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Culturally Familiar Texts to Improve Reading and Writing Outcomes for High School English Language Learners: An Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Study

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Abstract

Research suggests that culturally relevant pedagogical strategies are essential for improving culturally and linguistically diverse student achievement. However, there is little research about which specific strategies provide the largest impacts. And there is even less research on which strategies help LatinX English Language Learners achieve academic success in the areas of reading and writing. The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of utilizing culturally familiar text, as compared to culturally unfamiliar text, on reading comprehension and summary writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students. This study sought to determine if there were statistically significant differences in reading and writing outcomes when students were given a culturally familiar text versus a culturally unfamiliar text, while providing participants a voice through student interviews. Participants read two texts of similar length, difficulty, and word count, answered comprehension questions, provided a writing summary response, and participated in student interviews. This study hopes to contribute to the existing knowledge base around CRP and culturally and linguistically diverse students.

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Chapter One: Introduction

Research suggests that Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) is beneficial for students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. There is a need to better understand the impacts of valuing linguistic diversity, activating prior knowledge, and providing culturally familiar texts to LatinX high school students. While LatinX students are considered among the fastest growing population in the United States, there is an increasing need to better understand the impacts of CRP for English Language Learners, while valuing and viewing cultural differences as strengths. The purpose of this study was to determine the impacts of utilizing a culturally familiar text, as compared to a culturally unfamiliar text, on reading comprehension and summary writing outcomes for high school LatinX English Language Learners (ELL).

Research Problem and Significance

According to the United States Census Bureau (2018), the cultural composition of the country is widely changing. As the population of citizens who identify as White decreases, the African American, Hispanic or Latino, and Asian populations continue to increase. There continues to be an increasing number of students who attend United States schools from a wide array of diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds (He, Vetter, & Fairbanks, 2014). The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reports that in fall of 2000, 8.1%, or 3.8 million students enrolled in public K-12 schools

in the United States were identified as English Language Learners (ELL). However, in fall of 2015, 9.5%, or 4.8 million students enrolled in public K-12 schools in the United States were identified as ELL. Of the population enrolled, 6.6% of ELL students are in the secondary grades (National Centre for Education Statistics, 2018). Additionally, LatinXs are considered the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. There are approximately 51.9 million LatinX residents in the U.S. (Motel & Patten, 2013) and approximately 12.4 million are enrolled in K-12 schools within the US. These numbers account for one-quarter (23.9%) of the nation's public-school enrollment (Fry & Lopez, 2012).

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading scale non-ELL elementary and secondary students scored higher than their ELL peers' scores. This disparity in outcomes is commonly referred to as the achievement gap and is evidenced by a gap in elementary and secondary non-ELL students outperforming their ELL peers in NAEP reading outcomes by 37 and 43 points, respectively (NCES, 2017). This data might suggest that culturally and linguistically diverse students are being left behind academically.

In response to the growing achievement gap, many scholars have focused on the characteristics of teachers who have been successful teaching linguistically and culturally diverse populations, and from this grew the concept of culturally responsive teaching. The basic notion of culturally responsive teaching/pedagogy is that teachers will utilize a pedagogy that is inclusive of the students' culture in order to activate prior knowledge, demonstrate utility of the content, and to improve academic success (Kelley et al, 2015). Outcomes of this research suggest that effective teachers, who are able to increase

academic performance of culturally and linguistically diverse students, are teaching in ways that routinely engage in culturally responsive teaching techniques designed to engage the curriculum with their students' lives (Gay, 2018).

Prior research on LatinX students has indicated that many schools "fracture[s] students' cultural and ethnic identities," and creates a "subtractive schooling" environment for LatinX immigrant students, forcing them to leave their prior experiences at the door before entering the classroom (Valenzuela, 1999). Culturally relevant pedagogy seeks to view students' cultural knowledges, backgrounds, experiences as assets to build upon, which, in turn, empowers students, maintains cultural integrity, and activates prior knowledge to develop critical consciousness while meeting the diverse cultural and linguistic needs of all students (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Statement of Research Problem

Through a 20-year systematic review, there were few studies that discussed the impact of using pieces of CRP as interventions for culturally and linguistically diverse populations. There have been eight studies published that addressed CRP interventions for ELL students in the elementary and middle grades, and only 1 study that has addressed CRP interventions for ELL students in the upper secondary grades (Bell & Clark, 1998; Bui & Fagan, 2013; Kelley, Siwatu, Tost & Martinez, 2015; Lo, Correa, & Anderson, 2015; Luter, Mitchell, & Taylor, 2017; Powell, Cantrell, Malo-Juvera, & Correll, 2016; Riskowski & Olbricht, 2010; Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2011; Shumate, Campbell-Whatley, & Lo, 2012).

Research problem #1: Culturally relevant interventions in the upper grades. According to data published by the National Center for Education Statistics (2018),

16.3% of students enrolled in Kindergarten are English Language Learners. By the time students reach the upper secondary grades, 6.7% of enrolled students in the US are ELL students, and 7.5% of students between grades are ELL students, comes out to approximately 367,500 ELL students currently enrolled in public high schools (NCES, 2018). However, there are few studies that discuss the measurable impacts of CRP curriculum for LatinX students in the upper secondary grades. Furthermore, in a twenty-year systematic review of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), only one study focused a CRP intervention on the upper secondary grades (Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010). The systematic review yielded 27 qualitative studies that discussed student perception, feelings, confidence, and experiences in K-12 settings, but there was only one study that provided and intervention in the upper secondary grades (Sampson & Garrison, 2010). Eight out of nine identified culturally relevant research studies focuses on interventions at the elementary (Bell & Clark, 1998; Powell, Cantrell, Malo-Juvera, Correll, 2016) or early middle school grades (Luter et al., 2017, Bui & Fagan, 2013; Kelley, Siwatu, Tost, Martinez, 2015; Lo, Correa, Anderson, 2015; Riskowski & Olbricht, 2010; Shumate, Campbell-Whatley & Lo, 2012). While there are eight studies available for students at the elementary level (n=8), there is only one study focusing on interventions for past a K-5 setting. This remaining study was conducted at the high school level by Sampson and Garrison-wade (2010). In Sampson and Garrison-Wade (2010), the authors used a mixed methods study to deliver a culturally aligned resources and instruction, designed to elicit higher achievement on lesson assessments, in an American History class. The study found an increase in student quiz scores. Overall, this lack of research beyond the elementary years highlights the need for additional

supports for high school ELL students. There are a lot of ELL students in the upper secondary grades falling behind their peers (NCES, 2018), and there is not enough research available on how to best help these students.

Research problem #2: Culturally relevant texts for LatinX students and activation of prior knowledge. The importance of both reading and writing is recognized by Common Core State Standards, adopted by 41 states, and is a primary mode of demonstration of understanding in today's classrooms. Graham (2006) reports that summary writing and writing about a text read has positive impacts on reading outcomes (Graham, 2006; Harris, Graham, Brindle, & Sandmel, 2009). In a study published by *TESOL Quarterly* (1986), Janopoulos found that ELL college students who were allowed to read texts they enjoyed and found relevant also showed an increase in writing outcomes. The most striking finding from this study was the statistically significant strength between both reading and writing for ELL students (p=.008) (Janopoulos, 1986).

Utilizing culturally familiar texts, or texts where students can see themselves within the characters, is a broad tenet of CRP. There is little research, to date, that specifically examines the use of culturally relevant and familiar texts for LatinX students (Bui & Fagan, 2013; Kelley, Siwatu, Tost, & Martinez, 2015; Lo, Correa, & Anderson, 2015; Shumate, Campbell-Whatley, & Lo, 2012). The existing knowledge base will benefit from an increased understanding of this specific population, and how culturally relevant materials might help to enhance reading proficiency and summary writing. Two of the identified studies that focus specifically on the LatinX populations also focus on reading and writing outcomes (Bui & Fagan, 2013; Kelley, Siwatu, Tost & Martinez,

2015). However, these studies focus respectively on grades 5 and 7. The current proposed study will focus on high school grades. Research on second language acquisition at the high school level might benefit from an increased understanding of the intervention strategies that provide the most impact for LatinX ELL students, as there are only currently four studies in circulation that address this topic throughout the entire K-12 knowledge base.

Theoretical Framework

Culturally relevant pedagogy. First and foremost, this study operated under the theoretical basis of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP; Ladson-Billings, 1994). According to Ladson-Billings (1994), CRP uses students' cultures in order to maintain their culture, view the culture as an asset, and transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture. CRP is a pedagogy that empowers culturally and linguistically students by using culturally familiar teachings to impart knowledge and skills. Ladson-Billings' (1994) created a framework for successful teaching of African American students, which offers a model for teaching practices of these students. This model can be transferred to successful teaching of high school LatinX students, as successfully demonstrated by Kelley, Siwatu, Tost & Martinez (2015). Though this study transferred skills to LatinX students in the middle school grades, this model can also be used for LatinX high school students because of the clearly defined tenets of CRP, such as infusing lessons with cultural competence, critical consciousness, and the push to obtain and uphold academic success.

LatinX refers to plural male or female Latino/Latina learners. Ladson-Billings' (1995a; 1995b) describes three main principles or tenets of CRP (see Figure 1): academic

success, cultural competence, and critical consciousness of the current social order. CRP requires that students maintain their cultural integrity and identity, while emphasizing academic success. Academic success, in the context of this study, is defined as reading and writing proficiency. CRP demands that students' cultural values and learning go hand in hand and work together.

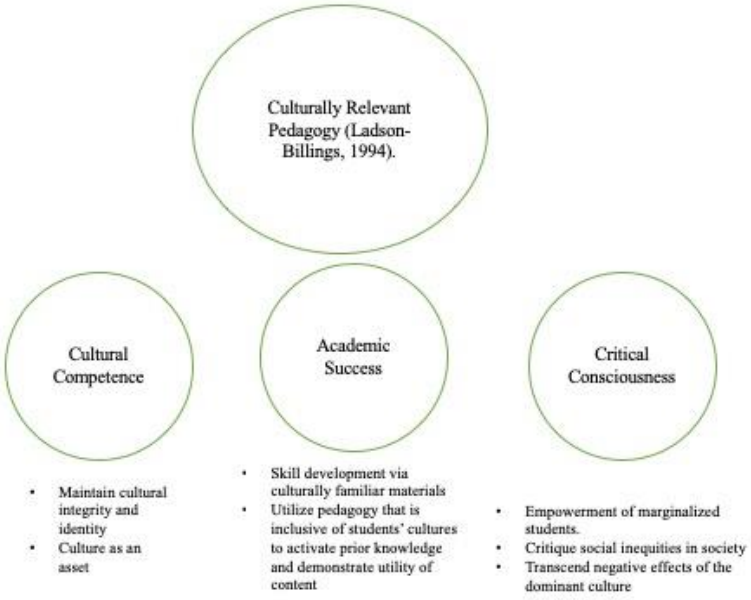

Figure 1. Tenets of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Ladson-Billings (1995a) uses her work to discuss the importance of using students' home language to promote cultural competence. Ladson-Billings primarily focused on "code-switching" (p. 161) where a student must switch between one's home language and the language students experience in school. LatinX students are often asked to code-switch in the classroom, with both language and cultural identity. In Ladson-Billing's work, "But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy" (1995b), she discusses the need to link school and culture, to bridge the code-

switching gap between home life and school life. Ladson-Billings states that there is a discontinuity between what students experience at home, and what they experience at school, both in cultural identity as well as language interactions, and suggests that students might be more likely to experience academic success if their home language is incorporated into the classroom more often (Ladson-Billings, 1995a).

Activation of prior knowledge. Vygotsky (1962) asserts that learners create knowledge by building upon, and referencing, their past experiences in an attempt to establish a current understanding of new information. Therefore, the more prior knowledge or relatability a student has about a topic, the easier acquisition of new information becomes. Hogan & Presley, (1997) states that when students cannot relate or build upon a past experience while learning, new knowledge is isolated. When students are able to connect to prior knowledge, this helps them engage in critical thinking while forming a deeper understanding. Students who are able to activate prior knowledge and see themselves in the learning find the learning tasks to be more familiar, less intimidating, and experience less difficulty when new ideas are presented within the learning task (Anderson & Pearson, 1984; Bell & Clark, 1998; Kozma, 1991; Rivet & Krajcik, 2008).

Affinity perspective. Gee (2000) coined the phrase "affinity perspective", where cultural identity is based on experiences, practices, and access to other people and traits in terms of shared culture. CRP requires an understanding that immigrant communities' cultural and experiential knowledge is valid, legitimate, and valuable. Elements of culture might include, but are not limited to: language, ethnicity, class, race, gender, or religion. Culture is also fluid and takes acknowledgement of one's cultural identity or identities in

a given context (Gee, 2000; Siddle Walker, 1999). According to Bruner (1996) humans construct meaning from learning based on their "cultural lenses".

Linguistically responsive teaching. "Schooling is primarily a linguistic process, and language serves as an often-unconscious means of evaluating and differentiating students" (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 2). Through language, students gain access to curriculum and are assessed for what they have learned. Linguistically responsive teaching (LRT) (Lucas & Villegas, 2010) seeks to prepare educators of English Language Learners (ELLs) by developing the skills necessary for educating linguistically diverse learners. When teachers show respect for and interest in students' home languages, they send a caring and welcoming message that is more likely to encourage their engagement in learning (Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990). The LRT framework involves seven central tenets (see Table 1): 1) sociolinguistic consciousness, 2) value for linguistic diversity, 3) inclinations to advocate for ELL students, 4) learning about ELL students' language backgrounds, experiences, and proficiencies, 5) identifying the language demands of classroom discourse and tasks, 6) knowing and applying key principles of second language learning, and 7) scaffolding instruction to promote ELL students' learning (Lucas & Villegas, 2010).

Table 1
Linguistically Responsive Teaching Framework

Sociolinguistic Consciousness	(1) Language and identity are interconnected. (2) Awareness of the sociopolitical dimensions of language use and language education.

Value for Linguistic Diversity	(1) Connection between language and identity. (2) Recognize impacts of attitudes regarding students' languages.
Inclinations to Advocate for ELL Students	(1) Actively working to improve one or more aspects of ELLs' educational experiences.
Learning about ELL Students' Language Backgrounds	(1) Help students make connections between their prior knowledge and experience-including linguistic knowledge-and new learning.
Identifying Language Demands of Classroom Discourse and Tasks	(1) Conduct basic linguistic analysis of oral and written texts
Knowing and Applying Principles of Second Language Learning	(1) To learn a second language, learners must have direct and frequent opportunities to interact with others. (2) Knowing differences between conversational proficiency and academic language and provide support for ELLs to complete tasks successfully. (3) Home language and culture plays a critical role in language acquisition.
Scaffolding Instruction to Promote ELL Students' Learning	(1) Value linguistic diversity. (2) Show respect for, and interest in, students' home language and culture.

Note. Compiled from "The missing piece in teacher education: The preparation of linguistically responsive teachers," by T. Lucas & A.M. Villegas, 2010. National Society for the Study of Education Yearbook, 109(2), p. 297-318.

A key piece of the LRT framework is making content accessible and understandable for students. One way this is achieved is by activating prior knowledge and making the content familiar, relevant, and accessible. Another way this is achieved is by showing value and respect to LatinX learners by engaging with, and showing interest in, their home language and culture.

Table 2
Research Theories and Study Alignment

Research Problem	Related Research Question	Theory Connection
1. The field needs more research on CRP in high school grade levels.	What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? Is there a measurable impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension and writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students?	Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) demands that students' cultural values and learning go hand in hand. Activation of prior knowledge (Vygotsky, 1962) states that when students are able to activate prior knowledge and see themselves in the learning find the learning tasks to be less intimidating and experience less difficulty. Linguistically Responsive Teaching (LRT) states that home language and culture play a critical role in successful second language acquisition and acquiring linguistic knowledge. Ladson-Billings (1994) developed CRP, which provides teachers with a model for best teaching practices for students of culturally and linguistically diverse populations. The various aspects of CRP should be continuously reformed and revised for unique populations to determine which pieces are most significant to specific learners.

2.	There is a need for more opportunities for LatinX students to engage with familiar curriculum when acquiring the L2.	What is the experience of culturally familiar curriculum for LatinX high school students? To what extent do LatinX high school students show preference?	Activation of prior knowledge (Vygotsky, 1962) asserts that learners create knowledge by referencing past experiences, or new knowledge will become isolated. LRT states that students must make connections between their prior knowledge and new learning. Affinity perspective maintains that culture is based on experiences, and that humans construct meaning from learning based on their cultural lenses (Gee, 2000).

Culturally relevant pedagogy seeks to view students' culture and identity as assets and strengths, rather than deficits. Researchers must continue to work towards a better understanding of how using CRP and the various aspects of CRP can make positive impacts for culturally and linguistically diverse populations. Specifically, researchers can work to discover how cultural relevance and familiarity can enhance student learning for LatinX populations when acquiring successful second language acquisition, and how cultural familiarity of text can affect reading and writing outcomes.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of utilizing culturally familiar text, as compared to culturally unfamiliar text, on reading comprehension and summary writing outcomes for secondary LatinX English Language Learners (ELL). This study sought to determine if there would be a statistically significant difference in reading and writing outcomes when students are given a culturally familiar text versus a culturally unfamiliar text. Culturally familiar curriculum is a large tenet of CRP, and this study aimed to measure the impact of this specific tenet, while taking student preference and voice into account.

To meet this purpose, two texts with accompanying comprehension and writing prompts were chosen and created. A previous study, Kelley, Siwatu, Tost, and Martinez (2015) conducted a similar study with goals of adding to the existing knowledge base of CRP techniques for linguistically and culturally diverse students. This study worked with seventh grade students, and provided a culturally familiar reading task, alongside a culturally unfamiliar reading task. The participants of this study were 83.7% ELL students, where Spanish was the first language being spoken at home. The purpose of this study, then, was to expand the current literature further by including students at the high school level.

Following Kelley et al. (2015), the researcher located two narrative selections identified fictional stories. The two passages were similar in word count, difficulty level, and reading ease, according to Lexile Framework for high school, as well as review of the Flesch Reading Ease. In an attempt to control for confounding variables, the two texts were nearly identical, except for the differences in cultural themes. For each of the two reading tasks, seven questions were based on reading comprehension of the passage, following the format of Kelley et al. (2015). Each question employed a multiple-choice format, with four options, of which only one answer was correct. The comprehension questions were designed to engage the reader in higher order thinking processes to answer questions that are not directly stated yet implied within the text. Students finished with an open-ended summary writing prompt.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students?
2. What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students?
3. What is the experience of culturally familiar curriculum for secondary LatinX students? To what extent do secondary LatinX students show preference?

Data Analysis

Upon completion of independent reading, comprehension questions, and summary writing responses, the researcher proposed to use an dependent samples *t* test to assess differences between tasks, in both reading comprehension and summary writing. Additionally, the researcher used qualitative reliability methods to rate the summary writing responses based on the WIDA rubric. Following independent work, the researcher conducted student interviews with semi-structured interview questions, where students were allowed to share perspectives, preferences, and feelings regarding the culturally familiar reading task, versus the culturally unfamiliar task. The researcher audio recorded the student interviews but also took notes during the session. Following, the researcher transcribed student interviews and generated preliminary codes. After the researcher uploaded transcripts using NVivo software and pulled specific quotes to generate initial themes, which were then boiled down to 2-3 larger themes. The researcher then coded and generated main themes using a phenomenological lens, following Creswell (2015) for creation of the phenomenological write up to better understand the lived experiences of high school LatinX ELL students.

Strengths and Limitations

One strength of this study was that there is little research, to date, that measures the impact of CRP strategies for LatinX ELL students. Further, this study adds to the existing knowledge base by conducting research with high school students. Therefore, this study is unique but benefits the field of CRP for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

CRP is a well-researched strategy, that is widely utilized and understood across curriculums. However, this study measured the impact of a CRP strategy and provided conclusive evidence for its effectiveness.

A limitation of this study was the small sample size. The researcher hoped to obtain a sample size of around 50-60 students but was aware that this will be a much smaller sample size than what will be needed to generate a calculable effect size. Because of the relatively small sample size, student responses in the interviews became an essential contribution to the study. Generating themes based on student responses was increasingly important, both to provide students with a voice for their experiences, but also to help contribute to the existing body of literature.

Another limitation of this study is that the study excluded non LatinX students. Although findings from this study may support future research with other culturally and linguistically diverse populations. The findings of this study will hopefully inform changes that could be transferrable to other demographics.

Summary

LatinX's are considered the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States. There are approximately 51.9 million LatinX residents in the U.S. (Motel & Patten, 2013)

and approximately 12.4 million are enrolled in K-12 schools within the US. These numbers account for one-quarter (23.9%) of the nation's public-school enrollment (Fry & Lopez, 2012). Additionally, LatinX students report that they feel a lack of value for the culture, background, and language in US classrooms. Prior research on LatinX students has indicated that many schools "fracture[s] students' cultural and ethnic identities," and creates a "subtractive schooling" environment for LatinX immigrant students, forcing them to leave their prior experiences at the door before entering the classroom (Valenzuela, 1999, p. 5). CRP aims to view students' cultural knowledges, backgrounds, experiences as assets to build upon. There is a need for a better understanding of which CRP strategies generate the largest impacts, starting with culturally familiar texts, resources, and curriculum.

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of utilizing culturally familiar text, as compared to culturally unfamiliar text, on reading comprehension and summary writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students. This study sought to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in reading and writing outcomes when students are given a culturally familiar text versus a culturally unfamiliar text. Following the lead of Kelley et al., it was the goal of the researcher to add to the existing knowledge base regarding CRP strategies, while giving voices to LatinX students. Results of this study will help inform teacher preparation programs, and even current educators of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Results will contribute to a richer understanding of student culture and the assets specific cultures bring to the classroom.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

In order to answer the research questions regarding how to utilize culturally relevant passages to improve reading comprehension, the researcher systematically reviewed the literature based on student outcomes, use of Ladson-Billings' theoretical framework for CRP, and implementation in K-12 schools. To better understand the current literature, this chapter discusses the background of CRP, the evolution of CRP, and discussion of current literature. The researcher also described the methods for the literature review. This was followed by the results of the search and a discussion of the findings.

Background

There is an increasing number of students attending United States schools from a wide array of diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds (He, Vetter, & Fairbanks, 2014). Specifically, the population of students who identify as being LatinX increases every year. LatinXs are considered the fastest growing ethnic group in the United States, and there are over 51 million LatinX residents in America, with approximately 12.4 million enrolled in K-12 public school (Motel & Patten, 2013). He et al (2014), argue that effective practice now requires a wide understanding of learners' cultural lives and more global and contextualized perspectives. These perspectives should be aimed not only at students' cultural lives within the United States, but also the

increasing transcultural identities they maintain. Students and teachers are operating within a time when we should be capitalizing on the rich diversity present in each classroom, while offering engaging curriculum to a variety of perspectives.

Educational theorist Gloria Ladson-Billings has spent her career arguing for the need for culturally relevant teaching practices in and across education, and teacher preparation programs. In her 1995 publication, “But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy”, Ladson-Billings outlines her definition of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP). Billings has defined culturally relevant teaching as a pedagogy of opposition (1992c), not unlike critical pedagogy, but CRP is specifically committed to collective, not merely individual, empowerment. Culturally relevant pedagogy, as defined by Ladson-Billings: Culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria or propositions: (a) students must develop and/or maintain academic success (b) instruction includes constructs cultural competence; and (c) instruction targets critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Evolution of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Prior attempts to address achievement disparities for marginalized youth were rooted in deficit orientations. Educational reforms such as Johnson’s War on Poverty provided funding for Title 1 programs, which aimed to address the culture of inherently poor youth, most of whom were students of color. Though challenged as soon as they appeared, deficit orientations remain present in theory and practices believed to address achievement disparities (Lopez, 2017). While challenging deficiency perspectives, Gándara (2015) suggested that when teachers cast Latino students as bearers of valuable

assets, such as language and cultural knowledge, educators may find that they have as much or more to offer as students.

In an effort to challenge deficit orientations, eventually *difference orientations* was birthed as a way to consider dissimilarities between school cultures and marginalized students. From this work grew *culturally appropriate* (Au & Jordan, 1981), *culturally congruent* (Au & Mason, 1983), *culturally compatible* (Erickson & Mohatt, 1982), *culturally responsive education* (Cazden & Leggett, 1981), equity pedagogy (Banks, 1993), culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b), culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000, 2010). Despite the numerous conceptions such as culturally appropriate, congruent, responsive, and more, Gay 2010 asserts that while these practices are known by name different names, the definitions are virtually identical. Gay (2010) states the importance of making classroom instruction consistent with a variety of cultural norms and orientations, and more consistent for ethnically diverse students.

Villegas & Lucas (2002), describe that cultural knowledge aligns and represents the constructivist views of learning, where learners are given the opportunity to use their prior understanding, knowledge, and believes to make sense and shape new input. Asset-based pedagogy (ABP) describes many ways to access students' cultural knowledge, which includes, but is not limited to, incorporating students' home and cultural experiences into the classroom environment and instruction. Doing this allows students to make connections between language used in their community and language used in academia.

Teacher education programs throughout the nation have coupled their efforts at reform with revised programs committed to social justice and equity. Thus, their focus has become the preparation of prospective teachers in ways that support equitable and just educational experiences for all students (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Three of the terms employed by studies on cultural mismatch between school and home—culturally appropriate, culturally congruent, and culturally compatible—seem to connote accommodation of student culture to mainstream culture. Only the term culturally responsive appears to refer to a more dynamic or synergistic relationship between home/community culture and school culture (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Ladson-Billings poses the following question which implores educators to consider the importance of their work: Billings asks how pedagogy can promote student success that engages larger social structural issues in a critical way? Billings also implores researchers to consider how they recognize pedagogy in action, and what potential implications for teacher preparation generated and informed by this pedagogy could be (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Previous Relevant Literature Reviews

Two systematic reviews of literature discuss the relevant literature of culturally relevant pedagogy on student level academic outcomes (Benneville & Li, 2018; Meister, Zimmer, & Wright, 2017). Benneville & Li (2018) reported on culturally relevant pedagogy interventions that were designed specifically for East/Southeast Asian English Language Learners, while Meister, Zimmer, & Wright (2017) report on CRP outcomes within journals specifically geared toward classroom teachers. Both reviews are meaningful yet have different aims.

Benneville & Li identified peer-reviewed studies, as well as dissertations, published between 2001 and 2016; authors included both quantitative and qualitative studies, as long as studies were reporting on a sample that came entirely from East and/or Southwest Asian. Studies involved in this systematic review included participants enrolled in a school within Asia, where English was not the primary language being used. Benneville & Li excluded studies that took place outside of a school environment, and excluded studies where participants were identified as having a learning disability. Researchers found a total of seven studies. All studies included were conducted in elementary grades (K-5) and found the most common themes for success with East/Southeast Asian ELLs were culturally relevant instruction, family involvement, and encouragement of second language development, which were similar to the themes of CRP discussed within American literature. The authors noted the need for more research to identify how culturally relevant teaching practices impact student learning.

Meister, Zimmer, and Wright (2017) conducted a systematic review of culturally relevant teaching practices, with a social justice lens. Rather than databases, authors of this review chose to comb widely circulated practitioner journals, citing that these chosen journals were more accessible to classroom teachers than a database. More specifically, they aimed their review towards one elementary journal, one middle-school journal, and one high school journal per content area. Content area is listed as English/Language Arts, History/Social Studies, Math, and Science. The researcher used EBSCO database to search archives of these journals, ranging back from the past 15 years. Articles were included if they sought to examine the content and quality of recommendations for

classroom practice, and included the search terms *social justice, critical pedagogy, critical literacy, and emancipatory pedagogy*.

The researcher identified 68 articles throughout the search and were able to generate many themes and recommendations for practice, as well as gaps in practitioner literature. Of these themes, *critical literacy* occurred most often in the review, followed closely by the term *social justice*. Recommendations for practice were broke down into four subgroups. First, *Challenges of Current Ideology*, which included topics of inequality, equitable systems and community engagement. Second, *Culturally Relevant Resources*, which included a call for a variety of texts representing marginalized populations. Third, *Drawing on Individual Strengths*, which incorporates home culture and experiences, choice, and recognition of culture. Fourth, *Learning Environment,* which included community engagement, discussions, mutual collaboration, and lessons centered around marginalized populations. Finally, Meister, Zimmer, and Wright (2017) concluded by stating that it is difficult for teachers to incorporate social justice and culturally relevant practices, and there is a need for more research on the challenging nature of these interventions.

Systematic reviews by Benneville & Li (2018); Meister, Zimmer, & Wright (2017) present similar findings. Both reviews cited results that indicate interventions that consider a student's cultural learning style is effective in successful second language acquisition. Additionally, one of the largest takeaways from Benneville & Li (2018) are findings that claim culturally familiar themes and texts were found to be more effective than culturally unfamiliar themes and texts, which was also one of the resulting themes from the Meister, Zimmer, & Wright (2017) review. Both studies focused on K-12

settings, during a typically occurring school day, while also excluding after school programs and participants identified as having a learning disability. Both studies include similar key terms, and both studies highlighted the need for more research and understanding in the areas of culturally relevant pedagogy, and both studies concluded by stating there was a need for more research for student outcomes, as well as teaching practices.

The present synthesis differed from the previous reviews. First, this review covered a different database than previously used, with a larger timeframe than the other reviews. Second, this review focused on United States based studies with quantitative student academic outcomes, while previous reviews included studies with qualitative research designs. Third, previous reviews included dissertations, this review included peer-reviewed articles only in an attempt to define study quality ratings as determined by WWC Group Design and Single-Case Design Standards (IES, 2017). Finally, this review focused solely on research conducted in K-12 settings, while Meister, Zimmer, & Wright (2017) chose to focus on practitioner-based articles in K-12 settings, and Benneville & Li (2018) focused on research conducted in a K-5 setting. Overall, each previously identified systematic review, as well as the current systematic review can agree that there is a need for more research in the areas of culturally relevant pedagogy and the impact these interventions have on student level academic outcomes.

To date, there are zero systematic reviews in circulation that list a calculable effect size of CRP when used as an intervention for student academic outcomes. The previously discussed reviews, Benneville & Li (2018); Meister, Zimmer, & Wright (2017), describe themes that emerge from the articles identified through their inclusion

criteria, and state a need for more research in this area. In Benneville & Li (2018), authors identify studies that contain measurable student academic outcomes, but later report that small sample sizes prohibited them from being able to calculate an effect size. To date, no study has conducted a single-case design or group design systematic review that describes the effects of CRP interventions on student academic outcomes.

Study Purpose and Research Questions

This review sought to better understand the impact of culturally relevant pedagogy on student academic outcomes. Research shows that there are many positive outcomes for culturally relevant pedagogical approaches. Brenner (1991), argued that culturally relevant instruction goes beyond simply diversifying the role models represented in traditional texts by acknowledging the value of the knowledge base that children bring with them to school. In order to go beyond what children already know, one of the most important pieces of culturally relevant pedagogy is to take advantage of children's current knowledge base by activating prior cultural knowledge and use this as a vehicle for developing more meaningful curriculum in areas that children truly care about (Brenner, 1991). When considering care in the classroom, student-teacher relationships, asset-based pedagogy, funds of knowledge, culturally familiar instruction, culturally aligned resources, classroom community, family engagement, equitable instruction, culturally rigorous, and student-centered curriculum, it was important to consider which facets of culturally relevant pedagogy can help students become the most successful versions of themselves academically.

In the current systematic review of literature, researchers had two aims. First, researchers aimed to identify culturally relevant pedagogy used as an intervention for

student level academic outcomes. The focus of this literature review was to identify studies located in K-12 settings that utilized a definition of culturally relevant pedagogy as a type of intervention that resulted in student level academic success in any core subject. Second, researchers set out to identify the type of culturally relevant practice being used, how it was defined, and the effects of the interventions on the student academic outcomes.

In order to investigate the use of culturally relevant pedagogical practices as interventions, researchers accepted group design studies whose findings allowed for a calculable effect size for students in the K-12 setting, and also accepted single-case design studies, which we evaluated separately from the group design studies according to the WWC determinants for singe-case design research.

Finally, researchers calculated effect sizes for (a) reading outcomes by reading dimensions (e.g., comprehension, word recognition, story retell), (b) classroom relationships, (c) family collaboration, and (d) critical thinking skills in an attempt to identify which interventions yielded the largest effect size for students. To date, this research team was unaware of any systematic review using these methodological approaches to answer the following research question: What is the effect of culturally relevant teaching approaches on student level quantitative outcomes?

Methods

Formulating the review aims. The goal of this review was to identify studies that implemented a culturally relevant teaching practice, which contained one or more of the tenets of culturally relevant pedagogy, as outlined by Ladson-Billings. Though the team identified many studies, there were little that discussed the impact of using CRP as

an intervention. The research team sought to identify studies that contained CRP as an intervention, which led to measurable student level academic outcome. Rather than focusing on participant experiences, while important, this review sought to identify quantitative student academic outcomes because we wanted a measurable response to the intervention that could potentially be generalizable to a larger population.

To identify relevant articles, the research team first determined inclusion and exclusion criteria, based on importance of factors identified during the literature review.

Defining Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

All studies met the following inclusion criteria:

1. Students were in grades K-12 at a United States based school.
2. Studies implemented a broad definition of culturally relevant teaching practice (e.g., culturally familiar texts, community engagement, activation of prior knowledge. Ladson-Billings, 1995).
3. Articles reported student level academic outcomes (e.g., improvements in literacy scores, improvement in math quizzes at the classroom level).
4. Studies occurred during typical academic year (not summer school or after school programs).
5. Studies implemented a randomized controlled trial, quasi-experimental, two-treatment without a comparison condition, or a single-case design study.
6. Studies were published in a peer-reviewed journal from Jan 1, 1998 through May 1, 2019.

Exclusion Criteria

Because the below environments do not represent a typically occurring school day with a general education population of students with the constraints and limitations of a regular class day, studies were excluded if they were conducted in the following environments: Online learning (virtual classrooms, online communities, electronic curriculums), or after school programs.

Electronic database search. First, the researchers conducted an electronic search of the database ERIC using the following combination search terms: (*"culturally relevant"* or *"multicultural" or "culturally responsive"* or *"social justice"* or *"critical race theory"* or *"cultural competence"* or *"critical consciousness") and* (*student)* and (*Instruct* or curriculum* or pedagogy).*

The initial search of the electronic database generated 5, 274 articles meeting the search criteria. 5,199 articles were excluded on the abstract review level. A text review excluded 66 articles based on the following criteria: action research projects, practitioner or teacher led projects (n=2). These were excluded because they did not contain a comparison condition. Studies were excluded if they did not contain student academic outcome (n=29), did not contain a broad definition of culturally relevant pedagogy as an intervention (e.g., culturally familiar texts, culturally relevant material; n=4), studies were based during after school or summer programs (n=3) did not contain an intervention occurring in a K-12 setting (n=1) qualitative methodology (n=27). Nine articles met the inclusion criteria (Bell & Clark, 1998; Bui & Fagan, 2013; Kelly, Siwatu, Tost, Martinez, 2011; Lo, Correa, Anderson, 2015; Luter, Mitchell, Taylor, 2017; Powell, Cantrell, Corell, 2016; Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010; Riskowski & Olbricht, 2010; Shumate,

Campbell-Whatley, Lo, 2012). The electronic database search was concluded on September 1, 2019.

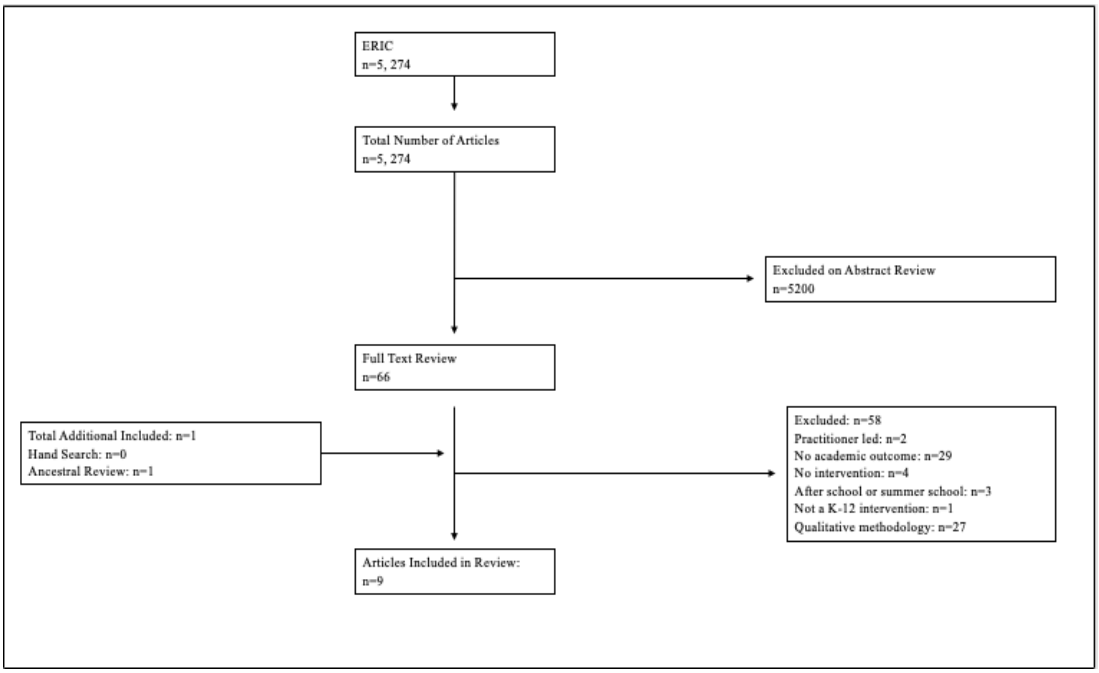

Figure 2. Screening and Eligibility Flowchart

Hand search and ancestral review

Next, the research team reviewed the journals from which these studies were published, from 2012-2018: *Preventing School Failure*, *Journal of Black Psychology, Educational Psychology in Practice, Journal of Positive Behavior Interventions, Teachers College Record, Journal of Education Sciences*, *The Urban Review, Multicultural Education Journal, Exceptionality: A Special Education Journal.*

Finally, the research team searched the reference section of all articles that met inclusion criteria to ensure the search encompassed all articles published within our parameters. Researchers hand searched the entire reference section, using our predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria. One study was identified during the ancestral search (Bell & Clark, 1998).

Coding Procedures

All members received article coding training, led by first author. After members were able to complete the search with 100% accuracy, they were directed to begin the search independently. Members were given two weeks to conduct the initial search and were directed to be as inclusive as possible. All members of the team were told to exclude on title alone. Following, members sent zip files to the team containing all articles.

Next, all coders were trained by the first author. The team did a few practice rounds discussing the broad definition of CRP, as outlined by Ladson-Billings, and then practiced coding an article on their own. Once a reliability score of 80% was maintained, members were directed to code the remaining articles independently. All articles were then coded independently by the first author, as well as one other member of the team. Articles were coded for study design characteristics, participants, study quality, intervention, and study outcomes. Any coding discrepancies were resolved between the first author and the coder.

Study Quality Evaluation

Study quality was determined using the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) study quality ratings for randomized controlled trial (RCT) and quasi-experiment (QED). According to the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), studies are eligible for three possible ratings: *Meets WWC Group Design without Reservation*, *Meets WWC Group Design Standards with Reservations*, and *Does Not Meet WWC Group Design Standards*. RCT's can receive the highest WWC rating if study participants are assigned randomly to or more groups, and differential attrition was not present. QED studies can receive a

WWC rating no higher than Meets WWC Group Design Standards with Reservations as long as they demonstrate baseline equivalence. Studies that are eligible to meet the lowest rating, *Does Not Meet WWC Group Design Standards* if students were randomized or not randomized, differential attrition was present, and baseline equivalence was not established.

From these nine studies, two did not report standard deviations or group means, and we were therefore unable to calculate effect sizes. Authors of these studies were queried, but we received no response. Of the remaining seven studies, two were single-case design studies and followed a separate study quality evaluation rubric.

Single-case design studies (SCD) are eligible to meet the following three ratings: *Meets WWC Pilot Single-Case Design Standards without Reservations*, *Meets WWC Pilot Single-Case Design Standards with Reservations*, or *Does Not Meet WWC Pilot Single-Case Design Standards.* In order to be eligible to meet evaluation standards, SCD studies must contain an independent variable that is systematically manipulated, the outcome variable must be measure systematically over time by more than one assessor, there must be inter-assessor agreement in each phase and must meet minimal thresholds. Finally, studies must include at least three attempts to demonstrate an intervention effect at three different points. For more thorough explanations and examples on systematic measurement, how baseline equivalence was established, and differential attrition see the What Works Clearinghouse Standards Handbook Version 4.0 (IES, 2017).

Results

Definitions of CRP. Across the nine studies, a total of 867 students participated. Of these students, 569 were in grades 1st-4th. 243 students were in grades 5-8, and 45

students were in grades 9-12. Of these children who reported demographics, 141 students identified as African American. 242 students identified as Latino/Hispanic. 14 students identified as Asian. 67 students identified as Caucasian. 15 students identified as Multiracial or Other. All studies used a definition of culturally responsive pedagogy to guide their research questions and define the interventions.

Outcome Measures

Table 4 provides the study characteristics for the nine studies identified within this systematic review of literature. Two studies were Single Group Designs (Luter et al., 2017; Riskowski & Olbricht, 2010). Two studies were Single Case Design (Campbell-Whatley & Lo, 2012; Lo, Correa, & Anderson, 2015). One study was Quasi-Experimental Design (Bui & Fagan, 2013). One study was Multiple Treatment Design (Bell & Clark, 1998). Two studies were Mixed Methods (Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010; Powell, Cantell, Malo-Juvera, Correll, 2016), where authors chose to look at the quantitative strand only. One study was Counterbalance Within Subjects Design (Kelley, Siwatu, Tost, Martinez, 2015).

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy as an Intervention

All nine studies were based in a K-12 setting. Each of the included studies delivered a broad definition of culturally relevant pedagogy as an intervention aimed to improve academic achievement for student level outcomes. Finally, all nine studies included a population of students from diverse backgrounds.

Table 3
Theoretical frameworks of culturally relevant pedagogy

Theory/ Framework Overview(s)	Description	
Sociocultural Theory and Culturally Responsive Teaching, where students are given reading material that conveys experiences congruent to the experiences of diverse students (Ladson-Billings, 2001).	Culturally aligned resources and instruction for reading comprehension and story retell.	Bell & Clark (1998)
Culturally Responsive Teaching is defined as using cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters relevant and effective (Gay, 2000).	Culturally aligned resources and instruction for word recognition, reading comprehension, and story retell.	Bui & Fagan (2013)
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (Gay 2002), Constructivist Theory (Vygotsky, 1986), Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1997).	Culturally aligned resources and instruction for work recognition and reading comprehension.	Kelley et al. (2015)
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspective of diverse students as conduits for effective teaching and situating academic knowledge within lived experiences and frames of reference of students (Gay, 2002).	Computer-assisted instruction for English Language Proficiency and verbal interactions.	Lo et al. (2015)
Critical Consciousness and the Community as Classroom (Taylor & Glynn, 2010).	Community outreach project for increased classroom grades.	Luter et al. (2017)
Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, defined as practices that connect learning to the cultural knowledge and experiences of students that draws on students' cultural and linguistic strengths	Culturally responsive instruction observation protocol (CRIOP) for classroom relationships, family collaboration, lesson achievement, and reading and math assessments.	Powell et al. (2016)

and frames of references (Ladson-Billings, 1994).		
Critical Race Theory (CRT), which focuses on social construction of race, racism, and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 1995).	Culturally aligned resources and instruction for history lesson achievement.	Sampson & Wade (2010)
Transformative Learning and Social Constructivist Theory (Vygotsky, 1986), which develops cultural awareness and consideration using critical analysis and self-reflection.	Culturally aligned resources and instruction for critical thinking skills.	Riskowski & Olbricht (2010)
Culturally Responsive Teaching, where teachers use cultural contributions in transforming student lives and the lives of their families and communities by making education relevant and meaningful and valid to cultural and language differences (Ladson-Billings, 2001).	Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) for math content quiz improvement.	Shumate et al. (2012)

Grades 1-4. Two studies were based in Grades 1-4 settings, where students received a culturally relevant teaching intervention (Bell & Clark, 1998; Powell, Cantrell, Malo-Juvera, Correll, 2016). Bell & Clark, 1998, delivered culturally aligned resources and instruction aimed at improving reading recall and reading comprehension. This study was a multiple treatment group design, where a female experimenter delivered instruction one on one, and each student received the intervention once. Powell, Cantrell, Malo-Juvera, Correll, 2016, also delivered the culturally relevant teaching intervention via teachers, after the teachers had been trained on culturally relevant teaching techniques. This was a mixed methods study design, where one group received a high dosage of instruction, while another group received a low dosage of instruction. The intervention was given over 2.5 hours.

Grades 4-8. Six studies were based in grades 4-8, where students received a culturally relevant teaching intervention (Luter et al., 2017, Bui & Fagan, 2013; Kelley, Siwatu, Tost, Martinez, 2015; Lo, Correa, Anderson, 2015; Riskowski & Olbricht, 2010; Shumate, Campbell-Whatley & Lo, 2012). Luter et al, 2017, was a single group design study, where students in grades 4-8 participated in a Community As Classroom intervention, aimed at community engagement, outreach, and project-based learning. Enrollment in this program lasted an academic year, which aimed to yield improved scores on the New York State Assessment, among other things. Bui & Fagan, 2013, was a quasi-experimental design which explored reading comprehension improvement through culturally aligned resources and instruction for 5th grade students. Students received 400 minutes of the intervention during this study, which sought to improve reading comprehension. Kelley-Siwatu, Tost, Martinez, 2015, was a counterbalanced within subjects deign, which looked to improve reading recall and reading comprehension for students in 7th grade. This study administered the intervention twice, for class sessions that lasted 20-25 minutes long. Riskowski & Olbricht, 2010, was a single group design study for students in grades 6-8. Students received the intervention, which included culturally aligned resources for eight consecutive class periods. This study aimed to improve critical thinking skills within a math classroom. Shumate, Campbell-Whatley, Lo, 2012, was a single case design study, which delivered a Sheltered Instruction (SIOP) intervention, which is inclusive of culturally relevant teaching techniques. This intervention was aimed to improve achievement on math quizzes. Students received five doses of the intervention, which lasted 55-60 minutes each.

Grades 9-12. There was only one study conducted at the secondary level (Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010). Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010, was a mixed methods study design, which delivered culturally aligned resources and instruction to high school students in a mixed level American History class. The intervention was designed to elicit higher achievement and scores on end of lesson checks and end of lesson assessments. Students received the intervention during six lessons, which occurred once per week.

Table 4
Summary of Included Research

Study	Study Design	Grade	Treatment	Sample Size	Duration	Outcomes	Findings
Bell & Clark (1995)	Multiple Treatment	1-4	Culturally aligned resources and instruction	N= 109	3 classes (hours not reported)	Reading Comprehension and Story Retell	Improvements in recall. Improvements in reading comprehension. g
Bui & Fagan (2013)	QED	5th	Culturally aligned resources and instruction	N= 49	6.6 hours	Word recognition Reading comprehension Story Retell	*g* =0.06 *g*= 0.92 *g* =0.71
Kelly et al. (2015)	Multiple Treatment	7th	Culturally aligned resources and instruction	N=132	.75-.90 hours	Story Retell Reading comprehension	*g*= 0.80 *g*= 0.18
Lo et al (2015)	SCD	4-5th	Computer-Assisted	N=4	2.15 hours	English proficiency via verbal interactions	Mixed across phases and participants. g
Luter et al (2017)	Multiple Treatment	4-5th	Community Outreach	N=665	1 academic year (hours not reported)	Increased grades and scores	Improvements in attendance, Improvements in discipline, Fewer Tardis, Fewer Suspensions, Increase in grades, Increase in ELA and Science Standardized Test scores. g

Powell at al. (2016)	QED	K-5th	CRIOP	N=27	2.5 hours	Classroom relationships Family collaboration Assessments (reading and math) Curriculum	*g*=0.19 *g*=0.03 *g*=0.25 *g*=0.17 *g*=0.37
Sampson & Wade (2010)	QED	9=12th	Culturally aligned resources and instruction	N=45	6 classes (hours not reported)	Lesson achievement	Increase quiz scores, increase in student critical inquiry. g
Riskowski & Olbricht	Single Group Design	6-8th	Culturally aligned resources and instruction	N=150	8 classes (hours not reported)	Critical thinking skills	*g*=0.91
Shumate et al (2012)	SCD	8th	SIOP	N=5	5 hours	Content quiz improvement	Higher in intervention than baseline. g

Conclusions

Findings suggested that culturally relevant teaching approaches positively impacted student academic outcomes in history, mathematics, reading recall, and reading comprehension. Findings also suggested that culturally relevant teaching approaches help to develop students' critical thinking skill, critical inquiry skills, and critical consciousness. Our findings also implied benefits in increased attendance and fewer disciplinary referrals, as well. Although these findings are primarily for students within grades 4-8, studies have also suggested that culturally relevant teaching approaches benefit students in the lower elementary grades, as well as the upper secondary grades.

Future Research Direction

Future research is needed to provide more information on impacts for upper secondary grades, specifically in the areas or reading comprehension, reading recall, and writing. There is a need for more attention to student level outcomes, as our 20-year search yielded only nine studies that report quantitative student level outcomes. There are many studies that discuss student voice, feelings, and education of the holistic child, but there are very few studies that report on measurable outcomes for student achievement, which suggests a need for further research specifically in this area. While there are included studies for students that identify as non-native English speakers, there is only one study in circulation that investigates the impacts of CRP practices on ELL students. Additionally, there is an express need for research on CRP at the secondary level. Only one study in our entire 20-year search focused on CRP as an intervention for quantitative student level outcomes at the secondary level.

Conclusions

Findings suggest that culturally relevant teaching approaches positively impact student academic outcomes in reading recall, reading comprehension, and writing. Our findings also imply benefits in increased attendance and fewer disciplinary referrals, as well. There is a need for more research specifically on English Language Learners, but more specifically there is a need for more research in the upper secondary grades.

Chapter Three: Methods

Overview

The cultural composition of the United States continues to grow each year. The LatinX population is considered the fastest growing ethnic group in the US. As of 2017, there were approximately 367, 500 ELL students enrolled in public high schools within the US (NCES, 2017). According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), reading scale non-ELL elementary and secondary students scored higher than their ELL peers' scores. This disparity in outcomes is commonly referred to as the achievement gap and is evidenced by a gap in secondary non-ELL students outperforming their ELL peers in NAEP reading outcomes by 43 points (NCES, 2017). Through a 20-year systematic review of existing literature, there was only one study identified that discussed a measurable impact for CRP interventions for ELL students at the high school level, yet there appears to be a need for more research in this area.

This study sought to determine the impact of utilizing a culturally familiar text, as compared to a culturally unfamiliar text, on reading comprehension and summary writing outcomes for secondary LatinX English Language Learners (ELL). This study sought to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in reading and writing outcomes when students are given a culturally familiar text versus a culturally unfamiliar text. Culturally familiar curriculum is a large tenet of CRP, and this study aimed to

measure the impact of this specific tenet, while taking student preference and voice into account through a phenomenological qualitative approach.

To meet this purpose, two texts with accompanying comprehension and writing prompts were utilized. The study was an expansion and replication of Kelley, Siwatu, Tost, and Martinez (2015), a similar study with the aim of adding to the existing knowledge base of CRP techniques for linguistically and culturally diverse students. Kelley et al. (2015) worked with seventh grade students, and provided a culturally familiar reading task, alongside a culturally unfamiliar reading task. In Kelley et al. (2015) the participants in the study were 83.7% ELL students, where Spanish was the first language being spoken at home. To expand Kelley et al. (2015), the purpose of this study was to add to the existing literature, while offering interventions for high school educators of ELL students.

Following the procedures demonstrated by Kelley et al. (2015), the researcher located two narrative selections defined as fictional. The two passages were similar in word count, difficulty level, and reading ease, according to Lexile Framework for high school, as well as review of the Flesch Reading Ease. The primary variation between the two texts were the differences in cultural themes. For each of the two reading tasks, seven questions were based on reading comprehension of the passage, following the procedural format of Kelley et al (2015). Each question employed a multiple-choice format, with four options, of which only one answer was correct. The comprehension questions were designed to engage the reader in higher order thinking processes to answer questions that are not directly stated yet implied within the text. Students finished with an open-ended

summary writing prompt, followed by random selection of participants for semi-structured interviews.

Participants

Recruitment procedures. In order to recruit schools to participate in this study, the researcher used the Department of Education's School Dashboard. From there, the researcher was able to filter by English Language Learners specifically at the high school level and identified many schools that might be a potential fit for the proposed study. Following, the researcher sent a recruitment letter to each identified high schools (see Appendix A). The letter included a brief description of the research problems, the study purpose, study methodology, and proposed timeline for data collection. The selection criteria for participation in the study included: (a) 9th-10th grade students enrolled in an ESL classroom, (b) students who identify as native Spanish speakers or speak Spanish at home, and (c) students must be identified as Limited English Proficiency (LEP).

The systematic review, discussed in chapter two, yielded nine studies from 1998-2019. From these nine studies, two did not report standard deviations or group means, and we were therefore unable to calculate effect sizes. Authors of these studies were queried, but we received no response. Of the remaining seven studies, two were single-case design studies and followed a separate study quality evaluation rubric. Of the remaining studies, the researcher was able to calculate the average reported effect size, which is g=.40 (Kelley et al., 2015; Lo et al., 2015; Powell et al., 2016; Riskowski & Olbricht, 2010). A power analysis in statistical software package G power reported that I needed a minimum of 58 participants in order to obtain an effect size of g=.40.

School Site

Recruitment for schools was interrupted due to COVID-19. Fortunately, in March, a school site in Texas, who had already committed to distance learning for the remainder of the school year agreed to participate through their online learning management system, Canvas. Following IRB approval, the diverse school in Texas agreed to participate, and the researcher was able to work directly with the lead ESL teacher, Ms. Peabody (a pseudonym) to negotiate schedules and timelines for data collection.

Selection of Participants

This study utilized a purposeful sampling method, where the target sample consisted of ELL students who were native Spanish speakers enrolled in a public high school in the South United States. Per the Department of Education, an ELL is a defined as a student who is linguistically diverse, and who is identified as having a level of English language proficiency that requires language support to achieve standards in grade-level content in English (Colorado Department of Education, 2019). For the current study, all ELL students fit the Department of Education definition. All students were native Spanish speakers who were viewed as developing bilingual students. Students spoke Spanish in their homes. The range of their listening, speaking, reading, and writing abilities is further discussed in in Chapter 4.

Eligibility for inclusion in this study was decided starting with a home language survey, followed by an initial English Language Proficiency Assessment called the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS) and Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment Standards Placement Test. Students were classified based on

scores obtained during the TELPAS, and are reassessed and reclassified each year (NAEP, 2019). Eligible participants were classified as ELL students, who identified as being native Spanish speakers. After meeting with teachers to determine eligibility, 75 students were eligible to participate. Students and parents gave consent to participate in the study, which provided the researcher with 62 total participants, and then students were randomly assigned to the culturally familiar (CF) versus culturally unfamiliar (CUF) task. The school site currently utilizes an ELL pull out program, where students attend all general education classes, and come to the ELL classroom during their elective period. Students are assigned to ELL 1-4 based on their proficiency level, as determined by their TELPAS score each year. The curriculum is decided each year based on the needs of the students enrolled in the classroom, yet the teacher has workbooks and textbooks available for the students designed by Pearson. Students are classified based on their proficiency one they are enrolled in the district, and they are kept in the ELL pull out program until they pass the STAAR tests for both 9th and 10th grade ELAR.

Research Design Overview

The study employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods design. In an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, data is collected over two different phases, occurring at different times: quantitative, followed by qualitative (Creswell et al. 2003). Priority was given to the quantitative strand, while qualitative data was collected in the second strand to help explain, or elaborate on, the quantitative data that has been collected. The use of mixed methods was appropriate for this study, as combing both the quantitative and qualitative data resulted in a more comprehensive understanding and explanation of the research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017). In the explanatory

sequential design, priority was given to the quantitative strand, with counterbalancing (Figure 4). The qualitative strand, which provided a richer understanding of the quantitative data collected, was achieved through variation purposeful sampling of students who previously agreed to participate in the general study. Step one was to implement the quantitative strand, followed by analysis of the quantitative data. Step two was to implement the qualitative strand for the CF group, followed by analysis. Step three was to interpret the connected results of all data collected. The point of interface occurred after the quantitative data was collected, followed by student semi-structured interviews for the final strand.

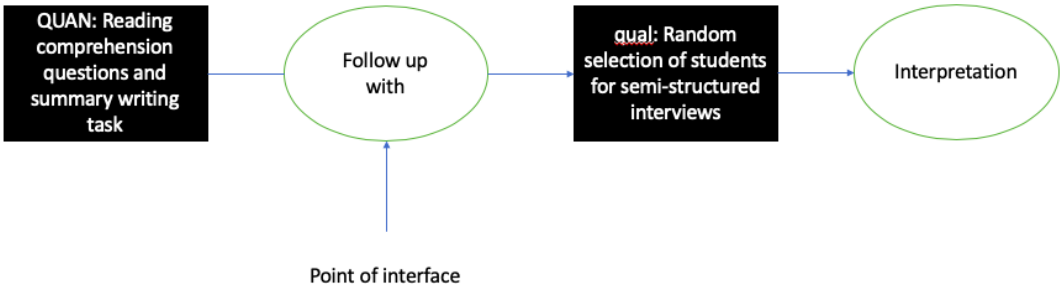

Fig. 3. Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Design Sequence

Quantitative. Relative priority was given to the quantitative strand, meaning this strand occurred first. Students (*n*=62) were first randomly assigned to receive the CF task first (*n*=31), or the CUF task first (*n*=31) to counterbalance which passage was read first or second in an attempt to control for possible confound of order effects. Students assigned to receive the CF task first were given a CF passage, followed by associated multiple choice questions and summary writing prompt, based on the given reading passage. Students assigned to receive the CF task first then received the CUF passage,

followed by associated multiple choice questions and a summary writing prompt, based on the given passage. Students assigned to receive the CUF task first then received the CUF passage, followed by associated multiple choice questions and a summary writing prompt, based on the given passage. The analysis utilizes dependent samples *t* tests to determine differences in the CF and CUF tasks.

Qualitative. The qualitative strand was informed by the results of the quantitative strand and stood as a separate piece of data collection to come after the quantitative tasks were analyzed. The qualitative element of this study utilized a phenomenological lens. This was accomplished through semi-structured interview questions, where students were encouraged to share perspectives, preferences, and feelings regarding the culturally familiar reading task, and their preferences and experiences around culturally familiar curriculum.

Procedures

Counterbalancing allowed the researcher to control for order effects. Students were randomly assigned to receive the CF or CUF task first. Students assigned the CF task read the CF passage, followed by comprehension questions, then a writing prompt. Then students read a CUF passage, followed by comprehension questions, then a writing prompt. Students assigned to the CUF task read the CUF passage, followed by comprehension questions, then a writing prompt. Then students read a CF passage, followed by comprehension questions, then a writing prompt.

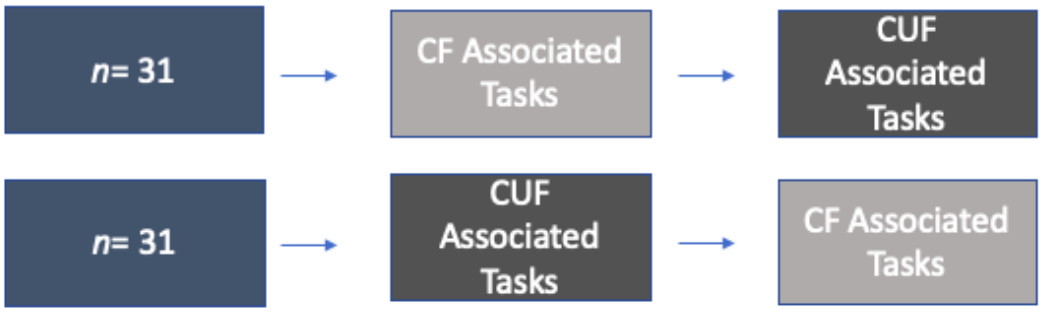

Figure 4. Counterbalancing procedures

Measures

Description of readings. The reading tasks used in this study consisted of fictional narrative passages. Understanding narrative techniques, responding to narrative writing, and production of narratives were all English Language Arts and Literacy standards in Texas grades 9-10 recognized by the Common Core State Standards Initiative (Common Core Standards Initiative, 2019) as well as the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS, 1997). The goal of the tasks selected for this study were written to be as similar as possible to each other. In an attempt to control for confounding variables, the two texts were almost identical (Table 5), except for the differences in cultural themes, based on Lexile Framework for Reading (2019). The Lexile Framework for Reading (2019) is a nationally accepted scale designed to measure reading comprehension and text difficulty by matching readers and text on the same scale as their assessed level. Lexile scales are found in over 100 million books, articles, and websites, and are used in all 50 states as tools to determine which books are appropriate for readers and grade levels (MetaMetrics, 2019).

According to the Lexile Framework for Reading Lexile-to-Grade-Correspondence, average early high school students at the mid-year should read around

855L to 1165L (Lexile Framework, 2019). *Tepeyac* and *The Pickets* were used for the CF and CUF tasks, respectively. *Tepeyac*, in the collection of short stories, *Woman Hollering Creek and Other Stories*, by Sandra Cisernos, had a recorded Lexile score of 960L, and was five pages in length. *Tepeyac* was a LatinX themed short story which included culture and language that was familiar to students. *Tepeyac* infused many references to LatinX culture and utilized language that used relevant words and phrases such as "sombrero", "Nino", "torta", etc. The themes expressed in *Tepeyac* positioned culture and family at the forefront. *The Pickets*, by Robert W. Chambers, had a recorded Lexile score of 960L, was six pages in length. *The Pickets* was an older passage, written to convey the importance of American involvement in various wars. The culturally unfamiliar themes found in this story referenced narratives from the civil war. The score of 960L fell within the range for 9th-10th grade mid-year reading levels, which yielded similar text difficulty and reading comprehension for both passages. The determination of what was and was not deemed familiar and unfamiliar in regard to passage selection was purposefully selected based on the demographics of the participating school site.

Table 5
Reading Passage Statistics

	CF reading task	CUF reading task
Lexile score	960L	960L
Flesch reading ease.	71.6	72.8
Visual page length.	5	6

Multiple choice questions. The reading comprehension questions utilized the objectives and format of the TELPAS Placement Assessment, which is a state mandated test for ELL students in Texas. For each of the two reading tasks, seven questions were based on reading comprehension of the passage, following the format of Kelley et al,

2015. Each question employed a multiple-choice format, with four options, of which only one answer was correct. In Texas, teachers use the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) to determine if students have achieved a particular task by a particular grade level. For each of the two reading tasks, two questions were based on reading recall skills, and the remaining five were based on comprehension skills. The reading recall questions (questions one and two) were designed to engage the reader in lower order thinking processes to answer questions that could be recalled specifically from the text. The comprehension questions (questions three through seven) were designed to engage the reader in higher order thinking processes to answer questions that are not directly stated yet implied within the text.

Summary writing. Mirroring the format of previous TELPAS prompts, students were prompted to write a summary with the following prompt: "What is this story about? Give a summary of what you read." The World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) 1-12th Writing Interpretive Rubric (Appendix D) was used to evaluate the summary writing portion of the study, which provides a rating of 1-6; level 1 is considered "entering, while level 6 is considered "reaching". WIDA is a nationally recognized organization that advances academic language development and academic achievement for students that identify as being culturally and linguistically diverse (Peters, 2001).

Data Analysis

The study addressed the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students?

2. What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students?
3. What is the experience of culturally familiar curriculum for secondary LatinX students? To what extent do secondary LatinX students show preference?

The researcher was responsible for collecting all data from the district and research site that was used for this study. Reading comprehension questions were scored as correct or incorrect. Before proceeding with data analysis equivalency for both reading comprehension and summary writing was established using pretest scores obtained from the participating district. In order to establish group equivalency following randomization (i.e., received CF task first, received CUF task first) based on reading scores, each student ID was attached to their accompany English Language Proficiency Standard (ELPS) reading score. An independent samples *t*-test was used to compare mean differences. The summary writing scores, however, were categorical, ranging from beginning to advanced high. To establish equivalency at pretest using writing scores, a Chi-square Test of Association was conducted.

Independent samples *t* test. Pretest equivalency was established using an independent samples *t* test. Before proceeding all assumptions for independent samples *t*-tests must be met. There are three assumptions required: Assumption of Independent Observations, Assumption of Normality of the Dependent Variable, Assumption of Homogeneity of Variance (Maverick, 2018).

1) Assumptions of Independent Observations will ensure that there is no relationship within each group. This will be accomplished via

counterbalancing, which will ensure that each participant receives the CF and also the CUF tasks, and there will be no crossover between participants.

2) Assumption of Normality of the Dependent Variable ensures that the dependent variable is normally distributed within each group. In order to meet this assumption, the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality was used. Because the *t*-test is considered a robust test, some deviation from normality does not have a large influence on Type 1 error rates. If normality of the dependent variable is not met, however, then the Mann-Whitley U test will be used, which does not require the assumption of normality to proceed.
3) Assumption of Homogeneity of Variance assumes that the variances of the two groups are equal in population. This can be tested using Levene's Test of Equality of Variances. When testing Levene's, if $p > .05$, then it will be assumed that variances are equal. If variances are unequal, however, then adjustments to the degrees of freedom using the Welch-Satterthwaite method will be used (Maverick, 2018).

Dependent samples *t*-test. Upon completion of independent reading, comprehension questions, and summary writing responses, the researcher used dependent samples *t*-test to assess differences between tasks in both reading comprehension and summary writing. To accomplish this the researcher used SPSS statistical software package available through the University of Denver. The use of dependent samples *t*-tests allowed the researcher to use data collected to compare the mean differences on reading comprehension between the CF and CUF tasks (Gravetter and Wallnau, 2008). The dependent samples *t*-tests were used to determine if differences existed in dependent

variables (i.e., reading comprehension scores) following the completion of CF and CUF tasks. The researcher used dependent samples *t*-tests, with the alpha levels, or probability of rejecting the null hypothesis, set at $p < 0.05$. This ensured a 95% certainty that the relationships did not occur by chance (Tutzauer, 2003). The null hypothesis for the dependent samples *t*-test stated that the population means from the two unrelated tasks (CF, CUF) will be equal. The hypothesis for the dependent samples *t*-test was that the population means from the two unrelated tasks (CF, CUF) will not be equal, therefore rejecting the null hypothesis.

In order to assess mean differences between the CF and CUF tasks using the dependent samples *t*-tests, the researcher categorized data into a categorical independent variables (CF, CUF) and dependent variables (reading comprehension scores from both tasks). Before proceeding all assumptions for dependent samples *t*-tests were met. There were three assumptions that were met before conducting a dependent samples *t*-test: Assumption of Independent Observations, Assumption of Normality of the Dependent Variable, Assumption of Outliers (Maverick, 2018).

1) Assumptions of Independent Observations ensured that there was no relationship within each group. This was accomplished via counterbalancing, which ensured that each participant received the CF and also the CUF tasks, and there was no crossover between participants.
2) Assumption of Normality of the Dependent Variable ensured that the dependent variable was normally distributed within each task. In order to meet this assumption, the researcher used the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality.

Because the *t*-test is considered a robust test, some deviation from normality does not have a large influence on Type 1 error rates.

3) Assumption of Outliers assumes that values may not be identically distributed because of the presence of outliers. To look for outliers, a Q-Q plot, or normal probability plot, was used to determine normal distribution of values. To check the assumption of outliers, all data points must fall in a linear pattern within the Q-Q plot.

Multiple comparisons. Because the analysis of this study was exploratory in nature, there was no correction for multiple comparisons. The purpose of exploratory analysis was to examine the relationships within the data to further identify outcomes, or subgroups, for which impacts existed (Schochet, 2008).

Chi-square test of association. The Chi-square test of association is a non-parametric test designed to analyze group differences with the dependent variables are measured at nominal levels, which is why this test was chosen to analyze the summary writing portion of this study (McHugh, 2013). Before proceeding with data analysis equivalency for summary writing was established using pretest scores obtained from the participating district. In order establish equivalency of pretest writing scores, each student ID was attached to their accompany English Language Proficiency Standard (ELPS) writing score, which were categorical scores, ranging from beginning to advanced high. To establish equivalency based on writing scores, a Chi-square Test of Association was conducted to detect possible differences in groups (i.e., received CF task first, received CUF task first) following randomization. The Chi-square test of Association requires that two assumptions must be met before proceeding.

1). Assumption of Categorical Variables. This assumption states that variables must be ordinal or nominal in order to proceed. This was met using categorical, descriptive variables for writing scores defined as Beginning, Intermediate, Advanced, or Advanced High.

2) Assumption of Two or More Categorical Variables. Variables must consist or two or more categorical groups. This study has two separate tasks; therefore, this assumption was satisfied.

Summary writing analysis. Dependent samples t-tests were used to evaluate participant summary writing. Summary writing samples were evaluated using the WIDA Writing Interpretive Rubric (Appendix D). The WIDA rubric is a comprehensive rubric that provides students with a holistic score, on a scale of 1-6. Level 1 is emerging, while level 6 is Reaching, and is considered the highest category. Each category is comprised of three sections, which look at vocabulary usage, language forms and conventions, and linguistic complexity. All writing samples were reviewed by the researcher and two graduate research assistants. All members were trained by the lead researcher. The team completed two practice rounds, discussing samples together and agreeing on a rating, and then the research assistants practiced coding a writing sample on their own. Once a reliability score of 80% was achieved, members were directed to code the remaining samples independently. All writing samples were then coded independently by the lead researcher, as well as one other member of the team. Samples were coded following the WIDA rubric only. Any coding discrepancies were resolved between the lead researcher and the coder.

Phenomenology. The purpose of the qualitative strand was to better understand the experiences of culturally familiar curriculum, if any, for LatinX high school students, and to determine their preference. The qualitative strand sought to answer the following research question: What is the experience of culturally familiar curriculum for LatinX high school students? To what extent do LatinX high school students show preference?

In order to adequately answer this question, a phenomenological lens shaped the interview questions. Phenomenology was best suited for this study as phenomenology is used to describe the common meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a central concept. The qualitative aspect of the larger study focused on describing what the participants had in common as they experience culturally familiar curriculum, or lack of familiarity in curriculum. Phenomenology is a project that aims to "get at the heart of things" (Van Manen, 2007).

Selection procedures and participants. The selection procedures for interview participants followed a purposeful sampling, which allowed the researcher to select a specific set of criteria in order to inform the research questions and gain a greater understanding of the experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2013). Participants were LatinX students, enrolled in 9th or 10th grade, male or female, and will range in numbers of years spent in the United States. See Table 6.

In order to obtain a sample that equitably answered the research questions, the researcher worked directly with the main ESL teacher on campus. Ms. Peabody, a pseudonym, was identified the main ELL teacher at the research site. Ms. Peabody is a Caucasian female with over ten years of teaching experience. She holds a bachelor's degree in Secondary Education. Ms. Peabody assisted in selecting select six participants

for student interviews based on the criteria delineated in Table 6. The student interviews were bound by student enrollment in the high school ELL program during the spring semester of 2020, and participants included students already participating in the study who had signed the parental/guardian permission. Culturally Active High School, a pseudonym, typically has one primary ELL teacher that serves and interacts with the ELL population enrolled in the high school.

Ms. Peabody assisted with purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2013) by generating a list of students who might be willing or interested in participating in my study based on the provided sample criteria (e.g., LatinX, grade level, gender, years living in the United States). Due to COVID-19, Ms. Peabody also facilitated scheduling of the student interviews over the phone. Using Ms. Peabody's list, the researcher selected six students that fit the criteria delineated in the following table.

Table 6
Participant Selection Criteria

Participant	Grade	Gender	Years Spent Living in US
Participant 1	9	M	1-2
Participant 2	9	F	3-5
Participant 3	9	M	6+
Participant 4	10	M	1-2
Participant 5	10	F	3-5

Before the interviews started, the researcher read the assent form to each student and allowed them to opt in or opt out with a signature (Appendix G). Students also chose whether they agree to be audio taped. The consent form discussed potential risks to

involvement in the study and explained the time commitment. Participants received a copy of the consent and assent form. Following assent, the researcher followed the interview protocol created for each student interview (Appendix H).

Semi-structured interviewing in phenomenology. Semi-structured interviews are dialogic, open, and conversational. A fundamental goal of this strand of the study was to understand the lived experiences of LatinX students with culturally familiar or unfamiliar curriculum. Semi-structured interviews were well suited for the study given the dialogic nature of semi-structured interviewing, with the goal of understanding as much as possible about LatinX students' lived experiences. By engaging in open conversations with the participants, the researcher was able to gather information about how they acquire new information and make meaning of their lived experience as culturally and linguistically diverse students.

The semi-structured interview questions (Appendix I) asked students about their experiences with culturally familiar curriculum at school, their preferences, and the experiences of assimilating to a new culture at school. Students did not receive the interview protocol in advance, but students did understand that the interview was voluntary, and that they could abstain from answering any questions that might be uncomfortable.

Audio recording the interviews. All sessions were audio recorded using the recording app available on the iPhone, with student consent. The recording began after the researcher reviewed the informed consent, and the recording was be concluded when the participant had responded to the final question. All recordings were time and date stamped. Notes were also be taken during the interviews. Immediately following the

interviews, the researcher wrote an interview memo, or reflection, regarding her initial thoughts and feelings about the interview. In order to transcribe the student interviews, the researcher used the free online transcription software, Otter Ai.

Analyzing Semi-Structured Interview Data

Colaizzi (2003) outlines four steps in the analysis of data in descriptive phenomenological research: (a) bracketing, (b) analyzing, (c) intuiting, and (d) describing. This section describes each step.

Bracketing. During the interview process, the researcher engaged in activities that help curve her own personal biases. After each interview, the researcher wrote a reflective memo and discussed perceptions and feelings during the interview. These memos, as well as conversations with peers during the peer debrief process and inquiry audits, were kept in the audit trail journal. The researcher also re-read all interview transcripts to reflect on possible biases held during the interview.

Analyzing. Colaizzi's method for data analysis is commonly associated with phenomenological research. The following steps represent Colaizzi process (as cited in Sanders, 2003).

1. Each transcript should be read and re-read in order to obtain a general sense about the whole content.
2. For each transcript, significant statements that pertain to the phenomenon under study should be extracted. These statements must be recorded on a separate sheet noting their pages and lines numbers.
3. Meanings should be formulated from these significant statements.

4. The formulated meanings should be sorted into categories, clusters of themes, and themes.
5. The findings of the study should be integrated into an exhaustive description of the phenomenon under study.
6. The fundamental structure of the phenomenon should be described.
7. Finally, validation of the findings should be sought from the research participants to compare the researcher's descriptive results with their experiences.

Intuiting. The researcher engaged in a reflective activity where she began to piece together the participants' descriptions of their experiences and attempt to preliminarily make connections. This was accomplished via the reflective memos that were written at the end of each interview.

Describing. In this phase the researcher attempted to generate a model, or overarching theme, of the experiences of high school LatinX students with culturally familiar or unfamiliar curriculum.

Research Validity

In order to address research validity, the researcher focused on four areas to establish validity, or trustworthiness, following the model of Lincoln and Guba (1986): (a) Confirmability, (b) credibility, (c) dependability, (d) transferability.

Confirmability. Confirmability is the degree of neutrality, or the extent to which the findings from the study are shaped by the respondents, and not the researcher

Credibility. Credibility is confidence in the truth of the findings. In order to establish credibility in this study, the researcher engaged in peer debriefing. To

accomplish this, the researcher described the findings with an unbiased, uninterested graduate research assistant.

Dependability. Dependability is showing that the findings are consistent and could be repeated. The researcher achieved dependability through inquiry audits, which involved an external research, a graduate research assistant, who is not involved with the research process.

Transferability. Transferability is showing that the findings have applicability in other contexts. Transferability was accomplished through thick description, which is also utilized in other forms of qualitative research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) define thick description as a way of achieving external validity by describing a phenomenon in sufficient detail so that an outside source can evaluate the extent to which conclusions are drawn, and ultimately transferable to other situations.

Codes and Themes

Data preparation. In preparing the data, the researcher transcribed all interviews using the Otter Ai software. The transcription presented a written form of original oral dialogue, although the researcher omitted any irrelevant dialogue and irrelevant verbal pauses (e.g., uhm, ah).

Initial analysis. Following Creswell's (2013) steps for phenomenological data analysis, went through all data (e.g. interviews) and highlighted significant statements, sentences, or quotes that provided an understanding of the participants' experiences. The researcher looked for common topics discussed and identified threads that shed light onto the research question and then generated a potential list of codes.

Data coding. The coding process involved deciphering and eventually cataloguing the data. The researcher looked for patterns and data containing similar ideas during coding. The researcher used NVivo software to comb through all transcriptions and highlighted words and phrases that fit into any predeveloped codes. Using categorical separation allowed the researcher to separate the codes into categories, as this was considered horizontalization. Additionally, NVivo allowed the researcher to see the code percentages that were present within the transcriptions. The researcher used these clusters of meanings (codes) and compile them into larger themes. When the researcher began coding statements and lumping them into categories, several codes collapsed into each other, and this process was used develop overall themes. Additionally, the researcher ran a word frequency count within NVivo to help identify the broader themes that participants were illuminating.

Presenting the findings. The researcher used these themes to write a description of what the participants experienced in the form of phenomenological accounts of the experiences. Particular description provided insights of the experiences of participants through direct participant interview quotes. Additionally, during this time the researcher attempted to make connections between the quantitative strand, and the qualitative strand and presented all findings from both strands.

Researcher's positionality. Stating and remembering the researcher's positionality served as another method for eliminating potential biases that might have arisen during data collection. In qualitative work, it was important to state and remember researcher positionality through bracketing, which supported the reflexive process that was so pivotal in creating transferability (Creswell, 2013).

The researcher was a former high school teacher of English Language Learners. The researcher was propositioned during her first year of teaching to work with ELL students, as she demonstrated patience and compassion for this dominant population at school. Later, as the researcher transferred schools, she was asked by the principal to become ELL certified, as she again demonstrated the desire to advocate and work with these students. The researcher was responsible for testing all ELL students on the high school campus, and also served as the ELL representative on the campus and gathered all state mandated data, provided professional development to teachers, and monitored student progress, both in academics as well as standardized testing. The researcher communicated regularly with families, celebrated cultures, and created a classroom environment that fostered safety and inclusion. The researcher holds a master's degree is in Reading Comprehension and Advanced Literacy, and was able to use the skills acquired during this degree to diagnose reading differences within ELL students, meet them at their current reading level, and work with them individually to achieve in both reading and writing and graduating.

The researcher has a passion for English Language Learners and have a wide range of experiences with these students, which is why it was believed that this research study was good fit. Many ELL students have stories to tell, yet their experiences are often not studied. The researcher believed that prior experiences as an ELL teacher, coordinator, and advocate led to empirical examination of interventions for this specific population.

Maintaining Data

For all data collected during this study, the researcher saved all documents to a password-protected computer file. Each student was given a numeric code. The researcher never used names, names of teachers, or names of schools. As all data was collected over the computer due to COVID-19, there were no original forms, and data collected data was kept in a secure zip file. When referencing specific students within the results and discussion section, the researcher referred to students by their unique numeric code. Finally, the researcher stored transcribed audio data in a password-protected file on her computer.

Summary

This study sought to determine if there would be a statistically significant difference in reading and writing outcomes when students were given a culturally familiar text versus a culturally unfamiliar text, while providing participants a voice through semi-structured responses. This study discussed the research problems, the systematic review of literature, the methodology, and finally data analysis employed in order to answer all research questions.

Chapter one discussed the research problems, and theoretical framework around which this study was built. This chapter also discussed the amount of available current literature, and the need for more research within this area. This chapter described Ladson-Billings' culturally relevant pedagogy, Vygotsky's activation of prior knowledge, Gee's affinity perspective, and the framework of linguistically responsive teaching. The researcher also gave a cursory overview of the study, the aims of this study, and strengths and limitations of the study.

Chapter two described the process of the systematic literature review, rationale for the systematic literature review, and the framework that guided the review. In order to answer the research questions regarding how to utilize culturally relevant passages to improve reading comprehension and summary writing, the researcher systematically reviewed the literature based on student outcomes and used Ladson-Billings' theoretical framework for CRP. This chapter described the evolution of CRP, discussed current literature, then described the methods, results, and finished with a discussion.

Finally, chapter three discussed the methods of this mixed methods study. The researcher calculated the necessary effect size, based on findings from the aforementioned systematic review, and discussed the materials that were used, the data collection process, and how the quantitative strand informed the use of the qualitative semi-structured interviews with students. The statistical analysis used within the quantitative strand was also described within this chapter, as well as procedures followed for the qualitative strand.

Chapter 4: Results

Overview

The current study employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods design, where data was collected over two distinct phases, which occurred at separate times: quantitative, followed by qualitative (Creswell at al., 2003). Within this study, priority was given to the quantitative strand, while data gathered during the qualitative strand was used to help explain, or elaborate on, the quantitative data that was already collected, providing a rich and comprehensive understanding of all data collected. The point of interface occurred after quantitative data was collected, which was followed by semi-structured student interviews.

The purpose of the present study was to determine the impacts of utilizing culturally familiar texts, as compared to culturally unfamiliar texts, on reading comprehension and summary writing outcomes for secondary LatinX English Language Learners (ELL). The study sought to determine if a statistically significant difference existed in reading comprehension and summary writing outcomes when students are provided a CF or CUF task (i.e., text). Tasks were completed by students enrolled in an ELL classroom in a public high school in central Texas. This study was counter-balanced, where one group of students was randomly assigned to receive the CF task first, followed by the CUF task next. Finally, five participants were chosen using for

semi-structured interviews using a criterion purposeful sampling method, which allowed the researcher to select participants that met specific criteria in order to gain a greater understanding of the experiences of the participants. Analysis based on the reading comprehension and summary writing tasks addressed the following two research questions: (1) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? (2) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? Analysis of the interviews answered the following research question: (3) What is the experience of culturally familiar curriculum for secondary LatinX students? To what extent do secondary LatinX students show preference?

Student Characteristics

In total, 62 students participated in the present study. Students were randomly assigned to receive the CF task first (*n*= 31) or the CUF task first (*n*= 31). The mean age of the sample was 15.6 years (SD = 1.52, range: 14.7-17.1). 33% of students identified as female, while 67% of students identified as male. The average number of years of time spent in the United States was 9 (SD= .78, range: 2-14). The average ELPS reading score was 707 (SD= 16.78, range: 660-796). The class writing score was Intermediate (range: Beginning- Advanced High), and the class ELPS composite score was Intermediate High (range: Beginning- Advanced High).

Pretest Data Analysis: Group Equivalence

Before proceeding with posttest data analysis, pretest group equivalency was established based on district reading (i.e., English Language Proficiency Standard [ELPS]) and writing (i.e., Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment Standards [TELPAS] ratings) measures completed in the spring semester. In order establish equivalency of pretest reading scores, each student ID was attached to their accompanying ELPS reading score, and an independent samples *t*-test was used to compare mean pretest scores of students placed in both the CF and CUF tasks. The summary writing scores, however, were categorical, ranging from beginning to advanced high. To establish equivalency at pretest using writing scores, a Chi-square Test of Association was conducted.

Reading comprehension. Assumptions for an independent samples *t*-test include: (1) independent observations, (2) normality of the dependent variable, (3) homogeneity of variance. The assumption of independent observations was accomplished via the counterbalancing of the research design. The assumption of normality of the dependent variable was met using the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality where the reported significance values both exceeded $p < .05$ ($p = .82$; $p = .88$) for the CF and CUF tasks, respectively, proving that the assumption of normality was satisfied. The assumption of homogeneity of variance was met using Levene's test of equality, where $p > .05$, and variances were assumed equal. An independent samples *t*-test revealed no statistically significant pretest reading comprehension differences difference between those assigned to the CF task first and those assigned to the CUF task first ($p > .05$).

Summary writing. The Chi-square test of association was performed to examine whether there was an association between the students assigned to take the CF task first, or the CUF task first. All assumptions for the Chi-square test of association were met before proceeding. The relationship between these two tasks was significant, as p was greater the alpha level .05 ($X^2(9, N = 30) = 22.4, p > .05$). The Chi-square test of association revealed that the two tasks, CF and CUF were associated ($p < .01$; $r_2 = .008$).

Reading Comprehension Assumptions Outcomes: Dependent Samples *t*-tests

Dependent samples t-tests were used to determine if differences existed between the dependent variable, reading comprehension scores, following the delivery of the CF or CUF tasks. Dependent samples t-test require three assumptions to be met before proceeding. (1) The assumption of independent observations was met via counterbalancing in the research design, which ensured no crossover between participants. (2) Normality was met using the Shapiro-Wilk to determine if the dependent variable was normally distributed within each group. The reported significance values both exceeded $p < .05$ ($p = .73$; $p = .84$) for the CF and CUF tasks, respectively, proving that the assumption of normality was satisfied. (3) Homogeneity of Variance was met using a Q-Q Plot (Appendix J) which revealed that there were no outliers, as all data points fell in a linear pattern.

Reading Comprehension: Posttest Data Analysis

The first research question was: (1) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students?

The average reading comprehension score for the CF task was 90.77 (SD = 11.42, range: 71-100). The average reading comprehension score for the CUF task was 83.69 (SD =

12.76, range: 57-100). This difference represents a mean score for the CF task 7.08 points higher than the CUF task. The number of questions answered incorrectly in the CF task was .55 lower than CUF.

The null hypothesis for this research question stated that the population means from the CF and CUF tasks would be equal. Results from the dependent samples t-tests revealed that the population means were not equal (p <.05). Based on this evidence we are able to reject the null hypothesis. Table 10 presents the results of the reading comprehension outcome measures for the CF and CUF tasks. An effect size of group comparison was conducted using Hedge's g (Hedges, 1981) which generated an effect size of g= 0.58 (CF: M = 90.77, SD = 11.42; CUF: M = 83.69, SD = 12.76).

Table 7
Effects of Reading Tasks on Reading Comprehension

Reading Task	*n*	*M*	SD	*t*	*df*	*p*	r_2
Culturally familiar	62	90.77	11.42	5.99	61	.00	.71
Culturally unfamiliar	62	83.69	12.76				

Summary Writing Assumptions Outcomes: Dependent Samples *t*-tests

To test the null hypothesis, a dependent samples *t*-test was used to assess differences between CF and CUF tasks. The following three assumptions for dependent samples *t*-tests were analyzed to reduce the likelihood of a Type 1 error: (1) independent observations, (2) normality, (3) outliers. Assumption of Independent Observations was accomplished via counterbalancing in the research design. The Assumption of Normality of the Dependent Variable was checked using the Shapiro-Wilks test of normality was used to determine if the dependent variable was normally distributed within each task, the reported significance was above $p < .05$ ($p = .88$; $p = .91$) for the CF and CUF tasks,

respectively, indicating that the dependent variable was normally distributed. The Assumption of Outliers was checked using a Q-Q plot, which revealed that all values fell in a linear pattern (Appendix L). The null hypothesis for this research question stated that the population means from the tasks would be equal. Results from the dependent samples *t*-tests revealed that the population means were equal ($p < .00$). Based on this evidence the null hypothesis was rejected.

Summary Writing: Posttest Data Analysis

The second tested research question included the following (2) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? Writing prompts were evaluated using the World-class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) 1-12th grade Writing Interpretive Rubric (Appendix E). Each summary writing prompt was given a level of 1-6. Level 1 was the base score, designated as "Entering", while Level 6 was the ceiling score, designated as "Reaching". All writing samples were reviewed by a team of researchers consisting of the lead researcher and two fellow graduate students enrolled in the Morgridge College of Education, with experience teaching and working with ELL populations. The null hypothesis for this research question stated that the population means from the two unrelated tasks (CF versus CUF) will be equal.

Table 12 presents the results of the reading comprehension outcomes for the CF and CUF tasks. An effect size of task comparison was conducted using Hedge's g which generated an effect size of $g = 0.29$ (CF: $M = 4.42$, $SD = .89$; CUF: $M = 4.15$, $SD = .97$).

Table 8
Effects of reading tasks on summary writing

Writing Task	*n*	*M*	SD	*t*	*df*	*p*	r_2
Culturally familiar	62	4.42	0.89	4.80	61	.00	.89
Culturally unfamiliar	62	4.15	0.97				

Summary of Quantitative Strand

The quantitative strand of this study sought to answer the following research questions: (1) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? (2) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? The results presented within the first portion of this analysis identified distinctions between the CF task versus the CUF task both in reading comprehension and writing. Based on establishment of equivalence at pretest via student reading and writing scores, the differences within the two tasks suggest that providing LatinX students with culturally familiar curriculum or assignments might positively impact academic outcomes in both reading comprehension and writing.

The results were presented to answer the two following research questions: (1) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? (2) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? In answering the first research question, findings suggest that a culturally familiar reading passage positively impacts students' reading comprehension outcomes (CF; $p < .05$). In answering the second research question, findings suggest that providing a culturally familiar reading passage also positively impacts students' writing outcomes using the WIDA rubric (CF; $p <. 05$).

Point of Interface

Integration of quantitative data with qualitative data occurs after the initial phase of quantitative data collection, known as the point of interface (Creswell et al., 2003). In the explanatory sequential design, integration involves connecting the results from the initial quantitative strand to follow up with the qualitative collection strand. This design was used as the results from the quantitative strand warranted further probing, as only LatinX students can help researchers understand their preferences regarding the quantitative results. The following section answers research question 3, the final research question, and lays out the qualitative component of the study.

Qualitative Strand

The purpose of the final research question, and the qualitative strand, was to analyze and present data that were collected from participants regarding their experiences related to culturally familiar curriculum in their high school classes. This strand will be compartmentalized into four sections to adequately describe the findings. The first section will describe the sample. The second section will discuss data analysis. The third section will present the results from data analysis. The fourth and final section will summarize the findings.

Research Question 3:

The final tested research question addressed: What is the experience of culturally familiar curriculum for secondary LatinX students? To what extent do secondary LatinX students show preference? This phenomenological qualitative question was semi-structured due to the nature of the explanatory sequential mixed methods design, where

the qualitative strand was informed by data collected during the quantitative strand, therefore required a more open-ended, dialogic style of interviewing.

Research Validity

In order to establish research validity throughout the interview process, the researcher followed the model of Lincoln and Guba (1985), which focuses on: (a) Confirmability, (b) Credibility, (c) Dependability, (d) transferability.

Confirmability. Confirmability was demonstrated by providing substantiation that all findings and interpretations unearthed during the interview and data coding process were grounded in data, demonstrating that links between the researchers assertations and the data were both clear and credible (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Confirmability was enhanced through inclusion of direct quotes taken from the participants. Under each code and theme, there were copious amounts of quotes from all five participants, stating the participant identification number, as well as the date the quote was obtained. In many cases, participants gave multiple quotes to fit under each of the developed codes and themes, further enhancing confirmability of assertions. This served to demonstrate the link between the researcher's assertions and the actual data.

Credibility. Many researchers consider credibility to be the most important aspect of trustworthiness in qualitative work (Krefting, 1991). One of the basic tenants of phenomenological inquiry is that the truth is subjective and is based on participants experienced. Thus, it was important to ask open-ended questions that were objective and did not lead the participants to read any potential biases held by the researcher through these questions. Credibility was demonstrated by accuracy and validity of findings that were assured through documentation of the researcher's actions, opinions, and biases

(Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Several methods were used to enhance credibility within this study. To establish internal validity, the researcher enlisted the help of a PhD student enrolled in the Morgridge College of Education. This student served as a sounding board and unbiased investigator. The peer had full access to de-identified interview recordings as well as notes, and the peer engaged in a phone conversation after each interview to ensure the development of themes and recollections of interview conversations remained unbiased and objective. A summary of these conversations was kept in an audit trail journal. Keeping up with an audit trail journal allowed the researcher to bracket her feelings and perceptions during the interview, where the researcher reflected on her own personal feelings and perceptions during the interview.

Additionally, credibility was further achieved throughout the interview process by the researchers' statement of positionality at the beginning of every interview. This process helped eliminate potential biases, and served as a reminder for the researcher to be objective and unbiased at the start of each interview. Following, the researcher re-listened to each interview before conducting the next interview. This reflexive audit helped identify any leading questions and adjust the interview technique for the following participant.

Finally, the researcher engaged in member checking to enhance credibility. This involved going back to the participants, via the classroom teacher, Ms. Peabody, to determine if the themes and findings felt accurate. Once the researcher identified the final three themes, the list was sent to Ms. Peabody, who then spoke with the students to determine if they agreed. All were in complete agreement. This action allowed the participants to be the judges of their own experiences (Creswell, 2014; Krefting, 1991).

Dependability. Dependability was demonstrated by the carefully documented research process which provided evidence of how conclusions were reached and whether, under similar circumstances, another researcher might expect to obtain similar findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). To establish dependability, an audit trail, in the form of a journal, was kept for the duration of the qualitative strand of the study. To enhance dependability, the researcher recounted detailed descriptions of conversations with peers enlisted for peer debriefing regarding development of themes and conversations with participants (See Appendix L). To this end, the researcher enlisted an additional fellow student, not affiliated with the Curriculum and Instruction department. The fellow student was able to debrief on the phone after each interview, examine the research process, investigate findings, and evaluate the accuracy to determine if interpretations and conclusions have been supported by the data collected during the process.

Transferability. Transferability was achieved through a report that contains sufficient information for readers to determine whether findings were meaningful to other people in similar situations (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability was established through thick descriptions and use of participant quotes, demonstrated later within this chapter.

The researcher's background, training, and experience have helped shape the approach for the current dissertation research. Phenomenological research requires strong interviewing skills, listening skills, and the ability to engage with the participants. The credibility and engagement ability of the researcher also depends on the education, experience, and presentation of self, which reflect how smoothly the interview process will flow (Patton, 2013). This researcher holds academic and professional credentials

relevant to the research question. The researcher holds a bachelor's degree in English, a master's degree in Advanced Literacy and Reading Comprehension, and has spent several years as a high school English teacher, as well as a high school ELL teacher.

The ability to create a welcoming space and connect and listen to students required transparency, warmth, attentiveness, organization, and the option to decline to participate if the participant felt discomfort. Many years of working with ELL students, connecting with their families, serving as the district ELL liaison and advocate adequately prepared the researcher to connect with the selected population. The ability to refrain from judging participants, their lives, and their past was a cornerstone for this strand of data collection.

Description of the Sample

The selection procedures for interview participants followed purposeful sampling, which allowed the researcher to select a specific set of criteria in order to inform the research questions and gain a greater understanding of the experiences of the participants (see Creswell, 2013, pp. 119). In order to obtain a sample that equitably answered the research question, the researcher collaborated directly with the ELL teacher, Ms. Peabody, a pseudonym. Ms. Peabody assisted in sampling to select six participants for student interviews based on the criteria delineated in Table 13. Ms. Peabody also spoke to the students regarding her relationship with the researcher, why participation was important, and due to COVID-19, the teacher also helped the researcher facilitate and schedule phone interviews with students attending school remotely. Ms. Peabody also stressed that students who agreed to participate would be helping the researcher finish a paper in order to graduate from college.

Ms. Peabody assisted with purposeful sampling (Creswell, 2013) by generating a list of students who might be willing or interested in participating in my study based on the provided sample criteria (e.g., LatinX, grade level, gender, years living in the United States). From there, using Ms. Peabody's list, the researcher selected six students that fit the criteria delineated in the "Participant Selection Criteria" table, and Ms. Peabody helped schedule phone calls with the students during their online class time.

Table 9
Interview Participant Demographics

Participant	Grade	Gender	Years Spent Living in US
Participant 1	9	M	2
Participant 2	9	F	5
Participant 3	9	M	6
Participant 4	10	F	3
Participant 5	10	F	8

For each of the participants, it was the first time they were participating in a qualitative study. Participants were shy at first but seemed eager to help. Some of the questions required rephrasing, but all questions were intentionally open-ended and dialogic in nature. The researcher clarified questions without leading, but often repeated clarifications multiple times to allow participants time to process and reflect.

Data Analysis

Lune and Berg (2012) imply that phenomenology is operated by patterns, concept, events, and relationships, and it is the job of the researcher to unearth the meanings of the underlying patterns presented through conversations with participants.

The researcher followed Colaizzi's method for data analysis, which will be further described here. The researcher began with transcription, followed by extraction of significant statements. Finally, through coding, the researcher was able to work towards generating a model, or overarching theme, that attempted to identify the true meaning of the experience.

Data preparation. In preparing the data, all interviews were transcribed and deidentified. Transcription was completed using Otter Ai software, placed into a password protected word document, and renamed with a unique numerical identifier. Irrelevant dialogue and irrelevant verbal pauses (e.g., uhm, ah) were omitted, but the transcription presented a written form of the original dialogue.

The chosen model for data analysis within the phenomenological strand was Colaizzi's (as cited in Sanders, 2003) method for analysis. The analysis for this dissertation offered a reflective analysis of experiences in an attempt to understand participants' perspectives, insights, experiences, and concepts of an underlying phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). In the present study, the goal of the phenomenological approach was to investigate the experiences of LatinX high school students in regard to culturally familiar or unfamiliar curriculum, and to attempt to determine their preference.

The first step in Colaizzi's method for analysis involved transcription and familiarizing yourself with the general sense of the transcription. This involved reading and rereading each transcription to find a sense of the content. Due to COVID-19, all interviews were held over the phone, which alleviated any potential prejudices, assumptions, or preconceived notions based on appearance, physical attributes, clothing style, facial expressions, mannerisms, and more, that might have arisen from an in-person

interview. The researcher was able to speak with the participant regarding the questions alone, and all reservations or judgements were therefore abandoned. Though the human aspect of the interview was missing due to an in-person visit, the barrier allowed for the researchers biases to be set aside as much as possible to allow for objective interviewing. Prior to speaking with each participant, the researcher reminded herself to treat each participant as if they were the first participant, and not attempt to make connections with other participants during the interview process. This process allowed the researcher to remain unbiased, and therefore the researcher was able to accept and dive deeper into all experiences without hesitation, and the researcher treated every experience as a unique experience during the interview process.

Data coding. The next steps in Colaizzi's method for analysis involved extracting significant statements once the interviews were concluded. During this step, the researcher went through all transcriptions, per Colaizzi's methodology for phenomenological analysis, and recorded significant statements on a separate paper, noting their page number. Use of NVivo Qualitative Software allowed the researcher to upload all final transcriptions, color code statements, and see code percentages present within interview transcriptions while identifying any lingering significant clusters of meaning. During this stage of the coding process, the researcher used categorical separation to place significant words or phrases into categories. This was considered a horizontalization process where the participants' significant statements begin to form clusters of meaning, which preliminarily identified common themes. The horizontalization process included identifying statements gathered from the transcriptions of the interviews, with the fundamental goal of presenting a variety of experiences

relating to the phenomenon. In an attempt to completely exhaust all potential clusters of meanings and themes, the researcher ran a word frequency query within NVivo to make sure all recurring words were accounted for within a developed category or theme (Appendix J). The top ten recurring words in the NVivo word frequency query included: culture, school, Spanish, speak, feel, remember, reading, familiar, classes, and English.

Codes

After extracting significant statements, the original code list included: This Isn't Diversity, Getting in Trouble, Poor, Misunderstood, Community, Embarrassment, and Lack of Representation.

This Isn't Diversity

- Most of the stuff we read is based on white people, and sometimes in English we read stuff about European people, like Shakespeare and stuff like that (P1, March 23, 2020)
- Americans are supposed to be diverse; we are supposed to appreciate diversity. I was born here, I am American, but I don't have a place I fit in to (P1, March 23, 2020).
- I think I would have liked to see my culture embraced more at school. I don't care about white guys or European guys (P2, March 23, 2020).
- Like America is supposed to be about diversity but it isn't. I never feel like my classes or assignments are diverse (P3, March 25, 2020).
- When I was first learning English, she would let me pick out comic books from the library, but they weren't Spanish or Mexican comic books. They were about American characters (P4, March 26, 2020).

- We read a lot of books by old white guys in my English classes, and we study American history, so none of that seems very familiar to me and I find most of it pretty boring (P5, March 27, 2020).

Getting in Trouble

- When I got to school in America, my teacher would yell at me because I didn't know any English, but I also didn't know very much Spanish, and I was afraid to speak, so then I became mute. I didn't speak to anyone for over two years because I didn't know which language was the right language to speak and I didn't understand either of them very well, and I was afraid of getting in trouble so I wouldn't speak to anyone about anything (P1, March 23, 2020).
- I'm not allowed to speak Spanish, and like I said, I used to get yelled at for speaking Spanish. So, it took a long time for me to understand that it was okay to speak Spanish, but there were only certain places where I could speak it (P3, March 25, 2020).
- I got in really big trouble with my dad for failing a grade. He was very violent with me and yelled at me a lot. I didn't need to go to summer school, but I was worried that if I didn't fail enough stuff, they would keep giving me tests and keep accusing me of cheating, so I needed to play along (P4, March 26, 2020).
- We would always skip class on Spanish holidays because those are important to our culture, but we got counted absent (P5, March 27, 2020).
- There are some students that speak other languages at school, not Spanish, and the teachers get mad at them too, so it's not just us, but people say a lot of racist

words to us when we are speaking Spanish so we try to hide our Spanish (P5, March 27, 2020).

- It's embarrassing to get called out in front of the whole class because I'm speaking my native language. Doesn't make any sense to me (P5, March 27, 2020).

Poor

- Actually, I grew up in Mexico. My family was really poor, and my parents didn't know how to teach me English. I went down to Mexico with my mom, and my dad would send us American dollars. It was 1 dollar for 18 pesos, so we were able to buy food and things, but we didn't know how to speak English (P1, March 23, 2020).
- My family doesn't have a lot of money so sometimes we have to help out and miss school, so I am a little behind in school in general (P2, March 23, 2020)
- My family grew up poor, so I've never been able to afford going to the dentist. But we found a place in my community where they offer dental services to other members of the community. We really take care of one another and that's something I'm proud of (P3, March 25, 2020).

Misunderstood

- I feel really ashamed and misunderstood (P1, March 23, 2020).
- We sometimes do Hispanic celebrations in my classes, or with my friends, but everyone thinks that Cinco de Mayo is a holiday for drinking and they call it Cinco de Drinko and no one understands the true meaning and I feel ashamed to tell my white friends what it means (P1, March 23, 2020).

- At school I just feel really misunderstood and I'm unsure of my identity, but in my community, I feel safe, and I wish I could feel safe at school too, but I just don't (P1, March 23, 2020).
- I feel like I'm very misunderstood (P2, March 23, 2020).
- I think people just don't understand Mexican culture and I think teachers don't want to teach something they don't understand (P3, March 25, 2020).
- I get help on my homework a lot from coach and from the other guys on the team but sometimes the teachers don't understand me when I ask questions so I usually don't ask questions, but then I get in trouble when I don't come to tutorials, but it's like why would I go ask you for help if you don't like me and can't understand me (P4, March 26, 2020).
- It seems like a lot of the teachers look down on me because I have an accent and they think I don't try very hard (P4, March 26, 2020).

Community

- My family practices a lot of religion. We practice a lot of Mayan teachings and Mayan religion (P1, March 23, 2020).
- My community is referred to as the "ghetto". It's looked down upon, but we take care of each other (P1, March 23, 2020).
- I feel welcome in my community, even if it is in the ghetto and I get made fun of (P1, March 23, 2020).
- I guess my culture was decided by my family. I live with my mom, dad, and little sister, and we're really tight and we do a lot together and I help out with my little

sister if my dad has to work and I get to play sports if I pass all my classes (P2, March 23, 2020).

- We have celebrations and big parties and we take care of each other (P2, March 23, 2020).
- When I'm with my family we all speak Spanish and it feels comfortable. It's just who we are and what we do (P2, March 23, 2020).
- Honestly the only reason I keep my grades up is so I can play soccer with my friends. We all speak Spanish and coach speaks Spanish and he talks to us in Spanish, so it feels like home (P3, March 25, 2020).
- We don't go to church or anything, but we have a lot of parties with our friends and family and friends are really important (P3, March 25, 2020).
- The Mexican community is really tight. We look out for one another (P4, March 26, 2020).
- We dance and make a lot of food, really good food (P5, March 27, 2020).

Embarrassment

- People look down on Hispanics (P1, March 23, 2020).
- But when I go to my community, I am called a "coconut" because my Spanish is rusty because I'm never allowed to speak it. A coconut is a person that is dark on the outside, white on the inside (P1, March 23, 2020).
- I get made fun of for being a coconut in my community, but I want to hold on to my culture. I'm proud of my culture even if other people aren't (P1, March 23, 2020).

- When I go to school, I don't speak great English and I have an accent and am looked down on (P2, March 23, 2020).
- Sometimes some of the nicer kids ask me where I'm from and they say they like my accent but it's embarrassing because I don't speak English that great (P2, March 23, 2020)
- The longer I'm in school, and the less I'm allowed to speak Spanish, the worst my Spanish becomes. For a long time, I was embarrassed to speak Spanish but now that I'm a little older I don't care (P3, March 25, 2020).
- People tend to look down on us (P3, March 25, 2020).
- They think they're better than us and I think it scares people when they don't understand what we are saying (P4, March 26, 2020).
- But it sucks because there's so much fun stuff in Mexican culture and it would be cool to talk to my classmates and soccer teammates about the fun stuff we do and the fun parties and food and cervezas but people look down on us so we hide a lot of our culture and who we are (P5, March 27, 2020).
- It's embarrassing to get called out in front of the whole class because I'm speaking my native language. Doesn't make any sense to me (P5, March 27, 2020).
- We live on the "bad" side of town, but it doesn't feel bad to me, it's just embarrassing to tell my peers where we live because they call it "little Mexico" like Mexico is a bad place or something (P5, March 27, 2020).

Lack of Representation

- I actually remember not being allowed to talk about my culture at school (P1, March 23, 2020).
- Honestly, I don't remember ever having a culturally familiar book or lesson (P1, March 23, 2020).
- Most of the stuff we read is based on white people, and sometimes in English we read stuff about European people, like Shakespeare and stuff like that (P2, March 23, 2020).
- Sometimes my ESL teacher would let us teacher her about the holidays, but that was the only time my culture was ever talked about at school (P1, March 23, 2020).
- Well I don't really remember any culturally familiar activities at all, so I can't say if I liked them or not. I think I would have liked to see my culture embraced more at school (P2, March 23, 2020).
- I would've even liked to read a book maybe from Spain, but I haven't had that chance (P2, March 23, 2020).
- I have never felt like my culture is welcome at school (P2, March 23, 2020).
- I don't feel like my culture is welcomed at school (P3, March 25, 2020).
- I get in trouble when I speak Spanish at school in most of my classes, but Spanish is part of who I am, and I hate having to hide my language (P3, March 25, 2020).
- My culture isn't welcome at school (P4, March 26, 2020).
- I think I would have liked books about Spanish people or culture (P4, March 26, 2020).

- I think I would have liked to see my culture embraced more at school. I didn't care about white guys or European guys (P4, March 26, 2020).
- My ESL teacher takes us to the library, and we pick books for book study and that's cool because I get to choose my own books but also there aren't any books that talk about Spanish culture or anything like that (P4, March 26, 2020).
- I play on the soccer team because it's the only thing that reminds me of home (P5, March 27, 2020).
- We don't do anything in classes that remind me of home (P5, March 27, 2020).

The initial seven codes were collapsed down into three larger themes. The themes began to give the researcher a chance to describe the phenomenon pertinent to the participants' experiences of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). NVivo software allowed the researcher to drag and drop quotes into the accompanying code. By clicking on each code, the researcher was able to see what percentage of each participant transcript was given to each code. The researcher also noted several instances where quotes fit into multiple codes, and used discretion to determine how closely related each code was for each participant. From there the researcher was able to collapse the codes into themes, based on the percentages presented by NVivo.

The next steps for analysis included integrating the findings into an exhaustive description of the phenomenon being investigated, followed, in conclusion, by description of the fundamental structure of the phenomenon. This step included syntheses of all the meanings and essences in an attempt to create a unified explanation of the experiences of culturally familiar experiences of LatinX high school students. Through this synthesis, the researcher is able to appreciate the impacts of shared experiences.

Presentation of Data and Results of Analysis

The purpose of this study was to understand, and learn more about, the lived experiences of LatinX high school students in regard to culturally familiar curriculum, and to learn about their preferences, if any. Utilizing Colaizzi's method for analysis highlighted and illuminated the experience of each participant, which led to the essence of the phenomenon of the experiences of LatinX students and their experiences with culturally familiar curriculum.

Themes for Participants

Using the themes developed through data coding and NVivo Qualitative Software, the researcher was able to begin writing a description of the phenomenological experience of the participants. The themes that emerged regarding the textural (i.e., experiences and feelings) and structural experience (i.e., relationships and materiality) of culturally familiar curriculum for LatinX students included: (1) Learning to Fit In, (2) Community, and (3) Culturally Unfamiliar and Unwelcoming

Definition of Themes

Learning to Fit In

- When I got to school in America, my teacher would yell at me because I didn't know any English, but I also didn't know very much Spanish, and I was afraid to speak, so then I became mute. I didn't speak to anyone for over two years because I didn't know which language was the right language to speak and I didn't understand either of them very well, and I was afraid of getting in trouble so I wouldn't speak to anyone about anything (P1, March 23, 2020).

The participants overwhelmingly reported experiences of not being able to fit in with peers and teachers, not having the social currency to navigate United States school systems, feeling embarrassed and being behind, and feeling misunderstood by peers, friends, teachers, and even their own communities. Participants reported getting in trouble for speaking in Spanish and expressed a desire to correct the misconceptions around culturally familiar holidays but refrained, noting feelings of constraints and the desire to fit in and seemingly fly under the radar.

Community

- But when I go to my community, I am called a "coconut" because my Spanish is rusty because I'm never allowed to speak it. A coconut is a person that is dark on the outside, white on the inside (P1, March 23, 2020).

Participants reflected on the warmth and safety of their community, but also reflected on external pressures they felt to keep up their language and culture, even though that weren't learning about themselves and their heritage at school. Participants described feeling rusty with the Spanish and being made fun of, lovingly, by people in their community. Participants also talked about the desire to spend more time with and connect with peers that looked and talked like them at school, as these people and interactions felt like home. Participants were overall proud of their community and proud of their culture.

Culturally Unfamiliar and Unwelcoming

- I get in trouble when I speak Spanish at school in most of my classes, but Spanish is part of who I am, and I hate having to hide my language (P4, March 26, 2020).

Participants were unable to recall culturally familiar assignments, activities, or readings. One participant recalled reading, *The House on Mango Street*, by Sandra Cisneros, which was unintentionally the author of the CF tasks chosen from this study. Outside of Cisneros, participants could not speak to experiences regarding culturally familiar texts, though they all expressed an interest in reading books written in Spanish, or about Spanish characters. They expressed a desire to learn more about themselves and their culture and admitted that they did not find the current curriculum to be engaging as they were unable to see themselves in the stories.

Overall Findings and Interpretation of Findings

To address the final research question, the researcher sought to understand the experiences of LatinX secondary students. From the themes that were extracted from each participant, the synthesis revealed overall meanings that illuminate the experiences of LatinX secondary students and their experiences with culturally familiar curriculum. The five participants each separately articulated what it feels like to be a LatinX student learning academic English. The composite description pairs the participants' experiences with the overall themes (learning to fit in; community' culturally unfamiliar and unwelcoming) to unearth the phenomenon of being a high school LatinX ELL student.

The participants allowed the researcher into their lives, and showed transparency, honesty, and gave candid answers that allowed the researcher to explore the vulnerability behind their experiences. Participants were comforted to know that the honesty behind their answers might potentially help future students, which was one of the driving forces behind the transparent responses and thoughtful answers the participants gave. When describing the essence of learning to fit it, each participant shared a story or memory

regarding being submerged into a new culture without the words, tools, or currency to survive in that culture. Each participant allowed the researcher to engage in dialogic questioning where the participants eventually opened up to reveal how he/she learned when and where Spanish was allowed. Participants recounted being chastised for speaking in Spanish, even though they did not yet have the words for English and spoke to how vulnerable and nervous it made them. Participant 1 told an especially harrowing story about how she was repeatedly yelled at for speaking Spanish and how mortifying and embarrassing it was to be the new girl at school who didn't know enough English to make any friends but got in trouble when she spoke in Spanish. P1 recounted the traumatic experience of being yelled at over and over and not knowing which language was the right language to speak, until she eventually refused to speak at all and went two full years without uttering a word in either language.

Across the board, participants had trouble remembering a single instance where they were given a culturally familiar task or reading passage. Participant 1 remembered reading *House on Mango Street*, by Sandra Cisernos, but admitted that the plot of the story made her sad as the grandmother was forced to give up her Spanish and learn English. All participants admitted to feeling bored and unamused with continually learning and reading about white characters and European characters. Though participants identified as Hispanic, it was stated that they would have happily accepted a text or story about a character from Spain. Even though Spain is not considered part of Hispanic culture, participants felt it would be more relatable than a European character. Additionally, participants reported feeling disconnected from readings and activities because the lives, cultures, language, and family interactions are not familiar to them.

Participants reported that it was difficult to connect and relate to the stories because the themes were unfamiliar. Several of the participants also reported participating in a book club within their ESL class, but also stated that the books in the library at their school are primary about white or American characters, so leisure reading is not always accessible.

Finally, participants overwhelmingly felt safe and comfortable within their communities. They reported that their communities are looked down on, located on the wrong side of town, or are in the "ghetto" (P1), but that they love their communities, regardless. Multiple participants reported being lovingly made fun of because their Spanish is rusty due to a lack of practice at school. Participants feel supported, safe, welcome, and a part of the Mexican community, where they have great parties, great food, great dancing, and take care of one another. They are allowed to speak Spanish within their communities and taking care of their family and community is extremely important, even if it means missing school and getting behind in classes. Participants wished for more experiences to learn about themselves and their cultures at school and cling to their culture and the things that feel like home within their families and community and go out of their way to engage with people and activities that feel safe.

Summary of Qualitative Findings

The participants experiences, analyzed with Colaizzi's (2003) framework for Phenomenological inquiry, provided a bounty of information in response to the research question: What is the experience of culturally familiar curriculum for LatinX high school students? To what extent do LatinX high school students show preference? The participants each shared many of the same themes of: Learning to Fit In, Community, and Culturally Unfamiliar and Unwelcoming.

All participants noted struggles with learning to fit in, learning to navigate social and societal norms without the social or societal currencies, desiring activities and readings that felt familiar or comfortable, and feeling proud and safe in their communities. From being in trouble for speaking Spanish in class, which ranged from simple reprimands to the absolute refusal to speak for years, participants each identified how and when they learned where it was and was not safe to speak in Spanish at school. In particular, participant 1 (P1) recounted several traumatic events surrounding her experiences learning to navigate United States Schools. P1 discussed not knowing enough English to speak at school, but also did not know enough Spanish to communicate, so she never knew which was the right language to speak. P1 stated that after several weeks of constantly being in trouble for speaking the wrong language, she became mute for two years. P1 recounted her experiences being mute, which eventually led to her misdiagnosis for special education services through a battery of tests ranging from verbal ability tests to IQ tests.

Participant five (P5) described getting in trouble for skipping school on the days that were important to the Spanish culture, such as Dia de Los Muertos and Cinco de Mayo, because these days were important to him and his family, but weren't acceptable days to miss school. P5 also talked about how he felt embarrassed when he was "called out" in front of the whole class for speaking Spanish to a friend. He recalled being confused and not understanding why he couldn't speak Spanish to a friend to help understand an assignment.

Participants also described some of the beautiful parts of their culture and communities, and the ways in which they celebrate and feel safe and loved when they

aren't always feeling those things at school. Participant two (P2) discusses how they feel safe within their family and community, and how welcoming the community makes everyone feel. P2 describes how the community helps one another out, how families help one another, how everyone takes care of everyone else and how safe and loved they all feel. P1 stated that while others refer to her community as "the ghetto", she understands that it is looked down on yet she doesn't care. She feels welcome and loved in her community, even if it is "ghetto" to others. Participant 4 (P4) talks about how the community is really close and they celebrate everything and everyone together. P4 and P5 also talk about how they seek out places to fit in at school that feel close to what their community provides. They talk about the importance of their culture and how much fun their community is. P5 says that others think he lives on the "bad" side of town, but to him it just feels like home.

And finally, participants described wanting to learn more about themselves and their cultures at school and expressed how difficult it can be to learn something new when you can't relate and don't see yourself within the characters or stories being taught. P4 talks about going to the library to select personal books for book club, but there are never any library books that talk about Spanish culture or have Spanish characters. Participants described their theories on how they feel they are looked down on and hypothesized why they are looked down on. P2 has never felt their culture has ever been welcomed at school, and P3, P4, and P5 echoed these sentiments in their own interviews. All participants, though, were hopeful that maybe future generations might feel safer and more accepted at school, and one day other LatinX students might get to read stories with characters that look like them. P1 stated that while it was difficult to remember some of

the traumatic events from her younger years of learning to speak English, knowing that her stories might one day help future students is an uplifting hope.

Integration and Chapter Summary

The quantitative strand of this study was conducted if statistically significant differences existed among reading comprehension and summary writing scores when high school LatinX students were given a culturally familiar task, versus a culturally unfamiliar task. English Language Proficiency Standard scores for both reading comprehension and writing were used as pretest scores, and statistical analysis revealed group equivalency for both the CF and CUF groups. Following group equivalency, analysis was conducted to reveal significant differences in group averages in reading comprehension, as well as summary writing. An effect size of $g = 0.58$ was generate for the reading comprehension analysis, and an effect size of $g = 0.29$ was generated for summary writing.

The results of the qualitative analysis of the semi-structured interviews revealed the following three themes: (1) Learning to Fit In, (2) Community, and (3) Culturally Unfamiliar and Unwelcoming. Participants used a variety of experiences and stories to reveal similar themes, and noted struggles at school, the desire to feel safe, pressures to abandon their culture and then feel simultaneous pressures from community when they do. Participants each told stories about getting in trouble for speaking Spanish at school and in classes, and they overwhelmingly yearned to learn about themselves and see themselves more in curriculum. Participants explained a difficulty with engagement as they can't see themselves in most of the curriculum, and find it hard to relate to stories

and things being taught as there is a cultural barrier between what is assumed to be understood.

The results of the qualitative strand offer and explanation for the results in the quantitative strand. The participants stated that they have very rarely, if at all, been given curriculum, readings, or content that in any way touches on their culture or background. Results suggest that when students are given a culturally familiar task, they might be more engaged, interested, and perhaps able to access prior knowledge. The results indicate that there is a significant difference in reading and writing achievement for LatinX ELL students when they can relate to, and see themselves in, the content.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the impacts of utilizing a culturally familiar text, as compared to a culturally unfamiliar text, on reading comprehension and summary writing outcomes for secondary LatinX English Language Learners (ELL). This study sought to determine if there would be a statistically significant difference in reading and writing outcomes when students were given a culturally familiar task versus a culturally unfamiliar task. Culturally familiar curriculum is a large tenet of CRP, and this study aimed to measure the impact of this specific tenet, while taking student preference and voice into account. To meet this point, an explanatory sequential mixed methods design was chosen to determine the impacts of culturally relevant reading passages while also providing student voice through qualitative interviewing. Group equivalency was established using students' ELPS reading and writing scores, as provided by the participating school district.

To determine the impacts of culturally familiar curriculum, two narrative selections, both fictional, were identified. The passages were similar in word count, difficulty, and reading ease. To assess differences, seven questions per passage were created to determine comprehension, followed by two open-ended writing prompts. Finally, six students were chosen for semi-structured interviews. This study sought to answer three research questions: This study will address the following research questions:

1. What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students?
2. What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students?
3. What is the experience of culturally familiar curriculum for secondary LatinX students? To what extent do secondary LatinX students show preference?

Summary of Findings

Group equivalence was established prior to random assignment to the CF or CUF tasks. Findings from the first research question, (1) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? included a paired samples *t*-test to determine statistical significance between CF and CUF tasks. Analysis identified distinctions between the CF task versus the CUF task in summary reading comprehension, which suggest that providing LatinX students with culturally familiar curriculum or assignments might positively impact academic outcomes in this area (CF; $p < .05$). Chapter one described two research problems: culturally relevant interventions in the upper grades, and culturally relevant texts for LatinX students and activation or prior knowledge. The findings from this study address both research problems, as the results indicate that culturally relevant texts and activation or prior knowledge for LatinX students might serve as a positive intervention for LatinX students in the upper secondary grades. Ladson-Billings (1994) offers a successful model for the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students, which demands that the incorporation of students' home language and culture into the classroom can be used to

promote cultural competence, which is key to further academic success. The results of this study indicate agreement that the incorporation of students' home language and culture might advance academic success in the area of reading comprehension. The average reading comprehension score for the CF task was 90.77 (SD = 11.42, range: 71-100), while the average reading comprehension score for the CUF task was 83.69 (SD = 12.76, range: 57-100). This difference represents a mean score for the CF task 7.08 points higher than the CUF task, which contribute to existing literature. Findings from this study align with Ladson-Billings, but also Vygotsky and his assertions that learners create knowledge by building on, and referencing past experiences. Culturally relevant pedagogy, and the various aspects of CRP, might enhance student learning for LatinX populations when acquiring second language acquisition. Findings from this study also suggest that cultural familiarity of text might positively affect reading comprehension outcomes.

Additionally, findings from this study might be able to fill a small hole in the current gap in literature. The previous systematic review discussed in chapter two revealed only one study in the past 20 years that described a measurable impact in the upper secondary grades. Of the included nine studies, two studies were based in grades 1-4, six studies were based in grades 4-8, and one study was based in grades 9-12. This upper secondary study (Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2010) delivered culturally aligned resources in an American History class (n=45). This study might be one of the first studies to measure the impacts of culturally relevant interventions on reading comprehension outcomes in the upper secondary grades. The positive findings from this study warrant additional research in this area.

Findings from the second research question, (2) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? included a paired samples *t*-test to determine statistical significance between CF and CUF tasks. Analysis identified distinctions between the CF task versus the CUF task in summary writing, which suggest that providing LatinX students with culturally familiar curriculum or assignments might positively impact academic outcomes in this area. In answering the second research question, findings suggest that providing a culturally familiar reading passage positively impacts students' writing outcomes using the WIDA rubric (CF; $p <. 05$). The findings of this study align with previous research conducted in the area of summary writing. Janopoulos (1986) previously found that college students who were allowed to read texts they enjoyed and found relevant showed an increase in academic writing outcomes, while noting a statistically significant strength between reading and writing for ELL students. Mean writing scores for the CF task versus the CUF task were notably higher (CF: $M = 4.42$, $SD = .89$; CUF: $M = 4.15$, $SD = .97$). The findings of this study address the research problems stated in chapter one, stating that current literature lacks culturally relevant interventions in the upper grades, and activation of prior knowledge for LatinX students is essential for academic growth.

Additionally, this study contributes to the current body of literature focused on culturally relevant interventions. The systematic review described in chapter two revealed only nine studies that measurable impacts for culturally relevant interventions. Of these nine included studies, there were none that looked at academic outcomes for writing. The findings of this study address a hole in the current literature, as there are currently zero studies in circulation that address culturally relevant interventions for the area of writing.

The results of this study indicate that there is an additional need for more CRP interventions, specifically in this area of writing.

The third research question, within the qualitative strand of the study (3) What is the experience of culturally familiar curriculum for secondary LatinX students? To what extent do secondary LatinX students show preference? This question was answered using Phenomenological semi-structured interviews. The participants each shared many of the same sentiments that fell into the themes of: Learning to Fit In, Community, and Culturally Unfamiliar and Unwelcoming. Findings from this research question were rich and meaningful. The results of these interviews illuminated the experiences of secondary LatinX students, and gave voice to these students regarding their preferences, struggles, and celebrations at school.

Participants were unable to recall culturally familiar assignments, though they each expressed a desire for such. Multiple participants recalled lacking academic vocabulary in Spanish, which made development in the second language even more of a barrier. The findings from these interviews align with previous research by Ladson Billings (1994) and Geneva Gay (2018), citing that culturally and linguistically diverse students must be able to engage with the curriculum and make sense of what they're learning within their own lives. Additionally, the results of these interviews add to a growing body of literature specifically for LatinX students. Prior research (Valenzuela, 1999) reports that many schools ask LatinX students to leave their culture and experiences at the door before entering the classroom. Many of the participants in this study described receiving embarrassing punishments in classes for speaking their native language, even when it was to better understand an assignment. Participants also

described feeling that they are a lesser culture, their community is on the "wrong side of town", and that they are "lazy". All of these sentiments contribute to prior research on LatinX students where students have indicated that US schools "fracture students' cultural and ethnic identities" (Valenzuela, 1999 & Gee, 2000).

Results of this research question address the research problems stated in chapter one, which describe a lack of culturally relevant materials, and a lack of culturally relevant materials specifically for the upper secondary grades. One of the participants recalled reading *House on Mango Street* for a class when she was younger. Though she was the only participant to recall a single culturally familiar text or assignment, the opportunity to read something that spoke to her background remained a positive memory, even though this opportunity was not made available once she entered high school. The remaining participants unfortunately struggled to recall a single time a culturally relevant text was made available to them at any point during their public-school education.

Limitations

One limitation of this study was the small sample size. In chapter two the researcher discussed conducting a systematic review, which spanned from 1998-2019, and yielded seven studies from which an average calculable effect size was derived. The average reported effect size was g=.40 (Kelley et al., 2015; Lo et al., 2015; Powell et al., 2016; Riskowski & Olbricht, 2010). A power analysis in statistical software package G power reported the need for 58 participants in order to obtain an effect size of g=.40. The researcher was able to obtain 62 students total, but this is still a relatively small sample size.

Another limitation of the study was the lack of diversity in the sample. This study focused on solely LatinX students ELL students and excluded students who did not identify as ELL via a home language survey. Students that might have self-identified as ELL were not included because district policy states that indication of ELL status on a home language survey grants access to a self-contained ELL classroom. The findings of this study, however, hope to inform changes that could be transferrable to other demographics.

An additional limitation to this study was the outbreak of COVID-19 during the IRB process. Fortunately, the researcher was able to work with a school who had already committed to online learning, but the lack of face to face human interaction changed the study. Though the researcher gave explicit instructions and trusted the participating teacher to implement study materials correctly, there was no way for the researcher to double check this. Also, because all in-person interactions were suspended, the researcher had to conduct all student interviews over the phone. The researcher relied entirely on the participating teacher to schedule and facilitate these interactions. Conducting the interviews over the phone generated wonderful data and helped potentially eliminate biases, but it also removed the aspect of human interaction that is often so important for qualitative work.

A final limitation for this study was that this study focused only on improvements to reading and writing. While reading and writing is often a constant in many content areas other than English, the choice to focus on literacy alone was a drawback of this study. There are also likely interventions that could serve in additional content areas, such as math, science, history, and electives, however these were not considerations.

Implications for School-Based Interventions

This study sought to determine the impacts of culturally familiar texts on student impacts in reading and writing. The results of this study contribute to a richer understanding of student culture and the various assets that cultures bring to classrooms. Findings from previous studies suggested that culturally relevant teaching approaches can positively impact student academic outcomes in reading recall, reading comprehension, and writing. Results from the systematic review described in chapter two indicate a need for more research specifically for English Language Learners, but also a need for more research in the upper secondary grades.

The findings from this study align with the findings from the previous studies described, where culturally relevant practices positively impact student academic outcomes in both reading comprehension and writing tasks. These results indicate implications for school-based interventions when consideration is given to literacy lessons, specifically for LatinX students. Results are promising and add to the research base for improving reading and writing outcomes for LatinX ELL students. School based interventions could focus on building up academic language in the native language. Many students in the qualitative strand described growing up and being behind in schools in their home countries due to lack of resources, the need to work, familiar commitments, etc. Students recalled being behind in their native language, then coming to the United States and falling further behind.

Next, school-based interventions could focus on providing more choice of materials and curriculum to teach objectives. This study focused on a highly recognized author in the LatinX population, but future research might expand to incorporate student

choices within specific parameters to engage higher order thinking skills when students can identify with and relate to what they are learning and reading.

Recommendations for Future Research

Chapter one discussed the amount of available literature in the field of culturally relevant pedagogy, and the need for more research in this area. While this study carves space for a very under-researched population, there is still a need for additional research. Based on this documented need, future research might focus on three different areas: First, there is a need for additional mixed methods research in the area of culturally relevant teaching, pedagogy, and education. Chapter two described the lack of mixed methods research available for all culturally relevant research, which is a disadvantage to the field of culturally relevant education, and a hole this study attempted to fill. Mixed methods research is robust and gives insight into quantitative findings based on qualitative explanations. Mixed methods research results in a more comprehensive understanding and explanation of the research problem (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2017).

Secondly, this study focused specifically on LatinX students, but there are many minoritized populations that might benefit from research centered around culturally relevant practices. The United States Census Bureau (2018) reports the cultural composition of the country is rapidly changing. Across the country, the number of citizens and students who identify as White continues to decrease while those that identify as African American, Hispanic or Latino, and Asian continue to increase. Additionally, there continues to be an increasing number of students who attend United States public schools from a wide array of diverse cultural, linguistic, and ethnic backgrounds (He, Vetter, & Fairbanks, 2014) which suggests a dire need for additional

research in these areas. Future research should continue to focus on culturally and linguistically diverse students. The systematic review conducted in chapter two outlined a need for additional research for culturally and linguistically diverse populations. This study only touched on one of those populations, though there are many more that exist. Based on this documented need, it is proposed that additional research is needed in this area to better understand the relationship between reading comprehension and summary writing when students are able to activate necessary prior knowledge related to the tasks.

Third, there is a specific need for additional research for culturally and linguistically diverse populations in the upper secondary grades. The systematic review discussed in chapter two described nine included studies, of which 867 students were participants. Of those 867 students, only 45 students were enrolled in grades 9-12. Yet the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) reading scale for non-ELL elementary and secondary students reports non-ELL students outperforming their peers by 37 and 43 points, respectively, which indicates a dire need for additional research in the upper secondary grades if this disparity in outcomes is to be rectified.

Finally, future research could focus on a larger sample size. Time and funding constraints, as well as COVID-19, prohibited this study from obtaining a larger sample size. However, future research could explore the aforementioned suggestions with a much larger sample size. A larger pool of participants could be used to determine if results are possibly transferrable to other culturally and linguistically diverse demographics.

Summary

The aim of this study was to answer the following three research questions: (1) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? (2) What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? (3) What is the experience of culturally familiar curriculum for LatinX high school students? To what extent do LatinX high school students show preference? Results from analysis in answering the first two questions suggest that using culturally familiar reading passages have positive impacts for reading comprehension and writing tasks for secondary LatinX students. Results from the analysis of the third research question revealed that LatinX ELL students rarely, if ever, are given the opportunity to interact with culturally familiar curriculum. Students report feeling unwelcome and unwanted at school, and would enjoy and appreciate the opportunity to learn more about themselves and see themselves in the content they're learning at school.

Overall, this research adds to an understudied topic by indicating that literacy outcomes, specifically reading comprehension and writing, can be improved for secondary LatinX students by providing culturally familiar texts and reading passages. Future research is needed for additional culturally and linguistically diverse populations, and future research is needed to further inspect the growing achievement gap in reading among non-ELL students and their peers. Future research might also benefit from a mixed methods approach, as there is very little research currently in existence that uses this methodology, though mixed methods approaches often provides a more comprehensive understanding of findings.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Principal Recruitment Letter.

Dear _____,

My name is Taryn Robertson and I am a Graduate Research Assistant in the Morgridge College of Education at the University of Denver. As a part of my doctoral dissertation, I am conducting a research study about the impacts on reading and writing outcomes when using culturally familiar texts. My study seeks to address the following research question: What is the impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? Is there a measurable impact of using culturally familiar texts on reading comprehension and writing outcomes for secondary LatinX ELL students? Do LatinX high school students show preference to familiar curriculum as opposed to non-familiar curriculum?

The research design for this study is a mixed methods study, where students will have the opportunity to participate in reading a passage, answering seven comprehension questions, and creating a summary of their reading. Following, students will have a chance to voice their feelings and stories in a semi-structure interview focus group. Therefore, I am seeking high school ELL classroom that meets the following criteria: (a) classroom that is predominantly students who identify as native Spanish speakers (b) students are enrolled in grades 9-10.

If you decide to participate, your participation would involve no more than 90 minutes in which I provide a brief reading, followed by comprehension questions and a writing prompt, finishing with a one on one student interview. All information collected will be de-identified and entirely confidential.

If you are interested in learning more about the study, or if you have questions, please contact me at Taryn.Robertson@du.edu. The University of Denver faculty sponsor on this project, Dr. Garrett Roberts, may be contacted at Garrett.Roberts@du.edu.

Do you know of a classroom that might a good fit for this study? Please send me their name and I will contact them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Taryn Robertson

Appendix B. Culturally Familiar Task Questions.

A: Culturally familiar reading comprehension questions.

Please answer each question by circling the correct choice. You may look back in the passage to help you answer each question.

(1) When does Abuelito tell Arturo it is time to close the shop?
   (a) After the balloon man has sold all but the ugliest balloons, the shoeshining men are done, and the women have packed up dishes.
   (b) After the women frying the food have sold all the food.
   (c) After Arturo says he is ready to go home.
   (d) After the sun goes down and they break the last of the piñatas.

(2) Where does the family live?
   (a) On the corner of Mysterios
   (b) La Fortuna, #12
   (c) Mysterios and Cinco de Mayo
   (d) La Pollusa, #13

(3) Where does Abuelito put the money when he is done counting?
   (a) He gives it to the women who fry the food.
   (b) He deposits it in the bank on the way home.
   (c) He puts it in a paper sack that he carries home.
   (d) He gives some to Arturo, and gives the rest to Abuelita.

(4) How many steps does the narrator count with Abuelito before they arrive inside their home?
   (a) 3
   (b) 19
   (c) 22
   (d) 32

(5) Based on the narrator's telling of the story, how does he most likely feel upon returning home after his Abuelito and Abuelita have passed?
   (a) Excited
   (b) Sad and reminiscent
   (c) Wishful and happy
   (d) Angry

(6) Based on the narrator's portrayal of Tepeyac, make the best prediction about his family life growing up.
   (a) The family was very close and lived together and worked together.
   (b) The family was very close but the narrator was excited to leave.
   (c) The family was distant and the narrator disliked living in Tepeyac.
   (d) The family had a big fight and the narrator wanted them to make up.

(7) The author wrote this story most likely to:
   (a) The narrator is sentimental and wanted to reflect on time spent in his hometown with his Abuelito and Abuelita.
   (b) The narrator hated Tepeyac and wanted to talk about what an ugly place it was.

(c) The narrator was sad that his Abuelito died and wanted to remember where his Abuelito worked.
(d) The narrator never thought Tepeyac was special until he came back as an adult.

B: Summary writing
What is this story about? Give a summary of what you read.

Appendix C. Culturally Unfamiliar Task Questions.

A: Culturally unfamiliar reading comprehension questions.

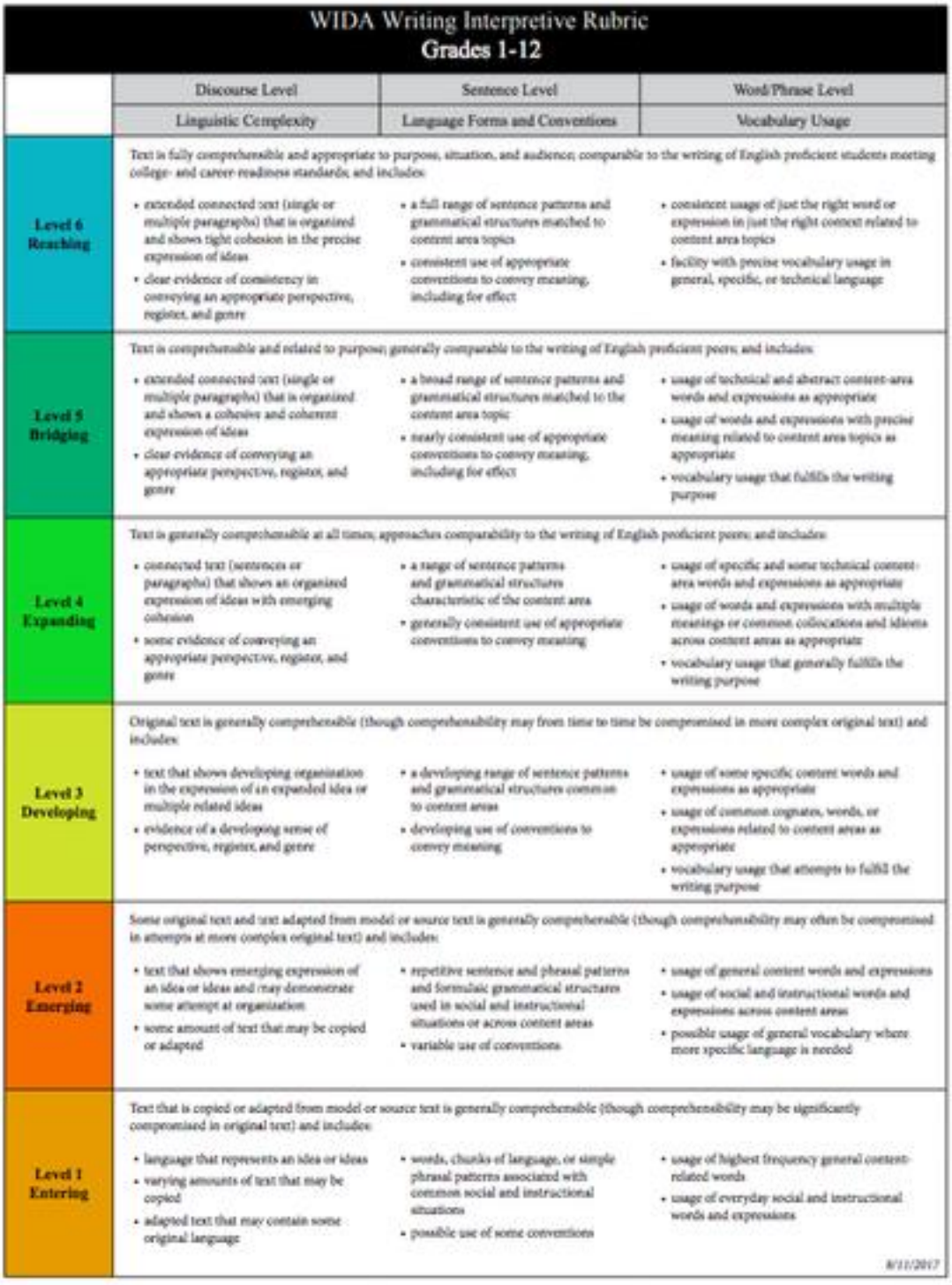
Please answer each question by circling the correct choice. You may look back in the passage to help you answer each question.

(1) At what time do the guys call a truce?
   (a) Two o'clock
   (b) Four o'clock
   (c) One o'clock
   (d) Dinnertime
(2) Why does Connor want everyone to stop talking?
   (a) He has a headache
   (b) He is sick
   (c) He is trying to fish
   (d) He is trying to take a nap
(3) Why did Aiden and Connor fire three shots in the air?
   (a) To scare anyone from coming to their camp
   (b) To pay respect for the dead solider
   (c) They were sick from the catfish they ate
   (d) They were angry with the other troops
(4) What do the characters add to their tobacco?
   (a) Leaves
   (b) Dirt
   (c) Coffee
   (d) Cinnamon
(5) Based on the telling of the story, how do you think the boys most likely feel about each other?
   (a) They want to kill each other, so they shoot at one another
   (b) They pretend to hate but actually like each other
   (c) They don't know each other very well so they don't talk much
   (d) They really like each other and look out for each other
(6) Based on the descriptions in the story, what season do you think it is?
   (a) Winter
   (b) Fall
   (c) Summer
   (d) Spring
(7) The author most likely wrote this story to:
   (a) Show how hard life is during a war
   (b) Show humor and love despite being on different sides of the fight
   (c) Show how many men die during a war
   (d) Show how being hungry makes you act crazy

B: Summary writing

What is this story about? Give a summary of what you read.

Appendix D. WIDA Writing Interpretive Rubric.



WIDA Writing Interpretive Rubric
Grades 1-12

	Discourse Level Linguistic Complexity	Sentence Level Language Forms and Conventions	Word/Phrase Level Vocabulary Usage
Level 6 Reaching	Text is fully comprehensible and appropriate to purpose, situation, and audience; comparable to the writing of English proficient students meeting college- and career-readiness standards; and includes: • extended connected text (single or multiple paragraphs) that is organized and shows tight cohesion in the precise expression of ideas • clear evidence of consistency in conveying an appropriate perspective, register, and genre	• a full range of sentence patterns and grammatical structures matched to content area topics • consistent use of appropriate conventions to convey meaning, including for effect	• consistent usage of just the right word or expression in just the right context related to content area topics • facility with precise vocabulary usage in general, specific, or technical language
Level 5 Bridging	Text is comprehensible and related to purpose; generally comparable to the writing of English proficient peers; and includes: • extended connected text (single or multiple paragraphs) that is organized and shows a cohesive and coherent expression of ideas • clear evidence of conveying an appropriate perspective, register, and genre	• a broad range of sentence patterns and grammatical structures matched to the content area topic • nearly consistent use of appropriate conventions to convey meaning, including for effect	• usage of technical and abstract content-area words and expressions as appropriate • usage of words and expressions with precise meaning related to content area topics as appropriate • vocabulary usage that fulfills the writing purpose
Level 4 Expanding	Text is generally comprehensible at all times; approaches comparability to the writing of English proficient peers; and includes: • connected text (sentences or paragraphs) that shows an organized expression of ideas with emerging cohesion • some evidence of conveying an appropriate perspective, register, and genre	• a range of sentence patterns and grammatical structures characteristic of the content area • generally consistent use of appropriate conventions to convey meaning	• usage of specific and some technical content-area words and expressions as appropriate • usage of words and expressions with multiple meanings or common collocations and idioms across content areas as appropriate • vocabulary usage that generally fulfills the writing purpose
Level 3 Developing	Original text is generally comprehensible (though comprehensibility may from time to time be compromised in more complex original text) and includes: • text that shows developing organization in the expression of an expanded idea or multiple related ideas • evidence of a developing sense of perspective, register, and genre	• a developing range of sentence patterns and grammatical structures common to content areas • developing use of conventions to convey meaning	• usage of some specific content words and expressions as appropriate • usage of common cognates, words, or expressions related to content areas as appropriate • vocabulary usage that attempts to fulfill the writing purpose
Level 2 Emerging	Some original text and text adapted from model or source text is generally comprehensible (though comprehensibility may often be compromised in attempts at more complex original text) and includes: • text that shows emerging expression of an idea or ideas and may demonstrate some attempt at organization • some amount of text that may be copied or adapted	• repetitive sentence and phrasal patterns and formulaic grammatical structures used in social and instructional situations or across content areas • variable use of conventions	• usage of general content words and expressions • usage of social and instructional words and expressions across content areas • possible usage of general vocabulary where more specific language is needed
Level 1 Entering	Text that is copied or adapted from model or source text is generally comprehensible (though comprehensibility may be significantly compromised in original text) and includes: • language that represents an idea or ideas • varying amounts of text that may be copied • adapted text that may contain some original language	• words, chunks of language, or simple phrasal patterns associated with common social and instructional situations • possible use of some conventions	• usage of highest frequency general content-related words • usage of everyday social and instructional words and expressions

8/11/2017

Appendix E. Parent Permission Form.

Parent or Guardian Permission Form
for Child's Participation in Research

Title of Research Study: Culturally Familiar Texts to Improve Reading and Writing Outcomes for High School English Language Learners: An Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Study. Do students perform better on reading and writing tasks when they are familiar with the texts?
Principal Investigator: Taryn Robertson, MEd

Faculty Sponsor: Garrett Roberts, PhD

Study Site: Culturally Active High School, Culturally Active Independent School District

Your child is being asked to participate in a research study. *Participation in this research is voluntary and they do not have to participate.* Your child may decline to participate or to withdraw from participation at any time. Withdrawal or refusing to participate will not affect their relationship with the University of Denver in any way. You can agree to allow your child to be in the study now and change your mind later without any penalty. If your child does not wish to participate, they may work on an alternate assignment, as decided by their teacher. This document contains important information about this study and what to expect if your child participates.

The purpose of this form is to provide you (as the parent or guardian of a prospective research study participant) information that may affect your decision as to whether or not to let your child participate in this research study. The person performing the research will describe the study to you and answer all of your questions. Read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether or not to give your permission for your child to take part. If you decide to let your child be involved in this study, this form will be used to record your permission.

This research study will take place during regular class activities and also serves as preparation for the ACCESS/CELA/TELPAS exams your child will take next year.

What if my child does not want to participate?
In addition to your permission, your child must agree to participate in the study. *If your child does not want to participate, they will not be included in the study and there will be no penalty.* If your child initially agrees to be in the study, they can change their mind later without any penalty.

Purpose of the Study
If you agree, your child will be asked to participate in a research study about reading and writing comprehension tasks when the curriculum is familiar to your child's culture. The

purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of how reading and writing tasks that are familiar to our children can impact instruction.

What is my child going to be asked to do?

If you allow your child to participate in this study, they will be asked to read two reading passages, answer 7 questions for each passage, and respond in a paragraph regarding what they read. This study will take no more than 60 minutes. There will be approximately 60 other people in this study.

If you choose to participate in this study, your child may be audio recorded for a brief interview. During your child's online class time, they may call the researcher at 512-937-8497 to participate in an interview. Any audio recordings will be stored securely and only the lead researcher will have access to the recordings. Recordings will be kept for one month, and then erased. Audio recordings will be transcribed, but your child will be given a numerical ID and will never be referred to by name. All recordings and transcripts will be securely stored and will only be used for dissertation purposes, possible publications, and maybe conference presentations.

This is a research study and, therefore, not intended to provide a medical or therapeutic diagnosis or treatment.

What you will you be asked to do in the study?

If you agree to let your child(ren) participate in this research study, you will not be asked to do anything as it relates to the study. All administration will occur during your child's ESL time.

What are the risks involved in this study?

There are no expected risks to participating in this study.

What are the possible benefits of this study?

While your child will not benefit directly from participation in this study, I believe the results could help improve the education they receive

How will your child's privacy and confidentiality be protected if s/he participates in this research study?

Your child's privacy and the confidentiality of his/her data will be protected using password protected files. All students will be given a unique ID. Your child's name will never be used. All original materials will be destroyed within one month. Your child's name will not be used in any report. Identifiable research data will be encrypted, and password protected.

Your child's responses will be assigned a code number. The list connecting their name to this code will be kept in an encrypted and password protected file. Only the lead researcher will have access to the file. When the study is completed and the data have been analyzed, the list will be destroyed.

Representatives from the University of Denver may also review the research records for monitoring purposes.

Use of your child's information for future research

All identifiable information (e.g., your child's name, date of birth) will be removed from the information or samples collected in this project. After we remove all identifiers, the information or samples may be used for future research or shared with other researchers without your additional informed consent.

Data Sharing

De-identified data from this study may be shared with the research community at large to advance science and health. We will remove or code any personal information (e.g., your child's name, date of birth) that could identify your child before files are shared with other researchers to ensure that, by current scientific standards and known methods, no one will be able to identify your child from the information or samples we share. Despite these measures, we cannot guarantee anonymity of your child's personal data.

Whom to contact with questions about the study?

Prior, during or after your participation you can contact the researcher Taryn Robertson at Taryn.Robertson@du.edu for any questions or if you feel that you have been harmed. This study has been reviewed and approved by The University of Denver's Institutional Review Board and the study number is 1546527-1.

The Faculty Sponsor overseeing this project is Dr. Garrett Roberts and may be reached at Garrett.Roberts@du.edu

Whom to contact with questions concerning your rights as a research participant?

For questions about your rights or any dissatisfaction with any part of this study, you can contact, anonymously if you wish, the University of Denver (DU) Institutional Review Board by phone at (303) 871-2121 or email at IRBAdmin@du.edu.

Consent to video / audio recording / photography solely for purposes of this research

This study involves audio recording. If you do not agree to be recorded, you can still take part in the study.

_____ YES, I agree to allow my child to be audio recorded.

_____ NO, I do not agree to allow my child to be audio recorded.

You are making a decision about allowing your child to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you have read the information provided above and have decided to allow them to participate in the study. If you later decide that you wish to withdraw your permission for your child to participate in the study, you may discontinue his or her participation at any time. You will be given a copy of this document.

_____

Printed Name of Child

_____	_____
Signature of Parent/Guardian	**Date**

Appendix F. Translated Parent Permission Form (Spanish).

Formulario de permiso para padres o tutores
para la participación del niño en la investigación

Título del estudio de investigación: Textos culturalmente familiares para mejorar los resultados de lectura y escritura para los estudiantes de inglés de la escuela secundaria: Un estudio explicativo de métodos mixtos secuenciales. ¿Los estudiantes se desempeñan mejor al leer y escribir tareas cuando están familiarizados con los textos?

Investigador principal: Taryn Robertson, MEd

Patrocinador del profesorado: Garrett Roberts, PhD

Sitio de studio: Culturally Active High School, Culturally Active Independent School District

Se le pide a su hijo que participe en un estudio de investigación. **La participación en esta investigación es voluntaria y no tienen que participar.** Su hijo puede negarse a participar o retirarse de la participación en cualquier momento. La retirada o el negarse a participar no afectará su relación con la Universidad de Denver de ninguna manera. Usted puede aceptar permitir que su hijo esté en el estudio ahora y cambiar de opinión más tarde sin ningún castigo. Si su hijo no desea participar, puede trabajar en una tarea alternativa durante la clase, según lo decida su maestro en el salón de clases. Este documento contiene información importante sobre este estudio y qué esperar si su hijo participa.

El propósito de este formulario es proporcionarle (como el padre o tutor de un posible participante del estudio de investigación) información que puede afectar su decisión sobre si dejar o no que su hijo participe en este estudio de investigación. La persona que realiza la investigación le describirá el estudio y responderá a todas sus preguntas. Lea la información a continuación y haga cualquier pregunta que pueda tener antes de decidir si le da o no su permiso para que su hijo participe.
Si decide dejar que su hijo participe en este estudio, este formulario se utilizará para registrar su permiso.

Este estudio de investigación se llevará a cabo durante las actividades regulares en el aula y también sirve como preparación para la TELPAS exámenes que su hijo tomará en la primavera.

¿Qué pasa si mi hijo no quiere participar?
Además de su permiso, su hijo debe aceptar participar en el estudio. Si su hijo no quiere participar, no será incluido en el estudio y no habrá penalización. Si su hijo inicialmente está de acuerdo en estar en el estudio, puede cambiar de opinión más tarde sin ninguna penalización.

Propósito del estudio
Si usted está de acuerdo, se le pedirá a su hijo que participe en un estudio de investigación sobre las tareas de comprensión de lectura y escritura cuando el plan de estudios sea familiar para la cultura de su hijo. El propósito de este estudio es obtener una comprensión más profunda de cómo las tareas de lectura y escritura que son familiares para nuestros hijos pueden afectar la instrucción.

¿Qué se le pedirá a mi hijo que haga?
Si usted permite que su hijo participe en este estudio, se le pedirá que lea dos pasajes de lectura, responda 7 preguntas para cada pasaje y responda en un párrafo con respecto a lo que lea. Este estudio tomará aproximadamente 60 minutos como máximo, y habrá aproximadamente 60 personas más en este estudio.

Si decide participar en este estudio, su hijo puede ser grabado en audio. Cualquier grabación de audio se almacenará de forma segura y sólo el investigador principal tendrá acceso a las grabaciones. Las grabaciones se conservarán durante un mes y luego se borrarán. Las grabaciones de audio serán transcritas, pero a su hijo se le dará un ID numérico y nunca se le hará referencia por su nombre. Todas las grabaciones y transcripciones se almacenarán de forma segura y solo se utilizarán con fines de tesis, posibles publicaciones, y tal vez presentaciones de conferencias. Los registros de lectura de educación solo se evaluarán para determinar los niveles de lectura de los estudiantes. Se trata de un estudio de investigación y, por lo tanto, no está destinado a proporcionar un diagnóstico o tratamiento médico o terapéutico.

¿Qué se le pedirá que haga en el estudio?
Si acepta dejar que su(s) hijo(s) participen en este estudio de investigación, no se le pedirá que haga nada en lo que se refiere al estudio. Toda administración ocurrirá in situ en la escuela de su hijo, durante su período de clase.

¿Cuáles son los riesgos involucrados en este estudio?
No se esperan riesgos para participar en este estudio.

¿Cuáles son los posibles beneficios de este estudio?
Aunque su hijo no se beneficiará directamente de la participación en este estudio, creo que los resultados podrían ayudar a mejorar la educación que reciben.

¿Cómo se protegerá la privacidad y confidencialidad de su hijo si participa en este estudio de investigación?

La privacidad de su hijo y la confidencialidad de sus datos estarán protegidas mediante archivos protegidos por contraseña. A todos los estudiantes se les dará una identificación única. El nombre de su hijo nunca será usado. Todos los materiales originales serán destruidos en el plazo de un mes. El nombre de su hijo no se utilizará en ningún informe. Los datos de investigación identificables se cifrarán y se protegerán con contraseña.
A las respuestas de su hijo se les asignará un número de código. La lista que conecta su nombre a este código se mantendrá en un archivo cifrado y protegido por contraseña.

Sólo el investigador principal tendrá acceso al archivo. Cuando se complete el estudio y se hayan analizado los datos, la lista se destruirá.
Los representantes de la Universidad de Denver también pueden revisar los registros de investigación con fines de monitoreo.

El uso de la información de su hijo para futuras investigaciones
Toda información identificable (por ejemplo, el nombre de su hijo, la fecha de nacimiento) se eliminará de la información o muestras recogidas en este proyecto. Después de eliminar todos los identificadores, la información o muestras pueden ser utilizados para futuras investigaciones o compartidos con otros investigadores sin su consentimiento informado adicional.

El uso compartido de datos
Datos desidentificados de este estudio pueden compartirse con la comunidad de investigación en general para promover la ciencia y la salud. Eliminaremos o codificaremos cualquier información personal (por ejemplo, el nombre de su hijo, la fecha de nacimiento) que pueda identificar a su hijo antes de que los archivos se compartan con otros investigadores para garantizar que, según los estándares científicos actuales y los métodos conocidos, nadie podrá identificar a su hijo a partir de la información o muestras que compartimos. A pesar de estas medidas no podemos garantizar el anonimato de los datos personales de su hijo.

¿A quién contactar con preguntas sobre el estudio?
Previo, durante o después de su participación puede ponerse en contacto con la investigadora Taryn Robertson en Taryn.Robertson@du.edu para cualquier pregunta o si siente que ha sido perjudicado. Este estudio ha sido revisado y aprobado por la Junta de Revisión Institucional de la Universidad de Denver y el número de estudio es 1546527-1. El Patrocinador de la Facultad que supervisa este proyecto es el Dr. Garrett Roberts y se puede llegar a Garrett.Roberts@du.edu

¿A quién contactar con preguntas sobre sus derechos como participante en la investigación?
Para preguntas sobre sus derechos o cualquier insatisfacción con cualquier parte de este estudio, puede comunicarse, de forma anónima si lo desea, la Junta de Revisión Institucional de la Universidad de Denver (DU) por teléfono al (303) 871-2121 o correo electrónico a IRBAdmin@du.edu.

El consentimiento para acceder a los registros educativos
los registros educativos utilizados por este proyecto de investigación son registros educativos definidos y protegidos por la Ley de Derechos Educativos y Privacidad de la Familia (FERPA, por sus) FERPA es una ley federal que protege la privacidad de los registros de educación estudiantil. Su consentimiento le da al investigador permiso para acceder a los registros de su hijo identificados anteriormente con fines de investigación. Su hijo todavía puede participar si usted decide no permitir el acceso a los registros de educación.

____ Sí, doy permiso al investigador para acceder a los registros de educación de mi hijo para este proyecto de investigación.
____ NO, no doy permiso al investigador para acceder a los registros de educación de mi hijo para este proyecto de investigación.

Consentimiento para la grabación de vídeo / audio / fotografía únicamente para fines de esta investigación

Este estudio implica la grabación de audio. Si no está de acuerdo en ser registrado, todavía puede participar en el estudio.
_____ Sí, acepto permitir que mi hijo sea grabado en audio.
_____ NO, no estoy de acuerdo en permitir que mi hijo sea grabado en audio.

Usted está tomando una decisión sobre permitir que su hijo participe en este estudio. Su firma a continuación indica que ha leído la información proporcionada anteriormente y ha decidido permitirles participar en el estudio. Si más tarde decide que desea retirar su permiso para que su hijo participe en el estudio, puede interrumpir su participación en cualquier momento. Se le dará una copia de este documento.

_____
Nombre impreso del niño

_____ _____
Firma del padre/guardián **la fecha**

Appendix G. Child Interview Assent Form.

Assent Form for Participation in Research
Minors Over the Age 13

Title of Research Study: Culturally Familiar Texts to Improve Reading and Writing Outcomes for High School English Language Learners: An Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods Study. Do students perform better on reading and writing tasks when they are familiar with the texts?
IRBNet #: 1546527-1

Researcher: Taryn Robertson, MEd
Faculty Sponsor: Garrett Roberts, PhD

Study Site: Culturally Active High School, Culturally Active Independent School District

What is a research study?
A research study is a way to find out new information about something. We would like to learn more about to student preference in reading and writing.

Do you have to be in the study?
You do not have to be in this study. It is up to you. You can say okay now to be in the study and change your mind later. All you have to do is tell us when you want to stop. No one will be upset if you don't want to be in the study or if you change your mind later. You can take time to think about being in the study before you decide.

Why are you being asked to be part of this research study?
You are being asked to join the research study because you participate in an ESL program at your school. About 60 other children will be in this study.

If you join the research study, what will you be asked to do?
If you agree to join this study, you will be asked to:

- You will be asked to talk on the phone to the researcher during your ESL class time and you will need to stay for 15 minutes. This will only occur one time
- You will have a chance to talk about your experiences at school and you will be asked talk with the researcher about those experiences for 15 minutes.
- You will be in the study for one visit.
- We will ask you to talk about your experiences at school and preferences for reading and writing.
- **If applicable.** We will want to audio record you during the study as you talk with the researcher about your experiences. If you do not want to be recorded, that is okay too. Just tell us if it makes you uncomfortable.

Will any part of the study hurt or be uncomfortable?
We do not think that you will be hurt or upset during the study.
We think that talking about your experiences at school may be a little uncomfortable.

Will the study help you or others?
We do not know if being in this study may help you, but we hope that this study will help other students in the future. We think the study will help you by giving you a place to talk about your feelings and experiences at school. We may learn something that will help other children with who are native Spanish speakers someday.

Do your parents or guardians know about the study?
This study has been explained to your parent or guardian, and they said that we could ask you if you want to be in the study. You can talk this over with your parent or guardian before deciding if you want. You do not have to be in this study even if your parent or guardian thinks it is a good idea. It is up to you.

Will anyone else know that you are in this study?
We will not tell anyone else that you are in this study. You do not have to tell anyone about the study or the questions you are asked.

The information that you provide in the study will be handled confidentially. However, there may be circumstances where this information must be released or shared as required by law. Representatives from the University of Denver may also review the research records for monitoring purposes.

Who will see the information collected about you?
The researcher will delete your name and use a number only to keep your information safe throughout this study. The information collected about you during this study will be kept safely locked up. Nobody will know it except the people doing the research. The study information about you will not be given to your parents/guardians or teachers or principals. The researchers will not tell your friends about the study or any questions asked during the study. Your individual identity will be kept private when we write our final report. Other researchers may want to use the information we collect during this study for their research to help other children. We may allow them to use your information without talking with you again.

What if you have questions?
You can ask any questions that you have about the study at any time. Just tell the researcher or your parent/guardian that you have a question. You or your parent/guardian can contact the researcher, Taryn Robertson any time during the study by emailing Taryn.Robertson@du.edu. You may also contact my University of Denver faculty sponsor, Dr. Garrett Roberts, by emailing Garrett.Roberts@du.edu.

Options for Participation
This study involves audio recording. If you do not agree to be recorded, you can still take part in the study.
Please initial your choice for the options below:

___ **YES**, I agree to be audio recorded.
___ **NO**, I do not agree to be video/audio recorded/photographed.

Please take all the time you need to read through this document and decide whether you would like to participate in this research study.

If you agree to participate in this research study, please sign below. You will be given a copy of this form.

_____ _____

Participant Signature **Date**

Appendix H. Student Interview Protocol.

Student Interview Protocol

Student Participant Interview 1 Protocol

Opening Protocol

1. Read assent form out loud to student. Distribution of parental consent forms will occur at the beginning of the study, however students will have a chance to opt in or out via the assent form.
2. Read Preamble

Preamble:

Hello, I am Taryn Robertson. Today's date and time is (fill in day and time). Today's interview is taking place at (state location) with (state participant's name). Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed. You have been randomly selected to participate in this interview.

This interview will be approximately 20-60 minutes long. I will be asking you questions about your experiences with culturally familiar curriculum, or lack of, and your preference towards culturally familiar curriculum at school. The informed consent/assent form you (if applicable: and your parent or guardian) have just signed allows me to audio record this interview so it can be played back for transcription. I will also take notes during the interview. The only ones who would listen to the audio or view the transcripts would be myself or advising researcher. Findings will appear in my dissertation and future research publications and presentation. Pseudonyms will be used and your actually name will not be attached to the research. You may stop the interview at any time.

Do you have any questions before we begin? Let us start the interview.

1) Culturally familiar means something that represents your culture or is familiar to the culture you grew up with. What kinds of culturally familiar or unfamiliar activities or readings have you experienced in your classes? (RQ 2).

2) How did you feel about those activities or readings? Did you like them? Why or why not? (RQ 2)

3) What culture do you identify as? How did you decide your culture? Do you feel your culture is welcome at your school? (RQ 2)

4) Can you describe or possibly tell me about why or why not you feel your culture is welcome? (RQ 2)

Appendix I. Semi-Structured Interview Questions.

The following questions will be used to guide student interviews. The interviews will be semi-structured, and participants will be encouraged to speak freely and openly.

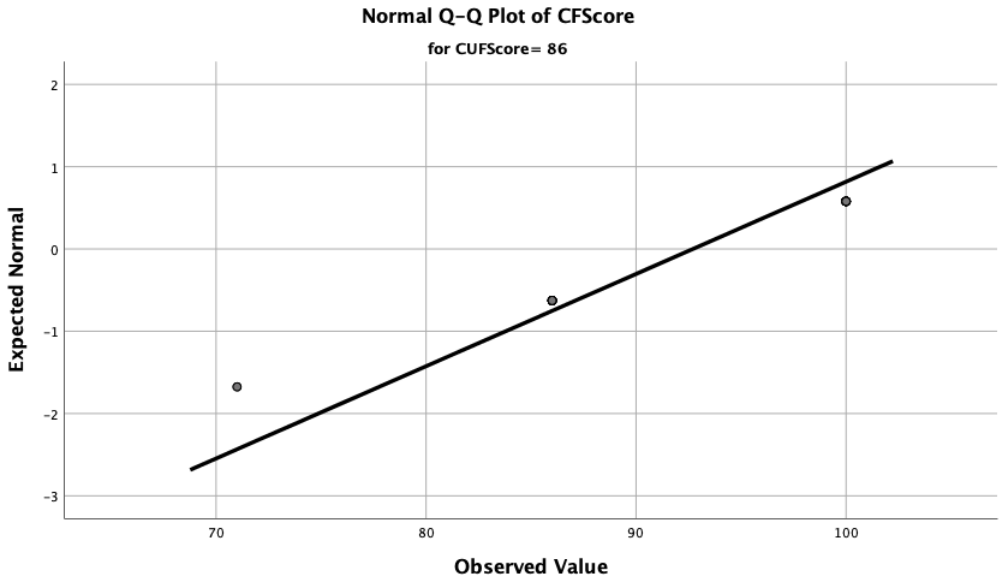
1) Culturally familiar means something that represents your culture or is familiar to the culture you grew up with. What kinds of culturally familiar or unfamiliar activities or readings have you experienced in your classes? (RQ 2).

2) How did you feel about those activities or readings? Did you like them? Why or why not? (RQ 2)

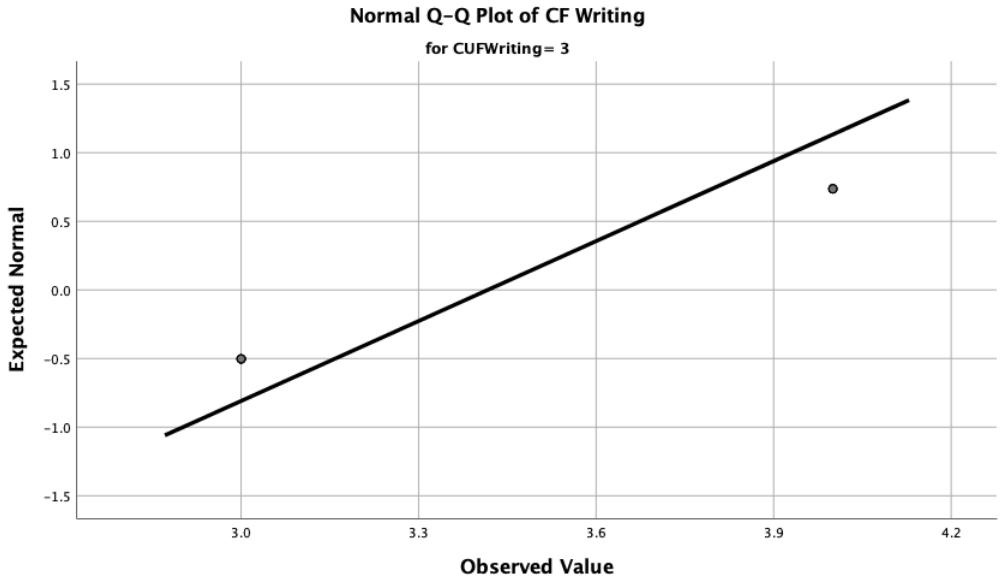
3) What culture do you identify as? How did you decide your culture? Do you feel your culture is welcome at your school? (RQ 2)

4) Can you describe or possibly tell me about why or why not you feel your culture is welcome? (RQ 2)

Appendix J. Reading Comprehension CF and CUF Q-Q Plot.



Appendix K. Writing CF and CUF Q-Q Plot.



Appendix L. Qualitative Audit Trail Sample

Date: March 25, 2020:

Location: phone call

Peer: Amy (A)

I had a really interesting conversation with one of the participants today, and I felt a theme might be emerging. I called A to debrief regarding the conversation. One of the participants recounted consistently getting in trouble for speaking Spanish in class, and how he only kept his grades up in order to play on the soccer team, because soccer was the only place he felt at home and his coach spoke Spanish to the players. I couldn't believe the irony of the scenario. I was also really angry at kids getting in trouble for speaking their native language to one another in class because teachers understand who is and is not identified as an English Language Learner. Many of the student participants at this point have described getting in trouble for speaking Spanish and how they have had to navigate how to figure out when it is and is not okay to speak Spanish. I thought this might be a theme that was emerging. However, after a conversation with A, she helped me realize that I wanted to see that theme emerge because I was personally angry about kids getting in trouble. She helped me to understand that my positionality as a former ELL teacher was making me somewhat biased. Yes, the kids were getting in trouble, but they were also describing more than just getting in trouble. Even as they were describing getting in trouble, there was more depth there than simply getting in trouble. The conversation led to an understanding that the idea of getting in trouble was the tip of the iceberg and that there was much more relevant, deep data there simply than punitive conversations.

Appendix M. Word Frequency Query.