BLACK WORLD LANGUAGE INSTRUCTORS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: SOCIAL JUSTICE-BASED PERSPECTIVES AND PEDAGOGIES

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ABSTRACT

Mariah S. Murrell: Black World Language Instructors in Higher Education: Social Justice-Based Perspectives and Pedagogies
(Under the direction of Xue Rong)

The field of world language education is one that has historically been dominated by traditional pedagogical practices and perspectives that limit the opportunity for rich, critical examination of course content. This often leaves much to be desired in students' learning experiences for many students, and frequently causes students of color to feel alienated from the language learning process. There has been a recent shift within the field in which social justice pedagogies are utilized by educators in an effort to create more meaningful learning experiences for students.

This study explores the former learning experiences of three Black, post-secondary Spanish instructors and examines their pedagogical practices as they explore social justice-based phenomena and question and challenge systems of inequity and injustice with their students through use of the target language. The pedagogies implemented within the classrooms are based on the educators' own perceptions of what it means to teach for social justice. Furthermore, these practices are the educators' intentional efforts to prepare their students to be globally-minded, critical thinkers who work to disrupt systems of privilege and power within our world.

This study is centered on the following questions: (1) What are the world language instructors' interpretations of social justice pedagogy related to world language education? (2) How do the instructors' interpretations of social justice inform their pedagogies in the world

language classroom? and (3) What were the instructors' K-20 (and beyond) experiences as world language learners? How might their experiences influence their interpretations of social justice within the world language classroom? Critical Race Theory, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, and Social Justice Pedagogy are used as the conceptual frameworks to analyze and examine data collected from interviews and classroom observations completed by each participant. This project is a major contribution to the field in that it focuses on the ways in which participants' experiences inform their pedagogy, and contributes to a more contemporary understanding of the experiences and perspectives of African Americans who teach and study world languages.

For my son still growing inside of me. Thank you for the constant kicks that keep mommy going. In loving memory of my amazing grandmothers, Mariah Killings and Mary Jane Smith. I will always work to carry out your legacies.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BSU	Black Student Union
BVE	Black Vernacular English
CIEE	Council on International Educational Exchange
CRP	Culturally Relevant Pedagogy
CRT	Critical Race Theory
ESL	English as a Second Language
FLES	Foreign Language Essential Standards
HBCUs	Historically Black Colleges and Universities
IRB	Internal Review Board
OPI	Oral Proficiency Interview
UWRF	University of Wisconsin at River Falls
WLE	World Language Education

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem: World Language Education History and Traditions

As with most other disciplines, the field of world language education (WLE) has experienced various changes throughout its history. Within the last decade or so, there has been a slight push to promote more social justice-based teaching and learning practices that will enable students to become more critically conscious as they prepare to live and lead in an increasingly diverse society (Glynn, Wesley & Wassell, 2014; Guillaume, 1994; Osborn, 2006). However, this change has been gradual and complicated as the traditional approaches to the teaching of world languages are difficult for many educators to leave behind.

In order to examine the trends of the field, we must first acknowledge its history. The initial purpose of one's pursuit of a world language (or "foreign language") education was to display one's social status and well-roundedness (Osborn, 2006). The opportunity to study a classical language was reserved for the most elite members of society and was in no way an attempt to increase one's level of critical consciousness to lead to the promotion of equity and equality within our society (Davis & Markham, 1991; Kubota, Austin & Saito-Abbott, 2003). Remnants of the exclusivity of language study still exist as many students of underrepresented groups feel alienated from their world language classrooms or find no interest in language study at all (Pratt, 2012). Furthermore, because of some of the more traditional pedagogical approaches to the teaching of languages, many students are bored and have no desire to study a second language (Kissau, Kolano & Wang, 2011).

The field of world language education (previously and still commonly referred to as *foreign language)* has changed based on the traditions and tendencies of society at various points in history. Shrum & Glisan (2005) provide a historiography of the field in their text, *Teacher's Handbook: Contextualized Language Instruction*. Initially, in the decades leading up to World War II, the purpose of foreign language education was to aid students in the development of their reading and writing skills. During the time of the war, however, the purpose of language instruction was to prepare Americans to communicate effectively with speakers of other languages. Language proficiency is a valuable skill especially during these times as it is crucial that messages are appropriately interpreted/translated by military personnel. Furthermore, military personnel are at an advantage if they are able to communicate in the language spoken in the nation in which they are based.

Beginning approximately in the 1950s, language schools and programs began to rate and assess students' on their foreign language proficiency. This trend continues throughout the development of the field and has manifested itself in the form of the Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), former President Jimmy Carter's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies (1978-79) which raised the public's understanding of the value of foreign language, and grants in the 1980s to further develop the field (Shrum & Glisan, 2005).

These pivotal historical moments have had a tremendous effect on the approaches to language instruction. Many of the various traditional approaches to world language education limit its ability to inform and enhance students' perspectives and understandings of the world. Shrum & Glisan's *Chronological Development of Language Teaching* (1994) documents various approaches to language instruction based on their respective time periods (see Appendix A). This

chronology also includes the techniques associated with each approach as well as the experts of the field/creators of these various methods and techniques.

The customary approaches to world language education parallel with the typical approaches to education in most, if not all, other fields. There is a tendency, unfortunately, to teach *about* language instead of using language study as a tool to help students grow in their understandings of our world. Focusing on "safe" content that is centered around basic information about students instead of focusing on larger, more controversial issues within our world using the target language as a navigational tool is one of the major shortcomings of our field. Specifically speaking, the textbook is the main source of the curriculum and is used as the guidebook to determine how lessons are planned, and the order in which material is taught (Ariew, 1982; Shrum & Glisan, 2005). Ariew (1982) reminds us to consider the fact that textbooks are not created with student success as the first priority in mind. The goal is for publishers to make a profit by creating and selling their innovative products to educators. Additionally, as a means of satisfying the needs of consumers, publishers also have a tendency to sterilize content as a means of not being too controversial or including information that could be uncomfortable to discuss in a classroom setting.

Most textbooks include activities that students can complete for practice in class and/or for homework assignments, demonstrating a focus on written, worksheet-based practice and assessment. This illustrates a disconnect in the perceived purpose of language instruction as oral proficiency is discussed as valuable to the field, however, students are often limited in their opportunities to improve in their oral proficiency. Many textbooks now include formal assessments created by the publisher which teachers use as chapter tests, midterms and final exams. Such "ready-made" packaging is convenient for educators, but truly limits students from

learning in ways that are meaningful and relevant. Furthermore, these paper-based activities and assessments do not grant students the opportunity to practice their interpersonal communication skills (Moore, 2005). For this reason, there are so many students that are uncomfortable or unprepared when it comes to speaking to others in the target language, or who mention that they are really good at listening but have had very limited practice in applying what they have learned in ways outside of the interpretive or written presentational mode.

Within language classrooms (and in the textbooks utilized), there is a large focus on grammatical content. Studying verb conjugations, subject-verb agreement, and verb tenses are all major components within the traditional world language classroom. Students are expected to be able to understand the previously mentioned grammatical concepts and are often drilled as a means of testing their knowledge. Verb conjugation charts, for example, are excellent practice tools for students to use, but should by no means be the central focus of a lesson. Osborn (2006) discusses a "legacy of nonsuccess" in which students enrolled in language courses are expected to demonstrate comprehension of subject matter through the completion of the aforementioned activities, but are not expected to show growth in their levels of proficiency (p.3). This leads to students who spend years in language courses but are unable to effectively communicate in the target language.

This tremendous focus on grammatical content leaves little room for discussion about controversial issues and/or real issues faced by both students and members of target language communities (Herman, 2002). Osborn (2006) refers to this as a "sanitation of the curriculum" (p. 13). Although the world language classroom seems like an obvious place in which critical content can be interwoven into the curriculum, this is not the reality. Because of the dominance of traditional approaches, the field is lacking in its inclusion of social justice-based material.

Teachers often stray away from critical and controversial content because it can potentially be uncomfortable. Such is the case because many educators have not been prepared in their academic programs to deal with more complex content. Though they may not necessarily be opposed to rich discussion about real and relevant phenomena, they do not know how to approach complicated topics and find that it is safer to stick with grammar, vocabulary and the typical world language course material. The traditional teaching of target language vocabulary also has a tendency to be unsuccessful in ensuring that students retain information. Students are often drilled on vocabulary words and/or given exercises in which there is little or no room for context to assist them with memorization.

Another customary practice within the field of WLE relates to the teaching of culture. Unfortunately, culture is often times placed on the backburner and is not a primary focus within the language classroom. Shrum & Glisan (2005) examine four traditional approaches to the teaching of cultural content;

- The Frankenstein Approach-using isolated, non-contextualized examples of culture (i.e. the occasional discussion of food from one location, dance from another, and clothing from another)
- The 4-F Approach-"folk dances, festivals, fairs, and food"
- The Tour Guide Approach-the discussion of various geographic landmarks within target language-speaking countries
- The "By-the-Way" Approach-random and inconsistent discussions about the culture within various target language-speaking countries. (p.141)

These non-contextualized approaches contribute to the "foreign" nature of the world language classroom and create a barrier between students and the cultures/languages they are

studying (Herman, 2002; Kubota, 2003). Furthermore, there is trend to group all target language speakers into one homogenous category. This, however, is extremely dangerous as it promotes stereotypical beliefs and does not address the diversity of speakers of a target language. For example, Spanish speakers in Spain possess different cultural norms and participate in different cultural practices than Spanish speakers in Equatorial Guinea. We often lump 'Spanish-speakers' or 'French speakers' into one category, which limits students opportunities to think critically about diversity and cultural difference.

The teacher as the focal point of the learning experience and the giver of knowledge is another tradition which has also found and maintained its place within the field of WLE. Instead of serving as a facilitator of learning, the teacher is often the gatekeeper that stands between passing and failing and is typically the one to determine what knowledge looks like within the classroom. Students rarely have opportunities to be in charge of their own learning. Instead of creating knowledge, they are regurgitating information that has been conveyed to them based on what their teachers or other school officials deem valuable. A metaphorical image that immediately comes to mind is a teacher "filling" the minds of students (or "receptacles") who are responsible for learning exactly what is being dictated to them (Freire, 1968). He writes,

> The more meekly the receptacles permit themselves to be filled, the better students they are. Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the "banking" concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits. (p. 1)

Though Freire was speaking generally about the field of education, we see instances of this exact description in world language classrooms. Book work, desk work, teacher-centered lectures, memorization and recitation are often staples of the traditional language classroom. A potential reason behind this tendency to maintain a calm and quiet environment controlled by the

teacher stems from the emphasis placed on classroom management. A classroom that is full of students speaking, moving around, asking questions and learning in a way that seems too rowdy is a reflection of the teacher's classroom management skills (Osborn, 2006). In order to avoid the stigma of not being "in charge," often times teachers resort to assigning work and teaching in ways that will keep students under control.

In addition to a lack of critical content in itself, the methods in which material is taught are often not the most culturally relevant/responsive (Ladson-Billings, 1995). For example, a study conducted in the early 2000s explores the perspectives of students of color enrolled in university world language classrooms. Findings showed that these students often felt like outsiders in their classes because content was not made relevant to them and was neither rich nor engaging. More specifically, students expressed that "real" issues affecting them and/or target language speakers were rarely discussed, and the content was often watered down because instructors seemingly felt that students were not capable of grasping challenging material (Kubota, Austin & Saito-Abbott, 2003). Kissau, Kolano and Wang (2011) also cite the lack of cultural relevance as an issue within the field of WLE. Students are left at a major disadvantage when they are not taught based on the realities of their own lives and the lived experiences of members of target language groups. For example, students involved in Kinginger's (2004) longitudinal study about language learning experienced many of the feelings of foreignness often associated with foreign/world language study. Their teacher taught using examples about *chateaus*, which was a very foreign concept to one student in particular who had been raised primarily in a trailer park. A similar level of discomfort and disappointment was experienced when Alice, a pseudonym used to replace the real name of the primary participant in the study, went to study abroad in France. She had expectations of grandeur because the places she studied

seemed perfect and vastly different from her normal surroundings. However, she was surprised to discover that there were areas with people that were impoverished and struggling in France just as there were in the United States. In fact, Alice ended up spending quite a bit of time in these places. Her classroom experiences had not adequately prepared her for her experiences as a student abroad. This is reflective of the aforementioned "tour guide" approach that exposes students to only the most beautiful and exciting places that create illusions of perfection and expectations of a fantasy world within countries in which target languages are spoken. This could potentially lead to feelings of discouragement similar to those that Alice felt during her travels abroad in France.

Each of the traditions of world language instruction contribute to the tendency to teach about language instead of teaching through language. Language classrooms are ideal places for discussion about important topics faced by members of our communities. Because it is a discipline in which students can learn about various people and their cultures, it is necessary to take advantage of opportunities to engage in conversation that enable them to learn about, analyze, and critique various issues affecting our world. An excellent way for teachers to do this exists in the form of socially just approaches to instruction.

Social Justice Pedagogy

Social Justice Terminology Defined

Though it is now an incredibly trendy topic for researchers and practitioners alike, there is not necessarily one clear and widely agreed upon definition of social justice pedagogy. Much of this lack of clarity stems from the use of the term itself. For example, the terms *social justice, social justice pedagogy/teaching for social justice,* and *social justice education* are often used interchangeably though they are vastly different. *Social justice* itself is a term that is not solely reserved for education. According to Adams, Bell & Griffin (2007), social justice is a concept

that "includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure" (p. 1). *Social justice education* is the process by which students [and teachers] approach social issues related to power, equity, equality and oppression, and how these issues affect members of our world (Adams, Bell & Griffin, 2007). *Social justice pedagogy*, however, refers to the educators' approaches to instruction, lesson planning and engaging with students. It requires instructors to teach their students to address and understand the realities of our society while encouraging the creation of solutions to combat the aforementioned issues (Ayers, 1998). Essentially, social justice pedagogy is the method by which educators present the opportunity to obtain a social justice education.

Because this proposed project focuses on educators, I will be employing the use of the term *social justice pedagogy*. Based on my understandings of the seminal literature and my own classroom experiences as an educator, I define social justice pedagogy an educators' approaches to instruction, lesson planning, and engaging with students that encourage critically thinking about various issues of injustice within our world and the ways in which we can work towards the improvement of these issues. Furthermore, I believe that social justice pedagogy helps to empower students to understand matters such as racism, sexism, ableism while promoting future (and possibly immediate) action and activism to change our world for the better. The key is to ensure that pedagogical practices explicitly encourage students to utilize what they have learned in the classroom and apply it outside of the classroom, especially within their own communities and other aspects of their lives. As will be discussed later in this section, this project will focus on the teaching practices of post-secondary Spanish educators, and how these practices embody the socially just perspectives of participants.

Misconceptions Regarding Social Justice Pedagogy

Before exploring its existence and applications within the field of world language specifically, it is important to first conduct a general examination of not only what social justice means, but why it is important, and key characteristics/goals of instruction. Quite a bit of the more seminal literature on social justice pedagogy mentions approaches that will specifically engage students of color and students of other underrepresented groups. Throughout my review of literature of the field I have found that much of the work on social justice pedagogy only discusses urban contexts and students of non-mainstream backgrounds (Agarwal, 2011; Esposito & Swain, 2009; Gutstein, 2003; Milner, 2011; Weiland, et. al., 2014). For this reason, it is important to mention that social justice pedagogy is not only a relevant approach to instruction for students of color or students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, but for all students. The pervasiveness of racism within our country is one of the most critical tenets of Critical Race Theory (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012), a school of thought which was created to respond to race-based phenomena such as racism, racial discrimination, racial inequality, and lack of power distribution (Brown & Jackson, 2013; Delgado, 1987). It is important for all students to be able to address issues of inequity as a means of challenging the status quo and creating a more just world. Still, it is important to note the demographics of the majority of members of the teaching force compared to the diverse populations of students. Because a large portion of the teaching force within the United States is White, middle class, and female, they are sometimes unprepared to work with students of diverse backgrounds in ways that are effective (Lee, 2011). For this reason, it is important that examples of White teachers working with diverse groups of students are readily available for teachers' reference, but it is still equally important to convey the need for teachers to implement socially-just practices in their dealings with all students.

Descriptions and Characteristics of Social Justice Pedagogy

Most scholars agree that equity, fairness and power sharing are important components of definitions of teaching for social justice (Osborn, 2006; Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012). There are race, class, gender, sexuality and ability-based hierarchies that have existed within our society since the beginning of time. Members of groups that are located at higher levels of this social hierarchy (i.e. White, male, heterosexual, etc.) have better access to resources because these individuals are valued more than members of other groups (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 2012). Examples of such structural inequalities can especially be found in our schools, which is one of the reasons why social justice-based pedagogies are especially important (Agarwal, et. al, 2010). Reddy (1998) posits that a major component of social justice pedagogy is preparing students to discuss various issues of equity, power, and oppression, including racism. She recounts a situation in which her son was called a "nigger" by a schoolmate, and how she discussed the situation with other parents who did not consider this name-calling to be racially motivated. They even went as far as expressing their own colorblind ideologies and the fact that most people no longer see color or consider it an issue (Reddy, 1998). Reasons such as these are why socially just pedagogical practices are crucial. We must equip our students with the skills necessary to address issues of inequity that perpetuate systems of White supremacy and the marginalization of members of non-mainstream groups.

A valuable part of teaching for social justice includes recognizing, valuing, and utilizing the social and cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) that our students possess and teaching in ways that are relevant to these resources that they possess (Dixon & Fasching-Varner, 2009). Agarwal, et. al. (2010) have provided a very useful characterization of what it means to teach for social justice. According to them, social justice educators:

> (a) enact curricula that integrate multiple perspectives, question dominant Western narratives, and are inclusive of the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity in North America; (b) support students to develop a critical consciousness of the injustices that characterize our society; and (c) scaffold opportunities for students to be active participants in a democracy, skilled in forms of civic engagement and deliberative discussion (p. 238).

Aside from specific examples of how social justice can be applied within the classroom, it is also important to make mention of the need for teacher reflection and introspection prior to, during and after their interactions with students (Alsup & Miller, 2014; Howard, 2003). In order for teachers to effectively converse with their students about race, class, discrimination, sexuality, etc., they must themselves be prepared for such conversation. Reflecting on their own biases, epistemologies, and ideologies is imperative for teachers as they critically examine the curricula and their own pedagogy.

Various scholars (Bell, Desai & Irani, 2013) have discovered the connection between social justice education and Critical Race Theory (CRT). Recognizing the pervasive nature of racism (and other social phenomena) within educational systems enables teachers to develop practices that combat injustice and inequity. In their reflection and introspection, educators must think critically about their experiences with race-based phenomena, just as CRT scholars must investigate the ways in which issues of race affect the various institutions within our society. Furthermore, they must consider the ways in which students' backgrounds and experiences impact their education as critical race theorists examine the role that race plays in all aspects of life. Ladson-Billings' (1995) Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) is a form of social justice pedagogy that acknowledges the racial inequities within our world and how they impact the educational experiences of students of color. In order for teachers to see the value in this form of instruction, it is necessary for them to be comfortable acknowledging the racial backgrounds of their students, and the most effective ways to engage with them. Furthermore, educators must be

willing to acknowledge the pervasiveness of racism and understand that it is endemic (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) in our society in order to better prepare students to address critical content both within and outside of the classroom.

Goals of Social Justice Pedagogy

One of the most important goals of teaching for social justice is to convey to students that the world in which we live is unfair and inequitable. As a means of working against instances of inequity, teachers must encourage the integration of various perspectives, not just those of members of mainstream groups. A primary goal of socially-just pedagogical practices is to prepare students to promote democracy within our world and to work to ensure that all are able and encouraged to participate (Hunt, 1998). The intent of this preparation is to enable students to think critically about issues affecting society and take action and fulfill their "civic duties" in the future (Westheimer & Kahne, 1998, p.3.)

Because of the increasingly diverse nature of our world, it is important that teachers are prepared to work with diverse populations of students in ways that are meaningful and effective (Nieto, 2013). Teacher education programs must ensure that they prepare pre-service teachers to be successful in more ways than just their grasp of content knowledge and disciplinary methods, but also on ways to address difficult issues with their students using social justice-based approaches (Ritchie, et. al., 2013). Social justice education includes more of a focus on the development of students' critical thinking skills as they discuss social phenomena affecting today's world. However, many educators are apprehensive about utilizing social justice pedagogies within their classrooms due to a fear of criticism from students and/or parents, and also being reprimanded by administrators. For example, Bender-Slack (2010) shares comments from various educators involved in a study on the teaching of English and Language Arts for social justice:

> I'm always thinking about in the back of my head, is this going to get me in trouble? So that's kind of limiting. And Stacey described a fear of legal ramifications: "I think a lot of teachers are fearful of undertaking [social justice]. I think fear is a big factor. [W]e live in the age of litigation . . . gosh if I go out on a limb and say this, could I be sued?" And Frank, a teacher with eight years of experience, suggested that teachers must be careful choosing texts to "make sure that injustice or whatever in a particular article isn't going to be too close to home or offensive 'cause there are things ... I don't know maybe something that's physically abusive or something . . . but some that might be more emotionally upsetting or unsettling. Sometimes I think you can scratch that wound or something (p. 192).

Although this perspective was communicated by a K-12 educator, the same fear may exist in the minds of post-secondary educators as they are expected to limit their discussions of political concepts, which is sometimes perceived as being synonymous with social justice. Since opponents of social justice education see it as a political act, critics argue that there is no room for it within the classroom, regardless of the level of education and make efforts to silence its proponents (Fine, 1991). In the midst of this fear of critique or being seen as "too political," teachers must search for ways to incorporate social justice content, even if just gradually until they become more comfortable with taking an activist stance within the classroom. This may be more challenging for newer teachers. On the other hand, administrators must also champion for social justice education within their schools, which will encourage teachers to transform their classrooms. This is a continuous obstacle within the field of education, but as research and examples of social justice pedagogy increase, perhaps trends related to world language pedagogy will progress.

Purpose of Study

As was discussed in the previous section, social justice pedagogy is a fairly new educational trend that is slowly making its way into the field of world language education. The purpose of this study is twofold in that it explores the experiences of African American Spanish

educators within the field and examines their perceptions and practices related to social justice pedagogy. This study answers the following research questions:

- Research Question 1: What are the world language instructors' interpretations of social justice pedagogy related to world language education?
- Research Question 2: How do the instructors' interpretations of social justice inform their pedagogies in the world language classroom?
- Research Question 3: What were the instructors' K-20 (and beyond) experiences as world language learners? How might their experiences influence their interpretations of social justice within the world language classroom?

The purpose of this project is to explore the experiences of Black post-secondary Spanish instructors, and to understand how these experiences inform their conceptualizations of social justice both generally and within their own pedagogy. This study specifically examines the experiences of Spanish educators as it has consistently been the most popular language program within our region (NC Department of Public Instruction, 2016) and throughout the country. This trend exists due to the large population of Spanish speakers throughout the United States. According to the 2015 United States Census, there is a population of approximately 56.6 million Hispanic people living within this country. They are the largest ethnic and racial minority within the United States (US Census, 2015). Due to the changing nature of our country's racial and linguistic demographics, many education programs have been promoting the importance of Spanish language education, specifically as it relates to marketability with finding jobs for those who are bilingual (Tse, 2001). Spanish educators are also the focus of this study as I, the researcher, speak Spanish and am able to understand classroom content during observations. I

would not possess the same comprehension capabilities during the observation of classes in which other languages are spoken.

This study is a contribution to the current discourse regarding Blacks/African Americans and world language education, though much of the existing literature is quite dated and does not focus on the experiences of those that have found success within the field. Furthermore, there is no literature on the ways in which Black educators' time as previous language learners informs their current interactions with students. The results of this research project fill a major gap within the field in that they shed light on more contemporary experiences of African American scholars in the field of world language. Additionally, social justice pedagogy is a fairly new concept within the world languages discipline and this study provides insight on Black educators' understandings and applications of such practices within their classrooms. For the purposes of this project, I have examined the instructors' perspectives on and conceptualizations of social justice, and the ways in which these understandings inform their pedagogy and engagement with students.

Importance of Study

Multiple language fluency and exposure to different cultures through world language education is instrumental to the development of globally-minded citizens (Hodges & Welch, 1992). Unfortunately, African American students are less likely to reap the benefits associated with world language study because their experiences are generally unfavorable compared to those of members of other racial groups (Anthony, 1997; Brux & Frye, 2010; Davis, 1991; Hubbard, 1980; Moore, 2005; Pratt, 2012). In order to fully understand this issue, one must first recognize the history of African American education. Throughout the late-1800s to early-1900s, the Hampton-Tuskegee model was supported by most historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs). Students were encouraged to pursue an education in agriculture, or areas that would

allow them to serve their communities through their labor (Davis & Markham, 1991). The idea was that African Americans should devote their time to learning skills that would be practical for their careers as field hands, sharecroppers, cleaning ladies, cooks, etc. while the more liberal studies (including foreign language) should be reserved for the White elite. This mentality is still engrained in the minds of many African Americans, who today still believe that foreign language education is for the wealthy and will not result in the attainment of a useful skill (Kissau, Kolano & Wang, 2011).

Furthermore, many African Americans feel like outsiders within foreign language classrooms because materials primarily focus on European Spanish language and culture and rarely on the diversity of the Hispanic diaspora, including many groups with African origins (Moore, 2005). Therefore, the issue is twofold: African Americans have historically been turned away from the study of world languages because it was reserved for members of a higher socio-economic status, which typically meant White. Secondly, African Americans have been unable to connect with course content because they are generally not included in the curricula at all, or in ways that are relevant (Hubbard, 1980; Moore, 2005).

This study explores the experiences of Spanish educators (who are also former students) and the ways in which these experiences inform their pedagogy. The data collected regarding these experiences will allow for the creation of a new conversation on African Americans who have found success (i.e. degrees, employment) within the field, which drastically contrasts the literature that is currently in existence. In understanding the experiences of successful African Americans within the field, this project contributes to the current discourses on racial minorities and world language study. Furthermore, this project investigates three Spanish educators' pedagogical practices related to social justice and their understandings of these approaches to

teaching. Much of the observation data shows instructors keeping students engaged with Spanish course materials while allowing the promotion of critical thinking that will prepare them, our future leaders, to disrupt the status quo and work towards improving issues of inequity/inequality caused by racism, sexism, ageism, ableism, etc. In understanding the experiences of Black post-secondary world language instructors, we will be able to better understand what motivates them to engage with all students, not just Black students, using culturally relevant and other socially-just practices.

Conclusion

In this chapter we have addressed some of the key aspects of this proposed project. Firstly, we examined the history of and traditional approaches to world language education. As a means of providing an alternative to these customary practices, we explored the social justice pedagogy/education framework generally, and examined key terms related to this method of teaching and learning. Understanding both the norms of the field and the key components of social justice pedagogy is crucial to considering the experiences of African Americans within the field as they directly contradict one another. In studying the experiences, pedagogy, and perspectives of Black Spanish instructors, we are able to see how these individuals interpret and understand various phenomena of a field that is typically not one explored by African Americans. Moreover, we are able to understand how these experiences have shaped their understandings of social justice pedagogy, and how these understanding inform the ways in which they interact with students.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter/literature review will first focus on the educational experiences of African Americans within the field of world language, which is the motivation and driving factor behind this study. I will then review the literature on Critical Race Theory (CRT), Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, and teaching world languages for social justice, which are the key components of this project's theoretical/conceptual framework.

The World Language Experiences of African Americans

Though this project focuses on Black Spanish educators who engage with students from various backgrounds, it is important to identify and examine research related to the experiences of Black students specifically. This literature aligns with the experiences that will be shared by participants, as they were all once Spanish/world language students. Based on the history of the field described in Chapter 1, it seems that there is a tendency to exclude critical, culturally relevant and inclusive practices from the classroom. Unfortunately, it also seems that African American students are affected the most by this issue. Multiple language fluency and exposure to different cultures through world language education is instrumental to the development of globally-minded citizens (Hodges & Welch, 1992). Regrettably, African American students are less likely to reap the benefits associated with foreign language study because their experiences are generally unfavorable compared to those of members of other racial groups. The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of world language educators who have been able to thrive in the field in spite of the complications that many African Americans face, and to understand how their experiences affect their understandings of and approaches to social justice pedagogy.

While the problem of low achievement and interest in world language study is clearly visible within the K-20 setting and beyond, the amount of research present on this subject is limited. In searching for articles to include within this literature review, many sources were written during the 1970s and 1980s, although all of the difficulties discussed are still obstacles that persist within the area of Black world language study. James J. Davis of Howard University, for example, has authored many articles throughout the 1980s and 1990s that discuss the attitudes of African American students toward language study. The more contemporary documents on this subject often cite Davis' works, and come to the same conclusions about the issues that exist and what needs to be done to combat them. Alvarez Harvey (1974) and Hubbard (1980) are also two authors that are cited heavily in the discourse regarding African Americans and foreign language study. Their most valuable works are related to cultural relevance and the historical aspects connected to low foreign language enrollments for African Americans.

Eurocentrism and Linguicism

Within the United States and many other areas of the world, society is centered on whiteness, with Whites being the dominant group and groups of color being marginalized by mainstream White culture. The same issue often exists within educational settings where students are taught from a White/European perspective without much room for the inclusion of people of color (Allen, 2004). Many African American students are unable to connect with the materials taught in their language courses because it does not pertain at all to their personal lives. For example, in many Spanish classes, students are taught about (Spanish) European culture and language, which usually excludes Black and Brown Spanish speakers. However, teachers are merely imitating the norms of society and its racial hierarchies when they teach students primarily about the more dominant, powerful or ideal "white Hispanic" group(s) (Anya, 2011).

This causes many African American students to feel as though they are "outsiders" within their own classrooms, which results in lower levels of interest and achievement.

Spain is often viewed by many world language educators as the most important country within the Spanish-speaking world. This trend exists because Whiteness is often perceived as more valuable than Blackness and Brownness, and contributes to the alienation of diverse Spanish-speaking groups and their language and cultures. Language based discrimination (Chen-Hayes, Chen & Athar, 1999; Phillipson, 1992), or linguicism, greatly contributes to the perpetuation of the Spanish language/dialect hierarchy and often alienates students of color from learning experiences. Spain's dialects of Spanish are also often perceived as more 'proper,' motivating instructors to encourage their students to select this European country as the ideal site to study abroad.

Aside from offering foreign language courses, programs must also provide culturally relevant materials within their classrooms. African American students taking beginner-level Spanish courses are often uninterested in the more common l cultural portions of foreign language textbooks, which is why it is imperative to provide the essential cultural relevance piece in these courses. In 1979, Hampton University began to develop their foreign language curriculums to include Afro-French and Afro-Latino literatures and cultures in an effort to engage students by connecting the languages with their cultural identities (Clark, 1982). Ladson Billings' theory of culturally relevant pedagogy (1995) posits that connections must be drawn between life outside of school (home, community) and the classroom. She argues that "The dilemma of African-American students becomes one of negotiating the academic demands of school while demonstrating cultural competence. Thus, culturally relevant pedagogy must provide a way for students to maintain their cultural integrity while succeeding academically" (p.

476). For example, inclusion of Afro-Hispanic culture, including important figures in history, food, language variations and pertinent connections to students' lives are ways to make curricula more dynamic. This implementation of more culturally relevant materials could potentially boost enrollments and levels of interest in world language classes.

African American participants in a fairly recent study (Anya, 2011) at a small, liberal arts college express that they were much more interested in foreign language courses that infused culture with language in ways that were relevant to them and that countered the whiteness in world language studies. Students were extremely receptive to African and Caribbean aspects of Brazilian culture. For example, "Didier" recalls being immediately drawn to Portuguese music because it had melodies that were rhythmic and upbeat, which also reminded him of Hip Hop (Anya, 2011). The use of music within the language classroom is an excellent way to engage students with course content. Furthermore, inclusion of Afrocentric materials in the world language classroom can greatly benefit the self-esteem of African American students by drawing parallels between the cultures of the speakers of the target language and backgrounds of language learners.

Additionally, knowing the specific background of each student enables teachers to handpick materials that will be culturally engaging and empowering. For example, there are differences between Black students with Caribbean backgrounds versus African backgrounds. Being able to incorporate these different cultures is a way to interest students in the language while also strengthening their self-perceptions and cultural awareness (Anthony, 1997; O'Neill, 2000).

When studying world languages, Black students often feel that course materials are not presented to them in ways that are relevant or engaging, which often causes them to feel

alienated from the learning process. Respondent “Kyle” references being confused by difficult course content and frustrated that he later had to complete homework assignments that were not fully comprehensible in class. He also mentions being intimidated by native speakers in the class that would get through lessons with ease, making those around them ashamed to ask for assistance or clarification (Anya, 2011). These negative experiences lead to students’ fear of continuing with language study

A 1998 (English & Moore, 1998) qualitative study conducted at an inner-city middle school assessed the performance of ten African American males learning Arabic through an analysis of teacher notes, student journals and videotaped class sessions. Students benefitted from being in the foreign language because it taught them to cooperatively work in groups, communicate effectively by presenting various cultural aspects associated with the language. Perhaps this class was extremely effective because it was taught by an African American male who spoke the language fluently. The students were well-behaved, engaged and fully capable of comprehending all course materials, which refutes previous notions that minority students cannot be successful language classrooms (English & Moore, 1998). Perhaps African American students will be more inclined to participate in world language courses when they are able to culturally identify with the instructors. Moore (2005) provides a recommendation that is not often mentioned in other articles. She suggests that an increased number of Black instructors within the field of world language education could help to heighten student interest in language study (Moore, 2005).

Kubota, Austin and Saito-Abbott (2003) question whether world language classrooms, which are supposed to celebrate diversity and enhance students’ cultural perspectives, are

actually inclusive of all students. They ponder the notion of minorities being made to feel like outsiders, although the field is one that should help students to feel empowered.

In this same study, many students expressed their beliefs that various programs at the school did not address the racial diversity within the student population. Furthermore, several explained the lack of social justice in world language course content, caused by lack of cultural context of discussions during class time. For example, while some conveyed that they discussed sociopolitical issues within their Spanish classes in conversations about marginalized Latino groups within the United States, other students cited that there was no time for classroom discussion about social issues and conflicts. Kubota, Austin and Saito-Abbott (2003) contribute an important element to the conversation regarding minorities and world language education. Not only must language classes provide cultural relevance for students, they must also allow students the opportunity to learn and discuss sociopolitical factors affecting minority groups. This article plays a huge role also in the argument that minority students participate in white language education at rates substantially lower than White students due to a lack of a sense of belonging. Elitist attitudes of instructors and society as a whole often marginalize members of minority groups, causing them to stray from having interest in learning second languages. The most important point that this article raises is the need to address biases and stereotypes of educators and institutions in order to make world language classes more diverse and appealing to minority students, (Kubota, Austin, Saito-Abbott, 2003).

World Language Education and Racism/Racialism

Racism based on the racialization of behaviors of certain groups plays a large role in the status of Black students in the world language classroom. White teachers are unaware, in many cases, that they, too, are racialized beings. According to A.E. Lewis (2004) "Although numerous all-white groups are not explicitly racial, their racial composition is not an accident but is a result of whites' status as members of a passive social collectivity whose lives are shaped at least in part by the racialized social system in which they live and operate" (627). They fail to incorporate diverse content in with their lessons because they fail to realize its value and instead choose to provide students with course content that is not culturally rich. Being unaware of their roles as racial beings, they ignore their connection with the dominant White culture (Picower, 2009). Teachers who do not embrace their own race and privilege typically fail to have discussions with their students about race, which allows them to maintain their perceptions and stereotypes about people of color. This leads to an extremely racist classroom environment in which African American have a more difficult time finding success. Instead of getting to know their students, they allow dominant discourses to prevail, which typically view students of color in a negative light, especially with the expectation that they cannot find success in world language classrooms. Furthermore, there is the notion that African American students to stick to more appropriate subjects with more practical coursework.

According to Bonilla-Silva (1997) racism must be addressed from a structural versus ideological perspective in order to truly understand the manner in which racialized systems function. Foreign language classrooms are a part of educational systems, which are highly racialized. As a result, much of the content and the behaviors of teachers tend to be a bit racist and alienate Black students from educational experiences. L.J. Hubbard's "The Minority in Foreign Language" (1980) discusses the perception that Americans as a whole have of foreign

languages. She also mentions the notion of the study of languages being considered exclusive only to those within the upper levels of society, which often alienates Blacks and other minorities. This idea was supported in 1961 by the Conant report which declared the teaching of world languages in urban areas as "futile" (Hubbard, 1980).

As it relates to the curriculum, many students on lower educational tracks are not required to take world language classes because they generally are not expected to attend college. Many teachers do not realize the academic benefits associated with second language learning, and fail to realize that comprehension of a second language can assist in English comprehension and performance in other classes. Often times, teachers do not make an effort to include their Black students because they view them as lost causes that will not benefit from learning a second language.

Kubota, Austin and Saito-Abbott (2003) refer to the often repeated idea that world language study excludes Black students because instructors feel that courses are too difficult for them because they sometimes do not have a grasp of how to speak "proper" English. According to many historians and sociologists, certain physical features and behaviors can be attributed to certain races while others argue that science does not explain the concept of race since there are no genetic differences among different racial groups (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). Some teachers racialize their students by assuming that certain groups are capable of learning a second language while others are not.

In "Connecting with Communities of Learners and Speakers: Integrative Ideals, Experiences, and Motivations of Successful Black Second Language Learners," Anya (2011) mentions that many language instructors use deficit models when approaching the curriculum in regards to their African American students. The notion exists that if students use Black

Vernacular English instead of Standard English, it is extremely difficult to teach them a second language, a notion that was proven to be untrue by scholars such as Baugh, Hymes, Dowdy and Perry (Anya, 2011; Pratt, 2012). Students will automatically feel that their identities are being threatened if they are led to believe that their communication styles are incorrect or inappropriate.

Aside from the state of "outsiderness" that Black students feel in language classrooms, there is also the issue of racist attitudes that many teachers have toward their African American students. The expectations that many teachers have of their black students are low, perhaps because they feel that their minority students are not capable of understanding course content as well as their White counterparts. Some teachers even believe that it is impossible to teach world languages to students that do not yet have a command of proper English and still use Black Vernacular English (BEV) in their daily lives (Kubota, Austin, Saito-Abbott, 2003). Some teachers accept their students' use of BEV and do not challenge them to improve their English speaking skills. When use of this form of communication is allowed within the classroom setting, an improvement in the student's native language is not being advocated, which further distances the student from his/her potential to learn world languages (Hubbard, 1980).

The discriminatory attitudes mentioned previously contribute to the racism that occurs in world language settings. Many teachers feel that students should study subjects that will be practical and useful in their future lives, including the types of careers that students choose (Anya, 2011). This parallels with the racialization of world language study that has been an issue for Blacks since the late 1800s. Many African Americans do not pursue opportunities associated with knowledge of multiple languages; therefore both the teachers and students find it unnecessary to put effort into teaching/studying them.

World Language Education and the Intersection of Race and Class

The issue of African American students' low interests and low levels of performance in world language classrooms is further complicated by economic status/class. Specifically as it relates to study abroad, Black students are not as exposed to opportunities for travel as members of other racial groups. The social and cultural capital and educational backgrounds of Black parents greatly affect their children's role within educational systems. In order to find success in school, students must have support from their parents, which is sometimes difficult when it comes to providing financial support for study abroad. This parallels with discussions regarding the intersection of race and property rights (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). If parents are unable to fund study abroad or are unaware of the benefits or fearful of potential dangers, this limits the student's opportunities to improve their second language proficiency and expand cultural experiences. Furthermore, if a student's social class limits them from obtaining information regarding the benefits of pursuing an education in world language, they will be less inclined to do so. This leads to further limitations on future educational and career opportunities.

Lack of exposure, high costs, and apprehensiveness toward international travel due to fear of discrimination are all factors that deter African American students from pursuing study abroad opportunities (Stroud, 2010). In many cases, students express their lack of knowledge about these educational options because they are not adequately advertised and information is not made readily available. This topic is extensively discussed in Brux and Fry's "Multicultural Students in Study Abroad: Their Interests, Their Issues and Their Constraints" (2010). The authors cite a 1993 study conducted by the CIEE (Council on International Educational Exchange) which identifies factors affecting minority students' efforts to study abroad, such as fear of discrimination within other countries and lack of confidence due to limited travel experiences. These factors greatly affect the numbers of non-White students studying abroad, a

concern represented in the data collected by the CIEE. In the Profile of U.S. Study Abroad Students completed in 1996/97 and 2006/07, numbers reveal a very minimal increase in study abroad by African Americans (3.5% of 99.448 students in 1996/97 and 3.8% of 241,791 in 2006/07). Other minorities also had numbers drastically lower than those of their White peers. These factors are also attributed to the attitudes of students' families to education abroad, lack of awareness of study abroad programs offered at their schools and the lack of relevance of study abroad options for multicultural students.

A 2007/2008 study (Penn & Tanner, 2009) conducted by the University of Wisconsin at River Falls (UWRF), shows that out of 12 students that studied abroad during the school year, none of them were Black while all other minority groups listed had a least two students that participated in study abroad program. While UWRF does not have a large minority population, the data collected aligns with the usual findings regarding Black student's lack of participation in education outside of the U.S. In a focus group at UWRF with the BSU (Black Student Union), none of the students present participated in study abroad. Many expressed financial strain, fear of the complications of being the only Black student within the group while also being different from those within the host country, and lack of information about study abroad opportunities presented by the university (Penn & Tanner 2009).

Perspectives regarding travelling/studying abroad is a minimally examined aspect of Black students' world language education experiences. Penn and Tanner's article explores the opinions on travel/study abroad of 41 Black high school graduates. The study conducted centers around the thoughts of 41 Black high school graduates enrolled in a college prep program at an HBCU in Texas in order to examine the factors affecting the disproportionate rates at which Black students engage in international study. Their findings contradicted the usual (financial

constraints, fear of the unknown, lack of information, lack of encouragement from teachers and family, etc.) (Brux & Fry, 2009; Penn & Tanner, 2009) found in previous studies regarding minorities and international education in that the students expressed their knowledge of the importance and benefits of studying outside of the United States. Although previous research has shown that Black students pursue study abroad options at a rate far lower than that of White students or other minorities (Brux & Fry, 2009), the student responses to research questions show their acknowledgment of the benefits of studying in countries outside of the United States, countering the notion that Black students believe experiencing different cultures will take away from their own cultural identities. While there were many who gave responses to the open-ended questions that suggested that education abroad would take away from their college experience, the results overwhelmingly showed the students' positive attitudes toward studying in another country (Brux & Fry, 2009).

A 1993 study conducted at the University of Michigan cited four major reasons for Black students' lack of representation in education abroad: (a) choice of major, (b) attrition rates, (c) lower level of affluence than White students, and (d) lack of encouragement and support from teachers (Penn & Tanner, 2009). Many students surveyed expressed some form of interest in study abroad opportunities as way to experience something new or to travel to a country that they considered interesting. However, based on their responses to questions about family income, they believed that studying abroad would be a great financial burden that could not be supported by the income of their parents (specifically mother since family matriarchs were specifically asked about in survey questions) (Penn & Tanner, 2009).

In addition to discussions regarding study abroad, the connection between language learning and student identity emerges within other areas. Kubota, Austin & Saito-Abbott (2003)

examines students' understandings of the relationship between world language study and socioeconomic status, race, gender and social-justice related topics. Many participants in the study indicated that their language coursework did not allow them to engage in dialogue regarding the aforementioned topics because the focus was primarily on grammar and vocabulary, and "basic conversation" (Kubota, Austin & Saito-Abbott, 2003, p. 18) and there was typically not enough time to further investigate issues of identity and social justice. Many of the advanced students partaking in this study expressed a need to incorporate topics related to the intersections of student identity while beginner-level students did not see a need to address these concepts within a language course. This article allows us to see that many students do not recognize the importance of aspects of their identity as it relates to language study. On the other hand, students who see these connections as valuable are limited in their opportunities to examine the relationship between their identities and what they learn in the classroom.

Theoretical and Conceptual Framework

Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Because we live within a society that is and has historically been plagued by issues of institutional racism, it is obvious that these issues trickle down to our educational systems (including the world language classroom). Throughout its history, our nation has been controlled by a hierarchy that perpetuates the belief that Whites are superior to people of color, thus contributing to the marginalization and disenfranchisement of these groups of color. Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a movement that was established to address various race-based issues such as racism, racial discrimination, racial inequality, and power. CRT actually derived from Critical Legal Studies, a movement founded to expose the biased legal practices that contributed to the disenfranchisement of non-White (and therefore non-mainstream) groups within the United States (Brown & Jackson, 2013; Delgado, 1987). Various scholars felt that CLS did not

do enough to unpack and challenge the race-based legal practices that negatively impacted people of color, and their creation of CRT was in response to this shortcoming of members of the legal field.

CRT aims to understand, observe, and challenge the connection between race, racism and power (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Additionally, there is an element of action/activism that seeks to eliminate racial inequities by disrupting the status quo and eradicating systems of White supremacy in an effort to promote racial equality throughout society. CRT as a theoretical framework is multi-faceted in its approach to challenging the status quo. The descriptions of CRT's key components and features is essential to understanding its history and development. Various seminal works by CRT scholars cite some aspects of the theory as tenets while others refer to them as themes or key constructs (Brown & Jackson, 2013; Delgado, 1987; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Donnor, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2013). The most critical tenet of CRT is that it acknowledges that racism is a normal practice embedded within all structures of society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2013). Bonilla-Silva (1997) refers to this as "racialized social systems" and argues that racial phenomena and racist situations all stem from the existence of racism itself (p. 469). Scholars within the field posit that racism is "the usual way society does business, the common, the everyday experience of most people of color in this country" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012, p.7). This racialization sometimes unfortunately occurs within the language classroom when teachers believe that their Black students are incapable of learning a second language because of their use of Black Vernacular English (BEV), or because their culture simply does not align with world language classroom content (English & Moore, 1998).

This normality of racism and stereotyping contributes to its continued perpetuation, and allows for racist practices to be the norm within our culture. Scholars work to expose this pervasiveness of racism by encouraging the reframing of race-based narratives in ways that expose the true racist tendencies of our society. This is referred to as counter- storytelling and is a critical tenet of CRT (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). The United States maintains a trend in which dominant narratives, or stock stories provided by members of the mainstream group, are taken for face value and accepted as truth. CRT seeks to discover truth by empowering people of color to share their experiences as a means of showing broader social implications of situations rooted in racism. Storytelling is not simply a way for people of color to vent about their experiences. Its purpose is to disrupt racism at the macro level by showing how individuals are affected at the micro level (Ladson-Billings, 2013). Moreover, storytelling and counterstorytelling ensure that history is recounted in a way that is unbiased and shares the experiences of all involved, regardless of their race, gender, ability level, etc. (Delgado, 1989; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). This speaks to the importance of the data that will be shared from this study in that it will shed light on narratives based on experiences that are often excluded from the more seminal pieces of literature on world language education.

Critical Race Theory encourages the understanding of intersectional experiences (i.e. the relationship between race and social class or race and gender) and seeks to combat meritocratic and colorblind ideologies and practices that contribute to the maintenance of inequitable systems of power (Bell, 1992; Delgado, 1989; Gotanda, 1991; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Scholars argue that ignoring the connection between race and other factors perpetuates inequity. Furthermore, they believe that meritocracy, colorblindness and post-racialism maintain a cycle of oppression of people of color because they blame failure on the individuals instead of

recognizing the systems in place that set them up for failure (i.e. in academics, in the workplace, etc.). Intersections of race and other factors that have affected the world language experiences of potential participants and/or their students were evident within this study, as well.

Another important feature or tenet of CRT is interest convergence, meaning that racial compromises are made to appease people of color only if people there is some major benefit to the dominant group. Many pivotal instances in history (Executive Orders 10925 and 11426, Brown v. Board of Education, etc.) have been critiqued by CRT scholars as being examples of interest convergence (Bell, 1980; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2013). CRT theorists posit that these events took place to give people of color an opportunity to progress, but not enough to make society completely equitable for all, because the primary purpose of such compromises was to fulfill the needs of members of the mainstream. Derrick Bell, Harvard School of Law's first Black, tenured professor, is considered to be one of the founding fathers of CRT. He coined the term 'interest convergence' and used it to analyze the Brown v. Board decision and the President Abraham Lincoln's issuance of the Emancipation Proclamation (Brown & Jackson, 2013). When the interests of Blacks and Whites align, especially Whites of higher socioeconomic status, changes are made. Even today, CRT theorists hold that many decisions are made that seem good for people of color in essence, though their intentions are not necessarily to benefit members of these groups. Much of the education policy that is in existence and many social programs can be cited as examples of interest convergence (i.e. No Child Left Behind, Planned Parenthood, and Affirmative Action) (Brown & Jackson, 2013).

Although it is more of a theme of CRT versus a tenet, Cheryl Harris' (1993) discussion on whiteness as property added a new dimension to the movement. The theory holds that whiteness/one's membership to the dominant mainstream group is valuable as White individuals

benefit from privileges not granted to members of other racial groups. Theorists also posit that because courts refuse to acknowledge whiteness as a form of property, it enables the value to be maintained since systems that privilege whiteness remain untouched by legislation that could inhibit them from doing so (Bell, 1980). Though CRT does not express a belief that all White people are racist, its scholars do believe that they all benefit from their whiteness. This same notion of white privilege/whiteness as property/whiteness as an asset exists within schools and educational systems as pedagogical approaches and curricular content tend to serve the needs of White students while seemingly ignoring the needs of others. CRT's discussion of whiteness as property also holds that it works to perpetuate White societal norms and marginalize those that cannot and do not behave in the ways of mainstream White culture (Harris, 1993). It could be argued that whiteness as property is a primary reason for the existence of CRT in education as it challenges the norms that exclude and marginalize students of color (Tate, 1997). Such issues exist within the language classroom when students of the majority [White] group see themselves represented within images presented within course materials while Black students are often not taught about culturally relevant material, such Afro-Latino culture, and the influence of African culture on Hispanic/Latino culture.

Traditionally, CRT has comprised of members of three camps; the idealists, realists, materialists. According to Delgado and Stefancic (2012):

> Idealists hold that racism and discrimination are matters of thinking, mental categorization, attitude, and discourse. Race is a social construction not a biological reality. Hence we may unmake it and deprive it of much of its sting by changing the system of images, words, attitudes, unconscious feelings, scripts, and social teachings by which we convey to one another that certain people are less intelligent, reliable, hardworking, virtuous, and American than others…The realists, or economic determinists hold that though attitudes are important, racism is much more than just a collection of unfavorable impressions of members of other groups. For realists, racism is a means by which society allocates privilege and status. Materialists point out that conquering nations universally demonize their subjects to feel better about exploiting them, so that, for

> example, planters and ranchers in Texas and the Southwest circulated notions of Mexican inferiority at roughly the same period that they found it necessary to take over Mexican lands… (pp. 21-22).

Various CRT scholars consider themselves as members of one or multiple camps, though most recognize the rationale behind each groups' description and ideologies. Furthermore, CRT still maintains its strong connection with legal studies and practices as it did during its initial period of inception. The movement still focuses on the ways in which law, education and other social systems are affected by racism and racist practices.

Though each of the tenets of CRT are crucial to discussions of race and power, I will be focusing on three within the context of this project. Whiteness as property, the endemic nature of racism and racialization, and intersectionality (of race and class) will be utilized as components of my conceptual framework. The aforementioned tenets align very well with the literature discussing the world language experiences of African Americans, and will provide a strong foundation and basis of analysis for the data within this project.

The Relationship between Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) and Critical Race Theory (CRT)

Because our educational systems mimic the trends and tendencies of larger societal systems and institutions, we know that race is a key factor within the classroom. More specifically speaking, Black students are affected by race-related practices, perspectives, and privileges (or lack thereof) within the world language classroom. Though it goes without saying that there are wonderful language instructors that effectively work with students of all backgrounds, there is much work to be done to close the racial achievement gap. The teaching of world languages through social justice is a way to promote equity and to ensure that the diverse cultural backgrounds and learning needs of all students are addressed. Here is where the next element of my theoretical/conceptual framework, culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP), is

imperative as it allows us to examine a possibility in addressing race-based phenomena in the classroom.

There are obvious and significant connections between Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) (Ladson-Billlings, 1995). It is important to mention that CRP goes by various names including Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (Harmon, 2012), culturally congruent, culturally compatible, culturally appropriate, and even as multicultural education (Irvine & Armento, 2001). Most apparent is the fact that CRP was created by Ladson-Billings (1995), who is also responsible for some of the key pieces of CRT literature. Her perspectives on race inform both her discussions on CRT and CRP. Because the previous section on CRT provides an overview of its history and development, it is important to also discuss the most important aspects CRP. Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is one of the most prominent examples of social justice pedagogy, and was founded in response to teacher education programs' failure to prepare teachers to meet the needs of diverse students (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Ladson-Billings' scholarship on CRP is centered around the idea that there should be a connection between students' home, community and school as a means of 'reaching' them in ways that are meaningful and relevant (Ladson-Billings, 2009). The three key components of Billings' CRP include academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness (Billings, 1995; Milner, 2011). Firstly and most essential to the approach is CRP's focus on the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) that students possess. Recognizing that students bring their own valuable knowledge to the classroom, and finding effective ways in which students have opportunities to utilize this knowledge are essential components of CRP. Educators must also have an understanding of the cultures and backgrounds of their students which will allow them to respond appropriately to their needs and situations (Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejia, 2003). These

components of CRP are essential to improving the value that Black students place on their language learning experiences. When students do not feel like foreigners within the classroom, they do not view the material as foreign and are able to overcome barriers that previously hindered them from finding success.

Another important quality of CRP is that it stresses the importance of teaching students in ways that are challenging (Ladson-Billings, 2006). Many teachers believe that they are helping their students of color when they allow them to pass without putting forth the appropriate amount of effort. Instead of helping the students, this lack of rigor is reflective of teachers' own biases, and perpetuates the stereotype that people of color do not possess the propensity to achieve academically. This connects with CRT's tenet related to the pervasiveness of racism. It is engrained in our mentalities and, in many cases, teachers tend to act on the racist-based perspectives that they hold.

Both CRT and CRP acknowledge the inequitable nature of our society and postulate that racism plays a huge role in all systems within this country, including educational systems. (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014). Though CRP obviously focuses almost entirely on education, it addresses many of the sociopolitical factors that are a part of CRT discourses and recognizes that they are an important part of students' experiences. The world, the classroom, and students are viewed using a critical lens. Let us consider the achievement levels of students of color at public schools compared to their white counterparts. There has been an obvious racial achievement gap since for the past several decades. The mainstream narrative suggests that students of color are not as successful academically because they do not try as hard, which parallels CRT's tenet of meritocracy. Members of the dominant group would also argue that all students are a capable of learning, regardless of their racial

background, so the achievement gap should not be viewed from a racial perspective. This is a common argument posed by those who view the world from a 'colorblind' perspective. Based on the literature presented by various scholars (Ladson-Billings, 2005, 2009), we can respond to the aforementioned arguments regarding achievement using the construct of CRP. Students of color are often not taught in ways that are culturally relevant and reflective of their own experiences. They are taught based on mainstream norms that do not consider the learning needs of diverse populations. A lack of connection with course materials results in students' alienation from their learning experience, and can often result in lower levels of achievement. This lack of cultural relevance aligns very closely with other tenets of CRT. For example, there is a tendency to ignore important demographic intersections that are relevant to students' everyday lives.

Instead of teachers, administrators, and policymakers viewing these academic disparities from a CRT and CRP perspective, they instead draw from negative perspectives of students of color, thus perpetuating the cycle of inequity. For this reason, advocates of social justice in education have created specific examples of CRP being effectively used within teacher education programs (Ladson-Billings, 2009), just as many have done with CRT (Milner, Pearman & McGhee, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Sleeter, 2013; Tate; 1997; Tatum, 2001). Escamilla and Nathenson-Mejia's (2003) study regarding the use of Latino children's literature as a teacher education tool is a powerful example of the use of CRP to improve the educational experiences of students from racially diverse backgrounds. Focusing on a large Colorado school district (with an almost 50% population of Latino students), researchers sought to discover if Latino children's literature could be effective in raising teacher candidates' awareness of other Latino and if it could be relatable to their own experiences. Additionally, Escamilla and Nathenson-Mejia (2003)

also wanted to determine if pre-service teachers would be interested in incorporating Latino children's literature with their pedagogy and course content.

The study focuses on the perspectives of 27 participants, including members of the previously mentioned white, female demographic though six identified as racial minorities. The researchers held monthly seminars in which pre-service teachers were broken into study groups where they discussed and wrote about their reactions to two Latino children's books per month. Responses surrounding questions about thoughts related to the books, similar experiences faced by participants and if teacher candidates would consider using the texts with their students were coded based on the following categories: "a) cultural; b) general or universal; c) negative; or d) no response or opinion" (Escamilla & Nathensen-Mejia, 2003, p.242). Most participants provided universal responses related to general concepts such as school and family life, though not necessarily related to culture. Some responses indicated negative feelings about the selected literature, including the notion that too many controversial topics unsuitable for students (such as religion, for example) were included.

While majority of participants expressed compassion, data collected from the study did not conclusively show that the literature utilized helped teacher candidates learn more about the cultures of the students they served. The study did, however, inform later curricular practices within the teacher education program in that teacher candidates were asked to reflect on their responses and continuously address their own biases and perspectives related to culture. This example of CRP could be taken further to include elements of CRT by incorporating discussions of whiteness as property, White privilege, intersections of race and class, interest convergence (related to educational policies affecting Latino students), and even instances of discrimination and stereotyping within the texts being utilized and within the school as a whole. Though this

study specifically addresses the ways in which teachers can use children's literature with their students, it could also be utilized within teacher education programs in the potential discussions between teacher educators and their students mentioned previously.

Milner (2010) provides a poignant example of a White teacher establishing rapport and building strong relationships with his students within an urban school. This study could be an exemplar within teacher education programs to not only discuss definitions and features of CRP, but also how it can be done in the classroom. Teachers are always in search of examples of practical applications of theory, which is why Milner's study is so valuable. Most notably, Mr. Hall (the teacher whom which the study centers around) acknowledges the existence of race and racism and discusses these phenomena with his students (Milner, 2010). As CRT informs us, many White individuals (including teachers) shy away from such topics and instead employ colorblind and/or post-racial (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) viewpoints, either because they are uncomfortable or because they do not see the value in conversations about race. Mr. Hall, on the other hand, welcomes these conversations and acknowledges the role that identity and the intersection of race and other factors play in the students' everyday lives. Furthermore, he recognizes the role that his whiteness (Picower, 2009; Sleeter; 2001) plays in his own identity, experiences, and relationships with students. His methods counter the race-based issues described in the previous section on CRT and work against systems of racism and oppression within the field of education. Additionally, he draws on students' cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) as valuable resources, using them to further his own understandings of our world. In learning about his students and their experiences, Mr. Hall was able to display his cultural competence. This allowed for the establishment of positive rapport with students and the creation of an environment in which students' experiences are valued.

As is evident in this example, CRP could potentially be seen as an answer to the questions that CRT raises about the injustices within our educational systems. For example, by utilizing materials that allow students to think critically about their lives, families, communities and experiences, teachers are creating an element of relevance for students. Furthermore, by asking students to share these experiences which counter or oppose dominant narratives, educators empower them to recognize the importance and value of their own lives. Creating classroom communities in which storytelling is promoted allows for the transformation of mentalities and prepares students to take action to affect change within their communities outside of the school (Bell, Desai, Irani, 2013). One could argue that CRT and CRP are quite similar, with the exception that the former analyzes our world while the latter takes these analyses and specifically uses them as evidence and examples of how/where our pedagogical practices must change.

The Relationship between Critical Race Theory and Social Justice Pedagogies/Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (Specifically in World Language Education)

There are various language ideologies that are evident within our culture. The United States has traditionally been a country that is very monolingual although it is home to members of various linguistic groups. Speaking English has commonly been regarded as a feature that is mandatory in establishing one's connection with this nation and is seemingly treated as a requirement for societal membership (Hermann, 2002). We have a tendency to stress the importance of speaking English, contributing to a language-based hierarchy that situates English at the top and other languages below. Both minority and nonminority members of society perceive language fluency as a critical aspect of acceptance and an important skill necessary to take part in society. Essentially, language can be seen as a tool of colonization based on how it has been used to dominate various groups throughout our nation's history (Wiley, 2014).

Historically, there has been a tendency to marginalize speakers of other languages due to the dominance of the English language within the United States. Limited opportunities for heritage language instruction beyond the household, pressure to eliminate usage of heritage languages, and the public's negative views of speakers of languages other than English perpetuate language ideologies within this country that celebrate English and only English (Tse, 2001; Wiley, 2014). Schools echo these same sentiments as students who speak other languages are expected to rapidly learn English and leave their heritage language behind.

Similarly, there are language-based hierarchies that exist within world language classrooms. The preferential perspectives regarding the Spanish spoken in Europe (Spain) is one of the most obvious instances of the language/dialect pecking order that comes to mind. For example, many students learning Spanish are completely unaware that there is a Spanish-speaking country in Africa, yet they are encouraged to study abroad in Spain to improve their target language proficiency. The same example can be applied to French, Portuguese, and even many of the Asian languages that are taught in U.S. schools. These issues of bias, specifically cultural bias, allow the dominance of European target-language speaking groups. This propensity to celebrate Whiteness/Europeanism reflects the same values of mainstream society.

The language-based ideologies mentioned previously create a natural connection between world language classrooms and the social justice pedagogies utilized by educators. Various social justice-based pedagogies (including culturally relevant pedagogy) align with the tenets of Critical Race Theory (CRT), with the connection between the two being made once CRT made its appearance within the realm of education (Chapman, 2013). Most apparent, both CRT and social justice education aim to combat various social issues affecting members of society (i.e. racism, sexism, classism, etc.). In fact, one of CRT's underlying themes is its commitment to

social justice and the fight against oppression (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Chapman (2013) makes mention of one of the challenges within the research and literature on social justice related to the failure of its scholars to explicitly state its definition. In her search for literature that specifically discusses the relationship between CRT and social justice, she discovered that "social justice is not a separate call for action in CRT, but an embedded function of scholarship that combats the pervasive and punishing presence of race and racism in social and institutional contexts" (p. 102).

In order to understand the relationship between CRT and social justice on a deeper level, it is imperative that the key principles of social justice are unpacked. Firstly, there is an element of equality that asserts the importance of equal rights for all. Secondly, opportunities for advancement, progression, and increases in power must be available for all parties involved (Rawls, 1972). The connection between CRT and social justice lies in the importance of ensuring equal access to resources and an understanding that power must be shared and not granted only to members of one certain group. Rawls (1972), however, posits that there will always be a disproportion of power and resources, but we must acknowledge that these imbalances occur instead of simply ignoring them (which leads to their continuation, as CRT scholars have expressed).

One of the primary foci of CRT in education has been to better prepare the emerging teacher force, which is predominantly white and female, to better understand and serve the needs of students from diverse backgrounds. Acknowledging that there are stereotypes that teachers associate with students of color is an important step that must be made to help educators address and work through their own biases (Sleeter, 2001; Solórzano, 1997). Educators must also accept CRT's most prominent tenet, which, as mentioned previously, posits that racism is endemic and

is a pervasive feature of our society. Many practitioners find it hard to accept that even though they may make efforts to treat each of their students equally, they are not necessarily seen as equals within our world (Sensoy, O. & DiAngelo, R., 2012). Failure to recognize this fact is counterproductive to the progression of social justice within our education systems.

Furthermore, social justice, just as CRT, works to address issues of inequity beyond the individual level, and encourages us to question, critique and challenge the ways that people outside of the dominant group are treated and/or (mis)represented. Both approaches are blatant in their "calling out" of systems of oppression that marginalize. They encourage minorities to share their experiences (storytelling/counterstorytelling, *testimonio*) as a means of exposing the inequities of our society (Bell, 1992; Chapman, 2013).

The language classroom is crucial to the dispelling of myths and stereotypes associated with the speakers of certain languages. Often times, instead of serving as a safe place in which students are able to critique and challenge societal norms and practices, language teachers often end up perpetuating mainstream negative perspectives related to language and beyond. CRP is an effective way to address language-based phenomena within the classroom, but teachers must first be aware of who their students are and where they come from in order to be able to find positive and beneficial ways to incorporate students' backgrounds with course content. Because of its focus on equity and the cultural assets that students bring to the table, CRP is considered to be an example of a social justice pedagogy.

More specifically, addressing community language contexts is a meaningful way to incorporate culturally relevant pedagogical practices. Tse (2001) cites that a students' peer group also influences his/her desire to study a language. She writes, "Encountering a peer group that we consider desirable and that also happens to use and value the [heritage] language encourages

us to improve our proficiency in that language, to use it more often, and to identify ourselves as a [heritage] speaker" (p. 39). She is specifically referencing heritage speakers of other languages, however, the same concept applies to second language learning. Pratt (2012) also affirms that students' cultural communities' perceptions of language study slightly influence the ways in which students themselves view language study. Having students discuss instances of language learning within their communities outside of the classroom allows for the incorporation of cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) based on phenomena that they experience each day. For example, students studying a language should have the opportunity to explore the ways in which languages are perceived, used/represented, and categorized within their communities (Reese & Goldenberg, 2006). It is important to understand and incorporate aspects of the community as it relates to language study within course content.

In examining its usefulness within the realm of social justice education, we find that CRT could be used as a tool for social justice educators to analyze the ways in which the issues of oppression and inequity surface within world language curricula. By acknowledging, discussing and critiquing these issues, teachers and students can conceptualize how to approach world language content using more socially-just practices. For example, textbook analyses can allow students opportunities to think critically about the curriculum. Consider using questions such as: How is culture represented? What is missing from the textbook? Are their certain countries/groups of target language speakers that are referenced more than others? How are target language speakers of color represented (if at all)? Is there a focus on the community? Are there examples of injustice within this text (i.e. racism, sexism, ableism, economic oppression, etc.)? How are controversial issues approached? From whose perspective is this story being told? How do these issues connect with experiences of minorities within the U.S.? How does this issue

resonate with you and other members of your community? Of course, these questions would vary based on the age and proficiency level of students, but providing opportunities for critical discussion is essential to an effective world language education. If the purpose of language courses is to prepare students to be global citizens, leaders, and overall good people, it is the responsibility of educators to ensure that students have the tools necessary to find success.

Discussions of white privilege/whiteness as property (Harris, 1993) relate to racial hierarchies that exist within target language-speaking countries, the intersectional identities of individuals within literature and how their experiences align with important historical events, racism as shown in current events, examples of interest convergence in history and various other topics are effective ways to infuse social justice-based materials with classroom content. Encouraging action and activism by creating ways for students to share what they have learned in meaningful ways is also important. As CRT scholars discuss and expose injustices within society, social justice educators must help their students to do the same. Activism takes these discussions further to a place where change can occur. The discussion of these issues is important, as is the explaining *why* such issues are being discussed. Students often beg the question, "How will this apply to my real life?" It is imperative that world language instructors are able to adequately answer these questions. Furthermore, educators should be consistently contemplating the ways in which world language course content is preparing their students to address issues of power, oppression, equity, identity, and more. Social justice within the field of world language is the vehicle by which we can change the tendencies associated with language study.

Teaching World Languages for Social Justice

As outlined in the history section, the field of world language education is defined by a tradition that is not rooted in social justice. Key scholars of the field posit that the teaching (and learning) of world languages (and other subjects) for social justice is not a linear or neat process (Kubota, 2003; Nieto, 2010; Osborn, 2006). It is instead a continuous process of discovering, questioning, exploring, challenging, etc. There is not one 'right' definition of social justice as it relates to world languages. According to Osborn (2006), social justice means "members of society sharing equitably in the benefits of that society" and is the "promotion of positive cross-national and cross-cultural understanding" and power sharing (pp. 16-17). Others have produced tenets of characteristics of teaching world languages for social justice. For example, Nieto (2010) created a list of social justice doctrines for scholars/educators of various disciplines:

1. It challenges, confronts, and disrupts misconceptions, untruths and stereotypes that lead to structural inequality and discrimination based on social and human differences.
2. It provides all students with the resources necessary to learn to their full potential, including both material and emotional resources.
3. It draws on the talents and strengths that students bring to their education.
4. It creates a learning environment that promotes critical thinking and agency for social change. (p. 48).

Kubota (2003) also created her own criteria of critical pedagogy to address the perceived shortcomings of the 5 C's, or standards of foreign language learning (communication, cultures, connections, comparisons and communities). The 4 D's, as Kubota calls them, will assist teachers in more deeply considering their approaches to social justice (specifically related to the teaching of culture) within the classroom. She posits that there is a need to incorporate more aspects of critical pedagogy and social justice to the standards that are currently in existence in

an effort to disrupt stereotypical perspectives that students (and teachers) may possess about target language cultures (i.e. a homogenized view of target language cultures/speakers). Because one of the primary purposes of world language education is to enhance students' worldview and assist them in more deeply understanding the diversity of cultures, it is our responsibility to ensure that we are not promoting stereotypes and biases. We must also work to make certain that our students do not hold a belief that all target language cultures are the same. Although each of the sets of criteria and doctrines described previously contain different points and key features, there is consensus that social justice-based education within the field must encourage the understanding and respect of different cultural perspectives and must challenge students to think critically about the world and the role that they play in society. A goal of teaching world languages for social justice must also be to understand the experiences of others and to value these experiences though they may differ from our own (Johnson & Randolph, 2015).

While the topic has not yet been widely explored within the field of WLE, there are several examples within the literature that can be used to show what teaching world languages for social justice actually looks like. In an effort to fill the critical pedagogy void that exists in language education, Glynn, Wesley and Wassell (2014) created a sourcebook that provides educators with insight on the definition of social justice along with examples of what social justice-based content looks like. Their text, "Words and Actions: Teaching Languages through the Lens of Social Justice," encourages language teachers to embrace the diversity of their students and provides practical ways to implement more social justice-based pedagogies within their classrooms. There are also templates included that allow instructors to create their own social justice-based lessons according to examples and information provided in the text.

In an effort to make the field more socially just, it must be diversified not only through content, but also through its educators (Hines, 2007). Teaching that is culturally relevant and culturally responsive is an excellent way to ensure favorable learning experiences for students. For example, a 1998 study examines the success of an exploratory Arabic language program for African American middle school students in an urban setting (Moore & English, 1998). The teacher, an African American male, related to students and made course content interesting and engaging. For example, he allowed students to create educational raps utilizing the vocabulary and language they had learned in the course. By no means am I suggesting that students of color can only learn through rap, however, this example shows how teachers can create content that will interest students in a course in order to set the stage for building language proficiency. Furthermore, rap music is a large part of mainstream popular culture and would be of interest to students of various backgrounds. The idea is to engage students in language study by teaching them in ways that allow them to grasp concepts. Some of the approaches mentioned previously (worksheets, translation method, etc.) alienate students from the learning experience and often cause them to lose interest in subject matter prematurely. Having the ability to create song lyrics, present a music-based project, and express themselves creatively is potentially a way to reach students that are inclined to learn using performance-based approaches.

Goulah (2006, 2011) explores world language instruction that promotes a "cosmological perspective of teaching second/foreign languages for promoting ecological interconnectedness and spirituality to counter material and monetary interests that cause environmental destruction and militarism" (Goulah, 2006, p. 201). This form of instruction encourages students to critique real issues faced by society as a whole through their language instruction. For this study, Goulah had students view the Japanese film, *Princess Mononoke,* a fictitious Japanese anime film that

focuses on the struggle of a princess who wants to save her forest from destruction due to her culture's deep connection with the environment. Students were required to complete a project of their choosing (paper, poster, diorama, etc.) related to one of the themes from the movie along with a written letter of introduction as though they were one of the characters from the forest. This written portion was completed prior to students' viewing of the film so that researchers could analyze student learning, or transformation, from the beginning of the unit to the end. Of course target language vocabulary and grammar were assessed, but the primary focus of the unit was on students' thoughts regarding how they connected with the forest in the film.

Goulah draws from the concept of transformative learning, which challenges learners to consider the world from a more emotional, spiritual and environmentally conscious perspective in order to transform their practices that may be harmful to the environment and/or other human beings (McWhinney & Marcos, 2003). Such critical examination of the world provides students with more meaningful classroom experiences and prepares them to be more critically-conscious and globally aware individuals. Goulah, and his high school students in a beginner-level Japanese course used Japanese anime movies to create a conversation about "cultural awareness, identity, attitudes, and language acquisition" (Goulah, 2006, p. 217).

Kubota (2003) provides specific examples of her pedagogical approaches to the critical teaching of Japanese culture. She makes mention of using audiotaped conversations, video clips, or TV shows with Japanese speakers as a means of helping students to recognize differences between male and female speech patterns. She posits that this is an effective way for students to critically examine the depictions of Japanese language and culture in the textbook as compared to what they hear (and see) during the conversation snippets. Furthermore, Kubota discusses the importance of ensuring that target language culture (and even language dialects) are not

generalized, which in turn creates stereotypical depictions of target language speakers (Kubota, 2003).

There has recently been an increase in the amount of discussion on intercultural awareness, which means familiarizing oneself with the perspectives and practices of another group while also critically considering the perspectives and practices within our own culture (Johnson & Randolph, 2015). Instead of looking at culture in a binary sense of 'their [culture] compared to mine' or 'normal versus abnormal,' educators must challenge their students and themselves to understand why certain perspectives and practices exist in certain cultures while considering how they affect us and relate to our own lives. This, of course, does not involve creating social hierarchies or making value judgments about the beliefs of others (Johnson & Randolph, 2015).

In relation to this discussion on hierarchies and judgments of speakers of languages other than English within the United States, Fitts & McClure (2015) share the importance of combatting anti-immigrant discourses (that exist within world language classrooms and beyond). Though this study does not focus on world language education specifically, it does speak to the various ideologies surrounding language and how it is associated with opinions surrounding what it means to be an American. Their study utilizes interviews in which Latino immigrant and European non-immigrant participants within the New L@tino South discuss their language ideologies and perceptions about immigrants in the United States. The study revealed principles in which Americanism is associated with English fluency, and the experiences of Latino immigrants who are often assumed to not be English speakers simply because of their race (Fitts & McClure, 2015). This is all information that we already know, however, it is imperative that such issues are addressed with students through world language course curricula as a means of

changing the discourse regarding immigrants within the United States. We must teach students to change the narrative regarding language, emphasizing the benefits of language diversity, diversity in general, and bilingualism. Explicitly asking students to address stereotypes that have heard about members of various linguistic or racial groups, and working with them in ways to productively rephrase these narratives is essential to the implementation of social justice within the world language classroom. Furthermore, such critical conversations can be held in classes of various disciplines as it is not the sole responsibility of world language educators to delve into such topics.

The examples cited previously are a great start for world language educators looking to improve their social justice-based pedagogical practices, however there is definitely a need for more tangible resources (i.e. lesson/unit plans, samples of assessments, assignments, etc.). Although important strides have been made in the field as it relates to the progression of social justice education, there are many challenges faced by both teachers and students. Firstly, there are different definitions of the term itself. Tensions exist regarding social justice within the field of world languages as related to course content itself, pedagogical practices, working to prepare students to fight oppression and issues affecting underrepresented groups, or a variety of each of these (Bender-Slack, 2010). As mentioned previously, there is a tendency within the discipline to avoid controversial and uncomfortable topics. Some educators may rebel against new requirements to incorporate social justice-based approaches into their pedagogy because they do not see a need and believe that their responsibility is to ensure that students can effectively communicate in the target language (Kubota, 2003). Other instructors may believe that social justice-based education is synonymous with liberalism (Alsup & Miller, 2014) and do not feel comfortable including what they perceive as politics into the classroom.

Additionally, because social justice is now a trendy term within various disciplines, many educators believe that their pedagogical practices are socially just, when in fact tenets of social justice are not actually being implemented at all (or are being implemented in superficial ways) (Agarwal, et. al, 2010). Some educators also confuse social justice education with multiculturalism, diversity, and other terms that are often inappropriately used interchangeably. The issue that is most critical for world language scholars to address is the lack of research and examples of teaching world languages for social justice. Many teachers are afraid to try their hand at making their classrooms more socially just because they do not know where to start and have very few examples of successful teachers' experiences. Even more so, there is a need for example of social justice-based lesson plans, assessments, and activities that meet the needs of various learners from grades K-20 (and beyond). Seeing these tangible resources would potentially make some teachers more confident about attempting broadening their horizons and critically reflecting on their pedagogy and implementing socially just approaches in their classrooms. As a means of making our catalogue of examples more robust, it would be extremely helpful to adapt examples of social justice education from other fields to make them applicable to world language course content.

Conclusion

Social justice pedagogy (specifically within the field of world language education) has a direct correlation with Critical Race Theory (CRT) in that they both acknowledge the role that oppression, power, and privilege, play within our society. Much of the literature cited in this section discusses the oftentimes negative learning experiences of African Americans within world language classrooms. Through the investigation of the experiences of Black Spanish instructors (who are also former Spanish students), we will be able to further understand some of the factors that affect Black students' learning experiences as seen in the literature. This project

examines the ways in which Black instructors' experiences affect the ways in which they interact with *all* students, and how they utilize social justice pedagogies to ensure students' academic success and critical understanding of our world.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

This section will focus on the research design that I have selected for this project and will provide justification for this design. According to Creswell (2009), the research design is the combination of plans for collecting data along with the researchers' procedures and decisions related to examining the phenomena of interest. The research design that I have selected aligns with my positionality and relationship with this topic as Creswell (2009) also indicates is an important element of any study.

As discussed in the introduction, there is a great need for more literature regarding African Americans and world language education as much of the existing work is outdated and does not examine the experiences of those who have found success within the field. In order to expand the field of world language to be more inclusive of African Americans, we first must understand their experiences, their perspectives, and their approaches to language learning and instruction. By no means am I suggesting that one singular experience exists as it relates to Black students and scholars of the field, however the purpose of this project is to shed light on some of these experiences.

It cannot be stated enough that the world language experiences of all African Americans are not the same. This project unearths some extremely relevant information regarding what the world language classroom looked like for three Black former students, how Black post-secondary educators view their practice as social justice educators, and how their experiences within the field inform their pedagogy and perspectives on world language education. This project examines the learning experiences and pedagogical perspectives and practices of three

Black post-secondary Spanish instructors at three different colleges and universities within the southeastern region of the United States.

The following research questions serve as the basis of this study and will allow scholars of the field to gain an understanding on widely under-researched phenomena:

- Research Question 1: What are the world language instructors' interpretations of social justice pedagogy related to world language education?
- Research Question 2: How do the instructors' interpretations of social justice inform their pedagogies in the world language classroom?
- Research Question 3: What were the instructors' K-20 (and beyond) experiences as world language learners? How might their experiences influence their interpretations of social justice within the world language classroom?

Constructivist Paradigm/Approach to Research

Culturally relevant educators utilize constructivist-based approaches to their pedagogy as they allow students to take their cultural experiences and use them as a means of understanding and finding success with academic materials (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). Members of the constructivist camp hold that the processes of meaning-making and understanding of phenomena are socially constructed by those taking part in the research, which includes participants (Mertens, 2010). Guba and Lincoln (2010) discuss "control" as being shared between both the researcher and participants in regards to constructivist research. Power sharing and honoring the voice of the participant are crucial to ensuring the accuracy and objectivity of data collected. Furthermore, the aforementioned scholars posit that "agreements about truth may be the subject of community negotiations" instead of truth and meaning being created by one individual (i.e., the researcher) (Guba & Lincoln, 2010, p. 177).

As a self-identified constructivist, it is also my belief that my experiences are relevant to my work as a researcher. Therefore, I recognize that my role as a Black, post-secondary world language educator not only draws me to this subject, but also affects the ways that I collect, understand and interpret data. It also affects my research choices. However, in order to avoid ethical issues in which I am projecting aspects of my identity on participants and data, it was important to ensure that members of the study were involved in the meaning-making process and were able to examine the accuracy of the information I presented related to this project. This recognition is supported by Guba and Lincoln's (1989) criteria for constructivist qualitative research which defines rigor as "trustworthiness and authenticity, including balance or fairness (inclusive representation of stakeholders in the process of research)…" (p.40).

Upon completing each interview, I asked each participant if there was any information that they would like to omit from the study as they may not have been comfortable with sharing it with a larger audience. They were also asked if there was any additional information that they wished to share (beyond what emerged from the interview questions) at the beginning of the second and third interviews. I also frequently summarized portions of interviews and observations to each participant to ensure that my understandings of the data were accurate and appropriately conveyed what was shared. This portion of the data collection process was crucial to me as a constructivist researcher as the negotiation of meaning was just as much a right of my participants as it was mine.

Positionality

Before discussing the research logistics of this project, it is important to include my positionality as it is what ties me to my phenomena of interest. As a Black woman currently working and previously studying within the field, I find it important to work towards inclusion and diversity within the world language classroom. Fortunately, I have been able to successfully

navigate my world language experiences and have found a place within the field. Unfortunately (and as discussed in the introduction), many African American students are far less likely to reap the benefits associated with world language study because their experiences within the classroom often cause them to feel alienated, marginalized and excluded from learning processes.

My personal connection with this topic stems from my background as both a student and instructor within the field of world language. I recall positive experiences in my Spanish classrooms with teachers that infused fun activities with grammatical content; I also had teachers with very limited pedagogical practices who only acknowledged the value of Spain and its Spanish dialects. I remember being the only African American in my class or in rare situations there was one other student that looked like me. None of the materials that were used in class showed the diversity of the Hispanic/Latino diaspora, and students were only exposed to images of White Spanish-speakers. I had no idea of the vast groups of indigenous, African, and Asian-derived cultures as these were never discussed in class. I did not have any Spanish instructors that looked like me until my junior year of college, although I attended a historically Black College/University (HBCU). My first Black Spanish instructor uncovered a whole new world of diversity within the Spanish speaking diaspora. She shared with us literature written by Afro-Latinos, African-derived music such as *bachata*, and *samba*, and shared with us images of Spanish-speakers with dark skin tones and coarse hair. Of course she still shared with us materials from Spain, Argentina and other places, but she ensured to share with us the richness and diversity of Spanish-speaking cultures. Though I always had an interest in language-learning, these experiences piqued my interest even more. It was amazing to see people of color speaking another language and living in places beyond the United States and Africa. Though I

was comfortable in the Spanish language classroom because of my interest in the language and academic success, I finally felt as though I *belonged*.

Once I went on to earn my Master's degree, the Eurocentric perspectives returned and I was constantly told that my Spanish was "not proper enough" and that I needed to study abroad in Spain or Argentina. Instructors implied that some of my speaking tendencies were reflections of time spent studying abroad in Mexico, the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico. I recognized that the teaching about the diversity of Latino/Hispanic culture was not of great priority and when I began my career as a Spanish lecturer, I talked with many of my students who admitted to thinking the same thing. To them, studying a second language was "boring" and consisted only of memorizing vocabulary and conjugating verbs. In their previous courses, the only culture that existed was *Día de los Muertos* around Halloween, *piñatas* and *churros* for various celebrations and *Don Quixote* for literature. Even more surprisingly, they were astonished that a Black person could possess a high level of Spanish language proficiency. Many of them knew only of Mexico and Spain and never been exposed to Black Spanish-speakers from the United States or other countries. I was often asked how I became so proficient in the language, and even had a parent request that their daughter be switched to a class taught by someone that would teach their child 'proper' Spanish. This was the first time that I realized that various social justice-based issues could be unearthed within the world language classroom.

Although I was far from perfect, I tried to include more of the richness of Spanish language and various cultural aspects of world language study that were engaging for students. I became curious to find ways to motivate my students to major and minor in Spanish. I asked students to address their biases regarding language study and the various appearances of Spanish-speakers. At the time, I did not know that this was the start of my interest in social

justice education, and did not even know that such a thing existed. I decided to leave my role as a lecturer in order to study education and further investigate various phenomena associated with world language study. At the start of my doctoral program, I reflected on my experiences as both a student and teacher and wanted to better understand why students, specifically Black students, struggled with language study and often have/had low levels of interest in course content. In conducting research and reading seminal texts of the field, I noticed a severe gap in the information available on African American students and world language study. The only literature that existed discussed the lower academic performance of Black students, the historical context contributing to this issue, but never addressed scholars that were able to successfully navigate the field and what motivated them to do so. The purpose of my research, specifically this study, is to fill that gap and provide educators with the insights of African American scholars that have thrived within the field of world language.

Because of my background as both a scholar and educator, I have been able to relate to many of the experiences that my participants have shared. As world language education is an arena dominated by White/European perspectives and ideals, I seek to address, challenge, and disrupt the structures of White supremacy and White privilege that exist within our field within my future career. In understanding stories of successful Black language scholars (including my own story), and the ways that these educators work to disrupt the previously mentioned systems of power through their pedagogy, I hope to provide insight regarding the ways in which we can help to motivate Black students and students of other minority groups to pursue an education and career within the field of world language through the use of social justice-based practices. The data collected for this study is instrumental in countering the underlying deficit-based narratives shared within literature on African Americans' educational experiences (Carlton Parsons, 2007).

I have utilized a qualitative approach to answer the previously shared research questions. A qualitative approach is best for the purposes of this study because it allows for a deeper examination of context and background and provides an opportunity to understand problems as a means of working to discover solutions (Creswell, 2012). Qualitative inquiry is centered more on understanding *how* things are and is "interpretive, experiential, situational, and personalistic" (Stake, 2010, p. 14), and allows researchers to take a closer look at themselves while also conducting research on a certain topic.

Case Study Methodology

The three categories of case study, explanatory, exploratory, and descriptive allow researchers to address their topic in the ways that position them to effectively answer research questions (Yin, 2003). The project is descriptive and exploratory as it describes and explores information related to my phenomenon of interest. As mentioned previously, the world language experiences of all African Americans are not the same. However, in collecting data that examines the trends and tendencies of the field, I have created an opportunity to generalize about some of these experiences. I have answered my research questions by investigating the cases of three participants, however, the purpose of this study is not to provide one simple explanation that can be applied to the experiences of every Black world language scholar.

Case study is one of the key constructivist methodological approaches to qualitative research (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). Multiple case study is the best possible methodological approach to this project and has enabled me to focus on multiple participants with very specific expertise and experiences, and thusly collect a robust amount of data related to the topic (Yin, 2003). Furthermore, the data collected through case study allows me, the researcher, to answer questions posed regarding *how* and *why* various phenomena have come to be (Yin, 2003). My research questions shared previously are primarily *how* questions. Though it has been argued that

it is possible to generalize from a single case (Flyvbjerg, 2006), I have collected a wealth of data from various cases in an effort to expand the field as it relates to this topic. Multiple cases will also allow for the analysis of trends across cases and compare the experiences of the participants within each case (Yin, 2003).

Entry/Sampling

Purposeful sampling was utilized to intentionally select participants that meet specific criteria (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). I am acquainted with members of the field that served as key informants who provided the names of potential participants that met the requirements of this study. Participants were required to be the following: 1) African American, 2) a post-secondary world language instructor at a college or university within the southeastern region of the United States (for convenience in conducting classroom observations and interviews), 3) a former world language student who has matriculated through various levels of education within the field, and 4) someone who self-identifies as a social justice educator/activist. The two key informants themselves meet these requirements but are not able to serve as participants within the study due to our relationship. One is currently a member of my dissertation committee and the other is my personal friend. They have not been included as participants within this study as a means of complying with guidelines set forth by the Internal Review Board (IRB). I contacted 17 potential participants who met the above demographic criteria and received responses from three who declined due to their inability to commit to the time requirement, five who indicated that the courses that they teach do not lend themselves to social justice-based pedagogies, and five who initially agreed to take part in the study (though two eventually withdrew). Four individuals never responded to my inquiry at all.

Key informants provided the names and contact information of potential participants. In one case, a participant suggested another individual who met all of the qualifications necessary

to take part in this study (snowball sampling). She contacted this potential participant on my behalf and introduced us via email. This was extremely beneficial in helping me to quickly gain access. Unfortunately, both of these participants dropped out of the study and asked that I not include any of the data collected during their interviews and observations due to reasons that will be shared in Chapter 5. Upon their withdrawal from the study I had only one participant remaining. She suggested another Black Spanish educator who agreed to participate in this project (also an incident of snowball sampling). The final participant is an educator that I found by searching a university's language department website. Upon seeing her picture, I assumed that she was Black and contacted her via telephone to see if she self-identified as such, and if she would be willing to participate in this study. She agreed, enabling me to complete my study with three total participants.

Researcher Role

My role in this project was that of a researcher. My responsibility was be to collect data, which consisted of serving as the interviewer for interviews, the observer for observations, and the analyst for the document analysis portion of the data collection process. I did not take part in classroom discussions (with the exception of one case in which I was asked to take part in the reading of song lyrics and share the nature of this project with students), nor did I provide any feedback to instructors regarding their lesson planning and implementation, or course material selection process. Furthermore, the goal of this study was not to project my assumptions through the interpretation of data collected in a way that is biased or inauthentic. For this reason, there was a brief member-checking process (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) that took place towards the end of the data collection phase. This portion of the project was shared with all participants during the informed consent stage. The member-checking phase consisted of me asking during the last interview for clarity on regarding various data collected. Additionally, I asked each

participant at the end of the data collection process if there was any information that they shared during interviews and/or observations that they wanted me to omit from this write-up. According to Creswell & Miller (2000), the purpose of member checking is to increase the validity and trustworthiness of the data. The goal is to ensure that all participants feel that they have been represented fairly and accurately and to avoid their disempowerment.

Data Collection Plans

In an effort to collect a wealth of meaningful data, I collected information from multiple sources: three instructor interviews and three class session observations. Triangulation of data ensures that the researcher has obtained enough data to answer the research questions and to accurately and adequately explore the topic at hand (Stake, 2010). Furthermore, this triangulation of data ensures the validity, or quality and accuracy, of the data as it relates to its ability to effectively answer the research questions (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

Interviews

Seidman (1991) states "I interview because I am interested in other people's stories. Most simply put, stories are a way of knowing" (p. 7). This simple quote most poignantly reflects my perspective regarding the value of stories, and storytelling as a means of empowerment and combatting the single, dominant narrative. The stories of each participant are extremely important in that they provide insight and context regarding the topic of interest. Furthermore, these stories of successful members of the field will serve as counterstories (Delgado, 1989) to dispel many of the deficit-minded (Castagno & Brayboy, 2008) works of literature that focus on negative characteristics of Black students as justifications for teachers' low academic expectations. Each instructor was interviewed three times each for approximately one hour per interview. Participants were asked during the informed consent stage if they will permit the [audio] recording of each session, to which they all agreed. These interviews were each

transcribed immediately following the session. Interviews were semi-structured in nature and loosely followed a format proposed by Seidman (1991). He posits that the three series interview is an effective way to focus each session and collect meaningful and relevant data each time. The first part of the series, the focused life history interview, allows the participant to share aspects of their experience relevant to the topic at hand. The second portion, the details of experience interview, allow the participant to share more nuanced details of their experiences and possibly include information that they forgot during the first interview. The third stage, the reflection on the meaning interview, allows for the interviewer and interviewee to reflect on the information that was shared, draw conclusions and new insights from the data collected and construct meaning (Siedman, 1991, pp. 21-23).

As discussed, the interview portion was structured similarly to the one mentioned previously. The first interview took on more of a narrative inquiry-based approach (Andrews, Squire & Tambokou, 2008; Kramp, 2003) in that participants were asked to tell the story of their language learning experiences and their decision to further their education and pursue a career in the field. Questions posed were more open-ended (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011), for example, "Could you describe your earliest memory as a world language student," "Tell me about your experiences as a language learner," etc. Additional questions were posed to obtain further detail, clarification, or to get the participants to expound as needed (Appendix B). The second interview honed in on the ways in which each participant's experiences as Spanish/world language learner inform their pedagogy and also included a discussion of each participants' perspectives on and interpretations of teaching Spanish for social justice both generally and within their own pedagogy. The third and final interview allowed for a discussion of the syllabus and course materials, and the lessons that were the central foci of the observations. The brief member-

checking phase also took place at the end of interview three. This allowed participants to clarify or correct any misinformation, or provide input or information relevant to the study, if necessary. This also provided me with an opportunity to ask questions and ensure that the data collection process had been completed. I had to contact one of the participants for a brief fourth interview to ask for clarification regarding what she shared about her interpretation of what it means to teach Spanish for social justice

Observations

Observations are a method through which a researcher is able to understand the community in which they will be collecting data (Smiley, 2015). Detailed observation notes were taken during this stage of the data collection process to assist in collecting and organizing data for use later on. Additionally, each participant was asked if they permitted the audio recording of short segments of the observation periods. They had the opportunity to accept or decline during the informed consent period. Participants were observed during multiple instructional sessions each to allow the researcher to gain a better understanding of their pedagogical practices and see examples of how each instructor implemented social justice pedagogies within the classroom. Again, as this study is exploratory and descriptive in nature, I neither assessed nor measured the implementation of social justice pedagogy. The goal of the observation stage was to allow the opportunity to see how each participant enacted their understandings and interpretations of social justice pedagogy. Additionally, it was important to see the ways in which the participants engaged with their students. The interviews were crucial to providing context to observation data that was collected. Questions were asked regarding why certain pedagogical or curricular decisions were made, and how these decisions were affected by previous experiences, knowledge of students, or other factors. Participants were also asked to

share their perceptions of social justice, how it relates to their own pedagogy, and what draws them to this method of instruction based on what was observed in the classroom.

An observation protocol (Appendix C) was created to provide structure and consistency to each observation session. The contents of this checklist are based on Nieto's (2010) social justice doctrines highlighted in Chapter 2. The observation recording tool allowed for the documentation of which doctrines were observed during instructional time and citation of specific examples of how these doctrines were implemented.

Data Analysis

Because qualitative data analysis is an ongoing process instead of single step (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996), data collected for this study were revisited frequently in an effort to produce the most complete and cohesive analysis possible. Additionally, more nuanced details regarding analysis (i.e. specific themes) emerged upon the completion of the data analysis stage. Though the approaches to data analysis vary by researcher, I primarily followed Tesch's (1990) eight steps to systematic textual analysis:

> Step 1: Prepare the Data
> Step 2: Define the Unit of Analysis
> Step 3: Develop Categories and a Coding Scheme
> Step 4: Test Your Coding Scheme on a Sample of Text
> Step 5: Code All Text
> Step 6: Assess Your Coding Consistency
> Step 7: Draw Conclusions from the Coded Data
> Step 8: Report Your Methods and Findings
> (pp. 142-145)

I first began this process by writing descriptive narratives based on interview and observation data collected from each participant. I then read through these narratives, first case by case, then all together, to gain an understanding of what data was present and how it could be categorized according to the research questions. In order to better organize data from interview transcriptions and observation and document analysis notes, these documents were coded for

themes. Coding allows for the expansion and also condensing or reduction of data, which helps the researcher complete the analysis (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). I utilized HyperRESEARCH, a qualitative data coding software coding program, first to create the initial set of codes for interview transcripts, and then a second time to ensure accuracy. I also manually coded the observation notes based on the codes created from the interviews from HyperRESEARCH.

The purpose of the data analysis process is not only to analyze the data itself, but to form ideas about the data (which is referred to as "generalizing and theorizing") (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 139). The codes and themes that emerged from the initial stages of the data analysis process prepared me to draw informed conclusions about the data that had been collected in regards to my research questions. The purpose of this project is not simply to report findings, but to adequately and accurately represent the lived experiences of participants. For this reason, the member checking process itself was a valuable portion of data analysis (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) and allowed for the truthful depiction of these experiences. Once all data was collected, I was able to better determine the ways in which I would represent the cases studied in my writing.

Critical Race Theory, and characteristics of Social Justice and Culturally Relevant Pedagogies were utilized to frame the analysis of all data collected. Themes were examined through the lens of these concepts in order to draw meaningful conclusions, and provide sound evidence of the ways in which these themes answered the research questions. These theoretical and conceptual frameworks are discussed in depth in Chapters Five and Six as they relate to the data.

Limitations

While a wealth of data were collected from two additional participants, they both withdrew from this study and asked that any data collected during their interviews and observations not be included in this project. Both of the women shared concerns regarding maintaining their jobs should they proceed with participating in this project. Their hesitance to believe that their identities would remain confidential made me aware that many educators are not encouraged to teach for social justice, but instead to follow the traditions that have been maintained within our field. Their decisions to withdraw have caused me to question whether multiple educators did not respond to my inquiry because they do not wish to have their pedagogical practices documented, or because they do not attempt to teach for social justice as it would be frowned upon by students and superior faculty members.

Conclusion

As a proponent of social justice pedagogies (including culturally relevant pedagogy), it is important that my approaches to research/data collection embody these conceptual frameworks (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). In looking at the experiences of members of a specific demographic, it is also important to utilize a theoretical framework (CRT) that recognizes the role that race plays in education. Furthermore, my positionality has a direct impact on the ways in which I will engage with the topic and my participants. By employing the use of two data collection methods—interviews, and observations-- I ensured the validity of this project through the triangulation of data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Stake, 2010). Content validity was further confirmed through a member checking process that enabled participants to take part in the meaning-making process as their perspectives regarding data are incredibly valuable components of this project. As the goal of this dissertation research is to fill a major gap/create a new niche within the field of world language research, it was important to make certain that all

information was complete and accurate and appropriately reflected the realities of those involved in the research process. As case study methodology allows for the in-depth examination of subjects while providing specific context, my aim was to provide a contribution to already-existing literature on African American world language educators.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

In order to create the foundation for an in-depth analysis of the data, this chapter will provide detailed narratives of the interview and observation data collected from three participants, Lisa, Melissa, and Corina. In sharing the stories of each participant individually, it allows the reader to gain insight into their experiences prior to the analysis section. This also provides the opportunity to explore the raw data without the interruption of the researcher's interpretations and opinions about the participants' lived experiences in relation to the topic. The sharing of narratives is also very reflective of the constructivist approach to research as it honors the voices of the participants (Guba & Lincoln, 2010). Additionally, these narratives serve as what CRT scholars refer to as counterstories (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012) in that they share the experienced of African Americans, which are rarely highlighted in discussions of world language education.

Table 1. Description of Study Participants/Courses Observed

	Lisa	**Melissa**	**Corina**
Current Position	Assistant Professor of Spanish	Senior Lecturer Of Spanish	Assistant Professor of Spanish
Employed at	Small, private HBCU	Small, public university	Small, private women's college
Undergraduate university	Large, prominent HBCU	Small HBCU	Small, private women's college
Course Observed	Beginner Level Course (First Year)	Beginner Level Course (First Semester)	Intermediate Level Conversation Course

Lisa

Setting

It is Valentine's Day and Lisa arrives to her 12:15 class dressed in red with a bag full of candy for her students in hand. She has a smile on her face as she prepares for today's lesson. The students begin to arrive, some greeting her in Spanish, others in English. Lisa smiles at all of them and places the warm-up activity on the smart screen. The students are a bit rowdy, with several arriving late, but they all eventually settle into place and begin doing their work. "We have a test on Thursday, remember. Make sure you guys study." A student says, "I need to study AND pray if I want to pass this test." Lisa, laughs.

Personal Connections to Spanish Language Learning

In looking at Lisa, some would assume that she is of Latina descent. By her own admission, many people often associate her profession as a Spanish teacher with her assumed racial background. She is fair skinned with what many Black people would refer to as "good hair" and she speaks Spanish as though it is her first language. However, she is quick to inform others that she is African American, a heritage that she is extremely proud of. Her father attended Morehouse College, one of the most prestigious HBCUs in the country, and many members of her family also earned their degrees at historically Black institutions. In fact, Lisa's choice to teach at an HBCU stems from her family's affiliation with them.

Lisa first began taking Spanish classes in middle school. She reflects on having wonderful teachers who were passionate about the language and various aspects of culture, and smiles while recounting these experiences during our first interview. Lisa's most influential experiences as a Spanish language learner, however, began when her father married a woman from Colombia. Because her step-mother did not speak much English, Lisa's father studied to become fluent in Spanish so that he could better communicate with his wife. Her father's determination to learn further intensified Lisa's desire to become proficient in the language. They would speak Spanish at home, which greatly benefitted Lisa when it came to her progress in the Spanish classroom. Additionally, many of Lisa's friends at school spoke Spanish as a first

language. She possessed a strong desire to engage with them, and her stepmother, and this propelled her motivation to become fluent in the language. Though she recalls having good teachers who were vested in her language learning, Lisa credits her community as being the primary reason for her continued interest in Spanish.

The HBCU as a Motivating Factor

Because of her success in language study in middle and high school, Lisa was able to place into third level Spanish courses when she enrolled in college. She opted to attend a prominent all women's HBCU as a result of her family's rich history with such institutions. Starting out as a Pre-Med major, Lisa soon found that this was not where her passion existed. She had Black Spanish and French instructors who encouraged her to pursue an education in world language. While her experiences learning Spanish prior to college were positive, Lisa never had a Black teacher. Encountering instructors who shared similar backgrounds exposed Lisa to a whole new world of culture and curriculum. Her professors were committed to ensuring that course content was culturally relevant and meaningful, and focused heavily on aspects of Afro-Latino identity and culture. Lisa remembers meeting some of her stepmother's relatives from Colombia who appeared to be of African American ancestry. However, they were never referred to as Afro-Latinos. For the first time, darker-skinned Spanish-speakers were the focus of the curriculum and connections were drawn between Black Americans and Black Latinos. Lisa recalls, "This was truly powerful for me. I never realized how Eurocentric my previous Spanish learning experiences had been."

"They Didn't Want Me to be Black": Study Abroad Experiences

Because of learning experiences that exposed her to areas of the Spanish-speaking diaspora beyond Spain, Lisa opted to study abroad in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic during her college years. "I wanted to go to a place with people who looked like me, especially since my professors placed such a large focus on Afro-Latino culture," Lisa shares. Studying in these Afro-Caribbean countries was extremely beneficial for multiple reasons 1. It allowed her to greatly improve her speaking skills and provided her with confidence in her proficiency, 2. It allowed her the opportunity to experience firsthand much of the culture she has learned about in her college classes, and 3. It provided her with a chance to live in a region where she did not look and feel like an outsider, which greatly contributed to her comfort and positive experiences. On the other hand, however, Lisa noted that some of the people she encountered had negative perceptions about Black Americans. She was constantly being questioned about her race and origin and had to frequently reassure those that she encountered that she was indeed Black American. "They never believed me," she laughs. "I would hear things like "Well, you can't be *just* Black. Where is your mother from? Where is your father from? You look and sound like *one of us*." Lisa shares that she eventually felt offended by these comments. Initially, they seemed to be compliments on her Spanish language fluency, but later they seemed like insults to her heritage. Furthermore, though they were Latino, Lisa saw many of the people that she met in the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico as being Black. However, they rarely referred to themselves as being Afro-Latino due to the stigma associated with being Black.

A Vastly Different Learning Experience

Lisa continued with her Spanish study and focused a great deal on Afro-Latino culture prior to graduating from her university. Upon graduating, she initially planned to study abroad with a friend from college, however she met her ex-husband and decided to remain in the states.

She returned to her hometown and taught Spanish at the middle and high school levels for several years before deciding to pursue a Master's degree in Spanish. She realized that a second degree was necessary to the attainment of her ultimate career goal: becoming a college Spanish professor. She unfortunately discovered a vastly different learning environment from the one with which she was previously familiar. Eurocentrism was embedded within every aspect of the Spanish program. Lisa's instructors criticized her for not speaking "proper" Spanish and encouraged her to study abroad in Spain instead of the Caribbean countries that she had visited previously. "I started to feel very self-conscious about my speaking capabilities," Lisa remarks. "I had always been told that I was an excellent Spanish speaker by previous professors and classmates. My classmates during my Master's program constantly complimented that I spoke like a native Spanish-speaker. However, my instructors really had a problem with my dialect and did not view it as being academic enough."

The content for each of her classes was based on literature and culture from Spain, and there was never any discussion regarding the aspects of Afro-Latino culture that Lisa had learned about during her undergraduate Spanish program. "It was so boring," laughs Lisa as she recalls her experiences. "Getting my degree was really a formality that allowed me to continue on my career path. I really did not enjoy my Master's program at all."

Lisa informed her professors that she wanted to teach at the college level and decided that she would pursue a doctoral degree in Spanish. She was met with quite a bit of resistance from her professors. They tried to persuade her to instead earn her doctorate in ESL (English as a Second Language) because they did not feel that her Spanish was good enough. "I did not want to teach or study ESL, but my instructors did not think that I would be a suitable Spanish professor. It was crazy." After graduating with her M.A. in Spanish, Lisa continued to teach

Spanish at the middle school level before becoming a Spanish instructor at a local HBCU in 2005. She also teaches graduate level education courses at a nearby public university. Lisa did go on to eventually earn her Ph.D., however, she received no support from the faculty from her Master's program.

Connections between Past Experiences and Current Pedagogical Practices: Community Activism

*The following section of dialogue has been translated from Spanish to English. The entire class session that was observed was conducted in Spanish After completing a brief review activity at the beginning of the class, Lisa begins to transition to the next portion of the lesson.

"Clase, ¿qué es una huelga?" (Class, what is a strike?")

She points to an area of the whiteboard with some writing that reads: 'Un día sin inmigrantes' (A Day without Immigrants) and poses her question again. After receiving no response, she asks:

"¿Qué significa 'Un día sin inmigrantes'?"

The students respond "A day without immigrants."

"Si, entonces, posiblemente, ¿qué es una huelga?"

"A protest," one students hesitantly responds.

"Not quite," says Lisa gently.

"A boycott," replies another student.

"Close," says Lisa. She goes on to provide a description of a *huelga* in Spanish: "A *huelga*" is when a group of people decide not to go to work, or maybe school, as a form of protesting some sort of societal injustice…"

Several students reply: "A strike!"

"¡Exacto!" says Lisa.

The students watch as Lisa points to the information on the board. Listed below the word *Huelga* are the details of the event including date, time, location, and a request for all participants to wear the color white. Lisa tells them that the 'Día sin inmigrantes' strike is an event that will be taking place at a local park in a few days. It is a response to the recent Muslim Ban and discussions about immigration reform that have been brought forth by the Trump Administration. The strike, which will primarily consist of Latino participants, calls for all immigrants within the area to take off from work as a means of showing the affect that a day without them would have on the city. All participants will meet at the park to rally against the Muslim Ban, the wall to close off the border between Mexico and the United States, and other proposed legislation that seems to negatively affect minorities. The Spanish is more advanced than most of the students seem accustomed to.

"Can *we* go?" asks one student.

"Of course," replies Lisa. "It would be great for you to show your support if you are interested in doing so. The event is open to everyone and is a way to unite all members of the community."

She goes on to show the students the vocabulary words related to the event that they must learn. She goes through each of the following terms in Spanish, first asking students if they know what each word means, then providing short, proficiency level appropriate descriptions until someone calls out the appropriate English translation. The terms are as follows: *La migra (ICE), una huelga*, *and unas redadas, un retén (immigration police, strike, [immigration] raids, and checkpoint*. Next to these terms is the #nobannowall hashtag that students can use to post pictures of the event if they choose to attend. Though Lisa cannot require her students to attend, she has been consistent in encouraging them to be active members of their community. I can hear some

students uttering that they plan to attend while a few others are discussing the possibility of carpooling.

During our interview following this class session, I ask Lisa to describe her thought-process in creating this lesson. She informs me that she considers herself to be a community activist, and thinks that this work should not be separated from her work in the classroom. She regularly discusses her work with the undocumented population with her students to expose them to issues related to immigration, and the experiences of immigrants. They are interested in these topics and value being active members of their community. Lisa has also been one of the only professors on campus to take her students to vote during various elections. She says, "I think it is important to encourage students to engage in civic duties and seek out opportunities to improve their community." For this reason, Lisa is intentional in her lesson planning and works to ensure that students are able to learn about Spanish language and culture in ways that are relevant to their lives outside of the classroom. "I want to prepare them and provide them with the tools necessary to make a difference. That is my job," she says.

Lisa also shares memories regarding some of her most impactful social justice-based lessons and courses. She recently taught a course on digital global activism that was initially cross-listed as both an English and Spanish course. However, she was able to work instead with only Spanish students as no English students opted to remain enrolled. She involved students in a project called *Support for Undocumented Citizens of the Southeast* (a pseudonym has been used to maintain the confidentiality of the participant's identity), "a grassroots group of residents concerned with the contemporary, racist, nativist dominant discourses and practices surrounding undocumented migration (communities) globally." They engage in community activism by visiting local high school classrooms and universities to speak to students about the issues faced

by undocumented citizens, and to provide them with useful information about their rights, and discuss various situations in which undocumented individuals were treated unfairly by law enforcement due to their citizenship status. The Support for Undocumented Citizens of the Southeast group has facilitated more than 20 workshops, circulated petitions, and created a movie trailer to advertise about the course to get other Spanish majors and minors involved in the future. Throughout the course (which was focused solely on the project), students blogged about various topics related to immigration to bring awareness to their cause. They also created safe spaces for undocumented students both on the campus and within the community in which they discussed what it means to be undocumented and discussed immigrant rights. Though the course has ended, students are still deeply engaged with the project as they are committed to their mission to bring about social change.

Lisa recalls her father and other family members being very involved in their community, which instilled a spirit of activism in her at a very young age. This tradition of action continued when she attended her undergraduate university as there were frequent opportunities for students to get involved. "Our professors encouraged us to think about our roles in the world around us. They taught us about the history of our predecessors and how they created a legacy of activism to bring about social change. As an African American, it is my responsibility to continue this legacy. It is my responsibility to share this information with my students."

Connections between Past Experiences and Current Pedagogical Practices: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

"Okay, class. Today Anthony will be presenting his culture project on the *Garífuna,"* Lisa tells the class.

The Garífuna are an Afro-Latino group descending from various parts of Africa. They live in various countries throughout Central America. Anthony has selected them from a culture

project option list that Lisa created at the beginning of the semester. Each student is responsible for completing a project in which they will research and share information about some aspect of Afro-Latino culture. Lisa selects 25 topics for students to choose from, with each student focusing on a different subject. These topic options consist of famous people, types of music, cultural groups, etc. that are typically excluded from Spanish curricula. Lisa's goal in assigning this project is to expose students to aspects of Spanish-speaking culture with which they were not previously familiar as a means of helping them to *see themselves* within their coursework. She says, "At first, they don't know what to think about the project. They see it as more work initially, but then they become more excited as they conduct their research. They say things like 'I never knew about this' or 'We never learned about this in my other classes.' They really end up enjoying the project. I want them to recognize that there *are* elements of Blackness within Spanish language study. They are accustomed to hearing about Spain and Eurocentric aspects of language and culture, but I like to expose them to content that is culturally relevant. I like them to be able to see aspects of their own history and culture by also studying people who look like them as my college professors did with me. I tie this project to the university's mission so that students are able to see the direct correlation between the project, the HBCU's purpose, and their own lives," Lisa explains.

Several years ago, Lisa and her students also created a bulletin board in the Humanities building that focused on the languages of various Black people from different Latin American countries to show the diversity of the global Afro-Latino diaspora. This project helped students to recognize the vast array of Black people who speak Latin-derived languages. Many students were unaware that important figures such as Marcus Garvey, for example, self-identified as Afro-Latino. In another course, Lisa and her students focus on protest music within the Afro-

Latino diaspora and study the ways in which various populations used music to protest social injustices. Students were able to draw connections between course content and their own cultural capital by also sharing current trends in music specifically tied to social justice issues. These are just some of the projects/assignments that Lisa creates as a means of engaging students with content that is culturally relevant and also directly connected to their Spanish course curriculum.

Additionally, Lisa promotes culturally relevant activism amongst her students by encouraging them to consider and address issues that exist on their campus. She recalls being required to take specific courses on African American history and issues affecting members of the Black community during her years as an undergrad. This trend has subsided as students at many HBCUs are not required to take such courses, which students recognize as being problematic. Lisa helped students create a plan to address this issue with university administration. They created a proposal expressing the need for the aforementioned courses and circulated a petition for students to sign expressing their agreement with the call for more culturally relevant courses. This movement still continues as there has not yet been a specific solution made to address this issue. However, Lisa is satisfied with the result as her aim was to help students feel empowered as campus and community activists.

Many of Lisa's students have shared details of their previous language-learning experiences with her. They describe their classes as being 'boring' and 'dry' with teachers that did not really include content that was culturally relevant. In some cases, students share that the classes they take in college are just as bad as those from high school. "They come back to tell me that they miss me because they don't do such and such in their other classes," she says. "It really bothers me because we should *all* be doing this." Outside of the classroom, Lisa is also involved

in the study abroad program, finding social justice-oriented internships for students, and as mentioned previously, has even taken groups of students to vote during multiple elections.

Melissa

Setting

It is a rainy Tuesday morning and Melissa rushes into the building, shaking off her umbrella and ridding herself of her drenched coat. She greets me with a kind smile and says "Lo siento. I'm so sorry I'm late. It has been a hectic morning." We enter her office and she closes the door. "Let's have our privacy so that I can be completely honest and share everything with you for this interview. Things are very political around here and I'm always in trouble," she laughs. I am caught off guard by her candidness, but excited to hear about her experiences.

Personal Connections to Spanish Language Learning

During our first interview, we discussed what Melissa refers to as "the easy stuff"-first experiences as a Spanish language learner, family background, how she found her way to a career as a Spanish instructor. Melissa recalls growing up in a predominantly Black and Latino area in Connecticut. "We were all the same. We came from the same neighborhood and went to the same schools. The only difference was that their parents would yell for them to come home in Spanish and mine would yell for me to come home in English. But I never saw us as being different culturally really." From an early age, Melissa had a deep connection with the Spanish language. Many of her friends were from Spanish-speaking countries and spoke both English and Spanish when they were together. She was able to pick up on a great deal of the language in spending time with her friends. She was fondly referred to as *prieta* or "dark girl" by the Hispanic kids in her neighborhood and loved going to their houses for dinner, sleepovers, and birthday parties. "I just saw them as Black people who spoke a different language," explains Melissa. They reminded me of my family, they were like my family." They would also visit her house for dinner and spend time with her parents and siblings. Their small neighborhood was very closely knit and there was a great sense of community. "My mom could go to Mrs.

Velasquez and tell her that her daughter was acting up just like Mrs. Velasquez could tell my mom the same. I did not realize then how valuable that was. We were like a big family."

Formal Spanish Education as a Deterrent

In having such positive experiences with members of the Spanish-speaking community, Melissa was thrilled to begin taking Spanish classes in the seventh grade. She remembers feeling confident that she would do well in the class and would receive praise from her teacher for the language skills she had already developed. However, she was in for a rude awakening on the first day of class when her teacher *Señora Negron* informed her that she would have to start speaking 'properly' in her class. "I felt so deflated and confused. It is funny because I understand now, but that really hurt my feelings as a kid," recalls Melissa. "So, my first experience with formal Spanish education was terrible."

Throughout the year, Melissa would share her experiences with her friends from the neighborhood. "Oh, that lady is just bourgeoisie because she's from Argentina," they would say when she informed them that Señora Negron would refer to various terms she learned from them as 'slang.' Melissa remembers her teacher alluding to the existence of a language hierarchy in which Spanish spoken in Spain was at the top, with Caribbean Spanish at the bottom. "I did not call it anything then, but even as a kid, I had a feeling that she was racist. I was a little Black girl who loved the language and was proud of what I learned from my friends, and she just wanted to cut me down. Eventually, I became very rebellious about it. I decided that I was no longer interested in trying to do well in class because all that mattered to me was the way my friends and me communicated. My grades started to slip in Spanish class because I felt like Señora Negron hated me, so I did not aspire to do well. I tried to explain to my parents what was going on and they would say 'you don't want to prove her right, do you? You need to learn the proper Spanish like the teacher says,' which just frustrated me even more. I failed Spanish in both the

seventh and eighth grades and decided that I no longer had any interest in formally learning the language," she remembers.

The HBCU as a Motivating Factor

Melissa eventually took another Spanish class in high school to fulfill a requirement, but had already decided that she would not pursue an education in the language. She left Connecticut in 1995 to attend college at a Southeastern HBCU where she decided to major in Pre-Law/Political Science. "I wanted to be a lawyer. Hell, I was argumentative enough," she laughs. Melissa remembers being interested in learning about the law, and feeling good about the prospect of becoming an attorney in the future. After completing her first semester, she decided to take a Spanish class to fulfill an elective requirement. Though she did not expect much due to past negative learning experiences in the Spanish classroom, Melissa was surprised to discover that she loved her new class and professor. "It was really my best educational experience ever. It motivated me to pursue an education in Spanish and completely changed my mind about my desire to become a lawyer. Spanish was my passion from the beginning, and this experience during my first year of college reminded me of that," shares Melissa. Her first Spanish college professor (*Doctor Garcia)* was, ironically, from Argentina. Melissa did not learn this until much later in the semester and told him about her previous experiences with Señora Negron. Dr. Garcia explained that many Spanish-speakers categorize speakers of the language based on their nationality and basically apologized for Señora Negron's ignorance. He always reassured Melissa that she spoke Spanish very well and would be successful as a Spanish instructor someday. "Our class was always so interesting. We talked about history, art, politics, sports, issues of race, everything. But we were also learning the language. I placed into like Spanish 3, so I got to bypass all of the beginner-level stuff. This first class was a conversation class and we would have *tertulias* where we just talked about various topics. It was truly refreshing."

Melissa cites her HBCU as one of the greatest motivating factors in her decision to pursue an education in world language. She remembers all of her Spanish classes addressing issues of social justice and engaging students in ways that were culturally relevant. Her instructors would often invite guest speakers from various Spanish-speaking countries to present to students about interesting topics. Spanish soon became Melissa's favorite course and she changed her major from Pre-Law to Spanish during her sophomore year.

Study Abroad Struggles

One of Melissa's greatest challenges during college was finding an opportunity to study abroad. Her professors constantly explained the importance of studying in a Spanish-speaking country to improve her language proficiency, and Melissa decided that her junior year was the perfect time to do so. She began researching the cost of various programs and talking to staff at the university's International Center to learn about how credits would transfer. During the summer before her junior year, Melissa shared her plans to study abroad with her parents and informed them that she had changed her major. "They were truly devastated," she recounts. They had been bragging to family and friends about how well Melissa was doing in her studies to become a lawyer. To them, that was an accomplishment for the entire family, the entire community. My parents did not really see the value in learning a language because that was not a skill to them. "There were so many Spanish-speakers in our neighborhood that they did not really see my education as anything special. I love them, but they were very ignorant about what I was doing. What do people say in the South? Bless their hearts," she laughs. "Bless anyone's heart who does not see the value of being multilingual in a world like ours."

Melissa's parents did not give her any money for study abroad. They were of a lower socioeconomic status and could not afford to give their child money to "travel the world taking pictures like a rich kid." Melissa explains that her parents were resentful that she used

scholarship money and money she had saved from working to travel to Costa Rica when they were struggling financially at home. “I did everything on my own. Of course, my professors helped me select a country that would be safe, helped me select classes, and even helped me find scholarships and money to fund my trip abroad. However, I did not have the support of my parents. They did not like the idea. They thought there would be drug cartels like the ones they saw on movies and did not understand how it could be a learning experience. And I was embarrassed when my professors asked me what my parents thought. I pretended like they were excited and supportive like the other kids’ parents. I lied and said that the money I made working was a little something my parents gave me as ‘pocket money’ to buy souvenirs and go on excursions. I called home maybe three times over the course of three months. My parents never called me. I felt very alienated. I had a great time on that first trip, and I did not want to think about how it would affect my relationship with my parents,” Melissa shares.

During her time in Costa Rica, Melissa gained an even deeper appreciation of Hispanic language and culture. This first trip was the foundation of her strong desire to see the world and travel to as many places as possible. Though each person she met in Costa Rica was friendly and respectful, Melissa definitely felt like an outsider. She was one of only two Black people in her entire summer group, and was considered the spokesperson and representative of all things Black. She was constantly being asked about her hair, complexion, and other physical features. So many of the Costa Ricans that she encountered were curious about Black culture and shares that they had not come into contact with very many Black people. Melissa recalls feeling very uncomfortable initially, but this discomfort eventually turned into pride. She was proud to be able to positively represent her people to those that had only seen Black life portrayed on television. She was also proud to be seen as intelligent as so many of the native speakers

complimented her on her Spanish proficiency. Her trip to Costa Rica gave Melissa the boost of confidence she needed to continue pursuing an education within the field of Spanish education. She went on to study in Spain and Mexico prior to graduating from college.

Formal Education as a Deterrent…Again

After completing her undergraduate degree, Melissa was highly motivated to attend graduate school. Her professors had been extremely supportive and helpful during her search for the right program. They were all eager to write her stellar letters of recommendation and were proud of her growth as a student. Though she missed her family and friends in Connecticut, Melissa decided to remain in the same state as her undergraduate university. She and Sharon, one of her classmates enrolled in their Spanish M.A. program together, were the only two Black people in the department. "We would say that we were the only flies in the buttermilk," laughed Melissa. "It was a major transition to go from an HBCU where we often had Black professors and nothing but Black students in our classes to a place where we were *the only*." Melissa recalls that the work was extremely difficult and she felt very much disengaged from classroom content. She and her friend from undergrad, Sharon, were often so lost or unfocused in class that they would go through and study the material for hours again after class was over. The professors were not very warm or helpful, and the department did not function as a collaborative or supportive community. On of Melissa and Sharon's professors even told them after class that they did not seem like they 'belonged' in the program.

Melissa immediately called one of her former professors, Dr. Jones, to discuss the comment. She questioned his intentions and whether he was saying they were not equipped to be successful, or of they did not belong because they were Black. Dr. Jones explained that racism does exist within education, and that she and Sharon should use the comment as motivation to excel. Melissa shared with Dr. Jones that the content was nothing like that which with she was

familiar. For a class project, she wanted to focus on issues of race and language hierarchy, but her professor refused and suggested another topic. Sharon was constantly being criticized for the dialect of Spanish she spoke as her mother was Afro-Mexican and she spent most of her time abroad in Mexico. Instructors would frequently remind her that she needed to go to Spain if she wanted to learn to speak 'appropriately.' Both young women even considered taking time off to regroup and decide if they were truly cut out to be Spanish educators. Dr. Jones immediately dismissed the possibility and told Melissa that taking time off and/or withdrawing from the program was not an option. She reassured Melissa that she was prepared, capable, and well-equipped with the tools necessary to be successful and she should not allow anyone to deter her from achieving her goals. Dr. Jones even gave Melissa what she refers to as "the talk," a straightforward discussion about racism in academia and other realms. Dr. Jones shared her experiences regarding being deterred from pursuing tenure, not receiving acknowledgement for her professional accomplishments, and having to confront colleagues and superiors about their microagressive behaviors.

"This was the motivation and pep talk that I needed. I began to work even harder, visited my professors during office hours, and stood up for myself by questioning their negative comments. There was one situation in which I had to confront a professor about a grade. I worked on a group project with two other students who happened to be White. Though we all submitted the same work, they both earned A's and I earned a B. The professor informed me that he took off points for the presentational aspect because I used some terms that were not 'the best' Spanish. I asked him for specific examples of this misuse of language and also informed him that the scoring rubric mentioned nothing about the presentational aspect. Because he could not provide me with an adequate response, I went to the department chair who required my professor

to change the grade. Thank God I was entering my final semester, because that man would have made my life miserable," Melissa reflects. Both she and Sharon went on to complete their Master's degrees in Spanish. Melissa has been teaching Spanish at the college level ever since and hopes to eventually earn her doctoral degree in Spanish. She has a husband and two children and does not have the time to go back to school right now, but is adamant about doing so in the future.

"I Want Them to Have Better Experiences than Mine": Motivations to Implement Social Justice/Culturally Relevant Pedagogies

"When I first started teaching, I was just going through the motions. Learn some grammar here, some vocab there, throw in a little culture. My students were growing, I guess, in their basic understanding of the language, but they weren't growing as people. And I was not improving in my craft. I was just doing what I had seen done during my first experiences as a Spanish learner. Yeah, we had fun in my classes, but we were not doing anything *meaningful*. I felt like I was that teacher that kids would think 'How am I going to use what I learned in this class in the future?' That is not what I wanted for my students, or for myself."

Melissa earned her M.A. in Spanish, not in Spanish Education/Teaching, so she never took a methods course. She had never been formally introduced to culturally relevant teaching or other social-justice based approaches. However, a few years ago, Melissa began to consider ways that she could make classroom content more rich, relevant, and meaningful for her students. At the same time, she wanted to ensure that the material was proficiency-level appropriate. She began the creation of a mini unit on Spanish-speaking identity called "¿Existe un hispanohablante típico?" (Does a typical Spanish-speaker exist?) in which she focuses on the diversity of the Spanish-speaking diaspora and helps students to deconstruct stereotypes about Latino groups.

Melissa arranged for me to complete my first observation on the first day of this unit/lesson series in her beginner level class. Most of the students have taken at least two years of Spanish in high school or at a community college before transferring. Melissa first goes through terms use to describe Spanish-speakers and asks students what each means. On the first PowerPoint, she has listed:

1. Latino/a (of Latin descent)
2. Hispanohablante (Spanish-speaker)
3. Hispano/a (Hispanic)

One student raises his hand and asks "Aren't *Latino* and *Hispanic* used interchangeably?" "Yes," Melissa informs him. "But it is not accurate to do so. Hispanic refers to speakers of the Spanish language while Latino is used to describe someone from Latin America. In this case, someone from Brazil is considered Latino, but not Hispanic since Spanish is not the primary language spoken in Brazil."

Several students jot down the distinction in their notes as Melissa moves on to the next slide which consists of a map of each of the 21 Spanish-speaking countries. Students were shocked to discover that there is a Spanish-speaking country in Africa (Equatorial Guinea). Melissa briefly asks students which countries they have visited, and which countries would they like to visit. Most students indicate that they have been to or would like to go to Spain. One of three Black students in the class says that he would like to visit Equatorial Guinea. A few students show interest in Costa Rica while many express that they have been to or plan to visit Mexico in the near future. Melissa tells her students that she has been to almost all of the Spanish-speaking countries and that she plans to share some of her experiences with them.

On the next slide is the title of the unit, "¿Existe un hispanohablante típico?" Melissa asks her students to describe the Spanish-speakers they know, including their countries of origin and their physical characteristics. "There are a lot of Mexicans in this country," one student remarks. Melissa informs her that this statement is true, but Mexicans and Mexican Americans are not the only nationality of *Hispanos* living in the United States. She continues onto a slide with pictures of several people with their country of origin listed beneath. One student comments that some of them look like African-Americans and Melissa informs the class that they are what we call 'Afro-Latinos.' One of the Black students comments that she never learned about this group of people in her other Spanish classes. She went on a trip to Mexico with her parents and met some kids that looked like Black tourists from the United States, but they were Mexican. This fascinated her and prompted her to share this experience with her previous teacher who remarked that it was "interesting" without saying anything more. Melissa explained that many people are unaware or do not know much about the various Afro-Latino groups living throughout Latin America and informs her that they would be discussing them in great detail throughout the semester. The student smiles with approval.

The class continues with students sharing some of the stereotypes and generalizations that they've heard about Hispanic people. Melissa goes on to clarify that there are stereotypes about all different kinds of groups and it is our responsibility to educate ourselves about what is fact and what is generalization. She refers students back to the map and continues on to a slide that shows photos of various famous Latin Americans with their countries of origin/nationalities listed below. Some students are surprised to learn that Cameron Diaz and Zoe Saldana are of Latin descent as they assumed that they were "just White and Black," respectively. Today's class is more informational in providing students with a foundational understanding of Spanish

language and origin. Melissa shares slides with statistics about the percentages of people from certain Hispanic groups living within the United States. She goes through the terms of nationality while again showing students the map, and has them repeat the appropriate pronunciations.

Prior to ending the class, Melissa asks students to think about one final question: *"¿Qué significa ser americano?* (What does it mean to be an American?)" They write down the question and begin to exit the class. Melissa pulls me aside and says that this lesson will lead into a discussion on Donald Trump's newly introduced "Muslim Ban." The topic brought about great controversy over the last several days and Melissa is both excited and nervous about tying it in with some of the other unit material.

During my second observation, Melissa begins the class with the question she posed to students at the end of the previous class, *¿Qué significa ser americano?* She has students call out words (in Spanish) that provide insight on their perceptions of American identity. The share words such as 'proud,' 'history,' 'great country,' 'hardworking citizen,' 'diverse,' 'many cultures,' 'melting pot (in English),' 'privilege,' etc. She chuckles a bit when a student asks if she was referring to "just the United States of America or the *whole* America" and tells her that the question can be interpreted in whatever way she chooses. After a slight pause, Melissa asks the students *"¿Quién decide lo que es Americano?* (Who decides what is American?), and one students immediately says "the government." "Interesante," Melissa says. She then shows students some clips from the news in which people were protesting and discussing the effects of the Muslim Ban and protesting and commenting on Trump's proposed approaches to immigration reform. She also shows them snippets of statements made by various activist groups in response to the ban. She then breaks students into groups and asks them to consider the question posed at the beginning of class in the context of the Muslim Ban and various proposed

immigration reform legislation. During the group discussions, she also asks them to consider their opinions about these issues. They are trying to speak in Spanish as much as possible and often have to refer to their dictionaries to find the appropriate vocabulary words.

Melissa gives a large piece of chart paper and markers to each group. She gives them sentence prompts on the smart screen to use to share their ideas. For example, some of the prompts read 'Pensamos que la reforma de inmigración es… (We think that immigration reform is…),' 'En mi opinión, the Muslim Ban es… (In my opinion, the Muslim Ban is…), etc. Students completed the sentences with words like 'confusing,' 'unfair,' 'un-American,' 'necessary in some cases,' difficult, etc. Melissa then asked them to share out with the class and provide context for their opinions. Some students were silent as others became very impassioned, though they may not have had the language to perfectly express their perspectives.

Complications

During the interview following this observation, Melissa shared that a couple of her students went to the Department Chair to complain about the previous class sessions. They expressed that they felt uncomfortable with the class content and believed that Melissa was prompting students to agree with political opinions that were not their own. She was completely taken aback and disappointed because she had plans to take this mini unit further by aligning with a university students' rights advocacy group.

> This is why teaching for social justice is necessary," she continues. "Some students do not like to feel challenged to think beyond their own level of comfort. I was not forcing them to share their political views or to align with mine or other students. I wanted to create a meaningful conversation in which we worked towards understanding the experiences of others. I wanted them to engage in conversation about relevant topics and to be aware of what is going on in the news. I wanted them to be able to have respectful disagreements and this lesson was preparation for doing that throughout the semester. I am just very disappointed to think that some students just want to sit in class and conjugate verbs. This is not the first time I have tried something like this and it failed. I told you that I always seem to get in trouble. Now it is ruined for the students that want to dig deeper.

Corina

Setting

Corina enters the classroom, warmly greeting her students in Spanish. She writes '*Plan de la Clase'* on the white board and lists the schedule for the day beneath it and tells her students: "Hoy, vamos a discutir los movimientos sociales" (We are going to discuss social movements today) and informs them that they should take out their phones to complete the first activity of the day.

Early Spanish Language-Learning Experiences

Corina grew up in an area that had a very strong elementary school language program called FLES (Foreign Language Essential Standards). She remembers loving Spanish from a very early age and has fond memories of her very first language classroom experiences. Corina refers to herself as a "Drama Queen" when she was younger, and recalls pretending that she was fluent in Spanish by speaking gibberish with her friends. Her first teacher in elementary school put this energy to work by making Corina her "little helper" and bringing her along to visits to other classrooms during Spanish instructional time. "This made me feel special," she recalls, which resulted in her becoming even more engaged with language learning. Another important element of Corina's first Spanish experience was that her teacher always incorporated music with each lesson. "She always carried about this little guitar and we would sing songs based on what we were learning. I loved it!"

Corina does not recall taking Spanish in middle school, but studied it again in high school. Though she had an affinity for languages, she only took two units of Spanish to fulfill the requirement for students not on the college track. However, Corina shares that the two classes she took were wonderful. Her teacher was a native speaker from Spain and she made sure to incorporate grammar with communicative activities. She was also good about presenting

students with relevant cultural information. Corina cites her high school Spanish learning experiences as being positive and recognizes that they helped prepare her to find success within the field.

Positive Personal Learning Experiences

Corina began working at a pharmacy and restaurant in her hometown during high school. Because of the large population of Mexicans, her community was fondly referred to as "Little Mexico." She felt proud that she was able to apply what she learned in the classroom at work when communicating with many of the Spanish-speakers that would frequent her jobs. The ability to apply what she learned in the classroom encouraged Corina to continue learning Spanish. She was seen as an "Honorary Latina" because she was able to speak to customers in their native language. They were appreciative that she was excited about learning the language in school and practicing outside of the classroom. Eventually, she was able to foster strong relationships with many of the customers as they would ask Corina to help them write letters, complete paperwork, or understand documents in English. She believes that her interest and commitment to social justice stems from these experiences. While she was helping others with navigating an English-speaking world, they were assisting her with improving and practicing her Spanish. Corina has always had a close relationship with members of the Spanish-speaking community and recognizes the value of practical applications of classroom learning.

Career, College, and a Caring College Professor

Corina shares that she never really considered the possibility of attending college. She says, "No one in my family went to college, but they all worked very hard and were very productive members of our community." She planned to do the same and continued working at the restaurant for about seven years. A woman who worked for U.S. Air, *Evelyn*, began frequenting the restaurant and probing Corina about her future career goals. "She would always

tell me that I was very poised and professional and that I would be a great flight attendant. I would basically be doing the same things I was doing at the restaurant, but I would also have the opportunity to travel. Evelyn suggested that I go to college to learn a second language, which would make me eligible to become an international flight attendant. I liked this idea as I had already started learning Spanish. My plan was to take my classes and start work with U.S. Air. When I enrolled in classes at my local community college, I met a teacher who drastically changed my life. My learning experiences with *Ms. Klein* are what made me decide to become a teacher." Corina describes Ms. Klein as a woman that was the complete opposite of her. "She was White, we were of different religious and political affiliations, but the language totally united us."

Corina cites that Ms. Klein was a "grammar person" who incorporated aspects of students' lives into highly communicative activities. "She would have me pretend that I was flight attendant and the classroom was my airplane. I would have to communicate with each of my classmates by asking them what they would like to order, etc. She was really good about making lessons relevant for all of her students, not just me. She loved skits and role playing. I think that was her favorite approach."

When Corina went to Ms. Klein's office to talk to her about becoming a teacher instead of a flight attendant, she was extremely helpful. She pulled up her transcripts and academic records and told Corina that she would need a four-year degree in order to teach. She walked Corina through the entire process, helped her enroll in the transfer credit courses she needed. Ms. Klein and Corina looked at colleges together and discussed which school would be the best option. She suggested that Corina consider a small women's college that was close to home as

Corina did not want to leave the area. “She even helped me apply to school and apply for scholarships that helped me fund my education.”

Ms. Klein informed Corina that she would be travelling to Mexico during the summer before she started school, and told her that she wanted her to come along. Because neither Corina nor her mother had ever been out of the country, they were not familiar with the process associated with travelling abroad. Ms. Klein met with Corina and her mother at a local restaurant and walked them through information regarding obtaining a passport, what to expect when she arrived to the airport, going through customs, etc. “She really prepared me for everything and was so helpful. She even helped me to get scholarships to fund my studies. I still have a strong relationship with her to this day. We get together for coffee maybe once every couple of months.”

Study Abroad

“My mom was supportive but terrified about me studying in Mexico. She had never been out of the country and was afraid about how I would be received in a place with a culture, race, religion, and language that was not my own.” However, when she arrived, Corina was happy to find people that welcomed her with open arms. “The Mexican students that I met had never encountered African Americans before. They would ask me race-based questions. Everything was about Martin Luther King, Jr. because that’s what they were taught. They had so many questions about civil rights, protesting, marching…this was in the 1990s. I kept having to explain that we were past that. I mean, we still had a long way to go, but we weren’t quite *there* anymore. They were so caught up in what they had learned that they didn’t understand that times had changed.”

“When I went to Acapulco in the state of Guerrero, it was my first time seeing Black Mexicans. And I did the same thing to them that the Mexican students were doing to me-I

constantly asked them about their experiences related to race. I had so many racial questions about discrimination, racism, etc., but they said they never experienced that. They saw themselves as being the same as everyone else. I discovered later that that was not necessarily the case, but it was interesting that they did not connect with issues of race."

Corina also recalls being *exoticized* by many of the Mexican students that she met. They would tell her that she looked like Janet Jackson or Whitney Houston because that is how they saw Black women. Comments were frequently made about Corina's appearance and features. She was foreign to them because they were not familiar with Black people or Black culture.

"My Experiences Were Mostly Positive, But…"

Each of the Spanish learning experiences that Corina shared were overwhelmingly positive. I decided to ask her directly if she encountered any negative learning experiences and, if so, how they impacted her current pedagogy. She recalls being the only African American person within her cohort during her Master's program. There was one professor in particular who had a very stereotypical perception of Black people and viewed them as being prone to criminality and violence. In fact, she asked Corina if she was part of a gang as she had seen such depictions of black people in the media. "She always measured me against that. She taught me based on a very deficit-based model and constantly accentuated the negative when I made a mistake. When I informed her that I had been invited back to my alma mater to present to students, she asked why they had selected me. I realized that she would never see me as a stellar student," Corina recalls. According to her, there were other instructors that treated her similarly during her Master's program, which was a great contrast from the positivity she experienced at her undergraduate institution. At the end of our final interview, Corina brilliantly articulated the reasoning behind the way she chooses to interact with her students: "No matter how many

accolades I receive, or what position I earn, I always remember how I was treated during my negative experiences as a student. I never want to treat anyone that way."

Activism and Teaching for Social Justice

I was able to observe Corina as she taught her 'Introduction to Literature' course. The class consists of ten students, 9 young woman and one young man, all of whom are Spanish majors or minors. The 'plan de la clase' that Corina lists on the board is as follows:

1. Charla- movimientos sociales (Chat/discussion-social movements)
2. Análisis- Castellanos/Agosín (Analysis of poems by these authors)
3. Ana Tijoux
4. Charla- implicaciones para hoy (Chat/discussion-implications for today/now)

The class begins with a Poll Everywhere activity in which students anonymously text in their answers to a question posed by the professor. The question (posed originally in Spanish) reads: "Why do you think that various social movements started with students?" Before leaving students to the activity, Corina mentions some examples such as the Greensboro 4 sit-ins, the *guerras sucias* (dirty wars) in Mexico and Argentina, and the Black Lives Matter movement. Students responses (in Spanish) were displayed on the projector as they texted them in. They read "Students are critical and can see injustice," "I think that students are in situations to support ideas related to justice," "Students are young and are open-minded about learning new information," "Because universities are places where many different people and ideas are together in one place," along with several other responses. Corina concluded the activity by asking for final thoughts regarding the question before moving on to the next portion of the lesson.

She briefly introduced me and informed the students why I was there. She also asked me to explain the details of my dissertation project and told students that they could ask me any

questions they wished to. After a brief pause, Corina asked if anyone would like to summarize details from the last lesson on social movements in Mexico and Argentina for me. Several students responded by saying that students were the leaders of the social movements against the government in these countries. In Mexico, a student movement against the government in the 1960s led to a massacre of over 300 students. They had been protesting injustices carried out by the government and had been using guerilla style tactics to bring about change. Specifically speaking, students were very much against the large amounts of money that went towards the Olympic Games in Mexico while people were starving and unable to provide for their families. Similarly, in Argentina student groups were among some of the many that had been protesting unfair treatment by the government. The protests and unrest led to the killing and kidnapping of many Argentinians by the government. Government officials even adopted the children of slain parents and raised them as their own.

Corina informed her students that they had done a good job summarizing both movements for me. She then handed them a Venn diagram-styled activity in which they were to complete in groups. On one side, they were required to share details of the social movement in Argentina; on the other side, the social movement in Mexico. In the center, students wrote the commonalities between both movements. Corina played music in the background as students worked, and I noticed that many of them were very excited about the artist she selected to play. After about ten minutes, the class came together and each group was asked to share some of their findings. They mentioned some of the details shared during the previous summary along with some new information. The commonalities that they found between both movements included "Injustice, corrupt government, murder, disappearance of people, etc."

After this discussion, Corina asked students to turn their Venn diagrams over to view the lyrics to a song called "Shock" by Ana Tijoux. The lyrics were listed in both Spanish and English and students followed along as the music played. After the song was over, each person in the room read a stanza of aloud in Spanish. Students were asked to share their opinions on which verses, lines, stanzas most adequately described the situations that took place in Mexico and Argentina. Students mentioned lines such as:

> Everything is criminalized,
> Everything is justified on the news,
> Everything is removed,
> Everything is stepped on,
> Everything is indexed and classified,
>
> Cops, hoses, clubs,
> Cops, hoses, protest chants,
> Cops, hoses, they don't add up.
> How many made off with the fortune,
>
> No countries, only corporations.
> Who owns the most has the most transactions.
> Fat slices of the pie, powerful, decisions by very few.

Corina informs students that one of their classmates, *Emily*, actually approached her about the song when they bumped into each other in the cafeteria after the lesson the week before. She explained that Emily was really excited about the song and said that it tied in well with what they were learning in class. Corina asked Emily to share her rationale regarding why the song should be included in the lesson. In Spanish, Emily remarked that the lyrics were so relevant to both of the social movements because they were calling for the end of 'shock doctrine' just as the protest groups were calling for an end to injustice and cruelty. She also mentioned that many of the lyrics are relevant today, even within the context of decisions made by our own government. Corina thanks Emily for what she has shared and draws students' attention to a line about 'everything being removed.' She asks students if they remember the

discussion from last week about Victoria Montenegro in which she discovered that she had been adopted by the very man who killed her parents during the *Guerra sucia* in Argentina. She, like many other children at that time, had no idea about her past or that she had been adopted. Her biological grandmother, along with many other grandmothers, had been advocating for the government to release the identities and whereabouts of their lost grandchildren. Montenegro eventually reunited with her grandmother and the students read her story in 'People en Español' the week before.

A second Poll Everywhere question was displayed on the screen and students simply had to answer yes or no. The question read, "Do you agree that the Argentinian government should make the kidnapped youth submit a sample of their DNA?" [to provide biological relatives with information about them]. After a few moments, the screen displayed a unanimous "no." Corina asked students to share their reasons and many indicated that their rights had already been violated when they were kidnapped, so the government should not be forcing them to do anything. Others nodded their heads in agreement. The class chatted a bit more about this topic before Corina revealed a final poll question, "If you could start a social movement (or join one already in existence), what would it be?" Students typed on their phones to share their answers. After a few moments, Corina asked those who were willing to share their responses. One student was very adamant about advocating for abused children, another rights for immigrant students in ESL programs (specifically related to advocacy for the preservation of language and culture). One student who plans to be an attorney shared that she would like to start or join a group to advocate for prison reform. Each student was very passionate about their platform, and several asked permission to speak in English as they could not quite communicate exactly what they wanted to convey in Spanish. They were so engaged in the conversation about social movements

that they did notice that class time was over. Before students left, Corina reminded them that they must share what they learn in class with others who may not have the opportunity to attend college and learn what they are learning. This final activity and conversation was the basis of the 'implications for today' item listed on Corina's plan for the class session.

The Educator's Role as a Social Justice Advocate

After class, I walked with Corina to see one of her responsibilities on campus outside of teaching. She is the facilitator of weekly student-led roundtable discussions in which students spend an hour discussing whatever issue they select for the week. They have previously discussed the relationship between their college and slavery, rights for members of the LGBTQIA community, the new Trump Administration, and various other topics. The roundtables are open to any student and are safe spaces for them to speak freely about their opinions. "It does not end in the classroom," Corina says. "I have a responsibility outside of teaching to be an ally to these students. In my classes, I prepare my students to be active citizens who are not afraid to challenge injustice. However, I am also an ally for students outside of my classroom, and for people within my community."

Conclusion

Very interesting similarities and differences emerged from the narratives shared above. Most obviously, each of the participants have been tremendously affected by their previous learning experiences, and utilize these experiences to inform their pedagogy and their interpretations of what it means to teach for social justice within the field of world language. Another major similarity is that each of the participants had positive learning experiences outside within their homes/communities, sometimes prior to their formal Spanish language study experiences. For Lisa, having a Colombian step-mother greatly influenced her motivation to learn Spanish. Additionally, her father was fluent in both Spanish and Portuguese and always

expressed the importance of multiple language fluency. For Melissa, her earliest memories of language learning took place right in her neighborhood during her interactions with her Puerto Rican friends and their families. Spanish was a part of her culture as she naturally picked up the language spoken by her peers. She also has an incredibly positive perception of Hispanic communities based on her childhood experiences. Corina's first Spanish language learning experience took place in an elementary school classroom. This exposure to a different language at a young age was instrumental to her interest in pursuing a world language education in the future.

While Melissa and Lisa both shared negative classroom-based learning experiences very early on in their interviews, Corina reflected on more positive initial learning experiences. However, she did cite examples of some negative occurrences much later on in her time as a language learner. She encountered a situation in which she was stereotyped by a professor during her graduate program. There were also other instructors during this time that did not foster positive relationships with Corina, and she uses these experiences to remind her that she must always be mindful of how she treats her students.

Melissa experienced racism, linguicism, and eurocentrism during her first classroom Spanish learning experience. Her teacher was extremely critical of her dialect as she had been speaking for many years with her Puerto Rican friends within the community. The criticism that she received during this time deterred her from desiring to put forth effort and do well in future Spanish courses. Her passion for Spanish was rekindled when she entered undergrad and was commended by professors for her excellent Spanish speaking capabilities. She opted to switch her major from Pre-Law to Spanish and committed herself to language study. Like Corina, she faced adversity during her Master's program as her instructors did not value her Caribbean

Spanish dialect, and felt that Spain was the pinnacle of Spanish language and culture. Lisa found great success in her Spanish classes during high school, and was encouraged to pursue an education in language. She was also exposed to Afro-Latino culture, which really drew her further into her Spanish study. Similar to the other participants, Lisa was challenged with facing Eurocentric practices and perspectives during her graduate program. However, none of these women allowed their negative experiences to destruct their desires to work within the field of language education.

The aforementioned learning experiences (both formally and informally) along with study abroad experiences, and encounters with positive and negative educational figures greatly inform their current interactions with students. They draw from their previous experiences for inspiration and also as a reminder of ways not to approach their pedagogy. Their life experiences (including classroom experiences) have been instrumental in their commitment to serving as social justice educator/activists. The narrative shared in this chapter have allowed us to connect with the cases that serve as the foundations of this project. In Chapter 5, we will critically examine the participants' experiences as a means of analyzing them to fulfill the purposes of this project.

CHAPTER 5: RESULTS OF THE CROSS-CASE ANALYSIS

This project focuses on the teaching and learning experiences of three Black, post-secondary Spanish educators. In reviewing the data collected from each participant, nine major themes emerged from the cross-case analysis of the narratives shared in Chapter 4 though the specifics of each of their cases differed. The examination of these three cases enables us to better understand the ways that educators' experiences inform their current pedagogy and methods of engagement with students. Though we can explore and recognize the uniqueness of each case, it is also incredibly valuable to understand the commonalities between the three as a means of discovering answers to the research questions. According to Stake (2006), it is important to first investigate each case independently, which was the purpose of the narratives shared in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 will consist of a discussion of nine major themes that were consistent across all cases: 1. Eurocentrism and Language Hierarchy/Linguicism, 2. Race/Racism and Identity 3.Social, Cultural, and Political Aspects of Language Education, 4. Culturally Relevant Pedagogies, 5. Social Justice Activism, 6. Community/Spanish Language Learning Outside of the Classroom, 7. The Role of Vested Educators, 8. The Value of Study Abroad, 9. Intersectional Experiences. These themes are essential in providing robust answers to the research questions surrounding this study and will be organized according to the research question that they are applicable to.

Research Question 1: What are the world language instructors' interpretations of social justice pedagogy related to world language education?

Theme 1: Eurocentrism and Language Hierarchy/Linguicism

Both Lisa and Melissa shared that they were criticized by educators for speaking the more Caribbean-derived dialect of Spanish. Melissa's middle school teacher, an Argentinian woman, referred to Melissa's speech as 'slang' and 'improper.' Lisa's professors in graduate school were from Spain, and created curricula that only focused on literature, language, and culture from Spain. They were also highly critical of Lisa's Caribbean dialect and insisted that she study in Spain if she wanted to learn 'academic' Spanish, which to them, was the only dialect appropriate for those interested in becoming Spanish educators. Lisa's friend, Sharon, was always being criticized by professors for the dialect of Spanish that she spoke. Her mom was Afro-Mexican and she studied abroad in Mexico, so the professors would always tell Sharon that she needed to spend some time studying in Spain if she wanted to learn to speak 'properly.' Though Melissa was discriminated against by her middle school teacher because of the dialect of Spanish, her professors in graduate school were satisfied that she spent time studying in Spain. Both Lisa and Melissa recognize that there is a tendency to promote aspects of European language and culture within world language classrooms, and experienced this trend firsthand. Their cognizance of such issues greatly affects their interpretations of what it means to teach for social justice within the world language classroom

As discussed in Chapter 2, linguicism, or "linguistically-argued racism" (Phillipson, 1992) is the practice of discriminating against an individual based on their language (Chen-Hayes, Chen & Athar, 1999). This discrimination could take place based on the language spoken, dialect of language, and/or detected accent In the cases of Lisa and Melissa, the form of linguicism experienced was based on the dialects of Spanish they spoke due to study abroad

experiences and influences from Spanish-speakers within the community. As there is a tendency to promote the speaking of English within the United States (Tse, 2001), there exists a trend in which European Spanish is elevated as 'more academic within many Spanish-speaking classrooms. The devaluing of various dialects of Spanish exists because the cultures of the individuals who speak these dialects are not valued, thus leading to a deficit-based perspective of their linguistic tendencies. Though they are not native speakers, Lisa and Melissa experienced discrimination based on their instructors' ideologies related to language.

Corina also shared that many of her students have shared classroom learning experiences in which Spain and European culture were the central focus of the course. Though some of the students were interested in this information, they were missing out on learning about the richness and vastness of Latino culture. Lisa and Melissa both also shared experiences in which the richness of the Latino diaspora was neither incorporated with classroom content, nor recognized. Because each participant experienced Eurocentrism and linguicism, they utilized pedagogies that address these issues and expose students to the diversity of Spanish language and Hispanic culture. Their experiences as Spanish students directly influence their pedagogical choices, including their decisions to teach for social justice.

Theme 2: Race/Racism and Identity

The perpetuation of Europe/Spain being the pinnacle of Spanish culture is an overt example of Eurocentrism and the tendency for language educators to place value on whiteness as opposed to being Brown or Black. As argued by members of the CRT camp, whiteness is viewed as a form of property (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Dumas 2013; Harris, 1993), which is contrasted by blackness being seen as lacking in value. Lisa's experiences in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic showed that even Afro-Latinos did not want to be considered as such. Even further, they did not want Lisa to be Black herself and argued with her regarding her racial

identity. For them, being Black was a negative attribute and they could not understand why someone would voluntarily want to be associated with that group. Their negative conceptualizations of Blackness caused them to deny an important aspect of their own identities and project these perspectives onto Lisa's identity.

CRT scholars such as Ladson-Billings (2013), Winant (2001) and Bonilla-Silva (1997) argue that race is a social construction that serves as the vehicle by which white supremacy is perpetuated. The examples of Melissa and Lisa's educators who celebrated only European culture in their classroom is a primary example of the ways in which dominant narratives of White supremacy are preserved within the classroom. The Puerto Ricans and Dominicans who Lisa met during her travels abroad also ascribed to the belief in the inferiority of the Black race and culture as they themselves did not want to be seen as Black.

All three participants actively seek ways to address issues of race and identity within their classrooms. They expose their students to content related to these issues as a means of engaging them in critical discussion and preparing them to understand the role that race and identity play within our society. Lisa intentionally creates projects and activities that celebrate Blackness and various aspects of identity because she recognizes that this content is often excluded from traditional Spanish courses. For her, teaching for social justice means incorporating materials that give voice to members of marginalized groups and shed light on topics that are often alienated from the curriculum. As mentioned in Chapter 4, her Afro-Latino project, the famous Afro-Latino bulletin board that she created with her students, and regular inclusion of content related to Afro-Latino music, history, art, etc. are all ways in which she counters experiences in which Blackness was left out of students' learning environments. As an instructor at an HBCU, she finds that it is extremely valuable for students to see themselves within their learning

experience and address reasons why they did not engage with such content during previous learning experiences.

For Melissa, social justice pedagogy is a way to prepare students to be critically-minded, members of our society who work to combat injustice. She directly addressed issues of race and identity within the Hispanic diaspora during her class sessions. She exposed her students to the diversity of Spanish-speakers and helped them critique limited perspectives of what it means to be Hispanic/Latino. She strongly believes that Spanish classroom content has the tendency to marginalize people that are not from Spain. For this reason, she intentionally and conscientiously works to expand students' world view and disrupt the stock story which perpetuates the belief that Spain is the pinnacle of Spanish language and culture.

Corina specifically mentioned the addressing of 'isms' as one of the primary goals of teaching world languages for social justice. As an instructor at a women's college that is very feminist and activist-minded, she knows that her students are typically very socially conscious and will appreciate course content related to race, gender, identity, and various other topics. She interprets social justice pedagogy as taking the time to see what is missing from the curricula (including course materials and textbooks) and including these silenced topics to expose students to rich and meaningful information with which they may not be familiar.

Proponents of social justice posit that it is impossible to isolate one's experiences from his/her understandings and interpretations of what it means to teach for social justice (Alsup & Miller, 2014). Reflection on one's own experiences is crucial to understanding the ways in which we interpret social justice. The participants experiences related to race, racism, and identity are crucial in shaping their understandings of social justice pedagogy within the discipline of Spanish language education. Lisa, Melissa, and Corina recognize that social justice pedagogy

must address issues of racial identity, racial injustice, discrimination, and marginalization. These topics are naturally embedded within the history and culture that often goes unrecognized within the world language classroom. Addressing these topics with students allows them the opportunity to discuss misconceptions, stereotypes, and other aspects of our society that lead to inequity.

Theme 3: Social, Cultural, and Political Aspects of Language Education

In Chapter 2, there was a discussion surrounding the teaching *about* language versus teaching *through* language. As shared previously, the field of world language education is characterized by a tendency to teach vocabulary, grammar, etc. while ignoring the social, political, and cultural aspects that could be included within the language classroom. This trend creates students who are unable to draw connections between language learning and more critical aspects of their lives and our society (Osborn, 2006). The language classroom, however, easily lends itself to discussions related to social justice-based topics. Language hierarchies, Latino and Hispanic identity, colonization, immigration, machismo, colorism, the variety of culture, stereotypes, and many other subjects can be incorporated within course curricula as a means of teaching students through language. Such rich discussion prepares them to be critically-minded future leaders who aim to disrupt the status quo and address issues of inequity and injustice within our world.

As theorized by CRT scholars, race is a social construction that has been used as a vehicle to perpetuate injustice (Bonilla-Silva, 1997). When issues of race are ignored within the world language classroom, it limits opportunities for students to become equipped with the tools necessary to understand the various social systems within our world. This opportunity is also missed when educators fail to address other social justice-based topics, such as gender, politics, socioeconomic status, and cultural diversity (including products, practices, and perspectives of

various cultural groups. Instead of finding importance only in the traditional aspects of the language classroom (i.e. grammar, vocabulary, basic cultural topics), the participants in this study utilize their teaching platform as an opportunity to teach through language and address the previously mentioned social justice concepts. Lisa, Melissa, and Corina are all incredibly vested in their work as social justice educators/activists, which is also key to their interpretations. They recognize that teaching for social justice means that they must be committed to addressing the social, cultural, and political characteristics of world language course content and serve as catalysts of change within their own communities.

An interesting concept that exists related to the political aspects of language instruction is the notion of resistance. For Melissa, the nature of her pedagogy changed from observations to observation as she had been notified by her department chair that some students had complained about the content of the first lesson in the series. In Chapter 1, there was a discussion on some educators' fear of teaching for social justice as it is seen as a pedagogy that may be too political to utilize in the classroom (Bender-Slack, 2010). As evidenced by Melissa's situation, this is a legitimate concern as there are many students who are not open to the idea of addressing issues of inequity that are faced by members of our society. In her case, unfortunately, she did not have support from the administration as the department chair basically told Melissa to tone down the content of her lessons. In doing so, there was less of a social justice focus during the second lesson observed, and eventually no social justice-based concepts addressed at all in lesson three. This situation shows the need for enhanced understanding of what it means to teach world language for social justice, and why it is important to do so.

Research Question 2: How do the instructors' interpretations of social justice inform their pedagogies in the world language classroom?

Themes 4 and 5: Culturally Relevant Pedagogies/Social Justice Activism

Because culturally relevant pedagogy is a form of social justice pedagogy, it is difficult to separately examine instances of the two as they overlapped in many areas during the data collection process. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Social justice pedagogy can be defined educators' approaches to instruction, lesson planning and engaging with students to prepare them to address and understand the realities of our society while encouraging the creation of solutions to combat the issues related to equity and power (Ayers, 1998). Systems of oppression and inequity that exist within various institutions of our society are also perpetuated within the educational realm (Sensoy & DiAngelo, 1998). Social justice educators seek to encourage students to engage with societal issues as a means of helping them to become empowered, informed, and active members of society.

There were examples of the application of culturally relevant pedagogies and the promotion of social justice activism observed during the majority of participants' class sessions. Nieto's (2010) social justice doctrines show the characteristics of social justice-based pedagogy, and were utilized as the contents of the observation protocol. Specific examples of the doctrines being implemented during the class sessions are shown in the chart below. The observation tool appears three times-once for each participant and provides specific examples of the ways in which each doctrine was applied during class time.

The completed protocol charts provide the details of only one observation per participant, though social justice-based practices were observed during the majority of observation sessions. For both Lisa and Corina, each of the three classes observed were social justice-based. For Melissa, however, the first observation was very social justice-oriented, while the nature of content gradually became more traditional during observations two and three. Melissa did indicate that she specifically changed the content for the second and third lessons because

students had complained to her department chair, who seemingly did not support Melissa's social justice-based approach.

Table 2. Lisa's Pedagogical Approaches to Social Justice

Socially-just Pedagogical Practice Observed	**Was practice observed during observation periods? (Y/N)**	**Description of activities/Examples seen in pedagogy (Observation 1)**
Challenging, confronting, disrupting of misconceptions, untruths, and/or stereotypes that perpetuate inequality, and/or discrimination	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	**-** (After a student's presentation on the Garífuna) Discussion of the large numbers of Africans that were taken to Spanish-speaking countries during the Transatlantic slave trade (a common misconception is that all slaves arrived to what is now the United States). This information helped students' to draw connections between the origins of Black Americans and Latin Americans
Ensuring provision of materials necessary for all students' learning	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	**-**Checking to ensure that all students had their iPads to access review materials -Making all test review materials accessible online for all students -Writing key terms on the board for students to add to their notes -Taking time to answer questions that students had to ensure that everyone was clear on the content
Utilizing course materials that promote social justice	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	**-**Terms written on board related to the upcoming 'Day without Immigrants' strike -Discussion of the purpose of the strike and its importance within the community -The Afro-Latino project specifically addresses the gap that typically exists within Spanish classrooms. Lisa explicitly shares the purpose of the project with her students as she wants them to see themselves within course content
Drawing on students' talents and strengths (cultural relevance)	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	**-**Inclusion of various types of activities that incorporated the diversity of students' learning styles -Allowing students to select culture project options based on their interests, experiences, and strengths -Allowing students to work in groups or alone based on what is essential to their learning and development

		-Utilizing technology and learning games to engage various types of learners
Promoting critical thinking	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	**-**Asking questions directly related to social justice terms such as "strike," "injustice," etc. and having students define these new terms -Having students address issues related to immigration, citizenship status, and how they impact various Spanish speakers
Encouraging activism (in the educational setting and/or in the community)	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	-Encouraging students to take part in the strike as a means of standing in solidarity with various immigrants/undocumented individuals within their community -Regularly discussing her undocumented citizens project with her students to educate them on issues related to immigration

Table 3. Melissa's Pedagogical Approaches to Social Justice

Socially-just Pedagogical Practice Observed	**Was practice observed during observation periods? (Y/N)**	**Description of activities/Examples seen in pedagogy (Observation 1)**
Challenging, confronting, disrupting of misconceptions, untruths, and/or stereotypes that perpetuate inequality, and/or discrimination	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: N** **Observation 3: N**	-Directly discussing stereotypes associated with Spanish-speakers -Showing the diversity of the Spanish-speaking diaspora through famous figures in popular culture to dispel myths about 'typical' Spanish speakers
Ensuring provision of materials necessary for all students' learning	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	-Providing daily lesson PowerPoints for students via the course site so that they are able to refer to these materials at any time
Utilizing course materials that promote social justice	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: N** **Observation 3: N**	-PowerPoints based on topics related to the diversity of the Spanish-speaking diaspora -Authentic texts related to current events that are relevant to class content
Drawing on students' talents and strengths (cultural relevance)	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	-Creating a safe environment for students to share their specific beliefs related to American and Hispanic/Latino identity -Using prominent figures in popular culture that students recognize to teach about various nationalities -Allowing time for various types of activities (presentational, interpersonal) based on the diversity of students needs
Promoting critical thinking	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y**	-Asking students to share their perspectives regarding the Muslim Ban, American and Hispanic identity, and who decides about these identities using the target language

	Observation 3: Y	
Encouraging activism (in the educational setting and/or in the community)	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: N** **Observation 3: N**	*Though Melissa had plans to encourage activism through a lesson that required students to discuss issues of immigration with members of their campus community, she was uncomfortable with proceeding with the lesson as students complained to her supervisor regarding course content

Table 4. Corina's Pedagogical Approaches to Social Justice

Socially-just Pedagogical Practice Observed	**Was practice observed during observation periods? (Y/N)**	**Description of activities/Examples seen in pedagogy (Observation 1)**
Challenging, confronting, disrupting of misconceptions, untruths, and/or stereotypes that perpetuate inequality, and/or discrimination	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	-Engaging in discussion with students regarding dictator-led governments and how they oppress citizens -Reading poetry and song lyrics that counter the stock stories often told by members of dominant groups
Ensuring provision of materials necessary for all students' learning	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	**-**Checking to make sure that students had phones to take part in the real-time polls -Taking time to recap the content from the previous lesson before having students move on to the next subject
Utilizing course materials that promote social justice	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	-Ana Tijoux's song entitled "Shock," which focuses on the oppression inflicted by corrupt governments -Poll that asked students to discuss which organizations they would join and/or create based on their social justice interests -The *People* Magazine article that discussed the experience of Argentinian men and women who had been adopted by members of the government responsible for the killing of their parents -poems based on social movements in Mexico and Argentina
Drawing on students' talents and strengths (cultural relevance)	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	**-**Having students read, write (including via text message), speak

Promoting critical thinking	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	**-**The Venn diagram activity that required students to compare/contrast social movements in Mexico and Argentina
Encouraging activism (in the educational setting and/or in the community)	**Observation 1: Y** **Observation 2: Y** **Observation 3: Y**	-Having students share *why* they would join or create their respective organizations and the affect that they would have on the community

This project is twofold in its purpose: The first goal is the share the Spanish language learning experiences of African Americans who currently work in the field; the second is to understand the ways in which these experiences inform their current pedagogy. It is evident that the participants' instructional practices are deeply influenced by their experiences, both negative and positive. Lisa explicitly mentions her race and the work of her ancestors as a motivating force in her decision to serve as a social justice educator/activist. Melissa recalls unfavorable learning experiences that focused solely on vocabulary and grammar, and decided that she did not want to provide those same experiences for her students. Her motivation to teach for social justice also stems from college experiences in which her professors focused on issues of race, racism, oppression, discrimination within Latin America. This showed Melissa that there was more to language learning than basic aspects of language and she works to share these phenomena with her students. Corina shares that activism and social justice-based approaches are the duty of the educator as they are preparing students to be productive and critically-minded leaders and members of society.

We were able to see specific examples of teaching for social justice in each of the three narratives shared in Chapter 4. Lisa specifically shares details of an upcoming protest/strike with her students. Instead of presenting this event in a way that was isolated from the lesson, Lisa focused on relevant vocabulary and discussed issues of immigration reform in the target language. As this event is an example of culture, she included it on the next test. This inclusion of social justice-based information shows that she promotes activism among her students, and that she herself is an example of an activist and also a community resource.

Corina's class session that was highlighted is a perfect example of a combination of engaging students with social justice issues in a way that is culturally relevant/responsive. The

focus on social movements in itself was an impactful way to engage with students about the context and history related to social movements. Additionally, Corina tailored the lesson to fit the needs and interests of her students by combining technology, group work, popular culture/music, and a discussion about their own social justice-related interests.

Though Melissa's social justice-based unit was curtailed by student complaints to her Department Chair, her intentions were to engage students in conversation regarding American identity and Latino identity as a means of preparing them to discuss issues of immigration, immigration reform and current politics. The student complaints that were made are perfect examples of resisting an education that will prepare students to disrupt systems of oppression and White supremacy in the future. Melissa's experience aligns with some of the fears that many educators have regarding being perceived as 'too political' when teaching for social justice (Bender-Slack, 2010; Fine, 1991).

Each participant also commented that social justice pedagogy is necessary to combat the various issues faced by members of our society. They each indicated that, as Black women, their identities lend themselves to constant consideration of social justice issues and advocacy and activism for themselves and others. Their work at their respective universities does not exist independently of their work in the community. Corina has always been interested in aiding members of her community. She also currently serves as the Director of Diversity and Inclusiveness at her college and regularly gives presentations on teaching for social justice at workshops and professional conferences. Lisa is employed at an HBCU where the university's mission focuses on community-building and empowerment. She involves her students in her community activism work and encourages them to get involved with issues that they deem important and relevant. Even further, she includes these activities in course curricula as she sees

the value of community activism as an appropriate theme within the classroom. Melissa is committed to preparing her students to be critically-minded leaders. The same way that she is adamant about showing her children the world as a means of exposing them to different cultures, perspectives and practices, she seeks to expose her students to topics that are relevant to our society. Each of these women embody the spirit of activism and carry it with them in both their professional and personal lives.

Research Question 3: **What were the instructors' K-20 (and beyond) experiences as world language learners? How might their experiences influence their interpretations of social justice within the world language classroom?**

Theme 6: Community/Spanish Language Learning Outside of the Classroom

As discussed in Chapter 2, a students' perception of language study is greatly influenced by the practices, understandings and perceptions related to language within his or her community (Pratt, 2012; Reese & Goldenberg, 2003; Tse, 2001). In each of the cases, some of the most prominent examples of positive language learning experiences took place outside of the classroom, and even before the participants were deeply engaged in formal learning. Lisa's step-mother is a native Spanish speaker who entered her life shortly before she began taking classes in middle school. Her father's motivation to communicate with his wife also encouraged Lisa to pursue Spanish language proficiency. Encouragement from family members to pursue language study is affects a students' level of interest and success within a language classroom (Pratt, 2012). Melissa shares early memories of speaking Spanish with friends in her community, and expressed that Spanish did not become a foreign language for her until she started taking classes in school. Corina was somewhat of a translator in her community, and her efforts to continue in her study of the Spanish language were recognized and valued by native Spanish speakers. These community-based experiences were pivotal in encouraging each participants' continued interest in language study. Exposure to 'foreign languages' in environments in which learners do not feel

pressured are extremely beneficial in that they allow for low-stakes learning. There are no assessments resulting in students being evaluated for their performance. Encounters are pleasurable and comfortable, which is the opposite of the ways that many African Americans describe their classroom language learning experiences. Additionally, when students are surrounded by speakers of the target language whom they view positively, they are more likely to be positively influences to study that language (both within and outside of the classroom) (Tse, 2001).

Furthermore, these learning experiences created a sense of oneness between native speakers and Spanish language learners. Melissa was referred to as 'prieta' by her neighborhood friends because they saw her as one of them, only with a slightly darker complexion. They even supported her during her first negative Spanish classroom experience and showed that they identified more with her as a Spanish speaker than they did her teacher (Señora Negron), who was actually of Latina descent. Their familiarity with Melissa brought them together and made her an 'honorary Latina' because she spoke the dialect with which they were familiar, as opposed to the "bourgeoisie" dialect spoken by Señora Negron.

Corina even said herself that she was seemingly considered an "honorary Latina" because of her desire to communicate with Hispanic members of her community, and also because of her willingness to assist them with important language-related tasks (i.e. translating documents, writing letters). Because of these foundational experiences, Corina has a deep connection with the Spanish-speaking community, and is also deeply committed to social justice work. Lisa's appearance and near-native proficiency allowed her to establish rapport while studying abroad in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. She was often mistaken for a Latina herself. Furthermore, growing up in a household with a Colombian step-mother also provided Lisa with

opportunities to meet her Latino relatives and learn about Spanish language and culture in a low-stakes environment.

Each of the participants' backgrounds regarding their personal connections to Spanish language and culture are extremely relevant to their decisions to pursue and find success in their current careers. The existence of participants' relationships with Spanish-speaking members of their community prior to (and during) formal education experiences also support Culturally Relevant Pedagogy's strong position regarding acknowledgement of the value of the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) that students bring to the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Because of Corina, Melissa, and Lisa's positive informal learning experiences, they had a strong foundation and motivation to excel in the classroom (though in certain cases this was squelched by negative formal learning experiences, i.e. Melissa and Señora Negron).

Theme 7: The Role of Vested Educators

One of the more apparent themes that emerged within each of the participants' narratives pertains to the role that vested educators (specifically in college) played in their decision to pursue an education within the field of foreign language. As English & Moore (1998) have shared, educators' approaches to engaging with students plays a large role in their levels of interest and academic achievement. Corina's first college Spanish professor (Ms. Klein) was not only an instructor, but also a mentor, advisor, and friend. She went beyond her responsibilities as a teacher to discuss future college and career possibilities with Corina, assist her with understanding the college enrollment process, and even met with her mother to ensure that she was familiar with travel abroad procedures and other pieces of pertinent information. As Corina did not have family members who attended college, Ms. Klein helped her to navigate this unfamiliar territory and equip her with the knowledge necessary to find success in college and beyond. They still remain in contact to this day. Once she transferred from her community

college to a four-year college, Corina received the same support and mentoring from her professors as she did from Ms. Klein.

Melissa's previous Spanish learning experiences in high school made her a bit apprehensive about taking college-level Spanish classes. She had been discouraged by her previous teacher, Señora Negron, who did not recognize her potential and constantly criticized her dialect. These negative experiences, which greatly affected Melissa's perception of Spanish education, were no longer relevant when she began college. There, she met educators who were vested in her education and reassured her that she was a strong student who could find success within the field. This reassurance was crucial to Melissa's academic and psychological well-being as Señora Negron had planted seeds of negativity regarding Melissa's capabilities. Being complimented on her Spanish-speaking proficiency and encouraged to study Spanish greatly helped to improve her self-esteem as a second language learner, which shows the importance of encouragement and emotional support as crucial aspects in ensuring student success.

Additionally, Melissa attended college states away from her parents. Though she made plenty of friends, her professors filled the void of being away from positive adult role models. She recalls wanting to be just like them and feeling amazed by their accomplishments and dedication to education. There were tumultuous periods of Melissa's college years in which she and her parents disagreed about her educational and career-based decisions. During these times, her professors were the ones that helped her to research study abroad programs, find information about transferring credits from her study abroad programs, obtain funding to pay for scholarships, and navigating the graduate school enrollment process. Though Melissa was adamant about not portraying her parents in a negative way, she credits her professors for a great deal of her success. Even when she was considering dropping out of or taking a break from her

graduate program, her former college advisor and professor, Dr. Jones, gave her the pep talk that she needed to hear in order to endure. Within this pep talk, Melissa also learned about the racial inequities faced by many women of color within the academic world. This conversation resonated even more as Melissa was able to identify with Dr. Jones based on the commonalities they shared (race and gender).

Through these narratives, we see the critical role that educators play in the quality of their students' educational experiences. In addition to providing students with an education, they [further] exposed them to international travel, graduate school opportunities, possible career options, provided support and camaraderie even after students had completed their undergraduate matriculation. In Melissa's case, her college professors even acted as stand-in parents when she did not have their support during the pursuit of her academic endeavors. Lisa benefitted greatly from having college professors from similar backgrounds as they saw the value in content related to Black identity and culture, which is a key characteristic in increasing African American students' levels of interest in language study (English & Moore, 1998) Each of the participants' instructors that had a positive impact on their learning experiences embodied the characteristics of effective culturally relevant pedagogues. They recognized the various strengths of their students, possessed an understanding of their backgrounds, recognized the cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986) that they brought to the classroom, and utilized content that was relevant to their students. These are the key practices of effective practitioners of culturally relevant pedagogy (Billings, 1995; Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejia, 2003; Milner, 2011).

Theme 8: The Value of Study Abroad

Various world language scholars and researchers (Brux & Fry, 2010; Moore, 2005) have shared their perspectives regarding the benefits of studying abroad. Enhancing students' understandings of the world, creating opportunities to expose students to the diversity of other

languages and cultures, and assisting in the reduction of ethnocentric perspectives are some of the benefits associated with study abroad (Carlson & Widman, 1988; Matz, 1997). Each of the participants had positive and meaningful experiences in the countries they visited, and had the opportunity to increase their cultural understandings and improve their Spanish language proficiency. Lisa, Melissa, and Corina all shared that they felt embraced by the members of the communities that they visited, which counters the existing literature regarding students' fears of being perceived as outsiders and being subjected to racism and discrimination while studying abroad (Brux & Fry, 2010; Perdreau, 2002). Corina, however, did share that she felt that she was being exoticized when she was compared to Black American celebrities while in Mexico. Even more, many of the Mexican students made comments admiring aspects of her physical appearance, but she did not make mention of being treated poorly by those she encountered. Some of her new acquaintances in Mexico were even deeply interested in topics related to race relations in the United States and celebrated figures such as Martin Luther King, Jr. for his work during the Civil Rights Movement.

Lisa was so similar to many of the Dominicans and Puerto Ricans that she met that they often did not believe that she was Black American, but a native Dominican or Puerto Rican. Lisa also mentioned that they were so adamant in refuting her Blackness that she felt that was an underlying negative connotation associated with being Black. However, she also shares that she was embraced and welcomed by those she encountered. Her desire to study abroad in the Caribbean stemmed from the cultural knowledge she attained while studying at her HBCU. She enjoyed learning about the connections between Afro-Latino and African American identities and felt most comfortable in being a place where she would not be seen as foreign, such as Spain, for example.

Melissa initially felt like an outsider when she arrived to Costa Rica as she also experienced quite a bit of exoticism. Though she was uncomfortable with all of the comments made about her appearance, and did not enjoy being the only Black person in her group, Melissa did share that she did not experience any racism or discrimination. Once she recognized that the Costa Ricans that she encountered were not intentionally trying to make her uncomfortable and were simply unfamiliar with aspects of her race and culture, she was much more at ease. In fact, she used their lack of knowledge as a teaching opportunity and chose the share important aspects of Blackness within the United States. Furthermore, she shared that her overall experience was quite positive and served as the foundation for her strong desire to see the world and continue in her studies abroad.

Theme 9: Intersectional Experiences

In order to more deeply understand systems of power, oppression and privilege within our society, it is necessary to examine life through the lens of our multi-faceted identities (May, 2015). Furthermore, we must be aware of the various factors that contribute to individuals' experiences and the ways that they deal with them. One's gender is important and distinct, but gender is also important in the context of other aspects of his or her identity (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). For example, a Black woman's social class is important to her experiences related to religion, sexuality/sexual orientation, origin, etc. When an individual's identity intersects multiple non-mainstream categories (i.e. Black, lesbian, female), there are even more complications related to power, oppression, and marginalization. Unfortunately, many language students do not have the opportunity to address the intersectionality of identity as it relates to language study (Kubota, Austin, Saito-Abbott, 2003). For this reason, it is imperative to include a discussion on the existence of intersectional experiences within the data collected.

The most poignant example of the role of intersectionality exists within Melissa's narrative. Her students' complaints regarding her decisions to discuss race/the diversity of the Hispanic diaspora, immigration, the effects of Trump's presidency, and other important issues are evidence that race and gender play a role in power dynamics. Though she is the leader of her class, her students went to her White, male Department Chair to complain about her choice of classroom content. Instead of supporting her, he cautioned her against focusing on the aforementioned topics and essentially asked her to tone down her discussion of controversial issues. Though it is mere speculation, I would imagine that this conversation would have gone quite differently had Melissa been a White male. In fact, I would argue that students would have never complained about the lesson content and respected the professor's authority. Moreover, one must question whether students felt uncomfortable with the discussions because they were being led by a Black woman. They even went as far as saying that Melissa was imparting her political beliefs on them, though she never shared her personal opinion on any of the topics at hand. I saw firsthand that she merely facilitated the conversation and guided students to have meaningful discussions using the target language.

In each of the three narratives, we see that the intersection of race and social class were present in the participants' parents' perceptions of study abroad and language study in general. Family perceptions regarding study abroad are important to students' decisions to seek opportunities to learn languages in other countries (Brux & Fry, 2010). For example, Lisa's father is college-educated and worked as an ophthalmologist to support his family. As someone who was multi-lingual himself, he supported Lisa's decision to pursue a Spanish education and study/travel abroad. Lisa recalls her dad always teaching her to learn about and embrace other cultures. Though they were Black, Lisa's father's socio-economic status provided her with an

advantage in that she had the foundation and support system that adequately prepared her to study abroad and pursue an education within the field of world language. Later on (after undergrad), Lisa's identity as a wife and eventually a mother slightly changed her course related to obtaining her Master's and Ph.D. These responsibilities took precedence over her career, which is often the case for women trying to navigate both the professional and home arenas. This is not necessarily an example of oppression or marginalization at the hands of "the system," however it is important to acknowledge the role that intersectional identity played in Lisa's life experiences.

Initially, Corina had no intentions of pursuing a higher education. As mentioned in her narrative, she planned to get a job and work hard as all of her family members had done. Though they were examples of positive members of her community, their choices to not attend college affected Corina's ambitions as well. In this case, her family's level of education completed intersects with Corina's potential future career and education options. Had she not decided to go to college, she would have still been a productive member of society like her family members, but her opportunities as a Black woman would have been much more limited without a college education. Even when she planned to become an international flight attendant, she was still required to obtain some higher education in the form of language classes at the local community college. For both Corina and Lisa, access to education, thus opportunities for employment at universities also affect their access to power, prestige, and opportunities to represent others in their community.

Though Corina's mother had never traveled internationally, she understood the importance of studying abroad and supported Corina's decision to do so. In these cases, race and socio-economic status are deeply connected in that they informed Corina and Lisa's parents'

perceptions about study abroad. Both groups understood the importance of international travel as it related to their daughters' studies and were supportive of their decisions to study in other countries.

On the other hand, Melissa's parents were very much against the idea of her studying and traveling abroad and felt resentful that she spent money "like a rich kid" to travel instead of helping to support her household. They were even against Melissa's decision to major in Spanish as they wanted to continue with her Pre-Law studies. As Davis & Markham (1991) have revealed, many African Americans do not see the benefit of language study as a practical form of education and believe that it is a field in which Black people do not 'belong.' Remnants from the historical argument regarding the Hampton vs. Tuskegee models of education still prevail as many African Americans do not see certain types of work and study as beneficial to one's future employment.

Melissa's narrative also unearthed the role that intersectionality plays in the workplace. Her former professor, Dr. Jones shared a bit about having to overcome racism and sexism within the workplace. She even specifically used the word *microagressive* to describe the behaviors of some of her peers and superiors in the workplace. When asked to share any information she had regarding Dr. Jones' workplace experiences, Melissa shared that she became increasingly frustrated with her treatment within the department before eventually retiring (without gaining tenure). She frequently had to advocate for herself to receive higher pay (which did not occur until two years before she retired), work-related opportunities, and even the respect and support of her colleagues. As a Black woman, Dr. Jones had to navigate a White space in which she was not valued. She received lower pay and fewer opportunities than the men in her department and was not promoted as many other in her department had been. She always felt that she was the

low man on the totem pole as a Black woman, even lower than the Latina women and Black men.

Less obvious, but still incredibly relevant to this discussion of intersectionality is Lisa's account of the perceptions of Blackness she experienced during her travels in Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. According to Harris (1993), whiteness being seen and used as property is extremely relevant to conversations regarding social class. In the case of the Latinos that Lisa met, they associated whiteness with opportunity, upward mobility, and social superiority, all of which create a connection between race and social class. Even participants' former instructors who celebrated Spain's dialect of Spanish were equating being European/White with superiority and opportunity. Their assertion held that speaking the 'proper' form of Spanish was necessary to finding success in the classroom and becoming gainfully employed within the field of language education.

Conclusion

In examining the experiences and pedagogical practices of Lisa, Melissa, and Corina, there were both obvious and subtle similarities and differences across each case. Each of these themes found within the previously shared narratives contribute to what CRT would refer to as the participants' counterstories, or stories that go against the stock story or narrative that is perpetuated by White, dominant, mainstream culture (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2013). While much of the currently existing literature regarding African Americans within the field of world language education focuses on their negative experiences, the narratives shared in this project shed light on the positive and transformational experiences of three Black women who have found success within the field.

As we learn more about the experiences (both positive and negative) of African Americans within the field of world language education, we will be able to better address their learning needs as a means of encouraging them to pursue this type of education.

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION

This study examines the experiences of three, African American post-secondary Spanish educators and the ways in which their experiences inform their perspectives and practices related to social justice. Interviews and classroom observations were the data collection methods utilized to answer the following research questions:

- Research Question 1: What are the world language instructors' interpretations of social justice pedagogy related to world language education?
- Research Question 2: How do the instructors' interpretations of social justice inform their pedagogies in the world language classroom?
- Research Question 3: What were the instructors' K-20 (and beyond) experiences as world language learners? How might their experiences influence their interpretations of social justice within the world language classroom?

Interviews were recorded and transcribed so that they could be analyzed. Observations were digitally recorded so that they could also be transcribed and utilized for data analysis. Field notes were also taken during each observation period so that they could be used to provide as much detail during the process of constructing the narratives in Chapter 4. Interview and observation transcriptions and field notes were coded for themes that were critical in answering the above research questions.

Summary of Findings

This project investigates the previous learning experiences and the perspectives and current pedagogical practices of three Black, post-secondary educators. Each of the participants previously studied at and are currently employed at different institutions of higher learning, however there were noticeable similarities in their narratives as there were differences. Though the specifics of their narratives differed, nine common themes emerged from the cross-case analysis and were essential in answering the research questions. These themes provided insight regarding participants' interpretations of social justice, how these interpretations inform their pedagogy, and also how their interpretations are also informed by their previous learning experiences.

Eurocentrism and Language Hierarchy/Linguicism

Language discrimination, or linguicism (Chen-Hayes, Chen & Athar, 1999) is a common practice that marginalizes speakers of certain languages and dialects within language classrooms, and in society in general. Eurocentrism, or the promotion of White European culture as superior to other cultures is also a tendency that we see perpetuated in language classrooms and beyond. Two of the participants shared situations in which they were criticized for their use of Spanish, specifically their Caribbean dialect, which was deemed "un-academic" by previous instructors. This trend of elevating language and culture associated with whiteness is a direct example of the ways in which individuals who are not members of dominant, mainstream groups are disregarded and perceived as inferior. Each of the three participants have shared examples of the ways in which they utilize social justice-based instructional approaches to disrupt hierarchical and Eurocentric perspectives and practices that often take place within the language classroom. Their interpretations of these practices are also informed by their previous experiences as learners.

Race/Racism and Identity

The propensity to elevate White language, culture, and identity also reflects the perspective that aspects of blackness are not perceived as being valuable. Each of the participants experienced firsthand the ways in which whiteness is seen as property (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Dumas 2013; Harris, 1993), within the world language classroom. For example, negative conceptualizations of Blackness were seen in Lisa's interactions with native Puerto Ricans and Dominicans who did not want to be identified as Afro-Latino as a means of disassociating themselves from Black culture. Each of the participants intentionally incorporate aspects of Black culture into their pedagogy as a means of exposing their students to the diversity of the Latino diaspora and encouraging them to see Blackness in a positive manner to combat racist and discriminatory viewpoints. They utilize culturally relevant pedagogies to promote understandings of the diversity of the Spanish-speaking diaspora, and to show students that both richness and complexity exist within this diaspora.

Social, Cultural, and Political Aspects of Language Education

Chapter 1 highlights pedagogical trends within the field of world language that promote the teaching *of* language (Ariew, 1982; Moore, 2005; Shrum & Glisan, 2005) instead of teaching *through* language. Lisa, Melissa, and Corina work to disrupt the status quo by engaging with their students in ways that are meaningful and will prepare them to critically address issues of injustice and inequity within our world. Instead of using the world language classroom to simply teach grammar and vocabulary, the participants intentionally utilize course materials that allow their students to address the social, cultural, and political issues that exist related to language and culture. Through the examination of their pedagogical practices viewed during classroom observations, it is evident that participants are promoting deeper understandings of classroom

content to combat the sometimes superficial approaches to language instruction that many students experience.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogies/Social Justice Activism

The participants' approaches to social justice (including culturally relevant pedagogy) are based on their understandings of the social, cultural, and political aspects of language study. Their pedagogical practices are reflective of their understandings of what it means to teach for social justice, and they work to incorporate meaningful classroom content that allows their students to explore critical topics. Furthermore, there is a consistent promotion of activism as each educator is committed to taking action within their communities. The observations of class sessions allowed for the documentation of classroom practices that directly aligned with Nieto's (2010) social justice doctrines. Lisa, Melissa, and Corina all share the viewpoint that their responsibility as educator/activists is to prepare their students to be effective future leaders that understand the injustices faced by members of our society. They draw from their own previous learning experiences for inspiration from stellar instructors, and reminders of how *not* to treat their students based on interactions with instructors that were not as vested in student learning. Their interactions with students were evidence of the implementation of culturally relevant pedagogical practices and social justice-based approaches to instruction.

Community/Spanish Language Learning Outside of the Classroom

Melissa's positive experiences with learning Spanish from friends in her community made her feel confident about taking Spanish classes at school. Being raised by a Colombian step-mother and a Black father who was passionate about language study and world travel, Lisa had incredibly positive Spanish-learning experiences outside of the classroom. Corina has been committed to issues of social justice since she began assisting Spanish-speakers in her community with their translation/interpretation needs. She recognized that there were limited

resources available to non-native English speakers in her area, and chose to fill that gap. However, her interactions with Spanish-speakers allowed her to greatly improve in her Spanish proficiency and contributed to her strong foundation as a second language learner. Each of these previously shared examples are evidence of the role that interactions with members of the target language community play in students' levels of interest and success in the world language classroom (Tse, 2001).

The Role of Vested Educators

The participants each shared memories of incredibly influential educators who were great motivators in their decisions to pursue an education within the field of world language. They describe these individuals as mentors, advisors, and friends, and are still deeply impacted by their interactions with these educators. In many cases, these teachers served as resources who provided information about study abroad opportunities, funding/scholarships, and also provided encouragement as the participants endured various hardships throughout their time as Spanish language learners.

Lisa, an assistant professor of Spanish at a small, private HBCU, cites that her experiences as a student at an HBCU greatly inform her instructional style. She is a proponent of culturally relevant pedagogy as her former professors were adamant about exposing students to the diversity of the Hispanic diaspora and sharing aspects of Afro-Latino culture. Melissa's passion for language study was rekindled when she began to take Spanish courses in college, and was commended on her language proficiency. At her undergraduate university, Melissa met supportive professors who encouraged her to major in Spanish, though her parents did not see the value in such a field of study. With the reassurance of her instructors, Melissa continued on to pursue a Master's degree in Spanish. Corina also recalls experiences with educators who supported her and encouraged her decision to pursue an education in world language. Based on

data collected from each participant, it is evident that vested educators play a large role in students' levels of success in language study.

The Value of Study Abroad

The value of study abroad emerged as a common theme among each of the participants. Literature on this topic suggests that language-learning experiences within countries in which the target language are spoken greatly benefit students by enhancing their cultural understanding and allowing them to improve their language proficiency (Carlson & Widman, 1988; Matz, 1997). Though Corina discussed feeling exoticized and Lisa experienced negative perspectives of Blackness held by some of the Dominicans and Puerto Ricans she encountered, they both recognize the benefits of their time studying in Spanish-speaking countries. Melissa also has extremely positive study abroad experiences once she realized that she could be proud of explaining aspects of Black life and culture to the native Costa Ricans that she encountered during her first study abroad trip.

Intersectional Experiences

A very important common thread that existed within each narrative addressed the role that the intersection of identity plays in each of the participants' teaching and learning experiences. As African American women, Lisa, Melissa and Corina each recognize the role that their race, gender, and socioeconomic status play in their experiences. They incorporate these aspects of identity (along with many others) into their curricula and instructional practices as they understand the importance of teaching in ways that allow students to see themselves. This practice of addressing the intersectionality counters the norm within language classrooms as many educators fail to incorporate issues of identity (Kubota, Austin, Saito-Abbott, 2003).

Contributions of this Study

Enhanced Understandings of African Americans' Language Learning Experiences

This study is a contribution to the currently existing literature related to the experiences of African Americans within the field of world language. This project, however, fills gaps in the aforementioned literature as it examines the ways in which previous learning experiences inform Black educators' approaches to social justice-based instruction. Much of the prevalent work on African Americans and world language study focuses on the negative classroom experiences of students, and/or their hesitance to pursue an education within the field (Brux & Fry, 2009; Davis, 1991; Hubbard, 1980; Penn & Tanner, 2009; Stroud, 2010). This study provides specific data related to the experiences of African Americans who have successfully navigated their educational experiences and obtained employment as post-secondary world language educators. Additionally, some of the negative experiences shared by the participants allow us to understand some of the practices that stagnate African American students' progress within language classrooms.

Specific Examples of Social Justice Pedagogy within the World Language Classroom

This project examines the relationship between the participants' previous learning experiences and their interpretations surrounding social justice pedagogy and how these interpretations are reflected within their own pedagogy. The topic of teaching for social justice is relatively new within the world languages discipline, so this study is beneficial to educators looking to discover ways to implement such pedagogies within their classrooms. Some of the specific lessons and activities shared in Chapters four and five are beneficial for practitioners looking for social justice topics and activities to utilize within their classrooms.

Uncovers Issues of Race, Identity and Language Hierarchies within the Language Classroom

While much of the currently existing literature on African Americans' experiences within the world language classroom does discuss issues of race, identity, and language hierarchies, this study is a more contemporary contribution to the conversation. In addition to uncovering these issues in the participants' narratives, we are able to see possible suggestions to combatting these issues through the participants' pedagogical practices. Moreover, the discussion of these matters allows us to understand some African American students' reasons for apprehension or their lack of interest in language learning. By no means are these issues faced by all African American students, however, it is important to recognize the inequitable perspectives and practices that may potentially alienate students of underrepresented groups from their language learning experiences. In understanding these tendencies, we may also work towards improving African American students' so that they are able to benefit from the advantages of knowledge of other cultures and languages.

Applications

Teacher Education/Professional Development Programs

The most apparent area of application of this study is within teacher education and professional development programs. Because many of the racist, Eurocentric, and language hierarchy-based practices shared in this project were perpetuated by educators who were maintaining norms within the field of world language education, it is important to equip educators across the spectrum of experience (from pre-service to veteran) with appropriate resources and training. In becoming aware that these issues exist, we can better target them during professional development and teacher education programs and show pedagogues how to utilize social justice-based approaches within their classrooms to address and combat these issues

Curriculum Development

One of the most important characteristics of this study is that it can be made applicable to K-16 and beyond educational strategies and instructional materials. The lessons discussed based on classroom observations provide insight regarding ways in which we can change our approaches to curriculum. As Ariew (1982) posits that our field is plagued by a tendency to utilize the textbook as the only form of curriculum, the educators involved in this study proved otherwise. Melissa's use of popular culture icons, Corina's use of popular music, and Lisa's inclusion of vocabulary taken directly from a community demonstration advertisement are merely a few of the ways in which we saw social justice being incorporated into classroom curricula. These examples have the ability to help educators step outside of the box and make changes to their own curricula.

Implications for Future Research/ Recommendations

As social justice is a relatively new concept within the field of world language education, it is imperative that we continue to explore its role within language classrooms, and also the ways in which its meaning is interpreted by educators. Glynn, Wesley & Wassell (2014) have created an incredibly useful sourcebook which serves as a resource for language teachers who are interested in social justice pedagogy. However, we must work to create more resources to ensure that we are developing the practices of our discipline. Creating a collection of social justice-based lesson plans implemented by various educators within our discipline would be extremely beneficial in providing examples of what social justice pedagogy looks like within the world language classroom. As this term as not been concretely defined within our field, it is necessary to draw from the practices and understanding of practitioners who are actually doing this work. Furthermore, a better understanding of social justice could be useful as we work towards removing the stigma associated with this form of a pedagogy. The more we know about

how such practices are implemented in the classroom, the less fear will be associated with it. Additionally, it is important to share the benefits of teaching for social justice as this will likely entice stakeholders to promote such pedagogy. Furthermore, while Corina's social justice-based pedagogical practices were observed in an intermediate-level course, both Lisa and Melissa effectively implemented social justice pedagogy within beginner-level courses consisting of students with lower Spanish language proficiency. Though there is a misconception that beginner level students do not possess the language necessary to discuss social justice-related content, this study proves the opposite. Students can engage with critical material if the educators create them with the students' proficiency levels in mind and consider ways to make content more accessible. Because of this misconception, there is a need to conduct further research regarding the ways in which beginner-level language educators engage with their students about social justice-related topics. The existence of these examples will likely motivate educators to try to implement various pedagogies within their own classrooms.

As much of work on African Americans within the field focuses mainly on students and is a bit outdated, it is crucial that researchers and practitioners continue to encourage the sharing of the experiences and perspectives from this group that is often alienated from discourses. Because of the various accounts of experiences related to racism, eurocentrism, and linguicism in the Spanish classroom, world language educators should be mindful of their biases and stereotypes related to the students that they teach and their perspectives surrounding course content. The reflection on and acknowledgement of these stereotypes and biases are crucial to ensuring equity and inclusion within the world language classroom. Educators must be willing to think critically about the ways in which their understandings of the world affect their interactions with students (Sleeter, 2001; Solórzano, 1997).

Another implication for future research exists as it relates to gender differences within the field of world language education. Of the four male potential participants contacted, only one responded (and informed me that he did not fit the description of a social justice educator). This conversation, though brief, prompted me to consider two questions: 1) Why is there such a gap in the number of men versus women working as educators within the field? And 2) Is social justice a pedagogical practice that is not as widely explored by male educators? These questions may only be pertinent to the issues encountered during the recruitment phase of this study, or they may reflect a trend within the field. At any rate, it is worthwhile to examine male world language educators' perceptions regarding the field in general and social justice specifically. It would be interesting to have a better understanding of male educators' stories regarding how they became interested in their field and how they view social justice both generally and within their own pedagogy.

The potential participants' evaluation of himself as not being a social justice educator because his course was not fitting for such content raises another issue: Are language educators being taught solely in the area of language, or are they also being educated in teaching methods to supplement their content knowledge? Based on my own experiences, the vast majority of world language educators have been trained in language-based content alone (i.e. grammar, literature, linguistics, history, conversation), and not classroom pedagogy. For this reason, it is important to gain a better understanding of language educators' backgrounds to understand how and why they implement certain approaches to instruction. Additionally, there is a great need to enhance language programs so that they better equip future language instructors with the tools necessary to be effective pedagogues. While students enrolled in teacher education programs may have access to courses related to social justice/culturally relevant pedagogy, etc., this is

likely not the case for language students (even though they are often receiving their training in order to become language instructors).

Limitations

While this project will serve as a resource for scholars of the field, it is important to also note some of its limitations. Challenges related to participant demographic, access to qualified participants within this region, and the inability to utilize a great deal of the data that were collected have somewhat confined this project. Each of these issues will be discussed below.

Participants of Similar Demographic

Each of the three participants involved in this study are of a very similar demographic. The most obvious similarity is that they are all women. As mentioned previously, four men contacted, only one responded. He informed me that though he found the topic of this study to be quite interesting, he does not teach for social justice as it is not relevant within the linguistics courses that he teaches. Lisa, Melissa, and Corina teach at different universities within the region, but they are all within the approximate age range of 35-45. The matriculated through their bachelor's programs and graduate school at roughly the same time. Furthermore, each of the participants have at least one child and are currently married or have been married in the past. Professionally speaking, they are all well-respected in their current positions and are very active within their campus communities. Lisa and Corina are both Assistant Professors of Spanish while Melissa is a Senior Lecturer of Spanish at her university, which is the primary difference in their occupational rankings.

Perhaps the learning experiences and the perspectives related to teaching for social justice would have been different had there been a more diverse pool of participants. I found that many of the older potential participants that I contacted opted not to respond to my inquiry as perhaps they are not as familiar with social justice within the field of world language education. This is

an assumption that I have made based on the newness of this concept within the field, and the possibility that those educators were not exposed to it during their teacher education programs and/or other learning experiences. The context from which individuals of different backgrounds view this topic may have differed greatly had multiple demographics been represented in this study. My initial goal was to produce a project consisting of a non-homogenous group of participants, however, my access to such was limited.

Limited Number of Potential Participants

There is a small number of African American, post-secondary Spanish instructors within the region that was surveyed for this project. As was discussed in Chapter 3, only five of the 17 individuals who met all of this study's requirements agreed to take part in this study. In extending this study to a larger geographical region, I would imagine that the potential participant pool would have been much larger. However, due to limited time and resources, I had to recruit participants only within the southeastern area of the United States to complete this project.

Conclusion

Overall, data collected from this study were quite effective in answering questions related to Black world language educators' interpretations of what it means to teach Spanish for social justice, how these interpretations inform their pedagogy, and also how their interpretations and approaches to social justice pedagogy are influenced by former learning experiences. While there is still much work to be done, it is important to explore social justice based pedagogies generally, but especially from people who themselves have historically been marginalized from the field of world language education (both in the classroom and within literature). This project has expanded my understandings of the experiences of African American world language educators, and has even caused me to reflect on my own pedagogy and how it is influenced by my time as a

Spanish learner. While social justice is a topic that is quite new and complicated within world language education as it is other disciplines, we must be willing to embrace practices that will prepare our students to address inequities and injustices faced by members of our society.

APPENDIX A: THE CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE TEACHING (1994)

THE CHRONOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF LANGUAGE TEACHING					
Time	**Era**	**Approach**	**Method**	**Techniques**	**Proponents**
19th Century	Influence of Teaching Latin and Greek	The student's mind needs to be trained by analysis of the language, memorization of rules, paradigms	Grammar-translation	Grammar rules; Translation on oral Skills.	Karl Ploz
End of 19th early 20th	Reaction to Grammar Translation Method	Learners acquire rules of grammar inductively through imitation, repetition, speaking, and reading. The best way to teach meaning is to use visual perception.	Direct	Use of visuals; grammar rules taught through inductive teaching; in foreing language only emphasis on pronunciation	Comenius Gouin, Jespersen, de Sauzé
1940 -1950	Result os Structural Linguistics and Behavioral Psychology/National Emphasis on Oral Skills	Students learn through stimulus-response (S-R) techniques.	ALM	Stimulus-response pattern drills; memorization of dialogues; Sequence of listening, speaking, reading, writing;	Skinner; Bloonfield
1960	Reaction to ALM	Grammar should be explained so that students understand the rules. Language practice should always be meaningful.	Cognitive Code	Meaningful language use; uctive teaching of grammar; the tice follows mechanical, ningful, communicative sequence	Chomsky; Ausubel
1974	Result of studies in L1 Acquisition	Learners learn to understand best through physical movement in response to command.	TPR	Teacher takes control of the Class by using physically to oral commands.	Terrel; Asher
1972 - 1973	Focus on Effective development of Individual: Humanistic Methods	Learnrs take more responsibility for their own learning. Learning is not relegated to imitation and drill. Learners learn from trial and error and are capable of making their own corrections.	Silent Way	Self-motivation and learning students are more responsible for learning.	Gattegno
1976		The teacher should remain passive in order to reduce anxiety among students. Learners learn when working in community with others who are trying to achieve similar goal	Communicative Language Teaching	Teacher translates information and use by learners from analysis of group conversations from records.	Curran
1980s-1990s	Proficiency	Learners are effective in the use of language to perform functions with accuracy in grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, fluency and pragmatic competence, and sociolinguistic competence.	No particular Method	To create opportunities for self-expression and creativity; usinge the foreing language in real contexts;	ACTL
1966 - until now	Standards	Competence in aforeing language to achieve communication in an effective way, embracing culture and different manifestations of language in its many different approuchs.	No particular Method	To create opportunities to use language as a tool for learning contents; integration of skills and culture, relationships and new perspectives.	ACTF

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview 1

1. Describe your first experience as a Spanish learner.
2. What were your most significant experiences as a Spanish learner?
3. Is there anything significant that you remember about your former Spanish teachers and their pedagogical practices?
4. Is there anything significant that you remember about the curricula utilized in your Spanish classrooms?
5. In what ways did aspects of your identity (i.e. race, gender) play a role in your world language learning experiences?
6. Are there any other details regarding your experiences as a Spanish learner that you would like to share?
7. What motivated you to pursue a world language education in Spanish? (Please describe what this education entails i.e. degrees, certificates, etc.)
8. Did you face challenges throughout the pursuit of your world language education? If so, please describe them.
9. How did you find success within the field of world language?
10. Describe your experience with regards to obtaining a job within the field.
11. Are there any other details regarding this interview that you would like to share?

Interview 2

1. Are there any further details regarding the first interview that you would like to share?
2. How do your experiences as a world language learner impact the ways in which you currently engage with students?
3. What is your definition of social justice?
4. How do you perceive your pedagogical practices as they relate to social justice?

Interview 3

1. Are there any further details regarding interviews 1 or 2 that you would like to share?
2. Please discuss/describe your thought process in creating and teaching the lesson that I observed during the classroom observations. Please include rationale for pedagogical choices, lesson content, activities, and assessments.
3. Please discuss/describe your thought process regarding the creation of your syllabus and the materials (textbooks, supplemental texts) that you have selected for this course.
4. In what ways do these pedagogical choices reflect your perspective regarding teaching Spanish for social justice?

APPENDIX C: OBSERVATION PROTOCOL

*Based on Nieto's (2010) doctrines of social justice pedagogy

1. It challenges, confronts, and disrupts misconceptions, untruths and stereotypes that lead to structural inequality and discrimination based on social and human differences.

2. It provides all students with the resources necessary to learn to their full potential, including both material and emotional resources.

3. It draws on the talents and strengths that students bring to their education.

4. It creates a learning environment that promotes critical thinking and agency for social change. (p. 48).

Socially-just Pedagogical Practice Observed	**Was practice observed during observation period? (Y/N)**	**Description of activities/Examples seen in pedagogy**
Challenging, confronting, disrupting of misconceptions, untruths, and/or stereotypes that perpetuate inequality, and/or discrimination		
Ensuring provision of materials necessary for all students' learning		
Utilizing course materials that promote social justice		
Drawing on students' talents and strengths (cultural relevance)		
Promoting critical thinking		
Encouraging activism (in the educational setting and/or in the community)		
Other Practices		

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