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Intentions, Operations, Beliefs, & Dispositions of Teachers at Culturally Diverse Schools: Examining the Intricacies and Complexities of Great Teachers

Abstract

Currently there is an increasing focus on teacher quality in educational reform, a lack of empirical research on exactly what culturally responsive teaching looks like, and a great deal of confusion on how teacher dispositions may be important in education. This study seeks to examine what great teachers believe, intend, and do while examining their dispositions in the process.

Three research questions guided this study: 1) What are the intentions and beliefs of culturally responsive teachers? 2) How does culturally responsive teaching operationalize? 3) What are the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers? To respond to these questions, I use Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship, a qualitative research method developed by Eliot Eisner (1998). Educational criticism is comprised of four dimensions: *description*, *interpretation*, *evaluation*, and *thematics*.

The findings suggest that there are similarities in the intentions, beliefs, operations, and dispositions of culturally responsive teachers. However, it was readily apparent that culturally responsive teaching operationalized differently for different teachers, leaving us to recognize that we cannot simply give teachers a checklist to ensure that great teaching manifests. Further, the study revealed that while the participants sought to reach the aims of what many culturally responsive scholars seek, they are confused by the label resulting in unintended consequences. This leads to the suggestion of evolving the label culturally responsive pedagogy to personalized pedagogy. Finally, the study recognizes the controllable and uncontrollable contexts of education. This has broad sweeping ramifications for policymakers and administrators, as they must recognize in their hunt for identifying what quality teachers do, there are a number of elements outside of teachers' control that affect students' educations.

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INTENTIONS, OPERATIONS, BELIEFS, & DISPOSITIONS OF TEACHERS AT
CULTURALLY DIVERSE SCHOOLS: EXAMINING THE INTRICACIES AND
COMPLEXITIES OF GREAT TEACHERS

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the Morgridge College of Education
University of Denver

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Philosophy

by
Bradley M. Conrad

June 2011

Advisors: P. Bruce Uhrmacher, Ph.D. & Maria Salazar, Ph.D.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction and Rationale

Criticism of public schools and more specifically, the quality of its teachers is not a new phenomenon in the United States. Despite continual reform over the past two centuries, the perception that teachers and teacher education is ineffectual and in need of change has continued to pervade American society (Warren, 1985). While this negative perception is nearly as old as the establishment of the common school, what is somewhat novel is the intensified search for identification of characteristics found in quality teaching. More specifically, there is an intensified interest by educational researchers, policy makers, and school districts in identifying aspects of quality teachers in public schools (Goe & Stickler, 2008; Hirsch, Koppich, & Knapp, 2001), as research has found a significant relationship between quality teachers and student learning (Byrne, 1983; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Thornton, 2006).

This focus on improving teacher quality has manifested as the “third wave” of educational reform (Hirsch, Koppich, & Knapp, 1998, p. 2), as effective teaching has been continually linked to student achievement and effective, rich classrooms (Kaplan & Owings, 2001; Lasley, II, Siedentop, & Yinger, 2006). In seeking to better understand

teacher quality, a number of events have taken place over the past several years including the development of state performance-based standards for teachers, teaching standards created by governing bodies such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) and the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC), along with a spate of research from scholars across the United States.

A layer of complexity added to this search for not only identifying qualities of effective teachers but also in improving schools has been the increased diversification of students in American schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2006). Along with a more diverse American student body, the need to be responsive to the needs of individual cultures, ethnicities, languages, etc. has become necessary and important. This reality has led to the evolution of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), a form of education that is responsive to individual students' cultures (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Scholars have produced a spate of theoretical knowledge around what comprises CRP along with a spattering of empirical evidence of its effectiveness in student achievement, but have been somewhat limited in producing how it operationalizes, or becomes manifest, in a classroom, often leaving educators somewhat befuddled by how to become culturally responsive in their practice.

What is CRP?

Geneva Gay (2000) describes culturally responsive teaching as a pedagogy that seeks to “empower ethnically diverse students through academic success, cultural affiliation, and personal efficacy” (111). CRP is more of a frame of mind, a practice with

a clear philosophical foundation seeking to equitably educate culturally and linguistically diverse students rather than simply a series of teaching strategies (Bartholome, 1994). Constructivist in nature, it requires teachers to hold firmly to the belief that all students can succeed while also holding to the ideas of Vygotsky, Piaget, and Bruener that students create their own learning. Moreover, CRP is an asset model that believes students bring unique knowledge, talents, and experiences to the classroom that can and should be utilized in creating a dynamic learning environment that is meaningful to all learners.

As one may have already ascertained, the mere definition of culturally responsive pedagogy is wide ranging and easily lends itself to being somewhat abstract. However, according to the literature, culturally responsive teachers have a number of common intentions, which can provide greater clarity as to exactly what it is. These elements, which are described in greater detail in the literature review, include: a) showing care, b) seeking to empower students, c) teaching through students' strengths, d) incorporating students' culture and heritage in the classroom, e) considering and utilizing multiple intelligences and Bloom's taxonomy, f) differentiating instruction, g) constructing bridges between home and school, h) utilizing multicultural resources, i) providing students with opportunities to produce knowledge, j) practicing assertiveness with students, k) providing clear, high expectations and; l) being an effective communicator.

Teacher Dispositions and CRP

While the search for elements of quality teachers, and CRP in general, focuses on the intentions necessary to be an effective educator, scholars began to consider another

tier by looking at the dispositions of effective teachers. Though there is much debate in the literature over the definition of dispositions (discussed later in this paper) (Talbert-Johnson, 2004; Freeman, 2007; Boggess, 2010), Project Zero's Ron Ritchhart (2001) offers one that I will utilize throughout this paper:

Dispositions are habits of mind including both cognitive and affective attributes that filter one's knowledge, skills, and beliefs and impact the action one takes in classroom or professional setting. They are manifested within relationships as meaning-making occurs with others and they are evidenced through interactions in the form of discourse (p. 144).

Ritchhart clearly makes a connection between intentions, beliefs, and action when thinking about what comprises a disposition. Facione (2000) concurs with this definition, arguing that dispositions are a nexus of intentions and beliefs. Beliefs have been defined in a number of ways and given that the definitions are so disparate, I will adopt leading beliefs scholar Milton Rokeach's (1968) definition, which defines beliefs as "any simple proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does, capable of being preceded by the phrase, 'I believe that...'" (p. 113).

With this definition in mind, it is also important to understand that scholars often either link beliefs and dispositions or conceptualize them synonymously. For example, in their educator standards, NCATE links the two by arguing that "dispositions are guided by beliefs" (NCATE, 2002, p. 3). Congruently, Rath (2007) argues that the word dispositions has been taken as a substitute for the word disposition by educational researchers, thus further adding to the confusion around exactly how to define dispositions. Despite this confusion, this study will conceptualize dispositions and beliefs as separate but connected. More specifically, beliefs directly affect one's dispositions, or

as Brown and Cooney (1982) explained, beliefs directly inform one's dispositions to action; dispositions in turn, are a large factor in how one acts. For example, if one believes it is important to care for students, he or she will have a disposition to care for students, and most likely will show care for his or her students when he or she interacts with them.

This study adopts a conception that connects beliefs, intentions, and operations when examining and defining dispositions (see appendix C). In other words, when examining the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers, this study will conceive of dispositions as being comprised of beliefs held by the teacher as well as the intentions of the teacher. Moreover, in drawing upon the literature, this paper argues that dispositions are observable in behavior (referred to as operations, operational, or how it operationalizes) and discourse.

Significance of the Study

Although the concept of teacher dispositions is hardly new, reaching back as far as the mid 1960s (Arnstine, 1967), the attention they received is (Freeman, 2007). Katz and Raths (1985) brought much attention to dispositions in the mid 1980s and within a few years, despite little understanding or research, dispositions were included in INTASC's teaching standards (INTASC, 1992; Freeman, 2007). The concept of dispositions has continued to flourish as they have become manifest in state standards for teachers, governing bodies of teacher education such as NCATE's standards (NCATE, 2002), in colleges of education evaluation and admission systems, and across the scholarly literature. Despite its popularity in education, little is still known about teacher

dispositions, and even less is known about the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers (Villegas, 2007). Still more, there are a variety of opinions on how to assess dispositions, as measurement techniques continue to evolve (Diez, 2007).

Such as the case, this study is significant for a variety of reasons. In order to best understand quality teaching in the 21st century, I believe we must seek to understand what knowledge, skills, and dispositions exist in exemplary teachers. One way to do this is to examine the intentions, dispositions, and actions of culturally responsive teachers in hopes of filling the gap that exists in the culturally responsive theoretical literature while also bridging the divide between CRP and the dispositions held by culturally responsive educators. Further, much needs to be learned about how dispositions affect pedagogy and quality classrooms (Thornton, 2006). Moreover, as Dewey (1922) pointed out, there is great importance in acquiring and developing dispositions for teachers. By identifying the beliefs and intentions of educators while concurrently examining how those entities manifest in teaching, we may be able to better understand culturally responsive practice.

The exploration of the relationship of dispositions to culturally responsive pedagogy has gained great momentum in the recent past (Diez, 2007). This model of examining teacher dispositions as related to issues of diversity has concerned itself with the alignment or misalignment of teacher and student worldviews. Researchers, in utilizing this model, often find that misalignment of teacher and student worldviews results in teachers viewing children of diverse backgrounds through a deficit perspective (Zeichner, 1996). Studying culturally responsive teachers (and their dispositions) may better illuminate what best practice looks like for in-service and pre-service teachers.

Gaining greater understanding of their dispositions could go a long way in informing teacher education, professional development, state and national standards, and state and national policy. Exploring and illustrating the intersection of beliefs, intentions, dispositions, and operations of culturally responsive teachers may dramatically alter the way we think about understanding quality classrooms.

This study is important for a variety of reasons. First, it will seek to add to the body of literature existing around the intentions of culturally responsive teachers. This body of literature is theoretically rich, but lacks in empirical depth. Second, it will seek to provide clarity on how culturally responsive teachers' intentions operationalize in the classroom through vivid depictions of their instruction. Third, this study will seek to further evolve the work around assessing dispositions through examining the construct of dispositions in action (Ritchart, 2001; Thornton, 2006), which seeks to glean individual dispositions through their actions. Further, we can add depth of understanding by also analyzing the classroom discourse of culturally responsive teachers to examine the implicit dispositions of which these educators may not even be aware. Finally, this study will serve a starting point for investigating the ways culturally responsive teachers' intentions intersect with their dispositions. Through this we may be able to determine if understanding the overlay of dispositions, intentions and operations possess any value for education in general.

Research Questions

While it is a highly theoretical concept, or set of concepts, CRP is not commonly seen or understood in the context of actual classrooms, and after engaging in a

comprehensive literature review, I have found that this is only partially true. Despite the reality that much of the literature on CRP is theoretical, there are a number of empirical, as well as theoretical studies that can examine and attempt to explain the praxis of CRP. However, this information is fragmented, leaving one the task of exploring a large body of literature to fully understand the theory-practice praxis of CRP, or more specifically, how culturally responsive teaching operationalizes in the classroom. Moreover, little is known empirically around the shared (or not) intentions of culturally responsive educators. Even so, one is left to wonder if teachers who others have identified as culturally responsive do in fact label themselves so. Congruently, is the moniker culturally responsive appropriate and/or limiting to effective 21st century teachers of diverse student bodies or is another term more appropriate?

In addition to the knowledge, skills, intentions, and operations of culturally responsive teachers, what role do their individual dispositions play in their teaching? While some research has been done on the dispositions of quality teachers and to an even lesser extent on the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers (Haberman, 1995; Zeichner, 1996; Gay, 1997; & Irvine, 2002; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Sleeter, 2008; Shiveley & Misco, 2010), no study has sought to examine the relationships of beliefs, intentions, dispositions, and operations of culturally responsive teachers. If we are to continue moving toward an understanding of the ephemeral notion of quality teaching, this examination must take place.

Given the above information, three research questions guide this study:

1. What are the intentions and beliefs of culturally responsive teachers?

2. How does culturally responsive teaching operationalize in the classroom?
3. What are the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers?

1. What are the intentions and beliefs of culturally responsive teachers?

Intentions refer to a teacher's explicitly stated or unstated goals or objectives for his/her practice and/or the students in his/her classroom (Uhrmacher, Conrad, & Lindquist, 2009). In short, what do the teachers want to teach? Beliefs refer to what a teacher thinks she/he should do. I purposely link intentions and beliefs together given that they are intimately linked. As Pratt explains, "For most people, beliefs informed their intentions" (1992, p. 208). "Culturally responsive" refers to a form of pedagogy that is responsive to students' individual culture. Culturally responsive teaching seeks to view individual cultures as assets while looking to incorporate those cultures in the classroom curriculum, instruction, environment, and/or discourse. Culture may refer to the ethnic, racial, and home cultures from which students come and is comprised of elements such as language, customs, behavior, beliefs, values, or social practices. Culture is generally defined as a set of shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterizes and institution or organization (such as a family).

In the case of this study, the four participants are public high school teachers in a highly diverse institution who were chosen based on their acknowledgement by administrators, teachers, and students of their being culturally responsive educators. Ms. Jenna Ward is a white female English teacher, Mr. John Granado is a Hispanic male

English teacher, Ms. Sandra Fay is a white female Science teacher, and Ms. Kate Borsch is a white female Math teacher.

2. How does culturally responsive pedagogy operationalize in the classroom?

The operational curriculum refers to the way the curriculum implementation actually occurs. In short, what does the curriculum actually look like during implementation?

There is a semiotic relationship between the intentional and operational curriculum in that what happens in the delivery of a curriculum may influence and/or alter the intended curriculum whereas the intended curriculum also affects the implementation or delivery of a curriculum. Moreover, one's beliefs are directly connected to one's intentions (Pratt, 1992). This is explored more deeply during data analysis and more directly in chapter four where I provide detailed vignettes of the participants' practice to illustrate how the pedagogy of the culturally responsive teachers selected appears, sounds, and feels.

3. What are the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers?

As stated above and as will be explored in the literature review, the definition of dispositions is disparate, somewhat contentious and there lacks a universally accepted definition (Damon, 2007; Murray, 2007; Boggess, 2010). Ritchart's (2001) definition connects habits of mind as discussed by Dewey (1922) as filtering one's knowledge, skills, and beliefs in impacting the individuals actions, which are also seen manifest through discourse. Considering this, the definition I will employ for this study is that:

Dispositions are habits of mind including both cognitive and affective attributes that filter one's knowledge, skills, and beliefs and impact the action one takes in classroom or professional setting. They are manifested within relationships as

meaning-making occurs with others and they are evidenced through interactions in the form of discourse Ritchart (2001, p. 144).

Important in this definition is that it looks at dispositions as a confluence of beliefs, intentions, and actions. In other words, a disposition considers these three questions: 1) What does the teacher believe? 2) What does the teacher want to do? 3) What does the teacher actually do? Ryle (1949) saw dispositions as ascriptions made about people after observing their behavior. Arnestine (1967) further clarifies this in claiming:

A disposition, then, is not some sort of thing or mysterious unobservable property of a thing; rather it is a concept that has its use in predictive statements. To ascribe a disposition to something or to someone is to say he has a tendency to behave in certain ways when certain conditions are realized. Ascribing a disposition, then, allows for the making of a prediction (although it may also be used as a sort of explanation). (p. 32).

In short, as Freeman (2007) asserts, “everything about human behavior is, in fact, dispositional.”

Overview of Methodology

To best describe and illuminate the nuances and subtleties of the practices of culturally responsive teacher, I chose Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship for my research method. Concurrently, I selected four culturally responsive public school teachers who were identified as being the embodiment of CRP. Prior to observing them for a two week period, I interviewed each participant individually (see Appendix A). I looked at each participant individually rather than observing multiple participants at one time so that I could fully ensconce myself in their practice. After all of the observations were complete, I conducted follow-up interviews with each of them. Each participant

was given copies of my descriptions and interpretation (see chapter four) for their review and comment. I will elaborate on my methodology in chapter three.

Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship

Built upon John Dewey's (1938) notion that people need to "lift the veils that keep the eyes from seeing" (p. 324), educational criticism and connoisseurship seeks to allow the researcher (or connoisseur) to perceive the complex, subtle, and relevant elements of a classroom (Eisner, 1994). As evidenced by the name, educational criticism and connoisseurship consists of two primary components: a) connoisseurship and; b) criticism. Connoisseurship is the art of appreciation and requires the connoisseur to have sufficient educational knowledge that would enable him/her to observe the nuances of the classroom (Eisner, 2002). Inversely, criticism is the art of disclosure, which allows the connoisseur to point out areas where improvement is possible in the classroom. It is the criticism that serves as a medium for the connoisseur to reveal his/her perspective with the underlying intent of improving education. It is the ultimate goal of the method to communicate educational evaluations that reveal the complexity, ambiguity, and richness of the events taking place in schools and classrooms (Eisner, 1994), which is the goal of this study.

Choosing Participants

In this study I examine the practice of four culturally responsive teachers in the most diverse public school in a western state to examine their intentions and dispositions while observing how those entities operationalize in a classroom. I identified and selected the participants through a snowball sampling (Glesne, 1999) by asking administrators, teachers, and students who they would deem effective, culturally responsive teachers. Ms. Amanda Ward is an white, monolingual English teacher, Mr. John Granado is a Hispanic, bilingual English teacher, Ms. Sandra Fay is a white, monolingual Science

teacher, and Ms. Kate Borsch is a white, monolingual Math teacher. The teachers reflect the demographics of the current teaching force where about 75% of new teachers are female, approximately 79% are white, with the majority of them being monolingual (Frankenberg, et al., 2009). Approximately 84% of the entire teaching force is white (Sleeter, 2008). It is my belief that by looking at these teachers in the most diverse high school in the state, one might conclude that if they can do it here, they can do it anywhere.

Data Collection

To examine the intentions of culturally responsive teachers I conducted formal interviews with each teacher where I inquired into their intentions for their students. To examine the dispositions of the teachers, which are defined as being comprised of beliefs, intentions, and actions, I also asked the teachers about their beliefs in the interviews before recording their actions (operations) through observations. I spent two weeks in each participant's classroom, focusing on the same class each time so as to get a sense of continuity. I also spent time with the teacher sporadically during their off hours to watch their interactions outside of the classroom and to ask informal interview questions. After the all of the formal observations were completed, I crafted follow-up interview questions (see Appendix B) that I asked of all the participants. After crafting descriptions and interpretations for each teacher, I shared those with each participant to check for accuracy and to allow them to provide feedback.

Data Analysis

I provide in depth descriptions of each teacher's practice in chapter four along with interpretations of those descriptions. The data is organized by theme, which is consistent for each teacher. In chapter five I evaluate the four participants' practice, drawing heavily from the literature to do so before considering the significance of my finding, considering how it might impact culturally responsive teach and teaching in general.

Conclusion

While the four narratives of the participants offer but a glimpse into the practice of culturally responsive teachers, they can greatly inform how we thinking about culturally responsive pedagogy. Chapter two examines the history and intentions of culturally responsive teaching according to the literature, while also examining the evolution of teacher dispositions and teacher beliefs. Chapter three explains the methodology of this study and details the background of Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship. Finally in chapter five, I seek to connect the four narratives, respond to each research question, and offer implications/significance and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Overview

In this chapter I will first examine the evolution and intentions of culturally responsive pedagogy. I then look at the history of the word dispositions while examining the literature around their use in education. Finally, I turn attention to teacher beliefs, examining their relationship to teacher dispositions.

Teacher Intentions: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

For the past several years, academics have sought ways to connect the historically Western European education provided in most public schools to the lives of students of color (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2000). The dominant response from academia has been the notion of culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), also known as “culturally appropriate” (Au & Jordan, 1981), “culturally congruent” (Mohatt & Erickson, 1981), “culturally compatible” (Jordan, 1985), or “culturally relevant” (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Though the labels vary slightly, the idea of providing a form of pedagogy responsive to individual students’ home culture has been sought after by progressive-minded researchers and educators alike for some time. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, while it is

a highly theoretical concept, or set of concepts, CRP is not commonly seen or understood in the context of actual classrooms, and after engaging in a comprehensive literature review, I have found that this is only partially true. Despite the reality that much of the literature on CRP is theoretical, there are a number of empirical, as well as theoretical studies that can examine and attempt to explain the praxis of CRP. However, this information is fragmented, leaving one the task of exploring a large body of literature to fully understand the theory-practice praxis of CRP, or more specifically, how culturally responsive teaching operationalizes in the classroom.

What is CRP?

Geneva Gay (2000) describes culturally responsive teaching as a pedagogy that seeks to “empower ethnically diverse students through academic success, cultural affiliation, and personal efficacy” (111). CRP is more of a frame of mind, a practice with a clear philosophical foundation seeking to equitably educate culturally and linguistically diverse students rather than simply a series of teaching strategies (Bartholome, 1994). Constructivist in nature, it requires teachers to hold firmly to the belief that all students can succeed while also holding to the ideas of Vygotsky, Piaget, and Bruener that students create their own learning. Moreover, CRP is an asset model that believes students bring unique knowledge, talents, and experiences to the classroom that can and should be utilized in creating a dynamic learning environment that is meaningful to all learners.

As one may have already ascertained, the mere definition of culturally responsive pedagogy is wide ranging and easily lends itself to being somewhat abstract. However,

culturally responsive educators have particular intentions, which can provide greater clarity as to exactly what CRP is. These elements, which are described in greater detail in the literature review, include: a) showing care for students, b) seeking to empower students, c) teaching through students' strengths, d) incorporating students' culture and heritage in the classroom, e) considering and utilizing multiple intelligences and Bloom's taxonomy, f) differentiating instruction, g) constructing bridges between home and school, h) utilizing multicultural resources, i) providing students with opportunities to produce knowledge, j) practicing assertiveness with students, k) providing clear, high expectations and; l) being conscious of communication in the classroom.

Showing Care for Students

Caring is a key component to culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000; Lipman, 1995). Nel Noddings (1992) describes a caring relation as being “a connection or encounter between two human beings – a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for” (15). In schools, care takes a number of forms while manifesting in a variety of ways. On an academic level, teachers care if students learn (Delpit, 2006). Congruently, teachers need to build relationships with students through authentic connections (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Brown, 2002) while building trust within students (Brown, 2002). In order to truly care for students, it is imperative to see the whole person, not just the academic/intellectual person, which is transmitted through both verbal and nonverbal language (Brown, 2002). Care is a necessary component of what Bartolome (1994) calls a humanizing pedagogy, one that utilizes reality, history, and perspectives of individuals

in the classroom. Caring also seeks to create equal status while respecting and even celebrating differences, thus eliminating in-groups and out-groups (Banks, 2002).

While caring has been linked to student achievement (Storz & Nestor, 2008), it has also shown to increase resiliency in students (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane, & Hambacher, 2007). To creating a caring environment, teachers engage in a number of specific behaviors, but it is imperative that they explicitly develop relationships from the beginning of the year (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane, & Hambacher, 2007). Along with being personally connected to students, teachers also should create physically inviting and inclusive physical spaces (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997). When considering specific actions teachers can enact, touching and hugging students are of great import, which has shown to increase students' self-worth (Ladson-Billings, 1992). Using terms of endearment as well as humor also create more caring environments (Bondy, Ross, Gallingane, & Hambacher, 2007). Finally, teachers should look to encourage students through verbal and nonverbal communication (Brown, 2002). It is important to note that while care can easily be misconstrued as requiring teachers to be excessively kind, as we will examine later, the image of the teacher as a warm demander provides a more appropriate dichotomy necessary in effective culturally responsive teachers (Osborne, 1996).

Seeking to Empower Students

Along with caring (and as mentioned earlier), at its core, culturally responsive pedagogy seeks to empower students to become active social agents of change (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Gay, 2000). CRP scholars argue that teachers should not solely seek

individual empowerment, but a collective empowerment that brings about greater critical consciousness in students (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and ultimately a personal, intellectual freedom (Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994). These aims can be accomplished in a myriad of ways. Hersch (1999) discusses the notion of increasing critical consciousness of students so that they can more effectively assess their social, political, and intellectual standing. Teachers should address issues of racism directly (Hernandez Sheets, 1995) while helping students become more aware of their own culture as well as the culture of others (Hood, 1999; Delpit, 2006). Teachers should also teach dominant discourses, being cautious not to denigrate students' cultures (Erickson, 1987) while also engaging in dangerous, or uncomfortable discourses surrounding issues of ethnicity, gender, race, social class, and power (Nieto, 1999).

Regarding more specific actions teachers can take, Delpit (2006) argues that teachers should seek to balance processes with specific skills. For example, teachers should not only seek to teach specific grammar rules, but help students understand the process of creating a powerful piece of writing and the role grammar may play in accomplishing this aim. Teachers should also work to develop empowering relationships between students, themselves, and the community (Matthews, 2003; Delpit, 2006), which provides them the opportunity to extend the classroom to the community. Along with this, teachers should share cultural assumptions and power relationships with students (Osborne, 1996) in congruence with teaching them how to act for social change (Banks, 2002).

Within the walls of the classroom, teacher should create an environment where there is less of a focus on answers that are right or wrong, but instead require students to critically reflect on their answers (Matthews, 2003). Treating students like they are competent (Osborne, 1996) and are already in possession of valuable knowledge (Ladson-Billings, 1992) are key components to creating a culturally responsive environment, but it is also important to teach to students needs (Hood, 1999). Ways to accomplish this goal include developing cognitive apprenticeships where students assume teacher and learner identities through means such as reciprocal teaching (Lee, 1995). Students can also receive power positions by assuming leadership positions while also serving as liaisons for students being apprenticed into the learning community – a mutually beneficial proposition for members of the class and potential new members (Ladson-Billings, 1992). Teachers should also be conscious of utilizing positive reinforcement for positive choices (Banks, 2002) while reinforcing academic development with affirming comments and/or actions (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997). Ultimately, research has shown that students want to be responsible for their own learning, a piece of knowledge that can encourage teachers to empower them through allowing them to take responsibility for their own educational goals by crating multiple opportunities for choice in the curriculum (Storz & Nestor, 2008).

Teaching Through Student Strengths

Another important tenet of culturally responsive teaching is found in identifying students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions in order to teach through their strengths (Gay, 2000; Delpit, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto, 1999). In teaching through

strengths, students' experiences are legitimized and become part of the curriculum (Ladson-Billings, 1994). In the constructivist spirit, teachers should utilize pre-assessments, direct discourse, and other activities to determine what students know and can do in order to determine where to begin in the curriculum (Osborne, 1996). Identifying students strengths can also be represented in the curriculum through allowing choice, an opportunity students have indicated they appreciate (Storz & Nestor, 2008). Once this has been determined, teachers can help students while make their own connections between their knowledge and new knowledge (Foster, 1991). Moreover, the teacher can build new academic knowledge and vocabulary and connect it to what students know (Brenner, 1998). Research has found that effective learning conditions are created when culture is recognized and utilized during the learning process (Trueba, 1988).

Regarding specific strategies, there are many. The role of language should be of great interest to teachers, as they must look at individual students' languages as an asset while teaching them how to code switch between their cultural form of communication and the dominant language of power (Smitherman, 1981) which ultimately can lead to empowerment. Along with building on students' linguistic resources, teachers need to help them access prior knowledge, build on their interests, use examples and analogies from their lives, tap community resources when possible, and create multiple paths to learning through varied activities (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Knowing and utilizing students' strengths, experiences, and talents are hallmarks of effective and inclusive learning environments (Nieto, 2002).

Incorporating Culture and Heritage

In congruence with teaching through students' strengths, it is important for culturally responsive educators to incorporate students' culture and heritage into the classroom as much as possible (Gay, 2000; Delpit 2006). Teachers must see home and community cultures as an asset (Howard, 2003; Lipman, 1995) while seeking opportunities to utilize those resources (e.g. families, community members) in the classroom by either inviting them in or extending the classroom beyond the traditional four walls (Osborne, 1996). In essence, students' life experiences and culture is part of the curriculum (Ladson-Billings, 1992). Moreover, teachers should teach through multiple perspectives (Hesch, 1999), allowing them to utilize a cultural lens as a frame of reference for understanding new concepts (Ladson-Billings, 1992b). Teachers can also present concepts, histories, and traditional understandings of various cultures (Presmeg, 1999).

Culture and heritage can also serve as starting points for thinking about life more critically (Matthews, 2003). Connecting the curriculum to students' individual experiences allow teachers to not only teach their content, but also increase grander connections and understandings for students. Teachers should also seek to incorporate students' languages into the curriculum to improve understanding and interest (Osborne, 1996; Smitherman, 1981). Teachers can utilize students' first languages to engage in building both vocabulary and discourse skills (Trueba, 1998). Acknowledging and utilizing students' first languages can eliminate a number of roadblocks in reading comprehension (Lee, 1995). In the end, incorporating students' language, culture, and

heritage only serve to increase both student interest and comprehension, thus allowing for a more efficacious education for all.

Considering Multiple Intelligences and Bloom's Taxonomy

In accompaniment with incorporating students' culture and heritage in the curriculum, culturally responsive teachers also consider multiple intelligences. While it would seem prudent to refrain from going into an explanation of Gardner's multiple intelligences and Bloom's taxonomy, it is important for culturally responsive teachers to consider learning styles while allowing for varying levels of questioning (Brown, 2003). In considering these entities, teachers should vary their teaching styles, engaging in a more equitable pedagogy (Banks, 2002). An increased emphasis in hands-on learning has shown to be effective in multicultural classrooms as well (Brenner, 1998). Congruently, teachers should consider leveled assessment and/or collective assessments as well as individual assessment (Qualls, 1998). Ladson-Billings (1995) suggests reconceiving how we approach literacy to include a curriculum that values literature as well as orature while allowing students to show different elements of understanding, or as Eisner (1994) suggests, different forms of representation. Some more specific instructional strategies teachers can consider include use of mini-lecture, large group discussion, small group discussion, debates, cooperative group projects, peer centers, reciprocal teaching, and individual work on computers (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). While culturally responsive classrooms incorporate multiple intelligences and Bloom's taxonomy, all classrooms would benefit from the use of both and should be incorporated to fit the needs of individual students.

Differentiating Instruction

Accompanying use of multiple intelligences, culturally responsive educators concurrently seek to differentiate their instruction. Tomlinson (1999) characterized differentiated instruction as including individual and group assessment, flexibility in assignments based on ability levels/academic needs, varying expectations by individual student, differing curricula to meet interests and needs of individuals, flexibility in time frames for learning, and varied grouping arrangements. Culturally responsive teachers should incorporate these strategies as well as many others to create effective learning environments to meet the needs of all students. Teachers should move about the classroom as much as possible (Ladson-Billings, 1994) while providing individual attention and encouragement (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Teachers should be comfortable using an unhurried pace if it is required by their learners instead of rushing through the curriculum (Osborne, 1996). It is of great import for teachers to match their instructional techniques to the learning style of individual students (Gay, 2002).

With regards to assessment, teachers should vary assessments to include traditional as well as authentic (Brown, 2002) while also considering use of performance assessment (Hood, 1999). This approach to teaching has been found particularly successful in English language learners (Curtin, 2005). Moreover, Latino/a, Native American, and African American students have learning, cultural, and motivational characteristics differing from the teaching styles utilized in schools, which lends itself to differentiating instruction to ensure their success (Ramirez & Castaneda, 1974; Delpit,

2006; Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997). Differentiated instruction is particularly suited to meeting all students' needs in helping them become academically successful.

Creating Bridges between Home and School

Another tenet of ensuring academic success for all students includes creating bridges between students' home lives and school lives. Often teachers believe that cultural conflicts between the home and school are the cause of failure for students of color (Ooka Pang & Sablan, 1998). Culturally responsive pedagogy sees the home as an asset (Howard, 2003; Hernandez Sheets, 1995) and seeks to build bridges between what happens in the classroom and the home (Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2000). Research has shown that this bridge is important in increasing the academic success of immigrant, refugee, and other children of color (Trueba, 1988). Continuity between the home and school are necessary components to increasing academic success (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Moreover, teachers must support both home and community cultures and can do so by doing things like bringing parents in to act as experts in the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995) as well as seeking to access other local human resources (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000).

Along with this, teachers should seek to affirm students in their cultural connections, thus verifying that academic and personal life is of equal import (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997). Teacher should seek to support both home and community cultures (Ladson-Billings, 1998). In more direct academic terms, research has shown that participation patterns are similar to those performed in the home/community and manifest themselves in the classroom accordingly (Osborne, 1996), which can greatly inform how

teachers perceive behaviors. Teachers would benefit from taking the time to learn the cultures of the students they teach (Bennett, 2008). In the content areas, teachers can again connect the content to the lives of their students to provide greater access to understanding (Brenner, 1998). Moreover, students can apply their own personal experiences to help them create understandings and to think more critically about what they are learning (Hayes Yokley, 1999).

Utilizing Multicultural Resources

To better assist students in applying their personal experiences to the curriculum, teachers should use multicultural resources in their classrooms. It is imperative for culturally responsive teachers to provide a multicultural curriculum that allows students to see themselves in their studies (Delpit, 2006; Banks, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Gay, 2000; Brown, 2002). Culturally responsive educators utilize materials that both promote learning and are relevant to individual students (Danielson, 1996; Zeichner, 1993). These materials can provide positive racial attitudes for students of color (Trager & Yarrow, 1952) as well as improving the attitudes of white students toward students of color (Lichter & Johnson, 1969). Traditionally, curriculum has reflected European values and has been viewed through a similar lens (Shopshire, 1999).

While teachers may use a general curriculum, they should at least think through a critical, multicultural lens (Ladson-Billings, 1995). However, researchers have found benefits to student learning in utilizing a curriculum with diverse texts (Lee, 1995) that are relatable to students (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Some questions teachers may consider in selecting texts include (Villegas & Lucas, 2002):

- Do the texts depict situations familiar to students?
- Is the language accessible to them?
- Are there materials in students' native language to assist them in comprehension?
- Do the materials reflect the diversity of the classroom?
- Do the materials reflect contributions from different groups, particularly those represented in the class?

Along with these materials, teachers can seek to provide cultural themes to their units where culture is the centerpiece to understanding rather than allowing the content to drive the curriculum (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). At the very least, teachers can add a cultural issue to any lesson and should always consider women of color (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000).

Providing Students Opportunity to Produce Knowledge

While incorporating multicultural resources is imperative to effective teachers of students of color, teachers must also provide students with the opportunity to be producers (rather than consumers) of knowledge. As has been alluded to previously, in the constructivist spirit, students need the opportunity to create their own meaning while also having the ability to produce their own knowledge (Gay, 2000; Delpit, 2006). In doing so, teachers would be well served to allow students some choice in what they learn (Ladson-Billings, 1994). In this way, students have the opportunity to lead discussions and even initiate their own inquiries (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Effective tools for educators include inquiry-based learning projects, mixed ability grouping, creating spaces

for authentic dialogue, and allowing students the opportunity to assume responsibility for their learning (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). In doing so, teachers will need to explicitly teach relevant/necessary skills while providing scaffolding for individual learners.

Creating a Community of Learners

Though individual scaffolding for learners is imperative, successful culturally responsive teachers also seek to create a community of learners. John Dewey (1916) argued that learning occurs in a community with others. Scholars of culturally responsive pedagogy agree (Gay, 2000; Brown, 2002; Weinstein, Curran, & Tomlinson-Clarke, 2003; Osborne, 1996; Banks, 2002; Brown, 2002). Rigorous, democratic spaces where learning occurs collectively reflect effective, vibrant learning environments (Nieto, 2002) where it can be hip to choose academic excellence (Ladson-Billings, 1992). In such environments, students have the opportunity to teach one another while also receiving guidance from the instructor (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Collaborative environments that foster positive support have shown to reveal greatly improved academic success for students (Hernandez Sheets, 1995). Moreover, small group work has shown to increase reading comprehension for students of color (Lee, 1995). It is important to note that teachers should provide opportunities for students to engage in both cooperative and individual work (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997) to provide varied learning opportunities for all students. Congruently, highly interactive classrooms with high levels of engagement feature individual work as well as cooperative group learning while varying assessments between individual and group (Curtin, 2005).

Practicing Assertiveness

While culturally responsive teachers need to practice care in the classroom and create a sense of community, they should also maintain an element of assertiveness that establishes respect while clearly delineating them as authority figures in the classroom (Delpit, 2006). Teachers need not be intimidated by students so that they can address behavior in a subtle, yet straightforward manner (Weiner, 1999). Teachers would be wise to avoid power struggles as well (Brown, 2002; Osborne, 1996) and should deal with classroom management in an instructive manner, where they seek to teach rather than discipline (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Students should perceive the teacher as being an authority figure who they respect that deals with them in a straightforward, caring manner (Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997).

Providing Clear, High Expectations

In being assertive, culturally responsive teachers must be sure to provide clear expectations to their students, but equally important is that the expectations are high expectations (Delpit, 2006; Brown, 2002; Weiner, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Banks, 2002). High expectations for students have proven to assist students in achieving academically in ways that may have seemed nearly impossible (Hernandez Sheets, 1995). When expectations for academic excellence are paired with cultural integrity, students have found great success in the classroom and beyond while improving their attitudes regarding school (Lipman, 1995). Teachers should focus on complex, inferential questions (Lee, 1996) and as mentioned earlier, consider varying their questions utilizing Bloom's taxonomy. Trusting, supportive, achieving environments should be created with

students and parents alike to assure students' success (Ladson-Bilings, 1992). Culturally responsive educators maintain affirming orientations (Villegas & Lucas, 2002) that help maintain a positive environment in the classroom and encourage students to succeed.

Being Conscious of Communication in the Classroom

Though it is important to clearly communicate high expectations, culturally responsive teachers must continually be conscious of communication in the classroom. Communication in the classroom is of greater import with increasing culturally and linguistically diverse settings in public schools (Gay, 2000; Weinstein, Curran, & Tomlinson-Clarke, 2003). Communication should be geared toward raising students' consciousness (Delpit, 2006) with the intent of providing a more liberating experience for students by recognizing the power of language (Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994). Teachers should become adept at teaching code switching (Smitherman, 1981; Matthews, 2003) so that students' cultural language is respected while also instructing them on the dominant language. Teachers can do this in and out of the classroom to show how language can be used in different contexts (Ladson-Billings, 1992). Moreover, students listening and comprehension skills are sharpened by this practice (Delpit, 2006). Understanding the power of language while respecting linguistic differences of varying culture groups serves to empower them while affirming their individual cultures.

Teacher Dispositions

While examining the knowledge and skills associated with culturally responsive teaching is extremely important in understanding culturally responsive teaching, it does not fully account for the dispositions that may be necessary to be an effective educator.

Knowledge and skills alone do not lead to the most effective, thoughtful teaching schools America seeks (Fairbanks, et al., 2010). Further, Yero (2001) asserts that the source of great teaching lies beyond the knowledge and skills one possesses and includes his/her dispositions. As Parker Palmer (1997) asserts, in American culture, power resides in the external world of objects, but equally important is the heart of the person.

Dispositions – A Brief History

Dispositions are not a novel concept in education, but are certainly new in their popularity among members of the educational community. Dispositions is a somewhat newly utilized term, but has a historical lineage of synonyms that includes attitudes (Thurstone, 1928), habits (Dewey, 1922), meta-abilities (Goleman, 1995), passions (Costa, 1991), rational passions (Paul, 1993; Scheffler, 1991), virtues (Paul, 1991; Schrag, 1988), attitudes, beliefs, values, among others (Freeman, 2007; Ritchhart, 2001). Donald Arnstine was the first to introduce the concept of dispositions in education as being greatly relevant to teaching (Freeman, 2007). His work, along with the other literature on dispositions, finds itself grounded in philosophy and psychology. Ritchhart (2001) found that “Goleman’s (1995) model of emotional intelligence and Perkins’s (1993) connections between neurological, experiential and reflective intelligence acknowledge the impact of dispositions on people’s thinking and judgments.”

These works provided much needed support and momentum around the need to more deeply understand and explore dispositions in teaching. Though these works did in fact support the study of dispositions, the dispositional movement in education had begun long before them. Katz and Rath (1985) argued that dispositions should be included as

one of the goals in teacher education. By 1992, INTASC adopted standards related to dispositions followed by The National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) in 1996, and finally NCATE followed suit in 2000. Dispositions were introduced into the educational policy world through the *Minnesota's Vision for Teacher Education: Stronger Standards, New Partnerships* document, which asserted that effective teachers possess a particular set of dispositions that best facilitate learning (Freeman, 2007). Linda-Darling Hammond considered many of the ideas in this particular document to help craft INTASC's original dispositional standards (Freeman, 2007).

While the history of dispositions is rather rich, currently finding these dispositions entrenched in educational standards, policy, education, and practice, it is important to note that the literature on them is sparse (Villegas, 2007). The abundance of terms used synonymously with dispositions, the varied opinion on how to best measure them, and the argument around the validity of their usefulness/existence had made it difficult for researchers to build upon one another's work (Ritchhart, 2001). However, the word disposition has seemingly emerged as the dominant word of choice to describe teacher's predisposition to act in certain ways, which may lend itself to altering the reality of disconnected research.

What the literature does reveal is that a number of characteristics or dispositions have been consistently observed in practitioners who are pedagogically effective with both students of color and white students (Haberman, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Bondy, Ross &

Hambacher, 2007; Galluzzo, 1999; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Bennett, 2001; Gay, 1997; Lewis et. al, 2008; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Delpit, 1996; Talbert-Johnson, 2004 Goodwin, 1996, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 1994). There is also a noteworthy body of literature highlighting the influence of teacher's dispositions on student learning and development (Collinson, et al., 1999; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Combs, 1974). These studies generally centered on some aspect of teacher knowledge, pedagogical skills, and/or dispositions, highlighting the reality that quality teaching is comprised of all three (Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000 Thornton, 2006).

Most importantly for teacher education and professional development, the literature also has shown that dispositions are not innate and are malleable (Oser, 1994; Ritchhart, 2001; Collier, 2005; Diez, 2007), meaning there is value for teacher educators, trainers, and administrators in better understanding dispositions given that they are not only an important factor in quality teaching, but also are adaptable. Boggess (2010) added that unlike beliefs, which are not alterable, dispositions can be “taught as well as changed and assessed because of their direct connections to skills and practices” (p. 73).

Despite these realities, the question of the existence of a link between dispositions and behavior or actions has permeated the literature. Dewey (1933) connects dispositions to behavior in his work examining the concept of reflective thought. He contends that learning improves through reflective thought, which results in increased learning while inversely, decreased reflective thought results in decreased learning. He further argues that strong content knowledge and sound pedagogical practice are limited to effective educating if one does not have the disposition to be reflective and be growth oriented.

Villegas (2007) later argues that dispositions such as reflective thought should be conceptualized as tendencies for individuals to act in a particular manner under particular circumstances. She connects dispositions to more tangible elements of teaching in arguing that a tendency implies a pattern of behavior that is predictive of future actions. Ritchhart (2001) concurred, adding that dispositions capture a person's tendency to have certain thinking patterns, which manifest in actions.

Marta Collier (2005) links teacher efficacy with the behaviors they display in the classroom, which ultimately contributes to teacher effectiveness and student success. She defines teacher efficacy as a teacher's belief in his/her ability to make a difference in student learning (Ashton and Webb, 1986). Teacher efficacy is in of itself a disposition one could argue is necessary in effective teaching (described later). Teachers who are efficacious tend to view teaching as important and meaningful work, set high expectations for students, hold themselves accountable for student success, set goals for themselves, their profession, and their students, have confidence in their ability to affect learning, see themselves as partners with students in the learning process, and are persistent in helping students learn. Collier (2005) asserts that these behaviors are driven by specific belief systems. Further, research has indicated that intrinsic motivations are made manifest through verbal and behavioral messages created during teaching (Breese & Nawrocki-Chabin, 2007; Boggess, 2010). Ultimately, as Talbert Johnson (2006) asserted, great teaching has to be more than content knowledge, as a combination of interrelated conditions and values should also be considered in the evaluation of candidates (Cochran-Smith, 2002a; Nieto, 2003).

Though the above represents thinking about how dispositions manifest in teaching generally, a subset of this literature has concentrated on how dispositions manifest in culturally diverse settings and/or how we might think about developing dispositions when educating teachers who will work with diverse populations. Research has shown that teachers' beliefs have a profound influence on their instructional choices and actions (Knopp & Smith, 2005; Pajares, 1992; Smylie, 1995) and to be successful in diverse settings, teachers must possess a particular set of dispositions (Bandura, 1997; Haberman, 1995; Paynter, 2003; Stotko, Ingram, & O'Ferrall, 2007). Ladson-Billings (1995) and Bartolome (1994) both contend that dispositions are imperative in quality teaching of students of color, and other scholars of multicultural education agree, pointing out the importance of teacher temperament, tolerance, flexibility, and overall disposition (Klug & Whitfield, 2003; Rhodes, 1994).

Brophy and Good (1974) confirm the notion that teacher dispositions toward students of color have a great impact on their expectations for these students. Subsequently, the researchers point out that low expectations on students result in low performance while high expectations on students result in much better performance. The researchers point out that the expectations that resulted from teachers' dispositions toward students of color significantly alter the way they treat individual students in the class. These varied treatments created great variability in student performance, students' self-perception, students' expectations of themselves, and students' goal setting for their futures.

Martin Haberman (1995) argues that because of the unique challenges of teaching in urban schools, urban teachers require unique training that may differ from teachers in

suburban environments. He argues that urban teachers require specific dispositions to effectively teach low-income, diverse student populations. He studies a number of successful urban educators to develop a list of common qualities that make them effective teachers, which he calls “star teachers.” A number of other such studies have been conducted to identify dispositions unique to quality teaching of diverse classroom settings (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995; Gay, 1997; Nieto, 1996; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Garmon, 2004; Brown, 2007; Villegas, 2007; Castagno & McKinley Borsch Brayboy, 2008).

Beyond identifying dispositions found in quality teachers of culturally diverse populations, the case has been made to utilize these findings in considering how we prepare and train teachers. Through examination of the No Child Left Behind Act, Talbert-Johnson (2006) pointed out the changing focus of teacher performance standards from being concerned primarily with pedagogical and content knowledge to newer standards focused on personal relationships between teachers and students. She helps illustrate the necessity for teachers to know their students learning styles to effectively educate them, particularly in cases where teachers work with highly diverse populations. While teachers clearly need to possess strong content knowledge, the author argues that they also need the “affective characteristics that enhance their effectiveness in the classroom” (p. 152).

Ellen Swartz (2005) makes the case for developing dispositions necessary for teaching in urban settings given that nearly 90% of teachers in the U.S. are white, many of whom work in such schools. She argues that these teachers have historically grounded

their curricula in “cannons of positivist science and Eurocentrism that are transmitted through conventional styles of pedagogy” (p. 255). Further, she asserts that many of these teachers typically have low expectations and conscious or unconscious deficit thinking surrounding students of color, which often leads to a blaming of students for failure. The solution proposed is for schools of education to help develop dispositions that will better prepare teachers for success in urban environments.

Dispositions: The Definition Problem

There has been great difficulty in arriving at a universally accepted definition of teacher dispositions (Thompson et al., 2005; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Damon, 2007; Murray, 2007; Boggess, 2010), and recent research has called for clarification (Damon, 2007; Murray, 2007; Stooksberry, 2007; Boggess, 2010). Moreover, given that there is a lack of common language when describing dispositions, recognizing and defining them have been made quite difficult (Talbert-Johnson, 2006). Multiple usable definitions of dispositions have appeared in the literature (Burant, Chubbick, & Whipp, 2007; Diez, 2007; Diez & Raths, 2007; Helm, 2006; Johnson & Reiman, 2007; Talbert-Johnson, 2006). The general consensus focuses on terms such as innate qualities, learned qualities, habits of mind, ways of behaving, values, beliefs, and attitudes, and these ideas are supported in the literature (Taylor & Wasiesko, 2000).

Some scholars think of dispositions as certain temperaments, beliefs and attitudes, personality traits, or ideas surmised from visible action (Burant, Chubbuck, and Whipp, 2007; Freeman, 2007), while others call for a more concrete conception that seeks to avoid the ambiguity and subjectivity of these characteristics (Damon, 2007; Shiveley &

Misco, 2010). Others argue against the use of the term at all, as they find it to be “superfluous” (Murray, 2007, p.386) and lacking the foundational moral grounding to be useful to the field (Burant, Chubbuck, and Whipp, 2007; Shiveley & Misco, 2010). Regardless of the minutia around the word disposition, there are some more commonly cited definitions found in the literature. Castagno & McKinley (2008) define dispositions as being comprised of values, attitudes, and ideologies and further argue that “Affective qualities, rather than skills or academic preparation, seem to characterize effective teachers in the research literature” (Yazzie, 1999, p. 95). Katz (1993) defines dispositions as patterns of behaviors that are exhibited frequently and intentionally in the absence of coercion, representing a habit of mind. Socket (2006) explains dispositions as being “the professional virtues, qualities, and habits of mind and behavior held and developed by teachers on the basis of their knowledge, understanding, and commitments to students, families, colleagues, and communities.” NCATE had defined dispositions as:

Professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development. NCATE expects institutions to assess professional dispositions based on observable behaviors in educational settings. The two professional dispositions that NCATE expects institutions to assess are fairness and the belief that all students can learn. Based on their mission and conceptual framework, professional education units can identify, define, and operationalize additional professional dispositions. (NCATE, 2006).

Building off of the work of Rokeach (1968), Brown and Cooney (1982), Freeman (2003), Katz and Rath (1985), Tabachnick and Zeichner (1984), Richardson (1996, 2003), Tatro and Coupland (2003), and Pajares (1992), Villegas defines dispositions as “tendencies for individuals to act in a particular manner under particular circumstances,

based on their beliefs (p. 374). Among the definitions is some commonality, as each generally include in them something involving values, beliefs, attitudes, characteristics, professional behaviors, ethics, and perceptions (Thornton, 2006). While these are all usable definitions, I would like to adopt a more succinct, linear definition for the purpose of this study that clearly points out the relationships between the tangible and intangible elements of dispositions, ultimately connecting disposition to action. This definition, offered by Ritchhart (2001) is:

Dispositions are habits of mind including both cognitive and affective attributes that filter one's knowledge, skills, and beliefs and impact the action one takes in classroom or professional setting. They are manifested within relationships as meaning-making occurs with others and they are evidenced through interactions in the form of discourse (p. 144).

Models for Categorizing Dispositions

Though no universal definition exists, many models are available for how dispositions may best be categorized. Thornton (2006) points out that there are several models for assessing teacher dispositions, each of which is slightly different than the others. The *standards language* model is directly connected to teacher's behaviors in the actual school setting and is crafted utilizing similar rhetoric found in state and national standards. The *professional behaviors* model concerns itself more with how teachers should behave in the educational environment such as how to dress, the value of being punctual, etc. The *self-reflections* model, grounded in Arthur Combs' work (1969), seeks to expose teachers to situations in schools for the purpose of their reflecting on it. The intent is to provide insight into teachers' dispositions through continuous reflective

journaling/essay writing, with the possibility of tracking how dispositions change over time.

The *ethics and equity* model focuses on teacher dispositions related to diversity, concerning itself with the alignment or misalignment of teacher and student worldviews. Researchers, in utilizing this model, often find that misalignment of teacher and student worldviews results in teachers viewing children of diverse backgrounds through a deficit perspective (Zeichner, 1996). Finally, the *dispositions in action* model connects dispositions of thought with actions, as it is concerned with examining thinking patterns and how one is predisposed to act. What separates this model from the others is that it extends beyond personality attributes and individual behavior and concentrates on how individual thought process concerning issues of morality, ethics/values, and diversity expose dispositions of thought and ultimately how those dispositions manifest in action in a classroom. For the purpose of this study, I will define dispositions as being comprised of beliefs, intentions, and actions (operations).

While Thornton offers a framework for conceptualizing general ways scholars have thought about dispositions, one must also consider how specific dispositions, once identified in teachers, should be categorized. Wasicsko (2004) first categorized dispositions in three categories that included dispositions toward self, students, and teaching. Later Wasicsko (2007) reorganized them to include *teacher behaviors* that are more observable (e.g. punctual, professionally dressed), *teacher perceptions* that represent their values and perceptions (e.g. self-image, seeing students as being capable of learning), and *teacher characteristics* that represent attitudes persistently demonstrated

(e.g. open-mindedness, resiliency). Diez (2007) offered two categories that included *moral dispositions* and *professional dispositions*, which are more observable than moral dispositions such as empathy and integrity. Sockett (2006) provides three categories that consist of dispositions relating to *character* (e.g. honesty, resiliency), *intellect* in an ethics of rules (e.g. fairness, consistency), and *caring* (e.g. relationship building, receptiveness to students). Finally, Misco and Shiveley (2007) created the categories *personal virtues* (e.g. caring, honest), *educational virtues* (e.g. sensitivity to difference, critical thinking), and *societal transformation* (e.g. seeking social equity).

Building off of all of these models of categorization for dispositions, I would like to offer five categories through which I would like to both situate the literature and to utilize when categorizing dispositions identified in my participants. The categories include: a) general dispositions; b) dispositions toward self; c) dispositions toward students; d) dispositions regarding education; and e) dispositions on race and diversity. *General dispositions* refer to dispositions one has as a human being regardless of vocation. These might include items like being people-oriented, a proclivity for being a life-long learner, or other such broad dispositions. *Dispositions toward self* are concerned with an individual's habit of mind, belief, value, action, or perception relating to the self. For example, one who is predisposed to self-reflection exhibits a habit of mind that analyzes an aspect(s) of the self. *Dispositions toward students* is intended to mean how one is inclined to think about, interact with, or perceive students. This would include items such as respecting the individual student or caring for students. *Dispositions Regarding Education* are concerned with a teacher's dispositions surrounding educational

issues and practice, including curriculum, classroom environment, pedagogy, professional relationships, or the profession of teaching in general. One such example would be the predisposition to utilize creativity in the curriculum. Finally, *Dispositions on race and diversity* concern the individual's beliefs, perceptions, values, and habits of mind around issues of race and diversity. This may include the proclivity to think about social issues from multiple racial, cultural, gender, sexual orientation, linguistic, and/or ethnic lenses. With these categories in mind, the following is a listing of the dispositions found in the literature to be utilized as a conceptual framework. For the purpose of clarity and succinctness, the dispositions will be offered in list form.

General Dispositions

1. Are people-oriented rather than thing-oriented; have an empathetic manner and feel connected to human kind (Combs, 1974; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Sockett, 2006; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Sachs, 2004)
2. See the bigger picture (larger issues) rather than insignificant, immediate ones; understand the larger social context in which they are working (Combs, 1974; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Shiveley & Misco, 2010)
3. A proclivity to consistently utilize higher order thinking in order to identify interrelatedness of concepts (Swartz, 2005; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
4. Open to new ideas and with people (Dewey, 1933; Swartz, 2005; Haberman, 1995; Garmon, 2004; Gay, 1997; Shiveley & Misco, 2010) --- Open to assessing the rules and taking risks (Sockett, 2006; Bennett, 2001; Sachs, 2004)
5. Life-long learner (Dewey, 1933; Swartz, 2005; Stotko, 2007; Shiveley & Misco, 2010; Stotko, Ingram, & O'Ferrall, 2007)
6. High level of perseverance, resilience, dedication and stamina (Boggess, 2010; Haberman, 1995; Stotko, 2007; Buehler, et al., 2010; Gay, 1997; Stotko, Ingram, & O'Ferrall, 2007)

7. Resourceful and belief in his/her ability to solve problems (Boggess, 2010; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Stotko, 2007; Gay, 1997)
8. Desire to be independent (Boggess, 2010; Haberman, 1995)
9. Possess a proclivity for humor (Bondy, Ross & Hambacher, 2007; Bain & Jacobs, 1990)
10. Flexible (Stotko, 2007; Shiveley & Misco, 2010; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007)
11. Strong moral compass (Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Sockett, 2006; Boggess, 2010)
12. Strong sense of professionalism (Shiveley & Misco, 2010)

Dispositions toward Self

1. Have a positive yet realistic self-perception: (Combs, 1974; Gay, 1997; Shiveley & Misco, 2010)
2. Can help any student and feel empowered to make educational change: (Combs, 1974; Collier, 2005; Villegas and Lucas, 2002; Sachs, 2004; Gay, 1995; Haberman, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995)
3. Holds oneself accountable for student success (Dewey, 1933; Collier, 2005; Boggess, 2010; Haberman, 1995)
4. Regularly set goals for his/herself, his/her profession, and his/her students and desires to get better as a teacher (Collier, 2005; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Gay, 1997)
5. Has a Self-reflective nature; willing to modify practice to improve student learning (Dewey, 1933; Swartz, 2005; Garmon, 2004; Stotko, 2007; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007)
6. Self-awareness of individual and cultural identity (Swartz, 2005; Boggess, 2010; Sockett, 2006; Fairbanks, et al, 2010)

Dispositions toward Students

1. Authentically care for students (Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Bondy, Ross & Hambacher, 2007; Galluzzo, 1999; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Bennett, 2001; Gay, 1997; Lewis et. al, 2008; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Delpit, 1996; Talbert-Johnson, 2004)

2. Confidence that all students are capable of learning and succeeding (Combs, 1974; Bondy, Ross & Hambacher, 2007; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Haberman, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner, 1996; Sachs, 2004; Sleeter, 2008; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
3. Maintain that students are valuable and bring assets (Combs, 1974; Swartz, 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner, 1996; Sachs, 2004)
4. Hold high expectations for students (Combs, 1974; Wasicsko, 2004; Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Collier, 2005; Boggess, 2010; Haberman, 1995; Brophy & Good, 1974; Stotko, 2007; Bain & Jacobs, 1990; Gay, 1997; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
5. Respect students and demand it in return (Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Bondy, Ross & Hambacher, 2007; Bennett, 2001; Lewis et. al, 2008; Willis, 2008; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
6. See and value whole student (do not focus solely on academics) (Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
7. Does not blame students, families, communities, and/or the educational system for student achievement (Swartz, 2005; Haberman, 1995)
8. Proclivity in providing choice (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995)
9. Proclivity to show students the value and relevance in what they are learning (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995)

Dispositions Regarding Education

1. Create safe environments for students (Castagno & McKinley, 2008)
2. View teaching as important and meaningful work (Collier, 2005; Bain & Jacobs, 1990; Shiveley & Misco, 2010)
3. Ability to utilize creativity in curriculum (Swartz, 2005; Gay, 1997)
4. Conscious of integrating theory and practice (Swartz, 2005)
5. Collaborative (Haberman, 1995; Stotko, 2007; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007)

6. Seek alignment of instruction to standards and assessments (Stotko, 2007; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007)

Dispositions on Race and Diversity

1. Valuing, respecting, and empathizing with individual cultures (Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Gay, 1997; Nieto, 2005; Germain, 1998; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner, 1996; Sachs, 2004; Shiveley & Misco, 2010; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
2. View teaching through class, gender, power and equity lenses; recognition that there are multiple ways of perceiving reality (often influenced by one’s position in the social order (Bogges, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Gay, 1997; Sachs, 2004)
3. Ability to examine problems from multiple perspectives (Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Gay, 1997; McAllister & Irvine, 2002)
4. Desire to evoke positive change in serving underrepresented groups (Bogges, 2010; Garmon, 2004; Nieto, 2005; Shiveley & Misco, 2010)
5. Consciousness of one’s beliefs about the world and one’s human and social characteristics (race/ethnicity, language, disability) and how those affect teaching (Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Gay, 1995; Sachs, 2004; Sachs, 2004)
6. Knowledge about worldviews associated with various culture groups (Bennett, 2001; Sleeter, 2008)

Teacher Beliefs

Beliefs have been defined in a number of ways and given that the definitions are so disparate, I will adopt leading beliefs scholar Milton Rokeach’s (1968) definition, which defines beliefs as “any simple proposition, conscious or unconscious, inferred from what a person says or does, capable of being preceded by the phrase, ‘I believe that...’” (p. 113). This serves as a functional definition of beliefs, but it fails to examine the connection between beliefs and disposition, one that is important to understand if one is to examine the two as they play out in a classroom.

As mentioned earlier, scholars often either link beliefs and dispositions or conceptualize them synonymously. For example, in their educator standards, NCATE links the two by arguing that “dispositions are guided by beliefs” (NCATE, 2002, p. 3). Congruently, Rath (2007) argues that the word dispositions has been taken as a substitute for the word disposition by educational researchers, thus further adding to the confusion around exactly how to define dispositions. Despite this confusion, this study will conceptualize dispositions and beliefs as separate but connected. More specifically, beliefs directly affect one’s dispositions, or as Brown and Cooney (1982) explained, beliefs directly inform one’s dispositions to action; dispositions in turn, are a large factor in how one acts. For example, if one believes it is important to care for students, he or she will have a disposition to care for students, and most likely will show care for his or her students when he or she interacts with them.

Further illustrating the connection between beliefs and dispositions, the literature on teacher dispositions often use the word beliefs or believe when describing particular dispositions. Such examples include dispositions such as “teachers believe they can help any student and feel empowered to make educational change” (Combs, 1974; Collier, 2005; Villegas and Lucas, 2002; Sachs, 2004; Gay, 1995; Haberman, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995) or “believe students are valuable and bring assets to the classroom” (Combs, 1974; Swartz, 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner, 1996; Sachs, 2004). This further supports the notion that dispositions are directly influenced by one’s beliefs.

The reality that beliefs directly inform one's dispositions was particularly important when developing a literature review on culturally responsive teachers' beliefs. After conducting a thorough research with the search terms "teacher beliefs", "culturally responsive teacher beliefs", and "culturally relevant teacher beliefs" on ERIC, CAROL, JSTOR, and the University of Denver library webPeggy, I found that the teacher belief literature did in fact directly overlap the teacher disposition literature. With this in mind and with the fact that beliefs directly inform one's dispositions, I decided to work backward and identify the beliefs held by teachers through their dispositions. For example, if the literature identified the disposition of "holding high expectations for students", one could reasonably assert that one with such a disposition also holds the belief that it is important to hold high expectations for students.

Utilizing the conceptual framework for dispositions, the beliefs conceptual framework offers five categories through which one might think of teacher beliefs. The categories include: a) general beliefs; b) beliefs about self; c) beliefs about students; d) beliefs about education; and e) beliefs about race and diversity. *General Beliefs* refer to beliefs one has as a human being regardless of vocation. These might include items like believing it is important to be people-oriented, a belief in life-long learning, or other such broad beliefs. *Beliefs about self* are concerned with an individual's belief, relating to the self. For example, one who believes in self-reflection exhibits a habit of mind that analyzes an aspect(s) of the self. *Beliefs about Students* is intended to mean how one believes he/she should think about, interact with, or perceive students. This would include items such as believing in the importance of respecting the individual student or

caring for students. *Beliefs about Education* are concerned with a teacher's beliefs surrounding educational issues and practice, including curriculum, classroom environment, pedagogy, professional relationships, or the profession of teaching in general. One such example would be the belief in the importance of being creative in developing curriculum. Finally, *Beliefs about Race and Diversity* concern the individual's beliefs around issues of race and diversity. This may include the belief that one should consider social issues from multiple racial, cultural, gender, sexual orientation, linguistic, and/or ethnic lenses.

With these categories in mind and with the recognition that I worked backward from the dispositional literature, the following is a listing of the beliefs found in the literature. For the purpose of clarity and succinctness, the beliefs will be offered in list form.

General Beliefs

1. Believe it is important to be people-oriented rather than thing-oriented; believe empathy and feeling connected to human kind is central (Combs, 1974; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Sockett, 2006; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Sachs, 2004)
2. Believe in looking at the bigger picture (larger issues) rather than insignificant, immediate ones; believe in understanding the larger social context in which they are working (Combs, 1974; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Shiveley & Misco, 2010)
3. Believe in consistently utilizing higher order thinking in order to identify interrelatedness of concepts (Swartz, 2005; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
4. Believe it is essential to be open to new ideas and with people (Dewey, 1933; Swartz, 2005; Haberman, 1995; Garmon, 2004; Gay, 1997; Shiveley & Misco, 2010) --- Believe in being open to assessing the rules and taking risks (Sockett, 2006; Bennett, 2001; Sachs, 2004)

5. Believe in life-long learning (Dewey, 1933; Swartz, 2005; Stotko, 2007; Shiveley & Misco, 2010; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007)
6. Believe it is essential to be perseverant, resilient, dedicated and vigorous (Bogges, 2010; Haberman, 1995; Stotko, 2007; Buehler, et al., 2010; Gay, 1997; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007)
7. Believe it is imperative to be resourceful and believes in his/her ability to solve problems (Bogges, 2010; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Stotko, 2007; Gay, 1997)
8. Believe it is important to be independent (Bogges, 2010; Haberman, 1995)
9. Believe humor is important (Bondy, Ross & Hambacher, 2007; Bain & Jacobs, 1990)
10. Believe it is important to be flexible (Stotko, 2007; Shiveley & Misco, 2010; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007)
11. Believe in having a strong moral compass (Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Sockett, 2006; Bogges, 2010)
12. Believe in the importance of professionalism (Shiveley & Misco, 2010)

Beliefs about Self

1. Believe it is necessary to have a positive yet realistic self-perception: (Combs, 1974; Gay, 1997; Shiveley & Misco, 2010)
2. Believe they can help any student and feel empowered to make educational change: (Combs, 1974; Collier, 2005; Villegas and Lucas, 2002; Sachs, 2004; Gay, 1995; Haberman, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995;
3. Believe in holding oneself accountable for student success (Dewey, 1933; Collier, 2005; Bogges, 2010; Haberman, 1995)
4. Believe in regularly setting goals for his/herself, his/her profession, and his/her students and believes it is important to get better as a teacher (Collier, 2005; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Gay, 1997)
5. Believe in being self-reflective with the willingness to modify practice to improve student learning (Dewey, 1933; Swartz, 2005; Garmon, 2004; Stotko, 2007; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007)

6. Believe in the significance of self-awareness of individual and cultural identity (Swartz, 2005; Boggess, 2010; Sockett, 2006; Fairbanks, et al, 2010)

Beliefs about Students

1. Believes it is essential to care for students (Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Bondy, Ross & Hambacher, 2007; Galluzzo, 1999; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Bennett, 2001; Gay, 1997; Lewis et. al, 2008; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Delpit, 1996; Talbert-Johnson, 2004)
2. Believe their students are capable of learning and succeeding (Combs, 1974; Bondy, Ross & Hambacher, 2007; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Haberman, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner, 1996; Sachs, 2004; Sleeter, 2008; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
3. Believe students valuable and bring assets (Combs, 1974; Swartz, 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner, 1996; Sachs, 2004)
4. Believe in holding high expectations for students (Combs, 1974; Wasicsko, 2004; Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Collier, 2005; Boggess, 2010; Haberman, 1995; Brophy & Good, 1974; Stotko, 2007; Bain & Jacobs, 1990; Gay, 1997; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
5. Believe that it is imperative to respect students and demand it in return (Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Bondy, Ross & Hambacher, 2007; Bennett, 2001; Lewis et. al, 2008; Willis, 2008; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
6. Believe one must see and value whole student (do not focus solely on academics) (Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
7. Believe in not blaming students, families, communities, and/or the educational system for student achievement (Swartz, 2005; Haberman, 1995)
8. Believe in providing choice (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995)
9. Believe students must see value and relevance in what they are learning (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995)

Beliefs about Education

1. Believe in creating safe environments for students (Castagno & McKinley, 2008)

2. Believe teaching is important and meaningful work (Collier, 2005; Bain & Jacobs, 1990; Shiveley & Misco, 2010)
3. Believe one must utilize creativity in curriculum (Swartz, 2005; Gay, 1997)
4. Believe it is important to integrate theory and practice (Swartz, 2005)
5. Believe in the importance of collaboration (Haberman, 1995; Stotko, 2007; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007)
6. Believe in aligning instruction to standards and assessments (Stotko, 2007; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007)

Beliefs about Race and Diversity

1. Believe one must value, respect, and empathize with individual cultures (Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Gay, 1997; Nieto, 2005; Germain, 1998; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner, 1996; Sachs, 2004; Shiveley & Misco, 2010; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005)
2. Believe one must view teaching through class, gender, power and equity lenses; recognition that there are multiple ways of perceiving reality (often influenced by one’s position in the social order (Boggess, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Gay, 1997; Sachs, 2004)
3. Believe it is important to examine problems from multiple perspectives (Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Gay, 1997; McAllister & Irvine, 2002)
4. Believe in the importance of evoking positive change in serving underrepresented groups (Boggess, 2010; Garmon, 2004; Nieto, 2005; Shiveley & Misco, 2010)
5. Believe in the importance of being conscious of one’s beliefs about the world and one’s human and social characteristics (race/ethnicity, language, disability) and how those affect teaching (Talbert-Johnson, 2006; Gay, 1995; Sachs, 2004; Sachs, 2004)
6. Believe in the importance of being knowledgeable about worldviews associated with various culture groups (Bennett, 2001; Sleeter, 2008)

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship

Geneva Gay argues that successful urban teachers instruct their students through a culturally responsive lens while teachers are trained how to accomplish this (2000).

Congruently, Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) asserts that culturally responsive teachers are not only effective in classrooms with culturally and linguistically diverse students, but in any and all contexts. Quality classrooms are designed with culturally responsive practice in mind, making an assessment of the manifestations of CRP relevant for this study.

Moreover, most scholarly literature reveals that studies on culturally responsive teaching has been highly theoretical with few examinations of concrete practice. In this study, I seek to shed some light on the actual practice of culturally responsive teaching and to explore the intentions and dispositions of culturally responsive teachers. To do so it is necessary to provide vivid accounts of how these intentions operationalize in the classroom. For this purpose I utilized Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship.

Eliot Eisner created educational criticism and connoisseurship as a qualitative method designed to improve education (1998). Built upon John Dewey's (1938) notion

that people need to “lift the veils that keep the eyes from seeing” (p. 324), educational criticism and connoisseurship seeks to allow the researcher, or connoisseur as he calls it, to perceive the complex, subtle, and relevant elements of a classroom (Eisner, 1994).

As evidenced by the name, educational criticism and connoisseurship consists of two primary components: a) connoisseurship and; b) criticism. Connoisseurship is the art of appreciation and requires the connoisseur to have sufficient educational knowledge that would enable him/her to observe the nuances of the classroom (Eisner, 2002). As is the case, the connoisseur/researcher must possess a sufficient amount of educational knowledge to be able to recognize the nuances and subtleties of the setting he/she is observing. Inversely, criticism is the art of disclosure, which allows the connoisseur to point out areas where improvement is possible in the classroom. It is the criticism that serves as a medium for the connoisseur to reveal his/her perspective with the underlying intent of improving education. The ultimate goal of the method is to communicate educational evaluations that reveal the complexity, ambiguity, and richness of the events taking place in schools and classrooms (Eisner, 1994). The aim of educational criticism and connoisseurship, much like this study, is to allow for the improvement of how teachers, particularly urban teachers, are trained for the classroom. In improving the training of teachers, students in turn have a greater opportunity for quality educational experiences that could potentially provide them with opportunity of a productive, fruitful existence.

There are four components to Educational Criticism, which are interconnected and serve to guide the researcher, as they do in this study (Eisner, 1998). The first

component is description, which is the actual portrayal of what the connoisseur saw or heard. In chapter four I offer detailed descriptions of each participant's classroom teaching interwoven with interview data from the formal and informal interviews. The second component is interpretation, which is the researcher's analysis of what he/she observed. My interpretations are woven into the descriptions of each participant in chapter four. The third component is evaluation, which connects to Eisner's idea that Educational Criticism should aim to improve education. In chapter five I turn to the literature to evaluate the practice of the four participants. The fourth component is thematic, which are the themes that emerge from the data. As will be discussed in further detail in chapter four, the themes that emerged served as the structural framework for this study in how I present the data.

Beyond the structure of Educational Criticism, one must also consider credibility when engaging the method in research. As a form of arts-based research, Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship can clearly not seek some sort of universal truth given its contextual positioning. The method recognizes neither absolute objectivity nor complete subjectivity while viewing all experience as transactive. Despite not seeking an absolute truth, Eisner (1998) offers three items of relevance in appraising the methodology: a) structural corroboration, b) consensus, and c) referential adequacy.

For the first criteria of credibility, Eisner (1998) offers the idea of structural corroboration in appraising an Educational Criticism. Structural corroboration refers to a "confluence of multiple sources of evidence or the recurrence of instances that support a conclusion" (Eisner, 1998). This is an inductive process where, much like triangulation,

multiple data sources are considered in assessing the findings of a study. While structural corroboration may be attained, the transactive nature of Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship allows readers to make their own inferences and potentially draw differing conclusions from the researcher. In this study I looked at the formal and informal interviews, artifacts, as well as classroom observations to corroborate the data.

Similar to structural corroboration is Eisner's second criterion for believability of an Educational Criticism is consensus. Consensus, as the word would indicate, seeks multiple assenting opinions regarding the findings of an Educational criticism. Though consensus may confirm the researcher's conclusions, it does not necessarily reveal truth. While a jury may reach consensus on a guilty verdict for a person in a murder trial, as we have seen, it does not necessarily mean they were right. Eisner (1998) argues that while it is important to reach consensus on one's work, it does not mean that failing to do so makes the work untrue. Regardless, to achieve structural corroboration, I shared each of my descriptions with the participants for the purpose of member-checking.

The third and final criterion for appraising an Educational Criticism is referential adequacy, which is achieved when the researcher accurately describes and interprets the educational setting that sheds light on something that had not been seen before (Eisner, 1998). In short, referential adequacy is achieved when readers of an Educational Criticism are able to see what they might not otherwise have without the aid of the critic. I would argue that my credentials as a connoisseur of diverse classroom settings serve to support the notion that I can offer readers the opportunity to see what they might not otherwise have in this study.

Discourse Analysis

When looking at dispositions, there are multiple approaches to consider. Diez (2007) identified four primary methods for assessing dispositions, each possessing benefits and shortcomings. The *Psychodynamic method* gives participants the opportunity to respond to a series of items relating to dispositions on a Likert scale. While this may prove helpful in completing simple statistical analysis, it assumes a set of right answers, leaves open the possibility of inaccuracy based on participants wanting to provide a “right answer”, and is not connected to evidence in practice (Diez, 2007). The *Humanistic method* allows participants to answer open-ended questions about their dispositions. Again, this format may lead participants to say what they think is expected of them and is also disconnected to evidence in practice (Diez, 2007). The *Behavior method (from the perspective of the teacher)* asks participants to self-reflect/self-report on their dispositions. Though this method is contextualized in practice, it limits itself to only discovering explicitly known dispositions to the teachers, failing to identify dispositions of which they may not be aware. Finally, the *Behavior method (from the perspective of the teacher’s students)* calls for focus group interviews of students where they are asked to describe the teacher’s dispositions. While this method allows for an outside perspective, the students could be influenced by the way questions are asked, be dishonest for fear of retribution from the teacher based on a negative answer, and do not consider actions or words of the teacher as observed by the researcher.

Two other models for assessing dispositions may prove superior to those listed by Diez (2007). The first, discourse analysis, can allow one to examine the implicit or

underlying meaning of teacher dispositions. By observing and recording rhetoric both in the classroom and in other environments within the school where a teacher may spend his/her time, one can develop a coding system to represent the intent and function of the classroom dialogue (Thornton, 2006). Macbeth (2003) described discourse analysis as a means to investigating “the conversations—of ordinary lives, settings, and occasions for the ways in which order, meaning, and structure are assembled and achieved from within them, and in real time.” (Macbeth, 2003, p. 247); it can serve as a means to make the implicit dispositions teachers hold become manifest. According to Fairclough, (1989, p.2) “Ideology is pervasive in language” and discourse analysis is a method to explore linguistic expressions that represent underlying independent constructions (Thornton, 2006).

There are a number of approaches to discourse analysis one might undertake. van Dijk (2000) recognized that discourse analysis does not have a singular theoretical framework or methodology, as it should be perceived as a collective perception encircling a variety of approaches instead of one way. However, Sheyholislami (2001) astutely noted that rhetoric – what one writes or says – is not arbitrary, but instead is done with intention and possesses underlying meaning. When considering a multitude of methods of discourse analysis for the sake of this study, I chose to utilize Macbeth’s (2003) approach to discourse analysis, which seeks to examine the daily conversations of individuals to determine how it is the receivers of their discourse make meaning, but also how his/her dispositions become manifest.

The discourse analysis in this study focused upon the dialogue that occurred in participants' classrooms between them and their students, periodically during their off hours, and during their formal and informal interviews with me. I coded the discourse for themes, which ultimately served as the framework for how I displayed the data in chapter four. By exploring the rhetorical interactions of the participants, I was able to glean insight into their dispositions (Macbeth, 2003).

While discourse analysis of a teachers helped provide greater understanding of teachers' dispositions by examining language, in tandem, observations also allowed me to glean greater insight into what Thornton (2006) terms "dispositions in action" (p. 56). Dispositions in action, seek to examine "patterns of thought about issues of morals, ethics and diversity reveal dispositions toward thinking *and* how they manifest themselves through the actions teachers subsequently take in the classroom" (Thornton, 2006, p. 56). Working in tandem with discourse analysis, observations allow the researcher to move beyond psychometrics and self-reflection to glean insight about dispositions through behavior in the classroom (Ritchart, 2001). Both discourse analysis and observations allowed for a richer understanding of dispositions I may not have gotten through other means.

Research Questions and Study Design

In this study I examine the practice of four culturally responsive teachers in the most diverse public school in a western state to examine their intentions and dispositions while observing how those entities operationalize in a classroom. I identified and selected the participants through a snowball sampling (Glesne, 1999) by asking administrators,

teachers, and students who they would deem effective, culturally responsive teachers. Ms. Amanda Ward is an white, monolingual English teacher, Mr. John Granado is a Hispanic, bilingual English teacher, Ms. Sandra Fay is a white, monolingual Science teacher, and Ms. Kate Borsch is a white, monolingual Math teacher. The teachers reflect the demographics of the current teaching force where about 75% of new teachers are female, approximately 79% are white, with the majority of them being monolingual (Frankenberg, et al., 2009). Approximately 84% of the entire teaching force is white (Sleeter, 2008). It is my belief that by looking at these teachers in the most diverse high school in the state, one might conclude that if they can do it here, they can do it anywhere.

Again, my research questions are as follows:

1. What are the intentions and beliefs of culturally responsive teachers?
2. What are the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers?
3. How does culturally responsive pedagogy operationalize in the classroom?

1. What are the intentions and beliefs of culturally responsive teachers?

I first formally interviewed each teacher individually regarding how he/she perceives his/her educational style, beliefs and what he/she sees as his/her role in students' lives before looking at the curriculum and individual syllabi of the classes I then observed each teacher individually to gain a general understanding of the intentions as allayed to the students in writing. It was my intention to glean better understanding of the individual teacher's intentions while gaining some insight into his/her dispositions. The

formal interviews lasted about one hour. I also informally interviewed the participants before and after classes to ask questions that may have emerged. Finally, I conducted follow-up interviews with the teachers to further examine the role of intentions in their practice.

2. What are the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers?

When knowledgeable, skilled, veteran practitioners are empowered to make a difference in the lives of students and stark differences still exist within their classrooms, we need to examine why these differences exist. Dispositions may be the key. Further research is needed in the area of how teacher dispositions are enacted in practice — dispositions in action (Thornton, 2006, p. 67).

In order to see how dispositions are enacted in practice, I sought to identify the dispositions of my participants. As mentioned above, I asked several questions in the formal and informal interviews with hopes of unearthing some of the teachers' dispositions. These questions concerned both teachers' intentions and their beliefs, as I am defining dispositions as being composed of beliefs, intentions, and actions. As Diez (2007) points out, asking open-ended questions in an interview format is the basis of the Behavioral method (perspective of the teacher) of assessing dispositions. Further, Yero (2002) argues that understanding of great teaching is not entirely accessible through direct observation, which justifies utilizing multiple methods for assessing dispositions, or trying to unearth them by looking at them in multiple ways.

Another such method is through observations where I recorded the rhetorical exchanges of the teacher inside and outside of the classroom. Congruently, I observed the teachers "in action" so as to attempt to identify dispositions through each teacher's behavior. Utilizing Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship further allowed me to

methodically observe and analyze what the teachers' rhetoric and actions. Villegas (2007) argued that in observing dispositions found in culturally responsive educators, the observer must examine "evidence from instructional plans and classroom observations of consistent use of rigorous learning goals; frequent use of an enriched curriculum that builds on students' prior knowledge and experiences while stretching them beyond the familiar; and verification that all students, not just some, are learning over time (from samples of student work and performance in other relevant classroom assessments)" (p. 378). In short, I will utilize interviews and observations to attempt to gain a fuller understanding of the teachers' dispositions in looking at their beliefs, intentions, and actions.

3. How does culturally responsive teaching operationalize in the classroom?

Following the formal interviews, I observed each teacher's classroom practice for two weeks using educational criticism and connoisseurship. I focused on how/where the teacher's culturally responsive intentions are realized. I then compared each teacher's stated culturally responsive intentions with the actual pedagogical/curricular choices made. Educational criticism and connoisseurship allowed me to most completely see and understand these choices while providing opportunity for vital findings because of the features unique to connoisseurship. In the follow-up interview, I asked certain questions about each teacher's perception of how his/her intentions are operationalized. I believe the interviews honored the voice of the teachers while providing insight into their experience. This insight allowed me to compare teacher's perceptions of the operational curriculum with the intentional curriculum. It also allowed me to see how their

dispositions are enacted in the operational curriculum. Finally, I shared the descriptions and interpretations with the teachers as a means to member checking. I asked them each to read their descriptions in chapter four to check the classroom descriptions and all quoted material to ensure accuracy. I told them that I would delete any material that was not accurate. According to all four participants, the descriptions provided are accurate.

I believe that educational criticism and connoisseurship allows for an extensive, artistic description of the delicate details of a classroom. It was my intent to provide thick description of the classroom in order illustrate how culturally responsive teaching is not only enacted, but also how intentions and dispositions relate to the operational curriculum.

Data Collection

The Participants

The four participants in this study are all public school teachers with varying degrees of experience and differing extracurricular responsibilities in the most diverse high school in Colorado. Two of them teach English, one teachers Earth and Physical Science, and the other teaches Mathematics (see Appendix D). To get a representative sample of the teaching population, which is comprised of 75% female and 79% white (Frankenberg, et al., 2009), three participants (75%) were white females and the other was a Hispanic male. I selected the participants through a snowball sampling (Glesne, 1999) where I asked administrators, teachers, and students who they would deem effective, culturally responsive teachers. Ms. Amanda Ward is a white, monolingual English teacher, Mr. John Granado is a Hispanic, bilingual English teacher, Ms. Sandra

Fay is a white, monolingual Science teacher, and Ms. Kate Borsch is a white, monolingual Math teacher. It is my belief that by looking at these teachers in the most diverse high school in the state, one might conclude that if they can do it here, they can do it anywhere.

Initial Interviews

As mentioned previously, I formally interviewed each teacher before observing them for approximately an hour, asking each participant the same 20 questions. One interview was conducted at a participant's home while the others were conducted at the school. I recorded each interview and took notes at the same time. Later I transcribed the audio recordings of each interview. Each of the interview questions was specifically connected to the research questions, as they sought to glean insight on the teachers' beliefs, intentions, and dispositions. I also asked some demographic and biographic questions (see Appendix A).

Follow-up Interviews

Follow-up interviews were not conducted until I had completed all observations and identified themes in the data. The questions were designed to respond to provide more insight into my findings (see Appendix B). I asked the same four questions to each participant and each interview, all of which were conducted at the school, lasted about 15 minutes. One of the most interesting outcomes of this interview was the commonality of the teacher's responses to the question "How do your intentions connect to your beliefs?" In each case the teachers adamantly stressed that they could not separate their beliefs

from their intentions, and anyone that could was not to be looked upon kindly. I examine this in more detail in chapters four and five.

Observations

I observed each teacher for two weeks from September 2010 through December 2010. Given that I had a full-time teaching job during the observations, my schedule was restricted, which did not give me open choice of the types of classes I would observe. However, the teachers were each open to my coming to any of their classes and each allowed me to sit where I pleased while not formally introducing me to their classes. Despite this, in each class students invariably would ask their teachers what it was that I was doing in their classrooms, in their environment. To me this was a clear indication that there was an intimate environment set up in each classroom, with my presence acting as a potential breach to this sacred, protected space. At times students would ask me directly who I was and what I was doing there, to which I would simply reply that I was learning from their teacher. Generally, they soon forgot about my presence.

Most often I would sit at a desk in the back of the room while taking handwritten notes and recording each observation so that I could ensure that I accurately recorded the discourse of the classroom. On my first observation I would record a detailed description of the room along with a classroom map that included my best guess as to students' ethnicities and genders. I would confirm with each teacher my guesses to ensure accuracy. After handwriting my observations, I later typed them while checking my recordings to ensure accuracy. I felt it imperative to capture the details so as to accurately portray the subtleties and complexities of each teacher's practice.

Study Limitations

As with most studies, there are potential limitations to this study. All four participants are in the same school, which may allow that school's culture to influence their practice and/or dispositions. Moreover, the teachers may not have consciously considered how culturally responsive practice, thinking, or believing affects their classroom practice. While none of the participants said that they were not culturally responsive teachers, each of them conceptualized culturally responsive teaching slightly differently (see chapters four and five). Along with this, given that 75% of the teachers were white females, their cultures may have influenced their beliefs and dispositions. It would be valuable to extend the study to a wider, more diverse population in the future.

Finally, I observed the teachers during the first part of the year (Ms. Fay had just recently returned from maternity leave), which could have had an effect on the classroom's behavior, interactions, and relationships. Ms. Ward, Mr. Granado, and Ms. Fay each commented to me informally that their classrooms looked different from when I had seen them, as they had been allotted more time to build relationships with their students. Despite these limitations, I believe there is a great deal to be learned from this study that could have implications to multiple audiences.

About the Researcher

Upon completing my bachelor's degree in journalism at Ohio University, I moved to New York City to pursue a career in public relations and advertising that spanned three years. In that time a sort of internal attrition was taking place within me as I attempted to develop a career as a professional in the public relations/advertising field. The attrition to

which I refer was a realization that the corporate career I had trained for lacked in its ability to help me realize a sense of fulfillment. Slowly I began to look for other potential vocations that would help me achieve the gratification I sought in my career; it was this search that led me to teaching, and more specifically, teaching in diverse settings. Having lived in one of the most diverse cities in America taught me great appreciation for the richness diverse communities offer. Moreover, my experience in media allowed me to hone my skills in utilization and analysis of rhetoric.

In 2001, I left the skyscrapers of Manhattan to become teacher at a high school in the shadows of the mountains of metropolitan Denver. Within two weeks I left the comforts of my 17th floor office in New York only to enter an urban classroom in Denver, with no formal teacher education of which to speak. It was during this year that I joined an alternative teacher education program, taking classes at night while teaching on an emergency license during the day. This experience was both rewarding and disappointing in that because of the alternative program, I was afforded the opportunity to teach in a public high school without any formal training but the experience the program provided me did little in helping me learn the nuances of being a reflective, culturally responsive, and theoretically-minded educator. As I continued to learn, succeed, and fail in the classroom for several months, it became clear to me the alternative licensure program I was enrolled in was not providing me with the necessary tools to succeed. The program lacked a theoretical-practice connection, often provided practical survival techniques to teaching, and provided assignments that seemed disconnected from my experience in the classroom. Finding that I could continue to teach for the remainder of the year, I quit the

alternative licensure program with the intent of attending a more traditional teacher education program that could potentially provide the tools I sought. In the process, despite recognizing my shortcomings regarding pedagogical/content knowledge and skill, I found that I possessed intangible qualities that seemed to engage students in my class while fostering an environment where I built relationships with them and they with each other. It seemed to me that for the first time in my working life, I recognized that I had a disposition for a particular vocation – teaching in a diverse setting.

I enrolled in a combined licensure and master's degree program at a private university in Colorado two years later, after completing a number of required provisional courses required by the state for licensure at a community college. My experience in the traditional program empowered me with the pedagogical knowledge and skills I was lacking, while also encouraging me to further examine my dispositions (though not labeled as such) toward teaching, toward myself, and toward working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations. I soon secured a job at another high school in metropolitan Denver that boasted the most diverse population of any high school in the state. Here I learned a great deal from the students and teachers in my culturally and linguistically diverse setting. During that time, to an even greater extent than me, I found that many teachers lacked the preparation to be reflective, culturally responsive, theoretically-grounded practitioners. Moreover, it appeared that many of the most effective teachers shared similar dispositions, many of which I saw in myself.

After several years in the classroom, teaching courses in Advanced Placement Rhetoric that helped further hone my skill in rhetorical analysis, and armed with the

realization that teachers truly were not being adequately prepared as the system existed, I decided to pursue my doctorate at the institution where I had received my master's degree. During this time I was exposed to literature on culturally responsive pedagogy, teacher dispositions, and quality teaching. Further, I had the opportunity to work with the University Partnership Team in observing diverse classrooms for the purpose of developing a tool to measure quality urban environments. This work led me to have a greater appreciation for why it is so difficult to quantify or even qualify all the facets of truly great educators. These experiences sparked a passion within me to try to better our understanding the complexities of great teaching so that we can utilize this knowledge in training both pre-service and in-service teachers who can provide the world-class education all children deserve. This dissertation is the first step in what I hope will be a lifetime of work.

CHAPTER FOUR

DESCRIPTION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Introduction

In this chapter, I present in depth descriptions of each of the four teachers in this study before interpreting those descriptions. As already discussed, the data collected for this dissertation was done so utilizing the qualitative methodology of Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship. Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship calls for analysis that is comprised of four parts, including *description*, *interpretation*, *evaluation*, and *thematic* (Eisner, 1998). I also analyze the teachers' and students' discourse to help examine the rhetoric of the participants from the interviews and the observations to examine their dispositions.

The descriptions in this section are intended to provide detailed, authentic representations of the four teachers, with those representations drawing upon the interview transcripts and observations of the participants. The descriptions are organized by the three domains of culturally responsive classrooms, which include the teacher domain, the student domain, and the environment domain (explained below). These domains were borne from the data and serve as a conceptual framework for

understanding the beliefs, intentions and operations of the teachers. I will further examine the domains in chapter five, where I will provide evaluations and thematics, but here will seek to provide descriptions and some interpretation for the readers so that they may be afforded the opportunity to draw themes for themselves. Ultimately the dispositions of teachers will also be illuminated, but as they are defined as being comprised of beliefs, intentions, and operations, all three components must be in place for anything to be considered a disposition.

As mentioned in chapter three, I drew upon grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to analyze the data. While first coding the data for themes related to intentions 24 themes became manifest (see Table 1). Upon further examination the codes were subdivided into concepts of similar content that allowed the data to be more succinctly grouped - ten concepts resulted. The final step in understanding the data included developing groups of similar concepts that I call domains, or in this case, domains of the participants' intentions. The three domains that resulted were the teacher domain, the student domain, and the environmental domain. I repeated these steps for beliefs and operations, which yielded an identical result. These domains are explained in more detail below.

The Teacher Domain

The teacher domain is comprised of beliefs, intentions, and operations related directly to the teacher's personal qualities as a human being or specifically as an instructor. This domain is subdivided into two parts: a) the person and b) the instructor. The person sub-domain refers to the beliefs, intentions, and actions one has regardless of

vocation and directly related to the self. This includes items such as being self-reflective, being open-minded, or being self-aware, all concepts concerned with the individual and unaffected by one's chosen vocation. The instructor sub-domain is concerned with one's beliefs, intentions, and actions surrounding one's practice as a teacher, including curriculum, classroom environment, pedagogy, or professional relationships. This includes items such as planning lessons with the end in mind, explaining purpose to students, and maintaining high expectations for students.

When sharing the descriptions and interpretations of this domain, I present them in two sections for each teacher. The first section is *The Teacher Domain: Beliefs and Intentions*. This section intentionally groups beliefs and intentions so that the reader can see the interrelatedness of these two entities. As participant Jenna Ward said, "It's impossible to separate my beliefs from my intentions. Why would I do something, or intend to do something I don't believe in?"

The second section is titled *The Teacher Domain: Operations*. This section provides detailed description of how the teachers' beliefs and intentions operationalize. I also offer an interpretive analysis of these operations to help explain the meaning of the descriptions. Here I will seek to illuminate "the potential consequences of practices observed and provid(e) reasons that account for what has been seen" (Eisner, 1998). It is my intent to not only illuminate the descriptions with my own interpretation but to also do so through the voice of the teachers themselves.

The Student Domain

The student domain consists of the teachers' beliefs, intentions, and operations related directly to how the teachers are inclined to think about, interact with, instruct, and/or perceive students. This domain is also subdivided into two parts: a) the individual and b) the learner. The individual sub-domain refers to the beliefs, intentions, and actions one has about the individual inside and outside of his or her classroom. More specifically, this sub-domain concerns itself with how teachers perceive the people rather than just the students in their classes. Examples of this sub-domain include teachers concern with a students' culture, his/her life outside of and beyond school, and allowing individuals to be authentic within the educational institution. The learner sub-domain is concerned with one's beliefs, intentions, and actions specific to students' education. This includes items such as helping students take ownership of their learning, teaching for growth, allowing choice in the curriculum, and differentiating instruction for individual needs.

When sharing the descriptions and interpretations of this domain, I again present them in two sections for each teacher. The first section, *The Student Domain: Beliefs and Intentions*, examines the teachers' beliefs and intentions related to their students. The second section, titled *The Student Domain: Operations*, provides detailed description of how the teachers' beliefs and intentions operationalize respective to their students. I once more offer an interpretive analysis of these operations to help explain the meaning of the descriptions. I will include both my own and the teachers' interpretations of the data to explain the descriptions.

The Environmental Domain

The environmental domain consists of the teachers' beliefs, intentions, and operations related directly to the classroom environment he/she has in his/her classroom. This domain is also subdivided into two parts: a) the social-emotional and b) the intellectual. The social-emotional sub-domain refers to the beliefs, intentions, and actions one has about the relationships with students or that the students have with one another. This sub-domain is comprised of elements such as creating a safe environment, building a community of learners, making kids feel valued, and establishing mutual respect among all members of the community. The intellectual sub-domain is concerned with one's beliefs, intentions, and actions students' interactions with content. This includes items such as students acting as teachers and teachers acting as learners, connecting content to students' lives, and making content interesting to students. The primary difference between these two sub-domains is that the intellectual domain specifically focuses on the interaction of students/teachers with content while the social-emotional does not consider curriculum's role in the classroom environment.

When sharing the descriptions and interpretations of this domain, I once more present them in two sections for each teacher. The first section, *The Environmental Domain: Beliefs and Intentions*, examines the teachers' beliefs and intentions related to the social, emotional, and intellectual environment of their classrooms. The second section, titled *The Environmental Domain: Operations*, provides detailed description of how the teachers' beliefs and intentions operationalize respective to their classroom environments. I once again offer an interpretive analysis of these operations to help

explain the meaning of the descriptions. I will include both my own and the teachers' interpretations of the data to explain the descriptions.

Table 1

Domain	Concepts	Codes
The Teacher	a) Who are you? b) Who is the teacher? c) How do teacher and person intersect?	a) Self-aware, open-minded, self-reflective b) Start with the end in mind, explain purpose, clear/high expectations, attainable objectives c) Be transparent, be authentic
The Student	a) I see you. b) It's more than content. c) I teach you.	a) Awareness of kids' cultures b) See kids as individuals, teach the whole person (not just content), teach life c) Build capacity in learners, teach for growth, build love for knowledge, allow choice/differentiation, teach for empowerment
The Environmental	a) A community. b) A place of caring. c) It has to be fun. d) It has to be engaging.	a) Building relationships and trust, create a caring, safe community of learners, make kids feel valued b) Have fun/make it fun, make it interesting, connect to students' lives/real life, students as teachers and teachers as learners

Greenville High School

Greenville High School is a low performing public high school in the Yellowstone School District in Colorado. While Yellowstone is a large school district with 7 high schools within its boundaries, Greenville is only one of two that are not classified as high performing or predominantly white. Greenville, classified as the most diverse high school in the state of Colorado, serves over 2,000 students from grades 9-12,

46% of which are on free/reduced lunch. Within the student body over 50 different languages are spoken and nearly 100 ethnicities are represented; 38% of the school identifies as African American, 24% identify as Hispanic American, 32% identify as Caucasian, and 6% classify as Asian American. What the numbers do not relay is that in a number of the classes I observed, many students were refugee students, multiracial and forced to identify with one particular race, and undocumented students.

The school has a graduation rate of 77.5%, an enrollment change rate of 32% annually, and a dropout rate of 6% (which can be an inaccurate number given that schools can manipulate this number through a variety of means). On the state standardized test, the Colorado State Assessment Program (CSAP), 68% of students were below proficient in mathematics, 50% were below proficient in writing, and 50% were below proficient in science. While these numbers are somewhat staggering, they hardly reveal the talent of the student body (it is also important to note that in the state of Colorado, students do not need to pass CSAP as a graduation requirement and are in no way accountable for their performance on the 15 hour test).

Students adorn the recently painted, industrial white hallways and cafeteria of the high school, walking across the newly installed blue and green patterned carpet. There is a crescendo of noise from the early morning until just before the cacophonous bell indicating that the first period is about to begin. Students frequently greet passersby in the hall, creating a kind, inviting atmosphere. In the bottom level of the two story building, student artwork, adorns the main hallway walls along with announcements hung on green or blue bulletin boards on topics including scholarships, campus recruitment visits, military recruitment visits, and upcoming events such as the school play.

The campus of the high school is in the north end of the Yellowstone School District and is surrounded by apartment buildings, some homes, and townhomes, far more than any other high schools in the district. Further, Greenville is bordered by several low performing high schools from a neighboring district, some of whose students take advantage of the open enrollment policy of the Yellowstone District by enrolling at Greenville High School. The school resides on a main highway near an interstate and looks every bit its age, very much resembling a building built in the 1970s with few windows, base brownish red bricks, and even still maintaining the foldaway walls in most of its classrooms that were used during the open classroom era. It resides on the Sam campus as one of its feeder middle schools and is adjacent to a large football practice field that doubles as a track practice area and a lacrosse field. Most sports teams however, participate on the fields or tracks of other high schools in the district.

Ms. Jenna Ward, English Teacher

Journey to a Teacher

Jenna Ward has been a teacher for the past 15 years, but struggles to recall why she chose that particular vocation. “I didn’t have this amazing moment where I was like ‘Oh my gosh! I want to be a teacher!’ and I really didn’t have great teachers growing up either. I mean I don’t remember some definitive moment; it just worked out that way and I’m glad now,” recalls Ms. Ward. After growing up in a small ranching town in rural Colorado, Ms. Ward chose to major in English Education at a small Colorado University before graduating college in 1995.

She began teaching reading and history in a rural school that housed 150 students in grades kindergarten through 12, all of whom were educated in the Sam building. After six months she moved to a larger town several hours north where she taught seventh and eighth graders at a junior high school. After a year she again relocated to a southern Colorado town where she found her niche in high school, teaching journalism and English there for nine years before one last time relocating to a large town in the north. It was there that Greenville High School became her home four years ago. Beyond being a teacher the past 15 years, she has also coached volleyball, been a class sponsor several times over, been an advisor for the school newspaper and broadcast journalism club, sponsored several proms, and been a cooperating teacher to several student teachers. As she says, “I pretty much do anything they ask me to do.”

Upon meeting Ms. Ward for the first time, it is difficult not to be struck by her short, dyed reddish-brown hair and large tattoo of a rose on her shoulder. Her aura is that

of a laidback punk rocker, much younger than her chronological age, and extremely charismatic. One can be fooled by her appearance, as she maintains a style that one might find in an East Village fashion magazine, often adorning t-shirts, with slacks, or hipster-sheik dresses one might find in a trendy SoHo fashion boutique. One could easily be fooled by Ms. Ward's fashionable appearance and cool air, as she is quite an intellectual and extremely family oriented. Living with her husband and three daughters, she currently teaches four classes at Greenville while beginning work on her PhD at a local university where she also is a full-time graduate assistant. I observed her during September and October of 2010, at which time she was teaching three sections of a lower level English 10 class and an Advanced Placement Language and Composition course. I witnessed Ms. Ward teaching one of her English 10 courses that met directly after lunch in the late morning.

The following descriptions and vignettes are organized into six sections: 1) The Teacher Domain: Beliefs and Intentions, 2) The Teacher Domain: Operations 3) The Student Domain: Beliefs and Intentions, 4) The Student Domain: Operations, 5) The Environment Domain: Beliefs and Intentions and; 6) The Environment Domain: Operations.

The Teacher Domain: Beliefs and Intentions section, *The Student Domain: Beliefs and Intentions*, and *The Environmental Domain: Beliefs and Intentions* are comprised of extensive quotes from Ms. Ward's interviews to provide the reader with a clear understanding of what she believes is important as well as what she wants to do as a teacher with her students. *The Teacher Domain: Operations*, *The Student Domain:*

Operations, The Environmental Domain: Operations sections draw to a lesser extent from Ms. Ward's interviews, but includes a few short vignettes drawn from her classroom interactions with students to illustrate how her beliefs and intentions come to life. It is important to note that themes from each of the domains will appear in the descriptions provided in the operations sections. This speaks to the organic nature of teaching and illustrates the point that great teaching is a highly complex process. While we can learn from these descriptions and can even grow and develop as teachers, one cannot simply generate a checklist of appropriate skills, beliefs, and intentions to give to another teacher with the expectation that following those steps will lead to great teaching. All of these beliefs, intentions, and operations are connected, necessary, and complimentary. I will try to illustrate how these domains can interact in my interpretation of the vignettes found in the operational sections.

The Teacher Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

"My intentions connect completely and totally to my beliefs. I don't know how you can disconnect intentions and beliefs." – Jenna Ward

Jenna Ward - The Person

Hello Ms. Ward

After driving through a suburban Denver neighborhood where many of the middleclass, two story houses that resemble each other surround a modest community pool, I pull up to Jenna Ward's home. After inviting me into her home we stand at an island in her kitchen where her family and friends regularly gather where I ask her about her to describe her about what it means to be a culturally responsive teacher:

I think it means being aware of my own possible biases. Some of them I'm still just learning I have; I don't think some of the things were conscious for me for a long time and now I feel like, in the last 5-6 years, I've really started to think of what I'm doing. Because I think what I was doing before was 'Oh lets read some Latina literature' or 'let's read a black author' so I was trying to be culturally aware of the kids and trying to do things that way but I wasn't aware of my own things that I was doing that was probably more detrimental than reading all white authors. So like, if we read Sandra Cisneros and I'm the one teaching it, then does it really matter who we're reading.

While Ms. Ward may not have been conscious of her teaching for some time, it is clear that she is a highly conscious person and this consciousness translates into her classroom and her beliefs about and intentions for teaching. This sense of consciousness begins with the self, and in Ms. Ward's case, that consciousness first manifests in her belief and intention of being self-reflective. This sense of self-reflection connects to her core as a person, as at one point in her career, she began to deeply question if she wanted to be a teacher, eventually deciding to enroll in a master's program in business while she taught. It was her deep-rooted belief in self-reflection however, that led her to eschew the business world for the classroom. In reflecting on her purpose in life, Jenna found what she believed to be her purpose: "The real moment I decided to be a teacher is when I finished my MBA and then I was like 'ok yah, I should not do other things. I should do this' so that was probably 8 years ago and that was a conscious decision that I want to be a teacher and not go into the business world."

This belief in self-reflection for herself also translates into a stated intention for her classroom. She tells me that she continually contemplates ideas and actions in both her personal and professional life. One can see it in her classroom, as she often will pause in the midst of a lesson and ask her students, "What can I do to make this work for you?"

or “How can I better teach you?” She will also not hesitate to stop a lesson in the middle of a class if something is not working for her students and try to pursue other avenues. According to Jenna, self-reflection is an essential part of her beliefs around what it means to be a good teacher and a thoughtful person.

With Jenna’s proclivity for self-reflection also comes a strong sense of self-awareness, yet another aspect of her consciousness. She shares that she is highly aware of her words, thoughts, and actions, particularly with regard to how they may affect others in her classroom. She recognizes how, “Just small things that I say in the classroom could have a huge impact on the way students hear it.” This leads Jenna to carefully choose her words, consider her tone, and contemplate her delivery of messages. This is also quite clear in her classroom where she will often alter her tone with students based on what she knows about their personalities. For example, she may be much more playful and sardonic in an exchange with a student with whom she knows is much more self-assured and playful while she will adapt a much more empathetic, almost overly welcoming tone with students who are more sensitive and likely to seek excuses to dismiss her and the need for her class.

Given that she teaches in the most diverse high school in the state of Colorado, and has worked in highly diverse schools the predominance of her career, Ms. Ward says that her awareness often centers around issues of bias and race. She explains, “I am really aware of my own possible bias, aware of the kids’ possible biases, and where they’re coming from.” For Jenna, awareness and reflection seem to be intricately linked and while she believes these are important factors for which to be conscious, she also claims

them as intentions in her teaching, believing that “You have to be reflective if you’re going to be a great teacher, you have to have a heightened sense of awareness to be a thoughtful human being.”

Jenna is deeply committed to self-reflection and self-awareness in her teaching and with regard to her students. In a school with a graduation rate below 75%, she knows the importance of this. Moreover, she recognizes that working with such a diverse student body, awareness of race will play into that reflection and awareness:

I think I have a lot of white guilt to be honest. I try to be cognizant of it at least, when we look at our classes and at who is failing, I traditionally fail white kids more than black and brown students, and I don’t know if I’m being harder on them; I don’t know. I’m sure it plays a massive role in what I do, but if anything its reverse racism, which is horrible, it’s really bad but I would think that my main point with that is as people, when a kid says something, I feel this way or I feel that way, I can’t pretend to understand where they’re coming from.

Though Jenna might not understand where students are coming from, her consciousness has gotten her to a place where she will not only recognize that, but will also seek to at the very least be a listener and will continue to reflect on it. “I think I’m definitely aware that race is an issue so I hope I don’t over compensate for it, but I know I’m always considering, ‘Am I being open minded here?’ ‘Do I understand where this kid is coming from?’” This continual reflection and heightened sense of awareness affords her students a high level of comfortability in her class, as it is common to hear kids talk about issues specific to race. Further, that level of comfort manifests in other ways, as students seem to view Jenna’s classroom much like one would view a living room in one’s house. Students regularly eat snacks or late lunches in Jenna’s room, many take off their shoes, some put their feet on chairs, they may leave to go to the restroom or to their

lockers without asking permission, and they talk about personal subjects such as boyfriend/girlfriend issues. Jenna is intentional about creating this type of space in her classroom and believes the classroom is much like her home and the students are much akin to her kids. Interesting, Jenna's belief about and intention to be conscious creates results one might not recognize upon first glance, which truly speaks to the complexity of the classroom.

While it is clear that Ms. Ward is aware of herself, her thoughts, and her actions, she is also cognizant of others around her, again, particularly with regards to issues relating to race and ethnicity. She specifically thinks about and seeks to be aware of how race and ethnicity affect the educational system in general. When I ask her about this topic, her eyes widen, and she talks with even more passion than she regularly exudes:

I think it affects it hugely because it societal, which then reflects in education, which then in assessments that we give our students. I think its huge and completely unfair and even when we pretend to be aware of it and we do ethnicity training, it's so engraved in everyone and if you look at the majority of the white teachers that we have, there's just no way we're not reinforcing bad social norms. We are just reinventing the wheel every year since the Puritans. I mean, when you can go into a classroom and there's still the need for rows because the teacher feels like they're going to be judged because their classroom is noisy so still in the 21st century, that we have teachers that still feel like they have to lecture and put kids in rows and the kids aren't a part of it and it's still this really random thing. So if that isn't a race issue, then I don't know what is because that is old school, what's working best for white people. That's how you take the ACT, quiet in rows. The whole thing is more than you can do at the school level, and hopefully at the school level you can show kids that they aren't just part of this huge system and show them that they can be a teacher. I mean why don't we have many black teachers?

It is clear to anyone who spends more than five minutes with Jenna Ward that her consciousness fuels her passions for her students, which she would argue is "a blessing

and a curse.” While that may be true, it is difficult to argue with the fact that part of what makes so many of her students love her and many of her colleagues admire her is that deep sense of consciousness that drives her teaching.

I am Who I am

Along with being conscious, Ms. Ward feels it is deeply important to be transparent in every aspect of her life, particularly as a teacher at a diverse school. For her, transparency means being an authentic person, which she not only believes is virtuous for human beings, but also is an intention for her in her classroom. She speaks proudly of this transparency:

I think if you would ask most people, including my daughter, who sits in my class all the time, there’s not a big difference between the way I am in the class and the way I am outside of class because I feel like if I’m not living my life the way I want to live it at all times, I don’t think I do anything in my personal life that is detrimental to other people and I would never do that in the classroom. I mean if a kid ran into me in public and I was drinking a beer, I don’t think they’d be shocked; that doesn’t mean it’s bad, I mean, I’m an adult and they’re kids and I can drink beer.

Being transparent is hardly an option for Ms. Ward and it often helps her create engagement with students while supporting her in managing her classroom. Her students clearly feel more connected to her because of this, ostensibly viewing her not only as a teacher, but also as a human being. The students know her husband’s first name and in every class I observed, they would comment on her outfits, illustrating that they paid close attention to her as a person, not just as a teacher. She draws on these forged connections in her classroom management, as she will often correct behaviors by showing disappointment or sharing with students how their actions are affecting her

personally. This technique not only regularly corrects undesired behaviors, but also has allowed Jenna to boast that she has only had to refer students for disciplinary measures to the school administration a handful of times over the past four years.

Ms. Ward's transparency comes through not only in her relationship building and classroom management, but also in her pedagogy. She explains that, "I'm really honest with kids and open about my process as well." She tells me that this openness about her teaching practice and curricular approach creates "buy-in" with students and serves to allow them to take ownership of their learning.

Though transparency is a virtue Jenna holds in high esteem while also being one that serves her well in her classroom, it is not without a drawback. Personally, Jenna feels that her authentic approach to living life leads to misconceptions about who she is as a person. Professionally, Ms. Ward explains that her authenticity can be somewhat detrimental as well. "I think of myself as an intellectual, but I know I don't come off that way to a lot of people, that I come off as that fun loving party gal more often than I'm considered an intellectual; until people get to know me and then hopefully they think 'Oh she's smarter than I thought.' But it's the tattoos that lent me to that description."

Regardless of the shortcomings of living life authentically, Jenna's transparency are what make her truly human and are an integral part of what make her a great instructor.

The Planning Process

Whereas the aforementioned beliefs and intentions relate to Jenna Ward the human being, they do in fact permeate her teaching. There are however, some beliefs and intentions that are specific to Jenna's teaching. One such example is the belief that it is important to plan her curriculum with the end in mind. An adherent to Wiggins & McTeigh's (2005) Understanding by Design (UbD) model of curriculum writing, which advocates planning courses, units, and lessons by first considering the outcomes teachers desire from their students before scaffolding to that end, Ms. Ward believes it is imperative to plan her curriculum this way. About her process she said:

When I'm planning, I definitely start with the end in mind. So this year I looked at the college readiness standards and I did this for all levels. I started with those standards in mind and then figured out how they were going to prove they met those standards and then I planned little mini lessons based on how they are going to meet that standard.

In that process she also looks for examples of what she is expecting from her students, believing that her students need such examples to understand what is expected of them. To gain an even better understanding of what she plans for her students she does or has done every assignment that she asks kids to do in order to both understand how students will complete the assignment and to anticipate what kinds of difficulties students might have. She regularly references her experience with students when she confers with them around difficulties they are having, an approach that seems to make the kids feel as though the work they are doing is not only valuable, but also achievable. Further, Jenna uses her ability to anticipate difficulties students will have by planning mini-lessons for

the whole group or one's in which students can choose to participate depending on their needs.

I See Every Student Individually

Beyond starting with the end in mind to help her better comprehend what her students will experience, Ms. Ward also believes that this approach helps her individualize instruction. Going back to her approach to planning with college readiness standards this past year, Jenna talked about how planning with the end in mind helped her support each learner individually in her class:

If students have already met the standard I planned to meet at the beginning of the year, then I asked them how they could either help other kids in the class or how they could move forward; so it's more individualized because they are each responsible for their own learning. So I'm usually trying to think of not the class as a whole, but what can each kid do. I try to design my lessons with that idea in mind that you can move on or you can take a little longer if needed so that there's ways to move forward without making anyone feel left behind.

Given the vast array of ability levels in Jenna's classroom and many classrooms in public schools across the country compounded with the demands of high stakes testing, an individualized approach to teaching is essential. Jenna believes in the importance of individualized instruction for academic success (among other factors to be examined later) and is intentional about finding ways to do it successfully in her classroom. Interestingly, Jenna told me that she directly equates individualized instruction with culturally responsive instruction. In her estimation, a large portion of what it means to be culturally responsive is "being really individualized" with instruction.

For Jenna Ward, being self-aware, open-minded, and self-reflective are essential beliefs for her as a person and she is intentional about them in her teaching. Congruently,

Ms. Ward believes that she must start with the end in mind when planning, be intentional about everything she does, and individualize instruction in her classroom. I will examine how these intentions operationalize or come to life in her classroom in the ensuing section, but one point Jenna made is important to note. When she talked about how her intentions and beliefs connect, this dynamic, charismatic teacher first explained how they were inextricably linked. However, upon deeper reflection, she grew frustrated and explained:

You know, the more I think about it, the most frustrating part of teaching is that my beliefs that reflect in my intentions are not always what's expected of me in public education. I disdain standardized testing, yet I spend a lot of time thinking of how to make kids successful on it. I don't know how I can disconnect my intentions and beliefs unless someone makes me. That's really sad.

The Teacher Domain: Operations

Scene 1: Tragedy and being human

Jenna's roster is comprised of 26 students, but that number will continue to change due to drop outs, newly added students from within and outside of the district, schedule changes, expulsions, and for a number of other possible reasons. Moreover, she rarely if ever has a day where everyone is present. In the time I observed, the mean number of students in the room was 18. She shares with me that more than half of the kids are at least two grades below reading level and the rest of them are English language learners with a variety of degrees of fluency. Of those students, there are 7 Hispanic females, 4 Hispanic males, 5 African-American males, 6 African-American males, 1 Asian-American male, and 1 European-American female, and 2 European-American males. Within that racial make-up however, Jenna tells me that there are multiple

ethnicities including a Somalian male, a Spanish female, Mexican females and males, and a Peruvian male.

The classroom, which Jenna shares with three other teachers in the school, is the only room of the four participants I observed that has windows. Like much of the rest of the school, it is painted industrial white and has a few educational posters on the otherwise barren walls. The desks are set up in pods of four desks; there are eight pods in the room.

Jenna is standing stoically at the front of the classroom near the teacher's desk that I never saw her sit at in all the time I observed her. She is drinking water out of a tall, metal water bottle. After the bell rings to signify the beginning of the class period, Jenna looks up passionately at her students. "Can I talk seriously for a sec?" she asks. "Today I'm a little emotional...I need you to bear with me. I'm concerned about each of you as people I care about. I get on you about school work and none of that really matters in the big pictures. I'm here not as a teacher, but as someone who cares about you in life. Did we decide to do reading time?"

An African American female asks, "Ms. W, what's wrong? You look like you're going to cry."

"One of my kids was killed."

"Was he killed outside of school?"

"Yes," she answers as tears begin to fall down her cheeks.

She turns to me as she attempts to compose herself, "I told my first hour too. I promised myself I would tell all my classes that I care about them."

“Why did you do it?” I ask.

“I want them to realize that I do care about them and that the last thing I might tell them isn’t about school.”

At a pod of four girls, one shares, “Now we’re sad Ms. W. Are you gonna be you?”

“I’ll be ok.”

Still trying to compose herself, Jenna turns to me again and asks, “Is it important that they read for 30 minutes? No. This is the second kid I’ve had shot in a month.”

A Hispanic female asks, “Are you ok Ms. W?”

An African-American female adds, “I hate seeing happy people sad.”

The students in the class are clearly concerned for their teacher and very much empathetic. There is a tangible community of care in this classroom. Jenna heightened perception has led her to reflect deeply on the tragedy and on whether/how she would tell her students about what has happened. Her reflection led her to one of her core beliefs that she does not simply teach content, but rather teaches people who have lives outside of school. Further she is insistent on telling her kids that she cares for them and reveals to them that she wants them to have fulfilling lives. Despite trying to maintain some composure, Jenna is incredibly transparent in sharing her very human emotion with her students, recognizing that she was most likely going to cry. Her genuine show of care for her kids further illustrates this transparency, as does how honestly the students receive her care.

At the conclusion of the discussion of the tragedy, Jenna instructs the kids to read the independent book they had already chosen. Upon planning the current short story unit with the end in mind, Jenna decided to assign the independent book to assist the students in completing their summative assessment of writing a short story, an assignment that she intentionally designed to which students are provided the opportunity to bring their individual ideas, views, and writing. Among other things, Jenna is intentional about using the independent book to assist the students in recognizing the author's craft as well as in identifying elements of plot that they will be expected to utilize in their own works. She also is intentional in giving students choice in picking their novels, allowing them to discard them in favor of others they may find more interesting. Once the students begin reading, the room grows silent for a few minutes, but quickly the noise in the room crescendos and after redirecting students a few times, she reflects and turns to me to say, "They're not into this right now. We're going to move into something else."

Scene 2: Life's lessons

While the previous, tragic vignette allows us to glean insight into Ms. Ward's craft, it is important to note that not every day is so grim. The archetype of the violence-ridden, low-achieving school is inappropriate and misleading at Greenville. In fact, Ms. Ward's classroom at Greenville High School offers a space that is more about life than it is about death.

"I'm going to get started. We're going to read a short story today, which is a story with a lot of difficult words in it. Before we do that, however, I've laid out what we need to do before the end of the quarter." On the board, Jenna has written what the students

will do by the end of the unit, illustrating that she not only has planned with the end in mind, but has a clear purpose for her students. One of the assignments they will complete affords the students to choose the product they will use to illustrate their understanding of a short story they will read. According to Jenna this assignment is intended to provide individualized instruction and products for students while providing them choice in the process.

After explaining what is written on the board, Jenna continues, “Last class you read the story, then defined words; instead I’ll give you the words first and you’ll get 20 minutes to define them. Each table gets one paper with words on it. Write 2 word definitions, 1 sentence, and add it to the word wall for everyone to see during the story. Each word will be on a half sheet of paper.”

Jenna walks around asking questions and checking for understanding. She tells kids they have 20 minutes to finish. After the 20 minutes have passed, Jenna informs the students that they will read their independent reading book for 25 minutes before writing a 5 sentence summary of what they read. In planning with the end in mind, Jenna recognized that she wanted the students to write an original short story that included all of the elements of plot as their summative assessment. To scaffold to that activity, Jenna wanted them to examine the elements of plot in an individual reading assignment. To compliment the project, students are expected to do periodic, small assignments using their books as an anchor; in this case, students will develop their writing skills by writing original summaries of what they read. This intention of this assignment is to build

capacity in students' writing and in their reading comprehension, two life skills Jenna believes to be incredibly important.

Upon commencing the reading, Jenna intentionally tries to model the notion that reading is fun by sitting in a slouched position in her chair while crossing her legs. However, the students seem not to be interested in reading, as most of them put their heads down or talk to someone near them. Jenna corrects and redirects individual students first and then the entire class without change. Finally, her patience has worn thin and she is clearly upset. Turning to the entire class with her hands extended as though she is pleading she asks rhetorically sarcastic, "Ok, so you're all comfortable with the story and have written your five sentence summary."

"Sorry miss," several students reply.

Jenna is clearly upset but says in a calm voice:

So that means we didn't do well reading by ourselves at all. There are a few people who did, so those of you that did read, I am not absolutely not talking to you. You have got to try. It can't be me doing all the work all the time because that's what's happening in this class. I'm coming in here busting my ass and you guys are ignoring it. I'm asking you to work with me. Of course I don't mean all of the people all of the time. But I cannot leave this classroom tired everyday because I have been doing the reading, I have been doing the discussion, and I have been checking up on you constantly. You're not children. You're in 10th grade and we need to get on it. So when I give you the time and I ask you to do something, if you have a problem, then we have to find you a teacher that you don't have a problem with. Because obviously I am too nice or I am too mean or I am too annoying or I am too easy or whatever the problem is with my class that makes you feel like you don't want to get the work done. If the work's not interesting, let's do something else. It's not like I don't give you options. I'm happy to give you options. What I need from you is some effort, a little effort. And literally, please, I'm not going to be offended. If I'm not the teacher for you, then lets find one that is. Because if it's me, I'm the only common denominator that I can think of. Its gotta be me. And so I don't know what I'm doing wrong but you need to tell me what it is.

If I'm doing something wrong or if I'm not helping you the way you need to be helped, I need to know. Otherwise it's just gonna stay. And everyday you're not going to want to come in here. I want this to be a place where you want to be.

After several seconds of stunned silence, an African-American male shares, "It's not you. It's, personally in my opinion, it's us because we take advantage of you. Other teachers would probably get mad and send you to the deans. I think that it's me because I don't talk to anyone else and I think that I take advantage of you in the classroom too much and so I have to straighten my ass out."

"And so will you do that for me? Or do I have to enforce it? Because I don't like that."

"I am enforcing myself."

Jenna again shows her consciousness by metacognitively reflecting with her students on what is or is not working for them or for the class in general. She is quick not to simply blame the students, but very much questions her role in why the class is not going well. Moreover, Jenna is transparent with her students in sharing her disappointment and frustration while concurrently inviting them to be self reflective, an example of her teaching the whole person while also seeking to build capacity in her students. She illustrates in her diatribe that she cares for them to which her African-American male student reciprocates that care, which coincidentally illustrates self-reflection on his part in accepting responsibility.

At the conclusion of the lesson, Jenna reflects again, sharing that she "won't do the short story unit again. It's not -----". Some want to do it but a lot of them are doing it

because I asked them. It's my fault. I'm forcing them to do it. They're doing the best they can with what they got.

In the two vignettes above, Jenna Ward operationalizes a number of her beliefs and intentions for having a heightened sense of consciousness, being transparent, starting with the end in mind, and individualizing instruction/providing choice. Congruently, several other beliefs and intentions from the student and environmental domains become manifest. As is the case, several other examples of the operationalizing of intentions and beliefs from the teacher domain will be described and interpreted in the ensuing sections.

The Student Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

The Individual

I Teach Kids Not Content

For Jenna Ward, teaching consists of much more than the content that she teaches. As an English teacher, she clearly recognizes the importance of teaching reading, writing, speaking, and thinking, but for her, the content is but a small part of her intentions for her students. When I ask her about what she considers to be the most important aspects of teaching she explains, "It's teaching skills towards being a good person. What are you doing to make this world better or at least not harming it? Like thinking skills and learning how to be open minded and not automatically judge someone and just learning how to be open minded and learning how to express yourself effectively and how to get your point across."

Ms. Ward believes strongly in the importance of "teaching life." In her opinion, her aim is to not only teach the English curriculum, but to teach the life curriculum. She

sees fostering what she considers “good people” as her primary goal in educating her students. It is clear that her priorities may run contrary to those of more traditional educators, but seeing students as individuals, not just standardized test statistics, is extremely important to Ms. Ward. This connects to her idea of one of the components that comprise culturally responsive teaching. She sees CRP as “really individualized”, arguing that it is imperative to get to know her students beyond just students in her English class. This belief manifests in her intentions, as she spends the predominance of the beginning of the school year building relationships with students, continuing that focus throughout the year. She recognizes that students have unique familial experiences, friendship issues, personal struggles, and the like, which she invites them to share in some of their writing assignment or in conversation. One would be hard pressed to find a time during the day when there are not any students in Ms. Ward’s office during her off hours, sharing their challenges and triumphs or asking for some kind of advice that has nothing to do with the district approved curriculum.

These relationships, this belief in knowing kids’ personal lives may lead to Ms. Ward’s formulation of what she believes culturally responsive teaching means while revealing her intentions for planning her curricula:

I think planning with culturally responsive techniques in mind is good for every kid. I think that good teachers by default are often culturally responsive...maybe it’s not even culturally responsive, maybe it’s just you’re a good person and you know how to be nice to other people and care about other people, not just about culture; but culture is who you are, so if you’re talking about a person, you’re also talking about culture.

Ms. Ward understands the embedded nature of culture in human beings but she adds that in the moments of teaching, she may not constantly think about it. “I think once I’m in there and the class is running, I’m just talking to kids. I’m not constantly thinking about race.” This thought may lead one to believe that Ms. Ward takes a color blind stance, but that is hardly the case. She believes that a large part of getting to know students is getting to know their cultures, their norms, their beliefs, their races, ethnicities, and the like. Equally as important, she is highly interested in getting to know how her students experience the world through their cultural lenses.

Culture Determines How We See

To understand or at least get a better sense of how one experiences life through one’s cultural lens, one must first learn about culture. For some people this knowledge come through reading books, or attending professional developments, or through some other secondary means, but for Jenna, truly learning about culture has to be much more humanistic:

For me, a lot of learning about culture or an individual’s culture is just sitting down and asking and talking about it. I’ve learned more about other cultures and the thinking of other cultures at Greenville more than anywhere else. It helps being in such a diverse place and maybe that’s what creates culturally responsive teachers, I don’t know. In my previous school, I felt like I was a good teacher as well, but there were only white and Hispanic students, and the black students who were at that school sought me out to be the sponsor of Black Action - because I’m obviously so black (she chuckles). I want to learn about other cultures all the time if I can, all about it.

Not only is Jenna intentional about becoming more aware of other cultures, but she also is excited by the process of learning. She does not hesitate to spend time in her class to talk about issues of culture, either when they become manifest or as a result of

intentional planning. For Jenna, knowing general ideas or claims about different cultures is hardly sufficient; she believes she needs to know the cultures of each of her students.

“As a person, I believe I need to ask them about their cultures and try to get to know them well enough so I can say I can understand where you’re coming from, at least to a point that if they’re black and were raised here or anywhere, then my experience is going to be light years different than theirs.”

Knowing not only her students’ cultures, which is an essential part to know them as people, is a large part of what makes Jenna the teacher she is, which may lend itself to a number of occurrences. Several of the students who regularly attend her class (even if they arrive late) rarely show up for others. There is also a high level of comfort in the room, as kids talk openly with Jenna about their lives, their troubles, etc. Further, Jenna intentionally will allow students to talk in their own cultural languages and dialects while occasionally correcting inappropriate language, but not every time. She will also code switch or even attempt to talk to students in their native language, sprinkling in her own version of “Spanglish.” Jenna’s belief about the value of knowing individuals and her intention to see her classroom as such is embraced by her students and lends itself to creating an environment where every individual can thrive.

The Learner

I Know You’re Smart, Now You Need to Know it

As it is clear that celebrating, knowing, and appreciating individual students is a large part of Jenna Ward’s teaching, there is also a learning component that is highly important. Interestingly, this learning focuses much more on growing as an individual

and as a thinker than it does on understanding what symbolism means or recognizing the comma rules. Upon being asked about her intentions for her students she explains:

My intention for my students is that they start to gain a sense of their ideas mattering and being intelligent so even if I have a low level kid that doesn't have writing skills or whatever, I definitely want to foster in them that those skills are something that we can gain, that you're smart that you can be intelligent and make points without being a fantastic writer at the start and hopefully we can catch up your skills to your ability to contribute to the conversation.

Not only does Jenna strongly believe in her students' ability to learn, but she is teaching for growth. In a constructivist sense, she is looking to identify what students know and to build upon that foundation in accomplishing some end. She explains that, "My intention is always to move them from where ever they are to a higher level." Jenna focuses her energy on what students can do rather than what they cannot. It is clear that her belief in the idea that students can learn is genuine, which comes through in her interactions with her students, often leading them to more firmly believe in themselves. Jenna says that she intentionally seeks to build students' confidence, believing this is essential to good teaching.

Beyond this, she recognizes what she describes as "the white power structure" that exists in America, and believes it is important to be intentional about helping all of her students be cognizant of and able to navigate this system. She connect this idea to her need to teach for growth:

It is so important for all of my students to be able to know what do you need to move from point A to point Z and how am I going to help you get that is really important. And so even if that means, on standardized tests, that was created for white people, by white people to support white structure, if I'm talking to a black kid, well what do you need from me as a person whose part of that system to get to the point where you're doing well on that as well.

In teaching her students, Jenna believes at the heart of her teaching is the idea that she is helping students recognize the need for being empowered. Ms. Ward tries to use her “insider” position as a white, middle class, educated person to enlighten her students on the culture of power. She wants her students to not only recognize these systems, but also to acquire the tools necessary to navigate that system.

Ms. Ward often balances teaching an understanding of the systems of power with inviting her students’ voices into the process. For her, part of building capacity in learners and becoming empowered is having a voice. She is highly sensitive to ensuring her students’ voices are a part of the learning process. “Every once in a while I’ll reflect on something and think did I handle that correctly, did I let that kid say what they needed to say?”

This invitation for students to share their voices manifests in the development of the classroom environment, the inclusion of all opinions, and in the curriculum itself. Jenna believes that an aspect of having a voice in the curriculum is giving students choices. She explains that, “choice is an intention in everything I do.” She sees choice as a means to getting investment on the part of the students in the learning. Further, she believes it necessary to allow students to feel empowered by the ability to choose how they will learn the material and if they did so. She explains, “Like I’ll say ‘I’m not sure how to teach vocabulary to you but we need to learn it so how do you think we should?’ So I’ll involve the kids in that process. I often, if I’m not sure how I want to do it, I ask them how they want to show me that they’ve learned something.”

At the center of Jenna Ward's beliefs and intentions about students is the notion that she is seeking ways for students to feel empowered and able to navigate the world in which they live. While doing so certainly includes teaching reading, writing, speaking, and thinking, for Jenna, much of what students need to be successful lies beyond that which is in the English curriculum guide at Greenville High School.

The Student Domain: Operations

Scene 1: You have the answers within you

Jenna instructs the students that they will begin reading *The Masque of the Red Death* individually at their desks. Upon receiving these instructions, several of the students groan before suggesting that she read it aloud while they follow along.

"We love to hear you read," a Hispanic female student says pleadingly.

"Wouldn't you all like to read to yourselves? I have my concern. I love to read out loud because I love to read but do you follow along? Do you understand? Does it help your comprehension?"

"Yes!" the class exclaims in unison.

"I ask this because this class isn't for me, it's for you. But I'll do it if it helps."

Jenna realizes that modeling fluency is an effective teaching strategy when working with struggling readers or second language learners, of which there are an abundance in this particular class. She struggles a bit however, with serving as a sort of crutch for them, as she believes in building capacity in her students. She proceeds to hand out books to kids, which she must do every period given that the school does not have

enough books for every student to sign out. One kid winces, afraid she will hit him with a book. Jenna jokes with him about how funny it would be for him to tell that story.

Jenna reviews what they did in the previous class period where they talked about the bubonic plague, a central concept in Poe's short story. After a brief review she reads, stopping periodically at difficult words that she planned to have the students work with after reading the story. Even in her questioning she has planned with the end in mind and is intentional in what she asks about. Every paragraph or so Jenna will stop to also clarify meaning, to ensure that students comprehend the difficult language for which Poe is known. She stops after a few paragraphs and asks, "So, what's the scene?" Several students confer in answering. She then turns to a particular student who she knows struggles with vocabulary. "Andre, what does improvisatory mean?"

Andre replies that he does not know.

"Well what does it sound like?"

Other kids in the class answer, "Improvisation."

"Good, what does improvisation mean?" she asks Andre specifically.

Others tell him. He repeats a wrong answer another kid has told him.

"Not exactly, anyone else?"

She comes back to Andre "Who does improv?"

Other kids start to give him answers

"It's OK, help him."

"Stand up comedians," Andre finally answers, using some of the hints he received.

“When they do that, what do they do?”

“Make it up on the spot.”

“So what does improvisatory mean?”

“Making it up on the spot.”

Jenna smiles widely, “*You* got it.”

A group two white males and an Asian male sitting at the Sam pod exclaim, “We said that 10 minutes ago.”

Here Jenna operationalizes a number of her beliefs. She is clearly seeking to build capacity and a sense of empowerment in Andre. Despite the fact that he clearly does not want to answer the question, Ms. Ward persists in helping him realize that there are strategies one can use when trying to determine the meaning of difficult words. Further she is aware that there are particular pressures at Greenville High School for many African-American males not to show that they are smart. While Andre may not have known the answer to the questions Jenna was asking, he may have been hesitant to answer them if he did. She also clearly believes that Andre has the ability to learn and while she could have simply asked another student or let him get away with saying that he didn’t know, she persisted until he realized he could answer the questions. Answering a difficult question can serve to build a student’s confidence, which most certainly is an aspect of becoming more empowered and building capacity. Moreover, Jenna is teaching beyond her content, as she is looking to teach a life skill that will transcend the English classroom.

Continuing to read, Jenna continues to stop before asking for clarification on what is happening in the story. As a Hispanic girl asks for clarity on a particular part of the story, Jenna walks over to two boys, one Hispanic and the other African American, who are not paying attention before flipping their books to the correct Peggy. After answering the Hispanic female's question, the kids asked to read the rest of the story either individually, in pairs, or in small groups. Again Jenna is providing choice to her students and seeking to build capacity in her students by allowing them to utilize their strengths to accomplish the task at hand. Lending credence to Jenna's fear that she is serving as a crutch by reading to the students, a group of African-American males asks if she will read to them.

She replies, holding now articulating her belief in the need for students to be empowered, "No, I cannot. You need to. I won't always be around to read to you."

Scene 2: It's all about options

As we walk down the hallway from Jenna's office to her classroom she shares with me, "Today my lesson is optional. Who knows how that's going to go?" We pass a student who is on her roster but is walking in the wrong direction and Jenna asks "Hey, am I going to see you?"

"I'll be right back."

The bell has rung and only four students are in class of 26. While there are rarely 26 students attending class, this number is particularly low. Within a minute, several students trickle in. The students recognize that the room is rearranged. After reflecting on her last few classes, recognizing that students may have a difficult time staying engaged

with the content and not socializing, Jenna has rearranged the pods into rows. There are seven rows comprised of five desks each. Ms. Ward made sure to get to class early so that she could not only rearrange the desks, but also could write the day's agenda on the board so as to provide clear expectations while appealing to visual learners. On the board

Jenna has written the following:

Friday: Novel test **in class** essay with textual proof

Creative Options:

- Write your own symbol story
- create your costume
- create your mask
- Draw the inside of the castle
- Create the invitation sent to the guests
- Create the music

To understand the story well: pg 348 – 110

- Answer all questions
 - Please discuss with group members
 - Each person hands in their answers
 - Write discussion answers as well
- Just Answers!

After the kids read the board while she takes attendance, Jenna begins the day:

“Can I have everyone sit in these two rows por favor? Thank you. I know I’ll have to say this again because as lot of people aren’t here. I am going to have to talk about expectations. Today, there are options. If you feel like you need it, I’ll have you come with me over here to talk about essay writing and format; I’ll do a mini-lesson in about 20 minutes. If you don’t need it, then you don’t have to come over. We’re going to write the essay in class; the reason is not because I want to punish you. My husband and I are in school, and this is how they do it in college. Your creative representation from *The Mask of Red Death* is due at the end of the hour. I made an example for you; here’s my invitation.”

Jenna shows the class what she has done, explaining her work before answering questions. This is another example of beginning with the end in mind, as she did the assignment she gave her students so as to troubleshoot any potential difficulties. Jenna

has also intended to provide choice for her students in this class with the goal of empowering them by giving them choice. Further, students have the opportunity to represent their knowledge in a form with which they feel comfortable. Jenna hopes to create a sense of ownership in and excitement for the learning that will take place. Concurrently, Jenna is creating a space for her students to bring their own individual experience and interpretation to the learning; she is allowing them to look through their individual lenses through which they experience the world to make meaning of the learning.

After she finishes sharing her work, she begins to walk about the room, stopping at students' desks to confer with them. After talking to an African-American male, he asks, "Do you have something on your leg?"

"I have on pantyhose."

"Oh, it just looked different."

She moves to a space where three Hispanic females have pushed their desks together while working. They are the only students who have taken this bold step, but Jenna allows them to do this, later telling me that they are three of the best students in the class. The girls are talking in Spanish to one another while Jenna stands near them, listening intently with a smile on her face.

"What Miss?" one girl inquires.

"Nothing. I like to listen to you speak Spanish that's all. I'm learning so I can practice what I know."

"Really?"

"Yeah, but my version is not really Spanish; it's Spanglish."

“I kind of talk Spanglish too,” another girl adds.

“Sometimes it’s hard for me to understand but I’ll get it. I’ll keep practicing.”

In this exchange Jenna shows that she not only invites students to speak in their native languages, but that she is aware of her and her students’ culture. Further, there is a sense of empowerment the girls may have felt in that Jenna was candid in sharing that she learns from listening to them speak Spanish. Jenna illustrates for the students that she too is a learner and that learning can happen in a number of different ways; either formally or informally.

After this exchange and to ensure they understand the directions, Jenna sits with several kids who came late or went to the bathroom. She sits in a desk next to one of the students who is standing over her. She explains the options and clearly shows what is due at the end of the day

“You have many options today. If you need to read, get quotes, or stop on creative options, choose what you need. I’m going to start my mini-lesson in 10 minutes.” As she finishes her sentence, a white male enters the room and tells Jenna, “Adrian is going to be late; she is at a congressional hearing and she’ll be back.”

“Yeah I know she is, but where’s everyone else?”

While the kids work on their projects, Jenna is taking attendance to account for all of the students who came in late that were marked absent at the beginning of class and reflecting on how she might handle the attendance issue that has grown increasingly worse. She turns to me and says, “I’m going to have to write referrals. I hate writing referrals. Why aren’t they coming? It has to be me.”

Our discussion is interrupted by an African-American female's phone. After anxiously taking it out of her book bag and nervously looking at her phone she quickly pivots her body toward Jenna, revealing a concerned face that asks, "Miss, look who it is. Can I answer it?"

"Aw, it's your mama. Sure go ahead, but go in the hall."

Jenna illustrates clearly to her student that she sees her as more than just a student in class, but one that has a life outside of it. In previous observations, I witnessed Jenna take students' phones but in this case she allowed the student to take the call because the girl was clearly unaware that the phone was on and it was ostensibly her mother calling, who was fully aware that her daughter was in class. Jenna also illustrates trust for her student, not asking if the call was really from her mother but rather trusting that it was. This kind of trust seems to build a stronger relationship for Jenna and her students, though it does offer potential for students to take advantage of the teacher.

In these vignettes, Jenna's intentions of teaching the whole person/teaching life, being aware of her students' cultures, seeing culture as a lens through which people experience the world, and teaching for empowerment/building capacity in learners. Further, the vignettes serve as further example that great teaching is a highly integrated, organic process, as many of the themes from other domains became manifest in the descriptions.

The Environmental Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

The Social-Emotional

The Family

At the very foundation of Jenna Ward's being is a sense of caring for others and a love of people in general she describes herself as "a very social person" who "loves relationships and loves people. I'm friendly. I think I'm a good person and I definitely am a people person." She goes on to explain:

So I would describe myself to thrive around relationships, I don't like being alone in general, but I am a caring person, I do care about others and I want to do what's best at all times for other people and I enjoy taking care of other people. I enjoy being mom in the classroom and that doesn't bother me. I like the idea that I can be depended on.

Ms. Ward believes it is important to be intentional about creating a caring environment in her classroom that is comprised of building relationships with students, creating spaces where students can build relationships with one another and developing a sense of mutual respect among the classroom community. When thinking about her classroom environment, Jenna considers it much akin to that of a household environment:

I think about the classroom like I would think about how I would run a house or a family. I love having people over, I like giving my own children choice, and I want people to feel comfortable at my house. Class is like that.

My belief is that my room runs like a family where there's love, caring, and respect, but it isn't always rosy. For example, I got a bad report from a substitute teacher about my kids, and I thought I would lose it. When I go in to the class, things are changing. I'm upset because the kids didn't have my back and they embarrassed me. They didn't respect someone when I taught them that they have to. I guess it's like parenting, sometimes you have to discipline kids. I don't like this intention but I have it; that's what a good parent does.

In being able to realize such a metaphor, Ms. Ward recognizes that it is imperative to build relationships with students. When I ask her to describe her students, she replies:

They're kids, I don't know, they're like my children. They're annoying and they're great and I can't stand them and they make me laugh and you have to stay on top of them to make sure they're doing what they need to do and sometimes they screw up and that's ok. I mean, they're like your children, you love 'em, and they're somebody that....I don't know how else to say that, everyone says that, kids are the reason I learn a lot about myself and the world. It's the relationship that matters to me most. They're people I have relationships with.

Jenna's belief in developing a caring environment manifests in a number of ways.

Upon entering her room, a novice might think that there is a great deal of chaos and a general lack of control, but Jenna explains that this is intentional:

I wouldn't say it's out of control, there's definitely respect. I respect them and they respect me. I don't have discipline problems. I suppose it's not really quiet but that's not a problem. What was I reading the other day, if you set objectives that are unattainable, like having a quiet classroom, that's unattainable - you're going to fail; it's silly. It may be noisy, but my classroom environment is very relaxed; everybody's opinion is valued and heard.

Jenna's affective nature is continually on display in her classroom, as she often sits with students, uses encouraging language, will often touch them on the arm or shoulder, and frequently smiles when talking to them. It is this sense of caring and building relationships that make teaching meaningful for her. "I teach because I care about kids. I really do and that's the truth. I love them and I think they deserve the best. It's my intention that they feel safe, that they feel cared for and valued."

The feeling of care is not simply between Jenna and her students. Her kids, who regularly work in groups, often speak kindly to one another. When needing a pencil, pen, piece of paper, etc., they do not ask Jenna but instead will share with one another freely and always be sure to say "please" and "thank you." Jenna models this behavior, as she will often share her supplies with students, often encouraging students to use her personal computer to identify a piece of information or allowing kids to borrow her books for their

independent reading projects. Further, students feel a sense of freedom in the class because of this sense of caring, which they often use responsibly. Students frequently enter and depart the room for various reasons without asking permission while students who are not even in Jenna's class will openly enter and leave the learning space. The door is literally and figuratively always open in Jenna Ward's classroom. Upon noticing this I ask Jenna if this is intentional. She explains that "Having an open door policy where kids come and go is an unspoken intention. I'll never tell a kid they can't come in my room. I want it to be a welcoming place and I hope they're respectful enough of me and interested enough in what we're doing that they don't want to leave."

The Intellectual

No Crazy Lectures

Within Ms. Ward's caring classroom are some high expectations she possesses about students' ability to learn and a highly rigorous curriculum. Jenna believes however, that for her students, particularly her most resistant learners, for them to access the content it should be interesting and fun. When describing her ideal day in the classroom, she explains, "My perfect day at school is probably really reading something super interesting and then having a great discussion where the kids are jazzed about it and I'm jazzed about it. That's really cool. I love those days when you have really good arguments and discussions."

Students frequently discuss the content they are covering in spaces Jenna intentionally creates. She regularly asks students to somehow connect the content to their own experiences or knowledge, and will occasionally help them make those connections for themselves. In describing how she intentionally creates these spaces Jenna explains,

“When I’m writing a lesson, I think about what I want them to do. What’s the skill I’m looking for and how am I going to make sure they can show me this skill and then what’s the most interesting way to show that skill for them.”

Intricately linked to making learning interesting, Jenna believes it should be fun. In her own life she admits that, “I love reading and I love learning.” She believes it’s important to bring this joy for learning to her students and it manifests in her intentions for her lessons:

I want learning to be fun. I can’t go in and have it be crazy lecture; I don’t have the energy for that. But I am energized by fantastic conversations; I am energized when the kids really love it. My intention in that selfish manner is that they’re really going to enjoy the lesson.

Jenna’s passion for and joy in learning permeate her classroom environment. While not every student, every time, exhibits this joy, kids often will comment on how “cool” the content is or how “shwag” something they are creating is. Further, students will often react emotionally to much of what Jenna presents, leading one to believe they are engaged in the content because of the interesting, fun way in which she shares it. This notion of making learning fun and interesting may not lead to 100% engagement, but it likely captures more attention than she otherwise would.

The Environmental Domain: Operations

In the midst of the short story unit that Jenna is required to teach, she talks excitedly to me about what she is about to teach that day as we sit in her office just before class: the bubonic plague. She explains to me that she has chosen an article describing how the plague affects the human body so as to give her students an opportunity to connect to this information on a human level. She is using this article to create

anticipation for Edgar Allen Poe's *The Masque of the Red Death*, which the students will be reading in just a few short minutes.

In planning the lesson, Jenna decided that she wants her students to create an original short story at the end of the unit. To help them successfully do this, Jenna wants students to first be able to identify these elements in a variety of short stories, which she has already done, before practicing writing some short pieces utilizing the elements of plot. The elements of plot they have studied and will be expected to use in their summative, authentic assessment include exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.

After we finish our conversation as we walk down the dimly lit hallway to her classroom, Ms. Ward is greeted by her students conversing at the door and eventually by those who have arrived early inside the classroom. Though Jenna teaches in two different classrooms, her door is regularly unlocked so that students can get seated even if she is running late. This open door creates a sense of equal ownership of the classroom, as the students do not have to be dependent upon the proverbial key master to grant them access to this shared space.

By the end of the class period there are 18 students, but only 13 when the bell initially rings to indicate the start of class. Jenna does not single out students who arrive late, but instead hands them what they need without missing a beat of what she is doing, before asking them why they were late and encouraging them to get to school on time. There are times when she has sternly instructed students to get to class on time, but she does this privately and rarely allows the class period to end without having a positive interaction with them. After taking attendance on her small laptop she stands in the

middle of the room among the eight pods of four desks waiting for the students to quiet down.

“Alright, I have a really gross story for you. I am going to ask you to read it at your table and then we’ll talk about it,” Jenna announces as she passes out the story before giving them a purpose for reading. “The part I really want you to focus on are the symptoms. We are going to read about the black plague and then we’ll discuss.”

At a pod consisting of four African-American female students a student says jokingly, “You forgot us Miss. W. It’s because we’re black, ain’t it?”

“Yes, I’m a racist,” Jenna retorts with mock sympathy. The students laugh along with Jenna, with the source of the humor behind the joke being that of purposeful irony. The girls recognize the ridiculousness of their comment for the purpose of humor.

After handing out the paper, the students do not begin right away, instead continuing to talk with one another. Jenna redirects several students, asking them to “Please begin reading the story so we can talk about it,” but she only enjoys a varying degree of success. Finally she asks forcefully of the class, “Ok, read it please.” While she is much sterner in her request this time, it is still phrased as a request and not a command, which fosters that sense of caring while also illustrating respect.

A student in the pod of African-American female with whom Jenna just joked says, “I thought we’d read it together. We love your voices.”

“Ok, do you want to do this together?”

“Yes,” the class shares collectively. Jenna has allowed them choice in how the lesson will proceed while quickly self-reflecting on whether her plan was a better one before ultimately allowing the students voices to be heard in how they will read the story.

She clearly values their opinions and they obviously feel comfortable sharing them. One could only find this in an environment that is safe and trusting. This small decision by Jenna also illustrates to her students that their thoughts are valued.

Jenna begins, “I like this because I’m fascinated by two things: the black plague and hoarding. That blows my mind because I’m the opposite of a hoarder. I watched a version of this last night where this woman that doesn’t ever throw anything away; her house was full of trash. And her upstairs was so full of trash clear up to the ceiling that she couldn’t even go upstairs anymore so she just closed the door and then she started filling the rest of the house with trash. So the bathroom got full of trash and she just closed the door. And then she decided to buy adult diapers because she didn’t have a bathroom and then she’d go to the bathroom in them and then throw those in the kitchen. And this is how she slept – the only space she had in her house at all was this single chair and she’d strap herself into the chair so she wouldn’t fall out and that’s how she slept. And when the guys came in to clean her house they said it’s so toxic in here we can’t clean your house. We have to bulldoze it down. And they just bulldozed the whole thing down.”

“Did she have kids?” a student asks.

“She did have kids; they were grown and they kept saying like ‘mom you probably shouldn’t live like this’ and she wouldn’t let them throw anything away. It was crazy.”

“Miss I don’t think that’s hoarding, I think that’s filthy,” another student shares.

“But most hoarders are filthy. Because they can’t help it, they just keep everything. Okay here we go.”

In sharing her story, Jenna is not only being somewhat candid in what she finds interesting and what she does in her spare time, but also is trying to make the learning interesting and enjoyable by sharing her anecdote about hording. While this is loosely related to the story they are about to read, Jenna has piqued the interest of her students, as no one is resting with his or her head on the desk, texting, talking about something off topic, or the like. Jenna now has a captive audience.

At the onset of her reading, 13 of 18 students read along while one of the 18 is in the bathroom. He got up in the midst of the reading to depart without disrupting the class or Jenna, a clear sign of mutual respect for the community. Illustrating a penchant for multitasking, Jenna uses proximity to redirect the students who are not following along while she continues to read. She simply places her hand on either their papers or their shoulders to get them to refocus. This is a nice example of her caring manifesting in classroom management, as she does not get angry, does not personalize the small infractions, but rather softly but sternly tries to redirect students. Suddenly, as she reads about how horrible the plague is, using an animated voice to do so, 18 of 18 kids are reading along. As she reads, she tries in every way she can to make the content interesting to kids. She focuses on blood, stench of people with the plague, and the details of suffering from the plague. Finally she stops and says, “Let me explain a few things about this”

“Is this real?” a student asks.

“Yes, and I’m going to show you what it looks like. Let’s pretend Greenville has the plague....500 dead bodies in the hallway, dead laying all over. There were these guys who would come around and say “we’ll talk all the bodies, but I want to sleep with all the

women in the house and take all your stuff.” Jenna is explicitly seeking to connect the content to students’ lives by presenting a real life scenario with which they can relate. In doing so she is attempting to increase engagement by making the learning interesting.

A girl walks in 45 minutes late as the kids exclaim “Ooooh!” Jenna acknowledges the girl with a nod before giving her a copy of the handout on the plague. Upon completing the story Jenna announces, “Now I want you to discuss in small groups, what this would like today. I want you to talk for a minute and then we’re going to do something really fun.”

Jenna is again trying to create exuberance for the learning that is taking and will take place by directly articulating that the experience will be fun. It is readily apparent that she is authentic when she says this too, as she rubs her hands together while smiling widely. As the students discuss, Jenna moves about the room to confer with students, either sitting at an open desk at a pod, kneeling on the floor or lowering her body so that she does not stand authoritatively over students; she is clearly aware of her proximity. As she does this, kids come in and out of the room freely; some from this class, some from others. She is always welcoming. She talks to kids as though they are intellectual adults and clearly respects them. When she explains things to kids, particularly struggling kids, she does so in multiple ways. When she talks, she moves her hands frequently, animated features on her face and the inflection of her voice changes frequently to reveal a somewhat dramatic appeal. She is a character, a unique character.

After the kids complete their conversations, she is ready to begin an activity that will support them in applying the elements of plot to the short stories they will write for the summative assessment. “Ok, so what we’re going to do is you’re going to write a

table story. Based off of your conversation I want you to setup a modern day apocalyptic event. Each of you will write an introduction based off of that apocalyptic event on your own for five minutes. Then I want to hand your paper to someone next to you. That person will read the introduction and then write the rising action. After five minutes, we'll switch again and the next person writes the climax for five minutes. We'll switch again for falling action and again for resolution. When we are done, we'll share what you consider to be the best ones. The last class had the most disgusting and awesome stories so please be disgusting and awesome."

Jenna again seeks to make the learning fun and interesting by encouraging them to be "disgusting and awesome." Further, she subtly turns the activity into an informal competition with her other class by sharing that their stories were particularly "disgusting and awesome", encouraging this class to be even more so with their descriptive writing.

As the kids work, they talk animatedly with one another. At one pod consisting of two African-American males and a Hispanic male one African-American male questions a detail in the introduction of the other African-American male's paper. "Nigga, why are you asking that?" one student asks.

"Because is don't make no sense, that's why."

"Well change it then, it's your turn for the rising action."

Throughout my time in Jenna's room I found that the students speak in slang regularly with each other. While she encourages them to utilize slang in their writing of dialogue and freely allows them to speak their cultural dialect with one another, she is intentional about the use of Standard English in their writing. In doing so she honors students' cultures while also teaching them the language of power.

The room is beginning to get raucous, as the noise has gone from buzzing with learning to being loud with talk. These are sounds that the most adept teachers can recognize immediately, the sounds of productive and unproductive noise. Upon individually trying to redirect several pods to focus on the task at hand, finally Jenna exclaims, “You know what, you guys are going to piss me off. I worked really hard on putting this lesson together and you are totally blowing it off. Get on it.”

“We’re sorry Miss,” an African-American male shares.

“It’s alright,” Jenna replies more softly, “Just get on it.”

The room grows nearly silent, as kids mumble to themselves or to partners about the story but since the directive, they are focused and everyone writes. Jenna again has drawn upon her relationship with students to manage her classroom. In sharing how their behavior upsets her, the students with whom she has a relationship feel badly for having shown a lack of respect for the learning Jenna holds in high regard. Even if they may not entirely be interested in completing the assignment, they will do so for Jenna because it is important to her and they do not want to upset her.

“Ok, stop where you are,” Jenna shares in a starkly different happy and positive tone from the angry tone that just recently came from her mouth, “This is the most important part; I want you to have a twist in your conclusion.”

The kids share their stories so far and write with fervor and excitement. As they do so an African-American male comes into class 70 minutes late and says he is sick and trying to make it through the day. Jenna feels his face with the back of his hand and tells him he’s not warm and that he can meet with her tomorrow to get what he missed. The student clearly feels badly for being late, another result of the development of mutual

respect in the classroom. Concurrently, Jenna exhibits care for the student's well being by checking him to see if he has a temperature. Using touch and showing concern for a student's health is not lost on the others in the classroom.

Every table writes frantically. At one table, kids argue about the endings while at another they argue about details. Jenna reads over their shoulders and comments "Oooh, ugh." Kids react with laughter and affirmation "yeah." At other pods, kids laugh, talk, say "Eww," but they write. Jenna lets it happen. There is a light murmur or buzz to the room that juxtaposes the loud talking, laughing, hand clapping, and yelling that took place up until this point.

Finally Jenna stops the students. "Alright, let's look at the stories and you guys pick the best." She begins to read a story at random from the stack she has collected:

Ok, my blood is boiling but nothing is happening and everything is falling to the ground. They're jumping back up; everything is wrong but I see that my eyes are being deceived. People are being eaten one by one; it's so gross I don't know how people can eat themselves – their hearts and everything. Dropping out, one by one, like flies – babies are even getting eaten alive like they were crying aloud. Blood spots are everywhere, from the picket fence to the soil in the ground. It looks like a painted picture. It was chaos in the streets; people were going inside and locking their doors, praying that they wouldn't be next. The sick ones were trying to get inside the houses looking for something to eat. At this point we knew it was going to be the end of life as we knew it.

The students engage with Jenna as she reads. While she has not asked for volunteers, no one asks her not to read his or her story. Only in a safe, caring community can this happen. In the process of the lesson, Jenna is seeking to increase their creativity while encouraging them to collaborate, and helping them develop their writing skills. Jenna's intention of developing an engaging and joyous classroom environment has been

realized, as evidenced by the laughter, excitement, and joy in the room. Not only have the students grown, but they had fun doing it in the process.

Closing Comments

In my time in Jenna Ward's class and in the time I spent with her outside of it, I found that she does much of what the culturally responsive literature recommends such as showing care for her students, seeking to empower them, and creating a community of learners. What is important to note, is that despite this, her classroom is not utopian. This reality must be articulated, as one may be led to believe that teachers simply need a particular set of skills or beliefs, or intentions, and if those are in place, all will be perfect. Though Jenna is an incredibly gifted educator, there is but so much she can control in the educational process, which is her classroom context (this idea will be discussed further in chapter five).

Such as the case, Jenna Ward is very much the mother figure in her classroom, which mirrors one's home. Her students are her children for whom she cares deeply, knows individually, and teaching about life's important lessons while supporting them in their intellectual growth. Though her house might not be a utopian house, it is a beautiful one where all children will have the opportunity to think, grow, and learn.

Mr. John Granado, English Teacher

Journey to a Teacher

Though some may not realize it, there are certain people destined to be teachers. John Granado grew up in a small town in west Texas where his mother taught elementary school for 26 years and his father, who also taught at a local community college almost as long, taught accounting. Even with several aunts and uncles who served as professional educators, John Granado says, “I never realized that I wanted to become a teacher”; at least not until he completed his bachelor’s degree before enrolling in law school. It was at the completion of his first year that he “did some soul searching”, questioning if he was heading down the right vocational path.

After much reflection, Mr. Granado did not return to the university he was attending for law school, but instead entered a teacher certification program in the town in which he grew up. It wasn’t long before John realized that he was in fact fated to be a teacher.

Mr. Granado began his teaching career at a high school near his home in Texas where he taught English in a predominantly lower class Latino and White school. During that time John completed a master’s degree in educational administration, hoping to possibly some day be a principal. In 2003-2004 the opportunity to enter administration presented itself in a suburban Denver, Colorado school, which John took advantage of, becoming a dean in charge of discipline and on the fast track to a principalship. After one year on the job he made a horizontal move to a more affluent, stable district but to a school that was low performing and highly diverse; it was the beginning of his career at Greenville High School.

While he was highly successful as a dean, a change in administrative vision led to him being asked to go back in the classroom, a move that led John to soul-search again. It was not long after her returned to his career as an English teacher that he realized he wanted to a career in teaching. Teaching all grade levels and serving as the varsity boys and girls swim teams' head coach, John has found his calling. A Hispanic male himself, he is also one of the advisors to the Latino Leadership group, which John explains was "created to hopefully to help our Latino boys hook into high school and make the connections needed to succeed and eventually graduate and go off to college or the workforce." Concurrently, Mr. Granado instructs a targeted intervention course for Latino males that is intended to support kids in their study habits while teaching them how to navigate the systems in place at the school.

Upon meeting John Granado, it is difficult not to be struck by his inviting manner and his incredible sense of humor. He is known in the English department at Greenville and beyond as being a friendly, humorous character that is difficult not to like because of his warm, kind nature. It is easy to mistake John's lighthearted attitude for someone who is not as cerebral and intentional as he is. Standing at around 6' 0" with short dark hair and a 200 lb. frame, one can find John buzzing around the hallways, talking to students or colleagues, and always offering a warm handshake and a joke that he tells with a straight face. A strong believer in the importance of family, John is recently married and not too long after he and his wife had a young son who immediately became the center of his world. I observed him during November of 2010, at which time he was teaching two sections of a lower level English 10 class, the intervention course for Latino males and two English 9 Honors courses, which were the first honors courses he has taught at

Greenville since returning to the classroom three years ago. I witnessed Mr. Granado teaching one of his English 9 Honors courses that met in the morning just before lunch hour.

The Teacher Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

“I base my teaching off of my beliefs. I always hear teachers say they want to be the best possible teacher for kids, to see their students as their kids and do what’s best for them.” – John Granado

John Granado - The Person

Thinking About the Challenges

Sitting in a small office with no windows at Greenville High School, it becomes evident rather quickly that John Granado is extremely aware of who he is and of the issues surrounding education, sharing with me that he thinks about these things a great deal. While discussing the educational system, he details the multitude of difficulties he sees in education before adding, “I mean education has gone through so many changes and it is still very challenging, but at the end of the day, when it's all said and done, this is the career for me.”

Mr. Granado first arrived at this conclusion after much of his characteristic self-reflection, having given up the pursuit of a law degree in favor of teaching. This self-reflection permeates his classroom, as one can regularly find Mr. Granado changing lessons midstream based on how students receive them, or sitting in his office, thinking deeply and taking notes on how he will alter what he did for the next time he teaches it.

According to Mr. Granado:

Without self-reflection, there’s no improvement. It’s a constant, ongoing process. After every class, I like to look at how things went, and if they didn’t go well, I try to find ways to improve them.

He not only continually reflects on his life and his practice, he also is very much reflective and aware of racial and class issues in his life, in education, and beyond. When we talk about how what John is currently mulling over, how his views on race and ethnicity affect his teaching he shares:

Well, that's tough. I mean as I mentioned earlier, I am Latino, was born and raised in Marfa, Texas. The population of Marfa is predominantly Hispanic so, even in high school, the high school I went to was pretty even when it came to the white population and Latino but there weren't that many African-Americans at my school. So I don't know, I sometimes wonder if it's more that socioeconomics affect classroom performance more than color. Because my family, the way that I was raised is that both my parents are college graduates and it was like from the time I was born it was just known that I would go to school, that I would go to college graduate. So I never had a doubt my mind about going from school to college and then going to work.

Though Mr. Granado at present finds himself contemplating the role of socioeconomics in poor student achievement (something he has not reconciled for himself as of yet), he pauses and adds, "You know socioeconomics play a big part. Where there is poverty somehow race comes into play and plays a big part." It is clear that Mr. Granado is very much conscious of his own racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic identity while also considering that of others. He shares with me that he is "very interested" in learning about his own culture because of his interest in his "background and roots."

Mr. Granado's self-awareness and self-reflective nature has assisted him in teaching the intervention class and leading the Latino Leadership group at Greenville, as he uses what he learns from his reflections to instruct his students. Moreover, John is not shy about sharing his internal reflections with his students, illustrating his transparency and belief in being authentic. He believes that it is important to be self-aware, self-

reflective, aware of others and of others' cultures and is intentional about this in his life and in his teaching. For Mr. Granado, a heightened level of consciousness is both a belief and an intention.

Much like Ms. Ward, John holds authenticity in high regard, viewing this belief and intention as a virtue to which one should adhere to. He explains that:

I think how I am as a person and how I am as a teacher are very similar. The way I am, I don't think that my persona really changes too much from when I leave the classroom to when I go home. Obviously there are a couple of things, but you know. The same thing, loving, kind, patient, goodhearted, nurturing, I guess you could say...fun definitely.

John shares that while he believes living life this way is incredibly important, it is particularly necessary in the classroom. When describing the necessity of being authentic with students he says:

I think teachers have to come across as someone who is a real person, basically you don't put on a show for them because they see right through it. You have to be yourself in front of the kids because they see right through any persona that you're trying to appear to be. If you're not being true with them, not being yourself, you're in trouble; it is very important.

Upon watching Mr. Granado teach several times it was clear his belief in the need to be transparent is very much in play. He regularly shares stories about his family, openly offers his personal musings, and very much represents his light-hearted, humorous persona with his students. When I ask him if being humorous is intentional he replies, "I like to use humor in the class because it keeps things light and is a nice way to build relationships. I don't try to be funny; it's part of your personality. If you try to force it, it's not authentic and the kids won't buy it."

In our last interview I ask Mr. Granado about his perception of the relationship between his beliefs and intentions. He shares with me that he sees them as

“interchangeable” and inextricably linked, adding, “I try to base my teaching off my beliefs. I always heard teachers say they want to be the best possible teacher for kids, to see their students as their kids and do what’s best for them.” As we will see in the ensuing vignettes, Mr. Granado’s beliefs and intentions permeate his classroom.

John Granado - The Instructor

Guiding the Learning Process

Whereas the beliefs and intentions about being highly conscious and living life transparently relate to John Granado the human being, as one can clearly see, much like all other intentions and beliefs one may hold, they cannot help but become manifest in one’s teaching. There are however, some beliefs and intentions that are specific to John’s teaching. One such example is the belief that it is important to plan curriculum with the end in mind. Like Jenna Ward, John believes in a backward design of curriculum writing where one plans courses, units, and lessons by first considering the outcomes he/she desires before scaffolding to that end. Once the end has been determined, Mr. Granado believes it is important to provide a number of models for students to utilize along the way. These models may come in the form of Sandrangle papers students will be asked to write, exemplary projects the students will be required to complete, or even audio recording of books students will be invited to read. Mr. Granado believes it is imperative to plan his curriculum this way. About his process he said:

When I plan I think about the end result of the want the students to be able to achieve. We start off I may be coming up with three guiding questions that will pretty much drive that unit and will refer to those on a daily basis or every so often so that they don't forget what it is that we're trying to accomplish.

These guiding questions are both visually available and often referred to in John's classes. He says that the purpose of this is to ensure that students know where they are going and can "buy-in" to the topics being covered. John's guiding questions are universal, unanswerable questions that often refer to life or quite frequently, to family. John's belief in the importance of family and building caring relationships, which will be explored later, pervade his guiding questions and recurrently show up in his assignments. When continuing to discuss his curriculum writing process and his intention for planning with the end in mind, John adds:

I look at whatever it is that we're wanting to do at the very end of the unit so if it's a short story or a persuasive essay or an argumentative essay, I'm going to present them with tons and tons of examples; student examples, professional examples. I will work up to the point where they finally get a finished product that's of high quality. So during that time will go through the entire writing process where will brainstorm and then get into the actual process of writing a rough draft and students usually produce several drafts. Then we'll do some peer editing and then we'll publish the final draft. So if we're doing a persuasive essay, I will give them examples of what a successful, persuasive essay looks like. We will look at different types of pieces of work that will show that.

Planning with the end in mind allows John the luxury of providing multiple models for what he would consider exemplary work, allowing the students to have a clear sense of what is expected of them. These expectations, which John describes as "high but attainable", are shared with the students along with a clear purpose for why they are engaging in whichever activity they take on. Mr. Granado believes that giving students a purpose and clear models are essential to increased levels of engagement and he is intentional about doing so.

Finding the Hook

While starting with the end in mind is a belief John is intentional about utilizing, he also believes in the importance of individualizing instruction. While backward planning his lessons and throughout the process of teaching them, John also considers the ways in which he can individualize the instruction. He explains, “I’m thinking about ways that are going to be the most effective for them to grasp the subject matter, bringing in real life examples so that they can make individual connections to what it is that we’re learning.” For this to happen, John adds that he must get to know his students intellectual strengths and weaknesses by continually formatively assessing them. Concurrently, he believes a large part of being able to individualize instruction is to know his students on a more personal level, understand their learning styles, and have an established relationship with them.

Beyond individualizing the actual instructional techniques, John also believes that it is imperative to offers his students an individualized curriculum that they can access and find interest in. He explains his intention of doing so:

I think it is important whenever possible to try to infuse some multicultural curriculum into the classroom. It's not always possible but I think that it is the majority of the time you do that, I think that the students are a little more actively engaged because they can relate to something they've read on an individual level.

In offering a highly individualized educational experience, Mr. Granado is also very intentional about operationalizing his belief in providing choice to his students. He explains, “I’m really intentional about giving kids choice whenever possible. I think it’s not just nice to give it, but it’s how you can get better buy-in to what you’re doing.” While everything is not individualized in John’s classroom, one would be hard pressed

not to see it operationalized on any given day. Though this individualized experience may not always lead to 100% engagement in every class, it certainly enhances students' educational experiences.

For John Granado, providing an individualized experience, planning with the end in mind, being highly conscious, and living life authentically are essential beliefs for him as a person and he is intentional about them in his planning. I will examine how these intentions operationalize or come to life in his classroom in the ensuing section

The Teacher Domain: Operations

Scene 1: Thinking on a higher level

John's roster is comprised of 27 students, and despite being an honors class, it will continue to change but usually not as regularly as one finds in lower level classes. What is somewhat unique about Greenville High School's policy on enrollment in honors classes is that it will allow any student to take them if they so choose. While this is a wonderful policy with regards to inclusivity, it creates a bit of a challenge for teachers as they will have a range of student ability levels, often including students who are two or more years below grade level in reading all the way to those two or more levels above. Of those students, there are 2 Hispanic females, 2 Hispanic males, 3 African-American males, 4 African-American females, 2 Asian-American males, 1 Asian-American female, 8 European-American females, and 5 European-American males. Though attendance is generally better in honors classes, there are still a high number of absences. In the time I observed, the mean number of students in the room was 23.

Though John shares his classroom with three other teachers, all of his classes are taught in this particular room. There are no windows in this room and the walls are

painted industrial white at the front and two sides while the back wall is tan. The tan wall is a reminder of the open classrooms of the 1970s, as it has a number of joints from ceiling to floor that once were used to fold back the wall, revealing the classroom next to it. This wall is thin and one can hear the hum of a voices emanating from the room next door.

The walls are adorned with a number of pictures, posters and graphs. Clearly the room is shared, as one wall has a banner that reads “AP Art History” with a number of images (6) taped above it (including a reprint of the whistler’s mother and Mona Lisa). At the front of the room, above the whiteboard, are 8 thinking map posters; to the left, a motivational poster reading “Imagination” that is parallel to a bulletin board. Many of the items that adorn the walls however, belong to John. These items very much serve as a reflection of John’s beliefs and his intentions for his students. Across from where I sit are a number of posters that include Cesar Chavez (the stamp of him), MLK, Ghandi, a mariachi band, and art from across Latin America. He intentionally seeks to find a variety of posters to represent a variety of races and ethnicities, including his own. In the back are pictures that include: 12 white American authors on one poster next to a “Diversity” motivational poster; an *Of Mice and Men* poster, a “What do writers do well?” poster and a “What do readers do well?” poster. All of these posters speak to John’s intentions and beliefs, serving as a sort of nondiscursive revelation.

There are also several personal items that ornament the walls that include a pennant and poster from his alma mater, a poster of his favorite college football team, two pictures of his GHS swimming teams, several pictures of former GHS swimmers that were given to him and two Michael Phelps posters. These images are very much

symbolic of his belief in transparency, as they serve as visual hints into John's life, interests, and passions.

John has written the following on the board for his students:

- read all four articles
- determine your position of whether or not Edgar Allen Poe died of rabies, tuberculosis, or alcoholism
- backup your position with evidence from articles

The students talk excitedly as Mr. Granado walks to the center of the room in the middle of the desks that surround him on three sides, a large table is behind him just in front of a white board on which he has written his expectations for the students. John begins, "As we continue on through the year, we are going to do many research assignments. We are not going to do a long project where you do note cards and all kinds of stuff although we will do bits and pieces of it. This is in preparation for next year and beyond into college where you are going to do longer research projects.

What I have seen in the past is the kids go on Google and it spits out thousands of different articles. Then a lot of times, the student at that point will basically take one or two of the first ones they see. And then, a lot of times their paraphrasing is really weak. It's really important that you can paraphrase well, to read the article and paraphrase."

Here John is considering what students will need to know in the future. While there is not a large research paper in the mandated ninth grade curriculum, they do exist in the ensuing grades. Further, John's belief that his students will go to college lead him to perceive university-level research papers as an end; he plans backward from there.

John asks, “What does that mean?”

An African-American male says, “Sounding it out in your own words.”

“Sounding it out in your own words, yes. So you’re going to read the material and not write it word for word like we did when we were correctly citing authors, but you put it in your own words. The purpose right here, right now is to practice taking several articles, reading them, taking the important information from each one by annotating like we’ve been doing all year, and then synthesizing it to use it for your purposes. So there are four short, short articles after the *Cask of Amontillado*. Each of them discusses how Edgar Allen Poe died. There are different theories. One is that he died of rabies. Another is that he died of alcoholism. He was a heavy drinker and that might have contributed to his death. Then some argue he died of tuberculosis. I want you to read all four articles, to determine your position on how you think Poe died, so you have to state your position and then you need to support that with evidence from your articles, evidence that I want you to paraphrase, not quote directly. I just want this to be short practice exercise in how to synthesize material. We’ll practice here and then move toward something bigger.”

Not only does Mr. Granado ask the students to engage in a high level assignment, he is allowing them choice in how they respond, something he is intentional about. The students will have the ability to individually construct an argument that they will defend with evidence that they choose from the four texts. Concurrently, in planning with the end in mind, John has scaffolded to this assignment by having taught them various literacy skills that include annotating for important information.

Several of the kids ask, “Can we do it in groups?”

“You want to do it in groups? O.K., hold on, hold on.” He pauses, reflecting on the proposal before saying, “Let's do it in groups of three.”

“Can't we choose them?” a white female asks. John shakes his head no.

John selects their groups, asking them to move their desks so that they can talk with one another before adding, “O.K., these groups need to work hard. Make sure you are facing your group members so you can communicate with them.”

John's self-reflection comes into play here, as he listens to the students' requests before thinking about how he might alter what he had planned as being an individual assignment. He also is reflective in how he will group the students, in this case by triads. In this particular exchange, he has also given the students voice in how the activity will be structured.

John passes out papers as they work together. The students decide how they will work together. The kids in this class have a great deal of autonomy and freedom to make choices. When they suggest things, John is often responsive to their requests. The kids have a voice in this class. As the students settle on plans for attacking the assignment, the loudness comes to a low hum. John intentionally does not tell the students how to approach the assignment, as he is trying to build capacity in his students, an intention and belief in the student domain. Every single student is reading. One pair of kids talk quietly about content tangentially related to the articles. While the students work diligently, three different kids leave the room and do not ask permission. Upon asking John about this phenomenon, which happens frequently in his room he explains that he wants his students to feel comfortable and trusted so he does not want them to ask permission to leave.

John confers with several students while they work, answering and asking questions while formatively assessing their progress. While doing this, John assesses students based not only on where he wants them to go, but also on where he knows they are as learners. He is intentional about identifying different concepts of skills for students to focus on. This is a great example of individualizing instruction, as one student works on improving their annotations, another works on paraphrasing, another works on a particular writing skill. Because John knows his students so well, he can effectively individualize his instruction to meet the needs of his learners.

One student has hardly written anything on his paper to which John says, “You need to get going guy. We only have 15 minutes left.”

One group of kids ask John, “Do we have to get done?”

“As close as you can. Come on, you can do this.”

A white male says, “It’s Monday morning, Granado, we’re tired.”

“If you don’t use it, you lose it. By the way, did you make the team?”

“I won’t know till next week.”

“OK, let me know guy. I’m pulling for you.”

John walks over to a table of three where a white male is off task and talking about a video game. “You’re not holding up your end of the bargain guy,” John says disappointedly, but somewhat evenly. The student apologizes and begins writing. This is a fine example of how John uses the relationships he builds with his students to manage his classroom. As is the case in Ms. Ward’s class, students do not want to disappoint Mr. Granado, a reality of which he is well aware.

A white male asks John, “How long would it take for rabies to kill you?”

“I don't know. Let's find out though.” John is honest and transparent about what he does or does not know. This is an authentic response that many teachers would not offer, as often teachers do not want their students to know that they may not have an answer.

In this vignette, John Granado operationalizes a number of his beliefs and intentions from the teacher domain. Congruently, several other beliefs and intentions from the student and environmental domains become manifest. As is the case, several other examples of the operationalizing of intentions and beliefs from the teacher domain will be described and interpreted in the ensuing sections.

The Student Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

The Individual

Wearing a lot of Hats

Given that John Granado is such an affective person who places high value on human relationships, it is not surprising that some of his strongest beliefs and intentions center around those dealing with how he thinks about and teaches the children in his classes. Though John has a great passion and love for his content area, he explains that it is hardly why he teaches:

Well yes, I am an English teacher but for me it's also about, I don't know kind of teaching life lessons. You're almost a parental figure, teacher, counselor, psychologist; you wear a bunch of different hats and sometimes you have this wonderful lesson planned and nothing goes right, everything blows up. You have to learn to be very flexible and basically be able to work on the fly and deal with anything that's thrown at you because every day is a different day and every day presents a different challenge.

John embraces the wearing of “different hats”, as he sees this as one of the most exciting aspects of being a teacher. Further, he is highly conscious and regularly reflects on his role as an educator, recognizing that because of issues outside of his control, he may have to be reflexive to the needs of his kids. It may not be difficult for John to be flexible given that he is intentional in his approach to not simply teaching content, but teaching life:

You have to have that passion and there has to be that fire inside of you that you want to inspire students to learn, to actually do something with their lives. And it doesn't always mean that this kid is going to go to college; it just means that he's going to be a successful, contributing member of society.

That's all I would ask for from my students and once again hopefully inspire them to learn as much as they can and find a love for learning along the way. You're not going to love every bit of knowledge that you learn but if you can acquire that love of reading and writing, that's what I would want. Hopefully, my students will learn to do the right thing, to make the right decisions. Once again it's just learning to be a good member of society. Sometimes that's overlooked I think because it's not just about grammar and Shakespeare all the time. There is a whole other dynamic to it.

Though John is certainly passionate about educating students for life, he also recognizes the importance of his content area in achieving those ends:

I want them to be able to write and read so that they can be; so that they can contribute to society in a positive manner; to be good citizens. Because like I said it's not all about Shakespeare and the classics, it's about teaching them life skills that they're going to need when they leave my classroom. They will have to know how to write complete sentences and effective essays.

For Mr. Granado to be able to teach life to his students, he also recognizes the importance of knowing his students as individuals, not just as kids in his English class.

When examining this he explains:

I think the kids come from different situations and I think that socioeconomic status plays a part when it comes to their achievement; they have a lot of outside

responsibilities. Sometimes they are being asked to raise younger brothers and sisters, maintain jobs to help the family income, so I think that possibly takes away from some of the motivation of doing well in school. I know especially with a lot of Latino boys that I am in contact with in my classes, most of them feel like it would almost be better to get out and go into the workforce rather than finish their education.

Culture Makes the Individual

While Mr. Granado believes it is important to know his students as individuals and to teach the whole person, holding this as an intention for his teaching, he also recognizes how culture shapes an individual. John sees culture as being comprised of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, family, and school, among others. When I ask him about how his views specifically on race and ethnicity affect his teaching he explains:

I don't push, I don't think, any particular race harder when it comes to learning in my classes but I don't allow my students of color to just go by the wayside and kind of just give up on it. If anything in that respect, I do, I would push harder. Sometimes they do need more of that motivation versus where white students, maybe they have an extra support system at home that my students of color do not have.

Again John illustrates that while it is important for him to know his students' cultures, he recognizes that he must get to know his students individually to really have a sense of their lens, their experience. In sharing an example he explains:

That comes into play in my class, that intervention class that I teach. I find that to be true and I have spoken with these parents, they're all supportive of what it is that we're doing but it's like they're so busy, working, it's not like they can always be monitoring their child's academic progress. They often don't have computers, they don't know how to logon, they don't feel as comfortable coming to school and checking on their kids. It's only if someone calls them and lets them know how their kid is doing...they basically trust the teachers of the school to take care of a child's education. There's the achievement gap right there. So I do my best and I talk to my parents and I talk to my students of color and I do everything in my power to somehow hopefully help them achieve some sort of academic success.

John not only actively gets to know the family cultures of his students, but also honors them. He sees culture as an asset from which he can build in encouraging his students to engage in school and become productive, happy members of society. Mr. Granado also recognizes the importance of getting to know his students' cultures so he can have a stronger sense of how they experience the world, how they experience school. Rather than dismiss a student and to simply consider his/her situation through his own lens, which he is extremely aware of, he considers students' situations through their eyes with the intent of supporting them in being more academically successful. Along those lines, it is John's belief that all of his students can be successful.

I ask John if what he knows about culture primarily comes from his interactions with his students and their families. He tells me that it is not before expanding on how he goes about it:

One way I learn about different cultures is reading books, reading professional books as well. I don't know if I can say that I go out there and try to study the African-American or the Asian culture, but my experience of trying to learn about other cultures pretty much, primarily comes from professional readings and talking to kids. I attended different workshops, professional development, for diversity and cultural diversity training.

John sees knowing his students individually while also recognizing that culture is the lens through which they experience the world is imperative to being a good teacher. This quest for getting to know his students is continual and regularly evident in the classroom. Whether he is having an informal conversation in his office or giving a journal assignment that requires the students to share about some aspect of their culture or how they view the world, John is extremely intentional about implementing his beliefs

about seeing kids as individuals, teaching life, and recognizing that culture is the way students experience the world.

The Learner

It's Not Just About Getting Shakespeare

While celebrating, knowing, and appreciating students as individuals is an integral aspect of John Granado's teaching, he is also cognizant of the learning experiences these individuals will receive. Much like Jenna Ward and as has already been explored to some degree, John's focus on learning resides more on growing students as individuals and as thinkers than it does on understanding complex literary concepts or "getting Shakespeare."

When considering his intentions for his students, John feels it is imperative for him to help kids "grow as individuals", to "become productive members of society", and to "understand that they can be successful". It is Mr. Granado's intention and belief that he build capacity in students so that they may be empowered to "live the life they want to live." I later asked him what perfection looked like in his classroom to which he replied, "Perfection looks like students making gains academically; you see growth, and my class in particular, their reading and writing skills are improving each time I see them." Again, John recognizes that reading and writing are essential skills one must acquire to become more empowered, but he also wants to see kids grown and develop as readers, writers, thinkers, and people.

Though John believes strongly in being intentional about building capacity in his students so that they become more empowered people, he also recognizes that it can be difficult for him to convince his students to share in those beliefs:

The biggest challenge for me is to try to motivate them to see that education is a road that can pave, that can basically open a lot of doors for them, it is just hard for them to see it. What's amazing to me is they have guardians or parents at home that have multiple jobs, and these are not easy jobs, but they have multiple jobs, and instead of seeing education as a way of avoiding that kind of life it's like they do the same thing.

John sees getting students to invest in the value and power of an education for themselves is a difficult but worthy challenge. He recognizes that to be empowered, one must recognize the value in being empowered and to have motivation to acquire the tools to do so. John believes that reading and writing are essential tools to becoming empowered and this belief operationalizes regularly in his classes. In the following vignettes, I will describe how teaching the whole person/life, recognizing that culture is the lens through which we experience, and building capacity in learners operationalizes in John's classroom. It is important to again note that themes from other dimensions become manifest, as the organic, complex nature is offered for interpretation.

The Student Domain: Operations

Scene 1: Love thy siblings

In preparation for reading *The Scarlet Ibis*, Mr. Granado has asked his students to write in the journals they maintain for his class to describe their relationships with their siblings. John regularly asks student to write about personal topics in their journals, as he sees this as a space where he can "get them to dig deep, to use their brains, and personalize the content." These journal writings are one way John operationalizes his belief that he is teaching a whole person and teaching life. He also sees the journals as a space that can allow him to build relationships with his students, which is one of his beliefs and intentions found in the environmental domain. Finally, John sees the journals

as a space where he can build capacity in his students by giving them an opportunity to improve their writing on topics of interest to them.

“As you finish up your thoughts in your journal, I’m passing out vocabulary list number seven. OK, so let’s talk about this topic a little. Donovan, you have a sibling? Brother or sister? Describe the relationship.”

“You know, it’s pretty good, like we get along and stuff. I have a little sister. She gets on my nerves sometimes but she’s really good to me so I don’t get too mad.”

John then asks, “Nate, you have a brother or a sister?”

“Sister”

“Younger or older?”

“Older”

“Ok, what’s that like?”

“It has its ups and downs. Sometimes she’s really annoying. She never minds her own business and is always in my stuff.”

“Do you think as adults that relationship will change?”

“I have a little sister too, and we’re really close. She’s like 11. We really do like to spend time with each other.”

“Do you think as adults that relationship will change?”

“Yeah, I’m sure it will. Maybe we’ll get closer.”

“I think so too. What about you Todd?”

“Well I’m Pilipino and in my family it’s really important to look out for your brothers and sisters. My mom’s always telling us that too. So sometimes that can make me get annoyed with my brothers and sister, but we definitely got each other’s backs.”

“That’s great, and culture can play a big part. I’m from a Hispanic family and in my family, family is number one. How about over here? Breanna?”

“My little sister is 9 and I haven’t been too tight with her lately. She’s starting to get the attitude of ‘I don’t have to listen to you and I can do what I want.’ Like, I’ll tell her she needs to go do the dishes and she’ll be like no, and I’ll be like yeah, go do the dishes.

“So it’s just you and your sister?”

“Yeah”

“Is there ever a time where you take her some place and then it’s good?”

“Yeah, there are some good times.”

“OK, good. What about you Shantel?”

“My brother’s in the military and he’s almost 10 years older than me. He moved back in with us and he works the night shift; one time he sent me a card that was three Peggys long. I’ll never forget that and I kept it all this time; it reminded me of how much my brother loves me and how much means to me.”

“Wow! That's awesome that you're that close even with the age difference. Well, the reason for the journal is to lead us into the story. This is one of my favorites. It's the story of two brothers, and the older brother loves his younger brother so much but he’s almost ashamed of his younger brother because of the handicaps his brother has and he’s trying to make him as normal as possible, but he has physical and mental handicaps. The older brother loves little brother, but wanting to be "normal" and tries to mold him. The title is *The Scarlet Ibis*, some think it is the abyss, but it's Ibis; it's a bird.”

In this exchange, John is laying the foundation of teaching the whole person, not just the student in his class. He is inviting students to share their personal stories as a means to not only build relationships with them, which he does by asking questions and illustrating his interest, but also to be able to see students as individuals. By providing a space for students to share their personal stories both orally in class and verbally in the journal, John is operationalizing his intention to get to know students as people, not simply as students in his class. He also tells me that he uses this topic to make the learning more interesting, as they personalize the content through these journal reflections. John also considers culture as he explores Todd's comment about how his culture views siblings while also operationalizes his belief and intention around candor by sharing a story of his own about his family and culture.

John invites the kids to read *The Scarlet Ibis* with one another or individually, providing them choice in how they will learn, a manifestation of teaching for empowerment.

After the students begin reading, John circulates around the room, asking how kids are doing. When he confers, he generally begins by asking students how they are doing before asking more specific, targeted questions related to the content. When he touches base with kids, he touches their book or desk, bending over slightly at the waist while he talks. He doesn't go from desk to desk, but rather goes from one side of the room to the other, then to another. John tells me that he intentionally confers as such so that he can build relationships with his students.

As John is conferring, a student suddenly says loudly, “Oh my God Granado, this is such a sucky ending, like what was that? Mr. Granado, why did you make us read this?”

The student is responding to the ending of the story where the main character, who is the physically disabled little brother of another able-bodied boy, dies because his brother has gotten annoyed with him and purposely pushes him to his physical limits. Unwittingly, by doing this, the older brother goes too far and causes the death of his little brother.

“You need to appreciate your brother and sister more,” John replies before asking, “Who’s still reading? OK, I’m not going to ruin it so hurry up.”

The majority of the students are all talking about the story. One girl cries “Oh my God!” Another cries “No!” John talks with various kids about their reactions.

Another exclaims, “That’s so sad!”

Even as some kids react, there is a frantic buzz in the room caused by students anxiously reading to find out what is so interesting about the ending. John has succeeded in operationalizing his intention of teaching life by making the learning interesting. In finding a way to help the students connect to the story by way of the journal topic, he has a great deal of student engagement. Further, he has found a way to increase students’ love of knowledge by finding a high interest text to which they could relate.

As the students finish the story, John says, “OK, some kids have been asking, “What caused him to die?” Powerful ending? Pretty depressing and sad right? Well basically if you look at it, the little boy was not supposed to live beyond birth. So it’s

almost like he was on borrowed time and he made it to the age of six. Why did he bleed through the mouth?

A black female asks, “Was he struck by lightning?”

“If he was struck by lightning he would have burned,” a black male replies.

A black male student then replies, “His heart gave out.”

“Yes, exactly. His heart gave out, it’s too cold. It could have been also that his body was overworked.”

“Which ending was more powerful? Or which one really got to you? What would you say? This one or *Of Mice and Men*?”

“This one!”

They are all talking

“Really? Why?” John asks.

A black male explains, “This one because in *Mice and Men* they were friends and in this one they were brothers and in like the end, he says that that inner hate just comes out and he leaves his brother. In *Mice and Men* he killed him, but here, they’re brothers.”

The class erupts in discussion, either agreeing or disagreeing.

“OK, one at a time. Let’s go to Brianna.”

“Like when you have a sibling and you’re that close to him like in the story, it makes you really think about what you have, what other people don’t have, and what it’s like to have a sibling like that.”

“Exactly, one reason I love to read this is to give you a better appreciation for your brother or sister. What about as far as weather’s concerned, because weather plays a

part in foreshadowing, which you have to us in your original short story? Where did we see foreshadowing in the story and how the author used weather? Jeremiah?”

“Well when the weather’s really calm, it’s like everything is O.K., but when the storm comes, that’s when the craziness happens.”

An African-American female adds, “And like the author says that they see a bird and that’s bad luck.”

A Hispanic female adds, “And its dead body was like the main character’s.”

“Exactly. The way his body was misshapen is kind of like the scarlet ibis. Keep in mind that you have a very unique bird, a rare bird in this area that shouldn’t have been there, it should have been in South America or Florida.”

An African-American male raises his hand before saying, “Did you realize that before every significant event in the story there was some sort of weather going on. Like at the beginning it was snowing and things were dark and it was spring when he learned how to walk.”

“So with the different seasons, a different event took place. Exactly! Well you are doing great guys. Continue with your annotations on p. 347.”

A number of items operationalize in this exchange. John illustrates that he is teaching more than content when he shares that he teaches this story for the purpose of getting students to appreciate their siblings. He is teaching a life lesson and doing so through literature. Congruently, he offers the journal topic so as to hone the lenses of his students before examining the story. John is intentional about offering a space for students to bring their own cultural perspective on their siblings so that they may have a heightened sense of awareness of that perspective before reading the story. He subtly, but

intentionally seeks to build capacity in his students by offering affirming words or phrases such as “Exactly” or “Perfect” in an attempt to build their intellectual confidence. While a number of themes from other domains manifest themselves in this vignette, John certainly operationalizes his intentions and beliefs for his students in the student domain.

The Environmental Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

The Social-Emotional

The Father Figure

As has should have become evident already, John Granado believes it is imperative to be intentional about building caring relationships with people. These relationships are found in both his personal and professional lives and speak to how John sees himself as a person. When I ask him about how his family would describe him he replies:

My friends and family would say I’m very personable, fun-loving, friendly, someone that really cares about people and cares about their best interests, keeps the best interests in mind at all times. They probably would say I’m sensitive, very sensitive to those kinds of things. I’m a huge family guy; family comes first, and always has. I was raised that way and now that my wife and I and welcomed a new addition to the family this past July I really appreciate that role of being a father. I play that father figure in my classes and my various swim teams, but when you have your first kid, it really puts it in perspective. So that’s what I would say: a loyal, good friend.

Playing the father figure at home and in his class speaks not only to John’s authenticity, but accentuates how he perceives relationships even outside of his actual family. He views relationships through the lens of family, seeking to build equally strong connection with his students as he might a family member. For John, his family life and school life are intricately linked, which he explains in more detail:

My perfect day is feeling fulfilled as a husband, father, and as a teacher. Spending the quality time at home with my family and the things, with the quality of life at home I believe that it translates to the classroom. If you're happy at home you're definitely happy at work, or it helps to be happy at work.

John links his own personal and professional happiness to the strength of his relationships. Beyond this, John sees a connection between the strength of his relationships with his students and their academic success:

There are so many things that go into being a good, effective teacher. One of the biggest things is that I think you have to build a relationship with all of your students; a relationship of trust. If your students don't trust you and feel comfortable inside of your classroom I don't feel that they're going to achieve their highest potential. So the first before anything is that you have to make a connection with them; and it doesn't mean you're becoming a friend or anything like that. It's a comfort factor, but they feel comfortable with you, and eventually they'll feel comfortable to take those educational risks.

There is a tangible level of trust and caring in John's classroom. His students talk with him openly about personal matters both in the classroom and outside of it, illustrating that they trust John and believe that he cares for them. Further, John is adept at getting his students to share their most intimate thoughts with him in the form of journal writing, which he also uses as a platform to engage students in the material they will cover in class.

Mr. Granado also recognizes the reality that despite having strong, caring relationships with students, his classroom is not always a problem free space. Much like Jenna Ward, John also draws upon his relationships with students when dealing with classroom management:

You've got to be fair when it comes to dealing with various discipline issues that my come up. I mean you treat everyone the same way, you treat them with respect. Respect is a big thing, if the students feel you respect them, they respect you. And even when have to come down on them, and you might have to call

home, they'll come back and say, 'Wow, Mr. Granado you called home?' And I say, 'Yeah well, I told you I was going to do it And I was always honest with you.' And there's no grudges held, and hopefully then the behavior changes in a positive way.

Not only does John draw upon his relationships with students, one that has been build on mutual respect, to manage his classroom, he also utilizes his relationships to build capacity in students by means of changing negative behaviors. Further, he uses his authenticity to show that he cares and to support him in managing his classroom.

The Intellectual

Fostering Lifelong Learners

Mr. Granado does not view making learning fun and engaging to be an act in frivolity, but rather see them as being essential to culturally responsive teaching. When I ask him what culturally responsive pedagogy means to him he explains, "I think the biggest thing with culturally responsive teaching is that as the teacher you're choosing or integrating curriculum that's students of color can relate to, feel comfortable with, make connections to. And when that happens I feel that the other stuff kind of falls into the place as well. They're able to be more engaged, they're able to write more, when you have a culturally responsive focus in the classroom." John recognizes the importance of student interest in their learning, understanding that if they are uninterested or do not see value in the curriculum, they are less likely to be motivated to learn it. He recognizes this reality especially for his students of color, explaining:

The curriculum is something that students of all color can relate to they're probably going to do a better job in the end. So that's why think it is important whenever possible to try to infuse some multicultural curriculum into the classroom. It's not always possible but I think that it is the majority of the time so when you do do that, I think that the students are a little more actively engaged.

John is very much intentional in planning a curriculum that students will find interesting, engaging, and fun. He hopes that his own love of knowledge is realized by his students, intentionally planning for the possibility but attempting to be realistic about his expectations:

Every day when I go into the classroom I hope that I can somehow interest my students in gaining a love for knowledge. You know, to become lifelong learners. And I know that's always said but I truly believe that because I love English and I know that not all of my students aren't gonna love it but if I can present it in a certain way that they can think "that was pretty neat" or "you know what, that wasn't so bad." You know especially when it comes to being effective readers and writers, we do a lot of writing class. Not all of it is gonna be fun, you presented in a way that is fun, but you can avoid it sometimes. It becomes low dry, but to kind of possibly influence that love for learning; we should never stop learning us humans.

Making learning interesting and fun is something John holds in high regard and relishes in his successes when he gets them. He explains:

If the kids like you, and trust you, and they enjoy your class, that really means something. Because when those things aren't there, a lot of kids end up hating English before I got them in my class. But they liked my class because they said I made it fun or made things enjoyable or things of that nature. I'll have a freshman who will want to have me again as a sophomore so sometimes that's a viable option, sometimes it's not the best option for them but the fact that they would want to take my class again makes me think that I did somewhat of a good job.

Like Jenna Ward, John Granado's passion for and joy in the learning process pervade his classroom. Similarly, many of his students pick up on the infectiousness of John's passion by reacting with joy, sadness, or anger at a number of topics John covers in his classroom. There is not a lack of emotion in John's classroom, a reality that makes that space all the more inviting, vibrant, and lively.

The Environmental Domain: Operations

Scene 1: Caring and creepiness

As the students walk in, John has written the following on the board:

Journal: Define revenge. Is there even a good reason for revenge? Have you ever sought revenge on another person? Explain

Clearly used in the routine, Mr. Granado does not even have to ask his students to take out their notebooks and begin writing. Less than one minute after the bell rings, everyone is already doing so. Only 19 students of the 27 on John's roster are present today. After nearly three minutes of silence, several students begin talking, few if any of which are about the journal topic.

"Mohammed, focus, focus," John pleads with an African-American male.

"Oh, I'm sorry Mr. Granado. I'm on it." Here again, John uses the capital he has acquired through relationship building to redirect a behavior. Clearly the student feels badly, as he apologizes for not doing what John has asked. Like Jenna Ward, John Granado does not yell or threaten, but instead draws on his relationships with students in managing his classroom. Somewhat ironically, this approach in and of itself helps build relationships with students.

John begins to confer with students, reading their writing over their shoulders before asking a questions or offering a suggestion. Much as he does any other time he confers, he always first asks "How are you doing?" or "How are you?" before asking more specific questions about what they are working on. This is a subtle, but very much intentional way of building relationships according to John.

“Ok, let’s talk about this a little bit because I really want to hear what you guys are thinking. When you hear the word revenge, what you think of Jazzmine?”

Jazzmine replies, “I think to it means going out of your way to get back at someone. Whether it’s good or bad, I would say it depends on what kind of revenge it is. Because like if someone did something to you and you go out of your way to make them suffer, that’s bad, but if it’s like someone played a practical joke and you want to get back at them for *that*, I don’t think it’s a big deal.”

“Taylor, can revenge ever be justified or be a good thing?”

“I don’t think it can be justified because like there’s never a good reason, there’s always a better way.”

“So you think there’s a negative connotation to the word revenge?”

“Yeah, and like an eye for an eye makes everyone blind so there’s no point getting revenge.”

“So if a guy came up to you in front of a big group of friends and made you feel really, really horrible, how would you respond to that? Like he’s calling you out in front of your friends, how would you deal with it?”

“I don’t know.”

An African-American male responds, “If it were me, I’d probably want to get revenge.”

“Like physical or what kind of revenge?”

“Either.”

“Really?”

“Really, because if you like insult me and it’s something really bad, I mean I don’t really fight a lot but, yeah, we’d fight.”

“So you’d get suspended just because some guy said some things that weren’t even true about you?”

“I don’t know.”

A Hispanic female adds, “I think revenge is just a reflex.”

“Well I’m talking about going through the whole process of plotting just to get back at someone.”

An African-American female adds, “I’ve plotted revenge before but I didn’t feel good about it so I didn’t go through with it. It’s like, it can seem OK in movies, but when it’s real, it ain’t so cool.”

In this exchange, John is again inviting the students to share their personal experiences for the purpose of getting to know students so that he can build relationships with them. John also tells me that the journal topics are intended to be fun while also providing a space for students to grow in their writing. He believes that they will improve their writing “if they do it a lot.”

“I want everyone to get a lit book now. It would be nice if you could get one for others in your row, and then get out a piece of paper please.” John shares. He is intentional about operationalizing his belief that students should also have a caring relationship with one another. Though this is a small example, little, seemingly insignificant actions like this summatively assist John in creating a caring environment. John also regularly says “Please” and “Thank you”, intentionally both modeling good manners (a life skill) and showing respect (building relationships).

“I want to warn you guys, this story is creepy.” John exclaims. The students are about to read *The Cask of Amontillado*, which John regularly pronounces “Amanteeyado”.

One student shares loudly, “The main character takes this guy down to kill him in the basement.”

“Don't ruin it Mohammed!” another complains.

John then says, “I want to crank it up a little. This is a tough story with difficult language. I know you guys can handle it. Let's first look at the title to break it down a little. What is a cask?”

Several kids guess incorrectly. He finally explains what it means once a kid guesses correctly, expanding the student had already said before writing the word on the board. “Aw, I can't write man (he's spelling something wrong on the board). Everyone's heard of Mardi Gras, right?”

The kids nod their heads in affirmation.

“What's the purpose of it?”

After an extended wait time, no one responds.

“It's about Lent. Entering Lent you're not supposed to indulge in pleasures, it's about sacrifice. People sacrifice some of their indulgences. That's why they tear it up for two weeks before Lent. And a lot of people do that at Mardi Gras. Has anyone seen Carnival in Brazil? That's the same kind of crazy party!”

An African-American male asks, “Have you been there Granado?”

“No guy, but it sounds fun. Well this story happens during an event like Mardi Gras or Carnival and it's important to know that because it directly affects the plot.”

An African-American female exclaims, “I don't read this Granado, Poe is weird.”

“That’s what makes it interesting lady, that’s what makes it interesting.”

In this exchange John seeks to operationalize his belief that learning should be fascinating and pleasurable. He leans on the examples of Mardi Gras and Carnival as a means to finding a way to help students connect to the story in some way. Further, he explicitly states that the story they are about to read is “creepy”, a move that assists him in creating higher interest and fun. We also see John operationalize his intention of being genuine by sharing that he would like to go to Carnival. In this vignette, John operationalizes his intention of building relationships and making learning amusing, as he has taken a story that may not be of great interest to students and sought multiple pathways to making it relevant.

Closing Comments

John Granado’s classroom is a place where students know they will not only examine literature, write, think, and grow, but they will also find a space where they can examine themselves. Moreover, they know that because John Granado cares about them, he will continually find ways for them to connect their lives, their views, and their experiences to the content he will cover. Though the students may not always read an author who shares their ethnicity, race, gender, etc, he will give them opportunities to make explicit connections to what they are learning.

Much like in his life outside of school, John Granado is very much the father figure in her classroom. Like Jenna Ward, his students are his children for whom he cares deeply, knows individually, and teaches about life’s important lessons while supporting

them in their intellectual growth. He is a story teller who encourages others to tell theirs because he wants them to see what he already does: it is valuable.

Ms. Sandra Fay, Science Teacher

Journey to a Teacher

If not for a severe knee injury, Sandra Fay may never have become a teacher. Growing up in rural Iowa, Sandra was the quintessential jock who starred at her local high school, Sandra dreamed of playing at a major division one college and potentially beyond; but a fateful knee injury altered her life forever. Though Sandra could no longer play soccer, she sought to fulfill her passion by staying close to the sport, aspiring to be a coach at a major high school or college. To help her accomplish this mission, Ms. Fay decided to major in education so that she could have that opportunity.

Upon graduating college, Sandra took a job as a science teacher at a predominantly white high school in Iowa where she also coached varsity girls' soccer for all three years she worked in the school. Not long after taking her first teaching job in Iowa, she married her husband who was also a teacher. The young couple, who had spent their lives in Iowa, decided to venture out into the world, each securing a job at Greenville High School in suburban Denver, Colorado. Here, Sandra taught Science but also was hired as the head varsity girls' soccer coach. Much like the unexpected knee injury in her youth, Sandra was subject to another turn of fate that would alter her career. After just one year, she was asked to resign as head coach because of a parent perception that she was pushing her athletes too hard. Sandra explains that "they thought it was too hard and they made the excuse that 'these kids aren't good enough.'" Sandra disagreed, believing that her kids were good enough to do anything, a belief she has for her students in her classroom.

Though her forced resignation was a bit of a shock and difficult for Sandra to deal with, she ultimately found it to be a blessing, finding that it is difficult to be a great teacher and coach at the same time. “That was a blessing in disguise. I think trials make us who we are; I can think my dreams are over, and I did at the time, but if there wasn’t another path for me, I wouldn’t have found my passion...teaching.”

Since that moment, the young woman who used to teach pigs on her grandfather’s pig farm how to play checkers but never planned to be a teacher has blossomed into an educator. In her six years at Greenville she has since earned her master’s degree in literacy, served as an instructional coach, and excelled in the classroom with the most resistant learners. She has the reputation with many of her peers as being one of the best instructors in the school. Further, she and her husband, who now serves as an administrator at a school in another local district, have recently added a baby girl to their family.

In first meeting Ms. Fay, it is hard not to be struck by her passion for her students and for education in general. She talks animatedly about her classes, her students, and the issues in education that excite and frustrate her. Sandra balances that passion with a beaming smile that she regularly flashes and it doesn’t take long for one to feel as though he or she has known Sandra for a much longer time than they have, a potential sign of her Midwestern upbringing. Beyond teaching three courses at Greenville, the brown-haired, athletically built Greek-American also serves as an educational technology specialist to the staff. I observed her during November and December of 2010, at which time she was teaching three sections of Earth and Physical Science, a course designed for struggling ninth grade students. It is important to note that in her six years at Greenville, Sandra has

only worked with struggling and/or resistant learners, a group of students for whom she has great passion. I observed Ms. Fay teaching one of her Earth and Physical Science courses that met just before lunch in the late morning/early afternoon.

The Teacher Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

“If you don’t have a belief, you can’t teach intentionally.” – Sandra Fay

Sandra Fay - The Person

Every Student Should be Seen

Sitting in an office she shares with three other members of the technology/library staff in a room adorned with glass just to the side of her desk off the library’s common area, Sandra begins to talk passionately about her beliefs and intentions:

What I believe is what I demonstrate in my classroom. One of my colleagues taught me that if you don’t have a belief, you can’t teach intentionally. I believe every student should be seen and what they think is important. I believe that if we don’t nurture that, we’ll produce a lot of unconfident, unreflective, non-thinkers.

It is difficult not to be struck by just how self-aware and self-reflective Sandra Fay is. Much like her colleague witnessed in the classroom, her heightened sense of consciousness is almost tangible if not contagious. She explains that when she self-reflects, which she does quite often, she does so to “reenergize” herself and if she doesn’t get that time she “can get really drained.” Ms. Fay adds, “I can’t just go home at the end of the day, I need my time to think about my day, bring closure to it, experience all the thoughts and emotions that come with it, then let it go.”

Though that energy of which she refers manifests in the classroom, Ms. Fay describes herself as being, “quiet, reserved, and observing.” She further explains, “I won’t say anything until I’ve taken everything in. I’m self-reflective, passionate almost

to a fault, loyal, loving, and understanding. That's what I strive for anyway, I don't know if I hit it." Ironically, even pondering the question if she hits what she strives further exemplifies how deeply engrained Ms. Fay's consciousness is.

Sandra also finds that her students lead her to go into deeper reflection, leading her to ponder the most fundamental questions:

I've found that inner city kids help you find the core of why you do what you do. I've often found that my experiences in working with inner city kids have led me to ask myself, "Why am I here? What is my purpose?" If you don't know, then why should anyone listen to you?

For Sandra, those fundamental questions often deal with issues of culture as well.

When I ask her about how issues of race affect education, she explains:

I think people who are white generally think they can relate better and work better with white kids. I really think that it builds racism when saying that we need teachers of color with kids of color. Just because a person is the same color as you doesn't mean their experiences were similar and it definitely doesn't mean that they are good teachers.

Though Sandra spends a great deal of her time contemplating macro issues such as how issues of race affect teaching in general, she also finds time to ponder issues much closer to home. She explains:

I love to just think about stuff, to self-reflect. For example, I need time to take in what one student said to me about his experience in growing up in Mexico and make meaning of it for myself, to think about what that means for him, and how growing up in a place like Juarez has made him who he is. At the end of the day, before I go home, I need time to decompress (write, think). I tell my husband I need to be alone to walk the dogs. Sometimes he limits it but he understands that that is what I need.

Ms. Fay's self-reflective nature and awareness have served her well in teaching some of the most challenging classes at Greenville, as her reflections drive the learning experiences of her students and herself. Sandra places high value on reflection for herself

as well as her students while being highly sensitive to others and their cultures. For Sandra, a heightened sense of consciousness is both a belief and an intention.

Buying-in because I'm Truly Me

Much like Ms. Ward and Mr. Granado, Sandra holds authenticity and transparency in high regard. The luminescent glow, intensely cerebral nature, and warm personality that Ms. Fay illustrates in our interactions are very much present in her classroom. For better or worse, Ms. Fay's students feed off of this transparency and often mimic it in their class. Whether they are sharing intimate stories about their lives, their innermost desires, or their immediate frustrations, Sandra's students are clearly more connected to her because they see her as authentically human. For Sandra, this is not only a belief but an intention that fuels her teaching. "It's important to show kids your personality. It's who I am at home, it's who I am at school; it's me. They need to see that or they won't buy-in to me."

What separates Sandra from other participants, despite her belief in and intention of being transparent and authentic in the classroom, she feels the need to separate her home and school life. She explains:

I focus on family when I go home – it's separate, I have to keep them separate, which is surprising to a lot of people who work with me because I am often so passionate about teaching and kids. But I have to keep it here and at home I'm at home. I'm not saying that I'm some totally different person in the classroom, I just need to keep my work and home lives separate or school becomes too consuming.

Not surprisingly, Sandra's intensely heightened consciousness and incredible passion for teaching make it necessary for her to separate school and home for the sake of self-preservation. That is not to say that there is not praxis. Sandra does in fact find

herself talking about her school life at home with her husband and friends and on several occasions, I witnessed her sharing stories about her home life with her students. As we will see in the ensuing vignettes, Ms. Fay's beliefs and intentions about the need to be transparent are evident in her classroom.

Sandra Fay - The Instructor

Authentic Learning with a Road Map

Ms. Fay is an adherent to the backward design planning model and much like Jenna Ward, she follows Wiggins and McTeigh's (2005) Understanding by Design model of curriculum planning. Sandra is intentional about devising essential questions for her students that are broad, universal and unanswerable in nature before considering her learning targets. In planning her learning targets ahead of time, she develops handouts for her students with the learning targets printed on them and a space for them to reflect daily on whether or not they have met those targets and to explain how they did or did not meet them. By starting with the end in mind, students not only are clear on the learning goals they are supposed to accomplish, but also can track their progress along the way (which Sandra explains is a form of teaching for empowerment).

When asked to discuss her process of curriculum writing, Sandra explained that she believe that it is imperative to give the students a clear picture of where they are going in their learning. Specifically, she explains:

I always begin with the end in mind and try to think about what products, real-world products we can create that will illustrate they learned the material. I come up with learning targets they need to reach and have them track those so that they are aware of what they learned or need to know. I think about any way I can make the material interesting and relevant to each of them so that they want to learn it, so they have ownership of their learning rather than just have material presented to them that doesn't mean anything.

Planning with the end in mind results in a number of important things according to Sandra and connects to a number of other sub-domains. By planning in this manner she feels that she is finding ways to not only make the learning more interesting, but is also connecting to *The Student Domain: The Individual* by connecting the material to her students' lives. Finally, she is intentional about realizing her belief around building capacity/teaching for empowerment, as she is using planning with the end in mind to increase student ownership in the learning and having them track their progress.

Interestingly, though Ms. Fay plans meticulously, she hardly scripts out her lesson. Even more, she does not use formalized lesson or unit planning templates, but does use the ideas from some. She explains, "When I go in to teach I have an outline of what I want to do, but not a lesson plan per se. I know where I want to go because I have planned with the end in mind." This sort of spontaneity that is afforded by not scripting lessons very much compliments Ms. Fay's heightened sense of consciousness, as she is intentional about giving herself the freedom to make adjustments to lessons as they unfold.

Giving Up Control

As alluded to above, starting with the end in mind results in a number of outcomes, including serving as a means to individualizing instruction for students. In tracking their own progress alongside Sandra's tracking, students not only become aware of where they are as learners, but they also can inform Sandra on how she will individualize her instruction. For example, she might have four learning targets for her students and upon reading her and her student's tracking notes, she will divide the class into groups of four based on each learning target. Students who did not meet learning

target 1 will be in group 1, students who did not meet learning target 2 will be in group 2 and so on. Ms. Fay will then work with each group to guide her students toward meeting the particular learning target that they had until that point not met.

Sandra believes strongly in and is intentional about meeting her students' individual needs and in allowing them choice in the learning process. More specifically, she believes it is imperative to give students options in considering how they will go about learning the material, though it is often a controlled choice that involves her giving options. She explains:

I'm really intentional about giving choice in the classroom. It allows the students to have the power to feel in control. I believe that if you give the kids a choice, they may not like the choices offered to them, but at least they can make a choice. It hands the power over to them and it makes it harder for them to deflect things on you.

Again one can see the organic nature of teaching in that there are not only overlaps in the domains, but a sort of complimentary relationship. Because Sandra gives her students choice in the classroom, she is seeking to realize her belief/intention around teaching for empowerment. Moreover, she is using choice to build relationships, as she is intentional about creating a space where students can own their choices in favor of blaming someone who may force choices on them.

For Sandra, providing an individualized learning experience, planning with the end in mind, being highly conscious, and living life authentically are essential beliefs for her as a person and a teacher and she is intentional about them in her planning. In the ensuing vignette, I will explore how these intentions and beliefs operationalize.

The Teacher Domain: Operations

Scene 1: Drawing out the learning

Sandra's roster is comprised of 22 students, most of which are below grade level in reading, writing, mathematics, and science. Of those students, several of whom are court ordered to be in school, there are 4 Hispanic females, 2 Hispanic males, 7 African-American males, 3 African-American females, 2 Asian-American males, 1 European-American female, and 3 European-American males. Like many of the other classes at Greenville, attendance is rather unstable, as in the time I visited Sandra's class, she averaged 18 students per class.

The room looks the part of a traditional science classroom with industrial white walls, tan plastic floor tiles, and black lab tables that seat two students per table. Sandra has moved the tables so that there are 18 tables that comprise nine work stations able to house four students at each station because tables have been pushed together. Around the perimeter of the room are a number of orange cupboards connected to the walls and extending up to the ceiling. Below the cabinets are eight sinks that circle around half of the classroom walls. At the front of the room there is a demonstration table that sits in front of a white board, a television from the late '90s mounted on a bracket in the corner of the room, a teacher's desk that Sandra never sits at, and a computer from the mid '90s for teachers that allow teachers to take attendance. The walls are nearly bare, with the traditional periodic table posted on one wall and a red fire blanket stand mounted to another; there are no windows in this classroom. Like most classrooms at Greenville, this one is shared with several teachers and like most teachers, Sandra teaches in multiple rooms.

The class has been studying states of matter as part of the required Earth and Physical Science curriculum. On a piece of butcher paper taped to the whiteboard at the front of the room, Ms. Fay has written the following:

Law of Conservation Matter = we can't destroy nor create matter
States of Matter: Solid, Liquid, Gas

"If we set the table on fire, would the matter change?" Sandra asks.

"Yes...it would disappear," a white male replies.

"Right it'll change, not disappear. It goes from grand scale of matter to the smaller pieces of matter. Does that make sense? Do we see the connection? Looking at the learning targets, what does that say?" Sandra is referring to the handout she has give to students with all of their learning targets written on them; there are seven in total for this particular unit. The creation of the learning target handout is a direct result in Sandra's belief in and intention for beginning with the end in mind when planning her curriculum.

A Hispanic male replies, "I can list the parts of matter."

"What goes inside matter, Dequan?"

"Why are you asking me?"

"Because I want to know and you to tell me." Dequan sits silently.

"Do you want to pass?"

"Yes"

"OK, Nate, what goes on the inside of an atom?"

"The nucleus."

"Good. Dequan, what goes on the inside?"

"The nucleus."

“Good. Christian, what goes inside the nucleus?”

“I don’t know.”

“Wanna pass?”

He nods in affirmation.

“Craig, what goes inside the nucleus?”

“Protons and neutrons.”

“Good. Christian, what goes inside the nucleus?”

“Pass.”

“Craig, what goes inside the nucleus?”

“Protons and neutrons.”

“Christian, what goes inside the nucleus?”

“Pass.”

“Craig, what goes inside the nucleus?”

Christian now gets excited, saying defensively, “I just said it.”

Sandra retorts, “Well what is it?”

“Protons and neutrons,” he replies defiantly. Sandra doesn’t pause, “Christian, what else goes on the outside?”

“I don’t know”

“Wanna pass?”

“Yeah.”

“Steve, what else goes on the outside?”

“Electrons”

“Christian, what else goes on the outside.”

“I don’t know”

“Steve, what else goes on the outside?”

“Electrons”

“Christian, what else goes on the outside?”

“I don’t know”

“We can’t move on until you tell me.”

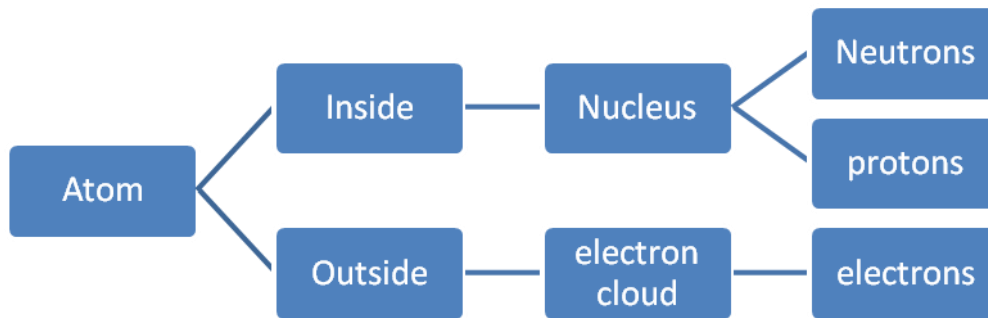
“Electrons.”

In this exchange there are several examples of Sandra’s elevated sense of cognizance on display. She is aware the Christian is frequently allowed to hide in his classes, rarely challenged by teachers because he is not outwardly defiant, but is a silent objector to participating in school. Through building a relationship with Christian, Sandra has learned that he is rather intelligent but is resistant to engaging in learning. Moreover, through building relationships with other students, she recognizes that the culture of many of the students in this class is to appear as though they are not interested in what is happening in school. The coach in Sandra, often on display in her teaching, becomes manifest in this situation, as she refuses to let Christian escape answering the question. This maneuver is intended to build capacity in him, showing him that not only does he know the answer, but that in this environment, with this teacher, it is “cool” to know the answers to questions.

Another subtle thing that shows up in this exchange is the element of choice, as Ms. Fay allows the students to choose to pass, though she will come back to them. Knowing this, the students can avoid feeling on the spot, but recognize that they are

eventually going to have to give the answer. In a sense, this strategy forces engagement, as the students must listen to their peers to find answers.

On the board, Sandra has drawn the following while she asks the students questions about the makeup of an atom:



Sandra then asks, “What does the second box on the learning targets say Dion?”

“I can calculate, draw and explain the parts of an atom. So we need to know our formulas so we can calculate, right? So Sean, how do we know protons? What do we look at Terrell?”

“Atomic number.”

“Good. Reggie, what do we look at when we are trying to find electrons?”

“Atomic number.”

“Why do you say that?”

“Because electrons equal protons.”

“Protons go in what location of the atom? You said it earlier.”

“Nucleus.”

“Good. If you flip your sheets over, you see your to do list right? What’s first on there Igor?” Sandra asks as she turns on a projector and goes to a document camera resting on the demonstration table at the front of the room.

“Pick six atoms to draw,” Igor replies.

“You can use the periodic table in your planners. If not, I will give one out. You have to do six, any six you have not done or we have not done in class.”

Sandra goes over the “to do” list she has created for the students both verbally and on the document camera. This list is a direct result of Sandra’s belief and intention for being self-reflective. On an exit ticket she handed to her students at the end of the previous class meeting, many of her students shared that having a list as such would be helpful in getting them to understand the content and meet the learning targets. Sandra promptly developed the following to do list for the day:

1st Pick 6

2nd Draw atomic structure for each

3rd Build all 6 on atom building game. You’ll call me over for each one

Sandra then pronounces to the class, “If you know what you are about to do, give me a 5. If you have no idea, give me a 1, and if you’re in the middle, give me a 3.” Most students give fives before they all begin to move about the room. Some grab books from the back, some move to different tables to get other partners. The kids feel really free to move and seem comfortable. Two kids playing around, one tosses a book on the table after feigning giving it to another. They playfully push one another on the shoulder. Sandra looks but lets it go, realizing it isn’t out of control. Sandra sits with an African-American students and his partner who both held up one finger when asked if they knew what to do.

“Do you guys want me to do it with you?” They look at one another but do not respond.

“Andrew, I want to see if you can problem solve that on your own.”

“I can.”

The room is rather quiet, as the kids are more engaged than I have seen. Sandra sits with Christian on a stool, working with him. They ask Sandra how they should undertake the project, offering two ways they can go about drawing atomic structure.

“You guys can do it however you want.”

Tyrone raises his hand to get her attention. She comes over and sits on the stool she carried over. The table is chest high. She had told me just a moment ago that she needed a stool. She talks quietly, always making eye contact with her kids as she speaks. Her hand goes to her cheek, elbow on the table as she speaks.

“That was a very smart idea,” Sandra says to one group.

Tyrone says he needs a calculator and Sandra promptly gets up to get one for him. One student asks for a book, standing beside her. She directs him behind where I am sitting. She turns, “Reggie, how are we doing up there?”

The room continues to have but a quiet murmur of kids collaborating. I look around and not one student is off task. Tyrone and his partner laugh as he continues to punch numbers on his calculator and then write. One student gets atomic game from the back room. He and his partner begin to build elements with marbles. Andrew walks over to Sandra who is still working with Tyrone’s partner. Andrew asks a question.

“Ok, I’m already noticing you don’t understand how the skills work. Let’s go to your table and talk.”

One student asks Sandra if he can go get an atom building game from the back of the room. She replies, “Yes, but be careful not to break that; it’s expensive.”

“You can buy another one,” the student replies.

“I wish.”

“You broke?”

“Imma tell you what, having a baby ain’t cheap.”

Several elements from the domains of culturally responsive teaching manifest in this series of exchanges. Most obviously, Ms. Fay’s intention of personalizing instruction and providing choice are on display. Not only do the students have handouts with learning targets on them, but there is also a section where they can indicate where they are in terms of meeting the target. Students can write an A if they feel like they are approaching meeting the learning target, an M if they have met it, or an E if they have exceeded it. There is another section on the handout where students must provide an explanation that illustrates that they have in fact met the learning target. Sandra tracks these regularly so that she can not only provide individualized instruction, but her students are empowered to recognize where they are as learners. Congruently, after looking at these sheets, Sandra reflects on what she has done and must do to help students meet the learning targets. Again, several domains intersect. The students’ also have a choice in how they attack the learning. They can pick which elements they want to work with, how they will draw the atomic structures, and they can also choose who they will work with on the assignment.

Another element that is visible in the exchange is Sandra’s operationalizing of her belief in and intention for being open and genuine. Not only does she openly share that

she does not have much money as a result of having a baby, but she relates to her students as she would any person in her life. She talks to them as though they are intellectual equals, not children that she is above. Moreover, her coach-like intensity and warm smile are frequently on display; her aura and her tone are no different in this setting than it was in any of our interview sessions. Sandra is very much herself in the classroom.

Collectively the above vignette illustrates how Sandra Fay operationalizes several of her beliefs and intentions from the teacher domain. As has been pointed out, several other examples of the operationalizing of intentions and beliefs from the student and environmental domains become manifest. As is the case, several other examples of the operationalizing of intentions and beliefs from the teacher domain will be described and interpreted in the ensuing sections.

The Student Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

The Individual

The World's Best Problem Solvers

For all of the teachers in this study, but particularly Sandra, each of them sees an inseparable connection between what one learns in life and what one learns in school. For teachers like Sandra, there is an almost permeability between what students learn in and bring to the classroom and what they learn and bring outside of it. Sandra feels as though the experiences and skills that students utilize outside of their school life, a life with a set of acquired skills and knowledge she feels is often kept separate from school life, is often kept separate from students' educational experiences. Instead she views the knowledge and skills students bring with them to the classroom as assets that should be utilized. She explains that, "Our kids are the best problem solvers and it's important that we show

them that the same way they think outside of school is how they think in school; they're the same skills and they're academic."

Keeping in line with viewing what students bring to the classroom as assets, Sandra also argues that the current system of standardized testing has often led to students being viewed as test scores rather than individuals. She argues that teachers must:

See every kid for who they are, not as a number or statistic. For example: I have a court appointed student that you saw in the class you observed, Terrell. I don't see him as an unsatisfactory kid who scored a 10 on the ACT, I see him as a young man who wants to make something of his life. His experience is unique to him and that matters; it matters a lot and I have to honor that. I believe in him and I want to help him be the best person he can be.

Like all of the teachers in this study, Sandra honors her students' wishes and desires and seeks to meet students' individual needs. More important than teaching them her science content, she is intentional about and believes in helping students gain the knowledge they need to live the life they want. This, according to Ms. Fay, is "the core" of her job. She explains, "I always ask myself, "How will they find their own passions and express it in a positive way?" Again the connected, organic nature of teaching is displayed in that for Sandra, teaching the whole person leads to students becoming more empowered as learners and as people. This is intentional and very much part of Sandra's beliefs about what her ultimate goals are as a teacher. She says:

I want to make sure the kids graduate with the skills they need to be successful in college and beyond if they are going to college or in the work world if not. I want to help them get the skills to be successful in live and be good people. I think it's important for me to help them get what they want to get out of school, rather than what education wants them to get out of school.

It is important to point out that because Greenville is a school that is in danger of being completely taken over by the state, they were forced to come up with a school improvement plan to better their test scores. Further, the state required that all courses be “audited”, meaning that there is a daily or weekly pacing guide that compliments a curriculum based on state requirements. Because of this, Sandra often is pressured to cover a set curriculum while conversely being forced (because of time constraints) to limit how much time she can spend on teaching the whole person/teaching life. Regardless, Sandra says that she can still cover a curriculum that many students “don’t care about” while operationalizing her intention/belief around teaching the whole person. This tension of external pressures versus internal beliefs and intentions is common among all of the participants.

Learning Culture from Real Experiences

Within her belief/intention of seeing her students as individuals and teaching the whole person, Ms. Fay also recognize that culture is the lens through which they experience the world. She is extremely conscious of learning about her students’ racial and ethnic cultures in the process of getting to know them as individuals. When asked about how she learns about students’ cultures she explains:

I learn through kids. I used to be scared to ask but over time I’ve really become comfortable talking about race with kids. It is what it is, but I can be more understanding. Take Luis for example; we were talking the other day in class about immigration and immigrating to the United States from Mexico. He’s from Juarez and was telling me about the difference between Juarez and Chiguagua. I really didn’t know so I asked him to tell me. He told me about how rough it is in Juarez, that’s where he’s from, and how you kind of get used to all the violence, and how there are like 7 murders every week. I learned a lot from him and interestingly not only was he not offended by the question, I couldn’t get him to stop talking and he’s usually so quiet in class. I learn a lot from the kids perspectives. For me that’s how you learn about culture because you learn from a real experience, not a generalization.

Though Sandra very much believes it is important to understand students' racial and ethnic cultures, like the other participants, she argues that focusing solely on individual cultures can be limiting and at times can lead teachers to making broad generalizations about particular ethnic/racial groups:

I was always taught how to talk to Latino, Black, American-Indian, Asian kids, the group as a whole was based off their cultural background. It basically generalized entire groups of people based on their race or ethnicity and that's not how it is. I mean, I'm a Greek-American and I know that my culture, my experience isn't common to every Greek-American; My family culture is different, my customs are different, my routines and beliefs are different, how I think and talk are different. As far as generalizing character trait to entire groups of people, I don't believe in it. I don't just teach to a culture, I teach to a kid. Does culture form how we see the world? Yes. But in my own experience, I was grouped as a special education kid and jock and that is exactly how I was treated. People generalized me based on the group they put me in and it affected my educational experience.

Diversity is a blessing and that's our biggest learning point. In every culture, there are different experiences. Undoubtedly the threads carry through but they don't define who kids are. It translates into everyday life. My husband is white, I'm white, but I have unique experiences and he has unique experiences. Often we think about race and assume that the experiences of people within the race are similar.

Like the other participants in this study, Sandra believes in getting to fully know her students, including their ethnic/racial cultures, their gendered culture, their student culture, their community culture, their family culture, their peer group culture, and so on. It is imperative for Ms. Fay to know as much about her students as possible, with culture being a major part of that relationship. She explains the evolution of her belief/intention for knowing the whole student while recognizing that culture is the lens through which they experience:

My first year was rough; I couldn't connect with them and often found myself wondering if I had much in common with them. We had done a great deal of equity work over the years and in that time I have found that often equity makes you feel like you don't know your students of color or understand them. But what I eventually found is that I can connect beyond culture. I treat kids as a parent/adult figure more and model what a good adult does/says. I'm teaching them what it means to be a good person and a productive member of our society. Does their culture still matter? Absolutely, culture is a huge part of who we are and how we see the world. But is culture all I should talk about in class? "What does an atom mean to you through your cultural lens?" I think that can be limiting.

Sandra views knowing her students individually while also recognizing that culture is the lens through which they experience the world are essential to being a great teacher. The process of getting to know her students is evident in her actions in the classroom and with the relationships she builds with her students. Whether she is having an informal conversation in her office, going to meet a kid in the cafeteria, or directly asking students about their experiences in the classroom, Sandra is extremely intentional about implementing her beliefs about seeing kids as individuals, teaching life, and recognizing that culture is the way students experience the world.

The Learner

Make this Education Work for You

As should be rather evident at this point, building capacity in learners and teaching for empowerment is a core belief and intention for Sandra Fay. As was the case with Jenna Ward and John Granado, Ms. Fay is far more interested in helping students realize the assets that they already possess, building upon those assets, and seeking to help them build capacity to live the lives they want to live than she is in teaching about atoms, molecules, or ionic bonding. This is not to say that she does not wish to teach these concepts as well, but rather she recognizes the difficulty in getting students to

“buy-in” to accessing this content if she does not focus upon teaching for empowerment and building capacity in learners.

According to Sandra, an essential building block of building capacity in learners and teaching for empowerment is helping the students realize that they can be successful. She recognizes the necessity particularly for students who do not have strong support systems at home or have felt left on the periphery by the educational system. She explains:

No matter what race you are, you (as a teacher) have to be like, “You can do this. You can be successful and make this education work for you.” I can still show them examples of how education worked for me. I tell them that, “Your experience will look different than mine or anyone else’s, but you can do it.”

In the process of building confidence in students on their way to becoming more empowered, Sandra is also extremely cautious not to feel sorry for or enable her students. She again illustrates a heightened sense of consciousness in doing so, while concurrently building capacity in her learners by way of teaching them not to use excuses for why they cannot be successful. She says she will “not let them make excuses for why they can’t do something or why they can’t succeed.” She further explains, “I want to find reasons, how and why and then to help the kids do the same for themselves. I think that is really empowering for kids, for people.”

As one might imagine, trying to operationalize a belief in and intention for building capacity in resistant students can be quite challenging and very much requires someone who is almost inhumanly resilient. This resiliency is frequently on display in Sandra’s classroom to the degree that at times, even as an observer, I would become somewhat frustrated with the resistance of some of her learners. Not only did Sandra not

show any signs of frustration in all the time I observed her, she later told me in our follow-up interview that she doesn't get frustrated, but rather becomes more resolute. She explains:

My resiliency comes from my stubbornness and partially a result of the kids I've always worked with; they make you work for everything. It never comes easy. It comes from my belief that they can do anything. It's like, 'You may have been able to fade away in other classes, but in here, your voice is an important part of the community. They know something and thinking is important.

Sandra truly believes that all of her students can be successful and that their voices are important. More importantly, she is intentional about getting her students to believe this as well. Ms. Fay believes deeply in getting students to see the value in thinking, reading, writing, and learning while also holding closely to the notion that students need to see that they possess a myriad of assets already. In the ensuing vignette, we will see how Sandra operationalizes this belief along with teaching the whole person/life and recognizing that culture is a lens through which we experience. It should again be noted and hopefully expected at this point that themes from other dimensions will become manifest, as the organic, complex nature of teaching is inherently so.

The Student Domain: Operations

Scene 1: Choosing your path to learning

As the students enter the room Sandra hands each of them a card. Each card has a number on it, which correlates to a chair in the classroom. Sandra does this with the intention of building a classroom environment, so that students do not continue to sit by the Sandra people. The students fill out learning target handouts. If they have met the target, they are asked to explain how they did so. Most kids write while Tyrone talks with Sandra. He is resistant to learning but does so quietly. He is one of several court-

appointed students in the class. Sandra explains that he is not used to getting pushed by his teachers because he is quiet and doesn't cause trouble. This often causes teachers to leave him alone.

She walks over to Terrell, an African-American male and his white male table partner to ask if they have met the learning target. Terrell says he does not know. She pushes him, "What did you do last class?" He shares several items with her, including knowledge of protons, neutrons, and electrons.

"See, you did learn something. Write that here." He writes that he is exceeding in the learning target. Sandra smiles genuinely, clasp both of her hands on his shoulders briefly and says, "You're exceeding that one? Awesome. See, and you told me you didn't know anything."

"I'm going to give you a few more minutes to get this done." She walks around the room asking questions.

"I don't get it," an African-American male shares.

"What don't you get?"

"What does that mean to classify?"

"If Mr. Watson (the school principal) told you to go to the gym and classified us by freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior, what is he doing?"

"He's putting us in different places by class."

"Exactly. So what does classify mean if we're talking about elements?"

"Oh, putting them in different places by some category."

In this exchange, Sandra is operationalizing her belief/intention for capacitating her students. Not only does she try to use affirmation and question asking to help her

students realize that they have grown as learners, which she clearly does with Terrell, she also is seeking to empower her students by having them track their learning. By giving them space to take inventory on their learning, Sandra is giving the students ownership of their education while also giving them space to be aware of their progress. Incidentally, but not unintentionally, Sandra's method of engaging with her students illustrates her care for them.

Sandra also intentionally utilizes a real-life example in building capacity with her student who asks what the word "classify" means. Her questioning models how he might go about finding answers for himself while also serving as a real life example he can draw upon to find answers. She is in fact teaching the whole person/life in this exchange, as she is teaching him a skill that he can use to find answers to questions to which he does not know the answers. She illustrates for him how he can draw upon his schema to find the answer to difficult questions, or in this case, to find the meaning of words he does not know.

Sandra put her hand on a kids head in the front, moving his head back and forth.

She then divides the class by the following criteria:

- If you have an A on the learning targets (1st four) go to one side and put tables together in quads.
- If you have an A on parts of an atom (last 3) go to one side and put tables together in quads.

A Hispanic female walks in late saying that she thought there was a modified schedule, apologizing for her mistake. One student doesn't know which side of the room to go to. She grabs his shirt/arm firmly and moves her to where she wants to go. Sandra moves around the room, helping rearrange tables and chairs for students; it takes four minutes but she does not seem flustered. Students sit in groups of four and in some cases

more. Some kids ask to move to different groups that they consider too big which she obliges. She hands out papers to the kids to help them understand states of matter before pausing for 15 seconds. Then she says, “Can I have your attention please so I can go through the packet?” She goes over the directions. “Does this make sense?”

Tyrone replies, “No.”

“What doesn’t make sense?”

“Nothing.”

“Can you ask me some questions so I can help?”

“I’ll figure it out.”

“Who are you going to ask if you don’t get it?” He answers. “Then who?” Again he replies. “Then who?”

“Good job Tyrone. Way to think your way through that.” She then asks the class, “How much time do you need to do this?”

Several reply, “20 minutes.”

“Ok 20 minutes.” She asks the kids to show how well they understand using a one-to-five scale.

Sandra operationalizes several intentions/beliefs in this exchange. The seemingly most obvious is building capacity and teaching for empowerment in her exchange with Tyrone. Not only does she help him come to recognize how he can get answers to his questions, but she also is building a community of learners in the process, as the students are looked to as teachers as well as learners. In the exchange, Sandra also operationalizes her belief/intention of individualizing instruction/providing choice by allowing the students to choose where they wanted to go for the lesson while also allowing them to

select their groups. In the process she is building capacity in her learners by giving them the space to identify their own needs before getting help.

Sandra approaches a group of students who have a question. Terrell has his head in his hand, leaning to the side with a brown hood covering his face and hair. She does not yell at him but asks if he understands. When Sandra leaves, all of the kids but Terrell work; he is clearly distracted. The kids to my left have been talking about gangs; one asks another if he is in a gang to which he gives the students an angry look. He changes the subject and they begin to talk about teachers they don't like. "I put my head down in Ms. Cameron's class and she tried to lift it up. I don't know who the fuck she think she is, she just a old ass teacher." The conversation ensues for a few minutes while they work on the activity. Sandra comes over to this table, asking, "What's going on Tyrone?" He says he doesn't understand. She asks what he needs to get help on. He says he wants to go to the other table. She doesn't believe him and asks, "You did? What did they say?"

"Nothing."

"They ignore you? They're filling in their boxes. Either way, what don't you understand?" He explains before Sandra asks him several questions that help him move forward. She then turns to an African-American female at the table, "Tyesha, what's the different between an atom and a molecule?"

"I don't know."

She asks several questions to Tyesha of which she cannot answer and begins to get frustrated.

"Tyesha, don't get frustrated, you can do this."

Sandra is sitting in a chair with the kids. They are answering questions and filling out their sheets. She leaves and they work on the sheet, asking questions. I am surprised that Tyrone raises his hand to ask a question. He wants clarity on something. He calls out to Sandra, “A, A, A, Ms. Teacher.”

“Call her by her name nigga”, Tyesha snaps at him defensively.

“Mm I don’t like white people.” Tyrone says, “But she’s alright. I’ll call her by name. Ms. Fay!”

Several intentions/beliefs operationalize in this exchange. Sandra is very intentional about teaching Tyesha about how to be persistent when things are difficult. She is also a court appointed student who has recently given birth to a child out of wedlock. Sandra explains that she is easily frustrated and prone to “shut down” as a result. Sandra is trying to teach her the life skill of maintaining composure and persevering when things get difficult. Congruently, Sandra is intentional in operationalizing her belief that culture is the lens through which one experiences, as she gives students the freedom to communicate in their dialect in her classes. Further, she allows them personal digressions so long as they are not too long or do not interfere with learning. In the case above, the students stay on task as they talk about non-content related items. She is also inviting of students’ cultures with regards to the ways students dress. Though there are school-wide dress codes, she tells me that there are several students who come to her class that do not show up for others. She attributes some of this to her allowing kids to be themselves. Dress is part of this for Sandra. She explains that she is indifferent to what students wear (within reason), so long as they are engaged and coming to class. She says, “I’ve got kids who are resistant learners, who are engaging in

material, and I'm going to make a big deal about a do-rag? You have to pick your battles." On this particular observation I notice that three kids are wearing a hats and one wears a do-rag. Most students talk in a hybrid slang/academic language when they talk about school but slang only when socializing. It is also interesting to note that this freedom Sandra provides for students to be themselves may help her in building relationships with students, as evidenced in Tyeshia's staunch defense when Tyrone didn't call Sandra by name. Only relationships build through mutual respect and trust, an element from the Environmental domain, has been established. While a number of themes from other domains manifest themselves in this vignette, Sandra certainly operationalizes her intentions and beliefs for his students in the student domain.

The Environmental Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

The Social-Emotional

I Care about How the Kids Grade Me

As has should have become evident already, Sandra Fay not only cares deeply about her students, but she believes it is important to build relationships with them for her to be an effective educator. Her passion for her students is almost palpable, and this enthusiasm is connected to her beliefs about teaching. She explains:

I was once told there was no such thing as an altruistic act, but teaching is truly an altruistic profession. I need to fight for voices that can't be heard. I don't care how administration grades me; I care about how the kids grade me. Smiling, when I get something accomplished, when I feel like they are growing, finding their voices...and I may have had something to do with that, it feels good.

Teaching is much more than a job to Sandra and her students' success is the focus of her passion. As is the case, Ms. Fay believes in and is intentional about building relationships with her students. In explaining the process she says, "You need to bridge

the cultural gap between teacher and student by finding commonalities. You need to know what they believe, what they care about, what makes them tick. Without that, you have nothing.”

Building relationships operationalizes in several ways for Sandra. Beyond the individual discussions she has with students inside and outside of class, she is intentional about creating spaces where she can build those relationships with students while also getting students to build relationships with one another. She explains:

My classroom is a community of learners. Everyone’s respectful toward each other. They learn how to work in groups, how to function in a teamed learning environment effectively. It’s a work in progress, but they’re getting there. I missed some time at the beginning of the year because of maternity leave so that has put me behind at this point but we’ll get there. The classroom will look different in March than it does now because I have to build those relationships, to build trust. Especially with kids like DeJuan and Tyronee, those are kids who have situations where they are waiting for me to abandon them, for me to give up because that has been their experiences in their lives. I have to show them that I’m not going to give up on them and that they can trust me. I would say overall that it’s a happy community, a full functioning realistic picture of the world. I need to mirror reality. I need to think about “How do I help this person get to where we need to be?”

As Sandra points out, she sees trust as an essential component to relationship building. Further, she sees relationship building as being connected to the notion of building capacity in learners, as she believes that her students will not be open to her teaching them about how to get the life they want if they do not trust her. Building that trust is extremely intentional for Sandra, as she explains:

I am very intentional about letting kids come and go from the room during class. It lets them know that we’re a community and we all play a part in the control. It also lets me prove that I trust them. I think it’s important to send the message that I trust you until you give me a reason not to and rarely do they take advantage of it, they don’t abuse it. They usually only go when they have to go.

Interestingly, this sort of open door policy as a means to building relationships and trust is not unique to Sandra. All of the participants in this study utilized the open door policy in building relationships with their students as well, each viewing this as a form of illustrating trust to their students.

The Intellectual

Why do We Need to Know This?

As one might surmise, Sandra Fay holds her students' interests at the center of her lens when she thinks about her teaching/curriculum. She is almost physically and mentally averse to the notion of teaching something that she does not think her students will find interesting. This can create a tension for her at times, particularly at Greenville where there is a mandated curriculum in her Earth and Physical Science class that was designed to align with the state examination used for accountability. When I ask her about the process of writing lessons for this curriculum, she explains:

I think about the kids – I think that if I were them I'd want to know, "Why do I need to know this?" In Earth and Physical Science we have a new curriculum this year and there's a tough unit I have to teach in physics. Why do we need to know this? This is an example of schools pushing an agenda on kids. Where in the real world does this exist? I need to give them places to see the connection to their lives. If I don't see it, then how are they going to see it? I really try to build on things that they see in everyday life so that they can connect the learning to their experiences. I think about how our neighborhood may not look like this or that but I listen to their experiences, hear their voices, and try to find ways to make the content relevant to their lives, their environment, and their experiences. You know, our kids can be the world's best problem solvers and they're not that different me. They have the same skills, they just look different. I am always looking for ways to bridge their commonalities with the content and with me.

One of Sandra's core beliefs and intentions about curriculum is that it is meaningful and important to students. The tension she feels between this belief/intention and the exterior pressures and requirements for teaching and curriculum are difficult for

her to navigate, but not impossible. In reality, she seems to connect the ability to effectively navigate this tension with what she views as quality teaching. She explains:

School district administration creates goals, definitions of success, and learning outcomes based off of what they think is meaningful for kids, not what kids think is meaningful. Their agenda is pushed on teachers so we do it to them; we give them the education other people think they need, but kids often know what they need. Sure they need guidance and teachers can also inform what they need to know, but I think it's our job to give kids an education that is meaningful and interesting to them.

In conjunction with making learning interesting for students, she also believes in the importance of not only making the learning fun, but also helping students recognize that it can be fun. Ms. Fay elucidates:

I really try to model how learning can be fun. It's fun to get to have an intelligent conversation, it's fun when you can understand someone who is really smart. I like to model that fun isn't just drinking and smoking but it's about having intellectual conversation. It's fun to teach them how to disagree with each other, or me, properly; it's communication skills.

Reading is fun and it's fun when we get to get smarter and know more. It's fun when you can ask tough questions and don't just roll over and take it. It's fun to question authority and that's what we teach; it can help them figure out their own beliefs.

I use humor intentionally because it does lighten the mood and creates a friendly environment. It makes things light hearted and shows the kids that we do this work because we want to and it can be enjoyable.

Again Sandra makes a connection with other domains of teaching in that she sees making learning interesting and fun as being connected to building capacity in learners. For Ms. Fay, if the learning is not interesting or fun, students have little to no motivation to learn the material and as a result, are far less likely to “help them figure out their own beliefs.” Concurrently, she affixes making learning fun/using humor to building

relationships, as she recognizes the necessity of having a friendly environment for her to be able to build relationships with students and for them to build them with each other.

As is the situation in Jenna Ward and John Granado's classrooms, Sandra's passion for and joy in the learning process permeate her classroom. Though it is not always evident that her students share her enthusiasm for learning at all times, there is little doubt that they are more likely to engage in the content she possesses because of it. Ms. Fay's classroom is a challenging space, but it is difficult not to feel the joy for learning and the warmth and safety of the environment she has intentionally created for her students.

The Environmental Domain: Operations

Scene 1: Earth, Wind, and Fire

As the students enter the room Sandra hands each of them a card. Students pick up their folders from the blue milk crate in the back of the room. They are being asked to fill out their learning target sheets. The cards that she hands out have number on them that correspond to numbers on the back of chairs in the classroom to which students have to sit. The intention of this practice is to ensure that students are building relationships with other people in the class, which is a means to creating a community. As the students are getting settled Sandra says, "Dequan, I need you to sit with Lilly please."

He argues but she doesn't give it any credence.

"I need you to sit with Lilly. You can sit with her or wait in the hall for me."

Dequan acquiesces.

Sandra puts a booklet on the document camera that is similar to the ones that the kids have in front of them before displaying the learning target sheet. She begins,

referring to the learning target sheet, “You have to make sure you know mixtures, substance, and compound.”

An African-American male asks, “Are we going to get a table? (What while Sandra is talking)”

Sandra replies evenly, “Yeah, you're going to get a table. We are going to make a brace map to help us understand the difference between elements and atoms. What is the difference?”

A white male responds, “Earth, wind, fire are all elements.”

“That's interesting, that's good. Carl made me think about a different definition of elements. You know, I watch science Friday on NPR.”

“You're a nerd,” Tyrone jests.

Sandra smiles, nodding in affirmation, “The newest one is on why money was made of gold. Why use gold? Tyrone, what's a penny made of?”

“Copper.”

“Right, and it has elements in. Then there was an NPR talk about the states of matter. They asked, why did they choose the elements they did to make money? The reason they said, was that they didn't know other elements existed besides gold. Why use a solid instead of a liquid or gas?”

An African-American female responds, “You can't hold a gas.”

“Yeah, but if you open a jar of gas what happens?”

“It escapes. It'll come out.”

“Well, what about a liquid?”

“It'll be all over the place.”

“What's the only thing left then?”

Several students respond, “Solids.”

“Yeah, but they had a limited understanding of solids back then. So when they used gold. OK, I want everybody to stand up.” Everybody stands up.

Terrell asks, “What are we standing up for?”

“I'm going to tell you. Stand up.”

Terrell sits down.

“Terrell, come on.”

Terrell gets up and Sandra begins, “Each one of you is an atom. Now you're moving, you're an excited atom. If you're an excited atom, you're what?”

“I'm hot. He dances. Oh yeah, I'm hot!” Terrell jokes.

“OK, stand still. Now we're all standing still and because we're standing still you're cool. Move-in together.”

They move.

“The closer we come together, we're what Tyrone?”

“Becoming solid.”

“If we're far apart, we're what?”

“A gas.”

“Dequan, if we're medium apart, we are what?”

“A liquid.”

“See how elements make up everything.”

In this vignette, several intentions/beliefs operationalize for Sandra. First she uses the story about money she saw on NPR to try to connect matter to students' interests. The

story, which is another manifestation of her candor, is intended to give students a tangible example of why matter is relevant. This story creates intrigue along with her asking students to stand up without telling them why right away. In piquing their interest, the students all are seemingly engaged in what will come next. She then seeks to operationalize her belief/intention that learning should be pleasurable by having them move about the room when guiding them to understanding gasses, liquids, and solids. She also gives Terrell space to have fun when he makes the joke about being hot, a sign that he is clearly having fun in the process of learning. Finally, Sandra illustrates how she uses the relationship she has build with Tyrone in getting him to stand up when his instinct of not participating begins to operationalize. Because she has built this relationship he refrains from resisting her request to participate in the activity without argument.

Scene 2: The smell of learning

“What does chemistry have to do with the Earth?” Sandra asks, “Keep this question in mind while we investigate. What did we do last class, Fran?” she pauses as kids talk to one another, “I’m sorry, I feel really bad for Fran because she’s trying to talk and she’s being disrespected.”

Fran replies, “We played with play dough.”

“Why?” She asks a series of questions to get Fran to the answer.

“What is potassium bicarbonate? What do we call that in our world?”

A Hispanic male replies, “Cream of tartar.”

Sandra proceeds to ask several questions around what they did in their last class. When students avoid answering, she tries multiple entry points. She insists on making

them feel successful and proving to them that they know the answer. More directly, she is showing the students that she care about them. She is clearly commanding the respect that is necessary in caring relationships when she points out that someone in the class has been disrespected, which silences the students immediately. Rather than yelling at the students, the relationships Sandra has built allow her to draw upon them to manage her classroom and redirect behavior.

“We’re going to do something different,” Sandra explains.

“Are we gonna sleep?” Dequan asks.

“I think you slept last week,” Sandra jokes. “On each of your tables you have vinegar and baking soda. In your yellow packets, write what will happen when we mix these things together. Then classify the substances as compounds, substances, elements, or mixtures.”

The kids get quiet and write down the questions in their books. They confer with one another. Terrell doesn’t have a pen; she walks up to him and quietly asks him if he needs something to write with. She does not ask in front of the whole class.

Sandra begins to walk around the class from table to table, conferring with students as they write. “That’s an interesting conversation Dequan. Why do you say that?” With another group she says, “I 100% agree with you....what do you already know that made you say that? I would agree.” She asks Terrell a question to which he gives an answer in jest. Sandra retorts humorously, “I’m going to call you captain obvious in a minute.” Then she hands Terrell a container of litmus paper and asks, “Terrell, will you give everyone one of these?” He agrees and distributes the litmus paper. He has batting gloves in his back pocket, a black winter jacket, and black saggy

pants with a long red string hanging out of the front left pocket. After he finishes, Sandra asks, “Can I have that back?”

“Nah I’m gonna sell it to another science teacher.”

“You ain’t gonna get much money for it, maybe a nickel.”

“Imma sell it for 50 cents; I’m a hustler.”

They both smile. After getting instruction to do so, the kids practice putting litmus paper into vinegar.

Tyrone suddenly asks Sandra, “Can I get water? My head is hurting.”

“Yes”

Tyrone comes back in and puts his head down on his desk. Sandra asks him if he is alright but he does not answer. “Tyrone, do I need to sing to you today?” He does not respond again. “Are you alright? What’s wrong? Are you tired?”

“I’m sick.”

“What kind of illness do you have? You sound stuffy.”

“I don’t know.”

“OK, do what you need to do but we need to set up a time to meet before you leave today so you can get this.”

Sandra walks around conferring. I notice that the last 3 times she did this, she starts at a table where she really pushed a kid. While she confers, some kids stay on task while others talk. One kid wants to air five another. Two kids laugh. One text messages another behind their book bag; another (Tyrone) has his head down.

In this exchange, Sandra again operationalizes several of her intentions/beliefs. Her intention/belief of building relationships with students is again on display in a couple

of instances. First, when Terrell does not have a pen and is seemingly trying not to engage in the lesson, Sandra is careful not to embarrass him in front of the class, illustrating the mutual respect necessary to building a caring relationship. Later, she shows a great deal of compassion for Tyrone when discussing his sickness with him. Possibly of greater importance, Sandra did not assume worst intent in that she asked him what was wrong rather than assuming that he was being defiant. These kinds of actions serve to help her not only build relationships with students, but to show them that she really does care about them as people. Finally, the experiment itself is intended to be fun for students, as they have an opportunity to test how different elements react to each other while also examining the acidity of them. This was done intentionally by Sandra to help her operationalize her intention that learning should be interesting and fun.

Closing Comments

Sandra Fay is very much a coach in the classroom. She is passionate about her “sport”, cares deeply for her “players”, and will not accept failure or a lack of effort from her “team”. Ms. Fay works tirelessly to get to know her “players” as both people and learners while doing anything she can to connect the learning to their lives. Though not every student will fall in love with science, Sandra’s creativity and knowledge of curriculum and pedagogy allows them ample opportunity to do so. Moreover, Sandra’s self-reflective nature continues to push her to become a better teacher; a rather tall order given what a gifted educator she already is.

Much like Jenna Ward and John Granado, Sandra Fay teaches students, not content. Students who are lucky enough to have Sandra Fay as their Science teacher are getting much more than they bargained for. It is clear that Sandra teaches with intention,

which is only made possible because she believes so deeply not only in her calling to teach, but in the limitless possibility of her students.

Ms. Kate Borsch, Math Teacher

Journey to a Teacher

For some people, they know what they want to do with their lives from a young age and despite all of the inevitable change that occurs as they grow and mature, they hold fast to their hopes and bring to fruition in adulthood what they desired as children. Kate Borsch is just such a person. Beginning in the third grade, she knew that she wanted to be a teacher. “My third grade teacher let me grade her papers and I thought that that was the coolest thing ever. Honest to God, I became a teacher to grade papers. I’m completely over that now; I’m done with that now,” Ms. Borsch explains with her signature humor, engaging smile, and welcoming aura. From that point forward, Kate was infatuated with teaching, even forcing her brothers in suburban Wisconsin to play school with her.

At her core Ms. Borsch is a teacher. She explains, “I enjoy learning and so I want to share that with others. I think that I’m good at helping people understand things that aren’t easy to understand. I really enjoyed the extracurricular aspects of high school so that was part of it: being able to be involved in an adult capacity with things like that. And I guess I just I enjoy that this is a challenging profession and that single every day is different. And that I get to keep learning, it’s really important to me to continue to learn and grow as a person. And so this profession allows me to do that.”

Though Ms. Borsch always knew she wanted to be a teacher, she didn’t always know what subject she wanted to teach. However, there was always something about mathematics that called to her, a subject that she recognized most thought was difficult but one she felt she could make accessible to others. Moreover, she has always felt that

math has taken a sort of backseat to reading and writing while having a negative societal connotation of sorts. She explains, “I think there are so many people with horror stories about math, ‘I had this teacher who told me I was stupid’ ‘I had this horrible teacher who did this.’ It seems like it’s OK to say, ‘Well I was never good at math,’ because society accepts that. You would never say, ‘Well I never learned to read so I don’t really do that. That was really hard for me so you know (laughing).’ So I think that’s kind of why I picked math, because I feel like I am good at taking a concept that’s hard, that’s challenging, and breaking it down in a manner that makes it understandable for the students.” Even when discussing her most intense passions, Kate finds a way to illustrate her witty humor to which one is hard pressed not to join her in a laugh. Her gregarious nature is a welcome juxtaposition to her extremely cerebral character. A long, brown-haired Caucasian of medium height and build with a youthful face and personality that seems eternally young, Kate is the antithesis of the often negative archetypal math teacher. For Kate, learning is fun and it is difficult for her students not to share in that belief with her.

After graduating college in 1996, Ms. Borsch began what has now been a 15 year career at Greenville High School. Though she began her career as a full-time math teacher, she began coaching and teaching Speech and Debate in 1999, where she began a passion that exists today for the subject. While coaching Speech & Debate up to the present moment, Kate also served as the head track coach for four years and an assistant cheerleading coach for a year. She is actively involved in the school, as she is often one of the first people in the parking lot and one of the last to leave, including weekends. Despite this hectic schedule, Ms. Borsch was recently married this past year to her long-

time boyfriend. I observed her throughout December 2010, at which time she was teaching three semester long sections of Trigonometry, one section of Debate, and one section of Forensics. I observed Ms. Borsch teaching one of her Trigonometry classes that met during the first period of the day at 7:10 and was comprised of students in grades 10-12, most of whom were college bound.

The Teacher Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

“My beliefs guide my intentions in every aspect of my classroom, not just in the lessons I teach.” – Kate Borsch

Kate Borsch - The Person

Searching Near and Far for Deeper Understanding

As we begin to talk about Kate’s intentions and beliefs about teaching, I quickly find that her self-awareness, awareness of others, and self-reflective nature are quite evident. She is clearly someone who thinks very deeply about her experiences and the experiences of others. A self-described “perfectionist”, Kate is continually thinking about the challenges she has faced and how she may have been able to better meet those challenges. She explains:

I believe every student wants to learn. I believe every student wants to be successful. My biggest challenge is the students that don’t show that. And when a kid comes to class and puts their head down on their desk, what is that telling me about me? What is that telling me about my class? What is that telling me about them? So I think that that’s a challenge.

Like Jenna Ward, John Granado, and Sandra Fay, when things may not go well in life of the classroom, Kate looks inward to find potential solutions rather than look to others or what they may have done to cause problems. I ask her about her process of self-reflection to which she replies:

For me, self-reflection happens on the fly during class, in the sense of if I can tell they're not getting it, I try to do something different to change that. I find that I'm even more reflective if I've had a bad class and that leads me to try to figure out why they had such a bad experience. Often reflection looks like me thinking in my head and figuring out what is going well or poorly and why. It may involve creating new materials; I sometimes talk with other teachers or I talk to students about why it didn't work. Then I will go back and look at the assignments, the tests, the quizzes to look at "are there things that I want to change this time around?" So based on what they succeeded with last time, based on what they didn't understand, are there things that I need to change?

Not only does she look deeply inside herself for answer, Kate also talks with her colleagues and her students in pursuit of finding solutions to problems. Though Ms. Borsch thinks intensely about some of the more immediate, concrete, practical challenges she encounters, she also frequently contemplates some of the grander, more abstract challenges she perceives for which she seeks solutions, particularly those concerned with issues of race:

I think that particularly with my black students, we've talked a bit about the messages that they get that being successful is being white and things like that. So I think that I try to create situations where they can have an excuse for choosing to be successful. And so for example, we're going to have a pizza party and study for this trig test. You can tell your friend that you're only going for the pizza and you get to stay safe with your friend. But I'm creating a situation where you're coming for the pizza, you're telling your friends that you're coming for the pizza or whatever. But you're in an environment where there's learning taking place and you have resources and you have people that can help you. I think that my belief that too many of our students, and it's not just our racial minorities, but more of our racial minorities have this problem than our white students.

When I went through my college program, there was no discussion of race, there was no discussion about ethnicity. We talked a lot about the gender gap in mathematics. And so I think that the fact that this is the problem now that's being highlighted, I think it shapes the college curriculum so I think that we're getting a lot more student teachers and people who have come out of college recently, they're coming in with more of an awareness of race and ethnicity do impact your classroom and you need to do something about it.

There is little doubt after spending even the smallest amount of time with Kate Borsch, that her heightened sense of consciousness drives her as an educator and as a person. This consciousness combined with her compassion for her students and people in general make her an engaging figure causing people to gravitate to her. Her classroom, in which there are almost always several students present during her off hours, would most certainly validate such a claim.

It's Important Not to Have all the Answers

Complimenting Ms. Borsch's consciousness is her belief in and intention for being authentic in the classroom. While observing her it was clear that her students knew exactly who she was as a person, details about her life, and stories from her past. She frequently shares these details with her students as a way to not only let her students know who she is, but to show them that she is being herself. While this is intentional, it is not necessarily prescribed, as many of her stories come in impromptu fashion, sparked by something that may have come up in class. The operationalizing of this intention to be transparent/authentic certainly creates a warm, enjoyable, comfortable atmosphere, but it is also intended to serve as a model to show students they "can be themselves" in her classroom.

Despite it being a strong belief and clear intention, transparency did not always come easy for Kate. She explains:

I think as a beginning teacher, I felt like I had to have all of the answers. And now I think that it's really important that I don't have all the answers and that I'm willing to say that. Because I think my first year, my insecurities made it really hard for me to say "I don't know that" because I was afraid if I said I didn't know it then they would see through me and realize I didn't really know what I was doing up here. Whereas now, I think that ability to just say "I don't know everything and I don't have all the answers." Kids respond to that better than they responded to me trying to pretend that I had all the answers, I guess.

Kate's genuine nature and openness creates an environment in her classroom and a feeling among others in her life that it is safe not to be right or know all of the answers. This authenticity also helps her build authentic relationships with her students and results in them often feeling more comfortable sharing thoughts, feelings, etc. with her that they might not otherwise share. Concurrently, her gregarious nature, which she exhibits in her classroom and outside of it, serves as an invitation for students and people in general to be exactly who they are when in her presence:

I think just like for me too, being able to be myself in the classroom like I'm a goofball and I like to do goofball things. It's important to me that I can do that and I think that that's modeling that they can be who they are in the classroom as well.

Kate's transparency/authenticity strongly enhances her charismatic personality. As she is rarely not in the company of at least one other person, it is clear that this authenticity creates a magnetism that is difficult to deny. It may be that others simply admire her to the point that they want to be in her presence often, but it is certainly the case that it is part of what makes her a great educator.

Kate Borsch - The Instructor

Looking at the Students First

While the abovementioned beliefs and intentions connect to Kate Borsch the person, they absolutely pervade her teaching. There are however, beliefs and intentions specific to her as an instructor. One of these particular beliefs and intentions that serves as an example is the notion of planning her curriculum and instruction with the end in mind. Before writing a single lesson plan, Kate first conceptualizes the summative

assessments, the guiding questions, and the scaffolded activities to which she will expose the students. Though this is an important belief/intention for her, Kate feels that something supersedes the actually planning of a course, unit, or lesson:

I first think about my students. I think about my beliefs about diversity, that every student is capable of succeeding, that every student wants to succeed regardless of the color of their skin. And so I believe that about my students. And I believe that because of that, I have to challenge them. I need to set high expectations and set a bar that says, "I expect you to achieve." And then I think that my beliefs about diversity also shape the support that I give students to reach that level of expectation. And I think that my views about diversity also shape, because I feel like students of color may not either be given the same opportunities or pushed to the same level. I believe that I have to do that because again it takes a village, I need to do my part.

Even in the planning of educational experiences for her students, Kate's consciousness manifests itself. Particularly, her consciousness about issues of race and diversity pervade her thinking and form a lens for her planning. When I ask her what comes next in the process she explains:

When I plan I think about what are the specific skills that I want them to get out of this unit? Where are they going to need these skills in the future? I think with a math class, the particular skills I might be teaching are more of a preparation for another level in the future, which is hard for me to sell. So "You're going to need this in pre calculus or you're going to need this in calculus" is the answer I'm forced to give sometimes, but I always try to find ways to make it relevant to them now.

Again in the planning process Kate connects her belief/intention of planning with the end in mind to another domain, that of teaching the whole student/life. Kate works tirelessly to find ways to make her content relevant to her students' lives so that they will "buy-in" to the content. Further, in identifying ways to make the content relevant to students she is taking into consideration her belief/intention that culture is the lens

through which one experiences. She tries to find culturally relevant examples or write culturally relevant problems in which students might better be able to see significance.

As Kate has been teaching her Trigonometry class for quite some time, I begin to wonder how much planning she does and how that might materialize. Without prompting she explains:

I think I've taught trig fourteen of the fifteen years I've been teaching and it's a semester course so I've basically taught trig 28 times. So when I plan, I create learning targets for each of my chapters so I will think about in each section kind of, "What is it that I want the kids to learn?" And so I start off by putting together a list for the entire chapter like, "This is what I want the kids to know." And then I create a syllabus for "What is our time frame on all of this?" So what am I teaching today? What am I teaching tomorrow? And within each of those steps I'm thinking about "Is today about exposing you to something or am I expecting you to master this?"

Kate's meticulous planning combined with her desire to begin with the end in mind frequently pay great dividends for her students, as their learning experiences are intentionally sequenced to help them be successful. Concurrently, Kate's self-reflectiveness allows her the freedom to take detours that she may not have foreseen, even after 15 years of teaching. This approach has helped ensure that her students will have a meaningful, effective learning experience in her classroom.

Making the Students a Part of Things

In the process of beginning with the end in mind, Kate also believes in and is intentional about individualizing instruction and providing choice for her students. It is a rare occurrence when students are working that Kate is not circulating around the room, conferring with students, formatively assessing where they each are as learners, and pushing them to grow from where they currently are as learners. With the reality of classrooms comprised of students with varying ability levels along with the reality of

high stakes testing, individualized instruction has become essential in public schools in America. Recognizing this, Kate will individualize/differentiate assignments, feedback, and instruction. Students are encouraged to choose from multiple pathways to solving problems in Ms. Borsch's class, which allows them the freedom to rely on their assets to succeed.

One intention/belief Kate possesses with regards to individualizing instruction that greatly benefits her students is in identifying individual difficulties students have with the material. A true constructivist, she regularly identifies, often through questioning, what students do and do not understand before providing a roadmap for them to find the answers they need. Moreover, connecting to another domain, she is intentional about helping students build their capacity in independent problem solving. She explains:

I don't think of identifying problems students don't understand as choice, but in a sense it is. I just think that if I can help students feel a part of things, great. But I am very intentional about creating choice for students on how they choose to learn.

Like the other participants in this study, the element of choice does in fact compliment an individualized learning experience. Choice encompasses Ms. Borsch's classroom. Students choose which problems they would like to discuss in class, who they will work with, how they will approach problems, and at times, when they will turn in particular assignments or which ones they will actually do. Students are very much involved in how the class runs and what is covered. Kate explains, "I do have flexibility and do give choices to my students. It's funny because often when you hear the word choice you can hear 'free for all' and let the students do whatever but that's not the case."

Moreover, Kate sees the element of choice as being an essential component in the attempt to close the achievement gap:

I think that there are a lot of people who are looking for a magic bullet solution. Like, “Tell me what to do to educate my black student. Tell me what to do to educate my Hispanic student. Give me the solution and I will implement that solution.” And I don’t think, if it was that easy, we would all be doing it. I think that it’s shaping education in general as people try to find solutions to the achievement gap. I think that the solutions that we do have: student choice and student engagement and creating motivation within your lesson. Those things that we found that are recommended procedures for students of color are making education a more positive thing for all students.

In the ensuing vignette, one can see how the elements of a heightened sense of consciousness, transparency/authenticity, starting with the end in mind, and individualizing instruction/choice will operationalize.

The Teacher Domain: Operations

Scene 1: ‘Oh Jez! Trigonometric Equations

Kate’s roster is comprised of 22 students, many of whom struggle with getting to class before the 7:10 tardy bell that pierces one’s ears. Though many of the students are seniors, there are a few students from grades 10 and 11 as well. Of these students, most if not all of whom are college bound, there are 2 Hispanic females, 2 Hispanic males, 2 African-American males, 5 African-American females, 1 Asian-American male, 1 Asian-American female, 6 European-American females, and 4 European-American males. Like all the other classes I observed, attendance was still an issue, as there was a mean number of 18 students present in the time I spent there.

Unlike the other teachers, Kate does not have to share her classroom with other teachers and has all of her classes in her particular room on the second floor of Greenville High School. When I first walk in the room, I am struck by the pinkish, stained carpet

that seems to have been delivered via time machine from the 1970s. The room has no windows and has several varieties of paint on the wall. Two thirds of the wall opposite the door as been newly painted industrial white. The remainder of the room's cinderblock walls are yellow and white, which clearly have discolored with time. A large trophy sits on a table near the new wall from the speech and debate needs. There is one bulletin board in the room opposite the trophy that has "speech and debate" information and "sign-up" section. Next to that is a leader board from speech and debate, tallying all of the scores as they currently stand for each participant at Greenville. Under those signs and protruding from the wall are three rows of computers with two computers on each desk. They are circa 1990s low-tech IBM computers with large, bulky monitors on each. Oddly, these are valuable assets in this particular school. Even more valuable is a 15-year-old printer (yellowed with age) that sits next to the third row of computers near the back of the room. This too is a rarity in the school, as they generally share one large copier/printer per department.

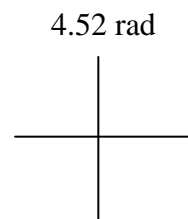
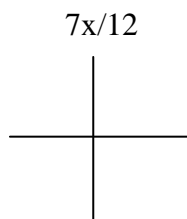
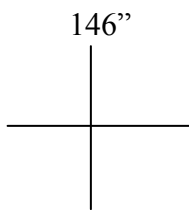
On the adjacent wall in the back of the room is large pink piece of butcher paper that reads "public forum finals" with a listing of student pairings and a picture of a snowman on it. Garrett is a closet on wheels that has too large open the boxes sitting atop it, doors ajar. Finally, near the newly painted wall, on the wall opposite the door sits a speech and debate leader board that is leaned against the wall; one on the newer white, the other against the yellow-white. Also sitting in front of the wall is a small refrigerator with a microwave sitting atop and a coffee pot sitting on top of that. There are 32 desks in the room, many of which are scribbled on, chipped, or more severely damaged. Desks are

arranged in pairs, leaving two long rows of five pairs and one long row of six that face the whiteboard at the front of the room.

As the students trickle into class before and after the tardy bell, they can see the following written on the whiteboard:

*you need a calculator today
review (put in notes)

1. list two things that must be true about a reference angle.
2. Draw the angle and find the value of the reference angle.



3. $Y = 7\cos(2x + 19) - 1$
Amp
Per
Vs
Ps
Range

learning target: I can solve trigonometry equations using my calculator.

Today

1. go over homework
2. solving trigonometry equations using calculator
notes
practice
start on homework

due today: green worksheet

homework: pink worksheet

next class: quiz on solving questions/inverse functions

Kate jokes with a white female who says something to her as she walks in late with two African-American females. She is writing at the overhead while the kids work on their bell starter. Two kids from her speech and debate team walk-in to talk briefly. She welcomes them while writing on the overhead then stopped to talk with them a

moment. It is clear that are comfortable coming in and out of the room, as are the students who arrive late. As she finishes writing on the overhead in front of the classroom, she invites the kids to check the work from their homework; she invites them to check the answers posted outside the classroom door. She writes more answers on the board as kids check work. She directs them to look at the whiteboard where she has written the following:

Chapter 5 test corrections – Done by Thursday 12 – 16 when I leave (5:00-ish)

Half credit option

1. corrected each problem you got wrong showing your work
2. number of points you lost on problem / 2 = minimum number of sentences to explain your mistakes
3. stable test corrections and original test and all homework from chapter (all the way done)
 - blue application worksheet
 - pink worksheet
 - purple worksheet
 - Green review packet

Full credit option

Do one half credit option then retake test

In this opening of the vignette, Kate is beginning to operationalize some of her beliefs within and beyond the teacher domain. Her elevated awareness has led her to offer the students an opportunity to improve their scores of their tests by correcting their work and retaking the test. Transitively, the students have an opportunity to reflect on their work to identify what they did wrong before correcting themselves. Her consideration for the end of the unit/lesson is evidenced by her agenda, which includes learning targets that she created at the onset of this unit on solving trigonometric equations. Congruently, the learning targets that she offers students is a means to give ownership to the learners so that they can know where they are going and what they need to accomplish. In the

process, she is offering students choice with regards to how they want to go about making corrections on the test they just took, as they have a full credit and half credit option.

As she finishes going over the options she has offered the students to reflect on their mistakes, correct them, and turn them in a white female says, “Ms. Borsch, your plant is dying.”

“I know, I have to water it.”

“I heard she put Sprite in it, it will live longer.”

“Really?”

Then an African-American female adds, “Or bleach.”

Kate retorts sarcastically, “I’m thinking if I drink bleach, I would feel better.”

The kids confer with one another in checking their answers. Kate walks around, asking questions while they talk. As the students finish, Kate asks, “If you could only go over one problem, which one is the one you would most like to go over? On your fingers, hold up the number for me please.” She gets the overhead and turns it on before saying, “I’m seeing lots of eights. OK let’s go over number eight. Alex, can you come up here and explain it to us? Alex comes to the overhead and explains while he writes, explaining his process. Kate asks Alex several questions while stands at the overhead projector. After the students ask several questions, Kate says, “Go ahead and pass forward your green worksheet please. So basically if you have anything you want to turn and so I can give you some points for them. If you are absent please make sure you write absent at the top of the green papers so I know why I’m not getting it from you.” After collecting the papers she transitions, “OK, I want you to travel back in time to geometry class.”

The students groan in unison, “Awwwww!”

Kate quips, “Clearly this was a good experience for you guys. Did any of you guys ever do the smelly skunk sausage in the sandwich café? This was used to prove which triangles were congruent.” She begins to write on the whiteboard:

shortcuts

SSS-LOC (law of cosines)

SAS-LOC

SSA-LOS (law of sines)

ASA-LOS

did work

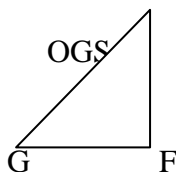
AAA

SSA = LOS ambiguous case

She explains why the shortcuts work while she turns off the light. She explains why angle- angle-angle doesn't work as well as the other shortcuts do. Then on the overhead she writes:

SSA – ambiguous case will

from given angle



G=given angle

SAG=side across

OGS=other given side

F=first found angle

She explains as she writes before she writes a number incorrectly before she says, “Oh Geez.” She repeats it in a Minnesota/Wisconsin accent that one might have heard in the movie *Fargo*. “That's a reference to my Wisconsin, Midwest upbringing. That’s how they talked in *Fargo*. Do you guys know that movie? Back in the day it was a big movie.”

An African-American male asks, “Is that where the guy gets put in the wood chopper?”

Kate replies in a Wisconsin accent, “Yup that's it. You betcha. ‘Oh Jez,’ that's what we say in the Midwest when something goes wrong. “Oh Jez, John got stuck in the toilet, oh geez, oh geez!” That's what can help us remember the other given side (OGS). It looks like Oh geez. Anyway, I want you to talk to your partner right now. I don't want a numeric answer. Can you give me a formula for this angle right here?”

Kate walks around to confer with kids. She asks question several individualized questions about the students' processes in solving this particular problem. Then she solicits a student for the answers. Kate then asks, "Do you think would she said is right? Why? Okay Carol, what did you guys come up with for an angle up here?"

"180 minus F."

"Did anyone else come up with 180 minus F. Someone else explain. Malik?"

"OK, I have to come up and show you." He goes to the overhead and explains; he is clearly comfortable moving about the room as are most kids. When he is done, Kate shares that Malik is in fact correct before explaining why.

This is an interesting hybrid class of student collaboration, individual autonomy, choice, and teacher direction. While Kate is generally on the stage, she varies activities to change up what they are doing. She regularly confers with kids, challenges them to explain their thinking, and encourages them to work with one another. Several intentions and beliefs are operationalized again in this set of exchanges. Kate's transparency is on display in her interaction with the girls in talking about adding bleach to her plant. She illustrates her humor that is authentically a part of her both inside and outside of the classroom. Later, she again uses her humor while also sharing a short bit about her life in Wisconsin in the while trying to get the students to remember OGS, or Oh geez. This use of humor supports Kate in creating a caring environment where learning is fun.

In her later exchange with Malik, he not only shows that he is comfortable in the environment by getting up to give an answer to a question, Kate also gives him the freedom to be an individual and to learn in a style that is most comfortable for him. He clearly has choice in how he learns. Finally, the students have choice in which problems

they are going to go over in class. While they work on the problem, Kate individually instructs students based on their needs while conferring with students. In there is rarely if ever a time that Kate is not conferring with students so that they can get individual attention.

In this vignette, Kate Borsch operationalizes her beliefs and intentions in the teacher domain. Concurrently, several other beliefs and intentions from the student and environmental domains become manifest. As is the case, several other examples of the operationalizing of intentions and beliefs from the teacher domain will be described and interpreted in the ensuing sections.

The Student Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

The Individual

Growth and Learning Mean a lot of Things

Like the other participants in this study and as has already been alluded to, Kate Borsch sees her students as far more than math students; she sees them as individuals. Kate believes it is imperative to get to know her students individually so she can teach the whole person. When she talks about this belief/intention she explains:

With my math students I think I try to incorporate students' individuality and differences. It's just in a more condensed time frame (because it's a semester long course). And I guess Overall, it's meeting a student where they are and helping them get to a higher level. I want my students to grow both as students, as learners, and as individuals. I ideally would like my students to gain an appreciation for learning new things.

In teaching the whole person, Kate is intentional about sometimes reaching outside of the mandated math curriculum to achieve this end. Part of that comes by way of recognizing her students' successes:

I want to recognize the success of this student so that other students are like, “Oh they did that, I could do that too. It’s okay to do that.” I’ve been doing this thing I gave them a quote in Trig. that was like, successful people achieve something for themselves, significant people help others achieve something that they couldn’t achieve, something like that. And so like that’s been one of their warm up questions, what did you do that was significant? So it’s about allowing them to recognize the ways that their actions impact the people around them. This is in math.

When asked in the follow-up interview about her approach to teaching the whole student, she explained:

It actually connects to self-reflection. I had given the students a quote about the difference between significance and substantial. One word starts with an “s” and relates to doing stuff for you and the other starts with an “s” and relates to doing stuff for others. So I shared this as a warm-up with my Trig. classes and asked them to write about how they are making a difference in others’ lives, how are they doing something significant? My intention was to see them as a whole person, not just a math student. Because at the end of the day, students don’t care about how much you know about math or whatever subject you teach as much as they need to know how much you care.

Kate’s belief/intention in teaching the whole students connects to several of her other beliefs and intentions in other domains. Some of the activities she has students engage in come from her own self-reflection and are intended to help them become more conscious. Congruently, she intentionally utilizes teaching the whole student to illustrate that she cares for them and wishes to build relationships with them. Though she hardly eschews the math curriculum she is required to teach, she finds ways to navigate through it so that she can further educate the whole person. Along the same line, she takes this time to make a metaphorical deposit from which she can draw when she is pushing students intellectually in her Trigonometry class. Much like the other participants, teaching the whole students is not an additive, but an essential part of Ms. Borsch’s teaching.

Understanding Who You Are

As Ms. Borsch is intentional about getting to know her students individually, she also is cognizant of the fact that culture is the lens through which students experience the world. She is very intentional about learning about her students' cultures, which she views as an essential part in getting to know the whole student:

I think I learn about other cultures from my students and so I don't think that I actively go out and say I'm going to read a book about this culture today. So I definitely learn much more from the student. "Tell me about yourself? Tell me about your background. I don't think that I, I think that I am more knowledgeable than some but there's still a lot that I have to learn.

There is even an authenticity in how Kate goes about learning her students' cultures, further highlighting her authentic care for her students. Kate warns however, like the other participants, that often teachers who might have good intentions in being culturally responsive can generalize when trying to attend solely to different cultures. She argues like the others that it is imperative to get to know students on a personal, individual basis. She explains:

So I guess to me, culturally responsive means recognizing students' individuality and the differences within students. And trying to for each and every student, figure out where they are and how to help them be better than that by the time we are no longer interactive. You know, and with speech and debate I get four years with them to watch them grow and watch them learn and I can remind them of things from their freshman year of areas of growth that I've seen. So I think I'm very lucky because with speech and debate I do get that four year growth span and I can see and say "Wow, you're such a different person." But I also get that ability to say, "This is something I saw you struggle with last year. How are we going to make better choices or do things differently this year?"

Again, getting to know students leads Kate into teaching students for growth, or more specifically, building capacity in her students. She believes that it is imperative to also recognize students, something that she feels takes place in the process of getting to

know them individually and something she believes is driven by conviction that culture is such a large part of who people are. Again, the connections among the domains becomes manifest, as the organic act of teaching continues to be illuminated.

The Learner

Learning to Overcome Challenges

Kate believes that as a teacher, more than anything her job is to teach for empowerment and build capacity in her students. Though she is intentional about this, she also recognizes that she also has to draw upon her belief/intention of individualizing instruction for this to be most effective:

I think different students need different levels of support to overcome something that they don't understand. And so that's where I think under the circumstances. So for one student, the right circumstances may be "Hey look at what you did right here. Do you think you could use that skill and apply it to this problem?" So for that student, that may be the right circumstance. For another student, it's "Let me sit there and let me walk you through this step by step and let me ask you why you did that, and why you did that." And for another student it may be me doing it and explaining why I did each step that I did. So I mean its meeting a student where they are, giving them the support that they need to feel like they can overcome something that is challenging them.

Kate sees a connection to the skills her students learn in math and those that will help them be successful in life. She explains:

I would like my students to overcome challenges so that when they leave my classroom, they know that they have the ability to overcome a challenge. And maybe I think too much about, "well if you could do this in math, you should know that you could do this in other areas."

While helping her students build capacity to overcome challenges, Kate also recognizes that every individual has different elements that may be posing challenges for them. She explains:

I think that there are different things that impede students' motivation. Sometimes it's an external, "I just got in a fight with my girlfriend. All I'm doing is sitting here thinking about that. So like I don't give a crap about what you're saying and I'm not motivated because it's too hard and I don't want to do it." You know, and I think sometimes I think it's external, sometimes it's within the classroom. "I don't feel like I need to know this for any real reason so why should I work through something that's hard?"

Once again, Kate's consciousness becomes apparent, as she will always question whether difficulties students are having is a result of her actions. Conversely, she seeks to build capacity in students when their impediments to success or motivation are internal. What is of note is that for a teacher to determine if impediments are internal or external, he/she must get to know his/her students individually. Kate also explains that when building capacity to help students overcome obstacles, it is equally important to celebrate successes:

I think that my views on race and ethnicity drive me to push my students as much as possible and I think that every student regardless of the color of their skin or their ethnic background wants to be recognized for the things that they're doing well. And so I really try to recognize the successes of the students. And sometimes that's a comment on a paper to them that only they can see. Sometimes it's a comment in class. The last quiz they took in trig I was like, "Oh if you got an A, you got an animal sticker." So all of these kids were like, "I got a sticker!" And some of them were like, "Oh I got an anteater. Look! I got an anteater." Again, an environment where they're not afraid of being proud of their successes.

For Kate Borsch, the math curriculum can serve as a medium to operationalizing her intentions to build capacity in her students and to teach for empowerment. As is the case with Jenna Ward, John Granado, and Sandra Fay, much of what students need to be successful lies beyond that which is in the Mathematics curriculum guide at Greenville High School.

The Student Domain: Operations

Scene 1: What's our vector Victor?

As the students walk into class they are direct to a warm up on the board to which Kate invites them to work with a partner while solving. While the students work, an African-American female speaks of Kate at the front of the room about the previous night's homework. Kate explains the homework, how to do it, which chapters the review problems correlate to, and what they can use to help them solve the problems.

The kids then confer with one another as they work on the problems. One African-American female walks to the side of the room to get work she missed from the previous class. There is a small plastic bin with drawers at the side of the room, each labeled for different class, to get handouts from the previous class. Kate looks for something at her desk as an African-American female comes into class to ask her about something (she's not in this class). As she finishes her conversation, begins to confer with an African-American female. She asks a myriad of questions and helping her solve a problem.

The room is never entirely quiet; there was a murmur. Some kids were individually, others in pairs. Two African-American females next to me ask and answer questions with each other in solving the problem.

“See with this you need to look at the law of sines”.

“Why?”

She explains.

As Kate continues to circulate in confer, an African-American female says, “You know what's funny Ms.Borsch, my mom wore boots like that today and asked me,

‘Jazzmine, does this look okay?’ I told her how good that looks; you look really good today Ms. Borsch. I never see you wear that kind of outfit.”

“I know, I feel weird not wearing jeans. I never wear skirts.”

She continues to circulate in a snakelike pattern. Then she announces, “One more minute and we are going to talk about these please.” She talks to an Asian female and asks her to go to the board where the problems are written in writing answer to one. She creates two graphs on the board and a number of fractions. As she is finishing, Kate asks a white male to put number two on the board.

“OK, Mae has put number one on the board. Check your answers and see if you agree with that. Now Todd is putting number two on the board, see if you agree with that.”

While they are checking their answers, an African-American male and white male talk about a place they go to play video games as Kate confers with a pair in front of them. The white male says, “That game is such a pain in the ass. I got to a point of saturation and couldn't play anymore.”

The African-American male replies, “It's like Madden. That fucking game gets tired after hours of playing it.”

Kate goes to the board before announcing, “OK, number one. What did she do first?”

Several students reply, “She drew a picture.”

“Right. So then I looked for negatives to see if she was right. If you do it wrong on the final, I will subtract one point. That's what I'm going to look for. OK, thumbs up, I

remember this and can do it. Thumbs to the side, need more practice. And thumbs down, I don't get this.”

After taking inventory, Kate confers with those who had their thumbs down while others work on another problem. She confers with a white female who reveals, “I feel bad that I can’t remember this.”

“If it makes you feel any better, it makes your teachers feel bad too because we feel like we didn’t teach you,” Kate replies before addressing the whole class, “Many of you have told me you’re good at doing this stuff in class, but when you leave, you struggle. Well, being the master teacher that I am, I ask a lot of good questions (smiling). So let’s figure out how we can transfer this. I want you to annotate the questions I’m asking while we do this problem.” The students then engage in this activity.

Several intentions and beliefs in the student domain operationalize in this series of exchanges. The entire activity is built around Kate’s intention to empower her students. She regularly confers with students, asking them questions that will help them find answers for themselves rather than disabling them by simply providing the answers. She even asks them to annotate her questions so that they can find the answers without her help, so that they can ask themselves the right questions to find answers. As an aside, this activity was created as a direct result of Kate’s elevated awareness, as she quickly self-reflects before introducing this activity that was unplanned and based off of her students’ needs. Concurrently, the students confer with one another, repeating a similar questioning pattern. In these groups, students are placed in the role of teacher as well as learner. This is further accentuated when Kate asks students to show and explain what they did in their problems. These students are thrust into the role of teacher, allowing them to feel

empowered by the fact that their teacher sees them as producers of knowledge and authorities on the content. She again illustrates her teaching for empowerment (as well as individualizing instruction) when she has students self-assess how well they understand the material. The thumbs up, thumbs down formative assessment is as much for Kate as it is for the students.

Yet another place an intention and belief operationalizes for Kate is in the exchange between the two boys about video games. Much like the other participants, Kate invites students to bring themselves and their interests into the room so long as the digressions are not too long or too distracting. She allows students to use language that is she sees as being connected to culture in her classroom, again, so long as it does not get too distracting or vulgar.

As the students finish up, Kate announces, “We are going to finish up with the vector stuff. You know, the vector stuff is actually used quite a bit. The way airplanes could fly safely from point A to point B is two vectors. When they created computers to help planes, they did this, they used vectors. If you are in the Coast Guard, they use this too. Vectors help us understand waves or airflow. We will talk about how this works and it will be the last thing you learn in this class this semester. Then I will give you time to work.”

Suddenly Kate pauses and says, “Sandy wanted to have a party and good news, we are having a party... a trigonometry party! From three o'clock until 6:30 this evening. I'm going to get soda and pizza and you can get help studying. OK, moving on, let's talk about gravity. Gravity, that's why you get shorter as you get older; gravity pulls you down to the ground.

An African-American female asks, “Is that true?”

“Well that and osteoporosis of the bones,” Kate jokes before continuing, “And then there’s friction. So if you have a cell phone that in your car to keep your phone from sliding, they used vectors to account for friction.” Kate then writes, “normal force, gravity, friction” on the overhead. “If you went to the moon, would you weigh as much there as on Earth?”

The students shake their heads. Kate then writes, “Weight of objects= gravity vector” on the overhead.

“Why might anyone care about this?”

An African-American female replies, “Wouldn’t it be because and factories, they have to worry if the box will fall off the conveyor belt?”

”Exactly. Have you ever been to San Francisco? You know how there are big hills? Engineers have to make cars that won’t slide down the hills when they’re parked.”

Interestingly, this real-life application has piqued the interest of the kids. As Kate is doing a simple problem, asking questions, kids who generally don’t speak are answering questions. Her use of real life and personally relevant examples serve as an example of Kate teaching life. These examples, intentionally given so that students could draw upon their schema, are related to the math content but extend beyond it a bit in reaching for connections to ideas like cell phones sliding off cars, computers being created to help planes land, and people shrinking. Moreover, recognizing students’ cultural lenses lead Kate to give an example of a cell phone. She is intentionally trying to build on students’ knowledge in getting them to access the content.

Kate draws a problem on the board before continuing, "If you like the law of sines, use that; if you like sokotoa, use that (kids work on the sample problem) go ahead and find n (force normal) and check with someone next to you. Then find friction and confer again."

She walks around the room checking for understanding, asking and answering questions. As students finish she directs the classes' attention back to the front of the room. "The last thing we will talk about is a plane and the boat and how they are going to get somewhere. I like to say boat," she says in a Wisconsin accent, "It reminds me of college, I had friends in abandoned college. That was cool, everyone is in a band. I had their CD, actually I had their cassette. And they had a song called "The Boat Song". Every time they played a show they'd say, 'Here's the boat (mocking Wisconsin accent) song.' I love that. Anyway, let's try this problem. I want you to type the whole thing in your calculator and don't stop in the middle. When you guys stop in the middle, that's where you have been making mistakes."

The students work while Kate turns to an African-American male and asks, "What did you get?"

"15.4."

Kate then tells the class, "You should get 15.4. If you're not typing on your calculator, I'm assuming you've got that answer. What questions do you have?...OK, there was a cruise ship recently that caught on fire in the middle of the ocean. They didn't have any food or anything. They ended up getting a free cruise out of it... Because yeah, that's what they wanted after that, a free cruise. Anyway, when the Coast Guard came out to rescue them, you'd don't want them following the simple path because of the current, they

will never get there. So let's take a look at these two problems and figure out vector. This pod over here, you do problem U and this pod over here, you do V so we can get them into X, Y form. When you finish, compare your work with someone else to see if you agree.

Kate once again operationalizes a myriad of beliefs and intentions. While her openness clearly is making the learning more fun and interesting, she again draws upon real life examples that can connect to students' schemas to understand the content. She continues to build aptitude in such a subtle exchange as when she asks the student to give her an answer, which she blindly shares with the class, assuming the student is correct. Further, she uses phrases like "confer with one another" and "see if you agree" to help verbally support her intention for building capacity in students. While a number of themes from other domains again operationalize in this vignette, Kate certainly operationalizes her intentions and beliefs for her students in the student domain.

The Environmental Domain: Beliefs and Intentions

The Social-Emotional

Connecting with Students is Imperative

As has been illustrated throughout this section, Kate Borsch is a compassionate person who cares deeply about her students. Further, she is intentional about building relationships with them, believing that for students to care about the content they are covering, they must first feel cared for. She explains:

It's important to have the ability to connect with my students and I think because they feel like I care about them, then they want to care back. So I think you know how do you show that you care? Listening is really important. I want my students to feel a level of success. I want them to leave feeling like somebody cares about them and whether they succeed or fail matters to someone. Not that I need to be

the only one caring about that, but if they don't have anyone else caring about that, I want them to feel like I do.

Kate explains that caring for her students may just be a result of who she is as a person. She says that she thinks her friends and family would describe her as “a caring, compassionate person,” which translates into her classroom and serves as another example of the domains being interwoven, as this is an example of transparency. However, Kate does not believe that this is the only crossover into another domain. She believes that building caring relationships supports her in building capacity in students, given they are more likely to “buy-in” to the material covered in class if they feel cared for. Moreover, relationship building between her and her students and among the individuals in her classroom supports her pedagogical intent of building a community of learners. Her room, which offers nothing but two desk pods about the room, is intentionally arranged to support the community. She explains that, “If I were a student walking into that classroom, I would notice that the desks were set up in pairs. And so to me that says, ‘Okay I’m going to be working with a partner some of the time, most of the time.’”

In encouraging group work and collaboration, Kate recognizes that building caring relationships among the students is essential. Moreover, she prides herself on the reality that rarely is there a time when there are no students in the classroom, particularly during her off hours:

I think that the classroom environment is a comfortable environment for students. I think that there are very few moments that there's no one in that classroom, which to me says that they feel comfortable being in there.

Creating Justification for Learning

Beyond her warmth infecting the classroom environment, Kate's interesting, gregarious personality also clearly impacts the intellectual environment of her classroom.

When we talk about her intentions for her students, Ms. Borsch explains:

I think just on like a day to day level, my intentions are to try to engage and involve students in whatever the lesson is so that they feel like when they walk out of the classroom, they know what I expect them to do for next time and they feel able to do that. So I think on the most basic level that's my intention every time I step into a classroom as a teacher.

For Kate, a large part of trying to engage students comes by way of helping students make real-world connections to the content that are studying. She explains:

I'm always looking for real world applications and it's frustrating sometimes how little I'm able to find them. And so it is, 'How do I create a justification for a kid for why they need to know this?' And I feel like that is a flaw that many times in math my answer is, 'You need this for the next class that you're going to take. And if you learn this now, it's going to make next year in pre calculus so much easier.'

Along with these real-world applications, Kate also believes that engagement comes when learning is fun for students, which for an outside, traditional observer, may lead to misconceptions about the learning environment:

I feel like learning is noisy. I don't feel like my classroom has to be silent for learning to be taking place. I think that most of the time if it is silent, learning isn't taking place. So I know that for some people, my classroom would drive them crazy and having to do that. I would say that I hope to, and I think I fairly successfully, create an environment that says, 'I'm not the only one in this room who knows something. Everybody is invited and or expected to participate in that classroom.'

Once again there is praxis among the domains, as Kate's belief in and intention for creating a fun, interesting learning connects to her belief that she must teach for empowerment, recognizing the importance of helping students see themselves and knowers. Kate believes that this kind of environment is one that is not only engaging, but one that can be enjoyable to students, something she aims to achieve:

I get a great sense of satisfaction when a student tells me that he enjoyed class or when a student laughs at something in class or asks a question that challenges something. All of those things, watching students succeed, makes me feel really good if I had a part in helping them. For me it's very fulfilling.

Kate knows that as the teacher of a classroom, she is inherently at the center of helping create an environment for the students. In recognizing this (while also illustrating a higher level of consciousness), she knows the pivotal role she plays in creating a fun, interesting environment:

Hopefully they think that I'm a little bit cool but I'm a total math geek. I tell them I go to parties on the weekends and play pin the four on the equation. So it's like I'm completely okay with them thinking that I'm a dork but kind of being like 'But she's kind of cool.' And hopefully then they have a better attitude toward math than they maybe would otherwise.

Kate's love of learning, of her students, and her insatiable sense of humor make her classroom environment what it is. Though not all students at all times replicate her infectious passion for learning and having fun, particularly at 7:10 am, there is rarely a time in the room where students completely disengage with the class. Further, students almost unanimously laugh at Kate's jokes or are ensconced in whatever activity they are given in which to engage. Though I do not make the claim that Kate's room is utopian, it certainly is a place to which students gravitate, engage, and grow.

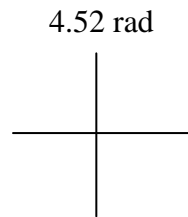
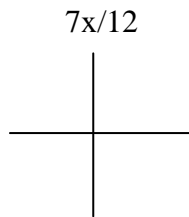
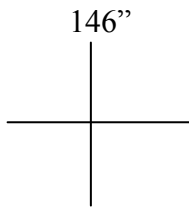
The Environmental Domain: Operations

Scene 1: Do we have to learn anymore? I'm full.

As the students walk in, they sit in their seats and begin to work on the bell starters. The room is silent, save an occasional crinkle of the wrapper from a breakfast bar or the unzipping of a book bag. On the board Kate has written the following:

*you need a calculator today
review (put in notes)

1. List two things that must be true about a reference angle.
2. Draw the angle and find the value of the reference angle.



3. $Y = 7\cos(2x + 19) - 1$
Amp
Per
Vs
Ps
Range

Learning target: I can solve trigonometry equations using my calculator.

Today

3. Go over homework
4. Solving trigonometry equations using calculator
Notes
Practice
Start on homework

Due today: green worksheet

Homework: pink worksheet

Next class: quiz on solving questions/inverse functions

As Kate takes attendance, two kids from her speech and debate team walk into talk briefly. She welcomes them while writing on the overhead then stopped to talk with the moment. They are comfortable coming in and out of the room, as are the four students

who walk in a few seconds late. As the students finish, Kate talks about the problems on the board. "When you have an angle, it must be acute and positive. What is an acute angle? How would I know if .872 was acute or not? Do this on your calculator. Most people are good at looking at an angle and knowing it's acute. We need to work on radians. Can I please have some volunteers to come to the board and write answers to the questions? Peggy did you get number two?"

"No, I didn't really."

"Yes you did. Trust yourself."

"OK, how about this. Jenny, tell me one of these three things," Kate says, referring to the three questions on the board. Jenny smiles before the students begin to chant songs that are used as mnemonic devices with Kate while she sings with them and dances:

Dividing fractions don't ask why
Flip the bottom number and multiply
Multiplying fractions no big problem
Top times the top and the bottom times the bottom.

"Helen, give me the phase shift or range."

"It's 2."

"Why is it 2?"

Upon answering the question an African-American male replies, "God, I'm sorry. It's been so long."

She turns her attention to the African-American males and replies, "That's okay, take your time. Why do you start with -1?"

After he answers the questions and is relieved to have remembered how to solve the problem, Kate says, "We just reviewed for your final exam. Everyone is ready right?"

She smiles and says, “OK, let's go,” joking as though they are going to take their final at that moment.

Several students cry, “Now!?”

“No, I'm just kidding.

A white female student then cries humorously, “We shouldn’t learn anything else this semester.”

Kate smiles back, rubbing her stomach with a feigned look of exacerbation, “Right, we should learn anything else, I'm full.”

This exchange is a fine example of some of the subtle ways Kate makes learning enjoyable. Her use of humor not only serves as look into her personality, but also sets the tone for laughter in a class, making the learning experience much more fun and interesting for students. This is further exemplified when the students sing mnemonic devices with Kate as she dances to the music, which gets a roaring laugh from several of her students. In this instance, Kate has used her intention for making learning fun to help students retain information necessary to their success in Trigonometry. Only in a situation where people have relationships with one another, where there is mutual respect, can they regularly jibe with one another as regularly happens in Kate’s class. In short, because she believes in and is intentional about building relationships, she can make the learning more interesting and fun. One can also see in the exchange with Peggy that Kate is trying to build the students’ confidence by saying something like “trust yourself.”

A black female comes in class and asks Kate to use her laptop (she is a Speech and Debate student). She is talking to the class, explaining a problem. She stops, says "yeah" to the girl and hands the girl her personal laptop. The black female sits in the

corner of the room, typing on the computer. The kids get out there homework while Kate turns off the light in the classroom then turns on the overhead. "Please don't commit this to memory or I'll be aggravated as hell," she jokes. On the overhead are the answers to homework. The kids check their work from the evening before. She takes questions while explaining some of the answers to them. "You will have a chance to try number 28 and 29. If you want to turn in the green sheet today, great, and if you want to do it tomorrow, fine. Both would be worth full credit." Kate walks around to students, checking for understanding and asking questions about what they did. She bends at the waist, touches their paper or desk, and talks with them.

Some students are confused by the answer to one question. Kate asks, "Did I miss up? Pinky, what did you get for the sin of y?"

Todd Pinkerington, whose friends call him Pinky, replies, "Um, I'm kind of behind because I had to write it over again."

"You're okay. Take your time."

"Try at least one of these two. If you are done with the first, try another."

As kids work on problems, Kate circulates. When she works with kids she will bend at the waist, put her forum on the desks, and point to the kids work as she talks with them. The kids chatter, buzz, as she circulates. Some talk about the problem, others about not getting to bed early enough, being tired, and doing too much. As continues to circulate as kids talk about content, digress, then come back. One stays off task for about 1 min., but she comes back. Some kids raise hands and Kate comes to them. Kids work in pairs. She stops them and brings them together to explain something she has been seeing a lot of while checking for understanding.

In this series of exchanges, a number of intentions and beliefs once again operationalize for Kate. She illustrates the trust she has for her students by letting the girl from Speech and Debate use her personal computer. This trust along with the sense of comfort the girl illustrates by entering the room while Kate is teaching is a sign that they have a caring relationship. This is further operationalized by Kate when she calls Todd “Pinky.” Using nicknames is a subtle way to not only illustrate that she knows him beyond her math class, but has a strong enough of a relationship with him to do such a thing. Finally, Kate operationalizes her intention to be transparent in sharing that she may have made a mistake, and does so without embarrassment. She is modeling for students that like them, she makes mistakes and that this is a safe place to do so.

In this vignette and in those that came previously, Kate operationalizes several of her beliefs/intentions of in the environmental domain. There rarely is a time where these beliefs are not on display inside or outside of Kate’s classroom. One could argue that they are the essence of her teaching.

Closing Comments

Kate Borsch’s classroom is a place of learning for some, a place of interest for many, and a place of solace for a large few. Regardless of students’ relationship with the room, when they have Ms. Borsch as a teacher, they are hard pressed not to have a relationship with her. While being highly cognizant of her students’ cultures and how they inform their worldviews, Kate Borsch knows her kids as individuals, a reality that is not lost on her students.

As is the case, Kate Borsch is a true intellectual humanist. She authentically lives a life of integrity, one that is driven by her deep intellectual curiosity and by her

unwavering human compassion. Moreover, she teaches with the same integrity, something a lucky 200 or so students will get to experience each year at Greenville High School. Though her room may not be aesthetically pleasing, it is a beautiful space for those that get to know it.

Summary

As specified in the beginning of this chapter, the data for each participant was organized into three domains of culturally responsive teaching: *the teacher domain*, *the student domain*, and *the environmental domain*. Within each domain, two sections are present, the first examining the teachers' beliefs and intentions and the second sharing rich descriptions and interpretations of their operations. The intentions and beliefs sections for all three domains are subdivided into sub-domains. *The Teacher Domain* is comprised of two parts: a) the person and b) the instructor. Within each sub-domain are themes that relate to the sub-domain. Within *the person* sub-domain exists a) a heightened sense of consciousness and b) transparency/authenticity. Within *the instructor* sub-domain exists a) starting with the end in mind and b) individualized instruction and choice. *The Student Domain* is also comprised of two parts: a) the individual and b) the learner. Within *the individual* sub-domain exists a) teaching the whole person/teaching life and b) culture as a lens through which we experience. Within *the learner* sub-domain exists a) teaching for empowerment: building capacity in learners. Finally, *The Environmental Domain* is comprised of two parts: a) the social-emotional and b) the intellectual. *The social-emotional* sub-domain is comprised of a) building relationships and caring while *the intellectual* is comprised of a) learning should be engaging and fun.

In chapter five I will further examine the themes presented in chapter four while providing further connection to the literature. Concurrently, I will address the three research questions that guided this study while discussing the implications of my findings.

CHAPTER FIVE

THEMATICS, EVALUATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Overview of the Study

With a contemporary focus on identifying attributes of quality teachers as a means to improving student learning, educational policymakers, researchers, reformers, and schools have continued to discover which characteristics may be found in quality teaching. As discussed in chapters one and two, the focus on improving teacher quality has manifested as the “third wave” of educational reform (Hirsch, Koppich, & Knapp, 1998, p. 2). In congruence with this “third wave” of educational reform, American schools have become increasingly diversified (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2006), making it necessary for schools to be responsive to the needs of individual students who come from a myriad of cultures. The praxis of the search for what makes a quality teacher and the emergence of culturally responsive teaching as a means to meeting the needs of a diversified student body makes this research paper timely and meaningful. This study centers on what the beliefs, intentions, and dispositions of culturally responsive teachers are while also seeking to show how culturally responsive teaching operationalizes in the classroom.

Culturally responsive teaching is a pedagogy that seeks to “empower ethnically diverse students through academic success, cultural affiliation, and personal efficacy” (Gay, 2000, p. 111). What is important to note is that CRP is not simply a series of teaching strategies, but rather a philosophical foundation seeking to equitably educate all students (Bartholome, 1994). With this in mind, as education professionals have sought to identify the elements of quality teachers and CRP in general, much of this search has centered around the intentions necessary to be an effective educator. Much of this literature however, is highly theoretical, leaving CRP to remain commonly misunderstood or unseen in the context of actual classrooms.

Congruently, much attention is now being paid to identifying what dispositions are held by the most effective educators (Freeman, 2007). Dispositions, defined as being comprised of teachers’ beliefs, intentions, and actions (Ritchhart, 2001), are included in INTASC’s teaching standards (INTASC, 1992; Freeman, 2007), NCATE’s standards (NCATE, 2002), and are receiving increased attention in various education circles (Freeman, 2007). Despite this reality, little is still known about teacher dispositions, and even less is known about the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers (Villegas, 2007). Because teaching is such a complex endeavor yet is often exposed to reductionist, step-by-step, or check-list like approaches (see Lemov, 2010; Joseph, 2010, Marzano, Pickering, & Pollock, 2001), this study sought to examine not only what teachers do, but what their beliefs, intentions, and dispositions are and how they might work together.

With this in mind, three research questions guided this study: 1) What are the intentions and beliefs of culturally responsive teachers? 2) How does culturally responsive teaching operationalize? 3) What are the dispositions of culturally responsive

teachers? To respond to these questions, I use Educational Criticism and Connoisseurship, a qualitative research method developed by Eliot Eisner (1998).

In this method, connoisseurship is the art of appreciation and requires the connoisseur to have sufficient educational knowledge that would enable him/her to observe the nuances of the classroom (Eisner, 2002). Criticism on the other hand, is the art of disclosure, which allows the connoisseur to point out areas where improvement is possible in the classroom. It is the criticism that serves as a medium for the connoisseur to reveal his/her perspective with the underlying intent of improving education. It is the ultimate goal of the method to communicate educational evaluations that reveal the complexity, ambiguity, and richness of the events taking place in schools and classrooms (Eisner, 1994). It is the aim of educational criticism and connoisseurship that aligns directly with this study, as it could allow for the improvement of how teachers, particularly urban teachers, are trained for the classroom. In improving the training of teachers, students in turn have a greater opportunity for quality educational experiences that could potentially provide them with opportunity of a productive, fruitful existence. Further, by analyzing the language of the formal interviews, informal interviews, and observations, I sought to identify the beliefs, intentions, and dispositions of culturally responsive teachers. In this study I attempted to provide educational criticisms that illuminated the subtleties and highlighted the complexities of the manifestation of culturally responsive teachers' beliefs and intentions. More specifically, I sought to share with the reader the beliefs, intentions, and operations of four teachers. By definition, I was sharing teachers' dispositions, which is defined as being comprised of teachers' beliefs, intentions, and actions (Ritchhart, 2001).

Educational criticism is comprised of four dimensions that form a system of inquiry: description, interpretation, evaluation, and thematic (Eisner, 1998). In chapter four I drew detailed descriptions and interpretations organized by the three domains of culturally responsive teaching, which include the sub-domains for each domain under which the themes that emerged in each sub-domain manifested. In this chapter I further examine those themes with accompanying interpretations that are connected to the literature. Subsequently, I will offer an evaluation of those themes in the significance/implications section of this chapter.

While describing and interpreting the data in chapter four, I sought to examine two of the three research questions for this study: 1) What are the intentions of culturally responsive teachers and 2) How does culturally responsive teaching operationalize? I also shared the participants' beliefs about culturally responsive teaching, as it would be necessary to do so to answer the question: what are the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers? Given the definition of dispositions as being comprised of beliefs, intentions, and operations, it was essential to capture the teacher's beliefs along with their intentions and operations to be able to answer that question.

The four participants in this study are all public school teachers with varying degrees of experience and differing extracurricular responsibilities in the most diverse high school in Colorado. Two of them teach English, one teachers Earth and Physical Science, and the other teaches Mathematics (see Appendix D). To get a representative sample of the teaching population, which is comprised of 75% female and 79% white (Frankenberg, et al., 2009), three participants (75%) were white females and the other was a Hispanic male. I selected the participants through a snowball sampling (Glesne,

1999) where I asked administrators, teachers, and students who they would deem effective, culturally responsive teachers.

After securing the participation of the four teachers, I conducted individual interviews with each of them before observing them beginning in September of 2010 and ending during December of the same year. I worked with one participant at a time, which I did to intentionally focus on each teacher's practice more intensely. Before observing each teacher, I conducted a formal interview with an explicit interview schedule (see Appendix A). The questions were each specifically linked to the teachers' beliefs, intentions, dispositions or educational practice in general with some biographical questions included to help get a sense of their "journey to teaching." After the formal interview, I observed each participant for a period of two weeks where we would occasionally have informal conversations. Upon completing all formal interviews and observations, I analyzed the data before asking follow-up interview questions (see Appendix B).

Discussion of Themes and Response to Research Questions

In chapter four, I examined the research questions: 1) What are the intentions of culturally responsive teachers and 2) How does culturally responsive teaching operationalize? I also shared the participants' beliefs about culturally responsive teaching, as it would be necessary to do so to answer the question: what are the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers? Given the definition of dispositions as being comprised of beliefs, intentions, and operations, it was essential to capture the teacher's beliefs along with their intentions and operations to be able to answer that question. I would now like to more deeply explore the subtleties of each participant's

intentions and operations before more intentionally answering the question: what are the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers?

Before proceeding to examine each research question in more detail, there are a few important items to first consider. As I pointed out several times throughout chapter four, the three domains of culturally responsive teacher are interrelated and inseparable. For example, one cannot seek to build relationships and care for students but not provide individualized instruction and choice and still be considered a culturally responsive teacher. While they may exhibit some qualities of a culturally responsive educator, they will need to fully exhibit, believe in, and possess as intentions all of these attributes.

A second item of note that is of great import is that while the four participants may have similar beliefs and intentions, they can and sometimes do operationalize differently. This reality gives support to the argument that one cannot simply be given a checklist of techniques to use in the classroom with the expectation that student and teacher success will ensue.

Finally, it is imperative to understand that despite the fact that the four participants in this study are unquestionably paragons for quality, culturally responsive teaching, it is not to say that none of their children are “left behind.” Though their beliefs, intentions, and operations may be optimal and are most certainly controllable, there is much outside of their control such as planning periods, supplies, students’ home support networks, etc. (Kennedy, 2010). For this reason, the domains of culturally responsive teaching shall be henceforth referred to as the domains of culturally responsive teaching in the controllable context. That is, these domains refer to what teachers have control of and do not intend to lead the reader to believe that if he/she were to emulate the beliefs,

intentions, and operations of the participants, he/she would have a utopian classroom with 100% student success. I will however, argue that these beliefs, intentions, and operations will yield a highly effective educational environment.

1. What are the Intentions and Beliefs of Culturally Responsive Teachers?

As illustrated in chapter four, I asked each of the four participants to share with me their intentions and beliefs for students. Though there was some variety in their responses, they were very much similar in what they believed in and intended for their students. All four teachers shared that their intentions and beliefs are directly aligned and inseparable from one another. This is not overly surprising, as Pratt found that “for most people, beliefs informed their intentions, which in turn directed the process of teaching (operations)” (1992, p. 208). As is the case, I found that in all four participants, their beliefs aligned with their intentions which aligned with their operations. With that being said, I would like to focus on the intentions of the four participants in this section. In doing so I would like to return to the domains of the controllable context in examining each one.

The Teacher Domain

Within the teacher domain, four primary intentions were present: a) a heightened sense of consciousness, b) a belief in the virtue of being transparent/authentic, c) planning curriculum with the end in mind and; d) individualizing instruction and providing choice. The first two fall into *the person* sub-domain while the second two fall into *the instructor* sub-domain, as the first two, while they may and often do show up in the classroom, they are specific to the participants as human beings. The second two are

more specific to the participants' intentions as teachers, which is why they fell into the instructor sub-domain.

A Heightened Sense of Consciousness

Each of the participants shared the intention of having a heightened sense of consciousness, which is comprised of four entities: a) self-awareness, b) self-refelctiveness, c) awareness of others, and d) awareness of racial issues. As Jenna Ward explained, culturally responsive teaching means “being aware of (her) own biases” and more wholly, being aware of her thoughts, beliefs, and actions. She is aware of her individual and cultural identity, which makes it possible for her to be aware of and responsive to the identities of others. Further, she continually reflects on ideas and actions in both her personal and professional life. She shares that she regularly asks herself questions like “Am I being open-minded here?” or “Do I understand where this kid is coming from?” The latter of those questions not only speaks to her self-reflectiveness, but also her awareness of others. She intentionally gets to know her students and seeks to better understand each individual in her classroom. For her, awareness of other is very much tied to awareness of race, which in turn is connected to self-awareness and self-reflection. She explains:

I think I have a lot of white guilt to be honest. I try to be cognizant of it at least, when we look at our classes and at who is failing, I traditionally fail white kids more than black and brown students, and I don't know if I'm being harder on them; I don't know. I'm sure it plays a massive role in what I do, but if anything its reverse racism, which is horrible, it's really bad but I would think that my main point with that is as people, when a kid says something, I feel this way or I feel that way, I can't pretend to understand where they're coming from.

While Jenna may not fully comprehend where students are coming from, her consciousness allows her to not only recognize that, but also seek to at least be a listener who will continue to reflect upon it.

John Granado has similar intentions for his students, as he also believes it is important to be intentionally self-aware. He routinely thinks about his racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic identity which drives him to learn more about his own “background and roots.” This awareness also makes John more responsive to his students’ identities and cultures. While he seeks to increase his awareness of his students’ and their individual cultures, encouraging them to do the same, he also is aware of the socioeconomic status of his students and how he believes that may play a role in their lives. He is intentional about getting to know each of his students individually so that he can be even more aware of who they are when they show up in his classroom, which allows him to be more responsive to their needs.

Sandra Fay serves as the embodiment of self-awareness, as she is prone to asking herself questions like “Why am I here?” and “What is my purpose?” She spends large amounts of time on a regular basis discovering who she is as a teacher and a person so that she can be wholly present with her students while encouraging them to examine themselves. She admits that she loves to “just think about stuff” and to “self-reflect.” This reflection is not limited to the self however, as she learns from her students, listening to their experiences and thoughts so that she can be more aware of the learners who show up in her classroom. Further, she regularly considers issues of race as they relate to her own experience, to the experiences of others, and how they affect education. She fears that the call for more teachers of color and a sort of aggressive approach to equity training have

the opposite effect of their intent, sometimes leading white teachers to think that they cannot connect with their students of color because they cannot understand their experience. Instead, Sandra makes it her mission to know her students individually, where in the process she is conscious of getting to know what their individual racial experiences are like. She recognizes that no one person's experience is the same and warns against those who make broad sweeping assumptions across races or ethnicities.

Kate Borsch, who has been teaching for fifteen years, also exhibits a great deal of self-awareness. She not only knows who she is as a person and teachers, but also how that shows up in the classroom and assists her in building relationships with her students. She will often see students exhibit behaviors in classes such as students placing their heads down on their desks, but instead of hastily arriving at the conclusion that they are being defiant or do not care, she often self-reflects on the situation while taking into consideration what she knows about these particular students before acting. She also recognizes the importance of knowing her students and their cultures so that she can find ways to get them to see being successful and working hard academically as being "cool." She also talks openly with her students on issues of race, which in turn make her students more responsive to talking about them as well.

There is much to support that this heightened sense of consciousness lends itself to improved experiences for students. Self-awareness and awareness of one's cultural identity has been identified in exemplary teachers in several studies (see Swartz, 2005; Boggess, 2010; Sockett, 2006; Fairbanks, et al, 2010). Moreover, quality educators must have a self-reflective nature and willingness to modify their practice if they are to improve student learning (Dewey, 1933; Swartz, 2005; Garmon, 2004; Stotko, 2007;

Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007). Finally, in being aware of others and aware of issues of race, they must examine problems from multiple perspectives (Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Gay, 1997; McAllister & Irvine, 2002) while valuing, respecting, and empathizing with individual cultures (Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Gay, 1997; Nieto, 2005; Germain, 1998; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner, 1996; Sachs, 2004; Shiveley & Misco, 2010; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005). In short, there is much literature to support that the intentions of these teachers are likely to yield positive results and quality educational experiences for their students.

Transparency/Authenticity

Along with having a heightened sense of consciousness, each of the participants in this study felt that to be a good teacher, particularly of diverse populations, it was imperative to be transparent/authentic. Jenna Ward proudly shared that “there’s not a big difference between the way I am in the class and the way I am outside of class because I feel like if I’m not living my life the way I want to live it at all times, I don’t think I do anything in my personal life that is detrimental to other people and I would never do that in the classroom.” Concurrently, John Granado doesn’t think that who he is as a person changes whether he is inside or outside of the classroom. He also believes that if he is not authentic with his students, they will see through any façade and ultimately will be more likely to be resistant to learning. Sandra Fay agreed, adding It’s important to show kids your personality. It’s who I am at home, it’s who I am at school; it’s me. They need to see that or they won’t buy-in to me.” What differentiates her from the others is that she is intentional about separating her home and school life, as she tries to focus on her family

when she finally gets home so that she can be fully present with her husband and infant daughter. Kate Borsch also is intentional about being transparent in her classroom, as she feels that doing things such as sharing that she doesn't know the answers to particular questions makes students more willing to take intellectual risks. She believes that this approach makes her more human to kids and thus more able to build authentic relationships with them. Further, like the others, her personality and sense of humor does not change in the classroom, though it may be filtered a bit in the name of professionalism.

Parker Palmer (1997) discusses at length the value of not only being transparent, or what he refers to as integrity in teaching, but also the value of self-awareness in the process. He explains that teaching with integrity means finding a sort of "wholeness" in one's self that is comprised of one's genetic composition, one's culture, and one's experiences, recognizing what is "integral" to selfhood, and then connecting with students by making one's selfhood "available and vulnerable" to them. Moroye (2009) refers to this as the complimentary curriculum, where one expresses his/her identity and integrity to his/her students. Each of the participants in this study utilize this complimentary curriculum in their classrooms and believe that if they are not authentic, they will not be effective teachers.

Beginning with the End in Mind

Though all four of the participants utilize a backward design model in writing their curriculum where they first consider their summative assessments and concluding activities so that they can scaffold to that end, only Jenna and Sandra are adherents to the Understanding by Design model (Wiggins & McTeigh, 2005). Jenna looks at standards at

the beginning of a unit, develops summative and then formative assessments, before finally planning her mini-lessons. Congruently, she completes all of the assignments she asks her students to do so that she can anticipate problems or identify potential difficulties the students may have. John follows a similar model but spends much of his time identifying models students can analyze so that they can be successful on the end of unit assessments. Sandra also begins with the end in mind, but she is intentional about ensuring that her end of unit assessments are real-world products that allow students to show what they have learned. She feels it is imperative to follow this model, as she believes that the assessment must be relevant and interesting to students so that the learning can be meaningful. Kate focuses more on the skills she wants students to acquire and how they might need or utilize these skills in the future before writing her learning targets for students and creating her end of unit assessment. She too is concerned that there has to be some real-world, relevant connection to the content for her students, lest they be less likely to find a reason to learn the material.

Individualized Instruction and Choice

Again, all four participants are intentional about individualizing their instruction to meet individual students' needs, but there is some variation on how each of them conceptualizes this intention. While all of them hardly ever sit down during a class period, each regularly conferring with individual students who generally work in groups the majority of the time, the individualization varies a bit. Jenna and Sandra have their students track their own learning as measured by how and if they have met specified learning targets. For each of them, tracking one's own learning gives him or her ownership of his/her educational experience. Moreover, this allows them to provide mini-

lessons to small groups of students who may need extra support on a particular concept or skill. Though John also provides individualized instruction by way of his conferring, much of his individualization and choice exist in the curriculum. He is intentional about infusing multicultural resources into the curriculum so that students can see themselves in the learning while increasing their “buy-in.” Kate not only confers with her students constantly, but she also teaches them multiple pathways to solving problems while encouraging to use the ones that work best for them. All four participants see providing choice in what they study, how they cover material, and even how long they may cover the material are essential components to creating motivation and providing ownership of the learning for students.

As much has been written on the effectiveness of individualizing instruction, Tomlinson (1999) characterized it as consisting of individual and group assessment, flexibility in assignments based on ability levels/academic needs, varying expectations by individual student, differing curricula to meet interests and needs of individuals, flexibility in time frames for learning, and varied grouping arrangements. While this is an effective means to instructing students, teachers should also move about the classroom as much as possible (Ladson-Billings, 1994) while providing individual attention and encouragement (Ladson-Billings, 1995), which each of the participants do. Concurrently, they seek ways to match their instructional techniques to the learning styles of their students, which has also been found to be effective (Gay, 2002).

The Student Domain

Within the student domain, three primary intentions were present: a) teaching the whole person/teaching life, b) seeing culture as a lens through which we experience and; c) teaching for empowerment/building capacity in students. The first two fall into *the individual* sub-domain while the third falls into *the learner* sub-domain, as the first two refer to intentions relating to the students' lives outside of the classroom while the third is specific to intentions within the classroom. It is important to note however, that there is permeability among these themes and that the participants view students' lives inside and outside of school as being part of their whole human experience.

Teaching the Whole Person/Teaching Life

On particularly striking commonality that each teacher possessed was rather than focusing on teaching their content, the participants felt as though their primary goal was to teach kids. Each of them commented on the importance of teaching kids to be better, well-rounded human beings rather than simply kids who are good students of English. About her primary role as an educator, Ms. Ward feels, "It's teaching skills towards being a good person. What are you doing to make this world better or at least not harming it? Like thinking skills and learning how to be open minded and not automatically judge someone and just learning how to be open minded and learning how to express yourself effectively and how to get your point across." She talked at length about the importance of "teaching life" and of her intention to foster what she considers "good people." Congruently, Mr. Granado said that he is intentional about "teaching life lessons", seeing himself as a "parental figure, teacher, counselor, and psychologist." He had to go as far as to confirm for either me or himself that he is, "well...an English

teacher.” Ms. Fay also talked at length about helping her students “get the skills to be successful in life and be good people.” More important than teaching them her science content, she is intentional about and believes in helping students gain the knowledge they need to live the life they want. This, according to Ms. Fay, is “the core” of her job. Finally, Ms. Borsch is similarly intentional about seeing each student as “a whole person, not just a math student.” She believes in and is intentional about teaching her students to “recognize the ways that their actions impact the people around them.”

For each of the teachers, teaching the whole person and teaching them life skills is their primary aim as educators. This very much connects to the theme of building relationships and caring, which will be discussed in more detail later. In order to truly care for students, it is imperative to see the whole person, not just the academic/intellectual person, which is transmitted through both verbal and nonverbal language (Brown, 2002). Care is a necessary component of what Bartolome (1994) calls a humanizing pedagogy, one that utilizes reality, history, and perspectives of individuals in the classroom. Seeing and valuing students as people, not just pupils, has proven effective in creating valuable learning experiences for students (Wasicsko, 2004; Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Collier, 2005; Boggess, 2010; Haberman, 1995; Brophy & Good, 1974; Stotko, 2007; Bain & Jacobs, 1990; Gay, 1997; Stotko, Ingram, & O’Ferrall, 2007; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005). Further, by knowing their students not just as pupils in their classrooms, but as people, each of the teachers is in fact engaging in a different kind of pedagogy, one that is more than culturally responsive or humanizing, one I would like to deem personalized pedagogy. I will elaborate on this in the ensuing sections as well as in greater detail in the significance/implications section.

Culture as a Lens through which We Experience

Though each of the participants strongly believed and were intentional about getting to know their students as individuals, not just viewing them as black males or white females, or Hispanic males, they also recognized that culture is the lens through which everyone experiences the world. More specifically, they each recognize that the students not simply from ethnic or racial cultures, but from gendered, communal, school, regional, peer, family and other cultures, all of which comprise their cultural lens and how they experience the world. Culture as a lens through which we experience very much connects with the intention of teaching the whole person/teaching life, building relationships and caring, and individualizing instruction, as for them to realize their intentions of teaching the whole person, they must get to know their students' cultures to get a better sense of their cultural lens. This lends itself to helping them understand how their students perceive what they are experiencing or doing inside and outside of class while in the process allowing them to build relationships with their students. The teachers are intentional about inviting students to share their cultural perceptions with them and/or the class, viewing diversity as an asset.

Each of the teachers is intentional about learning more about their students' cultures, but they do so in slightly different ways. Ms. Ward learns about culture by "sitting down and asking and talking about it." Mr. Granado also talks with his students and their families about culture, but he spends a great deal of time reading about cultures, attending "different workshops, professional development, for diversity and cultural diversity training." Ms Fay also learns about culture "through kids", understanding that she "learn(s) a lot from the kids perspectives." Ms. Borsch also learns about cultures

through her students but unlike Mr. Granado, she doesn't read about it in books. She and Ms. Fay believe that the most authentic way to learn about culture is through the actual experience of individuals. Ms Fay explains, "For me that's how you learn about culture because you learn from a real experience, not a generalization."

All four of the teacher warned about the dangers of making generalizations about ethnic and racial cultures, arguing that it is imperative to know each student as individuals who have multiple cultures rather than casting generalities on whole groups of students. Ms. Fay eloquently summed up much of what the other participants said when she explained:

I'm a Greek-American and I know that my culture, my experience isn't common to every Greek-American; My family culture is different, my customs are different, my routines and beliefs are different, how I think and talk are different. As far as generalizing character trait to entire groups of people, I don't believe in it. I don't just teach to a culture, I teach to a kid. Does culture form how we see the world? Yes. But in my own experience, I was grouped as a special education kid and jock and that is exactly how I was treated. People generalized me based on the group they put me in and it affected my educational experience.

Ms Borsch also added that for her, "Culturally responsive means recognizing students' individuality and the differences within students." Ms. Ward also saw the label of culturally responsive as being somewhat limiting and dangerous, also seeing CRP as "really individualized." Mr. Granado concurred, adding that he believes "the kids come from different situations" and teachers must get to know them individually rather than to generalize. He explained on a personal and very basic note that his own experience as a middleclass Hispanic male is very different from that of many of his Hispanic students.

Though it is clear from the literature that culturally responsive teaching is intended to be individualized (see for example Banks, 2002; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings,

1995), it is evident from my discussions with the participants that the label “culturally responsive teaching” is misunderstood and can and has led to unintended results.

Teaching for Empowerment: Building Capacity in Learners

Much in line with teaching the whole person/teaching life, more than teaching their particular content areas, all four participants are intentional about helping their students realize the tools of empowerment they already possess within them while seeking to build capacity in them so that they can more fully realize the capabilities they possess. Though this notion is present in all four teachers, it varies a bit for each. Ms. Ward builds capacity by helping her students “gain a sense of their ideas mattering and being intelligent” while also using her position as a person who is part of a system “created for white people, by white people to support white structure” to help them navigate that system and succeed in it. Correspondingly, Mr. Granado is intentional about helping his kids “grow as individuals”, to “become productive members of society” and to “understand that they can be successful.” Most importantly, he wants to help his students “live the life they want to live” while growing academically as readers, writer, and thinkers. Ms. Fay’s intentions focus on helping her students recognize that they “can be successful” while realizing that they can make their educations work for them in achieving their goals in life. In the process she does not want to let her students “make excuses for why they can’t do something or why they can’t succeed.” Similarly, Ms. Borsch wants to build capacity in her students to help them “overcome challenges so that when they leave my classroom, they know that they have the ability to overcome a challenge.” First identifying assets, she varies how she builds capacity in her students depending on their circumstances, abilities, and the like.

As mentioned earlier, at its core, culturally responsive pedagogy, and in turn personal pedagogy, seeks to empower students to become active social agents of change (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Gay, 2000). Further, building capacity and teaching for empowerment can ultimately lead to personal, intellectual freedom (Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994). As is evident with all four participants, teachers should also teach dominant discourses, being cautious not to denigrate students' cultures (Erickson, 1987) while also engaging in dangerous, or uncomfortable discourses surrounding issues of ethnicity, gender, race, social class, and power (Nieto, 1999). A large part of building capacity for the participants is helping their students see the relevance of the work they are engaging in, which is imperative to realizing this intention (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995). Further, the teachers each maintain that their students are valuable and bring assets, which not only helps them teach for empowerment but also has proven to be an effective strategy used by quality educators (Swartz, 2005; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner, 1996; Sachs, 2004).

The Environmental Domain

Within the environmental domain, two primary intentions were present: a) building relationships and caring and b) finding ways to make learning interesting and fun. The first falls into *the social-emotional* sub-domain while the second falls into *the intellectual* sub-domain, where the first refers to intentions relating to the students' social and emotional well-being and the second to intentions relating to their intellectual well-being.

Building Relationships and Caring

Much has been written on the importance of building relationships with students and caring for them. Nel Noddings' (1992) theory of care highlights the importance of teachers building and modeling caring relationships with their students. She describes a caring relation as being "a connection or encounter between two human beings – a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for" (Noddings, 1992, p. 15). Others have detailed the need for quality educators to authentically care for their students as a means to creating an effective learning environment for all learners that encourages them to participate, engage, and connect to what happens in the classroom (Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Bondy, Ross & Hambacher, 2007; Galluzzo, 1999; Taylor & Wasicsko, 2000; Bennett, 2001; Gay, 1997; Lewis et. al, 2008; McAllister & Irvine, 2002; Delpit, 1996; Talbert-Johnson, 2004). To assist each of the participants in building caring relationships with their students, they believe it is also important to respect students while demanding it in return, which has proven to be a common intention in successful teachers (Castagno & McKinley, 2008; Bondy, Ross & Hambacher, 2007; Bennett, 2001; Lewis et. al, 2008; Willis, 2008; Thompson, Ransdell, & Rousseau, 2005). Further, each teacher is intentional about creating a safe environment where relationships and caring may flourish, which is also essential to quality teaching (Castagno & McKinley, 2008). By building these relationships with and among students, the teachers are aided in creating a community of learners, which has proven essential to quality classrooms, particularly with diverse populations ((Gay, 2000; Brown, 2002; Weinstein, Curran, & Tomlinson-Clarke, 2003; Osborne, 1996; Banks, 2002; Brown, 2002).

When describing her intention for building relationships and caring, Jenna Ward explains that her classroom “runs like a family where there’s love, caring, and respect, but isn’t always rosy.” John Granado explains that, “One of the biggest things (to being a good, effective teacher) is that I think you have to build a relationship with all of your students; a relationship of trust. If your students don’t trust you and feel comfortable inside of your classroom I don’t feel that they’re going to achieve their highest potential.” Ms. Fay also explains her intentionality around building those relationships among her students, describing her classroom as “a community of learners (where) everyone’s respectful toward each other.” Ms. Borsch further discusses the reciprocity of caring and being cared for, explaining, “It’s important to have the ability to connect with my students and I think because they feel like I care about them, then they want to care back.”

Learning Should be Interesting and Fun

As the participants pointed out, it is imperative to intentionally seek to make learning interesting and fun for their students. Each has a love for learning as an end in itself, but recognizes that this attribute may not be shared by all of their students, leaving it up to them to find ways to help students connect to the learning, see value in it, while finding enjoyment in it. While they seek to make learning interesting and fun, they also believe it is essential to maintain high expectations for their students, which has proven necessary to providing a quality education (Delpit, 2006; Brown, 2002; Weiner, 1999; Hernandez-Sheets, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Banks, 2002).

Ms. Ward intentionally writes curriculum that seeks to find “the most interesting way” to help her students meet their learning targets. She says, “I want learning to be

fun...I am energized when the kids really love it. My intention in a selfish manner is that they're really going to enjoy the lesson." Mr. Granado, recognizing that his students may not share his love of learning, intends to present content "in a certain way that they can think 'that was pretty neat' or 'you know what, it wasn't so bad.'" He sees infusing multicultural curriculum that "students of all colors can relate to" as a means to making learning more interesting, which has proven effective in quality classrooms studies (Delpit, 2006; Banks, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Gay, 2000; Brown, 2002). Similarly, Ms. Fay begins any curriculum planning by thinking about why the material is relevant to students as well as where they might see it exist in the real world. She is intent on designing learning experiences based off of what is meaningful for students, not what others think is meaningful for them. Ms. Borsch too is "always looking for real world applications" to her math content with the intention of engaging students in whatever it is they do in class in a meaningful way. She too wants students to enjoy their time in her class, to laugh, and to feel fulfilled.

2. How does Culturally Responsive Teaching Operationalize?

As mentioned earlier, upon thoroughly reviewing the literature on culturally responsive pedagogy it became apparent that there was a significant gap in how CRP operationalizes. With most of the CRP literature theoretical in nature, there is a need for empirical literature on the operationalizing of this form of pedagogy. In chapter four I sought to provide detailed descriptions of culturally responsive teachers' actions while providing interpretation to help make sense of what they are doing. In this section I would like to compare the actions or operations of culturally responsive teachers with one another to illustrate the point that while their intentions and beliefs might be the same,

those intentions and beliefs can manifest in different ways. This reality grants further support to the notion that great teaching cannot be reduced to a checklist of sorts and may be represented in different ways while still being effective.

With that being said, I would like to focus on the operationalizing of beliefs and intentions of the four participants in this section. In doing so I would like to return to the domains of the controllable context in examining each one. It is important to note once again that looking at these themes in isolation is somewhat dangerous, as they each affect and connect to one another, but for the purpose of trying to provide some clarity to what teachers actually do, I will attempt to isolate them. It is also of note that given that there is a lack of empirical research on the operationalizing of culturally responsive teaching and in the hopes of avoiding redundancy, I will refer the reader back to the previous section on culturally responsive teachers' intentions in evaluating the data.

The Teacher Domain

A Heightened Sense of Consciousness

Jenna Ward operationalizes her heightened sense of consciousness in a number of ways. First, she often metacognitively reflects with her students on what is or is not working for them, avoiding blaming her students but rather questioning herself and self-reflecting to find ways to help them grasp what she is covering in class. At the end of each class she takes time to reflect on what went well and what did not. While observing her she shared one of those reflections with me around her short story unit, saying, "I won't do the short story unit again...Some want to do it but a lot of them are doing it because I asked them. It's my fault. I'm forcing them to do it." This quote further illustrates her self-awareness and her awareness of others, as she not only is cognizant of

her forcing this unit on her students, but also recognizing when the students are not entirely engrossed in what they are doing.

She also chooses her words carefully when talking to her students, illustrating that she is aware of her position as a teacher, her racial and gendered identity, and who her audience is. She seeks to get to know her students so that she is aware of how she will convey messages to her students. For example, if she has a sensitive student, she may soften her tone and speak kindly whereas she may offer a sarcastically humorous remark to a student she knows engages in and responds to such humor. Finally, she illustrates her awareness or lack thereof with her students in her interactions with her kids. She asks them questions about their cultures when a topic may come up for which she is not aware but will also share in that culture with what she is aware of, such as speaking “Spanglish” to her bilingual students. She talks openly about race with her students while reflecting on and being aware of how her own biases (e.g. favoring more white kids than kids of color).

John Granado operationalizes his heightened sense of consciousness in similar ways but there is some variance. Like Ms. Ward, he is highly self-aware about his racial and ethnic identity. His operationalizing of this awareness comes through when he shares stories about his life, his past, and his experiences, as he also seeks to increase students’ self-awareness and understanding of racial identity by encouraging them to write about, reflect on, and share theirs. John also continuously reflects on his experiences in the classroom, also often either changing lessons midstream or doing so after a class session to improve what he has done. For the classes of which he teaches more than one section, he says that often alters what he is doing based on how well or poorly a lesson went in a

previous class. For him to make changes, he has to be aware of his students to be in touch with whether they are interested in and/or understanding what he is teaching. Further, when working with individual students, he seeks to understand their cultures while pushing and supporting them to be successful students and people.

Sandra Fay operationalizes her heightened sense of consciousness similarly to Ms. Ward and Mr. Granado. She continually self-reflects on her teaching and her experiences with students to make meaning for herself and to make adjustments to her curriculum and/or instruction. Like the other two teachers, she will stop mid-lesson and go in another direction if she senses that her students are not connected to or understanding her lesson. She keeps notes on each of her students that she adds to after each class to record her thoughts on where they are as learners and what she needs to do as an instructor to help them meet the learning targets. She has a sixth sense for when her students need help, are not engaged, or are in need of redirecting. Further, she talks openly with her students about issues of race and ethnicity as well as about their experiences. She is highly aware of her body language and posturing, as she will regularly sit with kids so as not to come across as being overly authoritative; she stays at eye level.

Kate Borsch operationalizes her self-reflectiveness like the others, either changing her lessons mid-stream, providing multiple examples or models when she becomes aware that students are not understanding, or reflecting after her classes for the purpose of making modifications for when she teaches that particular lesson again. She also has the sixth sense for knowing who needs support, who is not engaged, and who needs redirected. She is in tune with her students because, like the others, she takes time to get

to know them. Even as a math teacher, she will frequently give them a journal topic that supports the kids in increasing their self-awareness while reflecting on their beliefs, experiences, and thoughts. Though it may not be part of the prescribed curriculum, it helps her realize her intention of teaching the whole person while encouraging her students to be self-aware, self-reflective individuals.

Transparency/Authenticity

Though there is some variance in how a heightened sense of consciousness operationalizes for each teacher, this intention/belief looks nearly identical for each teacher. All four believe it is imperative to behave inside the classroom as they do outside of it. None of them put on any sort of façade and all believe that being inauthentic will cause kids to disengage, leaving them less likely to be receptive to the content. Though they all filter themselves a bit, each shares details of their lives, exhibits genuine emotion, shows up with his/her true persona, and speaks openly with their students. Ms. Ward feels the need to be herself in all situations, including her time in the classroom. She shares her genuine feeling for and with her students, she cries and laughs with them, and she shares stories of her family. Her kids know her husband by name as well as her three daughters.

Mr. Granado's students also know about his family, where he is from, what he does on weekends (with a slight filter, particularly if that involved alcohol), and what his process is as a learner. If a student asks a question for which he has no answer, much like the other three teachers, he shares that he does not know and helps him/her find the answer (a form of building capacity). Mr. Granado wears his heart on his sleeve, openly showing emotions of joy, frustration, anger, or pleasure with his kids. He jokes with them

much as he would his friends and is unafraid to share his disappointment and frustration with kids when things might not be going well.

Though I did not see Ms. Fay share as much information about her personal life with her students, her personality in the classroom is nearly identical to the one outside of it. She is extremely open about her metacognitive processing while encouraging her students to do the same. For example, she will explain to them how she arrives at answers, what she is “wondering about”, and what her feelings are. She also is open about her emotions with her students but filters a bit when she is frustrated with them, at times pausing for several seconds, taking a breath and continuing. Interestingly, this is a transparent manifestation of her resiliency, which she recognizes is a powerful trait she possesses. When she shares examples with students to help them see relevance in the curriculum, she will do so with a personal story, such as the one about her watching NPR.

Finally, Ms. Borsch also is very much herself in the classroom. She frequently shares stories with her students about where she grew up, her experiences in college, her weekend tales, and the like. Her charismatic, humorous ways permeate her classroom and as she often does outside of the classroom, she frequently jokes with students. She will even occasionally use self-deprecating humor such as making fun of her Wisconsin upbringing to get a laugh, which she does in her personal life. As was the case with all four teachers, students seem to have a sense that they too can be open with her and often share personal stories about their love lives, home lives, and the like.

Beginning with the End in Mind

As mentioned before, all four teachers begin with the end in mind, but only Jenna Ward and Sandra Fay are adherents to Wiggins & McTeigh's UbD format (2005). The operationalizing of beginning with the end in mind is again similar but slightly different for each teacher. Jenna Wards operationalizes this intention/belief by first designing her summative assessments, which can be a traditional and/or authentic assessment. She actually completes each assessment herself so that she can anticipate problems in the classroom before they happen or make alterations to the assessments. Further, by knowing her end products, she designs lessons that include the skills the students will need to be successful on the summative assessments. Another manifestation for Jenna is that she will look at college readiness or state standards before she plans her year or unit so that she knows where she would like her kids to end up. In the process she determines how students will show they met the standards and uses that exhibition of understanding as the basis for creating her formative assessments.

Mr. Granado similarly begins with the end in mind by determining what his students will need to know at the end of a year or unit before shaping how they will illustrate this understanding at the end of each unit. He then locates models or exemplars of the assessments students will take at the end of the unit before sharing and analyzing them with students; frequently students will analyze the models individually or in small groups. John then plans his lessons so that students can learn the skill necessary to complete the summative assessment. For example, for a summative assessment of writing an original short story, students read stories to identify elements they would have to incorporate in their stories before analyzing how authors used these elements. John also

considers what students will need to know in the future before planning lessons that will make them successful when that future arrives.

Ms. Fay, much like Ms. Ward, uses the UbD approach to planning, but unlike the others, her end of unit product(s) are “real world” products that students can relate to and find relevance in. She also plans her lessons to scaffold the skills necessary to be successful on the summative assessment. As Ms. Ward does, she plans learning targets for each unit that she not only requires students to track themselves, but also tracks them herself to see if the students perception matches hers. Though Sandra doesn’t script her lessons, preferring to use a general outline, she always knows where she wants to go because she has planned with the end in mind.

For Ms. Borsch, planning with the end in mind is similar to each of the other participants, as she first thinks about the skills she wants her kids to acquire, develops learning targets, designs summative and then formative assessments, before finally developing a calendar for when she would like approach each skill. Concurrently, she designs guiding questions that she shares with the students each class. Much like the others, while planning with the end in mind she tries to design lessons that scaffold to the summative assessment while seeking ways to make them interesting. She shares the sequence she develops with her students in the form of a daily agenda on the board, a practice Jenna and John also undertake.

Individualized Instruction and Choice

As in the previous operations, there is much similar and some variation on how the four participants operationalize individualizing instruction and choice. All of them continuously confer with students as they work either individually or in groups, asking

specific questions or giving targeted feedback to each student. Ms. Ward and Ms. Fay make their students responsible for their own learning, each asking their students to track their progress on a learning target handout or through exit tickets they will give their students at the end of a class period. Both also offer mini-lessons on particular topics and allow their students to determine if that mini-lesson would be valuable for them to participate in or if they would like to spend their energies elsewhere. Jenna is unique however, in allowing the students to choose what kind of summative or formative assessment they would like to complete. Students can choose what Eisner (1994) terms different forms of representation.

Mr. Granado on the other hand, seeks ways for students to make unique, individual connections to the content. This may come in the form of choosing the topic of an essay or by crafting a journal topic that the students can respond to individually. He often tries to humanize the characters and authors they study in class so that they become more relatable to the students. While he may not allow students to choose the form of the summative assessment, he creates a framework within those assessments where the students can choose the topics or content while responding in an individual way, as he does in allowing the kids to create their own original short story. Finally, he regularly but not always, allows the students to choose whether they will work in groups or individually while giving them the freedom to choose their own group members.

Beyond what has already been pointed out, Ms. Fay operationalizes her intention/belief by also frequently allowing students to choose groups. She gives a great deal of individualized feedback on assignments, in conferences, and while sharing her notes on each student.

Ms. Borsch also provides a great deal of individualized feedback on assignments while providing space for students to internalize that feedback before often allowing them to resubmit their corrected work. Students have a great deal of choice in the content they will cover, as Kate will often ask them which problems they would like to discuss. She encourages students to utilize multiple pathways to answering problems while also allowing them to choose who they will work with.

The Student Domain

Teaching the Whole Person/Teaching Life

As may have been evident in the vignettes in chapter four, each of the teachers operationalized their belief in/intention of teaching the whole person/teaching life in a variety of ways. One striking commonality they each hold is that in the process of operationalizing this idea, they all are modeling what they believe to be attributes of good, intelligent people (this is a tangential result of operationalizing their beliefs in being transparent/authentic).

Jenna Ward believes that self-reflection is essential to being a thoughtful person, and purposely models this with her students. For example, when a lesson may not be going well or a student may not be grasping a concept, she will remain calm, pause, and often think aloud so that the student is able to hear her process. She will utter phrases like, “OK, so how can I make this work better?” or “Alright, how am I going to make this work for you?” Along with this, Jenna also models for her students what it means to be a caring person, as her interactions with students regularly include a tone of voice, body language, and proximity that lend themselves to this. Concurrently, Jenna will operationalize teaching the whole person by showing students how to find difficult

answers, as she did with her student who didn't know the meaning of the word "improvisation." Finally, both Jenna and John spend a great deal of time helping their students improve their reading and writing skills, not because they are concerned about their state test scores, but primarily because they see reading and writing as necessary to being successful people.

Another way John Granado operationalizes this belief/intention is by modeling that learning is fun, as he tries to share his joy for whatever it is they are doing in class with hopes of it becoming infectious. John is also can be more explicit in operationalizing this intention, as he will talk directly with students and/or parents about the value of an education, sharing personal stories or those of others. Similarly to Jenna, John also seeks to show kids the importance of family, as he did with his journal entry on siblings. He uses the journals to not only help kids connect to the content, but to reflect on their own lives before offering his sort of "moral to the story" (e.g. the need to love one's sibling). Along with this, John chooses stories that students will read that have life lessons in them so that students can not only contemplate these, but also empathize with characters. Finally, John intentionally models good manners and showing respect to others. Not only will he be certain to say "please", "thank you", etc., he will also talk to kids as young adults, be honest with them, and talk directly.

Similarly, Sandra Fay models the attributes she believes are essential in good human beings. She maintains her composure when she is frustrated (even at times sharing that she is frustrated), she demonstrates perseverance and resiliency when nothing seems to be going right, and she models caring, trusting relationships by either using touch, kind words, or simply telling them "I trust you." Along with this, Sandra makes sure to share

with her students on a regular basis that the skills they use in life are assets at school, telling them they are great problem solvers. She will also make sure to help kids see the connection between the content they are covering in science and their lives, which allows them to see the value in what they are learning. Yet another way she operationalizes this intention/belief is that she helps them learn skills to problem solve rather than simply giving the answer. In the process she regularly teaches them how to draw upon their schemas to help them find answers.

Kate Borsch also operationalizes her belief/intention in teaching life by helping students learn how to overcome challenges while sharing with them how valuable this skill is. In addition, she explicitly shares with kids how the skills they learn in the content area can help them in life or may help them in life (such as in the example with friction and their cell phones). She uses real-life examples to make explicit connections to mathematics while also choosing examples that will connect to kids' background knowledge. Moreover, she models for students that is alright not to know every answer while also allowing them to not know without admonishment or pressure. Finally, Kate ceaselessly seeks ways to make learning relevant and useful to students so that they can see how it will help them in the future, even if sometimes it is to help them in a future class.

Culture as a Lens through which We Experience

There is a great deal of crossover in how culture as a lens through which we experience operationalizes with other themes. For example, part of seeing students as individuals is recognizing that culture is an enormous part of one's identity. Therefore, many items that would show up in this section have been illustrated already. However, in

this section it would seem most appropriate to focus on how the participants learn about those lenses through which students experience.

Ms. Ward seeks out conversations about students' cultures and eagerly engages in dialogue about their home lives, personal lives, etc. Moreover, when the opportunity becomes manifest in class, she will engage in whole class dialogue about students' cultures. There are also times when she might have a particular learning objective in mind, but a student or students will bring up an issue dealing with culture. In these cases she will often treat them as teachable moments where she will facilitate discourse around ideas or issues of culture.

Mr. Granado also talks with students about culture but often seeks to create spaces where students can talk about their cultures while sharing stories of his. His journal entries are often intentionally geared toward providing a space where students can talk about some aspect of their culture. While he always facilitates discussion about what they wrote in their journals, not every student will share, which is why he collects, reads, and comments on their responses. Concurrently, Mr. Granado seeks to learn more about different cultures (including his own) by reading about them, attending professional developments, and attending cultural diversity training sessions.

Similarly to Ms. Ward, most of how Ms. Fay learns about culture is through her students. Sometimes these conversations arise unexpectedly in class, where she will provide the space for them to take place, and other times they arise as a result of her facilitating them. She asks students about their families, their ethnicities, their customs, and the like. Concurrently, she will reflect on these conversations to not only internalize them, but also to at times compare them to her own experience. She is always affirming

when students share their personal stories with her, which they often do more comfortably when she is talking with them individually rather than as a whole group. While Ms. Fay has read books about culture and attended trainings, she believes them to be much less authentic than when talking directly with students.

Ms. Borsch operationalizes culture as a lens through which we experience similarly to the others. When she provides examples to help students understand a concept, she seeks examples that would appeal to a large number of cultures and/or provides multiple examples. When learning about cultures, she also leans mostly from her students and does so actively. She will ask kids about their personal lives, their backgrounds, their experiences, etc. Much like Ms. Fay, she doesn't believe that reading books about culture is an authentic way to learn about them and can at times lead to generalizations about groups of people.

Teaching for Empowerment: Building Capacity in Learners

Before sharing how teaching for empowerment/building capacity in learners operationalizes, it is important to point out that there is a bit of crossover with teaching the whole person/teaching life, as one of the life skills the four participants intend to teach is that of finding one's power and learning how to function more effectively independently. With this being said, teaching for empowerment and building capacity in learners operationalizes in a number of different ways for the four teachers.

One way Jenna Ward operationalizes this theme is that she teaches strategies to her students for how they can find answers to difficult questions. For example, she teaches kids how to find the meaning of words they do not know without giving them the answers. She also helps her students see themselves as both learners and teachers, as was

evidenced when she told her Spanish speaking students that they teacher her about the language. Concurrently, she code switches in class verbally and in writing as a means to teaching kids the language of power, Standard English. In the process, she honors students' native language or even slang as a means to showing them that those have value as well and should be seen as assets. Another means to operationalizing this theme is that Jenna gives kids voice and choice in her class, as she will allow them to determine how they will learn, such as in groups, by choosing a particular project, and the like. She also fosters creativity while encouraging collaboration, two extremely valuable skills her students will be able to maximize long after they are in the work world. Along with this, she regularly uses affirmation as a means to making kids feel successful and thus more confident in themselves as learners/knowers. Finally, like John, she helps students develop their reading and writing skills so that they can more effectively and powerfully communicate their thoughts, a skill that transcends her classroom.

While building students reading and writing skills, John Granado builds capacity in his students by focusing on teaching for growth. Not only do students feel a sense of empowerment by recognizing their own growth, the mere notion of improving and striving to improve is a skill that will serve John's students well in life. Concurrently, John regularly uses affirmation to build his students' confidence, using words like "exactly", "perfect", or "yes!" to make his students feel successful. Finally, John teaches his students how to have caring relationships, which serves to empower them in their personal lives as well as their professional ones.

Similarly, Sandra Fay shows her students that they can be successful by directly telling them that they can, encouraging them to fight through obstacles to do so. In the

process she teaches them the value of not making excuses for not succeeding, which transcends her science class. Congruently, she teaches students how to draw upon their schema and other strengths to find answers to questions they do not know. In the same vein, Sandra teaches students to identify their needs while helping them see that they already know a great deal. Finally, she empowers her students by giving them ownership of their learning, as they will track their progress and be cognizant of what they do and do not know.

Like John Granado, Kate Borsch builds capacity in her students by teaching for growth and in the process, she teaches them how to overcome challenges for themselves rather than having to depend on her. Concurrently, she builds students' confidence by celebrating their success, which may have occurred inside or outside of her classroom. In building this capacity, she also puts students in positions where they are not only learners, but also teachers. They serve as both learners and teachers in their small group work, as students regularly ask and answer questions with one another. They also have the opportunity to teach when she will invite students to the front of the room to explain the answers to problems while taking the class through their process. Her words themselves also serve as capacity builders, saying things like "see if you agree with the answer." This kind of phrase indicates that they are in a position to challenge what is right rather than being disempowered by subservience and acceptance of what is told to them.

The Environmental Domain

Building Relationships and Caring

As is the case with the other themes, there are several common ways among the four participants that the intention/belief of building relationships and caring

operationalizes in the classroom. To begin with, all of them honor students' voices, making them feel as though they are valued by the teachers and ultimately creating a sort of buy-in for them for the class. Further, all four participants ask their students about their lives outside of school, illustrating that they care for them as people, not just pupils. Along with this, all four teachers go to great lengths to write curriculum in which their students will be interested. Finally, there is permeability in each of their classrooms, as students can leave to go to their lockers, the bathroom, etc. without having to ask permission. As Sandra Fay said, "I trust them until they give me a reason not to." While these operations are shared, there is variety.

Ms. Ward often tells her students directly that she cares for them as people while also talking with them kindly. She frequently plays the part of the mother with her kids, as evidence by her feeling the forehead of a student who said he was sick. Moreover, she maintains an open door policy during her office hours, where she will occasionally answer content questions for kids but often talks with them about their lives, their problems, and their successes. In a more collective sense, Ms. Ward encourages students to work in groups as a means to helping her students build relationships with one another.

Mr. Granado differs a bit in his approach to operationalizing his intention of building relationships and caring in that he makes an effort to not only ask students' about their families, but goes out of his way to get to know many of his students' family members. Similar to Ms. Ward, Mr. Granado also has an open door policy to his office where students frequently talk with him about what one female student described to me as "the drama." John listens, laughs, gives advice, and sometimes shakes his head in disbelief, but is always available for his students. He uses the moniker "guy" when he

talks to males and “lady” when talking to females as a show of familiarity and care. Further, on almost every occasion during the time I observed him, when Mr. Granado confers with students he asks them how they are doing before asking a content-related question. He demands respect and treats his students with it as well.

Sandra Fay, on the other hand, builds relationships with her students and shows she cares by telling them often that she won’t give up on them while also illustrating this by not allowing them to give up. She uses affirmation to make her students feel successful and while she won’t let them give up easily, she is careful not to embarrass a student in front of the class or in private. She respects them, demands it in return, and insists that they respect one another; she will call out a student who disrespects another without fail. Congruently, Sandra builds relationships among her students by giving them random assigned seats each class so that they can get to know one another better.

Similarly, Kate Borsch operationalizes this theme by making connections with kids so that she can build relationships. She is insistent on being a good listener so that she can illustrate care and will tell them directly that she cares if they succeed in her class and in life. She lightheartedly jokes with students frequently and when a relationship has been build, she will lightly jibe with many of her students. Congruently, she uses students’ nicknames that only their friends call them once she has reached a level of familiarity with them. She spends little time in her office, but rarely is there not a student in her classroom during her off periods, as she talks with them on about their school and personal lives. There are often students that come to her classroom while she is teaching to work on her computers or simply to work on other class work. Kate shared with me

that while it can be frustrating at times, the kids treat her room like their bedroom, but she wouldn't have it any other way.

Learning Should be Interesting and Fun

Once again the four teachers share a number of common ways in which they operationalize an intention/belief, in this case the intention/belief that learning should be interesting and fun. Though their brand of humor may differ slightly, all of the teachers regularly laugh in class and make jokes with their students. Concurrently, they all seek content that they think their students will be able to relate with and connect to their lives, which they believe is of interest to students. Each of them tell stories, often personal in nature, as a means to be interesting and funny; many of these stories connect to what they are going to cover in class, but can be tangential. Finally, they all allow their students to socialize when working in groups, but seem to have an internal clock for recognizing when students have digressed too much and need redirected. Though these operations are common, differences also exist.

Jenna Ward will model that learning is fun through her body language. During silent reading time, she will read a book of her own, slouching comfortable in a chair with her feet on a desk to show that she is in a comfortable place. Further, she only engages in activities that she finds fun herself, believing that if she does not, she can hardly expect her kids to be interested. She also presents the material that will be covered with a high level of excitement, serving as a salesperson of sorts for the curriculum so that students will be eager to engage with her in the curriculum. Jenna will also use the element of competition to create a sort of buzz for the learning, much as she did with the group story writing activity where she challenged them to write the best story.

John Granado also is a salesman of sorts who presents each activity with a sense of fervor and excitement. He will use any angle to get his kids to “buy” what he is “selling”, as he did when introducing *The Cask of Amontillado*, sharing how spooky and creepy the story was for the purpose of creating intrigue. Further, John uses his journal topics to create interest for his students, as he told me that they are supposed to be fun and interesting for the students. Finally, John purposely selects novels, short stories, poems, etc. that he thinks his students will find interesting and/or amusing.

Sandra Fay takes a bit of a different approach in making learning interesting and fun, as she goes out of her way to show her students that learning and intellectualism is in itself fun. She models in class conversations how intellectual discourse is fun and honors voices so that they can experience the fun. She teaches her students that it is fun to be smart and will show them how with acquired intelligence, one can question authority, which is also fun. Her lab experiments are intended to be fun for students, where they can explore and play a bit with tangible elements. Further, she makes students get out of their comfort zone and play a nontraditional student role as a means to making learning fun and enjoyable, much as she did when she made her students act like different elements. She also lets her students joke with her and one another, an action that implicitly tells kids that the fun they have outside of class doesn’t have to be left at the door when they arrive.

Kate Borsch also models that learning can be fun but does so as a “cool geek” who is smart but not in an archetypal “nerdy” way. She invites her students to pizza study “parties” and tells them they should tell their friends that they are only going for the free pizza as a means to protecting their “coolness.” Concurrently, Kate makes self-

deprecating jokes about herself as a nerd, but in doing so, illustrates that she has a “coolness” about her. Finally, she does things like singing and dancing to mnemonic devices to get a laugh out of students, but also to help them remember important concepts.

3. What are the Dispositions of Culturally Responsive Teachers?

As has been discussed throughout the paper, dispositions are defined as being comprised of beliefs, intentions, and actions. Such as the case, it is not difficult at this point for one to ascertain the answer to the question “what are the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers?” Each of the themes in the three domains of personalized pedagogy serves as beliefs, intentions, operations, and dispositions. For the sake of clarity, I would like to outline those here. As I have already alluded to the literature evaluating these themes in the section on “what are the intentions and beliefs of culturally responsive teachers?”, I will refrain from being redundant by doing so again here.

The first disposition of culturally responsive teachers is a heightened sense of consciousness. Teachers it is important to have a heightened sense of consciousness, intend to bring this to the classroom, and operationalize it both inside and outside of the classroom environment. Along with this disposition, culturally responsive teachers are also disposed to be transparent and authentic with their students, acting as they would inside the classroom as they would outside of it, though with some filtering for appropriateness and professionalism. Culturally responsive teachers also have disposition to plan their curriculum with the end in mind, first considering where they want their students to go before scaffolding activities to get them there. In the process, culturally responsive teachers possess the disposition to individualize instructions and provide

choice for their students. In short, they are personalizing their pedagogy. Along the same line, culturally responsive teachers have a disposition to teach the whole person about life and how to be successful in it rather than simply teaching their content to some student in their class. Though content is important, it is hardly the most essential part to being a great teacher.

Culturally responsive educators also are disposed to recognizing that culture is the lens through which human beings experience the world and is an integral part of their students' identities, worldviews, etc. Along with this, culturally responsive teachers have the disposition to teach for empowerment and build capacity in their students so that they can recognize that they already possess power within themselves. Further, these teachers help their students learn how to become independent problem solvers. Culturally responsive teachers are predisposed to build caring relationships with and among their students. Finally, culturally responsive teachers are disposed to make learning fun and interesting for their students.

Though these fall in line with what has been discovered in culturally responsive teachers beliefs, intentions, and operations, delineating the dispositions is important for a few reasons. To truly be a culturally responsive teacher, or to engage in personalized pedagogy, what is being taught and how it is being taught has to be meaningful to the teacher and cannot simply be something the teacher says or does. Teaching that does not do this is doomed to fall flat, be meaningless, and be joyless.

It is also essential to note that beliefs compliment intentions and operations. When beliefs, intentions, and actions (operations) align, teachers are teaching with integrity, which is in fact the essence of culturally responsive pedagogy/personalized pedagogy.

There is little question why professional development and even pre-service teacher education around culturally responsive teaching fails when they do not attend to the beliefs, intentions, and operations of their students.

Significance of the Study

Significance for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

As discussed in chapter two, culturally responsive pedagogy has been a form of pedagogy that sought ways to connect the hegemonic form of education provided in most public schools to the lives of students of color (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2000). At its core, CRP seeks to provide a form of pedagogy responsive to individual students' home culture. While this has been a valuable and important response to the dominant forms of pedagogy that often catered to the dominant culture, the label "culturally responsive" can be limiting and confusing for educators, as was the case with the participants in this study. Sandra Fay explains:

My first year was rough; I couldn't connect with them and often found myself wondering if I had much in common with them. We had done a great deal of equity work over the years and in that time I have found that often equity makes you feel like you don't know your students of color or understand them. But what I eventually found is that I can connect beyond culture. I treat kids as a parent/adult figure more and model what a good adult does/says. I'm teaching them what it means to be a good person and a productive member of our society. Does their culture still matter? Absolutely, culture is a huge part of who we are and how we see the world. But is culture all I should talk about in class? "What does an atom mean to you through your cultural lens?" I think that can be limiting.

All four participants shared that while culturally responsive pedagogy is intended to attend to the individual, the label culturally responsive often leads to unintended consequences such as teachers generalizing attributes onto entire groups of people. Jenna Ward warned that CRP can lead teachers to believe things like "all black kids work well

in groups,” which clearly is a broad generalization. Further, culturally responsive pedagogy is more than about race or ethnicity, it is about teachers recognizing and seeking to learn about/attend to the individual experience while recognizing that culture is the lens through which we all experience. For this reason I would like to offer an evolution of sorts for culturally responsive pedagogy by labeling it personalized pedagogy. If teachers are in fact misconstruing what culturally responsive pedagogy means and is intended to be, it should be of great concern. If one stops at culture in a broader sense, one can never get to the individual, which is what culturally responsive teaching intends to do.

The domains of culturally responsive/personalized pedagogy also hold significance in that one can look at any one of the themes and say that any teacher has a particular belief, intention, operation, or disposition, but one must possess all of them to be truly culturally responsive. Also of significance, beliefs, intentions, and dispositions can operationalize differently for different teachers. As is the case, we must have a broad definition of operations and cannot fall prey to a notion of “one right way” to be a quality teacher. Furthermore, it is important to understand that culturally responsive teaching/personalized pedagogy is not simply learner centered; it must attend to the environment and the teacher as well, if to varying degrees. I believe this is important to not in the current climate of teacher accountability, which has contributed to a dominant discourse that is not favorable to teachers. Congruently, this could and should have a great impact on how we approach teacher education and professional development where much energy is focused on training teachers/teach candidates on what and how to teach rather than attending to the individual. More specifically, this research would indicate

that we would be better served to focus our energies on developing the dispositions of the teacher so that he/she can focus on helping his/her students to develop as people in the process of examining content.

Finally, this study also has implications for policy makers and administrators. It is imperative to recognize that even the most outstanding teachers cannot bracket out the context in which they teach. In other words, teachers generally have control (or at least they should) of what happens in their classroom, of their relationships with students and parents, and of their interactions with students. Much is outside of the control of the teacher, yet the dominant belief is that by simply improving teacher quality (a term that hardly has consensus on its definition), student achievement will improve. Mary Kennedy (2010) referred to this as an attribution error, where there has been an overestimate on the influence of teacher quality/teachers' personal attributes and an under emphasis on the situational factors outside of the teachers control (the uncontrollable context). These factors include items such as supplies, planning time, common planning time, students' family situations, a students' willingness to learn, multiple room assignments for teachers, etc. Though I am hardly advocating for excuses for poor teaching, there is little question that if we want to increase students achievement, we cannot simply focus on the teacher. We must also revisit how we currently evaluate teachers. In the current reform era of expecting immediate results while finding ways to quickly and quantitatively evaluate the complex process of teaching (which often focuses on how and what is taught), it might be wise to layer qualitative evaluation with quantitative evaluation as a means to more fully evaluating teachers for the purpose of helping them become better educators.

Further Research

The themes that emerge in this study are significant for scholars of culturally responsive pedagogy. Those interested in the growth and evolution of culturally responsive teaching, and those interested in the betterment of education in general, may benefit from reading this study. However, further research is required.

For example, this study looks at the explicitly stated intentions of teachers but does not look at those intentions that may come as second nature for the teachers. It is possible that teachers possess intentions that they do not state directly, but do intuitively that may have great impact on how we train and prepare teachers. I would also be interesting to look at quantitative growth data for students who have teachers who have the beliefs, intentions, operations, and dispositions of those in this study. Further, looking at students' engagement and/or attitudinal data would be of interest as well.

Moreover, it would be interesting to look at teachers of homogenous student populations to examine the classroom experience for students with teachers possessing the beliefs, intentions, operations, and dispositions of these four participants. This could give some empirical support to Ladson-Billings' claim that culturally responsive teaching is just good teaching.

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Appendix A

Interview Schedule for Culturally Responsive Teachers

Interview Schedule for CRP Teachers – Dissertation Participants

1. Where have you been in education, for how long, and in what role(s)? (Demo)
2. What is your race/ethnicity? (Demo)
3. Describe your perfect day. (R2)
4. What does culturally responsive teaching mean to you? (R1; R2; R3)
5. How would you describe your students? (R2.3)
6. What are the most important aspects of being a teacher? (R2.2.3.4)
7. Why did you become a teacher? (R2.1.2.4)
8. How would your friends and family describe you? (R2.1)
9. How would you describe yourself? (elicit: as a person and as a teacher) (R2.1.2)
10. What are your intentions for your students? In other words, what do you hope to do when you go into a classroom? (Elicit: for the day, for the year) (R1.1-13)

- a. Do your beliefs around diversity play a role in those intentions? (R2.5; R1.1-13)
 - b. If so, why, and if not, why not?
11. Before writing a lesson or a unit, what do you think about? (R1.1-13)
12. Describe your lesson and unit planning process. (R1.1-13)
13. Why do you teach? (R2.1-5)
14. What do you find most challenging in your work? (R2.1-5)
15. Please describe your classroom environment. (R1.1-13)
16. How do your views on race and ethnicity affect your teaching? (R2.5)
17. How do issues of race and ethnicity affect education in general? (R2.5)
18. Do you spend time learning about other cultures? (R2.5)
- a. If so, how do you do it?
 - b. If not, why?
19. How do you maintain balance in your life? What do you do for fun? (R2.1.2)
20. Do you have anything else you would like to add? (R1,R2, R3)

Appendix B

Follow-up Interview Questions

1. How does self-reflection operationalize for you?
2. How do you perceive the role of choice in your intentions?
3. You seem to have an open door policy where kids can come and go freely. Is this intentional and why do you do this?
4. How do your intentions connect to your beliefs?

Appendix C

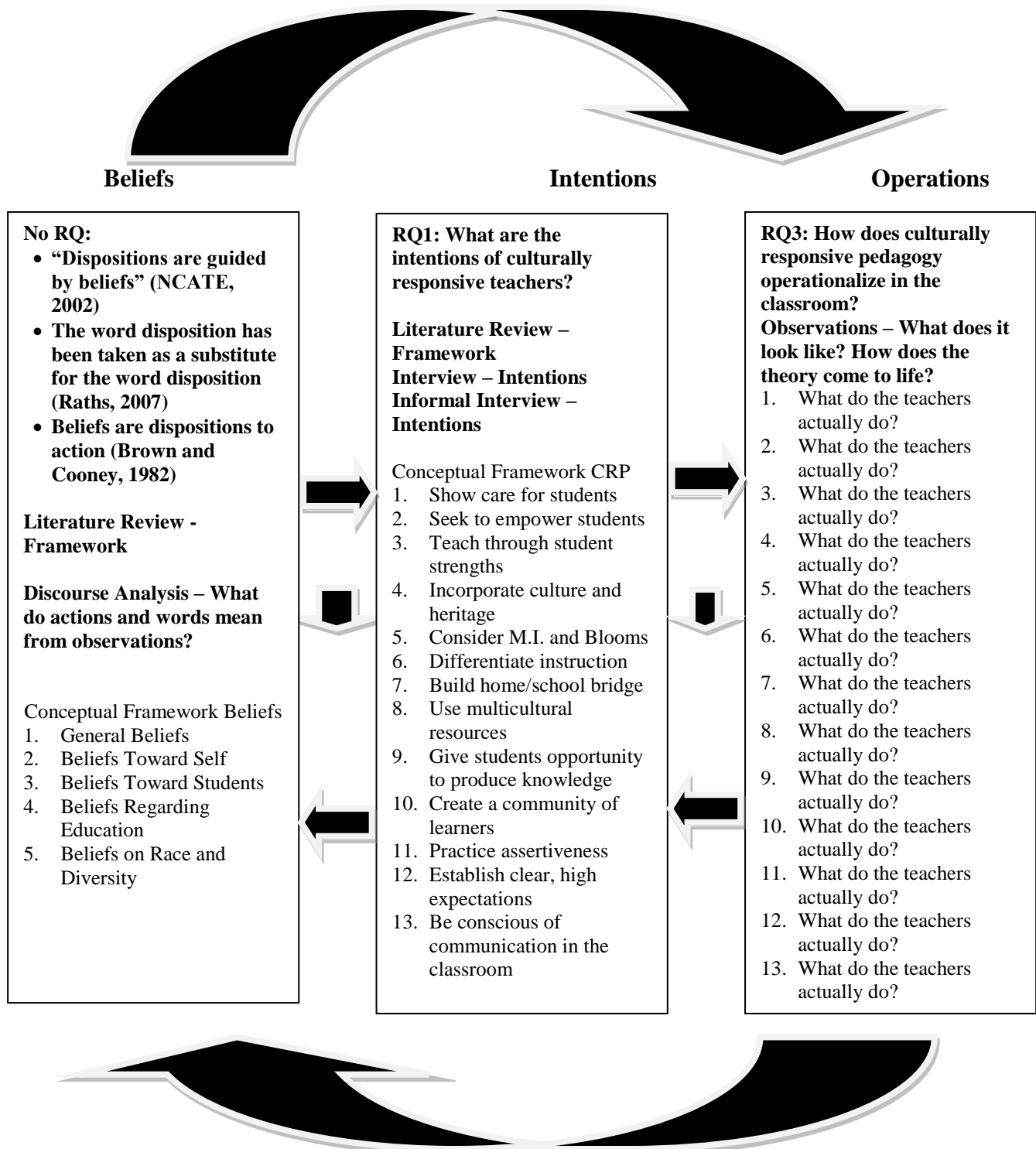
Dispositions of Culturally Responsive Teachers

(RQ2: What are the dispositions of culturally responsive teachers?)

Observations – Identify dispositions

Interviews – Identify dispositions

Discourse Analysis – What do actions and words mean from observations?



Appendix D

Conceptual Framework for Culturally Responsive Teaching/Personalized Pedagogy

A. Teacher Domain

a. The Person

- i. Heightened sense of consciousness
- ii. Transparency/authenticity

b. The Instructor

- i. Beginning with the end in mind
- ii. Individualized instruction/choice

B. Student Domain

a. The Individual

- i. Teach the whole person/life
- ii. Recognize that culture is the lens through which we experience

b. The Student

- i. Build capacity/teach for empowerment

C. Environmental Domain

a. The Social-Emotional

- i. Building relationships/caring

b. The Intellectual

- i. Make learning interesting/fun