I expect any different from anyone else? In the next section, I compare the findings of getting to know students, faith in students as knowers, negotiating power, and limited pedagogy from Jolene and Nicole.

Despite the different ways in which teachers demonstrated growth, both left the first iteration of PAR with a plan to continue to include strategies we practiced in the study through

their teaching. For instance, Jolene reflected on the collaborative aspects of the co-generated lesson and how she would keep these ideas "in the back of [her] brain" while she planned future lessons. Perhaps, by incorporating more collaboration where students are able to grapple with the content on their own will reveal to Jolene that students do possess knowledge about their learning that she may not have seen previously. Nicole, on the other hand, planned on including at least one activity that would allow her to get to know her students' values and therefore know them a bit more deeply than just their daily activities. Additionally, she wanted to incorporate more student feedback-surveys at the end of her lessons. Similar to Jolene, Nicole may also begin to build faith in student knowledge by accessing student feedback on her lessons and making changes to her instructions as a result. If we had had several more iterations of the PAR cycle, these possibilities for change might be a direction to consider.

Final Reflections from a Culturally Responsive Coach

After considering my role in this study, I realized that I have a lot of growing to do as a culturally responsive coach. This growth includes how to share power in the coaching relationship by using more a facilitative approach (Aguilar, 2013) which I mentioned earlier in this chapter. Additionally, my committee noted that I had failed to address culture, race, and identity in my work with teachers. In addition to the lack of time to build background and engage in conceptual shifts, I believe that I omitted cultural competence and sociopolitical consciousness into my coaching for a couple of reasons (i.e. lack of content-specific knowledge and fear, both of which I will elaborate on below.)

A Culturally Responsive Content-Specific Coach. One observation I made during the coaching cycle reflected the literature on effective coaching and mentoring. The literature states that coaches must have a deep knowledge of pedagogical content knowledge (Knight, 2007; Luft

et al., 2011). Specifically, Knight (2007) asserted that content knowledge for a coach is part of his "big four" for improving instruction (along with behavior, direct instruction, and formative assessment). As such, "coaches must know how to access state standards for courses and how to help teachers translate those standards into lesson plans" (p. 23). I would take this a step further, however, to include the culturally responsive aspects of the content. Without understanding the nuances of the content, I did not feel that I could effectively develop culturally responsive strategies that support students' problem-solving skills.

My limited content knowledge of the specific teachers with whom I was working (teachers of macroeconomics and geometry) and limited pedagogical content knowledge inhibited me from best helping teachers incorporate student voice into their classes. Both teachers who volunteered for my study were in the STEM department, leaving me at a disadvantage as their coach with a humanities background.

During the coaching cycle, I was very aware of the deficiencies that I had regarding the content of classes I was coaching in. I expressed often this lack of knowledge openly and honestly with the participants in my study. For instance, during Jolene's pre-conference, before she taught her lesson, we were reviewing the inflation scenarios and I admitted "my brain doesn't work in math terms" and when we discussed how I would demonstrate the lesson, I told her plainly that "I don't know how comfortable I am doing this part, just because . . . I don't know the content at all." Despite my honesty in hopes of building trust by noting my shortcomings, this did not help me see problems in the lesson before we taught it.

As previously indicated in the section on trusting students with content knowledge and pedagogical choice-making, I am limited in my effectiveness of coaching a teacher out of my content area of expertise. Knight (2016) noted that coaches need to be competent and they can

demonstrate this competence through "deep knowledge of teaching strategies they share, and can describe precisely" (p. 199). Although I may have a deep knowledge of cultural responsiveness, I do not have deep knowledge of how that manifests itself in a math classroom. Therefore, a coach looking to help teachers create more equitable learning environments by incorporating student voice must have a deep knowledge of both culturally responsive teaching and pedagogical content knowledge.

It may be that this deficiency better positions me as a collaborator in the partnership approach which is grounded in principles of choice, voice, dialogue and praxis. Moreover, if we consider coaching as a type of Freirean dialogue—the foundations of which include humility, love, faith, critical thinking and hope—then admitting to not knowing everything levels the metaphoric playing field and encourages the teacher to problem-pose with me (Knight, 2011). Ultimately, however, without knowing the content I was unable to, and therefore, chose not to incorporate race, culture, or identity into the lessons of the teachers I was working with.

Fear. Although I was aware when writing up my findings that I had failed to mention culture, race, or identity during any of the planning or reflecting portions of a study I designed specifically to focus on growing culturally responsive teaching, I did not address it until now. The focus of my work stayed safely in the first component of culturally responsive teaching: a focus on student learning. I did not venture into addressing cultural competence or sociopolitical consciousness. Again, due to time restrictions (perhaps) as well as a lack of content knowledge I chose to stay in the safety of student learning. In my limited work as a coach, I have run workshops and professional development on identity, race, LGBTQ+ inclusion, implicit bias, trauma informed teaching, etc., but this has run parallel to my work as a coach. In the year and a half I have been practicing coaching for cultural responsiveness, I tend to omit cultural

competence and especially sociopolitical consciousness from my coaching cycles and instead I engage in this work in the periphery of my job. I think a large part of this is because I am afraid that I if I make teachers feel uncomfortable then I will lose them. In his article, Gorski (2019) mentioned that "the educators most adamant about racial equity are cast to the margins of institutional culture" (p. 56) so my fear is not unfounded. Subconsciously, it seems that I compartmentalize the two aspects of my job (coaching and teaching about culturally responsive teaching) partly because I am fearful of resistance. Since the teachers who work with me are mandated by administration to do so, I cannot afford to lose them or else I feel that my position is on the line. Therefore, my methods have been more surreptitious by focusing on strategies that create settings for students that will promote inclusivity without doing the difficult work of engaging in the conceptual shifts in teacher beliefs. Again, this may speak to a lack of trust that I have in teachers. I believe that teachers genuinely want what is best for students, but in our political climate, I am afraid of the push back.

Moving forward in my coaching, I will be more cognizant of this omission and instead look for instances where I can incorporate cultural competence and sociopolitical consciousness can be infused into the curriculum. In fact, this year in working with a personal finance teacher (not approved by IRB) I have started suggesting topics that are culturally content-specific such as reparations, generational wealth, and the interwoven challenge between poverty and racism. Now that I recognize that I was shying away, I can be more intentional in my practice and my agenda for promoting culturally responsive coaching to teachers in my district.

Summary of Findings

In this first cycle of PAR, I set out to explore what happens when an instructional coach invites student voice into a critical culturally responsive instructional coaching cycle with

teachers in a diverse high school. In order to answer this question, I first sought to answer a

series of subquestions: 1. How do the teachers experience this input of student voice into their

instructional practice? 2. How do students experience the collaboration with teachers in their

instructional practice? and 3. What do I, as the instructional coach, learn about coaching using

student voice? My findings illustrated a complexity that exists when negotiating classroom

structures, pedagogy, and curriculum with teachers, students, and a coach.

With respect to my first research question regarding how teachers experience student

input into their lessons, my findings showed that teachers—although open to incorporating

student voice—hesitated to acknowledge students as knowledgeable about educational practices

and struggled with a negotiation of power in their classrooms. Additionally, my findings

indicated that teachers put significant emphasis on getting to know the whole student beyond

what they are capable of in the classroom, but they also had had little exposure to culturally

responsive pedagogy which made it challenging for them to employ more student-centered

classroom strategies. Nonetheless, exposure to collaborating with students with the support of an

instructional coach, even in a short period, seemed to lead to teacher's pedagogical

growth. These findings are in line with much of the literature on using student voice in the

classroom including a power struggle, a radical openness, and an ultimate change in teachers'

practice (Aliakbari & Faraji, 2011; Bragg, 2007; Cody & McGarry, 2012; Cook-Sather, 2014;

Ellsworth, 1989; Fielding, 2004; Kim & Searle, 2017; Kohli, et al., 2015; Leat & Reid, 2012;

Mockler & Groundwater-Jolene, 2015; Reynolds, 2018; Rodriguez & Brown, 2009).

Secondly, when exploring how students experienced collaborating with teachers during a

coaching cycle, I found that students noted the importance of building relationships not only with

their teachers, but also with their classmates when trying to build a communal classroom

environment. Students warned, however, that these academic relationships do come naturally and that they trust the teacher to help them foster these relationships with their peers. Furthermore, students demonstrated pedagogical values that challenged hegemonic classroom structures including the importance of seating arrangements, use of movement, and the desire for distribution of power among teachers and students. Students also indicated that they value having a teacher who acts as a guide or facilitator and provides them with the tools that they need to succeed as well as opportunities to choose learning experiences in their classrooms. By providing students opportunities to be heard, they provided teachers with insight into the classroom from their unique perspectives and students reported feelings of validation when they felt heard by their teachers. These findings provide windows into the experience of students as collaborators as a means of creating more culturally responsive classrooms.

Finally, the third question in this research explored the experience of the coach during a student-driven coaching cycle. By examining the data, I found that a coaching cycle using student voice requires an element of trust by all participants. Teachers needed to trust that the coach was knowledgeable and had teachers' best interest at heart. Students needed to trust teachers were hearing them and including their ideas into their lessons. Teachers needed to trust students had knowledge about the *what* and *how* of their learning. Coaches need to trust that teachers can make decisions without being led. Additionally, data indicated that teachers need assistance in accessing students' deep cultural values and pedagogical values. While teachers were getting to know their students, they did not necessarily delve into the deep culture of their students which made it more challenging to make meaningful changes to their curriculum or classroom practices. Also, I found that teachers needed resources or strategies as it pertained to both accessing student input in meaningful ways and using student input to implement culturally

responsive changes to their practice. Finally, I found that coaching for cultural responsiveness has added complexities as it pertained to pedagogical content knowledge and fear of resistance when addressing issues of inequity based on race, gender identity, sexual orientation, culture, language, etc. Not only does an instructional coach need an in-depth understanding of culturally responsive practices, she also must have a deep understanding of the content of her coachee in order to best incorporate student voice and create culturally responsive classes.

In the following chapter, I return to answer the overarching question of what happens when an instructional coach invites student voice into a critical culturally responsive instructional coaching cycle with teachers in a diverse high school as well as the implications of these findings.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The standard for professional learning in education is a top-down approach in which policy and administration dictate the needs of a school, districts and teachers. Often in making decisions about and for students, students are not included in decisions that impact their education. In conducting this study, I wanted to invite students into the conversation about their learning in hopes of empowering student voices and initiating change in pedagogical practices in my school through the use of my role as instructional coach. The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of incorporating student voice into a coaching cycle (a type of professional development) on culturally responsive teaching. During this study, students were asked to join teachers in planning a lesson facilitated by an instructional coach. The study provided insight into the experiences of teachers, students, and a coach while engaging in a co-generated, culturally responsive lesson plan. The findings suggest that while incorporating student voice into teachers' lessons with the guidance of an instructional coach promoted pedagogical growth, there were still instances of resistance and skepticism.

In this chapter, I discuss the findings of my research and their significance to the development of teacher education. This chapter is organized as follows: First, I revisit my overarching research question to conclude my findings. Next, I discuss how my research findings were analyzed through the theories described in my theoretical and conceptual frameworks; specifically, how to use Freire's model of dialogue to promote Ladson-Billings's framework for cultural responsiveness. Finally, I discuss the implications for development of teacher education for both inservice and preservice teachers.

Summary of Findings

The previous chapter detailed the experiences of teachers, students, and a coach while co-generating a lesson plan during a coaching cycle. Using action research methods, I concluded that while teachers may have struggled with negotiating power, having faith in students' knowledge, and accessing culturally responsive models, teachers still demonstrated growth in their teaching. Another area I identified opened an entry point for me in my coaching with both teachers. One of their combined strengths was getting to know students and trying to make connections with them. Since this was a point of strength, I could use this in future coaching cycles to build their capacity to use what they know about the students coupled with problem-posing and culturally responsive pedagogy to inform their teaching practice.

Incorporating student culture into teaching practice, however, is a process. The first step in this process is learning the students' deep culture. Hammond (2015) fashioned a Culture Tree Model to demonstrate cultural depth: the surface culture (leaves and fruit) consists of music, food, clothes; the shallow culture (trunk) consists of concepts of time, personal space, nature of relationships; and deep culture (roots) consists of decision-making, definitions of kinship, notions of fairness among others. Hammond posited that educators have to focus on the deep culture in order to understand cultural archetypes—or patterns of worldviews, core beliefs, and group values—which can make culturally responsive teaching possible.

Although this surface culture is important and helps teachers connect with students, it is insufficient and does not delve into the cultural identities and values of the students (Hammond, 2015; hooks, 1994). Moreover, Gay (2018) addressed the difference between caring *about* and caring *for* students, the distinction being that caring *about* students is surface and does not include any type of action; whereas caring *for* students is action-based and emphasizes changes

based on the caring. Therefore, for the culturally responsive teacher, caring *about* is insufficient for enacting change in students' education. Based on the data from this study, Nicole and Jolene were both demonstrating aspects of caring *for* by making decisions about how to address students and how to arrange them in groups (respectively). A possible next step would be to support them in using the knowledge of the students' deep culture to encourage change to teachers' content, pedagogy, and assessment.

Building these deeper, more meaningful relationships with students and learning to care *for* them is essential for culturally responsive teachers. Therefore, it is important for coaches and teacher educators to ensure that teachers are connecting with their students in meaningful ways and using this knowledge in actionable changes to their classrooms. This distinction between superficially knowing one's students and knowing one's students' deep culture is important. We, as teacher educators, must develop ways for teachers to get to know their students culturally and model how to use that information (students' values, home lives, notions of fairness) to build bridges to their education (Gay, 2018; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

One of the challenges noted in the data was the expected power struggle that presented itself while teachers engaged with using student voice for the first time in their classes. According to the literature on incorporating student voice in the classroom, the negotiation or struggle to relinquish power from teacher to student is a phenomenon that seems to occur when teachers attempt to include student input and identities in their teaching (Bragg, 2007; Cody & McGarry, 2012; Cook-Sather, 2014; Fielding, 2004; Kim & Searle, 2017; Leat & Reid, 2012; Mockler & Groundwater-Jolene, 2015; Rodriguez & Brown, 2009). This struggle manifested itself differently in each of the teachers. Nicole, as a first year teacher, for instance, struggled with finding her teacher voice while simultaneously negotiating a balance between a student-led

and a teacher-led classroom which resulted in a type of pseudo-negotiation where she attempted to include student voice, but in fact inhibited it by controlling the types of questions she asked of Natasha—the student-participant who helped craft her lesson. Jolene, an established teacher, on the other hand, struggled with negotiating how much of the class she was able to give over to the students and how much she was supposed to control which resulted in a firm belief that traditional styles of teaching were necessary using what she called "data dumping" or lecturing.

Conversely, data indicated that while being included in a coaching cycle with teachers, students demonstrated strong beliefs with regard to their education that broke with traditional classroom structures. Other findings from students included the importance of relationship building with teachers and among their peers, feelings of validation when being heard, and insight into students' perspectives. Findings from students were in line with both culturally responsive pedagogy and problem-posing methodologies which consist of breaking from culturally hegemonic curricula, pedagogy, and practices. These oppressive pedagogical structures include teacher dominated classrooms, traditional teaching methods, and poor classroom environment (Yusef et al., 2017). On the other hand, culturally responsive classrooms consist of student-driven curriculum and teaching strategies that emanate from students' individual cultural experiences in a safe and collaborative environment (Ladson-Billings, 2009) while problem-posing methodology "stimulates students to critically reflect upon their own lives and social relationships within the larger society, so that they may come to understand how power moves and shapes the condition in which their communities exist" (Darder, 2017).

Therefore, moving forward, using students' beliefs regarding their education coupled with background on cultural responsiveness and problem-posing methodologies may be an entry point for me as a coach to help teachers understand that traditional styles of teaching and

learning are ineffective for our students. For instance, Alaia and Natasha mentioned feelings of

boredom or shutting down when a teacher lectures while Eva noted feeling free in classes where

she was able to move and have choice in her learning. By harnessing student voice in teachers'

classrooms, in a future round of PAR I could model activities or strategies that would

demonstrate students' pedagogical values including movement, student choice, collaboration

(while building academic relationships among students), distribution of power and autonomy in

the class. Moreover, by continuing to incorporate students into my coaching cycles, I can help

validate student voice so that they feel more knowledgeable and empowered in their education.

Finally, upon reflecting on the data collected during the coaching cycle itself I sought to

answer what I learned about incorporating student voice into a coaching cycle. First and

foremost, I found that this work is messy and it is challenging. There are so many moving parts

that it is difficult to effectively manage them all—I expound on this more when answering the

overarching question below. After reviewing the data, I concluded that while working with

student voice building trust, providing tools to access students' deep cultural values and

identities, and exploring culturally responsive strategies to employ student input are crucial.

According to both Freire's (1970) theory of critical pedagogy and the extant literature on

coaching for cultural responsiveness (Averill et al., 2015; Bradshaw et al., 2018; Nathan, 2018;

Pas et al., 2016; Ramkellawan & Bell, 2017), trust is a major component that must be in place in

order for dialogue for change to occur. Moreover, my study found that trust is not unidirectional.

While Pas et al. (2016), Bradshaw et al. (2018) and Nathan (2018) observed the importance of

teachers trusting coaches and ways for coaches to display vulnerability to create that trust;

however, there was no mention of coaches trusting teachers. During my analysis, after returning

to the literature, I noted using coaching techniques that were not founded on trust. For instance,

my approach was more directive (or authoritative) than facilitative which should only be used if the coach recognizes a "fixed mental mode, a rut story, or a paralyzing web of belief" (Aguilar, 2013, p. 202); otherwise, a facilitative stance which helps the coach guide a teacher's learning is preferable. Part of my direct approach is attributed to being a novice coach—I am still learning how to guide rather than tell—but also there was an underlying distrust that if I did not provide teachers with strategies or solutions that they might not get there on their own. Part of this distrust might have been because I recognized that teachers did not have the student-centered pedagogy to help them implement the strategies in their classroom and/or perhaps I need to work on negotiating my own control of teachers' lessons. Part of my struggle as a coach to incorporate culturally responsive pedagogy has been in line with teachers' struggles to incorporate student voice into their lessons; while they had difficulty negotiating power with students and lacked faith in their knowledge, I also grappled with negotiating power with teachers and trusting their knowledge.

In this section that follows, I explore the data by considering the takeaways from the entire study to answer my overarching question: What happened when I, as an instructional coach, invited student voice into a critical culturally responsive instructional coaching cycle with teachers in a diverse high school? The findings from this question ultimately lend themselves to the implications of this study which I discuss later in this chapter.

Essentially, the three major happenings that occurred in this study were that self-reported, open-minded teachers pushed back against the shift in power dynamics; students pushed back against traditional classroom practices; and the coach attempted to act as a bridge by providing teachers with strategies to connect the divergent pedagogical choices between students and

teachers. Additionally, another aspect that should have occurred during the study, but did not, was the inclusion of culture.

As stated in the previous chapter, the teachers in this study were open to including student voice into their lessons; they prided themselves on getting to know their students and maintaining high expectations. Despite their openness, they still demonstrated unconscious biases when it came to students' knowledge of how they learn which contributed to a power struggle while negotiating the decision making of the lesson. Moreover, this study found that teachers had limited exposure to culturally responsive teaching practices which also might have contributed to resistance to fully negotiating the content, pedagogy, and assessment of the co-generated lesson. Without the modeling and examples of what student-driven classrooms look like, teachers may have continued to resort to practices that were familiar to them. Moving forward in my work with teachers, I will have to be more conscious of providing teachers with clear and concrete examples of what culturally responsive teaching looks like in their respective disciplines.

Moreover, the White teachers in my study were resistant to the problem-posing methodologies connections that the student-participants of color were introducing to the lessons. The pedagogical values of the student-participants in my study (two Latina and one African American) aligned with problem-posing practices including movement, collaboration, choice, and voice. While the teachers attempted to incorporate these components into their lessons, they relied on traditional hegemonic strategies that perpetuate racial, cultural, and socioeconomic inequities in school including lecturing and practice problems. It is possible that cultural and racial differences and biases played a role in teachers' lack of faith in student knowledge; it is also possible that teachers were resistant because the pedagogical choices of the

student-participants deviated from their comfort zone causing them to be vulnerable. This possibility of bias, however, cannot be determined from this study as culture and race were not addressed in this cycle of PAR (which I explain below).

To elaborate on the students' pedagogical beliefs, the students in this study demonstrated a desire to disrupt familiar teaching strategies by asking for more power, freedom, and autonomy in the classroom through peer tutoring and collaborative learning, movement, choice, and skills-based lessons. Skills-based lessons break from hegemonic content-based lessons by focusing on *how* to access information rather than being told *what* the information is. Finally, my role as the coach was to bridge students' pedagogical values with teachers' prior knowledge. Looking back, part of my instruction employed Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development. Teachers with limited experience with culturally responsive pedagogical strategies within the context of a systemically hegemonic education system cannot start where they are and in one coaching cycle transform their classrooms into completely democratic, negotiated spaces of curriculum and pedagogy; instead, there needs to be a progression in the incorporation of student voice which is demonstrated in Table 2. Therefore, building teachers' knowledge base of cultural competence and sociopolitical consciousness as it applies to their practice must be done in conjunction with coaching cycles and incorporation of student voice. I discuss this further in the implications section of this chapter.

To assist my understanding of using student voice in a culturally responsive coaching cycle, both Freire's (1970) theories on the banking model, dialogism, and praxis and Ladson-Billings's (2009) conceptual framework for culturally responsive teaching provided guidance. Often during the study, I conflated the two frameworks because of their inherent overlap, but also because culturally responsive teaching does not have specific pedagogical tools

that can easily be implemented in one isolated coaching cycle. Therefore, in my coaching, I leaned on more tangible student-centered strategies that when employed effectively create equity in the class and allow for student voice. To that end, however, Freire's theory of dialogism allowed me to understand the interactions between the teachers and the students in meaningful ways. For instance, on the part of the teachers, there was a notable skepticism in students' contributions to the lesson planning process which degenerated into manipulation (in the case of Nicole) and avoidance (in the case of Jolene). Had I provided teachers with more modeled opportunities for dialogue rooted in love, humility, and faith, there may have been more openness to critical actions to transform teacher practice on both the part of the teachers and myself.

Meanwhile, the use of Ladson-Billings's (1995, 2009, 2014, 2017) conceptual framework allowed me to consider gaps in teachers' pedagogical use of knowledge of students, the students' perspectives of their learning, and the outcomes of the co-generated lessons. For instance, Ladson-Billings's (2009) focus on student learning dictates that a culturally responsive teacher knows their students' in depth and uses this knowledge of students to inform their practice. Although the teachers in my study noted the importance of getting to know students, the knowledge of the students may have been on a surface cultural level (Hammond, 2015) and/or may not have been applied to the learning of the students in meaningful ways. As a culturally responsive coach, I also failed to get to know my teachers in depth—as I explain later in this section—as I did not provide enough time in the study to build relationships and apply my knowledge to teachers' practice. Moving forward as a researcher, I will not neglect the importance of relationship building with the participants in my study. Additionally, students' perspectives of their learning and choices they encouraged during the lesson planning session

denoted strong allegiance to aspects of culturally responsive teaching including collaboration and autonomy of learning as well as abolitionist teaching including learning for freedom (Love, 2019). One student, Alaia, also noted instances of cultural competence which had otherwise been unobserved during this study. In a class project that she had completed with me prior to the study, she created a lesson plan for a character in their choice novel that would prevent him from dropping out of school. Part of her lesson included allowing the students in her hypothetical class choose a topic of religion or discrimination which were two big ideas in the character's struggle throughout the novel. In her mock lesson, students were to read articles on people's perspectives on discrimination and then engage in a visual representation about how they felt about the topic they chose. By creating a lesson designed to discuss topics that were controversial, but relevant to the life of her character, she was able to naturally employ cultural competency in way that recognized her students' culture as valuable. Perhaps it was the nature of the class she chose for her student—arguably, topics of religion and discrimination more easily fit into a Multicultural Literature class than they do in geometry—or maybe it was an unspoken realization that in order for students to succeed they need to see themselves in the curriculum. This did not translate into my study.

Alaia's life experience as a self-identified religious Latina manifested itself in her mock lesson plan that she had created for an assignment the previous school year. Since the educators in this study are all white women (myself included) it is possible that since we do not live the experiences of marginalized groups as it pertains to our whiteness we do not view the world through a lens of inequity unless we are consciously looking for it. For this reason, the background of cultural responsiveness including the history and current events of oppression and

inequity in our country and how it manifests in education is critical for implementing the experiences of traditionally underrepresented voices.

One notable component of this culturally responsive coaching cycle was the omission of culture. Only on two occasions did we address culture: during the relationship building sessions and Alaia's cultural components of her mock lesson (which addressed both cultural competence and veered towards sociopolitical consciousness). This omission by white educators working with students of color is data in and of itself. Although I attempted to frontload culture in this study by looking at teacher and students' identities as well as the lenses that these identities provide when we are teaching and learning, I did not follow through with this into the lessons. This may be attributable to my lack of content knowledge mentioned in Chapter Four. I correlate the two because if I had a better grasp of the content, I could have helped teachers connect their lessons to the cultural aspects of the class. For instance, in Jolene's economics class we could have made scenarios that were more relevant to students' lives and the economic inequities that occur due to race and socioeconomic status. Another factor that prevented me from delving into the culture of culturally responsive teaching may have been a fear of pushback by the teachers. Worried that I might lose the teachers during the study I stayed safely in the culturally responsive tenet of a focus on student learning while I avoided delving into the tenet of cultural competence and veered far away from sociopolitical consciousness. After the study, I found that I am not alone in the feelings of rejection when it comes to equity work in schools. In Gorski's (2019) article "Avoiding Racial Equity Detours," he mentions four detours towards progress toward equity including pacing for privilege, poverty of culture, deficit ideology, and celebrating diversity. I think that I fell into two of these four detours: celebrating diversity and pacing for privilege.

Although I did not use students "as props for the gentle diversity education of white" (Gorski, 2019, p. 59) educators,—as is stated in Gorski's celebrating diversity detour—I did superficially gloss over both teachers' and students' cultures and how their identities form their perspectives and practice of education. During the second relationship building sessions, I had teachers and students create identity webs. After stating five identity markers, I then asked participants to consider Hall's (1976) Cultural Iceberg Model and consider how their different identity lenses helped them perceive the world and the values in the diagram (i.e. notions of beauty, importance of time, views on raising children). If I had had more time, I should have asked teachers and students to reflect specifically on how their identity affected their perspective of education or the choices that they made when planning a lesson. Perhaps I could have had them reflect after making their lessons how much of the lesson was built on each participants' perspective. Similar to the starting phases of the teachers of including knowledge of students' into the content, pedagogy, and assessments of their lessons, I am also in the beginning stages of incorporating students' culture meaningfully into my coaching cycle. Although I have searched for literature on using student culture to inform a teacher practice to help me expand my knowledge and present more practical examples to teachers, I have not come across any research that has been helpful.

The other detour I took was pacing for privilege "wherein an equity approach coddles the hesitancies of people with the least racial equity" (p. 57). As mentioned in Chapter 4, my role as the instructional coach is not limited to coaching cycles. In additional to working one-on-one with teachers, I also run workshops for teachers on topics such as addressing implicit bias and microaggressions, integrating gender and sexuality into mainstream curriculum, maintaining high expectations for emergent bilinguals, etc. However, these workshops run parallel to my one-

on-one coaching cycles with teachers which I had not realized until I conducted this study.

Perhaps I was coddling my own hesitancies—I did not ask the teachers during the study their

knowledge or perceptions of privilege, I omitted it all together. I did not give them the

opportunity to push back for fear that I might lose them completely. Instead, I stayed in a place

that was safe—focusing on student learning rather than the messy parts of culturally responsive

teaching (cultural competence and sociopolitical consciousness). Part of this fear may relate back

to the concept of trust that was prevalent in the literature about coaching for cultural

responsiveness (Aguilar, 2013; Averill et al., 2015; Bradshaw et al. 2018; Khalifa, 2019; Knight,

2016; Nathan, 2018; Pas et al., 2016; Ramkellawan & Bell, 2017). Teachers need to be able to

trust that coaches have their best interest and the interest of the student at heart, but at the same

time, the literature fails to mention that the coach also has to trust that the teachers are open to

ideas of cultural responsiveness and the inclusion of our culturally diverse students. I think I also

need to learn to trust myself more as a culturally responsive coach and take risks when it comes

to one-on-one conversations with white teachers about a lack of culture in their curriculum and

how to get students to challenge the status quo. Part of Gorski's (2019) suggestions includes

gathering advocates in the school to tackle issues of inequity. As the only coach in the building, I

have limited (or no) opportunities to discuss how to implement this work with teachers. I think

that moving forward I might reach out to like-minded teachers and see if they are interested in

putting together a study group or a grassroots movement that helps us parcel out the how of this

work so as to make it meaningful to other teachers (such as the two in my study) who are willing,

but do not yet know how.

  Ultimately, what I found as an instructional coach trying—for the first time—to

incorporate student voice into a culturally responsive coaching cycle is that it is messy; it is

difficult; it is vulnerable; it is emotionally draining; and there are no quick easy strategies that I can employ to make it work faster or easier. Teachers may push back against sharing power in the same way that the coach may hesitate to incorporate culture into the cycle and students may push back against oppressive systems of education. In the end, however, I believe that we all grew a little bit as a result of the discomfort and messiness.

Implications

Much in line with the extant literature, my study confirms various aspects of the incorporation of student voice and coaching for cultural responsiveness. However, the current literature does not account for the intersection of culturally responsive coaching with student voice intrinsic to my study. Below I explain implications of this study as it pertains to the complexities of trust and vulnerabilities, explicit focus on race and culture, and pedagogical perpetuation of the status quo in education.

Complexities of Trust and Vulnerabilities

One of the implications for this study is the complexities of trust and vulnerability. For instance, the components of trust (in culturally responsive coaching) and radical openness (in incorporating student voice) somewhat overlap in their basic tenets. For coaching, researchers noted the intrinsic vulnerability of teachers in a culturally responsive coaching relationship that requires them to allow for exploration into their biases as well as critiques into their teaching practices (Averill et al., 2015; Bradshaw et al., 2018; Nathan, 2018; Pas et al., 2016; Ramkellawan & Bell, 2017). As a result, these researchers found that coaches needed to build trust with their colleagues by offering vulnerabilities about their own practice and biases in order to move towards more equitable teaching practices. Similarly, radical openness speaks to the vulnerability teachers experience when relinquishing power and seeking students' truths

regarding their practice (Bragg, 2007; Leat & Reid, 2012; Mockler & Groundwater-Smith, 2015; Reynolds, 2018). In both of these components, teachers are vulnerable to either the critique of the coach or the students while the coach must demonstrate vulnerability to gain trust. These vulnerabilities were evident in my study as well. For instance, in an attempt to demonstrate my own vulnerabilities, I admitted in various instances that I did not have the content knowledge necessary to best help teachers in their respective fields. At the time, I did not realize that part of this lack of knowledge was prohibiting me from incorporating cultural responsiveness; instead, I saw it only as a deficit for helping teachers find more student-centered strategies in their classrooms. I also participated in and modeled the relationship building activities and conducted a recorded demonstration lesson that teachers and students could use as practice to provide feedback of a lesson. Teachers also shared in this vulnerability during the relationship building session (i.e. Jolene's acknowledgement of her privilege) as well as opening up their classrooms to student input and feedback (e.g. Nicole admitting that "people constantly critiquing [her] is difficult"). However, the research fails to mention the vulnerability of the student when they are placed in this hierarchical shift. Although students in my study reported feelings of validation and empowerment by the end of the study, they also experienced their own vulnerabilities when engaging in a dialogue with teachers where the traditional hierarchical dynamics were shifted to balance the power. Expressly, Alaia noted feeling "kind of afraid" to suggest a change to Jolene's lesson plan structure at the start of the study. More subtly, this vulnerability was evident in Natasha's interaction with Nicole during the co-generated lesson planning session. Her one-word, compliant responses did not demonstrate a willingness to be vulnerable by voicing her opinion with a teacher she was not familiar. This vulnerability may be compounded when we consider the power dynamics of racial relationships as well. Natasha, a first-generation, Latina,

and Nicole, a White teacher may have felt inhibited to voice more open-ended responses due to the nature of hierarchal racial power structures imbedded in society. Since I did not address issues of race or hegemony during my study however, more research needs to be done in this area. Additionally, more research needs to be done on the importance of building relationships and trust among the students, teachers, and coaches to allow for more vulnerability in all participants looking to use student voice to initiate change in teacher practice. Perhaps through the role of researcher or instructional coach, time should be dedicated to addressing and discussing feelings of vulnerability and trust in order to continue to grow in our practice.

Explicit Focus on Race and Culture

At the end of the study, I reflected on one coaching tool that I used in an attempt to focus on culture and to build trust and relationships while simultaneously accessing teachers', students', and my own deep cultural identity and pedagogical values: Hammond's (2015) Cultural Tree or Hall's (1976) Cultural Iceberg Models. I realized that knowledge of students' deep culture can lead to changes in pedagogical choices with the help of a culturally responsive instructional coach. Additionally, in depth work with implicit bias and microaggressions should also be employed with teachers when conducting student-driven coaching sessions. By learning to address implicit bias and microaggressions, both teachers and students will be taught to recognize when a microaggression occurs and how to work through it. More importantly, by addressing implicit bias, we are learning to identify and acknowledge our privilege (or lack thereof) and how it impacts our teaching and learning. In my study, I found that teachers did not trust student input into their lessons or that they exhibited deficit views of students' displays of behavior. Therefore, by examining and challenging mentalities that depict students as unknowledgeable or as less qualified to have opinions about teaching and learning, we begin to

break some of the biases that grate against the power hierarchy bequeathed to us and inhibit us from fully negotiating democratic practices in our classrooms. More research needs to be done to determine how to do this well in schools and institutions that are inherently racist.

Some of these biases could have been attributed to the way students talked about their learning. At the end of the study, I realized that teachers and students needed a common instructional language. Moving forward when collaborating with students and teachers I will attempt to establish this common language perhaps through demonstration lessons of culturally responsive pedagogues. When reflecting on students' feedback, Jolene mentioned that "they're not going to use the words that we would look for." This recognition elucidates the idea that if we want students to contribute their voices to their learning then we have to provide them with the language to do so. The idea of providing students with the language of teaching was also apparent during Nicole's reflection of her lesson about students who were not participating in the activity. In a plan to mitigate this lack of participation in the future, we discussed the importance of explaining the purpose and benefits of talking through math problems with a partner. By explaining the theory or rationale behind the choices we make as educators, we are giving students language that allows them to engage in a dialogue about those choices, evaluate them, and make informed decisions about their learning in a way that teachers can begin to engage in the sociopolitical consciousness of their teaching. As a result of this need for a common language, coaches and teacher education programs as well as administration should ensure that theory and practice are intertwined in pedagogical choices. Teacher education programs can accomplish this through intentional and explicit instruction while coaches can demonstrate pedagogical strategies that teachers and the coach can analyze together using various theoretical lenses or they could conduct book studies on culturally responsive or critical pedagogies. Finally,

administration could engage teachers in conversations with teachers regarding the how and why

of their lessons to solidify the importance of thinking through our curricular, pedagogical, and

assessment choices.

Ultimately, it is possible that culturally responsive teaching and even Freire's critical

pedagogy are insufficient in forcing coaches and teachers to grapple with the injustices that exist

in education. As stated in the introduction to the framework, there is no single framework to

adequately explain how student voice informs teacher practice. Since the start of this study, anti-

racist theories have moved to the forefront of education as the result of the Black Lives Matter

movement and the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. Therefore, this is an avenue that

might be interesting to explore which could centralize race and inequity while giving power to

students' voices in teachers' practice.

Schools Perpetuate the Status Quo through Pedagogy

Also not apparent in the literature regarding culturally responsive coaching or

incorporating student voice are the pedagogical values of students and the implementation of

those values into actionable teaching strategies. This study found that apparent in students'

pedagogical values were concepts of freedom and autonomy. Students advocated for movement

in their classes providing them with bodily autonomy in stark contrast to the controlled, stifling

paradigm of students in sedentary rows. Eva, in particular, encouraged student choice in her

classes equating it to feeling free. More research needs to be conducted on how to create spaces

of autonomy and freedom in public school systems that are rooted in the dominant factory model

"with its focus on the technical aspects of curriculum coverage and tests to sort and label

students" (Hammond, 2015, p. 72). Within these constraints, coaches need to support teachers in

finding authentic, sustainable ways for students to be able to provide input into all aspects of

their education (what they are learning, how they are learning it, and how they are assessed on the learning).

Additionally, this study found that students' pedagogical values inherently disrupted traditional, hegemonic classroom practices such as lecturing and sedentary, teacher-centered classrooms. Conversely, students craved movement, autonomy, choice, collaboration, peer-to-peer tutoring, and skills or strategies on *how* to engage in a problem rather than being told *what* the solution to the problem was. One avenue for further research includes how instructional coaches can operationalize students' pedagogical values in settings where teachers are bound by hegemonic educational systems that do not necessarily lend themselves to the flexibility of incorporating student voice into the curriculum or pedagogy of a class. Bound by oppressive restrictions that limit student voice such as limited instructional time, standardized tests that impact teacher evaluations, overpopulated classroom sizes which are all out of teachers' control create very real challenges for the incorporation of student voice and critical pedagogy. Therefore, policy makers should consider creating flexible schedules which amend themselves to exploratory learning, ridding education of standardized tests and student growth percentiles, and providing equity of funding for all schools regardless of income taxes.

Within these confines, however, there are strategies that can help promote equity in the classroom. In this study, I found that specific strategies helped (or could have helped) teachers actualize students' beliefs about their learning. Some of these strategies included student surveys to elicit feedback about their teaching as well as explicit discussion protocols. The protocols practiced or demonstrated in this study included a Kagan Strategy called Rally Coach, a discussion protocol called Save the Last Word for Me, and a consensus protocol—all explained in Chapter 4. These strategies are culturally responsive and reflect students' pedagogical values

because they promote active listening, peer-to-peer tutoring, collaboration, student choice, and autonomy. We also employed nontraditional activities in the class lessons such as a jigsaw and a carousel activity which promoted equity of voice, student autonomy, movement, choice, collaboration, and peer-to-peer tutoring. Additionally, by employing feedback surveys, specific discussion protocols, and nontraditional classroom activities, I found that despite a lack of complete buy-in to students' knowledge of pedagogy, teachers who were willing to be vulnerable and try new strategies and get student input (whether they found it valuable or not) did demonstrate pedagogical growth. Therefore, teacher education programs should address how new teachers should navigate student-centered learning and critical pedagogy with the reality of school life prior to graduation. Additionally, coaches can help teachers navigate pedagogical tools that promote equity and act as advocates for student voice in the school districts in which they work. Finally, administrators can provide professional development opportunities for teachers to create space and support for various teaching methods. Administrators can also use evaluation tools such as the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (Powell et al., 2016) which assesses the classroom on five components of observable culturally responsive teaching including: (a) classroom relationships; (b) family collaboration: (c) assessment practices: (d) instructional practices and discourse: and (e) critical consciousness. The combined effort of these three professional educators (coaches, teacher educators, administrators) could help teachers challenge the oppressive power structures that are in place.

The current literature on culturally responsive coaching elucidates the many facets of the job including building relationships of trust, providing opportunities to practice and collaborate, as well as having a deep knowledge of the content they are coaching (Averill et al., 2015; Borko & Putnam, 1996; Bradshaw et al., 2018; Garcia & Garcia, 2016; Hammerness & Matsko, 2012;

Knight, 2011; Nathan, 2018; Pas et al., 2016; Ramkellawan & Bell, 2017; Teemant et al.,

2017). My study attempted to problematize the implementation of cultural responsiveness further

by attempting to incorporate student voice into a coaching cycle. As noted with Alaia, in her

mock lesson plan, as well as the findings from all three student-participants, students are innately

culturally responsive. They want to talk about controversial topics that affect their lives, they

challenge and question everything around them and they want the autonomy that critical

pedagogy can provide them. Moving forward, it is up to coaches, like myself, to harness these

qualities and use them to help inform teacher practice. Challenges included struggles to negotiate

power, lack of exposure to culturally responsive teaching practices, and background knowledge

of how marginalized students continue to feel unseen and silenced in education. Therefore, more

research is needed into how coaches can juggle addressing implicit biases and microaggressions,

building schema of traditionally marginalized students in order to expunge the continuation of

hegemony in education, providing strategies and tools to access students' deep cultural and

pedagogical values, and incorporating students' pedagogical values into actionable teaching

practices—while simultaneously building trusting relationships, knowing the content (and

pedagogy) deeply, and providing opportunities to practice and collaborate.

Implications for Teacher Education

This massive undertaking, however, cannot only be the responsibility of an instructional

coach. All facets of teacher education (preservice and inservice, policy-making and

administration) must contribute to the implementation of student voice into culturally responsive

classroom curriculum and teaching and assessment practices. For instance, during a teacher's

preservice education (in both Alternate Route to Teaching and traditional programs), teachers

must begin to explore their own identities and examine their biases while also being exposed to

culturally responsive, problem-posing, inquiry-based, student-centered learning that explicitly connects the strategies to how the strategy mitigates marginalization of students and promotes equity, student voice, and autonomy. Additionally, preservice teachers should be exposed to and practice action research cycles that include student voice in order to prepare them for the work they will be doing as full time educators.

Districts striving to be culturally responsive need to provide teachers with new staff with a comprehensive culturally responsive induction program that utilizes student voice to promote student learning. Additionally, for all teachers, administrators need to provide more professional learning opportunities to complicate misconceptions of student behavior and learning to deepen teachers' examination of their biases. They also must provide an outlet for students to contribute to the decision-making of the school including negotiating school discipline procedures and rewriting curriculum. While the instructional coach can work individually with teachers to promote critical changes to teachers' pedagogical practices and analyze the curricular and instructional choices to determine if they are perpetuating or disrupting systemic marginalization of students. Coaches can also support teachers by providing them with tools and strategies to access students' pedagogical values instructionally and incorporate those values into actionable teaching practices and curricula. Perhaps more importantly, policy makers must create actionable requirements for districts to adhere to that advocate for the equity of all students and provide less restrictive teaching environments for educators to create more room for exploratory learning and problem-posing methodologies. Board of Education members and government policy makers must consider the roles of teachers and students critically and provide more opportunities for teacher and student growth outside of the status quo of education.

Finally, researchers conducting similar studies should consider a comprehensive book study or simultaneous professional learning opportunities for teachers and students to engage in together in order to build a common language of culturally responsive pedagogy and engage in brainstorming activities together to change teacher practice and ensure that all tenets of the pedagogy are being addressed (focus on student learning, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness). Prior to the study, teachers, coaches, and students should have an established, trusting relationship or the researchers should create space for building these relationships during the course of the study.

Conclusion

In brief, conducting student-driven culturally responsive coaching cycles is messy. For coaches, teachers, and students, there are numerous components occurring simultaneously and they all have to occur in order to be successful. Addressing implicit biases, students' pedagogical values; providing students with language and critical perspectives of their learning; providing teachers with culturally responsive strategies, models and examples; and ensuring that trusting relationships among all participants must be accounted for while incorporating student voice into a coaching cycle. Despite the multifaceted "mess" that is student-driven coaching, culturally responsive coaches can act as a bridge to help teachers reflect on their classroom practices and analyze how traditional pedagogies limit emancipatory knowledge and maintain power and privilege.

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