

Running title: Lessons for teacher training workshop in Pakistan: challenges novice teachers face while implementing CRT in elementary social studies classrooms in the US

Lessons for a Teacher Training Workshop in Pakistan:
Challenges Novice Teachers Face While Implementing Culturally Relevant Teaching in
Elementary School Social Studies Classrooms in the United States

Axa Khalid Warraich

Vanderbilt University

Abstract

Recent education reforms in Pakistan push for uniformity in the guise of standardization. This may not only discredit essential parts of students' identities but also pit students against each other without laying focus on the systemic causes of the "achievement gaps." It is in this context that I see great value in training teachers to practice culturally relevant teaching in my school in Pakistan. However, due to the lack of research on culturally relevant teaching in Pakistan, I have chosen to research similar literature in the United States. For over three decades now in the United States, culturally relevant teaching has been pushed forward as an appropriate educational paradigm to address the academic needs and improve the academic achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students in the U.S. Today, this need is felt more than ever because of the increase in culturally and linguistically diverse student population in schools and their continued underrepresentation in successful academic indicators. The existing literature provides ways to use culturally relevant teaching in teacher education programs for preservice teachers and also recounts its successful application by celebrated teachers; however, it does not highlight the challenges that in service teachers may face while implementing it and does not measure its effects on student performance. This research is important for improvement and evolution of existing teacher education programs so that they can address the unmet needs and under developed understanding of teachers dedicated to culturally relevant teaching. This paper is a step in that direction and will employ a systematic literature review method to highlight the challenges that novice teachers face in implementing culturally relevant teaching in elementary social studies classrooms, in hopes of designing an effective teacher training workshop for novice teachers, to address the needs of historically marginalized students, in my school in Pakistan.

Keywords: challenges, new teachers, implementing, culturally relevant teaching, elementary school, social studies classroom

LESSONS FOR A TEACHER TRAINING WORKSHOP IN PAKISTAN:

Challenges Novice Teachers Face While Implementing Culturally Relevant Teaching in Elementary School Social Studies Classrooms in the United States

Educational Context of Pakistan

There are three streams of K-10 education systems in Pakistan; namely, the national metric system (mostly in public schools), Cambridge O-levels (exclusively in private schools) and the madrassah certification (religious schools). There is the relatively new International Baccalaureate as well but is available at select few schools that are very expensive and not accessible even in all the major cities. The public schools are ‘free’ in the sense that they do not charge tuition fee formally but there are some miscellaneous charges that are incurred by the parents (Mehmood, 2013). Due to consistently low funding in the public education system, these public schools usually do not offer a worthwhile education and the schools that do provide that are usually private schools which charge differentially higher fees (Bari, 2016). Hence, access to education which in , in 1960s and 1970s, was based on merit is now increasingly based on wealth. Students from wealthy families go to better schools, get a better education, have access to better colleges and hence better jobs; on the other hand, students from under privileged families go to public schools, have access to under trained teachers. These students “... do not pick up the ‘right’ accent or receive the right education, and end up, even if they are talented and complete their education, with a relatively poor job and have discouraging career prospects. More likely, the poor person’s child will drop out of school and never finish his or her schooling.” (Bari, 2016). It just does not stop at this, due to the differences in curriculum, educational philosophy, material resources, textbooks and teaching methods, a student going to an elite private school develops a completely different worldview and point of reference from a

student going to a public school or a madrassah. Bari (2016) argues, and rightfully so, that “[h]ow can all these children be citizens of the same country? How can they share the same vision for their future and for the future of their country? How can they talk to each other, empathise with each other and understand each other’s points of view? How can they think that what happened to them was fair and not blame the other for what happened to them?” These parallel systems have been designed for this inherent stratification which is getting entrenched generation after generation.

Furthermore, Hoodbhoy (2018) argues that a sizeable number of Pakistanis still idealize the traditional teacher, who is an “... authoritarian who may not be questioned and is socially authorised to inflict physical punishment when needed”. He also says that it is due to this idea of rewarding conformity and obedience in educational settings that the critical thinking, which is vital for modern learning and social change, is hardly ever nourished. To make matters worse, there is a longstanding debate on of which language should be the medium of instruction for students. In her report, Naviwala (2016) finds out that “...For over 90 percent, their mother tongue is something other than Urdu, such as Sindhi, Pashto, Punjabi, Seraiki, or Balochi. Research shows that children learn best in their mother tongue. But in school, children are faced with an Urdu language curriculum and textbooks, which is a major reason why children are not absorbing the material.” On top of this, English is the official language and is the language of the elites. Several public schools in Pakistan are English-medium schools and in many of such schools many teachers are not proficient in English language. “This is where rote learning comes in. It is common to meet a child from a government school with a notebook full of word and math exercises. But if the child is asked to read the same word in another book or to answer a math problem a different way, he/she will be completely lost” (Naviwala, 2016).

After years of neglect of reforms in education and health, the new government is now actively working to bring about policy changes that can get to the root of the crisis. However, the way that some of these interventions are being planned seem problematic. There is talk of uniform education, in intention it looks like providing equality of opportunity but on closer look it a move for standardization where the curriculum, textbooks, assessment tools and medium of instruction will be the same throughout the country. This standardization is being thought of as levelling but the framing is that of “achievement gaps” (Jan, 2018) and culture blindness. Having been trained in culturally relevant pedagogy and social justice lens, I see immense problems with this philosophy in education. A philosophy that discredits essential parts of students’ identities and pits students against each other without laying focus on the systemic causes of these “achievement gaps”. It is in this context that I find great value of culturally relevant teaching in Pakistan. However, in spite of the plethora of resources and years of research on culturally relevant teaching in the US, there still are several challenges that novice teachers face while implementing it in classrooms. These do not take away from the utility and promise of culturally relevant teaching for students, especially students of historically marginalized communities, but do signal possible precautions that educators should take while designing culturally relevant teacher education programs. For this paper, I will do a systematic literature review of the challenges that novice teachers face while implementing culturally relevant teaching in social studies classroom in elementary schools, so that I can design a teacher training workshop for my school staff back home. The intent of the workshop is to introduce culturally relevant teaching to them and address potential challenges that other novice teachers face in implementing it in the classrooms.

Theoretical Framework

Agarwal et al (2010) notes that students in low-income communities and students of color "... are often denied adequate educational resources, are overrepresented within special education contexts, and are subject to harsher forms of punishment than their White peers" (p. 237). However, for them these trends are not shocking because "... U.S. schools have historically failed to adequately serve students outside the White, English-speaking, middle-class, nondisabled, mainstream culture" (p.237). Brown proposes that culturally responsive teaching as the only possible solution to creatively work with and positively respond to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Tuncel, 2017, p. 1340). He is not the only one advocating this teaching paradigm, many teachers in the US are dedicating themselves to implementing culturally relevant teaching to serve the needs of these students. This massive support is due to the asset based perspective of culturally relevant teaching. It shifts the prior burden of underperformance from the diverse cultural and ethnic background of students to the various opportunity gaps (Milner, 2010) which were making this background look like a deficit (Tuncel, 2017, p.1318). "Culturally relevant teaching" (Ladson-Billings, 2009), "culturally responsive teaching" (Gay, 2018), "culturally responsive instruction" (Powell et al, 2016) or "culturally sustaining pedagogy" (Paris, 2012) provides an alternative paradigm to look at these diverse backgrounds as assets which can be employed in ways to improve the academic achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

For this literature review, I have chosen to employ the term "culturally relevant teaching" as intended by Ladson-Billings; primarily for the reason that the three tenets fit well with the goals of social studies education. The term culturally relevant teaching entails that "(a) students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural

competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the current status quo of the social order” (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 75).

Sleeter notes that in spite of plethora of research on culturally responsive pedagogy, very little research systematically links it to its impact on student learning or highlights which practices impact more and in what contexts (Powell et al, 2016, p.3; Bottiani et al, 2018, p.381). Powell et al (2016) also argues that there is not “... a cohesive representation ... of what constitutes CRT, how it is defined, and how one might identify it in classrooms” (p.4). Tuncel (2017) adds that “... most preservice and in service teachers believe that culturally responsive education is an abstract and theoretical process. This gap between theory and practice makes it necessary to revise most teacher training program” (p. 1319). Simply emphasizing the utility of culturally relevant teaching and celebrating success stories within the walls of university often disconnects the “...teacher educators and their students from the everyday complexities and realities of teaching” (Endo, 2015, p. 30). The added pressures of emphasis on mathematics and literacy, performance accountability and academic standards have made culturally relevant teaching even more difficult for novice elementary social studies teachers (Colley, 2012). “Darling-Hammond (2003) also stated that teachers who lack preparation are more likely to leave the profession than those teachers with adequate preparation.” (Gourneau, 2014, p. 300). This is why it is absolutely necessary to highlight the challenges that novice teachers face in implementing culturally relevant teaching so that existing teacher education programs can be acclimatized and future teacher education programs are designed to effectively facilitate teachers who serve the students for which culturally relevant teaching had been posed as a match.

Context of Practice

The learners are novice teachers, who are in their beginning years of teaching career. The urban learning context is elementary school social studies classrooms serving culturally and linguistically diverse students in an under resourced neighborhood in Lahore. The diversity of my learners is that they have not attended formal teacher education programs, come from low income households and are dedicated to bringing social change. The problem that I am designing for is to create a collaborative learning environment where teachers can be given opportunities for personal and professional growth so that they create similar environments for their students in their classrooms. My approach to the current state of affairs is that of culture as disability (McDermott & Varenne, 1995), it is neither the teacher or the students who are at fault, instead it is the space and its ambiguous rules that may inhibit teachers from being productive, inviting and motivating in a way that improves student academic achievement and social consciousness. The school that I work for and in which the workshop will be held is in a neighborhood known for its high crime rate. Most of our students live in temporary slums and experience homelessness. All the students do not have Urdu or English as their first language and do not have first language literacy. Other children in their neighborhood either do not go to any school, attend a religious madrassah or go to a public school that is a few blocks away. The parents of our students are usually day laborers or house help.

The teachers of our school also come from low socioeconomic neighborhoods and are usually not fully trained or qualified to effectively carry out the job that is being asked of them; but our own financial constraints limit our hiring choices and opportunities for professional development as well. Having said that there is cultural and contextual knowledge, emotional intelligence, empathy and shared history that these teachers bring to the classrooms which elite urban qualified teachers may not. This has a very strong impact on the students because to a

certain extent they can see themselves represented in the existing teachers. The school financial sponsors belong to upper middle class or the elite class and reside across the school in an extremely affluent neighborhood. Most sponsors or active advisors in how the money should be spent or what the outcomes of education should look like are women, usually practicing Sunni-Wahabi-Islam (a religious sect in Islam), and belong to affluent households where the domestic help often is the parent of the students who go to our school.

In light of this context, the work that I intend to do as a teacher educator is to facilitate my teachers to employ culturally relevant teaching to ensure academic success and develop critical consciousness in and with students in historically underserved communities. Social studies as a content area is important for me because I consider it to be best aligned to fulfill the three tenets of culturally relevant teaching as highlighted by Ladson-Billings; also it provides several moments of entry to successfully develop a culturally relevant civic responsibility, in and with my students and teachers, which is especially important in the context in which the school is operating in. As this will be my first culturally relevant teacher training workshop, I am very intentional to design to directly address the challenges that teachers implementing it usually have to face, so that there is little gap between theory and practice.

Review Methodology

In the initial part of the review, I plugged in my key words into the advanced search option in the Vanderbilt University Library Catalog. My key words were “challenges to new teachers”, “implementing culturally relevant teaching”, “elementary school” and “social studies classroom”. These terms were operationalized crudely at first and after the literature review, they were operationalized more specifically. The term “challenges” was used to focus on those failed practices, struggles or other issues that teachers faced inside of a formal classroom. The term

“new teachers” was employed for those novice teachers who are in their initial years of service, have undergone teacher education programs, have an understanding or training in culturally relevant teaching and are willing to implement it in their classrooms. The term “implementing culturally relevant teaching” was targeted for real life applications of the three tenets of Ladson-Billings’ culturally relevant teaching (2009). The term “elementary school” was only limited to grade 1 till grade 5 in urban settings, yet I had to include some articles pertaining to prekindergarten and kindergarten due to the lack of resources on elementary school alone. Lastly, by “social studies classrooms”, I wanted to focus on those spaces in the school where the students are being actively educated to engage with history and civic responsibility. These spaces can be specifically social studies or joined in with literacy class.

I limited the research by choosing “articles” as my material type, “English” as my language and “2010 till 2018” as my preferred period of publication. With this initial filtering, I got 1,258 hits. I further limited the search by marking “peer reviewed” and excluding all articles that were classified under special education, literacy, science education and psychology. With these additional exclusion and inclusion criterion, I got 844 hits. This next step was challenging because I could not add anymore filter without the risk of losing potentially relevant articles. I was left with no option but to skim through all of the 844 articles, the way I did that was by scanning their titles and abstracts. Sometimes it also meant looking at the findings, method and the sample of the research and by doing so I successfully excluded the articles that were related to science, mathematics, middle school, high school, adult education, preservice teachers without any teaching experience, theory without substantial chunks of empirical research and policy. I was interested in asking a very specific question from the literature which can further my understanding and work that I am interested in doing. By the end of this third step, I was left

with 36 articles. This step was time taking but rewarding because it helped me understand the gaps in literature, possible reasons for those gaps and limitations of my research question. Some of these 36 articles did not clearly say if they dealt with culturally responsive teaching or were set in real life social studies classrooms or were in elementary school. I reread these articles and found 24 which addressed the research question fully. This was the last step and after this, the findings in the articles dictated the course of this literature review.

Emergent Themes

With a focus on challenges in implementing culturally relevant teaching in elementary social studies classrooms, five major themes emerged: understanding culturally relevant teaching, accessing relevant resources, addressing language demands, navigating standardized curriculum and mandated testing and creating spaces for critical consciousness.

1. Understanding the essence of culturally relevant teaching

Even though most of these teachers were trained to do culturally responsive teaching, there were major lags in the implementation due to an under developed understanding of the spirit of culturally responsive teaching (Young, 2010). Most teachers trivialize the paradigm to a number of steps to follow in class (Sleeter, 2012; Arson & Laughter, 2016). Powell et al (2016) found that interactions with teachers showed that they "... used terminology that implied that CRI was an instructional strategy versus a complex array of behaviors". This is a challenge because "Ladson-Billings's focus on pedagogy primarily seeks to influence attitudes and dispositions, describing a posture a teacher might adopt that, when fully embodied, would determine planning, instruction, and assessment" (Arson & Laughter, 2016).

Another challenge that teacher faced was the misunderstanding that culturally relevant pedagogy means "... simply incorporating diverse stories, language, or food into the classroom"

(Puzio et al, 2015; Nowell, 2017). Teachers reported that it took them several failed experiences to realize that it is much more complex and difficult than sharing a multicultural book with students; "... [y]ou have to know your content AND how to teach everyone ... There's definitely no one-size-fits-all approach to teaching" (Endo, 2015; Puzio et al, 2015). This critical development has to come from the teacher and when the teacher realizes that it will look differently with different students, it is then that the essence of the pedagogy will sink in.

Another major challenge that teachers faced was to understand the essence of culturally relevant teaching, Milner (2010) reports "Teachers who practice culturally relevant pedagogy do so because it is consistent with what they believe and who they are... Teachers practice culturally relevant pedagogy because they believe in it, and they believe it is right to practice to foster, support, create, and enable students' learning opportunities". This work is by default challenging because often times it means going against the grain and for novice teachers who already have to go through a learning curve, doing culturally relevant teaching can be taxing. This is where it is very important to have motivation and dedication very clear. If this work is not done in the spirit in which it was intended, it will either feel like a "... cursory-level foci on diversity integration such as celebrating ethnic holidays under the guise of multiculturalism" (Endo, 2015) or feel like doing extra work for "... Stuff I'm not required to teach and you don't see in the textbook or in the standards" (Nowell, 2017). This is especially relevant to my teaching context; several teachers will empathize with the students but then hold them to lower academic standards or regard their out-of-school histories as irrelevant or hindrance to their success in class. It is especially important for teachers to see that cultural competence and academic success has to go hand in hand for culturally relevant teaching.

Often what teachers reflected upon were the failures to reach their ideal in mind. Agarwal et al (2010) suggest that should "... see teaching for social justice as a journey, not a finished product. This will help beginning teachers understand or even deflect their frustrations when they face the hindrances that will get in the way of their visions." Also, it is very important to "... take into account the fact that teacher candidates will not overcome their discomfort with different cultures in a short period of time or through any single assignment or activity" (Jiménez & Rose, 2010). It is also very important to be mindful of the fact that some of the challenges that teachers face may not even be specific to culturally relevant teaching, but to teaching for the first time in general. Also understanding the limitation of this worldview, it is a solution to many problems but it is and cannot be the solution to all problems that our classrooms may have.

2. Accessing relevant resources

Several teachers reported facing difficulty in finding resources through which all students can be represented and served. Several kindergarten teachers reported that it was hard to find relevant play material and books which gave a nuanced account of cultural events (Alaca & Pyle, 2018). Most resources either gave a very surface level, one sided or stereotyped view of history and culture (Alaca & Pyle, 2018; Agarwal et al, 2010; Djonko-Moore et al, 2015). Another teacher reported having difficulty finding historical sources that "... spoke to the positionalities of more marginalized groups such as Mexicans, Asians, and women" in the Westward expansion (Agarwal et al, 2010). Another set of teachers reported difficulty in revisiting instructional material to make it more culturally relevant (Malo-Juvera et al, 2018).

Another significant challenge was accessing and maintaining relationships with parents and communities. This is a problem of resources because in culturally relevant teaching they are considered as invaluable resources without whom this work cannot be done effectively (Puzio et

al, 2015; Farinde-Yu et al, 2017). Some teachers reported barriers of language, interpretation and translation in initiating and maintaining relationships with community members; others talked of the lack of interest of the school administration in making these relationships possible (Agarwal et al, 2010; Alaca & Pyle, 2018; Durden et al, 2014; Yang et al, 2014).

Several teachers talked about the lack of resources that demonstrated what culturally relevant teaching looks like in the classroom. Young (2010) and Sleeter (2012) report the challenges that teachers face in connecting the development of cultural competence to academic success.

Spalding et al (2010) report through their systematic literature review that there is a dire dearth of empirical data to show what culturally relevant teaching is in practice and to assess is what is being called culturally relevant teaching is in fact exactly that. Teachers report feeling a sense of disconnect between theory and practice because of the lack of practice and discussion space in their teacher education programs; this becomes more apparent when they are in real life classrooms (Agarwal et al, 2010). Teachers also "... spoke about the challenges of incorporating subjects on which they had limited knowledge, in which case they felt it was more appropriate to not incorporate them" (Alaca & Pyle, 2018). They reported a lack of self-confidence due of these factors (Malo-Juvera et al, 2018; Djonko-Moore et al, 2015). They reported that one hope was in service professional development sessions; however, only selective teachers were sent to it who then had to train the ones who did not get selected to attend, also usually these sessions were not all teachers were "... isolated, single-day occurrences without follow-up programs that allow participants to come back and evaluate the results of implemented strategies (MacNaughton & Hughes, 2007)" (Alaca & Pyle, 2018). This challenge spoke to my experience of training my teachers previously. Having an effective feedback and follow-up is extremely important for the success of any teacher training workshop. Also there has to be communication between the

teachers as well so that they can brainstorm ideas and give feedback to each other on a regular basis. This can happen when the teachers themselves have worked on relationship development between them just like they are expected to do with their students for culturally relevant teaching.

3. Addressing language demands

Several teachers talked about the fact that they felt ill equipped to teach in classes that had students with lower level of English proficiency. “Prospective teachers became aware of the fact that linguistic differences are an important problem in communication, and after examining the situation within the context of multiculturalism, they concluded that they must be given importance” (Tuncel, 2017). However, their desire and effort to serve the needs of linguistically diverse students and parents fell short because of the lack of required skills to tackle this challenge (Powell et al, 2016; Endo, 2015). They also mentioned that there was a lack of resources and knowledge of instructional strategies to exercise culturally relevant teaching to facilitate linguistically diverse students with lower English language proficiency, especially in elementary school level (Powell et al, 2016; Yang et al, 2014). This is a challenge that my teachers often reported even prior to my coming to the US and that is why I will be very intentional in including resources and strategies to teach ESL and ELL students during this teacher training workshop. The good thing, however, is that the teachers are often fluent in the first language of the students and can act as effective resources in addressing the language demands.

Puzio et al, (2015) reported that even when teachers tried to use translations or other resources to facilitate these students, there were often problems of dialect and variations of the same language in different cultures which often failed the purpose of using these resources for

social studies. Other teachers mentioned that even if they were able to teach a certain content topic with minimum difficulties due to language, the challenge was "... the complexities of managing and responding to diverse responses to the planned activities" (Endo, 2015)

4. Navigating standardized curriculum and mandated testing

Teachers reported the challenge of focusing on social studies in schools which had lower test scores for mathematics and literacy because of the way funding works in the schools (Colley, 2012). Teachers reported that often times, due to the changes in the daily schedules the time allowed for social studies became marginally less than the time allowed for other subjects; this they said was more common in elementary schools than in higher levels (Heafner & Norwood, 2018).

Almost all struggling teachers reported facing difficulty in "...meeting standards and adhering to prescribed curriculum mandates" (Powell et al, 2016; Spalding et al, 2010; Colon-Muniz et al, 2010); Gourneau, 2014; Endo, 2015; Agarwal et al, 2010). They talked about the preparation time, instruction time and the effort it required to do employ methods which focused on developing cultural competence and critical consciousness. Novice teachers reported feeling the pressure of performing well in their beginning years and resorting back to traditional methods of teaching when under stress of covering the curriculum. "Achinstein and Ogawa (2012) found that new teachers of color face significant tensions relating to accountability and standardization that militate against implementing culturally responsive practices" (Powell et al, 2016". Allison said that, "...[y]ou really do have to follow the standards and what unit you're supposed to be on" (Agarwal et al, 2010). Other teachers described their experience of doing this work by reporting that "... [w]e would come back to administrative meetings and have it [culturally responsive lesson] questioned as to how we're going to be testing that; how is that measurable.

When you're excited about implementing it [culturally responsive instruction] and then get in your team meeting, and it's questioned, that's been kind of defeating. Not kind of; that's been defeating" (Powell et al, 2016). Teachers also pointed out the struggles of teachers in finding ways to translate the academic improvement into standardized testing (Yang et al, 2014; Colon-Muniz et al, 2010).

5. Creating spaces for critical consciousness

This third tenet of culturally relevant teaching was the hardest to implement; so much so that several teachers did not even talk of its success or failure in class (Powell et al, 2016). Teachers faced opposition from administration, mentor teachers and parents while trying to develop a critical consciousness in their students. "Teachers are sometimes prevented from providing culturally sustaining pedagogy by their sense of obligation to local authority figures and policies (Puzio et al, 2015). Some teachers feared that the critical consciousness developed through culturally relevant teaching "... may provoke opposition from parents and authorities" (Cho, 2018). Another teacher recounts that while doing this work of culturally relevant teaching, "...[w]hat she did not expect was the rejection she received from other teachers who did not share her passion for culturally relevant pedagogy ... [t]he main challenges that I faced were persuading other educators within my school that culturally responsive pedagogy/teaching (CRP/CRT) can increase learning in literacy" (Glover & Harris, 2016). This specific teacher recounted that since she was trained as a leader, she was much more confident and strong to continue the work in spite of opposition, but most novice teachers may crack in the face of such discouragement (Glover & Harris, 2016). There are several other instances when novice teachers had to give in to what the mentor teacher or co teacher was proposing, because "...[i]t takes tremendous courage to be different" (Puzio et al, 2015).

Other teachers reported that they wanted to direct the class towards thinking which promotes critical consciousness but they were tied back due to their internal conflicts. “Researchers have noted teachers’ inherent biases as a barrier to implementing culturally responsive instruction” (Young, 2010). Teachers feared that this work may encourage the students to be rebellious or give them a right to dissent, which may not be acceptable by the larger society that they exist in. They also reported challenges of justifying this work when they were working in public schools which were under the authority of specific political governments (Cho, 2018). Another teacher recounts an incident:

As one of the activities was designed to teach about caring, she showed the students a picture of African American homeless man, and asked, “How much do you want to care about him?” However, she did not ask the students to think about why he became homeless or what causes poverty. She commented on this moment that she had planned to discuss poverty, but she felt difficulty in integrating it with her focus on “building a caring-centered disposition.” She recognized this dilemma, but failed to find a way to combine her core message of “we can make a peaceful world, only if individuals care for one another” with another message of “individuals’ caring is not enough to solve social problems because those are mainly caused by structural injustice.” (Cho, 2018)

Another significant challenge that teachers faced was the age appropriateness of this work in elementary school and kindergarten. Kristen who is a kindergarten teacher, like several other teachers, reconsiders this question and wonders if her students are too young for this. She narrates an incident where she was reading a story about a meeting between a young girl and a homeless man, “... with the girl offering her pulled tooth to the man so he can put it under his pillow for money. Aretta left out the last page: “The man said, if only I had a pillow. So, that’s

how the book ended, but I didn't want [the students] to not have hope. I personally don't show that page" (Alaca & Pyle, 2018). It is decisions like these about age appropriateness of a topic which can be challenging.

Some teachers faced challenges in directly moving towards conversations that could be around critical consciousness without first establishing an environment where such conversations can take place in a constructive manner and can translate into academic success. Teachers admitted to shifting ideas of "... "community and management" and "how to foster more appropriate treatment" among her students. These efforts were in line with visions of teaching for social justice forwarded by the administration and were in response to her experiences with her students" (Agarwal et al). Some teachers faced challenges of classroom management and worked on norms like resolving conflicts without using physical force and listening to others even if you disagree (Cho, 2018).

Limitations

The research question in itself has an assumption which is that if culturally relevant teaching is effectively implemented than there will be no challenge faced by novice teachers. However, it does not acknowledge that culturally relevant teaching may not be the only solution and may not even be the best solution to serve the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Also, not every factor can be controlled by the efforts of the teacher, there are several other avenues where work needs to be done. Since it is a literature review, it cannot provide an exhaustive list of challenges that teachers might face. Additionally, it is also hard to differentiate if these challenges are due to implementing culturally relevant teaching or just due to the fact that they are novice teachers with little experience. The articles used in this review are mostly from the US and are intended to be used as reference points for work in Pakistan, which has a

different political and economic history; however, the unique thing about culturally relevant teaching is that it by default keeps the sociopolitical histories of its actors at the center of its work. So adaptations will definitely be made accordingly.

Steps Forward

These emergent themes will inform the design of my teacher training workshop in crucial ways. Firstly, knowing that even experienced teachers face initial struggles in implementing culturally relevant teaching in their classrooms helps me be realistic about the expectations I should set for myself and the teachers who will be learning with me through this workshop. In my design, I will be honest about the challenges that other novice teachers have faced. Especially those that were caused due to teacher's personal expectations of themselves. Knowing that culturally responsive teaching is an on-going process of intellectual and academic development for teacher and students can be rather comforting in times when one might get burned out or frustrated. Sharing out the testimonies from this literature, along with success stories can help open up space for sharing out experiences during the workshop and follow up feedback sessions.

One of the takeaways from the literature review is the necessity of having continued feedback or discussion space for the teachers after that initial training or teacher education program. Hence one of the most important feature of my design would be to put collaborative support structures in place so that my teachers have an active feedback and discussion space where the challenges they might face can be discussed and addressed. This I will be able to do because of the role that I have in my school. I serve as professional development coach and academic coordinator for all of the teachers in my school; therefore, sitting in on planning, collaboration and feedback meetings would not be an additional job for me. During these meetings, all teachers can brainstorm and gather relevant resources that can make the curriculum

and instruction culturally responsive. Also, due to the thorough consultation of these articles, I now have a plethora of case studies that can also serve as a resource bank of what can be tried out in a classroom space. These resources can also be used during this workshop and any follow up workshops. Discussing these case studies will also provide clarity on how to address or avoid some problems that were faced by novice teachers.

I also know now, that it is imperative to address language demands of diverse students while making social studies culturally responsive. The way that curriculum and pedagogy is designed in the US is very different from the way things are done in Pakistan, especially with regards to having a focus of language goals in all subject and content areas. Most students who are in schools in low income households do not have English or Urdu (Pakistan's national language) as their first language. Based on my own experience of teaching in these schools, I think that approaching content area through the focus on language demands would improve student learning exponentially. I may not be able to put dedicated focus on this aspect in the current project but this is definitely something that I would be thinking of in my future workshops.

Furthermore, the literature shows that teachers found it difficult to implement culturally relevant teaching in the standardized curriculum and high stakes testing environment. The teachers also reported that in elementary schools, principals and administrators often discouraged time being spent on social studies, instead encouraged more time being spent on ELA or mathematics. This problem, though faced by teachers in Pakistan, is not faced in the same manner because of the lower difficulty level of the tests and absence of a centralized tracking system for student performance. This will provide ample opportunity for my teachers to find

moments where texts from diverse sources can be introduced and more time can be spent on community based projects that put to use what is shared in the classroom.

Lastly, in light of the challenge that teachers faced with regards to age appropriateness of developing critical consciousness in students, I want my teachers to understand the spirit of cultural consciousness. The expectation is not to make all students well known social or political activists at the end of a school year, but the expectation is to facilitate them to be sensitive to what is happening around them and to nurture a courage and hope in them that there are always ways in which they can play a part. During the school year, modelling these skills and habits is what will help the teachers achieve the goal of making the students develop a critical consciousness.

Conclusion

Culturally relevant teaching was proposed to serve the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students. It is extremely important to note that if this work has to function effectively, teachers who are willing to do this work should be equipped and trained better. In light of the findings of this paper and similar literature, it is crucial that further research on better practices to improve the effectiveness of culturally relevant teaching be taken up. Also, teacher education programs for preservice teachers and professional development session for in service teachers be improved to address these challenges. In spite of these challenges, there is great value of this work for classrooms in the US and Pakistan. The teacher training workshop that I will be designing will take pointers from what worked and what needs more attention as reflected in this literature review. This task of making our classrooms culturally relevant is an ongoing process of improvement and evolution because what is at stake is worth every effort

possible. All students can achieve academic excellence and the last thing to be a barrier in that endeavor should be the conditions developed by adults.

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Project Description

The project is a 4-day teacher training workshop on culturally relevant teaching for social studies teachers in my elementary school back home. I will be conducting this workshop when I go back to Pakistan, so the project that I am attaching is the slide deck that I have created for the intended workshop. In order to put this project together, I consulted the following texts:

Copeland, M. (2005). *Socratic circles: Fostering critical and creative thinking in middle and high school*. Portland, Me: Stenhouse Publishers.

Gay, G. (2018). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. 3rd edition. New York: Teachers College Press.

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Milner, H.R. (2010). *Start where you are but don't stay there: Understanding diversity, opportunity gaps, and teaching in today's classrooms*. Cambridge: Harvard Education Press.

Varenne, H. (2009). Culture As Disability. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 26 (3), 324 – 348.

Apart from the resources listed above, I consulted numerous YouTube videos, online educational websites like Teaching Tolerance, Edutopia, Historical thinking matters, teaching history and several activity books to come up with useful activity ideas that can be used for my school back in Pakistan. All of these resources were publicly available and I have tried to credit the source, wherever possible. I have done classroom observations of three of Vanderbilt colleagues, who teach middle school ELA and social studies with a critical social justice lens, in order to learn more interactive strategies to make the workshop engaging. Most of the scenarios and examples

that I have used in my workshop slides are those that are from my own classroom experiences. In order to make the project collaborative, I had consulted a few of my staff members about what are the skills that they would want to work on with me through this workshop.

Project Write-up

The intended purpose of the project is to equip social studies teachers to make classrooms a place where all students can experience academic excellence, initiate and engage in critical dialogue, have pride in their identity and make informed decisions. At the heart of the project is the shift in teacher mindsets and instructional practice from a deficit mindset to that of culture as disability (McDermott & Varenne, 1995). It is not the student, their culture or their families that puts the blame of underachievement on them, instead it pushes us to look at the learning context in which such an underachievement is made possible. If the learning context and environment is redesigned according to the needs of the student, the student can excel academically. Just like culturally relevant teaching asserts that all students can experience academic excellence and that all students can learn, it would not be wrong to think that all teachers, if provided adequate support and training, can create adequate support for all of their students to excel. Hence this workshop will revisit what culturally relevant teaching is in spirit, what it may look like in a classroom and resources on how to tackle common challenges that other novice teachers face in practice.

Since this workshop is especially customized for elementary school social studies teachers in my school back home, the content and examples are especially designed from their books and for their context. The workshop will not only improve the teacher's teaching ability and add to their professional accomplishments, but also improve the academic achievement and social awareness of the students. The latter part is of extreme importance because if the students, who are the future of these communities, have the tools and the passion to invest in their own communities, then there is a lot of hope for these communities to progress in ways that is true to their roots and spirit. Also purposeful education in low income communities, along with other

simultaneously launched social interventions, is imperative to break through the cycle of poverty and oppression. The workshop is designed to facilitate students to be confident about their culture and identity, to have tools to interact with the world and to be provided opportunities to model social action in the classroom. This will prepare them to take well informed decisions about their life and their community. All in all, the project will hopefully have a butterfly effect on various levels in the communities that the teachers will serve.

It is amazing how the project, even though it was conceived and planned in the US, will be executed in Pakistan. The research for this project is mostly US centric because that is where most of the literature originated from. With regards to culturally relevant teaching, sometimes reading about culturally relevant teaching in books and trying to implement it in real classrooms can be totally different experiences primarily because reading about it and consulting video resources makes it seem very easy and doable but when you step inside the classroom, it takes a lot of time to refocus and try to integrate culturally relevant teaching in daily lesson plans and the curriculum. Often times what ends up happening is that one reduces culturally relevant teaching to a few token steps that do not deliver the same impact as is promised by the theory. In designing this workshop, I wanted to be sensitive and responsive to the initial difficulties that I knew most teachers may face while implementing culturally relevant teaching in their classrooms. This is where the literature review became extremely crucial and important. Reading up on challenges faced by other novice culturally responsive teachers guided me in thinking about what preliminary theoretical knowledge is needed to frame the educational problem to which culturally relevant teaching is being presented as the solution. I have tried to be very honest with the participants of my workshop, about the challenges that other novice teachers have faced, and shared with them some of these challenges; so that they know culturally relevant

teaching evolves and refines with time and will not miraculously fix all problems within days. Knowing that culturally responsive teaching is an on-going process of intellectual and academic development for teacher and students can be rather comforting in times when one might get burned out or frustrated. Sharing out the testimonies from this literature, along with success stories will help open up space for sharing out experiences during the workshop and follow up feedback sessions.

In response to the literature review, I have planned to have active feedback and discussion meetings with the attendees of this workshop, so that teachers can continue to grow their understanding of the method, brainstorm together and gather relevant resources that can make the curriculum and instruction culturally responsive. These resources from the literature review will also serve as case studies to provide clarity on how to address or avoid some problems that teacher have already faced. I will also introduce videotaping their classes for peer feedback on specific lessons, so that teachers can improve their practice.

I have also included strategies to address the language demand issue highlighted in the literature review. Furthermore, the literature shows that teachers found it difficult to implement culturally relevant teaching in the standardized curriculum and high stakes testing environment. The teachers also reported that in elementary schools, principals and administrators often discouraged time being spent on social studies, instead encouraged more time being spent on English language arts or mathematics. This problem, though faced by teachers in Pakistan, is not faced in the same manner because of the lower difficulty level of the tests and absence of a centralized tracking system for student performance. This will provide ample opportunity for my teachers to find moments where texts from diverse sources can be introduced and more time can be spent on community based projects that put to use what is shared in the classroom. Lastly, in

light of the challenge that teachers faced with regards to age appropriateness of developing critical consciousness in students, I have tried to exemplify through interactive examples how culturally relevant teaching can be done without making things overly difficult.

Putting these resources together in a way that it does not overwhelm the teachers was a challenge for me. There were so many techniques and tips that I wanted to include in the workshop, but I could not do so because the workshop would become a full length graduate level course instead of a professional development training. From prior experience of working with these teachers, I know that most of them are still not adequately trained in lesson planning; however, I have planned to design another workshop solely for lesson planning that I may give before or after this workshop.

Another challenge was the physical and geographical distance. Even though I have worked with that school for the past four years but being away from the students and teachers for a whole year has created a gap of my perception of what is happening in the school, what can be done and what are the most pressing hurdles they are facing right now and the reality that they are living miles away. I wanted my students and school staff to be part of the planning process of this workshop but due to the time difference and competing schedules, this could not be done in an ideal manner.

I also had a hard time making content relevant to my school in Pakistan. The education systems and standards for learning are so different in the two contexts that it put a lot of responsibility and burden on me to make everything true to the spirit and relevant to my teachers back home. The government authorized textbook questions are usually evidence based surface level questions and the content is very weak in terms of quality. There was a plethora of

instances from the books where supplementary resources will have to be introduced in order to push the students thinking and stimulate the student intellectually. On top of the poor quality content, the expectation in state mandated tests is to reproduce the answers word to word and use of own words is mostly discouraged. The reading ability of most students is not to grade level proficiency designing activities around this and expecting critical thinking skills was challenging for me. Often times, teachers also do not have satisfactory reading ability. Working within these parameters was definitely a challenge but the good thing about culturally relevant teaching is that it orients the focus on strengths of the people involved and pushes to think of ways to work on areas of improvement.

Through this project, I have learnt a great deal myself. I now have a rich toolkits of strategies, theory and case studies of what culturally relevant teaching looks like in classrooms and schools. I have also learnt how to take culturally relevant teaching to a year-long curriculum as well. I have learnt how important it is to mimic the classroom I want for my students in the classroom that I will be creating for my teachers during the teacher training workshop. This knowledge will come in extremely handy as I go on to conduct more teacher training workshops. After this particular workshop is conducting in my own school, I will be offering my services to other schools and nonprofits that work for curriculum development and teacher training. I am already working on a culturally relevant teaching workshop for English language, mathematics and science. These will be similar workshops for these specific content areas. I am also going to extend the relationship development portion of the current workshop into full fledged workshops focusing on restorative practices in classrooms and use of narrative circles for students, teachers and school culture. There is an almost endless era of opportunities that I can create and avail

from here on. I am excited and humbled to be part of this process of creating social change through the classroom.



Culturally Relevant Teaching for Social Studies Classrooms in Pakistan





Workshop Day 1

Introduction to Culturally Relevant Teaching

A vintage-style map of the Arctic region, showing various islands and sea names. A white rectangular box with a thin blue border is centered on the map, containing the text of the agenda. The map includes labels like 'Franklin B.', 'C. Nelson', 'C. Kellett', '80°', 'Jeanette 1881', 'Bernett L.', 'Faddeyeff L.', 'C. + Baran. Toll 1901', 'Lena Delta', 'Bulan', 'Olenek', 'Victoria L.', 'McClintock St.', 'Bea W.', 'Mariano N. 1810', 'South Fr. Reg.', 'Cockburn L.', 'L and C', 'C. Kater', 'Davis', 'Upernivik', 'Svarte Hulk', 'C. Dyer', 'Omenak Pa', 'Lamberts L.', 'Hudson 1607', 'West Spitzbergen', 'Snitzhergan', 'Olga Str.', 'Edge I.', 'Barents Sea', 'Mollat B.', 'Yugon Sea', 'Kara Sea', and 'Khabarova'.

Agenda

- Introductions
- Case studies
- How to frame the learning problem?
- What is Culturally Relevant Teaching?
- Benefits and challenges of doing Culturally Relevant Teaching
- Why is Culturally Relevant Teaching important?
- How does Culturally Relevant Teaching relate to Pakistan?



Introduction

- Your Name, your Pronouns
- Last degree
- What do you teach?
- Who do you teach?
- For what purpose do you teach?
- What might it suggest about what you are teaching against?



Student Diary

“Throughout the day that I am in the classroom, I never hear or read anything in my home tongue - Punjabi. When someone is talking in Punjabi, the teacher usually scolds them and orders them to speak only in English. This makes me think as if Punjabi is not of value in the world and in order to succeed, not only should I learn English but also unlearn Punjabi as well.”

Think-Pair-Share:

- Why do you think there is an emphasis on speaking in English in our classrooms?
- Do you think it is important for students to see their home languages represented in their classrooms? Why or why not?

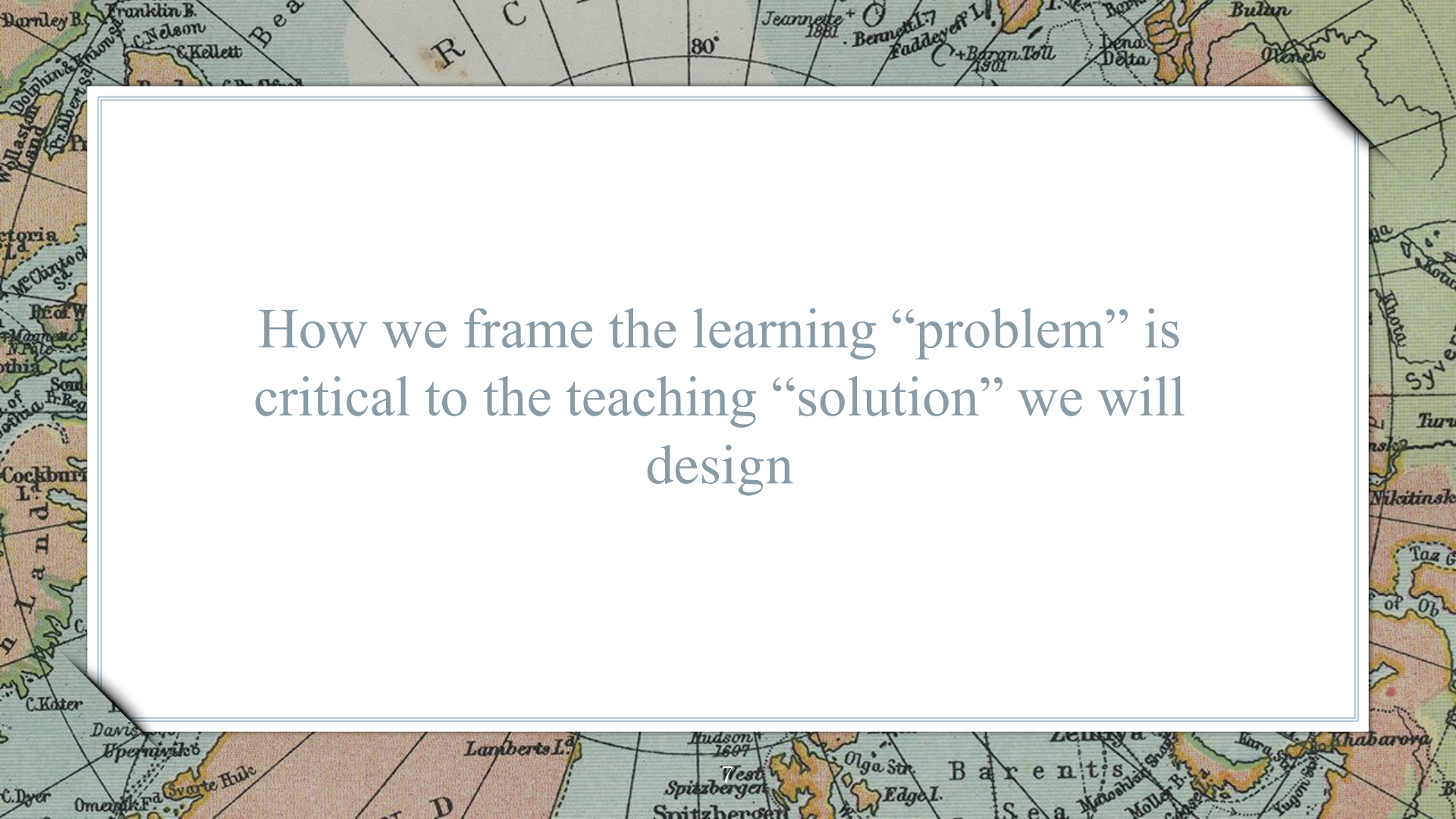


Staffroom Conversation

“I sometimes think that their parents are the least bit interested in their studies, they hardly ever come to the parent teacher meetings. Those who do come, are not educated enough to help with any school work. That is why it is so hard to teach these students because whatever they learn is from the school. This puts all of the burden on us teachers to teach these students what they need to learn to be successful”

Think-Pair-Share:

- What, according to the teacher, is the problem?
- What does it tell you about the role of family engagement and the way students learn?



How we frame the learning “problem” is critical to the teaching “solution” we will design

Three approaches to framing the learning “problem”



1. Deficit

A has more culture than B

$A > B$

2. Difference

A and B are culturally different


$A = B$  $A > B$

3. Culture as Disability

The learning environment has made the difference between A and B directly related to success/failure



Source: McDermott & Varenne; Tesha Sengupta-Irving slides



Taking the “Culture as Disability” framework, how can educators facilitate academic success of economically and linguistically diverse students?

Culturally Relevant Teaching (CRT)



It can be defined as a pedagogy that:

- *“uses the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. It teaches to and through the strengths of these students.” (Geneva Gay)*
- *“empowers students to maintain cultural integrity, while succeeding academically” (Gloria Ladson-Billings)*

A background map of West Africa, showing various countries and regions. The map is partially obscured by a white box containing text. The visible parts of the map include the Gulf of Guinea, the Atlantic Ocean, and several African countries like Nigeria, Cameroon, and Benin. The map is in a vintage style with various colors and labels.

Tenets of Culturally Relevant Teaching



1. Academic Achievement

All students must experience academic success and mastery.

2. Cultural Competence

All students must develop a firm grounding in one's own culture of learning while acquiring fluency in at least one more culture.

3. Cultural Consciousness

All students must have opportunities to examine and question the current status quo of the social order.

Source: "The DreamKeepers" by Gloria Ladson-Billings

Characteristics of Culturally Relevant Teachers



Culturally Relevant Teacher	Assimilationist Teacher
Believes that all students can succeed	Believes failure is inevitable for some
Sees teaching as “pulling knowledge out” – like “mining”	Sees teaching as “putting knowledge into” – like “banking”
Helps students make connections between their community, national and global identities	Homogenizes students into one national or collective identity
Encourages students to learn collaboratively, expects them to teach each other, be responsible for each other and encourages a “community of learners”	Encourages students to learn individually, in isolation and encourages competitive achievement
Sees herself as a part of the community and teaching as giving back to the community, encourages students to do the same	Sees herself as an individual who may or may not be part of the community; encourages achievement as a means to escape community
Views knowledge critically, as continuously recreated, recycled, shared and not static	Views knowledge as infallible, static, passed in only one direction from teacher to the student

Source: “The DreamKeepers” by Gloria Ladson-Billings

A vintage-style map of Africa serves as the background for the slide. The map is detailed, showing various countries, cities, and geographical features. The colors are muted, with greens for land and blues for water. The map is framed by a white border with a slight drop shadow.

Benefits of CRT for classrooms



- Improves overall academic achievement
- Equips students to initiate and engage in critical dialogue
- Supports students to have pride in their identity and be represented in the classroom spaces (mirrors and windows)
- Facilitates students to understand the world as it is and equips them to change it for the better
- Shifts the mindset of individual achievement to collective achievement
- Enables students to create bridges from the home to the classroom and vice versa and goes as far to change what knowledge counts as official

Challenges of implementing CRT in classrooms

as informed by  the literature

- Underdeveloped understanding of the essence of CRT
 - Accessing relevant resources
 - Addressing language demands
 - Navigating standardized curriculum and state mandated testing
 - Creating spaces for age appropriate critical consciousness
- On the last day of the workshop, we will revisit these challenges and look for ways to address these and any other challenges that you may anticipate

Why is CRT important?



- In the US, there is a statistically significant gap in academic achievement of ethnically and linguistically diverse students and their white counterparts and students from low income neighborhoods and their counterparts from high income neighborhoods.
- The current education systems are based on industrial age values of following instructions, standardization, rewarding conformity and homogenizing diversity. Such a system hampers the development of critical leadership skills.
- There is a lack of intentional space for student voice and critical thinking in the standardized curriculum and testing environment.

A background map of West Africa, showing various countries and regions. The map is partially obscured by a white box containing text. The visible parts of the map include the Gulf of Guinea, the Atlantic Ocean, and several African countries like Nigeria, Cameroon, and Ghana. The map is in a vintage style with various colors and labels.

How is Culturally Relevant Teaching relevant in Pakistan



- Teacher centered classrooms with monopoly over knowledge and power, where conformity is rewarded and students are not expected to speak up
- Rote learning and evidence-based surface level questions do not provide intellectual stimulus or space for development of critical thinking
- Colonial age medium of instruction often discourages and belittles the first language of several students
- Rarely any significant textbook accounts of the historical and cultural contributions of our diverse population
- Cultural knowledge is limited to surface level token celebration
- Need for development of political activism and local pride in students from young age



Workshop Day 2

Culturally Relevant Teaching in Social Studies Classrooms:

Building relationships and creating safe spaces

The background is a historical map of the Arctic region, showing various islands and sea names. A white rectangular box with a thin blue border is centered on the map, containing the agenda text. The map includes labels such as 'Franklin B.', 'C. Nelson', 'C. Kellett', '80°', 'Jeanette 1881', 'Bernett L.', 'Faddeyeff L.', 'C. + Baran. Toll 1901', 'Lena Delta', 'Bulan', 'Olenek', 'Victoria L.', 'McClintock St.', 'Bea W.', 'Mariano N. P.', 'South Fr. Reg.', 'Cockburn L.', 'C. Kater', 'Davis', 'Upernivik', 'Omenak', 'Svarte Hulk', 'Lamberts L.', 'Hudson 1607', '18th Spitzbergen', 'Snitzhergen', 'Olga Str.', 'Edge I.', 'Barents Sea', 'Mollat B.', 'Yugon Sea', 'Khabarova', and 'Taz G. of Ob'.

Agenda

- Narrative Circles
- Importance of building relationships
- Morning Meetings
- Classroom ideas for building relationships

A background map of West Africa, showing various countries and regions. The map is partially obscured by a white box containing text. The visible parts of the map include the Atlantic coast, the Gulf of Guinea, and several inland regions. The text is centered on the map.

Narrative Circles



“The stories we have about our lives are created through linking certain events together in a particular sequence across a time period, and finding a way of explaining or making sense of them. This meaning forms the plot of the story. We give meanings to our experiences constantly as we live our lives. A narrative is like a thread that weaves the events together, forming a story.”

(What is Narrative Therapy?, The Dulwich Center, 2017)

Big Idea: By consciously changing the way we link certain events in a particular sequence, we can change the story we believe about ourselves.



Badge Work



- Complete either of the two badge works: (10 minutes)

1,000 Questions

If You Really Knew Me

- Once you are done, only bring your badge work and join the circle

CIRCLE



PRESENCE | MINDFULNESS

TRUE NORTH



ATTUNEMENT | SUPPORT

CHECK-IN (and check-back)



VULNERABILITY | CONNECTION

WORK (and resonance)



GRATITUDE | IMPACT

APPRECIATIONS



RITUAL

CLOSING

Source: Valor Collegiate Academy

Listen for and validate personal values



- **Label** personal values for students often. (*“I’ve noticed that you’re always enthusiastic when the underdog in a story triumphs. You must really value justice in the world.”*)
- Uncover the **relationships** that have shaped students’ personal values. (*“Who taught you to value kindness?”*)
- Step outside of your own perspective to see the values underlying **beliefs that are different from your own**. (*Pay special attention to political beliefs different from your own.*)
- **Distress is testimony.**

Source: Valor Collegiate Academy



Re-contextualize “problems” as external to the child



- Recognize damaging storylines (*“I’m stupid.” “I can’t.” “I’m not a math person.” “I give up.”*)
- Label them as **negative emotions** or **negative thoughts**, which are external to the child. (*“I can tell you’re worried.”*)
- Be **curious** and **kind** about those thoughts and emotions. (*“I wonder where you started letting worry creep in and tell you what to do. Let’s see if you and I can tell worry to take a hike.”*)

Source: Valor Collegiate Academy



Break
10 minutes



Importance of building relationships



- When we feel cared for, our brain is flooded with oxytocin, also known as the “love” or “bonding” hormone.
- If we don’t feel cared for, there’s a rise in the hormone, cortisol, which causes a fight or flight reaction.
- **Culturally Relevant Teaching** is more about building trust through a learning partnership and then using that trust to push students to higher levels of learning (building skills and the capacity to do rigorous work).

Source: Zaretta Hammond

Morning Meetings



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U6_pLkwaCeY&feature=youtu.be

Debrief: (whole class discussion)

- What is something you liked about the morning meeting? Why?
- How can you use some of the ideas in your classrooms?
- What modifications would you make?
- How does it relate to Culturally Relevant Teaching?

Check in – Check out



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MyPUY38blZQ>

Debrief: (think and share in small table groups)

- What is something you liked about the check in and check out? Why?
- How can you use some of the ideas in your classrooms?
- What modifications would you make?
- How does it relate to Culturally Relevant Teaching?

Check in – Check out



Other variations:

- Share out what are we going to be our best at today?
- How can the class or the teacher support you in being on task?
- At the end of the day, take a few minutes to reassess the personal goals and brainstorm ways to be better tomorrow.

Classroom Norms

Our Class Rules

Be kind to yourself.

Be kind to each other.

Be kind to our tools.

Work hard and
never give up.

ARIF
Rahul
VINCE
KEVIN
LEVI
Savannah
Jube
MIRIAM
Tahanyes +
vishwa
Nafi
ESTEFANIA
MANNY
DANAKIT
MARINE
DAVID
CHRIS



TUMS at the doors

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=956br98qWbE&list=LL7hkOi8EYsuEGSHKqh3CZdA&index=15&t=0s>





Appreciation shout-outs

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cr_s3kzjX-g&list=LL7hkOi8EYsuEGSHKqh3CZdA&index=8&t=0s



Family engagement



Grade 2, Chapter 16, Construction

- Inquire about family members who are working for construction
- Create and send invites for them to come to class to talk about their work skills and experience
- Prior to their arrival, brainstorm questions that students can ask
- Get students excited about the visit and encourage them to ask questions

What could be other ways to improve family engagement in the classroom?



On the feedback forms:

Identify which activities you would use in your classroom?

For which activities, you think you need more resources?

List any other routines you follow for relationship building that might not have been discussed in the workshop





Workshop Day 3

Culturally Relevant Teaching in Social Studies Classrooms:

Instructional Strategies for the classroom

A vintage-style map of the Arctic region, showing various islands and sea names. The map is partially obscured by a white rectangular box with a thin blue border. The box contains the title 'Agenda' and a list of two bullet points. The map background includes labels such as 'Franklin B.', 'C. Nelson', 'C. Kellett', '80°', 'Jeanette 1881', 'Bernadotte L.', 'Faddeyeff L.', 'C. + Baran. Toll 1901', 'Lena Delta', 'Bulan', 'Olenok', 'Victoria L.', 'McClintock St.', 'Bea W.', 'Mariano N. 1810', 'South Fr. Reg.', 'Cockburn L.', 'C. Kater', 'Davis', 'Upernivik', 'Omenak', 'Svarte Hulk', 'Lamberts L.', 'Hudson 1607', 'Spitzbergen', 'Snitzhergen', '35st', 'Olga Str.', 'Edge I.', 'Barents Sea', 'Mollat B.', 'Yugon Sea', 'Khabarova', 'Taz G.', 'of Ob', and 'Nikitinsk'.

Agenda

- Reimagining student-teacher relationship in a culturally relevant classroom
- Instructional strategies for culturally relevant teaching



- Describe what is happening in the picture?
- By looking at the picture, what can you say:
 - (a) the role of the student in the classroom?
 - (b) the role of the teacher in the classroom?

Reimagining Student-Teacher relationship



- Student not an empty vessel to be filled in with knowledge
- Orienting towards a mining versus a banking approach
- Recognizing and utilizing their funds of knowledge
- Teacher as facilitators
- Teacher as co-learners
- Teaching talking to students versus talking at students
- Not the sole source of knowledge
- Give students opportunities to see you as the person you are outside of school

Instructional Strategies



Accessing background knowledge

K-W-L CHART

Name:

TOPIC:

K WHAT I KNOW	W WHAT I WONDER	L WHAT I LEARNED
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

- Teachers can access what students already know at the beginning of a lesson
- It reinforces that asking questions is a sign of curiosity
- This can be used by students to set learning goals for a lesson and assess what they have learnt at the end.

Engaging with primary sources



Family migrating during the 1947 partition



1. *Tell me a story about this family's day*
2. *Using evidence from the picture, why might they have posed for this portrait?*
3. *In what ways is this family like yours?*
4. *Who do you think took the picture?*
5. *Questions that you might have for them?*

Debrief:

How does this relate to the 1st tenet of CRT?
Give examples of higher order thinking questions?

Asking Critical Questions



Grade 3-5: **5 minute journal writes** at the beginning and end of unit

Sample prompt: How does the topic relate to us over here in our community?

Read the excerpt from *The Dreamkeepers* (Page 53-4)

What is the benefit of this strategy?

How does it align with the three tenets of culturally relevant teaching?

What modifications can be made to make it more aligned with tenet 3?

Asking Critical Questions



Grade 1, Chapter 10, My Family

The activity to be simultaneously done in other languages

❖ Debrief:

- *Give the students a chance to think about why Urdu and Punjabi has different words for each relationship?*
- *What might it say about family structure and expected responsibilities of people in Pakistan and Punjab?*



Differentiating Lessons

Grade 2, Chapter 10, Neat and Clean Environment

Question Prompt: Use your observation skills to investigate the sources of pollution in your neighborhood . Also think of ways that this problem can be addressed by young community members like you. You can answer the question in either one of the following formats and present your response to the class.

- Draw a series of picture describing the problem and ways to address it
- Write a story describing the problem and ways to address it
- Write a short play or monologue to present the problem and ways to address it
- Construct a time line showing describing the origin of the problem and chart out a tentative solution
- Write a first-person narrative in which you can impersonate the source of pollution and shed light on ways to manage that pollution

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Differentiating Lessons

Grade 2, Chapter 10, Neat and Clean Environment

Debrief:

How does this task align with the three tenets of culturally relevant teaching?

What are the benefits of the activity?

What modifications can be made to make it applicable to grade level?

Making content culturally relevant



Grade 5, Chapter 1, Graphs

- Share a primary source that provides statistics about the average expenditure on students in government schools and students in private schools. Also share information on graduation rates and employment rates of students from both schools.
- Ask students to draw a graph to present the information.
- Turn and talk to share “I notice” and then turn and talk to share “I wonder”
- Follow up discussion question: Do you think average expenditure has an effect on graduation rates and employment rates? Give evidence to support your thinking.

Making content culturally relevant

Grade 4, Chapter 4, Goods and Services

- *What is a talent or skill that you have which can be turned into a good or a service?*
- *Make a poster to market that good or service (think about why should people buy it, costing, business hours)*
- *Do a gallery walk and put a post it on the good or service that you want to buy, use the TAG feedback*

Debrief:

How does this task align with the three tenets of culturally relevant teaching?

Benefits of the activity? Possible adaptations?

Providing effective feedback

TAG Feedback

T

tell something you liked

A

ask a thoughtful question

G

ive a positive suggestion

- Teachers can use this strategy for peer review of students work.
- This is a constructive and quick way of doing critique and feedback.
- This technique can also be employed to critique the work of personalities from history.
- It reinforces the importance of having personal voice and having an outlet to share it.

Source: Edutopia. Demonstration of strategy :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HM5dp50HWXQ&list=LL7hkOi8EYsuEGSHKqh3CZdA&index=14&t=0s>

Engaging in academic conversations

Participation Cards



I agree with you because...

I disagree with you because...

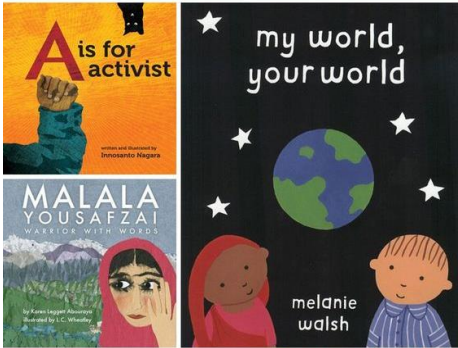
I am not sure how to reply, I need more information!

- Teachers can use this strategy in student lead whole class discussion.
- Students learn how to respectfully engage in debate and how to reach consensus in large groups.
- This technique can be used while doing multiple choice questions and using A,B,C,D index cards in addition to the provided index cards.

Source: Edutopia. Demonstration of strategy : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2L7o-By9rYo&list=LL7hkOi8EYsuEGSHKqh3CZdA&index=19&t=0s>

Children's Books

to motivate your kid activist



Introducing diverse and critical texts

Introduce books with strong culturally diverse characters.

Have students suggest what they want to read about.

However, always have essential questions and guiding activity in mind so as to make the activity critical and

purposeful



Break 10 minutes



Planning community based projects

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eGWqBZSFgxE&feature=youtu.be>

Debrief:

- What stood out the most for you?
- How do you think this lesson can be adapted for your grade level?
- How can it be modified to support students with lower language proficiency?
- How does this task align with the three tenets of culturally relevant teaching?



Equity Audits for park

- Social Studies Class 4, Chapter 4 - Government and civic engagement
- After you are done reading the unit and have talked about importance of parks in communities, plan a fieldtrip to the local park.
- Instruct the students to observe and describe the strengths and areas of improvement of the park. (can work in pairs or groups; can be assigned specific roles like photographer, scribe, presenter). Ask students to share out their observation.
- Now ask the students to go back and do an equity audit for people with disability, age, gender and religion. Students can be scaffolded for what to look for and maybe even create a rubric with students that they can check off from.
- In order to debrief, invite students to share their findings and ask them to think of ways to improve the design of the park.



Equity Audits for park

Social Studies Class 4, Chapter 4 - Government and civic engagement

Debrief:

- How does this task align with the three tenets of culturally relevant teaching?
- What benefits do you see of such a lesson?
- What could be possible challenges that you might face in executing it?

Equity Audits for park

- Students can be asked to do an equity audit for the textbook, classroom, school, piece of furniture.
- For younger students, ask them to list their observations on a 5 senses chart.
- Instead of full sentences, give them a choice of writing words or drawing pictures



Workshop Day 4

Culturally Relevant Teaching in Social Studies Classrooms:

Bringing it all together

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Gallery Walk

1. *What does Culturally Relevant Teaching mean to you?*
2. *What goals do you have for your classroom?*
3. *What might you change about your current instructional practice to align it with your goals?*

Post your responses on each poster and then we will debrief together

Do Not Let Perfection Be the Enemy of Trying



“In all cultural revolutions there are periods of chaos and confusion, times when grave mistakes are made. If we fear mistakes, doing things wrongly, constantly evaluating ourselves, we will never make the academy a culturally diverse place where scholars and the curricula address every dimension of difference.” (Bell Hooks)

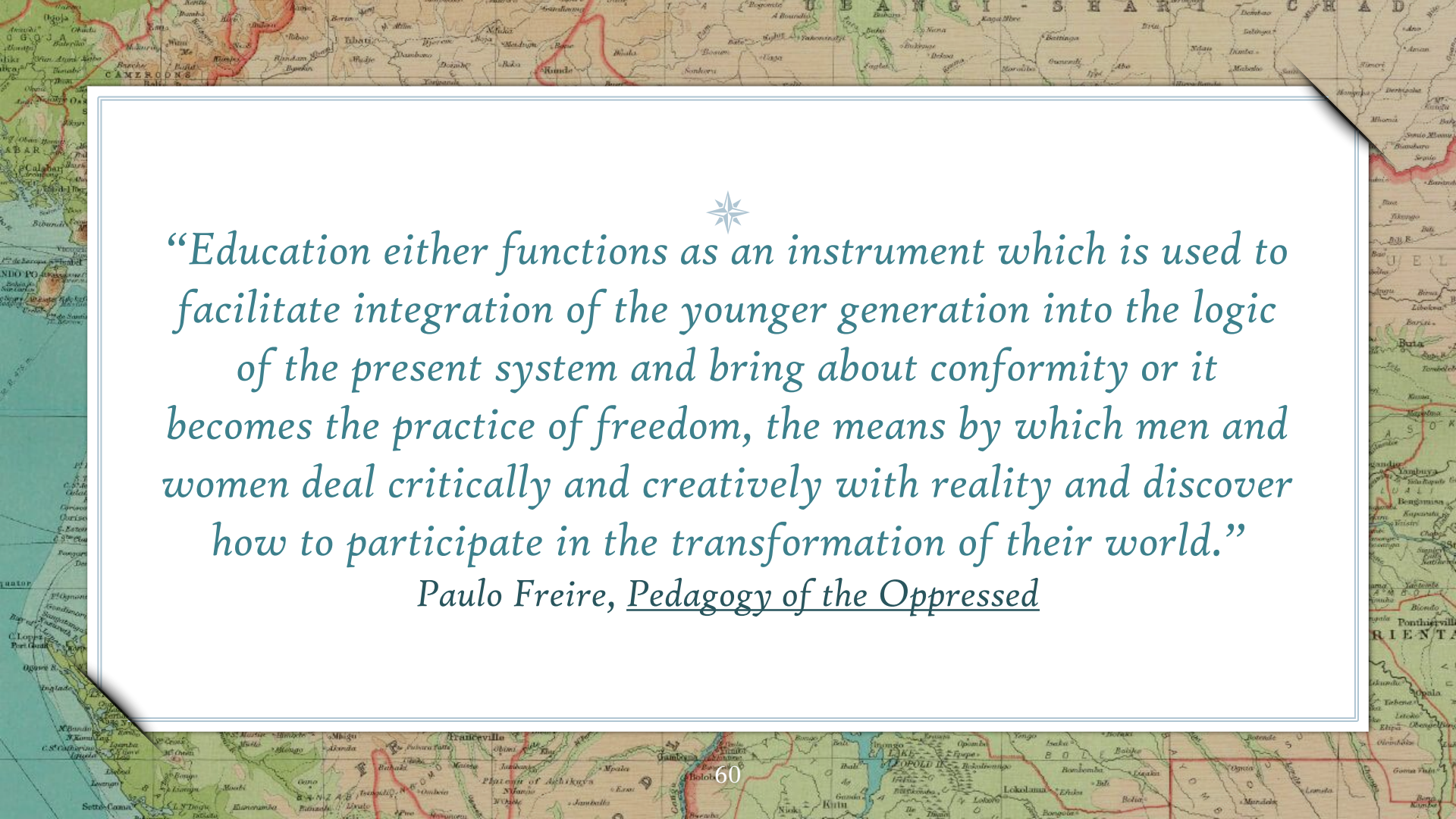


Break 10 minutes

Anticipating challenges while implementing CRT

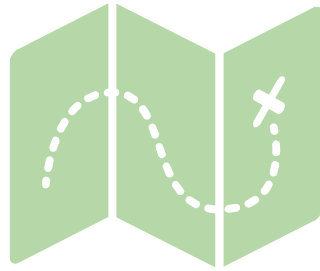


1. In your table groups, make a list of the challenges that you think you might face while implementing CRT in your classroom
2. You can regroup these challenges into themes that were provided by the literature or link of new themes that these challenge scan be categorized under.
3. Make a poster for each theme and leave it on your table
4. Walk around the room and try to think of possible strategies to address the challenges that other people have listed on their posters.
5. We will debrief as a whole class.



“Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.”

Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*



THANKS!

Any questions?

You can find me at axakwarraich1@gmail.com