

Borderland Teaching of Chinese American Teachers with Mexican American Students: Toward
the Development of a Theory

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Abstract

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Mexican American students represent one of the largest growing ethnic groups in K-12 public schools in the U.S., and remain largely underperforming. Chinese American teachers have a long history of presence in U.S. public schools, yet are underrepresented in educational research and scholarship. Drawing from the theoretical frameworks of Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) and Borderlands Theory (BT), a qualitative case study methodology was used to examine three Chinese American teachers working with eleven Mexican American students in three ethnically diverse urban secondary schools in the Pacific Northwest. Findings suggested that the teachers embodied *borderland teaching* (a hybrid of CRT & BT) to promote school performance for and create “kinships” with the students. The study concluded with claims about the significance of *borderland teaching* in regard to research, pedagogy, and representation. It also provided some recommendations for research and teacher education programs.

DEDICATION

谨以此博士文献给我的女儿，吴依娜。愿你树高千丈，叶落归根。愿你甜时忆苦，苦时思甜。愿你学而不厌，爱老慈幼。

This dissertation is dedicated to my daughter, Yina Wu. May you remember your roots and nourish your heritage. May you taste the bitter and cherish the sweet. And may you love to learn and learn to love.

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List of Abbreviations

AIMS: Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards

AP: Advanced Placement

BT: Borderlands Theory

CAT: Chinese American teachers

CRT: Culturally Responsive Teaching

ELA: English language arts

ELL: English language learner

ESL: English as a Second Language

FRSL: Free or reduced school lunch

HHS: Highlands High School

LMS: Lakeview Middle School

MAS: Mexican American students

OSPI: Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction

PHOLKS: Photographs of Local Knowledge Sources

SOC: Students of color

SPED: Special education

TEP: Teacher education program

TOC: Teachers of color

VMS: Valley Middle School

WCC: White Citizens' Council

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Chapter I: Introduction

In 2008 I began my teaching career in Tucson, Arizona in a publicly funded charter school district that served predominantly working-class Mexican American students (MAS) and families. Not well trained in pedagogical theories or cross-cultural teaching skills, I found it daunting to create genuine connections with the MAS. As an ethnically Han Chinese man, race was not a concept taught through my K-12 educational experiences partially due to my status as a member of the ethnic majority in China. When some of the MAS addressed me with racial slurs, such as “code yellow” and “Chino cochino” (nasty Chinese), they interjected race into my professionalization. As a first-generation male immigrant from China, I knew little of early Chinese male immigrants’ histories and experiences in the U.S. When I continued to be confronted and marginalized by White privilege at work, I gradually realized that I was not a member of the racialized majority group in the U.S. context, and embraced my professional identity as a “minority” teacher of color.

Statement of Need

Teachers play an important role in students’ lives. In the context of U.S. urban education, teachers of color (TOC) whose cultural affinity and membership align with those of students of color (SOC) play even more crucial roles in ensuring educational justice (Villegas & Irvine, 2010). TOC often serve as role models for SOC. This can be seen from Black teachers who inspire Black students from low-income backgrounds to pursue academic, social, and communal success (Cole, 1986; Siddle Walker, 1996), and Latinx teachers who use life experiences and stories to affirm Latinx students’ cultural identity, and teach them to resist racial discrimination (Galindo, 1996; Ochoa, 2007). TOC hold the potential to improve academic outcomes for SOC. This is evident in studies of Native Hawaiian teachers using Native Hawaiian “talk story” to

facilitate class discussions and improve Native Hawaiian students' literacy and writing skills (Au, 1980; Rynkofs, 2008); African American teachers using culturally relevant/responsive pedagogy (Adkins, 2012; Howard, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lipman, 1995; Ware, 2006) and hip-hop pedagogy (Adjapong & Emdin, 2015) to promote African American students' academic excellence and cultural competence; a Hmong American teacher using elements of cultural knowledge to help Hmong American students navigate science curriculum that conflicted with their cultural and religious beliefs (Chang & Rosiek, 2003); Latinx teachers using culturally congruent instruction to help Latinx students develop science inquiry skills and bilingual literacy (Lee, 2004); and Native American teachers employing culturally and linguistically sustaining curricula and instruction to promote Native American students' Indigeneity (Begay et al., 1995; McCarty & Lee, 2014; Yazzie-Mintz, 2007). TOC also help reduce the teacher shortage in ethnically diverse urban schools. This is often reflected in Black teachers' commitment to give back to their community through teaching (Dixson & Dingus, 2008; Foster, 1997; Irvine, 2002), and Latinx teachers' commitment to stay in the profession to fight for racial equity (Epstein & Gist, 2015; Flores, 2017; Irizarry & Raible, 2011).

This scholarship on TOC confirms the importance of their work, but it also reveals some notable gaps. There has been sparse research on the contributions of Chinese American teachers (CAT), despite their long history of presence in the U.S. teaching force (Dilworth & Brown, 2008). Some scholarship illuminates this scarcity. For instance, Gordon (2000) stated that traditional Chinese values, English language proficiency, and familial pressure may explain why so few Chinese Americans chose teaching as a profession. Sheets and Chew (2002) found that many CAT who chose to become teachers and enrolled in traditional university-based teacher education programs (TEPs) felt under-prepared to serve SOC since the curriculum, instruction,

and field practice of most of these programs focused on White candidates, and (whether intentional or not) discouraged CAT from enrollment. Goodwin et al. (2006) also disclosed that CAT served as support for their SOC while simultaneously experiencing prejudice from middle-class White colleagues and parents. Such working environments are not helpful to sustaining CAT in the profession. Although Pang (2009) and Rodríguez (2018) identified successful CAT who used culturally relevant teaching to develop collective efficacy among Asian American students, the scarcity of such scholarship indicates the need for greater quantity, current, and nuanced portrayals of CAT.

Another important reason for this study is the lack of representation in research of TOC working cross-culturally, cross-ethnically, and cross-racially with SOC. During the past five decades, educational research has illustrated effective cross-cultural and/or culturally relevant teaching between White teachers and a Cherokee student (Rogers & McLendon, 2015); Native Alaskan students (Kleinfeld, 1975; Lipka et al., 2005); African American students (Boucher, 2016; Cooper, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Tate, 1995); Asian American students (de Oliveira & Lan, 2014; Ramos, 2015); and Latinx students (Gallo & Link, 2016; Gutstein, 2003; LeCompte, 1981; Michie & Alexander-Tanner, 2020; Moll et al., 1992). Yet research on TOC working with SOC who are not members of the same ethnic or racial group is still rare. For example, Hackett (2003) provided an autoethnography of her journey of becoming a culturally responsive African American teacher for Asian American and Pacific Islander students in an ethnically diverse middle school in the Pacific Northwest. Willett and colleagues (2008) portrayed a Native American teacher who included relevant social issues in curricula to promote Latinx students' English literacy skills in an urban elementary school in Massachusetts. Choi (2013) described how a Korean American social studies teacher used culturally relevant

pedagogy with Latinx youths in an ethnically diverse Northeastern high school. Other scholarship contributes to understanding how African American teachers used critical pedagogy to promote Latinx students' learning outcomes (Buendía, Gitlin, & Doumbia, 2003; Martell, 2018; Zhang-Wu, 2017), and build cultural connectedness with them (Irizarry, 2007). Even in this limited scholarship, little or no attention has been given to CAT working with SOC from a different racial group. Considering the complex history between Chinese and Mexican peoples along the U.S.-Mexico border after the *Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882* and during the *Mexican Revolution* (Chang, 2017; Delgado, 2012; Hu-DeHart, 1982; Romero, 2010), it is timely and significant to study how CAT work with MAS.

Conceptual Framework

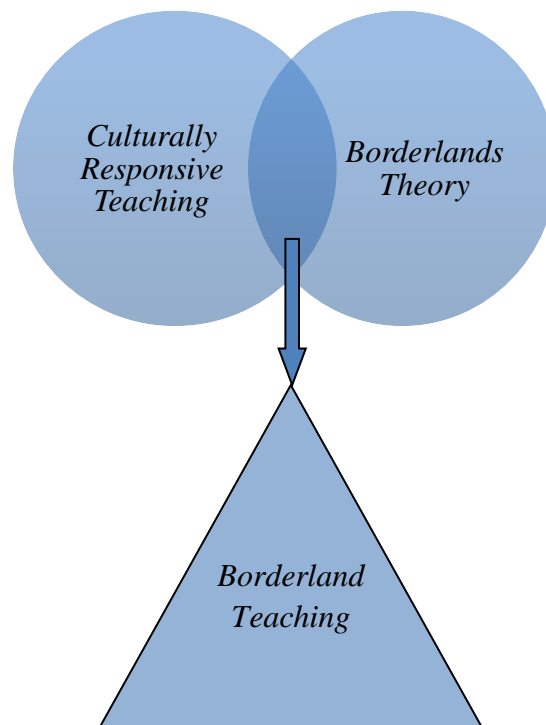


Figure 1. is a visual depiction of my conceptualization of *Borderland Teaching* that frames this study theoretically. It is a hybrid of *Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)* and *Borderlands Theory (BT)*, and contains three key tenets. First, in borderland teaching TOC use

their physical, mental, and cultural in-betweenness to make instructional materials and strategies responsive to SOC, encourage them to use knowledge from the margins, and validate marginality as a legitimate way of feeling, knowing, and being. Second, borderland teaching enables TOC to cross cultural borders in classrooms, search for meaningful ways to embrace and synchronize cultural differences among SOC, and create strategies with SOC to resist cultural hegemony. Third, borderland teaching empowers TOC to care for SOC's experiences of alienation, cultivate their agency for changing the status quo, and foster decolonizing kinships that transcend cultural boundaries.

A critical component of borderland teaching that draws from CRT is using culturally responsive curricula. Gay (2018) argued that culturally responsive curricula are crucial to the academic performance of SOC. She recommended that educators implement culturally responsive curricula within and beyond traditional classroom textbooks, including literary books and mass media. When school curricula fail to be culturally responsive to SOC, teachers should help them examine such inadequacies from multiple perspectives to generate ideas for change (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). A second component of borderland teaching derived from CRT is teachers developing culturally diverse knowledge bases and using them in lesson planning and implementation (Gay, 2002). While doing so, teachers should also remain sensitive to SOC's cultural backgrounds and school contexts, and modify their lessons and teaching to be reflective of the interests and needs of SOC (Gay, 2013; Irvine, 2001).

A third component of CRT included in the conceptual framework for this study is ensuring cultural congruity in classroom instruction, such as addressing linguistically diverse students' needs and matching teaching styles with ethnically diverse students' learning styles (Gay, 2018). One way this might be accomplished is teachers encouraging and assisting students

to preserve their first language and engaging in translanguaging as they develop English skills. Another way this might be achieved is using cooperative learning environments and practices. In so doing, teachers will increase the likelihood of facilitating effective cross-cultural communications between themselves and students (Gay, 2002). The last component of borderland teaching borrowed from CRT is culturally responsive caring. The interrelation of feelings and actions in this type of caring may be manifested differently by various teachers but should include being authentic and consistent in using efforts to cultivate genuine connections with students; having high expectations for students while assisting them in achievement; and developing bonds with students that extend beyond the classroom (Gay, 2018; Pang, 2004). The assumption of this study is that these are necessary elements of borderland teaching and should be detectable in instructional and interactive behaviors.

The conceptual framework for this study also includes some key ideas borrowed from BT. According to Anzaldúa (2012), a borderland “is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition” (p. 25). For people who live in a borderland, their emotional residue is a result of constant alienation from the dominant culture and a sense of liberation resulting from resisting such alienation. In other words, the basic concept of BT “involves the ability to hold multiple perspectives while simultaneously maintaining a center that revolves around fighting against concrete material forms of oppression” (Cantú & Hurtado, 2012, p. 7). In U.S. educational contexts, this means teachers who are alienated from mainstream culture use their experiential knowledge and embodied history to create in-between teaching and learning spaces for and with students that are neither totally mainstream nor minority-oriented but incorporate combinations of both, but neither in its original or “typical” form.

Another critical element of borderland teaching selected from BT is the connection between one's linguistic and ethnic identities. According to Anzaldúa (2012), pride in one's native language and culture is a prerequisite for pride in self. These different kinds of pride can be cultivated in schools, and can contribute to high academic achievement and sociopolitical efficacy such as resisting racism and other forms of oppression. In other words, borderland teaching emphasizes developing knowledge and skills for navigating diverse cultures and plural identities. A third critical element of borderland teaching borrowed from BT is the rejection of both inter-and intra-cultural alienating and negative experiences. This rejection helps develop an in-between mental geography, a psychological state and a place of refuge (Chang, 2016). It also empowers one to understand and feel "experientially the contingent nature of social arrangements" (Cantú & Hurtado, 2012, p. 7), and thus construct knowledge by living as an outsider within the system. In classroom settings, this may manifest in teachers inviting students to resist dominant ideologies and values while engendering oppositional consciousness to embrace marginality as a new way of seeing, being, and knowing that can potentially transform oneself and the world (Giroux, 1991).

Summary

This chapter introduced the importance of teachers of color for students of color in K-12 public schools in the U.S., the shortage of scholarship on Chinese American teachers, and the critical need for research on teachers of color working cross-culturally, cross-ethnically, and cross-racially with students of color. Building on the conceptual framework of *Culturally Responsive Teaching* and *Borderlands Theory*, this study focused on investigating how Chinese American teachers facilitate *borderland teaching* to promote the schooling experiences and outcomes for and with Mexican American students in K-12 public schools in the U.S.

Chapter II: Review of Relevant Research and Scholarship

The scholarship introduced in Chapter I laid the conceptual grounding for this study and served as a prelude to Chapter II. This chapter begins with a review of prior research on factors that influence MAS' academic performance in K-12 public schools in the U.S. Since this study examined how CAT promote school performance of MAS, the review of factors not related to TOC is brief. Next the impact of Mexican American teachers on MAS' educational experiences and outcomes in K-12 public schools is described. This is followed by a detailed analysis of research on non-Mexican-American Latinx teachers and non-Latinx TOC working with MAS. This chapter concludes with a discussion of gaps in existing research that warrants this study.

Factors Influencing School Performance of Mexican American Students

Over the past few decades, scholars have explained factors that influenced MAS' low academic performance. These include lack of linguistically congruent instruction, insufficient and inaccurate representation in school curricula, cultural mismatch between home and school authority figures, inequitable assessment practices and evaluations, undocumented immigration status, discriminatory policies and practices, and many White teachers' racially prejudiced attitudes and ineffective instructional practices.

Troubled by MAS' low academic performance, Ramírez III and Castañeda (1974) argued in their conceptual analysis that the learning and communication styles of these students were often reduced to monolingual approaches to teaching and learning that further hindered their bilingual and bicultural development. In an historical analysis, MacDonald (2004) observed that English-only instruction for MAS in early colonial periods functioned to strategically assimilate them into U.S. dominant culture. Along this line of inquiry, Hurtado and colleagues (2010) examined the impact of language use and maintenance on MAS' education. Through comparing

inter-and intra-racial group data on state standardized assessments and college completion rates, the researchers suggested that Spanish-speaking MAS “who manage to acquire English quickly enough to succeed in school are never rewarded or acknowledged for having such a valuable language skill” (p. 288). This deficit view of bilingualism and biculturalism is exacerbated by mainstream media’s stereotypical portrayals. Yosso and García (2010) conducted a critical analysis of three Hollywood films that portrayed MAS in urban schools. Investigating the question “Who are these kids, rejects from hell?”, the researchers found that Hollywood’s cinematic formula continues to reinforce the myth that MAS are not intellectually capable of achieving middle-class White standards of academic success. This myth is used to justify White teachers’ deficit views of MAS and rationalize the inequitable educational system. As a result, the colonial legacy of English dominance, and deficit views of bilingualism and biculturalism hinder MAS’ academic performance (especially in science and mathematics) and social mobility (Gándara, 2006).

In *Toward Quality Education for Mexican Americans* (1974) researchers reported that school curricula for MAS contained insufficient representation of literary works by Mexican American authors in language arts; omission of Mexican Americans’ contributions to the development of U.S. Southwest in social studies; and lack of Mexican American skills and cultural knowledge in mathematics. When included in school curricula, Mexican Americans were often portrayed as defeatists inferior to Whites (Cortés, 1973). For example, Orozco (2013) investigated how discourse in school curricula strategically engaged in different representations of people of color and Whites. The researcher analyzed a history curriculum from a Southwest high school district, and concluded that abstractions and omissions that dehumanized Mexican Americans simultaneously contributed to “normalizing Whites as American and maintaining a

desirable White social identity” (p. 81). Other similar studies such as that of Rocha and Dowd (1993) found that Mexican American females in K-3 grades realistic fiction books were often confined to limited aesthetic styles; ethnic celebratory activities; and caretakers at home. Barba’s (1993) random experiment examined to what extent 57 Southwestern bilingual elementary science classrooms used culturally congruent instructional materials. She suggested that MAS did not receive sufficient culturally congruent analogies, elaborations, examples, or role models in those schools’ science curricula. Consequently, these inaccurate, tokenized, and insufficient representations partially contributed to some MAS dropping out of school (Spring, 2016).

Interested in examining how MAS exhibit and cope with anxiety and stress at schools, Trueba (1983) observed MAS in classrooms and interviewed them, their parents, teachers, counselors, and other school personnel in a southern California elementary school district. He found that MAS experienced anxiety and stress largely due to the incongruence between home and school cultures, and engaged in coping mechanisms such as avoidance of communicating with school authorities to navigate the schooling system. Similarly, Delgado-Gaitan (1987) studied seven MAS in grades K-3 and their four families for 18 months in southern California. Through classroom observations and open-ended interviews, the researcher found that these students were used to engaging in cooperative and reciprocal learning activities at home. However, the competitive structures in their classrooms forced them to operate alone, “without support from others to accomplish tasks that could more effectively be taught in cooperative structures” (pp. 344-345). The dissonance between learning style orientations caused feelings of defeat, humiliation, and exclusion. In a three-year study of 10 Mexican migrant families in the Bay Area in California, Valdés (1996) observed and interviewed the mothers of each family on how they learned to navigate U.S. society, and passed on their family’s collective wisdom to

their children. The researcher noted that these Mexican mothers emphasized *respeto* and reciprocal responsibility among their children. Yet, their children attended schools where individual achievement was more valued than reciprocity, thus causing discontinuity between home and school cultures. Another dimension of home and school cultural mismatch for MAS is language. Mexican American parents who lack English proficiency may not be able to fully participate in their children's schooling or advocate for their needs. This may undermine their authority as experts of their own children in the presence of monolingual English-speaking teachers and administrators, and discourage their participation in school events (Zarate, 2007).

Another factor that negatively influences the school performance of MAS is inequitable assessment evaluations and practices. In a correlational study, Sánchez (1932) examined why Spanish-speaking MAS continued to perform lower on tests in comparison to their English-speaking White peers. He concluded that test evaluators who ignored MAS' bilingual and bicultural heritage and social factors such as school environments "may seriously impair the value of tests, even to the extent of invalidating results" (p. 230). Eight decades later, Garcia and colleagues (2012) analyzed Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) data from the 2005-2009 academic years using comparisons of across-grade, within-year and within-grade, across year. The researchers found that the state of Arizona made little progress in improving the educational outcomes for Spanish-speaking MAS, who were repeatedly pulled out of regular classroom instruction in preparation for AIMS and deprived of ample opportunities to interact with peers with higher level of English language proficiency. These practices have negative effects on MAS' academic performance and emotional wellbeing (Krashen, Rolstad, & MacSwan, 2007). They also contributed to increasing the number of Spanish-speaking MAS placed in special education (SPED) programs (Artiles, Klingner, Sullivan, & Fierros, 2010).

Using critical race theory as the framework, López and López (2010) pursued questions, such as (1) How have U.S. immigration laws and policies met the challenges of undocumented Latinx students? and (2) How have U.S. immigration raids affected undocumented Latinx children and school personnel? Through analyzing various U.S. immigration laws and policies, the scholars argued that many undocumented Mexican students are caught in the crossfire of the public education system and the immigration law system. The public education system fails undocumented Mexican students, and the immigration law system creates fear, uncertainty, and deportation among them without providing any alternative to apply for U.S. citizenship. Abrego (2006) investigated how legal status influenced undocumented Latinx youths' educational attainment. Through observing, interviewing, and interacting with six undocumented Mexican students in a Los Angeles high school district for one year, the researcher found that undocumented Mexican students' efforts to "adapt and contribute economically are met with legal obstacles" and "there are no available structural paths for those who excel academically" (p. 227) to pursue postsecondary education. In a study of 142 1.5-generation undocumented Mexican adults living in California, Gonzales (2011) investigated how undocumented status influenced the participants' childhood and adolescence experiences through in-depth interviews. The researcher suggested that transition from adolescence to adulthood automatically changed the participants' immigration status from de facto legal to illegal, which limited their occupational trajectory and put them in a disenfranchised underclass. These studies present another predicament that many Mexican students face in U.S. schools and society today.

Other U.S. laws and policies such as state-sanctioned segregation were imposed on MAS in public schools after the *Treaty of Guadalupe Hildago* in 1848 (Valencia, 2011). Until 1960 MAS (especially in California and other parts of the Southwestern U.S.) experienced academic

segregation through attending substandard and poorly-funded schools separate from Whites (Donato & Hanson, 2012; San Miguel Jr., 2013). In an historical analysis, García (2018) explained how middle-class Whites used their institutionalized privileges to enforce residential redlining in Oxnard, CA during the 1930s-1950s to ensure that MAS would not be able to attend schools in their wealthy, White neighborhoods, and remain working-class through attending under resourced schools. Even in schools attended by Mexican and White children in Oxnard, the district “maintained segregated classes, distinct recesses, and staggered release times for Mexican students” (García, 2018, p. 5) to actualize a school-within-a-school segregation model.

Seven decades later, this segregation model was still implemented in Texas. In *Santamaria v. Dallas Independent School District* (2006), Mexican American parents sued the Dallas Independent School District for tracking MAS into self-contained, separate classrooms from their White peers. In other cases, certain pedagogical methods are employed to reinforce segregation in schools where MAS are the demographic majority. Orozco (2019) examined MAS’ perceptions of White teachers’ (in)activity regarding Arizona’s anti-immigration law SB 1070. Through observing and interviewing MAS at two urban high schools in the Southwest for one year, the researcher suggested that MAS view White teachers using “niceness” as a method to avoid discussing the discriminatory law. This pedagogical method demanded that MAS leave issues concerning their well-being outside school and placate the hegemony of Whiteness at school, which reinforced segregation. These historical and contemporary segregation practices continue to treat MAS as lower-class citizens, and deny their rich communal resources and heritages (Moll, 2010).

West (1936) examined 72 White teachers and 60 Mexican American teachers in New Mexico’s rural schools. Through surveying and comparing the teachers’ attitudes toward

students, the researcher found that White teachers were more strongly inclined than Mexican American teachers to claim that White children are racially superior to Mexican American children. Other quantitative studies conducted since then have reported similar results indicating White students are affirmed and praised more frequently by White teachers in class (Buriel, 1983; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1973). Interested in examining how Latinx children in California engage in social activities to make meaning of schools, Orellana (2001) observed elementary grade MAS in classrooms, schoolyards, public libraries, and local parks; interviewed the students, their parents, and school teachers; and surveyed the students about their daily lives. The researcher suggested that MAS engaged in a variety of work, such as supporting their families' livelihood; helping their parents navigate U.S. societal norms; being cultural brokers between homes and schools; and volunteering to help in classrooms and communities. However, many White teachers often overlook MAS' contributions and fail to utilize these assets during planning and instruction. Foley (2010) conducted a 16-month study in a small, predominantly Mexican American town in south Texas. Through classroom observations and in-depth interviews of local Mexican American high school students, he analyzed how these students experienced teachers' pedagogies, race relations in school, and extracurricular activities. Foley suggested that socially prominent youths were "groomed to be future civic and political leaders" whereas working-class MAS were "trained to drop out of school into manual labor jobs" (p. viii) by White teachers and administrators.

Another factor that contributes to MAS' low educational outcomes is the lack of culturally responsive teaching by many White teachers. Reyes (1991) studied White teachers who used dialogue journals and literature logs interchangeably to teach writing to bilingual MAS in a Southwest middle school. She found that the students produced longer and more personal

writings in dialogue journals when they received personal feedback from their White teachers. When they were instructed to write about academic contents in literature logs, the tasks often were not contextualized or made relevant to their cultural experiences. Consequently, they alienated students and had negative effects on their attempts in academic writing. In a study conducted in Los Angeles and eastern Washington state, Pizarro (2005) investigated why so many schools have failed MAS and what can be done to address such failure. Through in-depth interviews of MAS, the researcher found that White teachers and administrators frequently referred MAS for disciplinary actions and denied them equitable learning opportunities. Based on these results Pizarro suggested that educators collaborate with community members to stop criminalizing MAS and help them develop positive racial identities through listening to and validating their stories.

Well-intentioned White teachers who try to provide a quality education for MAS sometimes reproduce systemic injustices. For instance, Garza and Garza (2010) explored how the intersection of race and language influenced White teachers' instruction for MAS. The researchers observed and interviewed four White female teachers who worked in a Texas school district that served a predominantly working-class Mexican American community and were considered successful because of high scores on state standardized assessments. Nevertheless, these teachers often ignored their low-income MAS' lived realities, used a culturally deficit view in their teaching, and taught MAS how to assimilate into White culture.

Effects of Mexican American Teachers on Mexican American Students

Since the 1990s, empirical studies on the effects of TOC on MAS from working-class backgrounds started to emerge. Some of this scholarship focused on how Mexican American teachers used MAS' linguistic and cultural heritages to support their learning. Pease-Alvarez,

Garcia, and Espinosa (1991) conducted a one-year case study of two female teachers in a central California elementary school. Through analyzing classroom observations and interviews, the researchers found that both teachers used Spanish and English for instruction on alternate days; encouraged MAS to share poems, stories, songs, and sayings they learned at home; and incorporated what the students shared into their science and social studies thematic units. These pedagogical strategies helped both teachers promote dual language literacy for MAS.

In another one-year case study, Shannon (1995) examined how a female teacher helped MAS recognize, challenge, and resist the hegemony of English in an elementary school in Iowa. Data such as classroom observations, student journals, and interviews of students indicated that the teacher used instructional materials proportionally in Spanish and English; juxtaposed both languages during instruction; and worked closely with the school community on understanding that speaking Spanish is fun and beautiful.

Exploring how teachers can create linguistically and culturally appropriate environments for MAS, Trueba (1999) observed and interviewed a fourth-grade male teacher who taught MAS in a rural agricultural community in central California. Data revealed that the teacher routinely involved students in mathematics group activities through different genres of music, such as banda, ranchera, and hip hop, and mixed group activities with competitions for students to demonstrate their mathematical learning in Spanish. The teacher also used his own poetry to “inculcate in children the values of hard work, antidrug and antigang attitudes, and notions of sacrifice for family and friends” (p. 604). These strategies helped the teacher establish a respectful and personal relationship with the students, and improve their academic engagement.

Other empirical studies examined ways Mexican American teachers facilitated CRT with MAS across grade levels and academic disciplines. In a one-year study of four teachers who

worked with predominantly MAS in six large urban high school districts (one in Arizona and five in California), Henze and Lucas (1993) observed and interviewed a Mexican American male biology teacher. Data indicated that the teacher used various instructional materials (i.e., lectures, film clips, and handouts) in Spanish to help students make complex connections between life experiences and scientific knowledge, and develop scientific investigation skills. This teaching approach improved students' confidence as science learners and academic performance.

Sheets (1995) used autoethnographic techniques to describe her own experiences teaching advanced Spanish to MAS enrolled in a large urban high school in Washington. She centered the students' cultural heritages in the curriculum by incorporating literary works by Latinx authors and taking students to see prominent individuals such as Cesar Chavez at El Centro de la Raza (a Latinx community center). Sheets also created cultural congruence during instruction by using cooperative learning (i.e., students decoding syllables and phonics together) and peer teaching (i.e., sharing and critiquing each other's thought processes). As a result, students improved their Spanish proficiency, self-esteem, and sense of belonging at the school.

Quintos and Civil (2008) investigated for one year how a fifth-grade female teacher promoted mathematical growths for MAS in an urban school in the Southwest. Classroom observations and interviews showed that the teacher used textbooks and students' life stories to contextualize mathematics as a tool for making sense of and countering injustices in the world. She also helped students practice mathematics across content areas and communicated with their parents regularly to help them "become informed advocates for their children" (p. 66).

Fránquiz and Salinas (2011) conducted a three-month case study of a female social studies teacher working with seven bilingual MAS in a central Texas high school. The researchers examined how the teacher integrated Spanish and instructional materials to help

students develop historical thinking skills. Data such as classroom observations and students' written products revealed that the teacher used sequential lesson planning, digital primary sources, and document-based questions to help MAS examine shared struggles for civil rights across African American and Mexican American communities. The teacher also encouraged the students to write letters to organizations that promote and protect civil rights for Latinx. These activities improved the students' historical thinking skills and promoted democratic citizenship.

In a seven-month case study, Smith and Salgado (2018) investigated how a female English language arts (ELA) teacher used young adult literature to help six-grade MAS improve English comprehension in a Title I school in west Texas. Classroom observations and interviews of the teacher about her pedagogical beliefs revealed different teaching strategies used in supporting student learning. First, the teacher valued the students' linguistic and cultural backgrounds, used English and Spanish interchangeably during instruction, and encouraged the students to communicate in Spanish to acquire new concepts in English. Second, she used culturally relevant young adult literature and visualization to improve the students' literacy comprehension. Third, the teacher believed in the power of *cuentos* (stories) and often told *cuentos* about her personal and family lives to help the students “connect the literature to their personal lives” and “negotiate their hybrid identities of Mexican and Texan” (p. 23). In so doing, the teacher assisted MAS in developing bilingual and bicultural competence.

Effects of Non-Mexican-American Latinx Teachers on Mexican American Students

Mexican American teachers are not the only group of Latinx teachers who have used culturally responsive pedagogical strategies to improve the academic engagement and performance of MAS. Escalante and Dirmann (1990) described a Bolivian American male teacher who collaborated with school and community members to establish the *Escalante Math*

Program in an east Los Angeles high school that promoted mathematical excellence for MAS living in a high poverty and crime neighborhood. The researchers identified several noteworthy characteristics that made the program and the teacher's instruction culturally responsive. First, MAS who were not considered academically inclined by mainstream standards but who possessed *ganas* (desire or wish to succeed) were recruited to enroll in the program initially created by Jaime Escalante. The teacher obtained textbooks that presented concepts in a sequential order that made mathematics less intimidating and more accessible to MAS. Second, the teacher displayed posters of famous sports figures to instill the value of perseverance and self-discipline, and substituted complex mathematics concepts with sports terms familiar to MAS to increase class participation. Third, the teacher used a team approach to teaching and learning that cultivated a communal sense of hard work and fun among students, and worked closely with parents to enlist support for accountability. As a result of these collaborative efforts, the number of Algebra I classes grew from six to more than 25 in 16 years and "students are uniformly studying more math regardless of whether they happen to participate in [the] program or not" (p. 423). This program was the subject of the commercial film *Stand and deliver* (Menéndez, 1988), which countered the hegemonic portrayal of Latinx youths in urban school.

Gutstein and colleagues (1997) conducted a study of five mathematics teachers (two Mexican American females, one Peruvian American female, one Columbian American male, and one White male) who worked with predominantly MAS in two schools (one elementary and one middle school) in a Midwest port city that has one of the largest Mexican American populations in the U.S. All five teachers were fluent in Spanish and English. They were recommended by their principals for the study because they deeply valued MAS' heritages and cared about their academic success and social well-being. Interested in examining the teachers' beliefs about

culture, conceptions of knowledge, and pedagogical strategies that built on MAS' cultural knowledge, the researchers collected data throughout one school year using classroom observations; open-ended interviews of the teachers and the principals; student assignments; and instructional materials and reflective journals produced by the teachers. The results revealed several attributes of culturally responsive mathematics instruction. Among them were being deliberate about integrating cultural and experiential knowledge of MAS into curricula; teaching students to become critical mathematics thinkers through helping them question standardized mathematics curricula, and explore multiple perspectives and techniques on mathematics problem-solving; and establishing solidarity with the students and their families to promote personal growth and social agency. These teachers' pedagogical orientations and practices empowered MAS to develop bicultural competence and pursue communal excellence.

Urdanivia-English (2001) used autoethnographic techniques to describe her experiences as a Columbian American teaching predominantly MAS in an English as a Second Language (ESL) class in an urban elementary school in southern Georgia. Initially, the students demonstrated little understanding of unfamiliar social studies contents due to their limited English proficiency. However, when Urdanivia-English started using culturally relevant children's books focusing on migration issues, the students became more engaged in class and began to converse with parents at home about information presented in the books. Urdanivia-English initiated a project called PHOLKS (Photographs of Local Knowledge Sources) that helped students use photographs to continue dialogues with parents at home. She also took them on a field trip around the city; instructed them to take pictures of historic landmarks; and encouraged them to use what they learned from the PHOLKS project to deepen their understanding of local histories. Additionally, the students "attended a bilingual lesson on using

the library” (p. 194); practiced research skills by interviewing “a fellow teacher to talk about her ancestry” (p. 194); and participated in peer conferences to evaluate each other’s progress and make suggestions for improvement. Gradually, the students became enthusiastically engaged in writing stories about their own family members’ migrant histories, and learned to recognize community members with “personal struggles and trials” (p. 194).

Using case study methods, Gutiérrez (2002) examined three teachers (one Puerto Rican male and two White males) who taught calculus to predominantly MAS at an ethnically diverse urban high school in Chicago. Some of the research questions included, “What might teachers who do not speak Spanish do to support their bilingual Latina/o students?” and “What are some of the practices and beliefs held by effective math teachers of Latina/o students who are largely bilingual?” (p. 1050). The researcher spent 13 months collecting data, including more than 200 hours of classroom observations (two days every other week), 22 semi-structured interviews of the teachers (1 to 2 hours each), and one semi-structured interview of and open-ended surveys of 22 participating students. Findings revealed that the Puerto Rican teacher supported MAS in learning mathematics despite his limited academic Spanish skills. For example, the teacher viewed students’ bilingualism as a resource, and encouraged group work and use of their primary language to develop English and Spanish proficiency. He also built on students’ previous academic knowledge, and scaffolded mathematics language during instruction. The teacher possessed a deep understanding of students’ cultural backgrounds; encouraged students to share their personal struggles and successes in Spanish; and spoke Spanish to them to cultivate stronger student-teacher relationships. Consequently, this teacher, along with the other two teachers, succeeded in “inducing large numbers of Latina/o students to take calculus by their senior year and to consider college as a realistic option for their future” (p. 1078).

Reyes (2009) conducted a six-month case study of an experienced bilingual El Salvadorian American female teacher who worked with predominantly Latinx students in an urban elementary school in the San Francisco Bay Area. Two Mexican American girls who attended a transitional bilingual program for four years participated in the study. Two questions guided the study: (1) “What are the discourse strategies of peer interaction during science instruction?” and (2) “What are the discourse characteristics of the teacher-student interactions during science instruction?” (p. 99). The researcher took field notes during weekly classroom observations, collected participating students’ writing samples, video-recorded their peer interactions, and audio-recorded their participation in different activities. The results of the study indicated that the teacher typically began class by introducing new vocabularies for a topic, directing students to discuss the topic in small groups, and asking them to pose hypotheses. During student discussions, the teacher provided language scaffolding through code-switching between Spanish and English, and “using a cognate to define a familiar term in English” (p. 105). The teacher usually instructed students to think through and write down materials and steps needed for the experiment, conduct the experiment, discuss in small groups, and record the results in science workbooks. During this process, the teacher constantly referred to spelling and grammatical conventions in Spanish to guide students through writing, and provided scaffolding of grammatical distinctions between Spanish and English. These strategies helped the MAS enhance their bilingual literacy and acquire a deeper understanding of science concepts.

Flores (2017) examined how much agency teachers possess and exercise when working with Latinx students given the constraints and inequities in the U.S. public school system. She conducted a two-year study of teachers, including 20 Latinas with one of Cuban and El Salvadorian ancestry, and one of Guatemalan ancestry. The teachers worked in two

underperforming ethnically diverse elementary schools in Los Angeles, CA. Flores visited the schools four days a week and occasionally on Saturdays when teachers held special fundraisers for students. The data gathering sites included classrooms, front office, faculty meetings, parent-teacher association meetings, teachers' lounges, school parking lots, and campus events. Flores also conducted focus group interviews of multiple cohorts of parents in both schools, and in-depth individual interviews of each Latina teacher. Data showed that these teachers used immigrant narratives, cultural communication codes, and alternative mathematical problem solving to promote MAS' learning. They were very conscious of the mainstream values embedded in school curricula, structures, and procedures, and acted as cultural mediators for MAS in navigating these systems. These teachers also taught MAS to challenge biased institutional practices such as standardized testing, and collaborated with families to affirm the students' cultural identities within and beyond the confine of schools.

Osorio (2018), a Columbian American, conducted a two-year autoethnography of her experiences working as a bilingual teacher with 16 bilingual MAS in a Mideastern elementary school. She examined the research question, "How can multicultural literature be used as a tool to foster critical consciousness in a second-grade bilingual classroom?" (p. 47). Osorio audio-recorded all her discussions with the students about multicultural literature, recorded field notes about her teaching, and collected student artifacts. Osorio created learning circles based on themes (i.e., family stories, linguistic pluralism, etc.) that emerged from the literature students read in class; provided opportunities for students to share their multiple perspectives; and engaged students in collaborative actions to solve problems raised in these dialogues. She also helped students develop an appreciation for cultural diversity by reading texts written by authors of color from multiple racial groups, and honored students' perspectives during class discussions

whenever topics were connected to their personal lives. She designed lesson plans, assignments, and discussions connected to students' rich linguistic and cultural heritages, and examined how their lived realities reflected or were affected by social inequities. As a result, students learned to use multicultural literature to problematize "issues related to power and privilege" (p. 52), and investigate possibilities to transform oppressions imposed on them.

In a two-month case study, Newcomer (2018) investigated two Latinx teachers working at an Arizona K-8 urban school that served predominantly bilingual MAS. The Nicaraguan American male teacher had taught mathematics and science for five years at the time of the study, while the Mexican American female teacher had taught language arts and social studies for ten years. Both teachers shared the same group of students in their dual-language classrooms. The researcher examined how caring relationships were built, sustained, and perceived by Latinx students and their teachers. She observed each teacher's class twice a week during the 2011 fall semester; interviewed each teacher once and documented ongoing conversations with them; and conducted focus group interviews of participating middle school students. Data revealed that the teachers used different techniques to facilitate caring for MAS. Both teachers understood the students' lived experiences and the larger sociopolitical contexts of Latinx youths. Specifically, the teachers' own experiences of learning English as a second language helped them empathize with the struggles that bilingual MAS were going through. Both teachers also held high expectations for students; communicated these to students through positive and encouraging messages; and "spent substantial time helping students with homework and preparing for high school and college" (p. 185). Furthermore, both teachers constantly expressed care, concern, and love for students' personal lives and academic progress. As a result, the students often felt a sense of family in the teachers' classrooms.

Effects of Non-Latinx Teachers of Color on Mexican American Students

Latinx teachers are not the only TOC who facilitate CRT to MAS. Valenzuela (1999), a Mexican American, spent three years examining why MAS who attend large urban schools continue to experience low academic achievement. Using a mixed-methods approach, she collected qualitative data at an urban Texas high school through participant observations in classrooms, faculty-meetings, parent teacher association meetings, school-related events, and community-sponsored events. Other data sources included open-ended individual and focus-group interviews of students, teachers, and administrators at the school. She also collected artifacts, “including the school memoranda, notices, handouts, archival information, and miscellaneous documents” (p. 287). Quantitative data were acquired from a survey of the high school’s entire student body (N = 2,281) that asked about their schooling experiences and their parents’ educational backgrounds. Based on the analyses of these data, Valenzuela concluded that many MAS experienced “subtractive schooling” because most of the White teachers failed to embrace their cultural heritages. Among the teachers, one African American female was the exception because of her caring-centered pedagogy. She openly expressed love for MAS; worked diligently to create classroom dynamics that were neither too organized nor too laid back; and promoted academic excellence, communal belonging, and reciprocity.

Buendía, Gitlin, and Doumbia (2003) studied a Senegalese American male teacher who taught science and life skills to bilingual MAS at an ethnically diverse middle school. Located in a north central state in the U.S., the school enrollment was 99% middle-class Whites prior to legally mandated desegregation. The school’s demographics started to shift in the 1980s. At the time of the study, the school was composed of 40% students of color (Iraqi, Mexican, Somali, and Vietnamese) and 60% Whites. This teacher was one of six employed by the school who had

an ESL endorsement. An immigrant from Senegal, he had taught for six years and was pursuing his doctorate in social inequities and diversity at the University of Utah. The question guided this study was how did an immigrant teacher's experiences of marginalization influence his pedagogical beliefs and practices? The researchers spent eight months in the teacher's classroom and collected 60 full-day observations. They also attended faculty meetings and parent-teacher conferences to observe how teachers talked about children of color; collected articles from two local daily newspapers that discussed immigrants in the community; interviewed the teacher about his pedagogy; and talked with school administrators and local residents about their perceptions of the community's changing demographics. These data revealed that the teacher's experiences of marginalization motivated him to value MAS' bilingual skills; encourage them to speak Spanish in his class to learn academic concepts; and speak Spanish to them consistently despite his limited fluency. The teacher also provided opportunities for MAS to write in Spanish at home and in class about their life experiences in Mexico and the U.S., and demanded that they put forth their best efforts. Thus, he assembled "a pedagogy that looked beyond language acquisition and that sought to challenge the limits placed on the opportunity structures and identity possibilities for his students" (p. 305).

DeNicolò and Franquiz (2006) studied a fourth-grade teacher who worked with predominantly MAS in a bilingual urban school in the Midwest. Born and raised in the city, this African American female teacher learned Spanish, had been teaching at the school for almost 10 years, and remained actively involved with local communities. The researchers sought to understand how literature discussions influence English language learners' (ELLs') acquisition of academic English and engender critical thinking. Over six months, they observed the teacher's class; audio-and video-recorded student and teacher interactions; interviewed the teacher and two

participating Mexican American female students; and collected students' written assignments. The results indicated that the teacher understood the sociopolitical role of teaching, and believed that improving MAS' educational outcomes had the potential to transform both Mexican American and African American communities. She used culturally relevant children's literature; provided instructional scaffolding such as assigning students different roles (i.e., director, connector, summarizer, etc.) during literature discussions; and encouraged students to use Spanish and English interchangeably in class. In so doing, the teacher helped MAS acquire the agency of learning and move through "feelings of anger to seek viable solutions to the discriminatory act they had read together" (p. 167).

In a three-year study, Duncan-Andrade (2007) examined how four teachers (two Filipino men, one African American woman, and one White woman) facilitated effective teaching and created equitable learning opportunities and for MAS at two high schools and one elementary school in south central Los Angeles. In the first two years, the researcher videotaped the teachers' lessons once a week and kept field notes during inquiry group meetings. In the third year, the researcher continued to collect data in the same format as the first two years, but added the teachers' lesson plans, student work samples, debriefing discussions after class observations, and interviews of each teacher. From these data, the researcher extrapolated five "pillars of success" demonstrated by the teachers. First, they felt that low-income students of color should use what they learn in school to return to and improve their own communities. For example, one of the Filipino teachers taught his students how to use persuasive letter writing to think and act critically about issues that concern their communal well-being. Second, the teachers saw themselves as members of the community where they taught. For instance, the Filipino teachers consistently asked students how their personal experiences were related to what they were

learning in class, stayed late in the community on school nights, and regularly attended off-campus events hosted by students and community members. Third, the teachers regularly spent time preparing culturally relevant lessons. Their efforts “fostered a contagious level of excitement, passion, and belief in the curriculum when they delivered it to students” (p. 630). Fourth, the teachers maneuvered between being confident in their pedagogical ability and being critical of their pedagogical practices. For instance, the African American teacher was comfortable with frequent visitors to her class and feedback on her instruction but also felt ill-equipped to address some realities of urban life when one of the students’ relatives died of gun violence. Fifth, the teachers held high expectations for all students, and instilled a sense of trust and love through their pedagogy. One of the Filipino teachers assigned students to read Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the oppressed*; helped students make connections between their lives and the text; and cultivated a bond with students through humanizing each other in the classroom.

Santamaria (2009) conducted a five-year study of two elementary schools that served predominantly Spanish-speaking MAS in north San Diego. At one of the schools, the researcher recruited an African American female teacher to participate in the study. As a visiting faculty from a local university, the researcher was invited to partner with this school’s administrators to help model and support differentiated instructional practices. She spent one day per week at the school during the 2002-2003 academic year and collected data including classroom observations; open-ended interviews of teachers, principals, students, and parents; and artifacts such as samples of student assignments and school flyers. Data analysis indicated that the African American teacher’s attitudes and actions were similar to those reported by research on other cross-racial group teachers. These included sensitivity to MAS’ linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic differences; MAS being partners with the teacher in classroom instruction;

inviting Mexican American parents to assist the students in the classroom; collaborating with Mexican American parents in enacting high expectations for MAS; and helping MAS learn to resist racial prejudices and discrimination in developmentally appropriate ways.

Stoehr and Patel (2017) examined how an Asian Indian American female teacher used insights from her own English-learning experiences to create equitable learning opportunities for MAS under the school's *English-only* instructional policy. Data including classroom observations, interviews of the teacher, and samples of student work were collected at an urban elementary school in Glendale, Arizona. The results indicated that the teacher improved MAS' engagement in learning mathematics. She used insights from her own K-12 experiences as an ELL to advance equity in teaching mathematics by modifying the district's curricula to accommodate students' language needs, and incorporating students' cultural funds of knowledge. The teacher used small and large group activities interchangeably, and warmly demanded students to articulate their mathematical thinking and engage in debates about different conclusions. She also used a variety of instructional strategies to increase students' participation in class. For example, she often asked students to re-verbalize new mathematics vocabulary during lessons; expand on each other's mathematical explanations; and talk to each other to clarify their thinking. These strategies were complemented by her consistent use of visual tools to explain unfamiliar mathematical terms to students. The teacher's beliefs and actions instilled a sense of competence in students that fostered their identity as capable mathematics learners.

In a six-week study, Kwon and de los Ríos (2019) examined a Korean American female teacher working with ethnically diverse SOC in an urban public high school in east Oakland, CA. At the time of the study, 16 ninth-graders (six Latinx with mostly Mexican ancestry) were enrolled in the teacher's Ethnic Studies class. The teacher was the daughter of working-class

immigrants, co-created Ethnic Studies courses at the school, and had been teaching in the district for seven years. The question that guided this study was how do racism-conscious inquiry in Ethnic Studies courses “prepare students for their increasingly inequitably, racialized, and digital social worlds?” (p. 154). The researchers used a combination of ethnographic and action research methods to collect data including weekly classroom observations; field notes of class activities; two one-hour open-ended interviews of the teacher; one 25-minute semi-structured interview of each participating student; a student survey; and students’ written reflections and digital literacy artifacts. These data indicated that the teacher fostered critical civic consciousness, and promoted critical digital literacies for the students. For example, she designed a unit that encouraged students to analyze elements of racism and how they impacted their communities. The students also conducted independent research on local issues, reported their analyses on mobile devices, and tracked the progress. At the end of the unit, the students presented their findings at a district Life Enrichment Committee meeting. Although most students had an intimate knowledge of what their communities were going through, their understanding of systemic inequities and a sense of civic responsibility increased. The students learned to resist deficit and pathologizing narratives constantly imposed on and sometimes internalized by people of color. During a class presentation, one Mexican American male student resisted “forms of internalized shame by reversing the lens to highlight larger structures of inequality” (p. 161). The students also learned to reposition their civic duties through critical digital literacy. During an interview, a Mexican American female student declared that it is “on us” to bring more equitable changes to communities of color. The carefully designed unit, combined with the use of digital tools, helped students “articulate arguments, critique social structures, and use systematized evidence to enter civic conversations around institutional racism” (p. 162).

Summary

Of the studies on non-Mexican-American Latinx teachers' effects on MAS, four were conducted in elementary schools, two in middle schools, and two in high schools. The teachers' ethnicity and gender include one Bolivian male, one Columbian male, two Columbian females, one Cuban/El Salvadorian female, one El Salvadorian female, one Guatemalan female, one Nicaraguan male, one Peruvian female, and one Puerto Rican male. Of the studies on non-Latinx TOC's effects on MAS, three were conducted in elementary schools, one across an elementary school and two high schools, one in a middle school, and two in high schools. The participating teachers' ethnicity and gender include four African American females, one African American male, two Filipino American males, one Asian Indian American female, and one Korean American female. Hence, there is limited research on TOC working cross-ethnically and cross-culturally with MAS, especially between CAT and MAS.

Almost all of the 15 studies were conducted in ethnically diverse urban schools. They were, however, spread out across different regions of the U.S. Six were conducted in California, three in the Southwest, three in the Midwest, one in the Mideast, one in the North Central, and one in the Southeast. Since geographical location has an impact on the racialization experiences of teachers and students, studies (such as this one) located in other regions of the U.S. are needed.

Another common feature from the reviewed research is the shared qualitative attributes among the non-Mexican-American TOC. Most of the teachers had extensive teaching experiences. They were well grounded in their own cultural heritages and pedagogical skills; lived within or close to the community they served; and were familiar with the contexts of working in urban schools. All non-Mexican-American Latinx teachers were bilingual in Spanish and English (with various fluency levels), and they saw MAS' bilingualism as an asset. This

belief was demonstrated by including students' language backgrounds in lesson plans; providing instructional scaffolding in both languages; encouraging students to use translanguaging to access academic content; pairing students of different English proficiencies to expand linguistic zones of proximal development; assessing students' skills in oral and written formats; and teaching against the *English-only* mandate. Non-Latinx TOC who did not speak Spanish or any language other than English had similar asset-based orientations and instructional practices.

All the TOC facilitated CRT for MAS. This was seen in their deliberate and consistent efforts to include students' funds of knowledge into curricula; help students critique culturally irrelevant curricula; share personal experiences to improve mastery of academic content; use cooperative and independent learning fluidly; use creative instructional materials to facilitate multimodal learning; create assignments to develop students' critical thinking skills; and engage in genuine dialogues with students on how to solve social inequities. Moreover, all the TOC facilitated culturally responsive caring for and with MAS. Some teachers demonstrated caring through having high regards for the teaching profession and learning to improve their own pedagogical practices. Other teachers embodied caring through holding high expectations for students; collaborating with parents to actualize high expectations; staying actively involved with local communities; defending students' rights and dignity in face of racial discrimination; and remaining committed to students' academic excellence and social well-being. The assumption of this study is that similar teaching ideologies and behaviors should be detectable in CAT if they are effective in teaching and building relationships with MAS.

Another important trend that emerged from the reviewed research relates to methodology. Nine included qualitative case studies; three used autoethnographic techniques; two used action research; and one used a mixed-methods approach. Yet, there are some notable gaps in these

methodologies. A few studies published within the last five years were practitioner-oriented. Although beneficial for classroom and pre-service teachers, the methods were either ambiguous, not clearly explained, or strongly particularized. This made their claims less theoretically robust. Among the 15 studies, only six contained interviews and/or survey of students' perspectives about their teachers. Since youth culture and perceptions influence teachers' pedagogical ideologies and practices, the absence of student voices is a limitation that needs to be corrected.

Although all these studies investigated some forms of border-crossing between TOC and MAS, none of them explicitly named this phenomenon. Therefore, while the present study was situated in qualitative methodological conventions, it attempted to be more deliberate about including both students' and teachers' voices equitably, and investigating the implications of the in-between "landscape" resulting from teaching, learning, and border-crossing.

Chapter III: Methodology

The research reviewed in Chapter II served as the scholarly underpinning for this study and a methodological prelude to Chapter III. This chapter includes several procedural phases essential to conducting research. These are the rationale for using qualitative case study methods; the qualitative case study design; the research questions; and the description of research participants and settings. These discussions are followed by procedures for collecting and analyzing data, and methods of increasing procedural trustworthiness.

Rationale for Qualitative Case Study

According to Hammersley (2013), qualitative research is a form of social inquiry “to study a small number of naturally occurring cases in detail, and to use verbal rather than statistical forms of analysis” (p. 12). Another distinguishing feature of qualitative research is “understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 6). As such, qualitative researchers are the primary data collectors and interpreters of their own study, and are “a part of the research process as the participants and the data they provide” (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 4). Qualitative researchers also tend to take a holistic stance on their studies, bring their selves into their studies, and challenge positivist scholars’ orientation to strong objectivity that “legitimizes” one universal truth across cultural differences (Patton, 2014). In so doing, qualitative researchers help expand the epistemological terrain of scholarship through (re)presenting perspectives often unseen in research and voices often marginalized in society (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006).

Creswell and Poth (2017) pointed out that there is a variety of qualitative research methods, each with its own approach, structure, and purpose. Among these different methods is case study. According to Yin (2017), a case study “investigates a contemporary phenomenon in

depth and within its real-world context,” and “relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion” (p. 15). Qualitative case study is thus an approach that allows researchers to examine a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) in depth and context through multiple data sources (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). This method is appropriate when researchers try to answer “how” or “why” questions, have little or no control over behavioral events, and focus on a contemporary as opposed to an historical phenomenon (Yin, 2017). Qualitative case studies also allow researchers to get a close look into a phenomenon, contextualize data to deepen understanding of the phenomenon, and develop multilayered perspectives to interpret the phenomenon (Hamilton & Corbett-Whittier, 2012). In other words, they challenge positivist researchers’ notion that there is only one “right” way to approach scientific research that will result in “universal” truth.

Qualitative Case Study Design

According to Yin (2017), qualitative case study usually follows a four-step design pattern: identify the case and establish the logic of the study; collect case study evidence; analyze case study evidence; and report the case study. The first step can be accomplished through doing extensive review of prior research and scholarship to narrow the topic of interest and discover existing gaps; generating research questions relevant to the field of study; and defining and bounding the case. Subsequently, researchers can collect data that capture the unique attitudes, insights, feelings, and actions of the study participants. Data often come from documents, archival records, participant observations, interviews, and physical artifacts. During data analysis, researchers can follow four general strategies: “relying on theoretical propositions, working [the] data from the ‘ground up,’ developing a case description, and examining rival explanations” (Yin, 2017, p. 164). After completing the first three steps, researchers can determine whether to

present the case study in writing or orally based on the targeted audience. Then they can incorporate textual and visual evidence into their presentation, and ask for others to review drafts of their composition and revise it as needed.

This study follows the four-step qualitative case study design to examine how CAT make sense out of their pedagogy to promote school performance of MAS, and how CAT and MAS perceive their relationships with each other. (See *Appendix A* for research design overview.) The overall intent of this study was to build a theory for understanding pedagogies CAT use to support MAS' school performance, and extend the current educational scholarship on CAT.

Research Questions

This study assumed that CAT engage in *borderland teaching* for and with MAS. If this is true, then the questions worthy of examination are how is *borderland teaching* facilitated, and to what effect. Hence, this study examined three major research questions:

- What kinds of pedagogies do Chinese American teachers in secondary schools use to promote the school performance of Mexican American students?
- How do Chinese American teachers' racialized experiences influence their pedagogies and their perceptions of Mexican American students in secondary schools?
- How do Mexican American students and Chinese American teachers in secondary schools perceive their relationships with each other?

Participant Selection and Settings

While working as an instructional coach in the TEP at the university where I was studying for a doctoral degree, I established rapport with several classroom teachers and principals in local school districts. With recommendations from some of the teachers and principals, I recruited two CAT and three MAS in two different high schools in the region to

participate in a pilot study in 2017. When I concluded the pilot study, I asked these two CAT and principals at their schools to nominate more CAT in the Pacific Northwest who were committed to educational equity for SOC. After receiving six nominations in September 2018, I sent each teacher an individual email, explained my research project, and asked if they would be interested in participating. One teacher never replied to my email. Two teachers replied that they were interested but could not participate during the current school year due to personal constraints. By November 2018, the other three teachers replied “yes” and wanted to discuss the study in more details and in person.

I met with them in early December 2018. During the first meeting, I engaged in a process of “reciprocal vulnerability” (Kohli, 2014) by sharing my immigration stories with each teacher and listening to each of their life stories. An overarching theme from our collective stories was we each had experienced racial prejudice and discrimination as teachers of Chinese ancestry, and were continuing to fight against racism through teaching and advocating for ethnically diverse SOC. This meeting was the beginning of building mutual trust. Afterwards, I asked each teacher to help me recruit MAS in their classrooms to participate in the study. I also sent an email to the principals at the schools and asked for permission to conduct my study. When all three teachers emailed me that they had secured some potential student participants, I arranged a time to visit each of their classrooms and meet those MAS. During my visit, I took field notes of the teachers’ instructional techniques and their interactions with students in class. When class was over, I spoke with MAS about my research project, presented them the student participant assent form, and asked them to read it with their parents/guardians before signing (see *Appendix B*). I also gave each teacher a copy of the teacher participant consent form (see *Appendix C*). By the end of December 2018, all principals had given approval to conduct the study at their school sites; all

three teachers returned their signed consent forms and agreed to participate; and eleven MAS returned their signed forms with consent from their parents/guardians to participate.

Ms. Chao and the Three MAS in Her Class

Ms. Chao is a 1.5-generation Chinese American. Born and raised by parents (originally from Shanghai) who have advanced degrees, she developed a passion for reading at an early age. This passion led her to pursue a bachelor's degree in English from a private liberal arts college on the East Coast of the U.S. and eventually led to a Master in Teaching program at an Ivy League institution. During her graduate studies, she was very sensitive to and vocal about the program's scattered representation of Asian American faculties. She initiated an effort to organize an on-campus panel that invited Asian American teachers in local schools to speak and connect with Asian American teacher candidates in the program. She earned her master's degree in the mid-1990s and applied for teaching jobs on the East Coast. However, she experienced racial prejudice during the process because she was often called for interviews for teaching ELLs while her applications were for teaching ELA. Eventually, she was offered an ELA position at a "desegregated" high school on the East Coast. Although she enjoyed working with most of her colleagues, she remembered vividly that she was the only teacher of color on campus and that most of her African American students were still bused across town to the school. Witnessing what the African American students were going through, she organized a weekly lunch group in her classroom, invited them to eat lunch with her, and provided them emotional support.

Two years later, Ms. Chao's parents moved back to Asia. However, her father visited Los Angeles, CA frequently for business purposes. Ms. Chao decided to move to Los Angeles so that she could still connect with her father whenever he was in town. Shortly after moving to Los Angeles, she secured a position in a private, evangelical middle school that served a

predominantly Armenian community and taught there for two years. She then transitioned to working as a 6th grade ELA teacher at a private school that served a predominantly upper-class Jewish community in Bel-Air, CA for the next ten years. Within those ten years, she got married and looked for a place to settle down. Discouraged by the expensive housing in Los Angeles, Ms. Chao and her husband relocated to the State of Washington in 2008. Since then, she has been working as a high school ELA teacher in the same public school district. In 2010, she obtained her National Board Certification and was promoted to the English Department Chair at her school. Ms. Chao loves working with students, maintains open communications with parents, and has a great relationship with most of her colleagues and the principal.

Jerome, Cuac, and Michi are the MAS in Ms. Chao's 9th grade ELA Honors class. Jerome grew up in Oregon and Washington, speaks Spanish fluently, and has hard-working parents. He enjoyed elementary school tremendously because most teachers genuinely cared for his success, yet felt bitter about his middle school experiences because many teachers treated him unfairly based on his skin color. Cuac grew up in a predominantly Mexican American community in Washington and enrolled in a bilingual program from K-6th grades. He enjoyed elementary school immensely because all his teachers were of Mexican ancestry, and taught him how to speak Spanish and take pride in his culture. However, Cuac felt the hegemony of English when he attended a middle school far away from his elementary school. Michi grew up in Washington and lives with his mother. Although he enjoyed elementary school, he was mostly quiet and did not learn to speak Spanish. He attended the same middle school with Jerome but did not have the same experience since most teachers left him alone.

The class in which these students were enrolled was the first period of the day, and was composed of 30 students whose identities are reflective of the school's demographics. Highlands

High School (HHS) is a Title I school with approximately 1,500 students and 70 teachers. The student racial demographics are 10.2% African ancestry; 10.9% Asian ancestry; 51.9% European origins; 17.4% Latinx; 7.7% Multiracial; 0.6% Native American/Alaskan Native; and 1.3% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Student gender ratio is about 52% female and 48% male. There are students who self-identify as LGBTQ, yet the official data on the percentage of these students was unavailable. About 40% of the students qualify for free or reduced school lunch (FRSL); 9% are categorized as ELLs; and 7% qualify for SPED services (OSPI, 2019). Over the past few years, HHS has seen a steady increase of ethnically diverse SOC and immigrant students from Ukraine. Currently, the school's four-year graduation rate is at 79%.

Mr. Lee and the Three MAS in His Class

Mr. Lee's parents (originally from Hainan, China) immigrated to Saigon for work during the 1950s. When the Vietnam War began, his family applied for refugee visas and arrived in Seattle in 1979. The youngest of three siblings, Mr. Lee grew up in a government subsidized housing neighborhood, was bused to predominantly White schools during his K-12 education, and was often called "chinks" by most of his White teachers. Against all odds, he worked diligently to get into a prestigious university in the State of Washington and earned a bachelor's degree in Ethnic Studies in 1997. When he applied for ELA teaching positions with his Chinese last name, he was seldom called for interviews partially because of the stereotype that people of Asian ancestry were not good enough to teach English to native English speakers. When Mr. Lee changed his last name to a common (White) American name during job application, he was immediately called for interviews and offered a teaching position in a local middle school. Since then, he has taught ELA and social studies for a decade in two school districts that served predominantly middle-class White students. Even with such extensive teaching experiences, Mr.

Lee continued to be questioned by some of his White colleagues about his qualification to teach ELA. Tired of justifying himself, Mr. Lee returned to graduate school at a local private institution and obtained his endorsement in mathematics in 2006. Shortly after, he started teaching high school mathematics in a different school district. Five years ago, Mr. Lee became a middle school mathematics teacher in the school district where he is currently employed.

Mr. Lee is one of the very few TOC in the district and is very incisive about issues related to racial equity. In 2013, the school district did not report Asian American students as “minorities” on their annual report card. Instead, it manipulated the Asian American quota to elevate school performance grades in order to gain more funding from the state. He noticed this unethical practice and sent an email to the principal, only to receive a diplomatic response about how all teachers helped the school district improve its performance on state standardized assessment. After this incident, Mr. Lee became more vigilant and strategic about promoting racial equity at the district. For instance, when the school sent out a “confidential” survey to teachers asking for their feedback about curriculum development and leadership decision making, Mr. Lee honestly expressed his concerns but checked “White” for the teacher racial identity category. He knew this strategy would increase the possibility of his answers being seriously considered and decrease the potential of exposing his real identity. Mr. Lee has served two years as co-chair and one year as chair of the mathematics department at the school. He enjoys teaching and engaging with students, maintains open communications with parents, and has a great relationship with most of his colleagues and the district’s assistant superintendent.

Camila, Luna, and Mina are the MAS in Mr. Lee’s 7th & 8th grade mathematics class. Camila grew up in Washington, speaks Spanish fluently, and has hard-working parents. She recognizes that school provides her opportunities for a future career and is not deterred by others

who don't take advantage of them. Luna's parents immigrated from Mexico to Washington and raised her speaking Spanish and English. Despite unpleasant memories of some elementary grade teachers who talked to her dad differently because of his accent, Luna enjoys school for the most part. Mina also grew up in Washington, was raised by parents who immigrated from Mexico, and speaks Spanish fluently. Like the other two girls, Mina enjoys school and cherishes the opportunities she has been provided.

The class in which these students were enrolled was the second period of the day, and was composed of 18 students whose identities are reflective of the school's demographics. Valley Middle School (VMS) is a Title I school with approximately 950 students and 45 teachers. The student racial demographics are 7.6% African ancestry; 10.9% Asian ancestry; 47.6% European origins; 24.2% Latinx; 7.4% Multiracial; 0.5% Native American/Alaskan Native, and 1.7% Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Student gender ratio is about 51.5% female and 48.5% male. There are students who self-identify as LGBTQ, yet the official data on the percentage of these students was unavailable. About 48% of the students qualify for FRSL; 11% are categorized as ELLs; and 10% qualify for SPED services (OSPI, 2019). Over the past few years, VMS has seen a steady increase of ethnically diverse SOC and immigrant students from Ukraine. Currently, this school's percentage of students meeting standard on state standardized assessment is slight below district average.

Ms. Srang and the Five MAS in Her Class

Ms. Srang's father (originally from Southern China) immigrated to Cambodia during the 1960s and gradually became a successful chain barbershop owner. When the Khmer Rouge army seized control of Cambodia and started ethnic cleansing in 1975, Ms. Srang's father lost his home and business, escaped the country, and ended up in a refugee camp in Thailand. He met Ms.

Srang's mother in the camp while applying for asylum to come to the U.S. When he was granted a refugee visa, he set sail and landed in New York in 1981. Upon his arrival, he petitioned for a visa for Ms. Srang's mother and they were reunited within one year. The third of six children in her family, Ms. Srang was born in San Francisco and moved frequently in California for seven years but lived mostly in working-class neighborhoods with people of color from different ethnic backgrounds. Besides experiencing financial hardship, Ms. Srang struggled with schooling because most of her teachers perceived her as a quiet, well-behaved Asian American girl who caused no troubles at school and was mostly meeting academic standards. She also struggled to come to terms with her own ethnic identity because her father barely allowed anyone at home to talk about their Chineseness due to the historical trauma he had personally experienced. In 1992 her family moved to the State of Washington and again settled in an ethnically diverse urban neighborhood. Later, Ms. Srang was admitted by a prestigious university in the state and earned a bachelor's degree in anthropology.

Somewhere in between these life transitions, Ms. Srang met her first husband and gave birth to a boy and a girl. Around the same time, she enrolled in a Master in Teaching program at a private institution in the State of Washington and earned her teaching credentials in 2010. After she was employed, she started to petition for her husband's transition from an undocumented Mexican immigrant to a U.S. permanent resident. Unfortunately, this legal process proved to be time consuming, costly, and fruitless. What made the situation worse was that Ms. Srang could not be approved for a mortgage because she was married to an undocumented immigrant. Eventually, Ms. Srang filed for divorce with her husband but chose to raise their children together. These deeply personal experiences made Ms. Srang care about and for all her SOC, especially those who are from low-income backgrounds and undocumented. This was evident in

her and an African American male colleague pushing White teachers in the mathematics department at the school to use curricula that deeply reflect and contextualize their SOC's ethnic diversity and lived realities. Ms. Srang obtained her National Board Certification in 2017; has been teaching at the current school for more than five years; and is well regarded by her students, the parents, her colleagues, and the principal.

Alan, Chris, Emma, Lily, and Tyrone are the MAS in Ms. Srang's 6th grade mathematics class. Alan grew up in Washington and speaks Spanish fluently. He enjoys playing videogames, helping his parents, and going to school. Chris grew up in Washington and lives with his mother and grandmother. His 2nd grade teacher was from Mexico and taught him how to speak Spanish. He has fond memories of elementary schools, except for the first one he attended where he was frequently bullied. Emma was raised by politically conscious and hard-working parents in Washington. She has been placed in gifted programs since 2nd grade; enjoys cooking with her mom and reading; and is proud to claim mathematics as her favorite subject. Lily's parents immigrated from Mexico to Washington and raised her speaking Spanish. She helps her parents take care of younger siblings and other household chores. She enjoyed elementary school but understands that she is expected to do more in middle school. Tyrone was raised in Washington and grew up speaking Spanish. Although he has a carefree persona in navigating school, he takes his academic performance seriously and tries out for sports programs at the school.

The class in which these students were enrolled was the last period of the day, and was composed of 29 students whose identities are reflective of the school's demographics. Lakeview Middle School (LMS) is a Title I school with approximately 610 students and 32 teachers. The student racial demographics are 17% African ancestry; 30.1% Asian ancestry; 12.1% European origins; 31.1% Latinx; 5.3% Multiracial; 0.8% Native American/Alaskan Native, and 3.7%

Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander. Student gender ratio is about 48% female and 52% male.

There are students who self-identify as LGBTQ, but the official data on the percentage of these students was unavailable. About 70% of the students qualify for FRSL; 31% are categorized as ELLs; and 11% qualify for SPED services (OSPI, 2019). Due to a recent economic surge of a nearby metropolis and subsequent gentrification, LMS has witnessed numerical growths of low-income SOC. Yet this was not accompanied by comparable increases in allocation of educational resources. Hence, the opportunity gap has negatively influenced most students' performance on state standardized assessment (below district average).

A demographic summary of the participants for this study is presented in Table 1. As these data showed, there were three teachers with professional experience ranging from 9 - 20+ years. Two were females and one was male. At the time of the study, two were teaching mathematics in middle school and one was teaching ELA in high school. Of the 11 student participants, five were females and six were males; five were in 6th grade, two were in 7th grade, one was in 8th grade, and three were in 9th grade.

Table 1. Summary of Chinese American Teachers and Mexican American Students

CAT	Gender	Bilingual	Years of Teaching Experience	Content Area	MAS	Gender	Bilingual (Spanish; English)	Grade Level
Ms. Chao	Female	Mandarin; English	20 years +	English Language Arts	Jerome	Male	Yes	9th
					Cuac	Male	Yes	9th
					Michi	Male	No	9th
Mr. Lee	Male	Mandarin; English	20 years +	Mathematics	Camila	Female	Yes	8th
					Luna	Female	Yes	7th
					Mina	Female	Yes	7th
Ms. Srang	Female	Spanish; English	9 years	Mathematics	Alan	Male	Yes	6th
					Chris	Male	Yes	6th
					Emma	Female	No	6th
					Lily	Female	Yes	6th
					Tyrone	Male	Yes	6th

A demographic summary of students at the schools is presented in Table 2. As these data showed, students of European origins were the demographic majority at HHS (51.9%), and SOC were the demographic majority at VMS (52.4%) and LMS (87.9%). There were slightly more female students at HHS (52%) and VMS (51.5%), in comparison to LMS (48%). The percentage of students who qualified for FRSL at the schools was between 40% – 70%, with those at HHS being the lowest and LMS being the highest. The percentage of students who were categorized as ELLs ranged from 9% to 31%, with those at LMS more than triple of HHS. Students who qualified for SPED services fell along a similar range: 7% – 11%.

Table 2. Demographic Summary of Students (in Percentage) at the Schools

Name of School	Race							Gender		FRSL	ELL	SPED
	AfA	AsA	EO	L	M	NA	NH/PI	Female	Male			
HHS	10.2	10.9	51.9	17.4	7.7	0.6	1.3	52	48	40	9	7
VMS	7.6	10.9	47.6	24.2	7.4	0.5	1.7	51.5	48.5	48	11	10
LMS	17	30.1	12.1	31.1	5.3	0.8	3.7	48	52	70	31	11

Note on Abbreviation:

AfA – African Ancestry; AsA – Asian Ancestry; EO – European Origins; L – Latinx; M – Multiracial; NA – Native Alaskan/Native American; NH/PI – Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

A summary of school demographics is presented in Table 3. The three schools were located in urban areas of the Pacific Northwest. HHS was the largest and LMS was the smallest in terms of student enrollment and number of teachers. Student teacher ratio at each school was similar: between 21:1 and 19:1. Teachers’ gender was reflective of the profession with predominantly females: 61.4% at HHS, 57.8% at VMS, and 69% at LMS. Teachers’ racial identity was also reflective of the profession with mostly Whites: 85.7% at HHS, 88.9% at VMS, and 62.5% at LMS. The data reflected the “demographic divide” (Gay & Howard, 2000), where a persistently homogeneous teaching population (White females) interacted with increasingly ethnically diverse student populations.

Table 3. Summary of School Demographics

Name of School	Urban Area	Number of Students	Number of Teachers	Number of Teachers by Race and Gender				Student Teacher Ratio
				TOC	White	Female	Male	
HHS	Yes	1,500	70	10	60	43	27	21:1
VMS	Yes	950	45	5	40	26	19	21:1
LMS	Yes	610	32	10	20	22	10	19:1

Data Collection

I started collecting data in January 2019 and completed this process by the end of June 2019. I visited each teacher’s classroom two to three times each week for one hour per visit, observed, and recorded field notes of their instructional strategies for and interactions with MAS. My field notes included detailed descriptions of each teacher’s pedagogical techniques; physical movements, verbal and nonverbal communications with MAS; and MAS’ responses to each teacher’s instruction, movements, and communications (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011). Due to severe weather conditions in February 2019, each school was cancelled for two weeks. Other factors, such as the teachers’ family obligations and district professional development meetings, limited the opportunities for classroom observation. In the end, the observation hours I collected from each teacher’s class are 30 for Ms. Chao, 23 for Mr. Lee, and 30 for Ms. Srang.

I conducted a semi-structured, open-ended interview with each teacher in March 2019. I interviewed Ms. Chao at a local library, Mr. Lee in the staff lounge at his school, and Ms. Srang in her classroom. These interviews focused on each teacher’s conception of their own pedagogy; ways they support MAS in their classrooms and at the school; and their relationships with MAS’ parents (see *Appendix D* for the first interview questions). Data gathered from the first interview helped adjust a follow-up interview with each teacher, which was conducted in June 2019. This time I interviewed Ms. Chao at a local resort club, Mr. Lee at his house, and Ms. Srang in her classroom. This interview investigated how each teacher crossed cultural borders in class; how

they were and still are racialized in schools and in society; and their suggestions for TEPs to better prepare preservice teachers on working with MAS (see *Appendix E* for the second interview questions). Each interview of the three teachers lasted between 45 and 60 minutes.

I conducted semi-structured, open-ended focus group interviews with the participating students in May 2019. I interviewed the MAS in Ms. Chao's class in the school library; the MAS in Mr. Lee's class in the school counselor's office; and the MAS in Ms. Srang's class (Alan, Emma, and Lily in one group; Chris and Tyrone in another group) in a school administrator's office. The interview examined each student's own schooling experiences; their perceptions of the CAT's pedagogical strategies; and their relationships with the CAT (see *Appendix F* for the interview questions). Each focus group interview lasted between 45 and 60 minutes. One week after the interview, I met with the MAS in their school library and asked them to work as a group to draw a picture or write a poem about their CAT. Other data collected included the teachers' lesson and unit plans, and students' assessments, assignments, and artifacts from class projects.

I followed the qualitative data collection procedures recommended by Merriam and Tisdell (2015) and Spradley (2016). For example, I usually sat in the back of the classroom and remained silent while taking field notes on my laptop. When I observed something that confused me, I made a note of it and asked the teachers to clarify at the end of the class. I also tried to blend in with the class by dressing in a formal-to-casual manner as each teacher did. When I signed in and out at the administrative offices, I remained courteous to the staff and principals, and expressed my gratitude as needed. Prior to the interviews, I solicited feedback from my advisor to make sure that the questions were reasonable and accessible to the participants. I then worked with the participants to find locations that helped maintain the informal nature of our conversations. During the interviews, I listened attentively to the participants; probed for

clarification without imposing my perspectives on them; and audio-recorded our conversations. Afterwards, I assigned each participant a pseudonym and transcribed all the interviews on my own. I then destroyed all the audio-recordings on my phone and in my iCloud storage. These procedures helped me protect the participants' confidentiality.

Data Analysis

I started preliminary data analysis in February 2019. This process allowed me to adjust the focus of subsequent classroom observations and some of the interview questions. In May 2019, my maternal grandmother had a stroke and almost passed away. Traumatized by this situation, I stopped data analysis and spent time healing. I resumed the analysis in January 2020 and completed the process in March 2020. These three months allowed me to process and make better sense of the data. During the initial stage, I coded all the field notes and interview transcripts using "open" coding to categorize and conceptualize the data. This procedure generated some descriptive codes, such as "using multimedia to explain academic concepts," "using personal stories to contextualize class discussions," and "MAS experiencing different forms of racism at school." I also wrote analytic memos to compare coding categories across cases, and identify overlaps to condense data and infer meaning (Saldaña, 2015). The overlaps in the initial codes provided structure for major themes that emerged from the analyses.

During the second stage of analysis, I engaged in a focused coding process grounded in the scholarship introduced in the conceptual framework. For example, I looked within and across cases for themes that represented how the teachers' in-between experiences and consciousness influenced their pedagogical beliefs and actions. I also wrote analytic memos to keep track of supporting and invalidating evidence of major themes, and revised them as needed (Miles, Huberman, & Saldaña, 2019). This procedure allowed me to theorize from major themes within

and across cases, and draw inferences from the data (see *Appendix G* for the data analysis process). A revised coding scheme emerged after these two stages of data analysis and is presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Revised Coding Scheme

Conceptual Framework	Themes and Codes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embody physical, mental, and cultural in-betweenness • Construct knowledge from the margins • Validate marginality 	<p>Hybrid identities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asian and American • Black and White • Home and school • Expertise and stereotype • Privilege and oppression <p>Neither totally mainstream nor minority-oriented teaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using multiple materials and references to explain academic concepts • Using multiple ways to engage and assess student learning <p>Empathy with students’ lived experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflecting on personal struggles • Addressing social inequities in class
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cross cultural borders • Synchronize cultural differences • Resist cultural hegemony 	<p>Seeking commonality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using humor • Using personal stories <p>Matching teaching styles with learning styles</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding group characteristics and individual differences • Adjusting pedagogical strategies <p>Education as a pathway to success</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asset view of students and parents • Holding high expectations for students
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Care for experiences of alienation • Cultivate agency • Foster decolonizing kinships 	<p>Leveraging resources for students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising concerns at the school and district • Advocating through various methods <p>Developing multiple competence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic confidence • Social skills • Political consciousness <p>Respecting each other’s humanity</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building and sustaining genuine relationships • Serving as role model and mentor • Holding a place for each other

I established the credibility and trustworthiness of the study in a sequential way. Prior to data analysis, I emailed each teacher the transcripts of their interviews, and asked them to edit misunderstanding of their words and add any information they felt comfortable sharing that was not included in the interviews. During data analysis, I triangulated observation field notes and interviews to trace patterns of the teachers' instructional strategies, as well as MAS' subsequent responses within and across cases. In so doing, I increased the study's internal validity (Patton, 2014). As I wrote up my analyses, I sent preliminary findings to the teachers to solicit feedback to rule out possibilities of misinterpreting their words and actions. This procedure helped me guard against my own blinders and increased the trustworthiness of the findings (Maxwell, 2013).

Another way I enhanced the trustworthiness of the study was recognizing, reflecting, and recording my own emotions during data collection and analysis. According to Banks's (1998) typology of cross-cultural researchers, an indigenous-insider is someone who "endorses the unique values, perspectives, behaviors, beliefs, and knowledge of his or her indigenous community and culture and is perceived by people within the community as a legitimate community member who can speak with authority about it" (p. 8). Because of my upbringing experiences in China and my immigration journey in the U.S., I am deeply grounded in Chinese culture and connected with the overseas Chinese diaspora. These experiences and my reciprocal vulnerability helped the three CAT trust me as an indigenous-insider to examine, write about, and share their stories. At the same time, I felt affiliated with the Mexican American culture due to my prior working, immigration, and lived experiences in Southern Arizona, and personal travel to different regions of Mexico. These experiences of crossing and being crossed by ethnic, racial, linguistic, cultural, national, and geographical borders allowed me to gain unique insights into the research, yet challenged me to reconfigure my positionality as a researcher.

As I collected and analyzed data, I constantly felt like entering and exiting a borderland between the past and the present, between reality and memory, and between autobiography and ethnography. These processes generated excitement, bewilderment, certainty, ambivalence, longing, and restraint. For example, when I observed the CAT teaching and interacting with the MAS in dynamic ways, I reflected on my experiences teaching MAS and felt excited about capturing the teachers' pedagogical activities. When I analyzed the MAS' experiences of various forms of racism in school, I was reminded of what my former students had to cope with. I felt saddened by this continued reality, yet constrained due to my role as a researcher. Instead of ignoring these emotions, I recorded and reflected on them to "better connect my own profound sense of displacement with the professional rituals of displacement [of qualitative research]" (Behar, 1996, p. 21). In so doing, my self-reflexivity enhanced the authenticity of data collection and analysis. While I have not yet reconciled some of these emotions, I hope naming and sharing them is a step toward more ethical and humanizing research that embraces the researcher's vulnerability as a way of decolonizing education.

Summary

This chapter began with a discussion of the rationale for qualitative research design and methods used to examine how Chinese American teachers promote the schooling experiences and outcomes for and with Mexican American students. This was followed by descriptions of the three participating Chinese American teachers, eleven participating Mexican American students, and the demographics and contexts of their respective schools. The procedures for data collection and analysis were then discussed in details, and the coding scheme was listed. The chapter concluded with a discussion of methods used to increase the study's trustworthiness.

Chapter IV: Findings I

The findings of this study were derived from data collected through classroom observations, semi-structured interviews, and documents analyses. Nine major themes emerged from these data. The three themes presented in this chapter are hybrid identities; neither totally mainstream nor minority-oriented teaching; and empathy with students' lived experiences. Each theme is discussed in details with supportive data.

Hybrid Identities

All three teachers in this study exhibited various hybrid identities regarding race, culture, social status, and professionalization. However, the journey to reach such hybrid identities was lengthy and different for each of them. When prompted to reflect on their upbringing experiences, each teacher shared some irreconcilable aspects of their personal identity. Ms. Chao said,

All the way till 8th grade, I grew up in a predominantly White and Black neighborhood. There were a lot of White kids and African American kids in my middle school, but only three Asian American kids and I was one of them. I always feel more American when I am with my peers at school and more Asian when I am at home with my parents or going out to eat Chinese food. There wasn't ever a melting of the two worlds.

Ms. Chao noticed her identity as a demographic minority caught between the Black and White racial binary in her neighborhood and school. Besides navigating this identity, she felt the split between being Asian and being American as she transitioned between home and school.

Sharing somewhat similar experiences, Mr. Lee stated,

I grew up in a housing project and the neighborhood was predominantly minorities, lots of Southeast Asians like Cambodians, Laotians, and Vietnamese. We would play with each other and that's cool. We were bused to schools and there weren't a whole lot of

buses. Most of the White kids could actually get to the school with a ride from their parents or they could pay 25 cents to hop on a public bus. So when you step off the school bus, they knew exactly where you're from and what your income level is... In my high school P.E. classes, the teachers would say, 'All the gooks and chinks on one side of the gymnasium and everybody else on the other side.' They would let the White kids pick their own team first. After all the White kids were picked, the teachers would let them pick the Black kids. Then they would say, 'Now pick from this group of Asians.'

Mr. Lee's experience is a testament to the racial and economic segregations built into the U.S. society. In his working-class neighborhood, he socialized with Asian immigrant children. Yet, when he got off the school bus, he stepped into a middle-class White world, in which his identity as a low-income Asian student was a target of discrimination and humiliation. The drastic difference between home and school contributed to the incongruity of his personal identity.

Ms. Srang's story indicated another layer of complexity. She explained that Growing up, my dad was always like, 'No talking or water until you're done eating. Then you can leave and talk whatever.' At school, I felt mostly ignored because I do my work; I am quiet; and I don't get into trouble. And I've noticed in our society that Asian girls aren't really pushed to do well. So even though I was doing academically well, no one said, 'Oh, you could do so much more.'

Ms. Srang received mixed messages from authorities at home and at school. Her dad assumed a parenting style that maintained authoritative control and the hierarchy between parents and children. At school, she did not have similar control or hierarchy between the teachers and herself. Rather, she was left alone due to her teachers' "benevolent" racist attitudes toward Asian female students. These experiences revealed irreconcilable aspects of her personal identity.

As each teacher progressed to adulthood, more race-related factors caused conflicts in their professional identity. When asked about the difficulties they encountered in their careers, each teacher shared candidly. Ms. Chao recalled,

When I first started looking for jobs, my racial identity was an issue because I remember I wasn't getting called for interviews, or I was called for interviews for positions I didn't apply. Even after I had some teaching experiences, this was still an issue. I still remember at the private school in California, the principal would always introduce me to parents saying, 'This is my new English language arts teacher and she's an Ivy League graduate.' I was like, 'I haven't gone to the university in 10 years.'

Despite having an advanced degree from a prestigious university, Ms. Chao experienced racial stereotypes about Asian Americans not having good English skills. This conflicted with what she was trained to teach, thus creating incongruence in her professional identity as an ELA teacher.

Resonating with Ms. Chao's sentiment, Mr. Lee shared a similar yet different experience: I think when I lost my Asian accent, that might have given me some advantages when I did phone interviews for teaching jobs. But when they see me, it takes on a different direction. Just my last name, it's a turn-off for a lot of people in terms of the subjects I teach, English v. math. I would never have to defend myself teaching math. They just assume I am good at math, which is far from it. I'm not good at math and I have to work very hard to be good at it.

While Ms. Chao had to defend her expertise for teaching ELA due to racial stereotypes, Mr. Lee never needed to defend his ability to teach math because of racial stereotypes. This, however, created a conflict in his professional identity because he felt torn between societal expectations and his actual math teaching skills.

Ms. Srang echoed the experiences of Ms. Chao and Mr. Lee, and added another layer of complexity dealing with work. She said,

During my first-year teaching, I struggled with other White teachers. The way they talked to me was very demeaning. My mentor teacher made me cry because she was talking to me as if I was still a student teacher without autonomy of how I want to run my own classroom. Even though I said I wanted to do things this or that way, she kept suggesting that I do things her way. In my current school, the senior teachers talk to me in a way that I have a problem with. It has to do with when I say something and they would say something back in a way that makes me and other people question if I was right. But they wouldn't do that to anyone else. So I always have to defend myself. In other cases when we were selecting new math curricula, I made suggestions and they didn't even put them on the list, whereas all the curricula suggested by White teachers were the ones we dove into, piloted, and tried out. So sometimes I feel like having ideas and suggestions doesn't really matter because they aren't going to be taken seriously.

In comparison to Ms. Chao and Mr. Lee who had to deal with the explicit impact of racial stereotypes on their professional identity, Ms. Srang's experience was more implicit in the sense that her White colleagues of senior rank treated her with little professional respect. This type of "seniority" racial discrimination created dissonance in Ms. Srang's professional identity as she felt conflicted about contributing her knowledge but was not treated with equal recognition.

In addition to conflicts in their personal and professional identities, each teacher possessed nuanced understandings of their social positioning. When asked to reflect on their contextual privileges and oppressions, they provided rich details. Ms. Chao felt that

in some ways East Asian Americans have ‘made it’ because we are no longer a concern for the racial majority, but at the same time we are not part of the racial majority. So we need to be considered in conversations about racial equity, especially since there are so many varying generations of East Asians from people who were born and raised here to first-generation immigrants. Assuming we are all the same does us a disservice.

Although recognizing East Asian Americans who have achieved mainstream success may no longer pose a threat to Whites, Ms. Chao pointed that it is problematic to consider them as a monolithic group, and to be left out in the pursuit for racial equity.

Mr. Lee agreed with this observation but added,

I think East Asian Americans are often not included in conversations about racial equity because many of us are considered high-performing. So we get mixed into the shuffle.

But some Asian American students need help at school and it’s difficult for them to get it because Asian Americans have been made a blur in the Black and White racial binary.

For some Asian Americans, they just don’t know what they want to be. My sister wants to be White and she lost her ethnic identity. And then there are those who are tired of being mistreated, so they blend in, stay quiet, and try not to be noticed.

Observing how Asian Americans are positioned in the Black and White racial binary, Mr. Lee reflected on how his own family member assimilated into Whiteness, and how some other Asian Americans conform to racial stereotypes to survive. This positioning puts Asian Americans in a double-bind, where they simultaneously experience certain privileges and oppressions.

Duality was also evident in the following observations made by Ms. Srang:

The history of our country often falls into this Black and White binary that does not involve Asians. Because I am not part of the group who were enslaved here or part of the

group who enslaved, this part of the history needs to be hashed out without me. When the school talks about racial equity, I definitely don't feel like I belong to either White or Black, except when they're using phrases like 'people of color.' Then I feel like I'm being included. But I also think every time they say 'people of color,' they are not really talking about me. They say the phrase because they don't want to say 'Black people' or 'Brown people.' But I do feel some effects of it. When I go to math trainings and raise concerns about something problematic, I get some people hushing me like, 'We're not here to guess.' And I think to myself, 'I didn't guess. I know it.' So I notice this very slight discrimination because it happens all the time.

Reflecting on her social positioning, Ms. Srang acknowledged that the legacy of slavery is not part of her heritage. This granted her some leverage in navigating mainstream society. However, this leverage was not present when she challenged White authorities in professional settings. This reinforced her ambivalent feelings about being simultaneously included and excluded in conversations about racial equity.

All three teachers experienced incongruities in their personal and professional identities, and social positioning. Although some incongruities were more salient than others, in some way they all involved their complex personal and professional experiences. As they became older, and accumulated more teaching and living experiences, these incongruities gradually diminished and were incorporated into their identities. Ms. Chao explained how she came to terms with her own identities by saying,

When I first started teaching, my struggle was getting to know the parents, and their community and culture. Now I am mostly dealing with many people's assumption that I don't understand what it is like to struggle or to be an outsider. For example, a few years

ago the principal took a group of students to watch *Hidden Figures* [Melfi, 2016]. She thought it would be a great bonding moment with students of color. The school counselor who is White and has adopted an Ethiopian child was invited. The ELL teacher who worked with a lot of students of color was invited. The two African American staff members went. But I was not invited. Everyone at the school assumed I was going and asked, 'Are you going?' I was like, 'No. I wasn't invited.' So in that sense, I guess I am not seen as a minority. Every now and then, I get stuff like this that made me feel like I was not included. But I am not really offended because I know if I went to the principal and told her I wanted to go, she would be receptive.

Ms. Chao's struggles transitioned from learning to connect with the school community she served to confronting others' misconceptions about her as her social status elevated. Rather than being offended by racially exclusive incidents, Ms. Chao centered her identities around knowing what, when, and how to push back on inequities.

Similarly, Mr. Lee reflected on his evolving identities. He stated,

I feel like an in-betweener all the time because I don't get some of the nuances of what recent Asian immigrants are experiencing now. I know it was hard for me when I came to America, but I know their difficulties of adjusting to new schools are quite different from mine. So I get this feeling of in-between because I can't quite relate to them all the way and they don't quite see me in their position all the time... I am also vocal, but at the same time I am getting to an age that I don't really care whether you punish me or not. I came to this realization years ago that I don't really need a job. If I lose everything, I can survive because I still remember the days of surviving in America with no money. And I can still do that. So I do feel blurred in the middle, but I also feel blessed to be in the

middle cuz I can go either way. I've been in America long enough that I can go White if I want to. I don't know if I can go back being completely Asian, but I have no problem blending in with Asians.

Mr. Lee's identities are layered. He felt somewhat but not completely connected with incoming generations of Asian immigrants. Yet, his age and financial stability granted him the flexibility to bounce back and forth between blending in with Asians and acting White if needed. These layered identities made him feel alienated and blessed at the same time, a central signifier of his Asian Americanness.

Although somewhat similar to Ms. Chao's and Ms. Lee's identity evolving trajectory, Ms. Srang's journey took on a different direction as she explained:

I think in some White teachers' mind Asian American students do better than White students so they don't feel the need to celebrate Asian American students. This makes me saddened because two of my brothers had not succeeded in school. One had to leave school at 7th grade and the other one left around 9th grade... My kids' cousin, a Mexican American, lives in this apartment complex where many students I teach come out and play. I often drop off my kids with their cousin and their grandma watches them. So my students will always play with my kids. When I started school this year, a lot of the students knew my kids already. Some of them thought I was Mexican because my kids are part Mexican, and their cousin and grandma are Mexican. Even one of the parents who live across the hall from my kids' cousin said to her husband, 'You can speak Spanish with her. She's Mexican.' And I thought, 'You can speak Spanish, but I'm Asian.' But I also didn't refuse I'm Mexican.

Ms. Srang's Asian identity was neglected by her White teachers' and White colleagues' racist attitudes and actions. She found refuge in personal and cultural affiliations with local Mexican American communities. This became crucial in her evolving identities as she continued to care for Asian American students' achievement due to her own personal and family members' experiences, while leveraging her Spanish-speaking ability and familial connections to reconfigure her Chinese-Mexican identity.

These personal stories indicated that the teachers in this study possessed hybrid identities that resemble "in-betweenness," which speaks to their "ability to hold multiple perspectives while simultaneously maintaining a center that revolves around fighting against concrete material forms of oppression" (Cantú & Hurtado, 2012, p. 7). This "in-betweenness" was a central feature of their Asian Americanness that allowed them to resist and reconfigure alienation from U.S. dominant culture.

Neither Totally Mainstream nor Minority-Oriented Teaching

These teachers' hybrid identities informed their pedagogical beliefs and actions. This was evident in using multiple materials and references to explain concepts with the focus of ensuring students obtain academic knowledge, and in using multiple ways to engage and assess student learning with the purpose of helping them develop mastery of academic knowledge.

Ms. Chao's 9th grade Honors ELA curriculum was determined at the school district level with most of its content written or selected by people of European ancestry. She used different materials and references to make the content more accessible to students. In the cinema unit, students first studied *Charlie and the chocolate factory* (Burton, 2005) to analyze cinematic techniques and effects. Knowing some students may not be familiar with this film, Ms. Chao

used another popular film written by the same director, *The nightmare before Christmas* (Selick, 1993), to provide instructional scaffolding.

During one class, Ms. Chao instructed students to turn and talk to each other to review or refresh their knowledge about *The nightmare before Christmas*. She then instructed students to log onto their laptops to play a Kahoot! quiz she created. This quiz contained 12 questions about cinematic techniques and effects, such as what cinematic techniques did the film makers use to tell the story? and what mood did the cinematic effects create at the climax of the film? After students completed the quiz, Ms. Chao reviewed each question to make sure that everyone understood the basics of cinematic techniques and effects. She then asked students to access “Setting the Mood,” and gave them one minute to read through the assignment. Afterwards, she directed students to an excerpt from the book *Charlie and the chocolate factory* (Dahl, 1964) as she played it audibly. When the audio ended, Ms. Chao instructed students to access a list of tone words, thusly:

The list is six pages long with all types of tone words. As you work with your elbow partner to analyze the mood of the excerpt, don’t just write ‘The mood is negative.’ Use the list and be specific. For example, a negative mood can be contemptuous or depressing.

It can also be judgmental or hypercritical. So whatever your conclusion is, be specific.

Ms. Chao used a variety of other materials (i.e. book excerpts, audiobook) and references (i.e. pop culture, list of tone words) to facilitate learning. Her instructional techniques did not deter from the focus of this lesson, which was to help students develop understanding of cinematic techniques and effects. The summative assessment in the cinema unit required students to analyze and provide supportive evidence of how a director’s cinematic techniques help the audience predict the plot and convey the mood. After the guided practice of analyzing *Charlie*

and the chocolate factory earlier in the unit, students were instructed to view *Edward scissorhands* (Burton, 1990) and produce their analysis. Tables 5 and 6 include the results of Michi and Cuac, the two students who participated in this study.

Table 5. Michi’s Analysis of Cinematic Techniques

<i>Segment of the Film</i>	<i>Observations</i>	<i>Interpretations/Predictions</i>
The Opening Credits	There were many dark images, spooky shapes, and suspenseful music.	Many people may be negatively impacted, and possibly die.
The Frame Story	Grandmother told the story to granddaughter. There were frequent camera movements, like pans and zooms. The music started off soft, and changed to eerie and spooky.	Edward may be sad and lonely due to his unique features. He may be misunderstood by others.

Table 6. Cuac’s Analysis of Cinematic Techniques

<i>Cinematic Techniques</i>	<i>Textual Evidence</i>	<i>Mood/Tone</i>
Lighting	Low-key lighting when introducing Edward	Scary, mysterious
Sound	Non-diegetic when Peg looked at the car mirror	Eerie
Camera Angles	Eye level when Edward tried to eat dinner	Uniquely humorous
Framing and Shots	Longshot when the camera looks at the mountain with the mansion	Spooky
Editing	Cut when the view of the mansion transitioned to the guy fixing the washer	Lighthearted
Camera Movements	A zoom as Peg got to the fireplace	Suspenseful, on edge

Michi used cinematic techniques to predict plot and character development, while Cuac used textual evidence to support his analysis of cinematic techniques and effects. Building on the students’ mastery of knowledge, Ms. Chao required them to adapt a Shakespearean play and produce a short film based on their personal preferences in the subsequent unit. Michi, Cuac, and three other male SOC formed a group. Their short film was titled “Romeo and Juliet: Zombie.”

The film started with two male SOC introducing the plot. The protagonists are living in a post-apocalyptic world. Romeo and Juliet fall in love while their families hate each other. The screen then showed a pop-up cover with each person’s role listed. The student who played Romeo was in the center of the cover, while other characters were blurred in the background

with raindrops as watermarks. The film then opened with a long shot of a rainy day and zoomed into a building where Cuac (Romeo's best friend) caught Michi stealing from Romeo's family warehouse. As Cuac confronted Michi about his behavior, the camera zoomed between their facial expressions with amplified volumes. When the verbal confrontation did not stop Michi from stealing, Cuac drew a sword and challenged him to settle the dispute with a fight. As they fought, the camera sped up and zoomed in on the moments when their swords collided. Piercing metal-like sounds and visual effects such as animated sparks occurred. When Michi "stabbed" Cuac, the camera cut to Cuac's remorseful face as Michi retreated silently. The camera slowly zoomed in on Cuac as the screen turned dark blue. A few seconds later, Romeo emerged to confront Michi about his "crime." They engaged in a sword fight until Michi was "stabbed" and fell on the rainy ground with no one around. Credits rolled!

This film demonstrated that Michi, Cuac, and their other group members were able to apply their knowledge of cinematic techniques and effects into practice. The art designs reflected the students' skills in orienting an audience to the mood and plot development. The opening scene indicated thoughtfulness about where and how to begin the film to convey a convincing story. The confrontation scene between Michi and Cuac demonstrated effective use of camera angles and speed to suggest character development. The fight scene illustrated good use of special sound and visuals to engage the audience throughout. The scene of Cuac's "demise" demonstrated use of camera angles and screen color to communicate the mood, while the scene of Michi's "demise" was in dire contrast to show the consequence of crime. Ms. Chao's various assignments and assessments, combined with her instructional scaffolding, helped the MAS develop mastery of cinematic techniques and effects that deepened their learning.

Mr. Lee's school district was undergoing math curricula revisions during this study. This led to students in his class using two different math textbooks over a period of six months. Mr. Lee used a variety of materials and references to make math more accessible to students. During one class, Mr. Lee introduced the concept of "pattern." He listed a sequence of numbers (1, 2, 3, 4, 5...) on the board and asked students what the next number would be. After the class answered "6," Mr. Lee wrote a different sequence (0, 1, 1, 2, 3, 5, 8...) and asked students to turn and talk with each other about the next two numbers in the sequence. When students figured out the next two numbers were "13" and "21," Mr. Lee praised them by saying, "Great! You just figured out the sequence for this group of numbers. In math, it's called Fibonacci numbers. Now I'm going to play a video called *Fibonacci numbers and Phi in music*."

The teenager in the video introduced the concepts of Fibonacci numbers and Phi; explained how she used Fibonacci numbers to compose a melody on her piano; and showed how to use Phi to predict the bridge of the melody. Mr. Lee paused the video from time to time to make sure students were following along. When the video ended, Mr. Lee said, "It's spring right now. When you go out and play, sometimes you see clovers. How many leaves are in a clover?" Students answered, "Three." Mr. Lee continued, "Good. Most of them are three-leaf and that's the pattern. If you see a four-leaf clover, it's either unnatural or it's because some people drew an extra line on one of the leaves to make it look like four-leaf." Students giggled. Mr. Lee explained further that

The point is there are patterns in our world, whether it's math, natural science, or music. Learning about Fibonacci numbers helps us understand patterns and predict what's going to happen next. If you have a piano at home, try to assign the Fibonacci numbers on the keyboard and play the piano based on the numbers as you've seen it in the video. Then

you will understand how certain numbers on the scale of the piano do not work well to create music easy to your ears.

Mr. Lee used multiple materials (i.e. video, music) and references (i.e. sequence, natural science) to explain math concepts. His instruction focused on helping students understand the essence and relevance of Fibonacci numbers, and encouraging them to apply this knowledge in real life.

These aspects of his instruction were also evident in how he engaged and assessed student learning. During one lesson, Mr. Lee introduced this question: “Aaron walked 3 miles/hour toward a store 10 miles away. Zhang left the store when Aaron started walking, and walked toward Aaron on the same road at 2 miles/hour. How many hours would pass before they meet?”

Mr. Lee instructed students to solve the problem by drawing a line to symbolize Aaron and his walking speed, and another line for Zhang and his walking speed. When the class solved the problem with the correct answer “two hours,” Mr. Lee responded, “Great! Now I want you to grab a marker, come to the board or the window, and show me how to find the coordinate on a graph when Aaron and Zhang meet each other.” Camila and Mina (the student participants in this study) quickly found the coordinate on the graph they drew. After verifying their answers, Mr. Lee sent Camila and Mina to help a few other students, who were struggling, including Luna (another student participant).

After all students found the coordinate on their graphs, Mr. Lee directed them back to their seats and gave them this new question: “At a movie theater, the price of 2 adult tickets and 4 child tickets is \$48. The price of 5 adult tickets and 2 child tickets is \$64. What is the ticket price for one adult and one child?” He instructed students to write the two equations first and then solve the problem. After every student got the right answer, Mr. Lee wrote a set of equations ($6a + 4b = 53$; $4a + 6b = 47$) on the board, and said, “Now I want you to write a

prompt based on the equations, and use real-life examples to explain the equations and your answers.” Luna and her partner created the prompt: “The cost of 6 sandwiches and 4 drinks is \$53. The cost of 4 sandwiches and 6 drinks is \$47. How much does one sandwich and one drink cost?” Mr. Lee verified the accuracy of the prompt and asked Luna to solve the equations. When everyone finished, Mr. Lee asked Luna to share her prompt and demonstrate how to solve the equations. Mr. Lee’s various prompts and ways of doing math, coupled with his instructional scaffolding, helped the MAS master math concepts.

Ms. Srang’s math curriculum contained culturally relevant examples for ethnically diverse SOC. Building on this advantage, she used multiple materials and references to help students personalize math learning. When introducing how to calculate the area of quadrilaterals, Ms. Srang used a written prompt about the U.S. national flag, and instructed students to work individually to answer the first two questions about the areas of the stars and the flag. As students proceeded to the third question about the percentage of the area of the stripes, many of them seemed confused. Ms. Srang paused the class and instructed students to use their answers to the previous questions to solve the third question. Seeing many students still confused, she reminded them that this had been taught five months ago. This prompted Chris (one student participant) to declare, “I got it. You divide the area of the stars by the area of the flag and you find this percentage. Then minus 100% by this percentage and you will find the percentage of the area of the stripes.” Ms. Srang smiled and said, “You didn’t say it loud enough.” Chris repeated his answer. Ms. Srang said, “You still didn’t say it loud enough.” Chris repeated his answer in a louder volume. Ms. Srang asked the whole class, “What did Chris say?” All students repeated Chris’s answer and moved on to solve the problem.

After this round of practice, Ms. Srang asked students to take notes as she played a song called “We’re Quadrilaterals.” The song has the same melody as *Radioactive* (Imagine Dragons, 2012), but its lyrics were changed to concepts related to quadrilaterals. As the song started to play, students got excited and sang along. However, they got confused quickly when they realized the lyrics were changed. Ms. Srang saw the confusion on their faces and smiled. Gradually, students caught up with the lyrics and started to sing the chorus, “We are made of four sides, 360 on the inside. Parallelograms are parallel. Trapezoid. Whoa, I’m quadrilateral. I’m quadrilateral.” When the song ended, students asked Ms. Srang to play it again. She happily obliged before asking them to solve more quadrilateral problems.

Ms. Srang used various materials (i.e. printed questions, song) and references (i.e. U.S. national flag, pop culture) to make math accessible to students, as she focused on helping them stay on task of learning quadrilaterals. These elements of her instruction were also evident in how she engaged and assessed students. During one lesson on equation, Ms. Srang first gave students the example, “I have \$14 in my bank account and my mom gave me more money. Now I have \$30 in my bank account. How much money did my mom give me?” After students gave her the correct answer, Ms. Srang asked them to write the equation on their computer and check each other’s answers. Next the students had to create their own equation scenario. Two minutes later, she asked Lily (a student participant) to share her scenario. Lily said, “I got 14 candy bars for my birthday and bought some more from my friends. Now I have 30 candy bars in total.” Ms. Srang asked the class, “Does this scenario work?” Everyone answered, “Yes.” Ms. Srang then played a hip-hop song called “Equations” and paused it from time to time to make sure the students were following along. When the song ended she instructed students to log onto their laptops and access the lyric lab, which contained incomplete sentences of equation. On the left

corner of the screen, there were six equation vocabularies. On the right corner of the screen, there were 15 rhyme words. Ms. Srang asked students to play with the words and come up with their own math song. A few minutes later, she asked Emma (a student participant) to share her song. Emma said, “When I write a math question, I put it in an equation. I’m gonna try to solve it right, to simplify my expression.”

All these methods Ms. Srang used to engage and assess student learning were building toward the summative assessment of the unit. Students were asked to choose a topic of their own, create a math story of it, and design a poster to illustrate the story. Included in Figures 2 – 4 are the posters created by Alan, Chris, and Tyrone, respectively. These three students also were participants in this study.

Figure 2. Alan’s Equation Poster

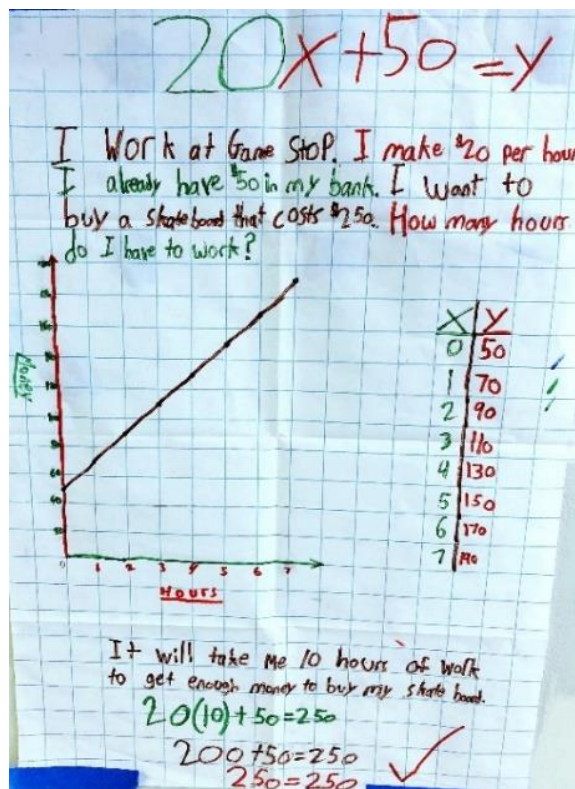


Figure 3. Chris's Equation Poster

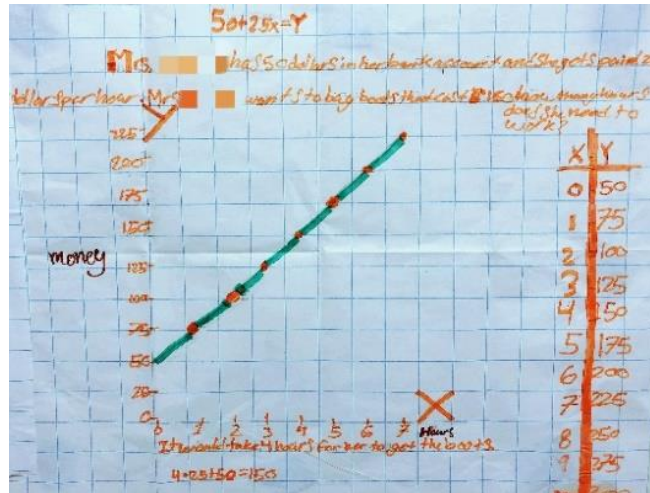
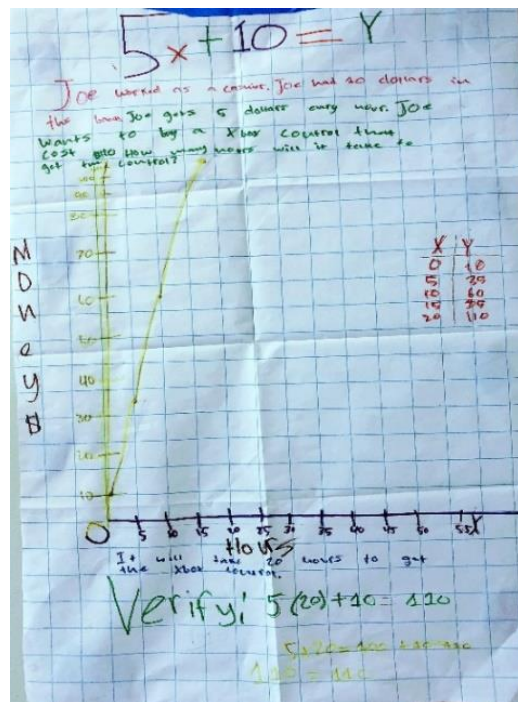


Figure 4. Tyrone's Equation Poster



In Alan's story he had \$50 in his bank account and was working at a Game Stop that paid him \$20 per hour. He wanted to know the hours he needed to work in order to buy a skateboard at \$250. Chris's story was about Ms. Srang who had \$50 in her bank account and wanted to buy a pair of boots at \$150. Given that Ms. Srang was paid \$25 per hour, Chris wanted to know how

many hours she needed to work to have enough money to buy the boots. Tyrone's story was about Joe who was paid \$5 per hour as a cashier. He already had \$10 in his bank account and wanted to buy an X-Box Control that cost \$110. Tyrone wanted to know how many hours Joe needed to work to earn enough to buy the X-Box Control. These examples suggested that Alan, Chris, and Tyrone understood the equation and were able to apply it to real-world contexts. They also demonstrated their complex mathematical thinking in creating a table and graph with an equation in slope-intercept form to visualize math stories. Ms. Srang's various lessons and projects, combined with her instructional scaffolding, helped the MAS master math knowledge.

Thus, all three teachers' diverse materials, references, and techniques made academic concepts accessible to their MAS. Their teaching focused on helping these students master academic knowledge and skills. These efforts were enhanced by evoking both the teachers' and students' "in-betweenness."

Empathy with Students' Lived Experiences

Their hybrid identities and lived experiences provided the teachers with unique insights into what it is like to live on the margins of mainstream society. Therefore, they empathized with personal struggles of their MAS and addressed social inequities.

When asked if any teacher in her K-12 experiences made a lasting positive impact on her personal life and professional career, Ms. Chao said,

I was a super quiet student and I didn't ever talk out loud in class. I spoke a different language at home and my home life was completely different than school life. My family also moved a lot on the East Coast. I went to one school for kindergarten, one for 1st – 3rd grade, one for 4th – 5th grade, a different middle school, and then a different high school. So I didn't feel like I had any teacher who made a lasting positive impact on me.

She made connections between her personal experiences of schooling and her understanding of the MAS' struggles as she explained,

I know many of them speak a different language at home and their home life is very different than school life. Also, in the Chinese culture, family is very important. So I understand Mexican American students' family obligations sometimes take precedence over their schoolwork. I avoid being judgmental about their absences and incomplete work, and instead focus on when the work will be completed.

Ms. Chao's empathy was communicated to Jerome in one of their interactions in class. Toward the end of the Shakespeare unit, Ms. Chao instructed students to write a short essay evaluating their group's performance in the short film. She made it clear that she would not grade any group's work until every member turned in their individual essay. Jerome was the only one in his group who did not turn in his essay. As students were doing independent reading, Ms. Chao walked to Jerome and said, "You know your group is waiting for you to finish so that I can grade everyone's work." Jerome replied with a smirk, "Peer pressure. That's the best!" Ms. Chao smiled but stood there sternly. When Jerome finally turned on his laptop and started typing, she walked away to help another student. A few minutes later, Jerome raised his hand and called Ms. Chao, who walked to his table and said, "Yes, my dear?" The following exchange occurred:

Jerome: "What if I don't have anything that I appreciate about the play?"

Ms. Chao replied firmly, "You know you have something to say."

Jerome: "I'm just gonna bs my way through this."

Ms. Chao stared at him silently. A short time later, Jerome said, "You know what, I actually liked that we got to do a modern scene to put a twist on the plot. Our group used the show *The Bachelorette* to act our scene. So I'm gonna write about this."

Later Jerome shared the following reactions to Ms. Chao's persistence:

I used to love reading, but now reading is like an afterthought because I've had such a negative experience with my English teachers in middle school. So when Ms. Chao gives us work, I will only do half of it and it's not her fault. That's why I haven't been turning in my assignments. But whenever she said, 'Do it!' I'm like, 'I will, eventually.' As long as she keeps saying that, I will eventually do it.

Jerome recognized Ms. Chao's persistence and its positive impact on him. Ms. Chao explained her persistence with Jerome by saying,

One of the goals of 9th grade Honors class is to get students ready for 10th grade Honors class. Cuac and Michi for the most part are doing fine in our class, but Jerome is on the borderline of failing which probably made him feel like he doesn't belong in an Honors class. Jerome mentioned on several occasions that his parents made him go to certain relatives' houses to help with chores, which prevented him from finishing his work at home. Instead of expressing skepticism or disbelief, I made him commit to a certain timeframe to finish his work so that he can pass our class and stay in Honors classes.

Ms. Chao's awareness of Jerome's personal struggles led to her empathy and persistence in her instructional interactions with him. Furthermore, she seemed determined to help more SOC enroll in advanced classes in high school. At the beginning of the last academic term, students were registering for 10th grade classes, and some were asking Ms. Chao for advice. She explained the difference between Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes as follows:

Our class is geared toward Honors and AP classes in your junior and senior years. If you want to enroll in Honors classes by then, you will read more literature. If you want to enroll in AP classes, you will read more non-fictional texts and have to be really good

writers. But it is not that scary because we had a unit in the fall quarter that dived deep into non-fictional texts. The point is if you really want to get into a prestigious university, you have to take AP classes and do well. One of the senior students in my class was able to get into California Institute of Technology because they admitted her AP classes, not her Honors classes. Each university reviews high school students' transcripts differently so you have to think about which route you're going to choose. You're all very smart, but it's not just about being smart. You also have to have good work ethics and discipline, and a good grasp of how the system works. With these qualities, knowledge, and skills you can do well in AP classes and beyond.

Explicitly addressing social inequities in class, and encouraging students to develop knowledge and skills to navigate the system, were other dimensions of Ms. Chao's empathy.

When asked how his own immigration journey intersected with his K-12 schooling experiences, Mr. Lee noted that

My mom and my siblings escaped from Vietnam and made it to America through a whole year journey. My dad stayed in Vietnam to work and send us money. I grew up without him being around until my senior high school year when our family finally reunited. My mom worked full time and didn't speak a lot of English. So no one at the school felt the need to include her when it came to my education.

These personal struggles with schooling contributed to Mr. Lee's insightful observation of similar plights among MAS. He explained this affinity as follows:

My observation is that many Mexican American parents are so far removed from the school in the sense that they are afraid of many teachers who teach their children and the administrators who run the school. When things are not right in my son's class, I have no

problem walking into his school to demand a meeting with the principal because I have been in the educational system long enough. I don't think many Mexican American parents at our school feel empowered to do something like that. So how can we empower Mexican American students when their parents feel disempowered?

Mr. Lee's personal reflection led to his empathy with many MAS' and their parents' experiences of disempowerment in school. When the story of a student's father failing a U.S. citizenship test was mentioned in class, Mr. Lee used the opportunity to ask students to examine if some people in the U.S. are more genuine citizens than others. Then he related the situation to teaching and learning math, by inviting students to think like a mathematician. He asked,

We have more than 300 million people in the U.S. How do you find the percentage of people who need to take the citizenship test? And how do you find the percentage of people who are not allowed to take the test? Once you figure out these percentages, does it mean that people who fall into these percentages are less American than people who don't need to take the test?

This scenario demonstrated that Mr. Lee directly addressed inequities in the U.S. immigration system when prompted, and encouraged students to consider the inequities from mathematical perspectives. When asked how this made them feel, the three MAS shared the following thoughts:

Camila: "I think he felt neglected in his youth and that has an impact on him. He gives us talks and works hard to include every student in class."

Mina: "I think his race makes him really understand what it's like to be excluded because he felt it before. So he prioritizes we don't have to feel that in his class."

Luna: "I think his struggles impact his teaching. He doesn't just call out things that are wrong. He also encourages us to work hard to solve those things."

Mr. Lee's empathy was well received by the MAS, who valued his inclusive pedagogical strategies.

In reflecting on her own experiences and their link to MAS, Ms. Srang recalled, "I noticed struggles within my own background: just certain people who don't speak English or haven't succeeded because of that, or people who grew up in poverty and struggled with not having support outside school." The five participating MAS in her class were performing fairly well in other subjects compared to math. In explaining this Ms. Srang thought,

Other teachers only give students a few assignments each month and they have one test at the end of each month. They also allow students to use notes during tests. I'm not saying their teaching is bad, but I notice our students are not being pushed to do their best. So when they take the district's quarterly benchmark tests, they do not show much growth. Just yesterday, a Latino parent came to me after school and was getting mad that her son is failing in my class. I showed her the son's assignments and his 5th grade state test results to explain that he didn't even know how to divide 11 by 3. I had to explain to the parent that her son was 'cheated' by his previous math teacher and the school, and that he's not failing my class. Rather, he's catching up to where he needs to be.

The MAS participants noted a significant difference between Ms. Srang's and other teachers' classes. For example, their comments included,

Chris: "She makes us work harder than most of our teachers. She wants us to use our knowledge and tools. She pushes us to our limit so that we can get better at math."

Tyrone: "Ms. Srang is my only teacher of color at the school. All my other teachers are like, 'You will have your notes for your tests.' Ms. Srang is harsh on us and pushes us to do better without using our notes on tests."

Alan: “My other teachers are just mean. Ms. Srang is nice and harsh, but not mean.”

Previous research showed that one of the most salient inequities MAS experience in schools is many uncaring teachers (Valenzuela, 1999). This inequity is manifested in different ways, such as being mean to students, or not helping students master content knowledge (as shown in the comments of Ms. Srang and her MAS). Ms. Srang’s technique to confront this inequity combined empathy with demands for academic rigor.

Another inequity many MAS experience at the school was low academic performance, especially in subjects such as math. Ms. Srang addressed this inequity through teaching MAS how to access each other’s competencies. Her class observed for this study occurred at the end of the school day and many students were exhausted, hyper-energetic, or easily distracted. During a lesson on integers, students (including Tyrone) were loud and seeming inattentive after Ms. Srang completed the first practice problem. She paused and said,

I do the practice with the whole class so that you can understand these concepts before you do your own practice. But when you all start to talk out loud, we cannot hear each other. In our class, I do not want to teach you what is right or what is wrong, because you all know what is right and what is wrong. Right, Tyrone? You have been doing right lately. So let’s all work together to do what is right.

After the students quieted down, Ms. Srang led another two practice problems and directed them to work on their own. About 15 minutes later, a group of students became loud and distractive to others. Ms. Srang, who was assisting a student, paused and stared at this group until they quietly returned to work. About 10 minutes before the end of class, another group of students burst into laughter and distracted everyone else. Ms. Srang stared at them without a word.

As the dismissal bell rang and students were getting ready to leave, Ms. Srang instructed them to gather in the back of the classroom in a circle. She then said, “I want you all to think about your behavior today and tell me what are some appropriate behaviors for big group lessons?” A few students tried to sneak out. Ms. Srang called them back and was adamant that every student participated in the circle. She asked again, “What are some appropriate behaviors for big group lessons?” Chris said, “Be quiet.” Ms. Srang replied, “Not exactly.” Emma stated, “Be respectful.” Ms. Srang said, “That’s one thing we can work on. Be respectful of each other, especially when other people are trying to learn or sharing their knowledge. When you come back tomorrow, I want you to try to do better than today.”

During interviews with the targeted students, the following observations were shared that reinforced Ms. Srang’s emphasis on students and teacher respecting each other:

Lily: “One thing I learned in Ms. Srang’s class is always respect other people because you don’t know how many sacrifices they made to get to where they are.”

Emma: “I learned in Ms. Srang’s class that you should not interrupt others when they want to learn. It’s not just about you; it’s also about other people’s learning.”

These MAS’ perceptions of Ms. Srang’s “harshness” and emphasis on respect indicated their understanding of her empathy. Ms. Srang’s pedagogical approaches to confront MAS’ experiences of marginality in school helped improve their learning. This was indicated by the students’ increased performance on the first and third math benchmarks in September 2018 and March 2019, respectively, as shown in Table 7.

Table 7. Math Benchmark Assessment Data of Mexican American Students (Ms. Srang’s Class)

Student Name	1st Test Score	3rd Test Score	Percentage of Growth
Lily	36	47	31%
Chris	49	79	61%
Alan	50	86	72%

Emma	49	98	100%
Tyrone	41	85	107%

Summary

All three teachers in this study (Ms. Chao, Mr. Lee, and Ms. Srang) had hybrid identities that symbolized their “in-betweenness.” Their hybrid identities included elements of mainstream and minority-oriented teaching techniques that helped MAS access mainstream knowledge, and construct knowledge from the margins. The teachers also showed their empathy to MAS by validating their marginalized experiences in class.

Chapter V: Findings II

The three themes resulted from the data analysis and presented in this chapter are seeking commonality; matching teaching styles with learning styles; and education as a pathway to success. Each one is discussed in details with supportive data.

Seeking Commonality

Despite being from different ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds than MAS, all three teachers recognized some similar cultural characteristics between the Chinese and the Mexican communities. Ms. Chao observed,

Last year my senior students taught each other a lesson on something from their own cultural backgrounds. I had a Mexican American student who taught us how to make tortillas, and how this family tradition is passed down from her grandmother to her mother and to her. This made me think of our cultural traditions, like how my parents taught me how to make dumplings and I teach my kids how to make them.

Echoing similar sentiment, Mr. Lee explained,

I see more similarities within Chinese culture and Mexican culture than differences. For example, we eat the same food. Maybe the way we prepare them and the flavors are different, but the food is there. Another thing that I absolutely adore about the Mexican culture is Quinceañera. They know what that means and how important it is. It's like Chinese New Year or the Moon Festival. Those are big things for Chinese people.

Ms. Srang's personal affiliation with Mexican American communities and Spanish-speaking ability helped her establish connections with Mexican culture. She explained,

I think Mexican American students understand me and I feel I understand them. A lot of them know that I have a connection with Mexican American communities, especially

with my kids. So today one of the Mexican American girls asked me if I speak Spanish really good. I said, 'Really good? No. But if you had a conversation in Spanish, and I was sitting at a table nearby and eavesdropping, I would understand what you're saying.'

In addition to seeing commonalities between Chinese and Mexican cultures, each teacher understood the importance of not essentializing either, and using pedagogical strategies such as humor and personal stories to cross cultural borders. Ms. Chao strategically used humor when opportunities arose in class. During a lesson on a Shakespeare play, Michi asked Ms. Chao, "What are you gonna do when your daughters run off and get married with someone?" Ms. Chao quickly answered, "I would send them to nunnery (with a big laughter). No, I would just tell them that they will be too busy playing soccer so no time for them to run off and get married." During another lesson, Ms. Chao noticed that Jerome was not working productively with his White male peer. She asked a White female student to change seats with Jerome's partner and gave her a snack bar. Jerome asked, "Can I also get one?" Ms. Chao replied with a smile, "Where the offense is, let the great axe fall."

In both of these scenarios, Ms. Chao used humor to cross cultural borders. But she also used other techniques as she explained:

Sometimes I bring up the fact that my parents were immigrants to this country and had a hard time assimilating to mainstream culture. Whenever I bring up these personal stories, I see a lot of head nodding from Mexican American students.

The three MAS in Ms. Chao's class noted that, "she tells us bits of her stories. We remember one of those when she talked about how she had to move around with her parents when she was younger. The stories made us understand her better."

Thus, sharing personal stories was another way Ms. Chao established commonality with the MAS, facilitated mutual understanding, and crossed cultural borders.

Mr. Lee also used humor to bridge cultural differences between himself and his MAS. He provided the following reasons why:

My humor comes from racial jokes, not in a mean way. I have no problem teasing about my own culture, like being Asian or using my family as an example. When I tell students that I used to get some spanking from my mom, I see them nodding. In other cases when I tell them that I knew I was in big trouble when my mom yelled at me in Chinese not in English, I see Mexican American students get a big chuckle.

The three MAS in Mr. Lee's class explained how his humor helped them better connect with him:

Mina: "A lot of the time the jokes he used help me understand him and math better. I can tell he's encouraging us to do better in math with his jokes."

Luna: "He makes inside jokes our class gets. It cheers us up before we get to the lesson and tricks us into thinking that math can be fun."

Camila: "He jokes around like 'I want you to open a school one day in my name.' It makes me realize I don't have to be a certain kind of person to succeed because he's successful in his own way."

Mr. Lee also consistently shared personal stories in mathematical contexts. For example, at the beginning of one lesson, he asked the class to find a bird nest in one of the trees outside the windows, and related it to his own experiences:

I see the bird nest in the tree all the time because it reminds me of my son. When he was little he sat in the back of the car every time we went out. I played this game with him, 'Tell me what's after 2?' When he told me 3, 4, and all the way to 50, I knew he would

pass kindergarten. When he turned six years old and we were driving one day in the fall, my son suddenly asked me, ‘Dad, how many birds do you think live in a tree?’ I was stunned by this question and didn’t know how to respond. So I asked my son, ‘What do you think?’ My son paused for a minute and said, ‘I think there are six.’ Immediately, I started thinking, ‘What is my son talking about? Is he dumb? No, he is cute, not dumb.’ So I continued to listen. My son said, ‘Because there was only one bird nest in the tree we just saw and I think about six birds can fit in there.’ I started to think, ‘My son is right. Birds fly into a tree and fly away. They don’t necessarily stay there. And when there is a bird nest, it usually has about five to six birds.’ That’s when fall has become my favorite season because I realized that I need to become a better math teacher so that I can teach these logical and analytical skills.

Seeing many students smile, Mr. Lee continued:

My son is 15 now. I drive him to soccer games every week and he sits in the front seat. Occasionally, I asked him, ‘Do you remember the question you asked me about the bird nest when you were six years old?’ My son said, ‘No.’ I thought, ‘Typical teenager response.’ What my son may not know is that I will always remember that question.

By sharing the bird migrating story in mathematical and familial contexts, Mr. Lee connected with the MAS, whose parents are also immigrants. The MAS in Mr. Lee’s class offered these reflections about his personal stories related to being an immigrant:

Mina: “When he shares his stories, I can relate to them because my parents came here and started off with almost nothing. They made it really far with the little resources they had; so did Mr. Lee.”

Luna: “When he tells us his stories, I connect to them because they make me think about

my parents' journey and how hard they work to make sure I have more resources.”

Camila: “My parents sometimes tell me stories about when they came here and only had a few dollars. What Mr. Lee shared helps me visualize what my family has gone through and appreciate what we have.”

Mr. Lee's stories helped the MAS understand and appreciate their own parents. Consequently, his stories helped him connect experientially to the MAS.

Similarly, Ms. Srang used humor to establish common ground with the MAS. She stated, I think my sense of humor matched well with middle-school age humor. The Mexican American students bring a lot of humor in class. They would joke about things or ask silly questions not necessarily related to math. So when I build on what they said, they laugh at me. And that makes me laugh.

Some of the MAS shared the following comments about their reactions to Ms. Srang's humor:

Emma: “Around Halloween, she dressed up and pretended to talk like a witch, ‘Are you yelling at me?’ Another time there were two students goofing off in class and she's like, ‘Are you flirting or something?’ This cracks me up.”

Lily: “I started laughing when that ‘flirting’ thing happened. Ms. Srang started to laugh when she saw me laughing. When she jokes with us, it makes me more relaxed in class.”

The statements indicated that Emma and Lily responded well to Ms. Srang's sense of humor.

However, Ms. Srang's rationale of using humor went beyond the surface level of making class fun. She explained that

I look at students' assessment data when they come into my class. Some of the Mexican American students are one year or two years behind. I do see being behind in math as an obstacle in the way toward their graduation. So when they're with me, I try to use my

humor to make math less intimidating so that they can be more engaged. My goal is for them to grow two years' worth when they're with me. So when they get to high school, they'll be right at the level of where they need to be.

Ms. Srang also connected with her MAS by sharing personal stories. Emma gave this description as an example of Ms. Srang's relational technique:

In the fall quarter, Ms. Srang showed us a map of the world, and used China's population and land area to explain fraction. I remembered her sharing some stories about which parts of China her dad is from and how her family went from China to Southeast Asia and to the United States. Her stories showed that she's gone through difficult things in life. They made me understand that she has to do more than White teachers because she didn't have many of their advantages.

Emma's statement indicated that she felt a sense of kindred with her teacher because of some shared inequities. Other students also appreciated Ms. Srang's personal stories:

Chris: "She tells us a lot of stuff about her past. Once she shared that she had a bad job so she had to go back to college. Her stories make me want to stay in school and do better."

Tyrone: "Sometimes she talked about who she is as a person and her past. Thinking about it overwhelms me because it's crazy how far she's come. And I realize that I may have a similar path: I need to overcome a lot to achieve what she's got."

Ms. Srang also listened to the personal stories of her students. In the interview, she stated, "I noticed the stories they tell me and their parents' stories, which helped me understand what they care about and include that in my teaching." Since many MAS often talked about playing video games, she used gaming to illustrate math concepts and skills, such as

Celine (a Brown teenager) is visiting her aunt during spring vacation. While she is there, she works for her aunt so she can earn some money to buy a new video game. She knows that video game prices start at \$22. She also knows that sales tax is 8.5% in her aunt's city. Celine already has \$12.50. How much more does she need to save in order to buy a video game? Remember, Celine must pay sales tax on any video game she buys.

Thus, sharing personal stories and including the students' stories in her lessons was another way Ms. Srang connected with the MAS, and facilitated cross-cultural understanding.

Matching Teaching Styles with Learning Styles

All three teachers acknowledged what they learned from their TEPs, yet recognized that their programs did not help them develop cultural knowledge or cross-cultural skills to teach ethnically diverse SOC from a holistic perspective. Ms. Chao remembered:

I finished this one-year program in 1994. There were no courses on multicultural education, and the program did not require it. We were able to take two classes of graduate course work outside the program. So I took an African American literature course and a class from Robert Coles. The program focused on an idealistic vision of what education should be like. It was good for people who wanted to teach at an elite private school but not very useful for people who wanted to teach in urban public schools.

Similarly, Mr. Lee

enrolled in a teacher preparation program 21 years ago and it was super easy. There were no grades. The classes were like you do it and you finish it. The instructors were all White, mostly women with only two males. We didn't have a diversity class or a subject methods class. The only thing I learned about working with students of color was when we came back to our classes and shared with each other what we learned in the field.

Ms. Srang's TEP had relatively more diverse faculties and course selections, but she still felt inadequately prepared to work with ethnically, racially, and culturally diverse students. She described it thusly:

I enrolled in a teacher preparation program nine years ago. My cohort was not diverse. There were 18 of us and most of them were White females. There was a Pacific Islander, a Native American, and me. I went through 12 instructors and four of them were of color. The Asian instructors taught ELL strategy classes, and the Black instructor taught the diversity course. I don't think my program taught me how to work with a specific diverse group. It just taught us to understand theories of diversity.

Each teacher spent time observing and reflecting on how cultural characteristics of different ethnic groups may be manifested in schools, and how school contexts may shift students' socialization patterns. Ms. Chao noted that

The Mexican American students in my classes are very social with each other. They have a tight-knit group at the school, probably because they are a demographic minority and many of them speak the same language. They will joke around and speak Spanish to each other in and out of class, which gives them a tighter bond than some other groups. If one kid likes you, you're sort of accepted by the other kids in the group.

Mr. Lee continued these observations by comparing MAS in his class and school with those in another school located in a different part of the State:

My wife works as an instructional coach for different schools. One of the schools she goes to is in central Washington and I would sometimes go with her. That school is almost 100% Mexican. The students live in the same neighborhood; have hard-working parents; lose days at schools to look after their younger siblings; and are not afraid to be

Mexican. But the Mexican American students in our school are completely different. They want to be Black, White, or whatever the popular thing is. Their movement to Americanize themselves is rampant here in comparison to the school in central Washington. Often when they act up in class, it's because they try to be someone else. Ms. Srang included another layer of complexity in observing differences among MAS: I do notice in one of my class periods that Mexican American students who were born here or have been here a while, or are fluent in English want to differentiate themselves from our ELL students. It's almost like they have this pride that they want to appear better like, 'I'm not with kids from another country who don't speak English.' Even if their math level was the same and I had put them in small groups together, they seem upset or a little irritated.

These teachers' observations suggested that MAS' social behaviors toward each other are often influenced by school contexts and age level. The MAS in Ms. Chao's classes bonded with each other due to their status as a demographic minority at the school, bilingual capacity, and maturity level. The MAS at Mr. Lee's school tried to assimilate into the dominant culture due to their status as a demographic minority at the school and some conflicts about their ethnic identity. The MAS in one of Ms. Srang's classes differentiated from each other even though they were a demographic majority at the school.

The three teachers also recognized students' individuality to avoid perpetuating racial stereotypes or essentializing them based on their ethnic group's cultural traits. For example, Ms. Chao conveyed this sensitivity through a metaphor:

If I draw a picture of the three students, it may be a jungle scene. Jerome is the monkey because he is so smart, mischievous, and energetic. Cuac is the lion cub because he is

quiet but also has a lot of potentials. Michi is the elephant because he is steady, plodding along, and always does his work.

Mr. Lee's descriptions of this study's participating MAS in his class were:

If I were to draw pictures of Camila and Mina, they would be very angelic and picking a quiet spot to sit in a quiet room, while Luna would be more like an attention person sitting in a spot easily seen by adults. If they are going to New York city together, Camila and Mina will blend in with everyone who is wearing black raincoats whereas Luna will be wearing a yellow raincoat.

Ms. Srang's portraits of the MAS in her class would include rainbows and sunny sky because they're all positive kids. But they would also be different. Emma will be wearing a lab jacket and goggles; looking into a microscope; and doing something very scientific. Lily will be standing with a group of friends with her backpack on. Chris will be exercising, such as running or doing push-ups. Tyrone will be leaning back in a chair in front of a desk. Alan will be with his brothers and parents at a family party.

These characteristics of individual student influenced the teachers' instructional strategies.

For example, Ms. Chao's pedagogical approaches involved giving

students more hands-on opportunities to talk and discuss with each other. I feel this type of approach builds students' knowledge, helps them see what they know, and gives them different ways to show it. I feel like in high school, teachers sometimes are like, 'Well, students should already know it.' So I try to bring that middle school ways of teaching into a high school classroom. This means more building blocks, hands-on practices, group work, and interactions with materials.

For the most part the perspectives of the MAS in Ms. Chao's class on her pedagogical approaches were consistent with her own. Cuac noted that

We have a lot of assignments in her class, but she's mostly hands-off. We end up having conversations with her and with each other about why we're doing what we do, so you don't just sit there quietly all by yourself and fall asleep.

Michi said,

Ms. Chao teaches in a very hands-off way. She gives us an assignment to work on and just lets us do it. But she's available for help if we need it. And I really enjoy that we get to choose our own group for group work.

Jerome agreed with Cuac and Michi by stating, "She's hands-off and that's pretty hard to do. In some classes, people would just talk and not do the work. But we do work in her class."

Ms. Chao's pedagogical preferences were displayed in a unit on poetry. She helped students explore different forms, elements, and techniques of poetry. She also instructed them to design a performance based on their favorite poem. As the unit progressed, Ms. Chao spent time scaffolding the performance by showing a range of artists (i.e., Alicia Keys, Rat Sack, Wyclef) performing their poems. She also provided two poems for students to rehearse with and give feedback to each other before their individual performance. In preparation for his performance, Jerome chose a hip-hop song called *44 More* (Logic, 2018). Ms. Chao worked with him to make sure that he could interpret and perform the song as he wished but would also meet the criteria on the grading rubric. During one lesson, Jerome went to Ms. Chao's desk and showed her the poem. The following exchange occurred:

Ms. Chao: "Tell me what this poem is about."

Jerome: “The rapper grew up in a dysfunctional family and went through a lot. He’s really trying to express his concerns about social inequality and send a positive message with all the hidden messages in his words.”

Ms. Chao: “What you just said, write that down. Go through his poem a few more times to see if he used metaphor to convey his messages. Then maybe you’ll find a way to approach your performance.”

Jerome responded: “Okay, Ms. Chao.”

Ms. Chao: “You also have to make sure that the lyrics are school appropriate when you perform the poem.”

On the day of the performance, Jerome asked a friend from another class to help him. Ms. Chao assisted by asking the friend’s teacher to release him for 15 minutes in her class. Jerome started to play the song on his phone and rap along. Initially, he was nervous and missed a few beats. As he looked into the audience and saw the encouraging smiles from his peers and Ms. Chao, he started to smile and became more confident. As the song hit the chorus, Jerome’s friend yelled “Preach!” in the background. Jerome started to move his body in sync with the rhythm and became immersed in his performance. He engaged the audience with his eye contact and became less concerned about forgetting the lyrics. When the performance ended, everyone clapped for Jerome as he returned to his chair with a big smile.

This lesson demonstrated Ms. Chao’s hands-off approach to teaching. She established the parameters for the poetry performance; provided instructional scaffolding; and allowed students to choose their own material and design their own performance. She took into consideration of the learning preferences of many MAS such as working in groups to rehearse poems with each other. She also encouraged students to use their own interpretations of their selected poems.

Mr. Lee reflected on his pedagogical approaches in these comments:

I think my own K-12 schooling experiences influence how I teach. I refused to do a lot of the things when I was put on the spot. So now I refuse to do popcorn reading in my class because I couldn't read when I was put on the spot. I also refuse to do popsicle sticks or 'equity sticks.' To me, these strategies are not culturally responsive and they just make me cringe every time I see them on the list of strategies recommended by the administrators. So these type of things, they influence who I am as a teacher.

In sharing their perceptions of Mr. Lee's teaching styles, the following comments were made by the students in his class who participated in the study:

Luna: "He usually breaks down the question and do it on the board so it's easy for everyone to see. But if I need help, he will come to my table and show me one-on-one where I got stuck."

Mina: "Besides breaking down questions and explaining them really thoroughly, he would notice if you're too scared to raise your hand and come to help you."

Camila: "I'm one of those people who is scared to raise my hand and ask for help. When I hesitate to ask for help, Mr. Lee can tell and knows that maybe more people are struggling with the same question. So he would pause the whole class and re-explain it without calling out anyone."

Mr. Lee's teaching preferences were demonstrated in a lesson on hypotenuse. He began by drawing a right triangle on the board and asking, "What's this triangle?" A few students answered, "It's a triangle with 90 degrees." Mr. Lee confirmed and moved on, "Yes, it's a right triangle. The two short sides of a right triangle are called legs, while the longest side is called a hypotenuse." He instructed students to repeat the word "hypotenuse" after him three times and

asked them, “What does hypotenuse mean?” After receiving the correct answer from students, he wrote the formula for a right triangle ($a^2 + b^2 = c^2$) on the board and instructed students to repeat it after him. He then told them, “You’ve got to remember the formula for right triangle because they don’t give you this formula anymore on the test. So repeat after me five more times.” After this practice, Mr. Lee wrote $a = 5$, $b = 3$ on the board, and instructed students to find the answer to “c” by putting the value of “a” and “b” into the formula. Once all students completed this step, Mr. Lee asked, “Now we have found $c^2 = 34$, how can we find what ‘c’ equals to?” Mina quickly answered, “We find the square root.” Mr. Lee smiled, instructed students to use their calculators, and demonstrated which button they should press to find the square root of a number.

After every student showed that they knew how to use the calculator to find the square root, Mr. Lee wrote another practice question on the board: “One of the legs of a right triangle is 18 while the other is 24. What is the hypotenuse for this right triangle?” He instructed students to work with their elbow partners for the next two minutes to answer “ $c^2 = ?$ ” When all partners answered, “ $c^2 = 900$,” Mr. Lee asked them to find the square root. When the class said the square root was 30, Mr. Lee probed, “So the square root for 900 can be 30 or -30, which one is the right answer for this question?” The class answered, “30.” Mr. Lee continued, “How do you know? Turn and talk to your neighbor for 30 seconds.” Afterwards, Mr. Lee asked the question again and Luna said, “The two legs are 18 and 24. Because hypotenuse is the longest line, so it has to be a positive number, which is 30, not -30.” Mr. Lee reassured Luna, “Good. Remember that the two legs in a right triangle are shorter than the hypotenuse, so once you find the square root of the hypotenuse, it should be longer than the two legs.” Seeing students nodding their agreements, Mr. Lee said, “Next I want you to try to find the hypotenuse on your own without working with a partner: $a = 16$, $b = 20$; what does c equal to? Come back to me in three minutes.”

This lesson suggested that Mr. Lee followed the “we do - you do - I do” mode of teaching. Because he did not like being singled out during his own K-12 experiences, he tried not to single out any students in his own classroom. His pedagogical approaches blended instructional scaffolding with group work and independent practice. This made the content more accessible to MAS, many of whom learn better in group-oriented settings.

Similar to the other teachers in this study, Ms. Srang’s pedagogical approaches were strongly influenced by prior personal experiences as she explained:

I struggled with shyness for a long time till I was 18 years old. When I studied by myself in college, I struggled even more. And I thought, ‘Oh my goodness, I’m gonna fail my classes. I need to find a new way.’ Once I joined study groups and talked with my peers, I started to do better. Then I realized it’s really helpful to have other people who are studying the same thing talk about their understanding with you. And you also express what you’re thinking to them. This helped me see why talk is important. So now in my class, there is ‘turn and talk to your neighbor,’ ‘check with your neighbor about whether you agree or not,’ and ‘put your answer on the board.’ I also like this idea of peer-teaching. If I teach a student, I will send that student to help another student who is struggling on the same concept based on their exit ticket.

The student participants made observations that complimented Ms. Srang’s own assessment of her teaching styles. Emma said,

She would often check in with the whole class: ‘thumbs up’ if you get it. When she sees that not everyone has their thumbs up, she will go back and teach it again. And we don’t always have her teach us. She often teaches a group of students and has them teach others.

Tyrone added,

She often teaches some students first and have those students teach other students so the whole class will understand. Let's say I didn't know multiplying fractions. Other kids did or didn't either way. Ms. Srang would call a small group to the front to teach us. We learned it and then we go help others.

Chris agreed with Tyrone and Emma that, "When people need help, Ms. Srang would ask them to come to her desk, or go help them. When others need help, she would send the students who already know how to do the task to help others."

An example of Ms. Srang's teaching styles occurred during a lesson on fractions. She started the lesson with a visual demonstration of a scenario: "Courtney uses the cake that her mom baked to visualize the product of two fractions. She cuts the cake vertically into fourths and frosts three of the slices. This is how she can represent $\frac{3}{4}$." Afterwards, Ms. Srang called Alan, Tyrone, and three other students to sit in front with their practice books, while asking the rest of the class to practice fractions on their own. In interacting with the students in front, Ms. Srang asked them to draw a cake in their practice book; divide it into four vertical slices; and color $\frac{3}{4}$ using the same color and $\frac{1}{2}$ a different color. She then asked the students to examine how many slices represent the intersection of two different colors and if the intersection represents $\frac{3}{4}$ times $\frac{1}{2}$. When the students answered "yes," she wrote the math problem on the board and asked them to multiply the fractions. When each student completed the task correctly, she sent them to help other students.

Alan was helping a Latino student using the same procedure that Ms. Srang demonstrated. The Latino student understood the procedure, and produced the correct drawing and answer in three minutes. Tyrone was helping a Filipino student, who did not understand the procedure after Tyrone's initial explanation. Tyrone then used the Filipino student's lunch box, and explained:

“Let’s look at your lunch box. How many rows does it have and how many are shaded? I want you to write it down.” After the Filipino student wrote “ $2/5$,” Tyrone prompted: “Now how many columns does it have and how many are shaded?” The Filipino student wrote “ $3/5$.” Then Tyrone said, “See, now you just need to multiply the two fractions so that you can find out the percentage of the shaded area that’s intersected.”

This lesson illustrated how Ms. Srang routinely encouraged academic talks, group work, and students helping each other to learn, which were complimentary to many MAS’ learning preferences.

Education as a Pathway to Success

Many educators have culturally deficit perceptions of MAS. Those who endorse this paradigm do not recognize or use the assets these students bring to school. They also tend to blame the underachievement of many MAS on parental and communal shortcomings. All three teachers in this study focused on students’ strengths instead of their weaknesses. For example, Ms. Chao declared,

My experiences have taught me that Mexican American students have always been respectful in class, and their parents want them to do well and succeed. I also learned about the struggles many Mexican American students go through and their resilience. Last year, I had a Mexican American student in my senior class. She was living apart from her parents, working part-time, and still managing to come to school every day and do well. I had another Mexican American student who lived with his aunt because his parents had been deported. He still came to school every day and tried his best.

Mr. Lee had similar positive considerations of his MAS’ personal respectfulness and academic potentialities. He explained:

Mexican kids are sorry when they do something wrong. You can see it in them even when they don't say it. When I pull them aside and ask, 'Are your parents okay with what you did?', they will usually say 'No' or shake their heads. They are sorry and try to change. So there is a sense of respect that I don't usually get from White kids.

One thing that I value and celebrate is Mexican American students' parents who are landscapers, roofers, or construction workers. I try to tell students that there are a lot of things you can learn from these types of jobs, such as math and geometry. If you want to help your parents with their jobs during the summer, just do it. There is nothing wrong doing manual labor jobs because that's what I had when I grew up. The hard work built my character.

Similarly, Ms. Srang emphasized assets of her MAS in acknowledging their personal strengths and willingness to help each other. She said,

The Mexican American students in this class are very willing to help their peers. If I have a student who is really low in math and English proficiency, they are happy to help that student learn and translate back and forth. I also learned that the students have more than what you expected of them, their parents are very supportive, and they want their kids to do well. If I contact parents about their child goofing off in class or not taking math seriously, they're definitely on it.

All three teachers' asset views of MAS and their parents translated into high expectations for the students. For example, Ms. Chao was very strategic about how to communicate expectations for each of the MAS. She used Jerome's learning situation to explain further:

Jerome barely made it to stay in Honors class. So I'm always like, 'Jerome, if you want to stay, I will do what I can to help you, but you still have to do the work.' For example, if

he needs a sentence starter, I help him look at examples of other students' work to generate ideas. Even if he turns in work late, he will still get points.

Ms. Chao's expectation for Jerome was demonstrated in a lesson on cinematic techniques. After introducing the task of writing an analytic essay of cinematic techniques, Ms. Chao walked around the room to assist students as needed. As she was answering questions raised by a White male student, she noticed Jerome goofing off with his peers. She turned around and used the folder in her hands to brush Jerome's arms and half-jokingly said, "More typing, less talking." Jerome responded quickly, "I already wrote one sentence." Ms. Chao smiled and said, "Good. Keep going." When she finished helping the White male student, she moved close to Jerome who was not making much progress with his paragraph. Ms. Chao showed him a sample essay from a student in another class and explained, "You're using only one example from the movie for this paragraph. Once you get this paragraph done, you can add more examples for the rest of the essay."

Ms. Chao's performance expectation for Cuac was different because of his intellectual capabilities:

Cuac has the best skills out of the three [MAS in class]. He came in with pretty high academic skills, but I noticed he had been dipping through the year. So I put him in a group with very strong writers and told him, 'Cuac, I am fully expecting you to get an A for this essay and you can do it.' So he worked with his group and delivered.

In another lesson on cinematic techniques, Ms. Chao instructed students to work in groups of three or four on their introduction and conclusion paragraphs of the essay, and stated that she would give the same grade to everyone in the group for these two paragraphs. She paired Cuac with two students who had somewhat advanced writing skills. For the remainder of the lesson,

Cuac and his peers shared ideas about how to ensure the high quality of their group efforts. They were able to finish their two paragraphs before class ended.

Of the three MAS in her class Ms. Chao considered Michi “sort of in the middle” because he plods his way and does his work, but he still struggles. So I don’t pair him with peers who are too high leveled and make him feel like he’s not good enough or he doesn’t belong. Instead, I pair him with mostly peers at his level with one student who’s a bit lower. Then I tell him, ‘Michi, you need to help him (the student at the lower level) with writing.’ This gave Michi a little responsibility and made him feel like he can do it.

In a task on writing an argumentative essay about the relevance of Shakespeare, Michi was paired with Jerome and two other students. Toward the end of the activity, Michi finished his introduction paragraph while Jerome was just beginning the first sentence of his. When Ms. Chao checked in with the group, she praised Michi’s progress and asked him to help Jerome. Before leaving to help another group, she asked Michi, “I wonder when you’re gonna get an ‘A-’ in this class?” Michi smiled, and then said, “I don’t know. Right now I have a ‘B+.’” Ms. Chao smiled back and said, “Yeah, but I am looking forward to seeing that change into an ‘A-.’” These scenarios suggested that Ms. Chao want the three MAS to remain and do well in her Honors class based on their individual potential.

Mr. Lee also differentiated expectations for his MAS based on their individuality. He explained that

Luna processes math a bit slower in comparison to the other two girls, so I encourage her to do re-takes and I’m pretty intentional about it. For example, Luna’s mom is an insurance broker. I asked her once, ‘Do you know what insurance brokers do?’ She said, ‘No, but I know she makes good money.’ I said, ‘You understand that’s a lot of hard

work, right? That's why your parents want you to stay in school and do well.' I like to have these conversations so that I can push them to continue to do re-takes because sometimes they will say, 'I feel comfortable with a B.' I don't want them to feel comfortable with a 'B.' I want them to get something higher.

An example of his high expectations occurred in one of Mr. Lee's lessons on multiplying polynomials. He started the class by giving students a practice question, $(x+5)(x^2-3x-2)$, and asked them to tell him how to solve it step-by-step. He wrote each step on the board as the class verbalized it, and asked the students to simplify their answers. Once the students completed this question, Mr. Lee asked them to practice two more similar questions on their own. As they worked he walked around the classroom to check their answers. Many students, including Luna, had difficulty with the third question, $(x^2+4x+8)(x^2-2x-6)$. Camila and Mina were able to solve the question on their own. Mr. Lee asked them to re-do the question to verify their answers while he helped others. When Luna solved the question with the help of a peer, Mr. Lee asked her to do the question again on her own. Noticing the MAS and a few other students were a bit irritated by his request to re-do this question, Mr. Lee paused the class and asked, "Do you know why I asked you to re-do this question even if you got it right in the first round?" A few students answered, "Because there will be a similar question on the test tomorrow." Mr. Lee responded,

Yes, but it's more than that. Look, your parents work very hard to get you here to learn, not to take some tests so that you can pass this grade level and move onto the next one.

One of the best ways for you to learn is keep practicing. And once you learn, you will have this knowledge in you so that you don't have to repeat the same tests.

Therefore, Mr. Lee's high expectations for the students were communicated through his insistence on practicing skills to ensure long-term academic competence.

High expectations for MAS also were present in Ms. Srang's comments that I am very focused on getting them to meet all the 6th grade math standards and that they do not waste any time in my class. They really need this to succeed in 7th grade and to be successful in school in general. So I help them meet the standards by letting them struggle initially in my class. Because if you don't understand a concept, your brain is saying, 'Okay, I'm a little confused, or I've tried this but I might need a little push.' This initial struggle, with some scaffolding, can lead them to solve problems on their own.

Ms. Srang demonstrated these expectations in a lesson on combining like terms. She started the class by asking students to simplify $(4a + a + 5 + 7a + 2)$. After a short time, all students got the correct answer. She then moved to the second question, $(5b - b - 7 + b)$. About one third of the class struggled with this question. Ms. Srang asked students to substitute "b" with an apple and calculate how many apples will be in the final answer. She waited till every student got the right answer, and then asked the third question, $(6v + 4 - 5v)$. Ms. Srang called four students, including Chris, to come to the board to solve the question. When every student solved it correctly, she asked four more students, including Alan and Tyrone, to come to the front and solve the next problem, $(9 - 3y + 7y + 6 + 10y)$. Afterwards, the last group of students, including Emma and Lily, had to solve a slightly more complicated problem, $[5 + 6(6v + 4)]$. When none of the students got the right answer, Ms. Srang instructed them to look at the math chart on the wall and determine where they made a mistake. After Emma got the right answer on a second try, Ms. Srang asked her to teach the rest of the students in the front. She then instructed them to practice this question step-by-step with their peers. After these five rounds of practice, Ms. Srang instructed students to open their math book and practice solving the remaining problems of combining like terms on their own. Three minutes before class ended, she distributed an exit

ticket to each student that included the problem, $[6 + 4(4p + 2)]$. She asked students to solve it individually and turn in the exit ticket as they leave.

This teaching-learning process was continually focused on mastering academic concepts; students demonstrating their knowledge; allowing students to struggle with complex questions; providing scaffolding as needed; and high expectations for performance capability and quality.

Summary

Each of the CAT in this study evoked commonalities between themselves and the MAS to cross cultural borders in class. They also matched their pedagogical approaches to MAS' learning preferences, which helped synchronize their cultural differences. Furthermore, their asset-based perceptions and high expectations for MAS helped give functional meaning to the idea that education is a pathway to success. This, too, was an intentional opposition to the culturally deficit paradigm by the three CAT for their MAS.

Chapter VI: Findings III

This chapter presents the final three themes that resulted from the data analysis. They are leveraging resources for students; developing multiple competence; and respecting each other's humanity. Each theme is discussed in details with supportive data.

Leveraging Resources for Students

The extensive teaching experiences of the three CAT in this study helped them see many inequities that MAS experience in schools. One of them is the lack of support at the school and district levels. According to Ms. Chao,

There haven't been any resources allocated to support Mexican American students at the school. We have a lot of White teachers who speak Spanish, but it's not the same. We have a Latina teacher who teaches Spanish but she connects well with a small portion of Latina students at the school. Our Mexican boys don't like her and they don't have a role model at the school from the same cultural and gender background. The district has been traditionally very White. It's only within the last five years we have seen the student demographic shift. But there haven't been any efforts to increase the support for Mexican American students.

Mr. Lee also pointed out limited institutional efforts to be more supportive of MAS: The only thing the school did was add a Mexican American liaison. The administrators gave her secretary tasks like, 'I want you to be the front woman.' Because of this she often looked so lost, like a deer in the headlight. So I don't think this is the kind of support our Mexican American students really need. Also, when the district looks at student assessment data, Mexican American students are not the group they focus on. Echoing these observations Ms. Srang claimed,

The district's focus is on Black boys and it's very clear. When we look at assessment data, we evaluate whether Black boys are growing or not. I know this is needed, but Mexican American students also need help. I know some schools in the district have translation services, but that's not something we hear a lot at our school. We have a during and after school program for Black boys, but there isn't a program for Latino boys. I don't think we even have a Mexican American teacher or para-educator, despite the relatively large Mexican student population. We do offer a Spanish class, but it's kind of a foreign language class and taught by a White teacher. Last year the school tried to jump start a home-visit program targeting Latino students, but it never went anywhere.

Given these situations, each teacher leveraged their own and other resources to assist MAS by raising concerns at the school and district levels. Ms. Chao described supportive efforts at the district level that included looking at data and creating a racial equity team. Her involvement entailed being

the only teacher who brought up the issue about the lack of support for Latino students. So the district sent an equity survey to teachers and students, and pulled out all the students who are not in an AP class based on the survey. Many of them are Mexican American students. The district asked teachers to write letters of recommendations, and counselors to talk with the students about enrolling in AP classes. So I was able to get more Mexican American students and other students of color in my AP classes.

Ms. Chao also was involved at her school, department, and class levels to make culturally relevant curricula and mainstream knowledge more accessible to MAS. These efforts included:

Our current principal was a P.E. teacher. She doesn't really know that much about ELA. Because our students have outperformed other schools in the district, especially in ELA,

she placed a lot of trust in me. So she's always like, 'You decide. You figure it out.' I have been the ELA department chair, and part of the district committees such as standard-based grading and curriculum adoption. A few colleagues and I have made a concerted effort in the last few years to add more texts written by authors of color, such as Sherman Alexie, Amy Tan, and Sandra Cisneros. Also, for the Shakespeare unit, the school doesn't have the budget for theatre performance. So I wrote a grant to get a local Shakespeare theatre to come and teach our students how to do theatric performance.

Mr. Lee also raised concerns and advocated for more resources to support MAS at the school and district levels. These efforts involved joining several committees at the district to "know what we would keep and what would be thrown out in terms of curriculum," and "speaking out when the curriculum is outdated or not responsive to students of color at our school." In addition to raising concerns about outdated curriculum at the district level, Mr. Lee advocated for MAS at the school through other platforms and methods. He described some of those as follows:

What I advocate is for Mexican American students to have technology ownership. The school swapped out all the old computers last year and the kids are using new ones. I've asked the administrators to give the old computers to students who don't have them at home. But teachers' words only go up so much to the administrators. So what I've done is tell Mexican American students who don't have computers at home, 'Ask the office staff if you can get one of the old computers.' Many students don't know about these things so they never ask. I've been trying to teach them this kind of hustling skills.

Ms. Srang advocated for MAS at the district and the school as well. She noted, "When the district's material does not match up with Common Core State Standards, I supplement a lot

in terms of making assignments through Google forms and making my own tests using material related to Common Core.” Moreover, she advocated for more recognition of MAS at the school.

For instance,

In March, I recommended a Mexican American boy, an African American girl, and a White boy for Honors class, because I noticed they understood a lot of the course contents and their scores on the district benchmark assessment were close to the incoming Honors 6th grade students. I know this Mexican American student comes from a single-parent family. And I know for sure that his parent speaks very little English and is not a citizen here. So I imagined how happy it would make his parent.

Ms. Srang also demonstrated her commitment to support MAS by working directly with their parents as she explained:

I try to support Mexican American students through home visits. The reason I do home visits is to learn what their needs are and what I can do to support them with the resources they have at home. For example, when I did the home visits during the fall term, I noticed many of them have computers and internet at home but didn’t know how to use our school’s online system. So I spent time showing them how to create an account, log in, check their child’s assignments, and stay on top of their child’s performance.

Therefore, all three teachers showed caring for MAS through concerted efforts and advocacy. They also continued to reflect on their own areas of growth. Ms. Chao indicated her desire to build and sustain more meaningful relationships with Mexican American parents to help their children succeed in school. She stated,

At this point in my career, I’d like to learn about how to collaborate more with the families of Mexican American students. I notice that many Mexican American parents

tend to see teachers as authorities. So unless there is a dire need, they would not usually reach out to me. I also think that once high school kids reach a certain age, it's harder for the parents to talk through them. I also feel that many families tend to get dropped in high school, so I'd like to see a structure in place to get families involved.

Mr. Lee emphasized his desire to know more about MAS to improve his instructional techniques with them. He said,

One thing I want to continue to learn from Mexican American students is to be okay with not knowing everything. When I first started teaching, I thought it was so important that the students learn math and live their life in the whole 18 years of school. Now I am still serious about them learning math, but I also see that it's okay if you don't figure out everything at this point in your life. Sometimes when I give them a lecture, they look at me like, 'Why are you giving us a lecture? Just calm down.' They never say it out loud but I see it in their faces. Afterwards, I realized it was no big deal because it wasn't the end of the world. So in this aspect, I want to continue to learn from them.

In a somewhat different way, Ms. Srang shared some deeply personal reflections related to her investment in MAS:

When I was helping my ex-husband, I was doing it as if he were a U.S. citizen. I persuaded him to go to college. He got good grades and a degree. But he couldn't get into nursing school being undocumented. So I felt really guilty at the end because I helped him with something he really wanted to do only to hit a road block and couldn't continue. It was devastating for him and me. Now he's going to school to become an electrician. This is something he can do to make a living regardless of his immigration status.

Because I know some of my Mexican students are undocumented, I want to know pathways that can help them succeed in ways that are relevant and practical to them.

Thus, Ms. Chao, Ms. Srang, and Mr. Lee used their positions and resources to raise concerns at the school and district levels about myriad inequities MAS experience. They also offered support through personal reflection, advocacy, and caring.

Developing Multiple Competence

Another way these teachers supported MAS was through helping them develop multiple competence, including academic confidence, social skills, and political consciousness, that could help them succeed in and beyond school.

Ms. Chao created a variety of assignments and assessments in each unit to help MAS develop multiple competence. The culminating project of one unit required students to create their own poetry anthology. Michi struggled with writing poetry as he explained in the introduction of his anthology:

Poetry is my least favorite type of writing, mostly because it requires me to write about my personal life or at least my feelings. Knowing this you can understand why I wasn't excited about this project, but I still tried to do it well. I decided to use the theme, 'the writing of poetry,' for my anthology because I realized that poetry is the hardest and deepest form of writing possible. I hope it is clear to see that in my writing and that my poems are good enough to at least pass the bare minimum of your expectation.

Throughout this unit Ms. Chao used a variety of activities (i.e. performance) and assignments (i.e. analytic essay) to build capacity for this project. Michi's final project showed his thoughtfulness and growth as illustrated by the following excerpt from his anthology.

Figure 5. Excerpt from Michi's Poetry Anthology

Poetry Is an Instinct

As Ideas burst into my head I quickly sit down and begin my first stanza

The hardest part is over and now my feeling will guide the rest

My hands move quickly as I type, as graceful as a mockingbird and fast as lightning

Words form quicker than I think, like a primal instinct I barely recognize

And the poem takes form like a caterpillar in metamorphosis

But this instinct does not exist from necessity. Instead, it is born from understanding and desire

The poem completes: its content shines brighter than the stars and its meaning deeper than the Mariana Trench



The poetic techniques demonstrated Michi's thoughtfulness in approaching this project. The mockingbird and lightning were similes used to describe the speed of handwriting. The caterpillar in metamorphosis (with the image) served as a metaphor for the birthing of a poem. The stars and the Mariana Trench were imageries that allowed readers to relate the final poem to the grandeur of nature. Despite his claimed unease writing about personal feelings, this poem demonstrated Michi's capacity to write personally through poetry and his improved confidence in approaching complex academic tasks.

In the Shakespeare unit, one of the assignments was for students to write an argumentative essay about the relevance of Shakespeare to today's high school students. An excerpt from Jerome's essay read,

Many high school students argue that they don't like Shakespeare as a writer because they don't get his writing. And it is not their fault because his language was used over 400 years ago and seems irrelevant by today's standards. However, this does not deny

that his writing can provoke deep thoughts about life... In *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare wrote about how falling in love is beautiful and absurd at the same time. He also wrote about how humiliation and glory are problems teenagers face. This is still relevant to high school students... We also need to think about the purpose of studying Shakespeare. If it is to preserve his status in the English classroom, it can be counter-productive.

Jerome's writing demonstrated his academic confidence and analytic skills to compose argumentative essays that were well-reasoned, critical, and socially conscious.

In another unit on racism, Ms. Chao asked students to write an analytic essay about *To kill a mockingbird* (Lee, 1960). Cuac wrote about the trial scene in the novel. An excerpt from his essay read,

Bob Ewell beat Mayella and blamed Tom for the physical abuse and alleged rape. The only reason Bob got away with his lies was because of his skin color. Tom did not rape Mayella, but he was convicted because the jury would never believe the word of a Black man over the word of a White man.

This excerpt suggested Cuac's ability to use textual evidence to support his analysis of the novel. It also showed his confidence in critically analyzing racial injustice. His confidence, skills, and consciousness were complementary to those of Michi and Jerome when they collaborated on the final project for the unit on racism. This project required students to research how different communities react to desegregation laws. The three MAS worked as a group and presented their findings on "White Citizens' Council" (WCC). One of their PowerPoint slides was

Figure 6. What Was the WCC against?

What was the WCC against?

When the Supreme Court abolished legal school segregation, Whites in the deep south made the White Citizens' Council. Council members published a book called "Black Monday", which outlined their belief that African Americans were inferior to Whites and the races must remain separate. Their only purpose is to fight the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). They contested the NAACP's desegregation lawsuits and fought to cancel what they had gained over the last half century.



Harold P. Boulware, Thurgood Marshall, and Spottswood W. Robinson III confer at the Supreme Court prior to presenting arguments against segregation in schools during *Brown v. Board of Education* case, 1952. Courtesy: Library of Congress

This slide contained a succinct and accurate summary of WCC and its purpose, and a photograph of intellectuals involved in desegregation efforts at the U.S. Supreme Court. It demonstrated the MAS' ability to collaborate, conduct research, and apply political consciousness in analyzing different organizations and factors that interfere with achieving racial justice. These skills are evidence that Ms. Chao used a variety of contents, activities, and assessments to help MAS develop multiple competence.

Mr. Lee incorporated lectures and stories into his instruction to help MAS develop multiple competence. In a lesson on quadratic formula, he gave students a practice question, ($2x^2 + 16x + 6 = 0$), and asked them to solve it on their own for two minutes. Afterwards, he asked the entire class, "So what are some ways for us to solve it to get to the answer quicker?" A few students answered, "We can factor it." Mr. Lee said, "Good. We can find the factor of 'x' to get to the answer faster. What's another way to get to the answer?" Mina said, "We can graph it." Mr. Lee said, "Great! Now I want you to either find the factor of 'x' or graph it to see if you can get to the answer quicker." As most of the class were practicing on their own, a few students became distracted and disruptive. Noticing this behavior, Mr. Lee stopped the practice session and gave the following lecture:

Years ago when I did my master's degree, I wrote a thesis comparing teachers. My conclusion was that elementary teachers should get paid a lot more than middle or high school teachers. Elementary teachers teach many basic life skills: respecting others, being a good community member, etc. Middle or high school teachers don't really teach you these skills mostly because they have many content and state standards to cover. And you know why some middle or high school students struggle with math or other content? It's not because they can't grasp the concept. It's more because their teachers didn't teach them those skills, such as being a good listener, respecting your time in class, and trying to discipline your own learning. So I'm giving you this lecture because I don't want you to take these life skills for granted. They will make your learning experiences much easier in high school and college.

This lecture suggested that Mr. Lee want students to develop social skills that would benefit them in life beyond schools, as well as academic ones within school.

In another lesson, Mr. Lee used this personal story to help MAS develop political consciousness:

This past weekend I got a landscaping flyer in my mailbox. It seemed that the advertiser had two client groups in mind - Vietnamese and Latinos - because the flyer was written in Vietnamese and Spanish. When I ran into my neighbor yesterday, he made the comment, 'Look at all these Mexicans advertising for landscaping.' I was taken aback by this comment and said, 'Wow, you don't know about that. They could be Mexicans, Cubans, or Guatemalans. You just don't know. Plus, what's wrong with doing landscaping to support your family? Even if it's a Mexican doing landscaping, he or she might also be an electrician or an engineer.' Anyway, I'm sharing this story with you because many

people in our world like to see other people in certain ways and they tend to believe that there are only certain things you can do. For example, people may think that if you're Mexican, you can only do hard-work labor. Or if you're Asian, you must be smart and good at math. If you allow people to put you in a box and tell you that this is only what you can do, then it will be hard for you to break out the box. You have to grow this mindset where you won't allow people to put their stereotypical expectations on you and live to their expectations. You have to find what you really want to do with your own life.

Mr. Lee began the story with a scenario familiar to students, and extended it to the point about understanding and resisting racial stereotypes, and developing agency to counter hegemonic ideologies. The MAS' reactions to this story included:

Mina: "When he shared the story about his neighbor, it made me feel that I want to break the stereotype. For some people, being a landscaper may be the only thing they can do or available to them. But I know I can do more and that's not what my whole race can do."

Luna: "His interaction with his neighbor made me think about my mom. Last year she opened up her own insurance company and she's been doing really good. She told me, 'I'm not trying to be a house cleaner, or what everyone thinks a Mexican mother should do. I want to be more and I want you to be even more.' That's why I am trying hard in school because I know I can break the stereotype."

Camila: "I agree with what Luna and Mina said about the story. Stereotyping is not good because we're all different. My mom is a housewife, but she's always around if you need her. We don't need to worry about who's going to pick us up after school or who's going to make food. My dad is a construction worker, but he's more than just a construction worker. He's a really good dad. I know that doesn't pay anything, but it pays a lot in a

way like he’s made a lot of mistakes in his life but they all taught him something. He always tells us even though mistakes make you suffer sometimes; it can help you in future references.”

Given his overall teaching style and relationship with students, it was not surprising that Mr. Lee’s emphases in these interactions helped the MAS develop political consciousness along with study skills. One example of their academic success is shown in Table 8.

Table 8. State Standardized Test Scores for Luna, Mina, and Camila

Student Name	Grade Level	Math Test Score	State Passing Score
Luna	7th	2,583 (Proficient)	2,567 – 2,634
Mina	7th	2,707 (Advanced)	2,567 – 2,634
Camila	8th	2,645 (Proficient)	2,586 – 2,652

Ms. Srang also used a variety of teaching techniques and assignments to help MAS develop multiple competence. Toward the end of the school year, she taught a unit on organizing statistical data. In a lesson on calculating mean, median, and mode, she began with a few practice for students to find the mean, median, and mode of three data sets. After verifying their answers, she passed out the lyrics of “Mean, median, and mode,” and played the hip-hop song. Ms. Srang paused the song from time to time and checked if students were following along with the concepts. When the song ended, students asked her to play it again. Ms. Srang obliged and asked them to sing along if they wanted to. Afterwards, students were instructed to log onto their computers and play the “Mean, median, and mode” vocabulary game. The first part of the game contained questions about whether the number was median, mean, or mode in a data set. The second part asked students to write a four-line poem with the words “mean,” “median,” and “mode.” This lesson provided scaffolding for students to approach the final project of this unit.

Three days after this initial lesson Ms. Srang began instruction on a “Double Digit Data Project.” She asked students to go to the back of the classroom to retrieve supplies, such as

markers, rulers, and posters. She then projected these instructions on the board: (1) Create a numerical statistical question with responses in the double digits; (2) Research and collect at least 15 data points; (3) Create a stem and leaf plot; (4) Create a histogram; (5) Write a summary for the measures of variability; (6) Include the three measures of variability; and (7) Write a conclusion selecting the best representation of the measure of central tendency and why you selected that center. To complete these tasks students were to talk with their partners about the project they wanted to do, ask each other questions about each step, and create a representative poster. Those of Emma and Lily are presented in Figures 7 and 8, respectively.

Figure 7. Emma's Double Digit Data Poster

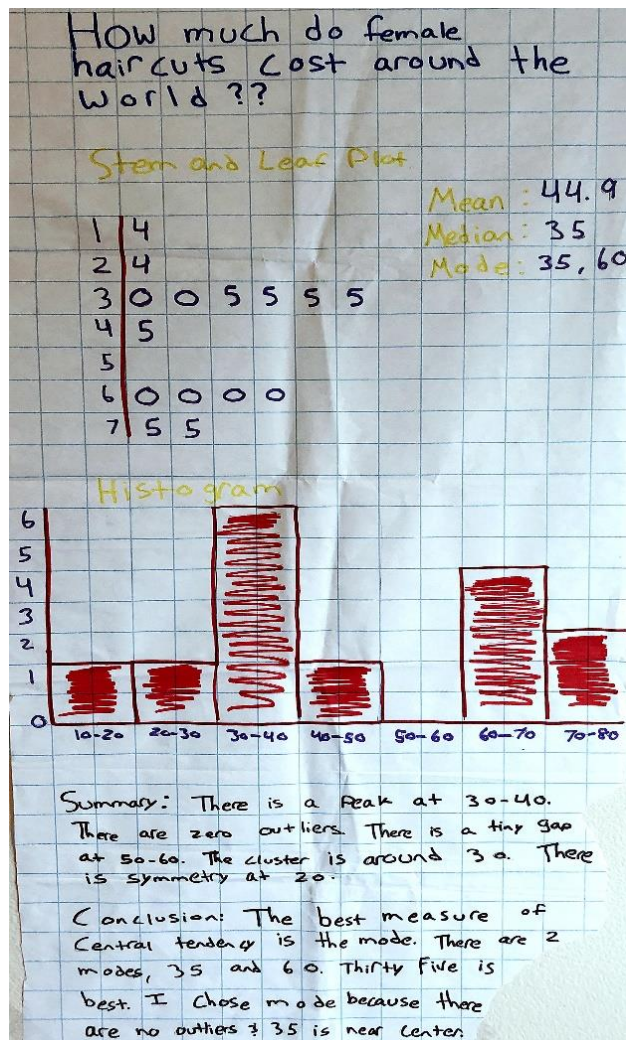
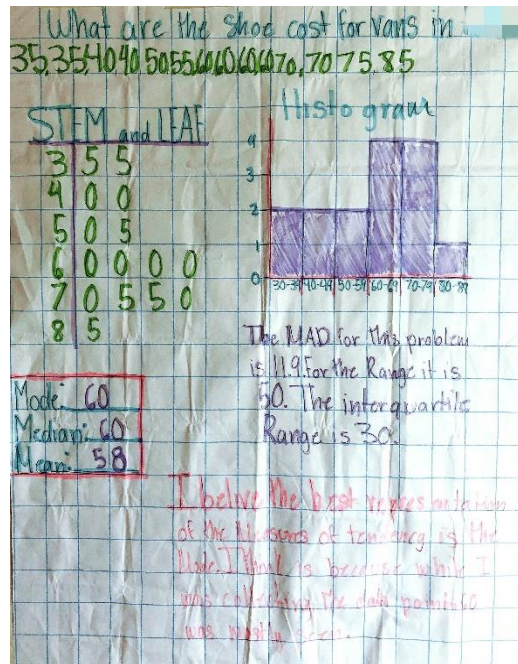


Figure 8. Lily's Double Digit Data Poster



Both posters showed the students' competence in double digit data, and using math to analyze real-world issues. Emma investigated the cost of female haircuts around the world, while Lily examined the cost of Vans shoes in local stores. When asked why they chose these topics, Emma explained,

I know there are many types of women in here and around the world. And I know the costs of haircuts are different based on where you live and how much you make. So I want to know the price range and which groups of women pay more for their haircuts.

Lily said,

Many of my friends at the school like Vans, but the shoes can be really expensive. So I want to find out the range of their costs and who can really afford them, especially in the stores where we like to hang out.

Ms. Srang's instructional scaffolding and hands-on projects helped the MAS apply their math knowledge and skills to analyze local and global issues.

On the last day of the school year, Ms. Srang brought in a model ship made of canvas and seashells. She instructed students to push the tables to the walls and sit in a circle in the back of the classroom. Once students settled down, Ms. Srang said, “I will ask you six questions. Once you answer each question, please pass the ship to the person next to you so that they can answer the question.” Each of the questions asked students to reflect on what they had learned over the school year, and what they looked forward to in 7th grade. For example, the second question was, “What did you learn in 6th grade that you’re going to take into 7th grade?” Tyrone answered, “I learned how to make friends;” Alan “learned how to be kind to others;” Emma “learned how to collaborate with peers;” Lily “learned how to be more confident;” and Chris claimed, “I learned how not to get into trouble.”

For the last question, Ms. Srang said, “I want you to think about a person you wronged this year or a person who helped you this year. You can start your sentence with ‘I’m sorry’ or ‘I appreciate...’ I will go first.” She continued, “I’m sorry to Luis because I yelled at you at the beginning of the school year. I appreciate Lamar because he’s made a night-and-day difference in our class. I also appreciate Selma because she’s always willing to help others.” Each student followed her example: Tyrone was “sorry to Ms. Srang for not paying attention in class sometimes.” Alan appreciated “Ms. Srang for being a good teacher.” Chris apologized to Ms. Srang “for talking out loud in class.” Lily expressed appreciation to “Emma and Ms. Srang for always helping me out when I need it.” Emma was “sorry for making our class get into the circle once because I was talking too much in class.” She also appreciated Ms. Srang “for teaching us this year.”

This lesson demonstrated Ms. Srang’s efforts to help the MAS reflect on their learnings, take responsibilities for their mistakes, and show appreciation for others’ contributions to them.

In addition to developing social skills, Ms. Srang’s teaching probably contributed to the satisfactory academic performance of the MAS in her class, as demonstrated by their state standardized test scores (Table 9).

Table 9. State Standardized Test Scores for Lily, Tyrone, Chris, Alan, and Emma

Student Name	Grade Level	Math Test Score	State Passing Score
Lily	6th	2,514 (Approaching)	2,552 – 2,609
Tyrone	6th	2,573 (Proficient)	2,552 – 2,609
Chris	6th	2,574 (Proficient)	2,552 – 2,609
Alan	6th	2,585 (Proficient)	2,552 – 2,609
Emma	6th	2,643 (Advanced)	2,552 – 2,609

Respecting Each Other’s Humanity

The participating teachers and students in this study expressed genuine caring for each other, and the students considered the teachers as role models and mentors. In the following comments Ms. Chao described how she varied and sustained strong relationships with the MAS based on their academic performance, personality, and socialization:

Relationship with Jerome is really important to keeping him in Honors class. So during parent-teacher conferences, I called his dad and scheduled a conference at 7 A.M. because this is the only time that worked for his dad. I also remind Jerome to turn in his work whenever I can. I think all my nagging showed him how much I cared so he put in the effort to actually do his work! Michi and Cuac are a bit quieter and they often hang out with a group of boys at the school. One of their buddies is a student in my other class. He and I have a very good relationship. So I work on my relationship with this student to reach Michi and Cuac. And, I noticed Michi and Cuac hang out with their friend at the school’s balcony in the morning and wait for me to come. Once I get to school, they follow me into my classroom and hang out there. I think they feel that my classroom is a safe space to hang out with each other.

During the course of the school year, Ms. Chao's relationships with the students deepened. Some of the reasons for these changes are explained in the following comments:

My relationship with the three students has changed from being just their language arts teacher to a more trusted mentor; someone who helps them navigate high school. When it was time to register for their classes next year, they asked me about which class to take in all subjects, not just for language arts. I found that spending time with them and building personal relationships were really helpful.

In commenting on their relationships with and perceptions of Ms. Chao, the students reflected some of their teacher's assessments. For example, Jerome said,

I think my relationship with her changed. At the beginning of the school year, I was really annoying. I still am. I think she got used to it. Now she's like, 'Jerome, cool.' She's a good teacher and good person, and she's been helping me out. I see her more as a guide, like someone who points me to a right direction without forcing me to take a path.

Michi explained,

I like distancing my personal life from school as much as possible, so I don't talk much with my teachers. But I trust Ms. Chao because I started hanging out with my friends in her classroom and got to know her better. And she's a very likable person, so I'll probably want to be like that one day. So she's more like a guide to me.

Cuac declared,

I had a bad experience with my language arts teacher last year, so I was expecting the same thing this year. But Ms. Chao is different because she's better than the other teacher in so many ways. For me, she's in a small group of teachers I will revisit, just to talk to

them. She also has prestige because she went to an Ivy League university. I'm thinking if she can do it, I can probably do it, too. So I would consider her a role model.

Although each student had a slightly different relationship with Ms. Chao, they all associated their positive relationships with her engaging them in successful learning, getting to know them on a personal level, and her overall good teaching. When asked how they remember Ms. Chao in the next few years, the three students produced this drawing in Figure 9.

Figure 9. Mexican American Students' Drawing of Ms. Chao



In it, Ms. Chao is standing calmly by her daughters with clouds and the sun in the background. A soccer field and a swimming pool are in the foregrounds (because one of her daughters played soccer and the other was on a swimming team). Immediately in front of Ms. Chao is the question, "Can you portray sarcasm in a sentence?" Underneath this question was a book with the title "Knowledge Is Power" as its cover. The symbolism was revealing. Students explained that the clouds represented Ms. Chao's difficult past, while the sun represented what lay ahead for her. The soccer field and the swimming pool symbolized Ms. Chao sharing personal life experiences with students. The question about sarcasm indicated Ms. Chao's personality and sense of humor,

and the book cover spoke to the intellectual expectations she included in her teaching. These visions of Ms. Chao indicated that the three students considered and connected with her as a human being, not just a teacher.

Ms. Chao held similar conceptions of her students. Her hopes for them combined high career expectations with quality human attributes. She explained:

I think Jerome might get his Associate degree and a job first. But he really likes boxing and videogames, so I'd like to see him at DigiPen and eventually become a graphic designer. I think Michi and Cuac might go into business or engineering, so I'd like to see them attend a four-year college and continue on their path to get there. In 10 years when they look back, I think they will appreciate that I pushed them all year to do their work. Hopefully, they learned that they can actually do the work because this is their first year in high school. I hope they will feel like I had a really good freshman year and that will keep them going.

Mr. Lee described how he developed and sustained good relationships with the MAS by connecting regularly with parents:

I contact their parents and I'm very intentional about it. Mina is really quiet and I can see her getting lost in the shuffle for many teachers. So I try to stay on top of it by keeping in touch with her parents. Luna is outgoing but needs more help with math, so I talk with her parents regularly to make sure we're on the same page. Camila is quiet and she's graduating. But I still send her parents emails and let them know what's going on.

Another way Mr. Lee developed and sustained good relationships with the students was by remembering details about their personal lives. This was evident in each student's reflections about him. Camila recalled, "I play an instrument and when I went to perform on behalf of the

school, he told me how cool that is. He gets involved with students a lot and knows how the social environment can affect us.”

Mina stated,

One time I told him some days I came to school not really feeling my best and can't concentrate in class. A few weeks later, I had one of those days. He assured me that I don't have to be the most talkative student sharing answers that day. I can just relax a little bit.

Luna said,

Once I told him about my summer job as a soccer referee, and he brought it up in class a later time. I feel that he cared about my personal life, not just about what type of a student I am in his class.

Like Ms. Chao, relationships between Mr. Lee and his MAS deepened as the school year progressed. He provided the following example:

In early spring, Luna and Mina asked me what my schedule will be like for next year. I told them I don't know yet. They went to the counselors and found that I would be teaching geometry. So they asked the counselors to enroll them in my class for next year.

When asked if their relationship with Mr. Lee has changed since the beginning of the school year, Luna said, “Our relationship has improved since the start of the year. He's thoughtful about my learning and cares about me as a person. I don't get that from a couple of my other teachers. So I appreciate him a lot.” Mina added, “Our relationship has gotten better since the beginning of the year because he's gotten to know us more personally. We always feel like he's there if we were to need him.” Camila explained similarly with, “My relationship with him has changed since the

beginning of the year because I came to know who he is as a teacher and person. I feel comfortable asking him for help when I need it.”

The statements suggested that Mr. Lee’s efforts of developing and sustaining good relationships with the MAS were successful. Their relationships both as teacher and friend were appreciated. These were displayed in a lesson toward the end of the school year. Before Mr. Lee walked into the class, Mina and a few other students wrote “Happy Birthday, Mr. Lee!” in capital letters on the board and covered it with the projector screen. Luna and a few other students blocked Mr. Lee at the door, and asked him not to come in until they said so. When Mr. Lee was granted permission to enter, Mina lifted the screen and everyone sang “Happy birthday to you!” Deeply moved, Mr. Lee thanked the students. The class then asked if he would give them “stamps” (a system the school used to reward positive behavior). Mr. Lee smiled and said, “Yes, and because I owe you stamps anyway.” This scenario illustrated how the MAS showed respect for and appreciation, and Mr. Lee to them.

During the interview the MAS described their perceptions of Mr. Lee as follows:

Luna: “I respect him for where he came from and how he’s worked his way up. I look at my parents that way, too. My parents are my role models so I look at Mr. Lee in a similar way.”

Mina: “I respect that he came from so little and built his way up. He’s put every advantage he might have had to get somewhere far in life. So I look at him as a role model, like my parents.”

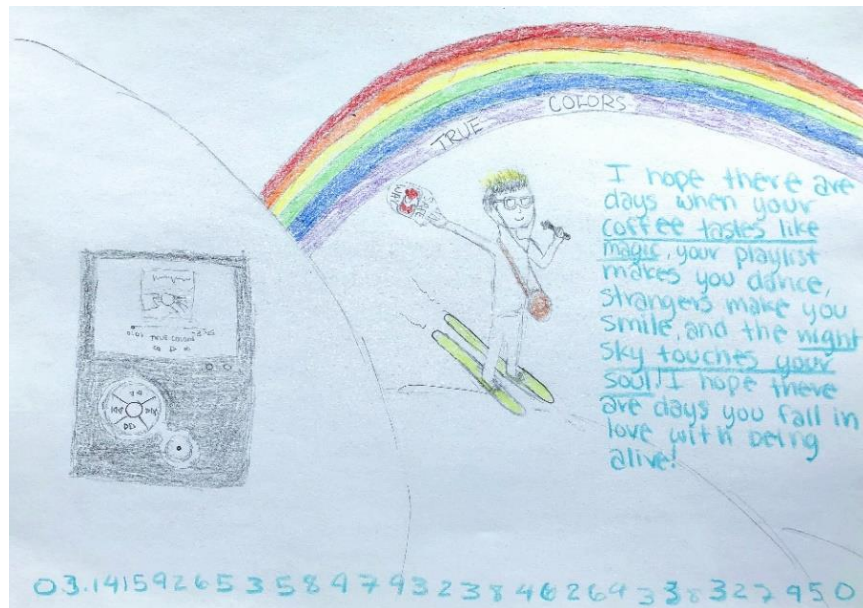
Camila: “He doesn’t just teach us math. He also teaches us why it’s important to make good choices in life. This reminds me of my parents who are my role models.”

The students saw similar experiences and qualities between Mr. Lee and their parents. These similarities allowed them to perceive Mr. Lee as more than just their math teacher, but also as someone they could relate and look up to.

Mr. Lee held a similar humanizing vision of the three students. He explained it thusly: I share this with the students all the time that my wife is a contractor with the department of education and she charges people by the hour of what she thinks she is worth. She can say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ anytime she wants. When I share this story, I can see the light in their eyes. So I hope they have learned that the hard work they put in right now will transcend things. Because in 10 years, I would like them to be their own bosses. I want them to be owners of their shops or something. I don’t want them to work for anybody. When you determine your own worth, you will be empowered.

Mr. Lee’s vision of them was mirrored by the MAS in a symbolic drawing (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Mexican American Students’ Drawing of Mr. Lee



In the picture, Mr. Lee stands on ski boards with a smile, a microphone in his left hand, and a grocery store bag in his right hand. He is saying, “I hope there are days when your coffee tastes

like magic, your playlist makes you dance, strangers make you smile, and the night sky touches your soul. I hope there are days you fall in love with being alive!” There is a rainbow with the words “true colors” above his head and “ π ” beneath him. In the left corner, there is an iPod playing the song “True colors.” The messages in drawing reflect Mr. Lee’s attitudes and behaviors toward students and teaching. The grocery store bag was what Mr. Lee used to carry his lunch, indicating the students’ observation of his personal life. The microphone and the statements suggested their understanding of Mr. Lee’s pedagogy and attitudes toward life. The rainbow symbolized Mr. Lee’s personality, life experiences, and students’ feelings about his class. The math symbol represented Mr. Lee’s passion and the subject matter of his class. The song indicated the most important lesson they learned from Mr. Lee about staying true to yourself and not being afraid to show your authenticity. These symbols represented the humanization of Mr. Lee.

In differentiating and sustaining positive relationships with the MAS based on their personal needs and academic performance, Ms. Srang explained:

Chris’s mom told me that they didn’t have a computer at home and many of our homework is online. So I talked to our technology department and found a used laptop. They fixed the scratches and bruises, and I offered it to Chris so that he can do his online homework and not fall behind in our class. Alan is very bright but his work habits weren’t always there. So every time he forgot something, I always gave him a short lecture or story about if you keep good habits you can go very far and do good things with your life. Lily hasn’t made much academic growth this year. So I have been helping her after school and trying to figure out what’s going on with her thinking and how I can help her understand more concepts. Emma and Tyrone are advanced learners. So I try to

have projects with questions they care about or things they want to investigate. For example, the equation project required them to come up with their own story and the double digit data project asked them to examine something they're interested in.

As the school year progressed, Ms. Srang's relationships with the students improved because "they became more comfortable asking me for help; joking with me; and saying things in Spanish to me." The students agreed as apparent in the following comments:

Alan: "I have a good relationship with her from the start and it's gotten better because she helps me learn. I see her as a role model because she's taught my older brothers and shown us what we can do with education."

Tyrone: "My relationship with her has changed since the beginning of the year. When we came in on the first day, all we were doing was blocks. I thought it was going to be an easy class. Then I looked at my 2nd and 3rd tests and I'm like 'Okay!' Her class got harder but I enjoy the challenge. I would consider her a mentor, rather than a role model, because she's been helping me learn."

Chris: "My relationship with Ms. Srang is complicated because she's part of our family. Every time I do something good, she would tell my mom. When I misbehave, she's like 'I'm going to text your mom right now' with a smile. But I know she cares for me. I consider her a role model because she teaches us really well. Now I want to teach other people."

Lily: "Our relationship was really strong at the beginning. It went downhill and uphill, depending on how difficult the unit is. But our relationship has gotten better once I started asking for help after school. I see her as a role model because she told us how she

was not always successful in school but was still able to finish college really strong. I thought to myself, if she did it, I can do it, too.”

Emma: “Our relationship has gotten a lot better when I started talking to her about personal things. I definitely see her as my role model because she’s the only teacher of color I ever had. I love math. It’s my favorite subject. She works hard and teaches math really well. It shows that I can be a teacher if I want to.”

When asked how they thought they might remember Ms. Srang in the next few years, Chris, Tyrone, and Alan wrote this poem called “Good Teacher:”

Ms. Srang is a good teacher.

She watches her son play soccer from a bleacher.

She teaches us math

that takes us to a path.

She helps us learn fractions:

One half of the class is working on their Chromebook,
the other half is paying attention to the teacher.

That’s two halves of a fraction.

She also teaches us decimals.

We can use that to calculate how many animals
are on a farm, or use it to count our money
when we’re shopping for grocery.

Ratio, just like decimals,
but the two dots are its amigos.
She helps us connect it with fractions,
like how addition is related to subtraction.

Then we learned geometry.
We split the shape in half for symmetry.
There are square, rectangle, and endless angles.
But how come life seems like a circle?

At last, we learned statistics,
like histograms and you can post them on Instagram.
Yet we are the outliers of this society,
where the algorithm was not built for us to succeed.

But she taught us how to break the statistical pattern,
and thanks to her, we will proceed.

Emma and Lily expressed their future visions of Ms. Srang in a drawing (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Mexican American Students' Drawing of Ms. Srang



Emma's interpretation of it included,

She's wearing a floral dress with her hair down. She's at a park with her kids and flowers floating in the air. On the corner, there's a rainbow for the storms she's gone through and what's waiting for her. The math in the rainbows represents what we have been learning in her class.

Lily added,

The three Ls are what we have been practicing the whole year in her class and speak for who she is as a teacher. Along the grass, there is a road with two paths forming. One path stands for the sacrifice her family made to come to the U.S., the other stands for the things she's done for her family. At the center of the road where the two paths formed, there is a present waiting for her and her kids.

Emma's and Lily's drawing and reflection suggested they appreciate and respect Ms. Srang as a teacher and a person, as did Tyrone, Chris, and Alan. Ms. Srang reciprocated in kind in these comments:

Emma takes school very seriously and cares about details. I definitely see her going to college and become a mathematician or an engineer. Lily is very kind to people around her. I see her surrounded by friends and family. Even though she's a little behind now, I see her eventually going to a four-year university. Chris is family so I know more about his interests. I know he wants to join the army one day and he totally can. But I also hope he knows that he has other choices. I picture Alan at his family party where everyone is getting food, and I see him going to college and having some types of leadership roles in the future. Tyrone is the only one who I don't picture going to college because he's always chilling in school. I think he might take some other approaches such as trade school to think outside the box to find success.

Summary

Each of the CAT in this study cared for and assisted in academic and personal growth of the MAS by leveraging resources to support them at their school and district. They also helped the students develop multiple competence, such as academic confidence, political consciousness, and social skills to change the status quo. Furthermore, the CAT and the MAS recognized and respected the humanity of each other, and transformed their formal relationships into a kind of fictive kinships.

Chapter VII: Summary, Discussion, and Recommendations

This chapter includes a summary, discussion, and recommendations for future research on teachers of color working with students of color cross-ethnically, cross-racially, and cross-culturally. The tenets of *borderland teaching* are elaborated. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the significance and limitations of the study, and recommendations for future research and teacher education.

Summary

This study examined three Chinese American teachers teaching eleven Mexican American students in three ethnically diverse urban secondary schools in the Pacific Northwest. It explored how the teachers' racialized experiences informed their hybrid identities and pedagogies. Specifically, the study examined how the teachers facilitated *borderland teaching* (a hybrid of *culturally responsive teaching* and *borderlands theory*) to improve their students' educational experiences and outcomes, and how the teachers and the students perceived their relationships with each other.

Teacher participants were selected from nominations by two Chinese American teachers and their principals in school districts in the Pacific Northwest. Three Chinese American teachers (two females and one male) whose professional experiences ranging from 9 to more than 20 years participated in the study. Two teachers taught middle school mathematics and one taught high school English language arts. Eleven Mexican American students (five females and six males) participated in the study. Eight were in middle school and three in high school. The study began in January 2019 and ended in June 2019. Data collected included classroom observations; semi-structured interviews of the teachers and the students; the teachers' lesson and unit plans; and student assignments, projects, drawings, and assessments.

Findings suggested that each teacher's racialized experiences helped develop their hybrid identities, which were manifested in neither totally mainstream nor minority-oriented teaching. Their pedagogical strategies assisted the students in accessing and constructing knowledge from multiple perspectives and sources. The teachers' racialized experiences also helped them empathize with and validate the students' experiences of marginalization in schools. In addition, each teacher held asset views of and high expectations for the students; used humor and personal stories to cross cultural borders in class; and adjusted their pedagogical strategies to the students' learning preferences. The teachers also demonstrated caring for the students through advocating for support in multiple venues and cultivating their agency to change the status quo. Their pedagogical efforts and personal caring helped develop and sustain genuine relationships with the students. In turn, the students appreciated the teachers' efforts and respected their humanity.

Discussion

The proposed theory of *borderland teaching* introduced in Chapter I included the in-betweenness to teach students to construct knowledge from the margins and validate their marginality; synchronizing cultural differences among students and resisting cultural hegemony; and caring to develop students' agency and cultivate kinships. The data presented in Chapters IV, V, and VI illustrated how this theory was translated into practice by the three teachers, and how the students responded to the teachers' pedagogy. Each tenet of *borderland teaching* is explained further in view of the study findings, and previous research and scholarship.

Constructing Knowledge and Validation from the Margins

The teachers experienced conflicts in their personal identities during their own K-12 experiences that created feelings of alienation as described by Anzaldúa (2012). As the teachers grew older and accumulated more professional experiences, they learned to reject feelings of

alienation by resisting the hegemony of U.S. dominant culture. Their resistance reconfigured the conflicts of their identities into hybrid identities, which were signified as “in-betweenness.” It is a fluid state and a place of refuge that allowed the teachers to live on the margins of mainstream society and simultaneously resist oppression. These findings are consistent with explanations provided by Cantú and Hurtado (2012), and Chang (2016).

The teachers’ hybrid identities informed their “in-between” mainstream-and minority-oriented teaching that helped students access mainstream knowledge in ways responsive to their lived realities, and construct knowledge from their own experiences. For example, they used multiple materials and references to explain academic concepts while ensuring that students learned academic knowledge. They also used multiple techniques to engage and assess learning with the main purpose of helping students master academic knowledge. Their pedagogical strategies were similar to those articulated by Gutstein et al. (1997) and Trueba (1999).

All three teachers’ personal struggles sensitized them to similar ones experienced by their Mexican American students. Although they communicated empathy in different ways (i.e., making explicit the system of advanced tracks in high schools, weaving students’ stories into topics of discussion, and insisting on academic rigor), their reasons for doing so were aligned with those reported by Newcomer (2018). In other words, their empathy was based in understanding larger sociopolitical contexts, and how they affected students of color generally and Mexican American students specifically.

Synchronizing Cultural Differences and Resisting Cultural Hegemony

Despite coming from different cultural backgrounds than Mexican American students, each teacher recognized similarities between Chinese and Mexican cultures, and used personal stories to bridge cultural differences. The ways the teachers included personal stories in teaching

illustrated the power of stories for personalizing learning and improving academic productivity (Smith & Salgado, 2018). They also used humor based on learning materials, racialized experiences, and students' jokes to cross cultural borders in class and to connect with Mexican American students.

The teachers' comprehensive understanding of the Mexican American students helped them match teaching methods with the students' learning preferences. The way Ms. Chao used hands-on and collective learning activities was similar to the teacher in Valenzuela's (1999) study. Mr. Lee used a "we do - you do - I do" mode of teaching to combine group work with individual practice, which was analogous to the teacher studied by Stoehr and Patel (2017). Ms. Srang used a team approach to teaching and learning that cultivated a sense of hard work and communal achievement similar to the teacher described by Escalante and Dirmann (1990). The teachers' pedagogical efforts helped them harmonize cultural differences among the Mexican American students.

All three teachers recognized the cultural wealth Mexican American students brought into their classrooms, including resilience, respect, funds of knowledge, and parental support. These assets were complimented with high expectations for the students and support for meeting them. Their actions included sometimes requiring students to re-do assignments even if they were initially correct; helping students develop knowledge and skills to solve problems on their own; and using group work to expand students' zones of proximal development. These actions were similar to the teachers' in Duncan-Andrade's (2007) study. Their asset views and high expectations countered the hegemony of the culturally deficit paradigm often imposed on Mexican American students.

Caring to Develop Agency and Cultivate Kinships

The teachers in this study leveraged resources to counter Mexican American students' experiences of inequities at school. Their efforts ranged from raising concerns at the school and district levels; seeking external funding to support students' academic development; and advocating for technology ownership and social recognition. These efforts were illustrative of the ones described by Sheets (1995). The teachers also continually explored teaching techniques that could better serve Mexican American students in and beyond schools. Their efforts and commitment demonstrated caring for the students.

Another way the teachers demonstrated caring for Mexican American students was by helping them develop commitment and skills to change the status quo. For example, Mr. Lee focused on improving students' academic confidence and promoting political consciousness. His approaches were similar to those described by Santamaria (2009). Ms. Srang used various instructional strategies to enhance students' math literacies and political consciousness in ways comparable to those described by DeNicolo and Franquiz (2006). Ms. Chao also used a variety of assignments to expand students' analytic, collaborative, and research skills. These techniques helped students "articulate arguments, critique social structures, and use systematized evidence to enter civic conversations around institutional racism" (Kwon & de los Ríos, 2019, p. 162).

All three teachers invested much time and effort in developing and sustaining genuine relationships with Mexican American students. This involved demanding time on task; bonding with students during non-instructional time; acknowledging and complimenting students' extracurricular activities in class; communicating with parents; providing extra help after school to improve students' grades; and challenging students to perform better. The teachers also had promising visions for their students, and hoped they would pursue personal growth and professional excellence regardless of their postsecondary choices. In turn, the students

appreciated their teachers for what they learned in class; considered them role models and mentors; and envisioned a positive future for them. This caring and appreciation allowed the students and their teachers to honor each other's humanity and transform traditional student-teacher relationships into "kinships" (Gay, 2018).

The findings of this study exemplified the tenets of *borderland teaching* with a high degree of consistency. The Chinese American teachers' lived experiences epitomized different elements of *Borderlands Theory*. For example, they encountered and reconfigured conflicts in their professional and personal identities, which informed their "in-betweenness." This helped them empathize with Mexican American students' experiences of alienation, and teach the students in hybrid ways that validated their marginal ways of being and gained access to mainstream knowledge. These pedagogical orientations resembled many components of *Culturally Responsive Teaching*. This was seen in high levels of instructional and cultural compatibility with the out-of-school experiences of Mexican American students. In other words, pedagogical actions complemented the students' learning preferences and improved their academic engagement. Other components of *Culturally Responsive Teaching* such as caring was communicated by the teachers in multiple ways and venues. In turn, reciprocal respect and appreciation transcended traditional student-teacher relationships. Thus, the hybrid of *Borderlands Theory* (i.e. the teachers' lived experiences) and *Culturally Responsive Teaching* (i.e. the teachers' pedagogical approaches) constituted the essence of *borderland teaching*.

While characterizing the collective art and craft of teaching exhibited by the teachers was an important goal of this study, the richness of their individual stories and pedagogical styles was not sacrificed. Rather, the combination of these was important to making attributes of *borderland teaching* tangible. Any attempt to apply this theory in practice without fully understanding

teachers' hybrid identities, or the larger sociopolitical context of teaching, would distort it and be an injustice to its essence. Furthermore, it would be presumptuous to assume that only (or all) Chinese American teachers can use *borderland teaching* to engage Mexican American students in academically productive ways. For many teachers of color who are marginalized but use some of the U.S. dominant ideology, "in-betweenness" is their normative reality, and a regular part of their cross-cultural teaching.

Significance of the Study

Early academic research on communities of color was often conducted by cultural outsiders, who have limited understanding of those communities' struggles, wisdom, and resilience. Such research distorts the realities of communities of color, positions the researchers as legitimate knowers and the researched as "others," and perpetuates the corrupting influence of mainstream paradigms (Villenas, 1996). This study challenges mainstream research on individuals of color, and questions who *can* and *should* pursue these scholarly inquiries. Furthermore, research and scholarship from scholars of one ethnic minority group studying students of another ethnic minority group is beginning to increase. This study is indicative of this research trend. Specifically, it involved researcher and participants, who share similar (i.e., Chinese American teachers) yet different (i.e., Mexican American students) identities. This unique research has the potential to characterize pedagogy that blends cross-ethnic, cross-racial, and cross-cultural engagements in schools.

Another contribution of this study relates to methodology. Data in multiple sources and formats were collected in different content areas, secondary grade levels, and schools. This encourages future research to examine the value of cross-content, cross-grade, and cross-school studies of culturally responsive teaching. Data also captured culturally responsive teaching

practices and students' responses as they were happening. Specifically, the inclusion of students' in-the-moment perspectives enriches research on social and educational justice issues that often neglect students' perspectives or include them from "remember when" viewpoints. Data analyses combined teachers' and students' perspectives with a high degree of consistency among the three primary data sources. This increases the research value of triangulation; makes the findings more robust and nuanced; and provides readers multiple entry points into the study.

This study included participants from two specific ethnic groups. Their varying immigration backgrounds and racialized experiences challenge mainstream monolithic portrayals of ethnic diversity, and encourage researchers, educators, and policymakers to understand intra-group diversities from the participants' vantage points. In centering the personal and professional perspectives, stories, and lived experiences of the three Chinese American teachers, the study added to research on culturally responsive teaching enacted by Chinese American and Asian ancestry teachers generally. It also provided some important evidence that teachers of color whose cultural understanding and affinity (but not membership) with Mexican American students can improve their schooling outcomes. Moreover, the study substantiated previous claims about ethnic, racial, and cultural "in-betweenness"; illustrated how to successfully engage Mexican American students in schooling; and suggested what reconfigurations of culture might look like in teaching and learning. In so doing, the study disrupts "the static notions of culture that dominate educational discourse" (Howard, 2019, p. 72), and makes a worthy contribution to the field of multicultural education.

Limitations

One limitation of the study was its duration. The study did not start until the second half of the academic year, and lasted about six months. Student-teacher relationships were already

established before data collection began. Thus, the study cannot explain how the relationships were initially created, and how they actually changed from the first half to the second half of the academic year. Any information on the beginning process is reflective (based on memory) and may not be totally accurate. Furthermore, students were enrolled in these teachers' classes at the time of the study, and may have "skewed" their comments to be overly complimentary due to established relationships. This limitation can be mitigated by starting data collection at the beginning of the school year, and spending more time immersed in the research sites.

Potential unintentional bias was another limitation of the study. The teachers being Chinese American like the researcher could have led to "identifier syndrome," and the researcher with the teachers. This potential bi-directional bias means that what was observed in the classes might not have happened all the time; what was shared during the interviews might have been biased due to the relationships between the researcher and the teachers; and what was interpreted might not have fully captured the teachers' perspectives. This subjectivity was mediated by consistent triangulation of data within and across cases. Other methods such as peer review with colleagues can reduce potential bias and increase the study's internal validity.

A third limitation of the study was language. Although English is the second language of many of the participants, the teachers' limited Mandarin Chinese proficiency and most of the student participants' proficiency in Spanish made it necessary to conduct the study in English. It is reasonable to assume that some linguistic and cultural nuances were lost during the collection and analysis of some data such as the interviews. However, to minimize this happening the transcripts and analyses were sent to the teachers, who reviewed them for accuracy. A similar accuracy check unfortunately was not possible for student participants. Therefore, it is likely some errors occurred in (re)presenting their contributions.

Another limitation was the study's external validity. Because of the nature of qualitative case study methodology, no claims can be made that the results are objective, representative of, or generalizable to a large population. For example, there were only three Chinese American teacher and eleven Mexican American student participants in the study. The teaching, learning, interactions, and relationships may be indicative of other teachers and students from similar cultural backgrounds. They are, however, not definitive or representative. Other factors, such as content areas, grade levels, school demographics and locations, and teachers' experiences, may have limited the generalizability of the study. One strategy to increase the study's external validity is using maximum variation in the sample that "allows for the possibility of a greater range of application by readers or consumers of the research" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 257).

Recommendations

Future research on cross-cultural teaching and learning between teachers of color and students of color should address some of the limitations of this study. One recommendation is to start the study at the beginning of the school year. This can be done by recruiting teacher participants and working with school site supervisors to obtain permission for the study during the summer break. This procedure will allow researchers to observe how teachers develop relationships with students at the beginning of the academic year, and capture pedagogical strategies that sustain or improve their relationships as the academic year progresses.

Researchers also can spend a longer period of time in the field conducting more observations on student-teacher interactions during classroom instruction and school events. In so doing, they may obtain multi-dimensional perspectives on whether student-teacher interactive patterns and relationships are consistent within and beyond the classrooms.

Another recommendation is to recruit more Chinese American and Mexican American researchers who have extensive cross-cultural teaching and learning experiences in ethnically diverse schools. The benefits of this strategy are threefold. The researchers can conduct interviews using languages culturally responsive to participants, which increases the authenticity of data. The researchers also can use researcher-participant and within-research-team member checks during data transcriptions and analyses. This improves the study's internal validity. A third benefit of such collaboration is the expansion of scholarly communities, and potential increase in accessible research and scholarship.

Future research should increase variation in the sample. Researchers can recruit more Chinese American teachers and Mexican American students representing many linguistic, gender, sexual, socioeconomic, immigration, and generational diversities. Researchers also can look into how *borderland teaching* may be used across different content areas. For example, questions such as "In what ways do Chinese American teachers facilitate *borderland teaching* similarly and differently in social studies and science?" are worth examining. Other variations, such as student demographics, grade levels, and school geographical locations, should be considered when selecting the sample. These techniques will increase the study's external validity.

A final recommendation is for teacher education. Each teacher participant was inadequately prepared to work with ethnically diverse students of color in urban schools regardless of their institution's prestige. This is not surprising given that many teacher education programs in the U.S. operate under Eurocentric ethos (Sleeter, 2017). When these programs change their structural operations that decenter Whiteness, they are likely to close the gap between professed commitments and actual outcomes (Zeichner, 2009). A step forward can be

recruiting, supporting, and retaining more teacher educators of color who can facilitate effective cross-cultural teaching. This will likely improve the preparation of preservice teachers of color.

Concluding Comments

As I look back on the three teachers' stories, I reflect on my own experiences crossing borders of race, ethnicity, language, culture, and nationality. I recognize my generation of Chinese immigrants may have slightly more advantages in comparison to earlier generations (Takaki, 1998). Yet, I know my sense of belonging will always be conditional in a society still deeply segregated by race. I hope the three teachers' stories are testaments to how *borderland teaching* can equitably serve some of the most marginalized students in K-12 public schools in the U.S.; center Chinese American teachers' experiences in educational discourse; and increase Chinese Americans' sense of belonging in the larger society. Toni Morrison (1998) once eloquently said, "I stood at the border, stood at the edge, and claimed it as central and let the rest of the world move over to where I was." When Chinese American teachers and other teachers of color who are standing at the border/edge of the U.S. educational enterprise claim their (our) "in-betweenness" as the center, they (we) will be set free.

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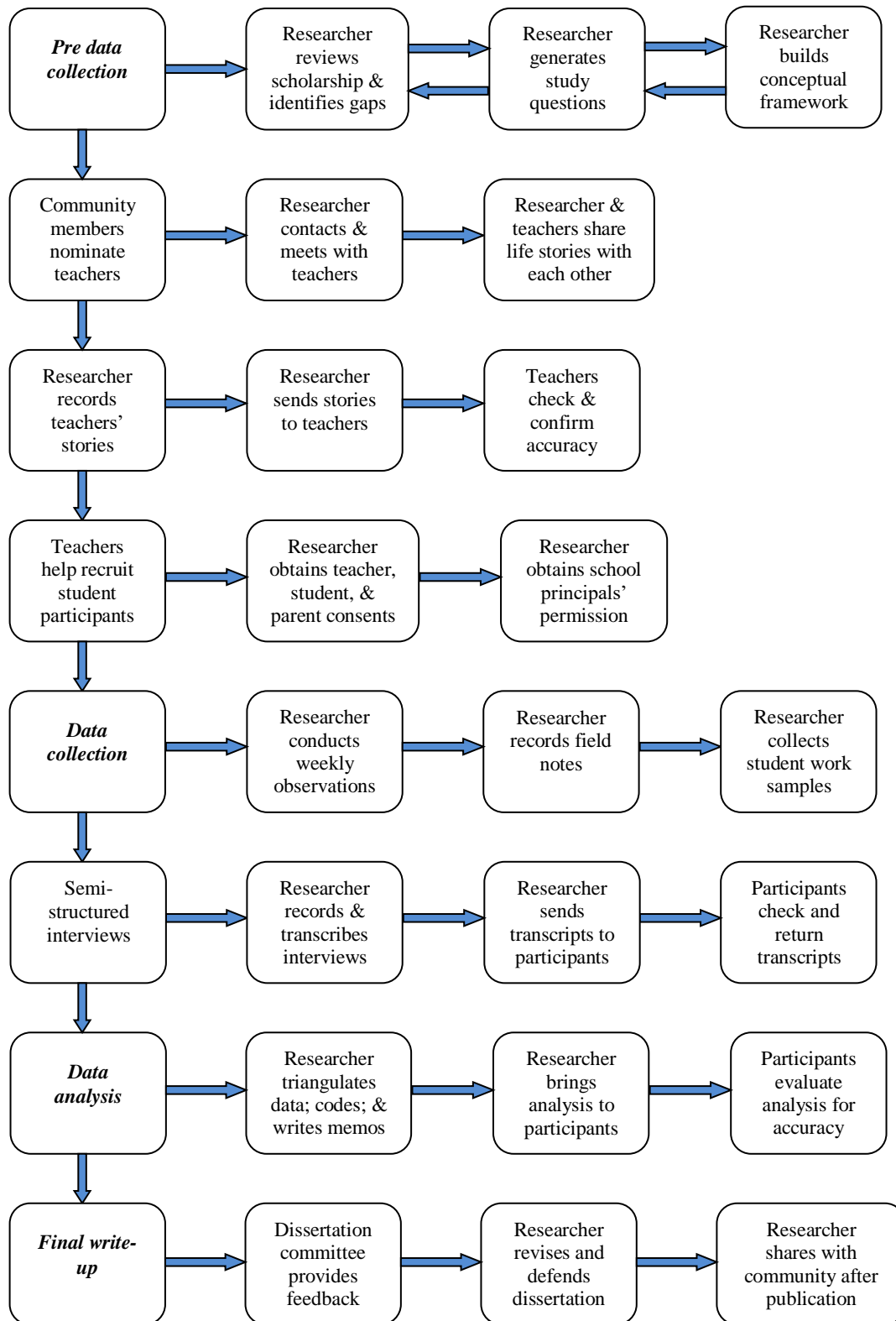
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Appendix A: Research Design Overview



Appendix B: PARTICIPANT ASSENT FORM FOR STUDENTS

Borderland Teaching of Chinese American Teachers with Mexican American Students: Toward the Development of a Theory

Investigator: Lin Wu (Cell-phone: 206-886-7318; Email: lwu74@uw.edu)

Faculty Advisor: Prof. Geneva Gay (Phone: 206-221-4797; Email: ggay@uw.edu)

Investigator's Statement

I am asking you to be in a research study. The purpose of this assent form is to give you the information you will need to help you decide whether or not to be in the study. Participation has no impact on your grade or other opportunities in this class. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what I would ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "assent." I will give you a copy of this form for your records.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out *how Chinese American teachers might be effective when working with Mexican American students.*

Procedures

I am going to conduct a study in your classroom for about six months. If you agree to be in the study and your parent or guardian gives consent for your participation, I would like to: (1) observe your participation in Mr./Ms. [] class; (2) interview you about your experiences in this class; and (3) collect some of your class projects, assignments, and assessments.

For observations, I will be in your class about two or three times a week. I will be mainly sitting in the back of the classroom to observe and take notes. Occasionally, I might ask if I can join in your class activities. If you are not comfortable with that, you can always say no.

I am also hoping to interview you once toward the end of the school year. If you choose to participate in the interview, it will be scheduled after school or at your convenience. In the interview, I would ask you questions about what you think of this class; how you interact with Mr./Ms. []; what you do to be successful in this class; and what you think of your relationship with Mr./Ms. []. With your permission, I would like to audio tape your interview so that I can have an accurate record of our conversation. Only I will have access to the recordings and they will be kept in a secure location during my study. I will transcribe these recordings without identifiable information and destroy the recordings after the study is over. If you would like a copy of the transcript of the interview, I will gladly provide you one.

Results Sharing

I would like to share my findings with you during and after the data analysis phase. The findings may include: (1) my interpretation of your interactions with Mr./Ms. [] in your class; and (2)

my interpretation of your interviews. Please indicate below whether you give me permission to do so. Giving me permission to share my findings with you does not obligate you in any way. And you are free to withdraw yourself from this process anytime.

Benefits of the Study

You will be compensated a \$50.00 Amazon gift card for your participation in the study. I will deliver the gift card to you in person once I conclude the study in June 2019.

Risk, Stress, or Discomfort

Some people feel that providing information for research is an invasion of privacy. Some people feel self-conscious when notes are taken or interviews are recorded. I have addressed concerns for your privacy in the section below.

Other Information

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate and you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Information about you is confidential. I will assign you a pseudonym and code the study information. I will keep the link between your name and the pseudonym code in a separate, secured location until the study is complete. Then I will destroy the information linking your information to the pseudonym. If the results of this study are published or presented, I will not use your name, or any other identifying information.

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact **Lin Wu** at the telephone number or email listed at the top of this form.

Signature of Investigator

Printed Name

Date

Participant's Statement

This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later on about the research, I can ask the investigator listed above. I will receive a copy of this assent form.

_____ I give permission for this researcher to observe me in my class.

_____ I do NOT give permission for this researcher to observe me in my class.

_____ I give permission for this researcher to interview me and audiotape the interview.

_____ I do NOT give permission for this researcher to interview me or audiotape the interview.

_____ I give permission for this researcher to share the study's findings with me.

_____ I do NOT give permission for this researcher to share the study's findings with me.

Signature of Participant

Printed Name

Date

Copies to: Investigators' file
 Participant

December 3, 2018

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I am writing to inform you about a study I am conducting with Mr./Ms. []. I am a graduate student at the University of Washington-Seattle. I am also an experienced middle and high school teacher. Currently, I am studying how Chinese American teachers might be effective when working with Mexican American students. To do this, I would like to observe your child in Mr./Ms. [] class. In addition, I would like to learn about your child's experience in Mr./Ms. [] class. With your permission, and if your child agrees, I would like to observe your child in Mr./Ms. [] class and conduct one audio-recorded interview with your child at the school. Your child's participation in the study is voluntary. You and your child's decision about whether or not to participate has no impact on your child's grade or other opportunities in this class.

This letter explains more about student participation in the study, and how the observation of class and audio-recorded interviews will be used. A consent form for your child's participation is at the bottom of this letter.

Procedures

Between January and June, 2019, I will visit Mr./Ms. [] class about two or three times per week. I will be mainly sitting in the back of the classroom to observe class activities and take notes. Occasionally, I may join in class activities. With your and your child's permissions, I would like to include your child's participation as part of the study.

I am also hoping to interview your child once toward the end of the school year. If you give permission and your child chooses to participate in the interview, it will be scheduled at the school. In the interview, I will ask your child about her/his experiences in Mr./Ms. [] class and her/his relationship with Mr./Ms. []. The interview will be audio-taped so that I can have an accurate record of our conversation. Only I will have access to the recording and it will be kept in a secure location during my study. I will transcribe the interview without identifiable information and destroy the recording after the study is over. If you would like a copy of the transcript of the interview, I will gladly provide you one.

Results Sharing

I would like to share my findings with your child during and after the data analysis phase. The findings may include: (1) my interpretation of your child's interactions with Mr./Ms. [] in class, and (2) my interpretation of your child's interview. Please indicate below whether you give me permission to do so. Giving me permission to share my findings with your child does not obligate her/him in any way. And you are free to withdraw your child from this process anytime.

Benefits of the Study

Your child will receive a \$50.00 Amazon gift card when I conclude the study in June 2019.

Risk, Stress, and Discomfort

The observation notes and audio recordings will be of great help to my research. When I report findings from this study, I will not use your child's name, the teacher's name, or the name of the school, district, or state. Pseudonyms will be used instead. In addition, you are free to withdraw

your child from this study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which your child is otherwise entitled.

Other Information

Please contact me if you have any questions about this study. You may also contact Dr. Geneva Gay who is my faculty advisor at the University of Washington-Seattle. I look forward to being a part of the classroom community in your child's class.

Thank you,

Lin Wu, researcher
lwu74@uw.edu
(206) 886-7318

Dr. Geneva Gay, faculty advisor
ggay@uw.edu
(206) 221-4797

Please return this form by **December 18, 2018**

Statement of Parent/Guardian

This study has been explained to me. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later on about the research, I can ask the investigator listed above. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

I give permission for this researcher to observe my child in Mr./Ms. [] class.
 I do NOT give permission for this researcher to observe my child in Mr./Ms. [] class.

I give permission for this researcher to interview my child and audiotape the interview.
 I do NOT give permission for this researcher to interview my child or audiotape the interview.

I give permission for this researcher to share the study's findings with my child.
 I do NOT give permission for this researcher to share the study's findings with my child.

X

PRINT Student's Full Name

X

PRINT Parent/Guardian's Full Name

X

Parent/Guardian's Signature

X

Date

Appendix C: PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS

Borderland Teaching of Chinese American Teachers with Mexican American Students: Toward the Development of a Theory

Investigator: Lin Wu (Cell-phone: 206-886-7318; Email: lwu74@uw.edu)

Faculty Advisor: Prof. Geneva Gay (Phone: 206-221-4797; Email: ggay@uw.edu)

Investigator's Statement

I am asking you to be in a research study. The purpose of this consent form is to give you the information you will need to help you decide whether or not to be in the study. Please read the form carefully. You may ask questions about the purpose of the research, what I would ask you to do, the possible risks and benefits, your rights as a volunteer, and anything else about the research or this form that is not clear. When all your questions have been answered, you can decide if you want to be in the study or not. This process is called "consent." I will give you a copy of this form for your records.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to find out *how Chinese American teachers might be effective when working with Mexican American students.*

Procedures

My study includes observations and interviews. From January to June, 2019, I will be mainly sitting in the back of your classroom to observe you teach and interact with Mexican American students, and write down observation notes on my computer. I will also conduct two interviews with you. Each interview will last about 45-60 minutes. Some sample questions are: (1) In what ways do you think your cultural background influences how you teach? (2) When teaching Mexican American students, in what ways do you feel like you're crossing cultural borders? How would you know when you're crossing cultural borders? With your permission, I would like to audio-tape your interviews so that I can have an accurate record of our conversations. Only I will have access to the recordings and they will be kept in a secure location during my study. I will transcribe these recordings without identifiable information and destroy the recordings after the study is over. If you would like a copy of the transcript of the interview, I will gladly provide you one.

Results Sharing

I would like to share my findings with you during and after data analysis. The findings may include: (1) my interpretation of your teaching and interactions with Mexican American students, and (2) my interpretation of your conception of culture and pedagogy. Please indicate below whether you give me permission to do so. Giving me permission to share my findings with you does not obligate you in any way. You are free to withdraw yourself from this process anytime.

Benefits of the Study

You will be compensated an \$80.00 Amazon gift card for your participation in the study. I will deliver the gift card to you in person once I conclude the study in June 2019. Another benefit of

this study is that it could help teacher educators train preservice teachers of color to become effective when working with students of color from a different ethnic, racial, and cultural group.

Risk, Stress, or Discomfort

Some people feel that providing information for research is an invasion of privacy. Some people feel self-conscious when notes are taken or interviews are recorded. I have addressed concerns for your privacy in the section below.

Other Information

Taking part in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate and you are free to withdraw from this study at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Information about you is confidential. I will assign you a pseudonym and code the study information. I will keep the link between your name and the pseudonym code in a separate, secured location until the study is complete. Then I will destroy the information linking your information to the pseudonym. If the results of this study are published or presented, I will not use your name, or any other identifying information.

I may also want to re-contact you for future related studies. Please indicate below whether you give me permission to do so. Giving me permission to re-contact you does not obligate you in any way.

If you have any questions about this research study, please contact **Lin Wu** at the telephone number or email listed at the top of this form.

Signature of Investigator

Printed Name

Date

Please return this form by **December 18, 2018**

Participant's Statement

This study has been explained to me. I volunteer to take part in this research. I have had a chance to ask questions. If I have questions later on about the research, I can ask the investigator listed above. I will receive a copy of this consent form.

_____ I give permission for this researcher to observe my class.

_____ I do NOT give permission for this researcher to observe my class.

_____ I give permission for this researcher to recruit student participants.

_____ I do NOT give permission for this researcher to recruit student participants.

_____ I give permission for this researcher to interview me and audiotape the interviews.

_____ I do NOT give permission for this researcher to interview me or audiotape the interviews.

_____ I give permission for this researcher to share the study's findings with me.

_____ I do NOT give permission for this researcher to share the study's findings with me.

_____ I give permission for this researcher to re-contact me for future related studies.

_____ I do NOT give permission for this researcher to re-contact me for future related studies.

Signature of Participant

Printed Name

Date

Copies to: Investigators' file
 Participant

Appendix D: First Interview Questions for Chinese American Teachers

1. In your K-12 experiences, which teacher(s) made a lasting impact on your personal life and professional career? Why?
2. Why did you choose the teaching profession? What are some difficulties you have encountered in this line of work? What are some joys you cherish?
3. How would you describe your own pedagogy? In what ways do you think your cultural background influences how you teach?
4. How do you navigate the possible tension between what you want to teach and what the district requires you to teach?
5. In what ways do you think Mexican American students' schooling experiences differ from other students of color, as well as middle-class White students?
6. Can you think of any characteristics that Mexican American students as a group bring to your classroom?
7. What kinds of things have you done in your lesson planning and classroom instruction that build on Mexican American students' funds of knowledge? How do Mexican American students respond to your efforts?
8. At your current school, in what ways have educational resources been allocated to support Mexican American students, or not?
9. What kinds of things have you done at your school to promote Mexican American students' educational performance?
10. What kinds of role do you believe parents play in Mexican American students' schooling success? How would you describe the relationships you've had with Mexican American students' parents?

Appendix E: Second Interview Questions for Chinese American Teachers

1. In our last interview, you talked about ways you support Mexican American students in general at the school. What are some specific things you have done to show your caring for the Mexican American students in this study?
2. When teaching Mexican American students, in what ways do you feel like you're crossing cultural borders? How would you know when you're crossing cultural borders? And what do you do to cross those cultural borders? Can you give me a specific example?
3. How do Mexican American students respond when you're crossing cultural borders during teaching?
4. How would you describe your relationships with the Mexican American students in this study? Have your relationships with them changed since the start of this year?
5. In what ways do you think your own racialized identity influences how you perceive and build relationships with Mexican American students? Can you give me a specific example?
6. When thinking about race, how do you feel that East Asian Americans are not often included in conversations about racial equity? Why do you think this happens? Does proximity to Whiteness grant you White privilege?
7. Because our racial group is often excluded in conversations about racial equity, do you ever feel like an in-betweener? If so, tell me a bit more. If not, why not? In what ways do you feel this kind of in-betweenness influences your teaching?
8. Let's switch gears a bit. Can you tell me a bit about the teacher preparation program you went through? How was the experience? Who taught the courses? Did the theories you learn connect with your teaching practices? If so, in what ways? If not, in what ways?
9. Specifically speaking, how did your teacher preparation program train you to work with Mexican American students? If the program did not provide any trainings on working with Mexican American students, what did you do to learn about working with this particular group?
10. If you could redesign teacher preparation programs so that all teachers can be better prepared to work with Mexican American students, what changes would you make and why?
11. In which areas would you like to gain more support and/or professional development for working with Mexican American students at this point in your career?
12. Here are the last four questions to conclude our interview. First, what do you think are some of the most important things that Mexican American students have taken away from your class?
13. Second, what are some of the most important things you have taken away from working with Mexican American students and their families?

14. Third, if you were to draw a picture of or write a song about the Mexican American students in this study, what would it look or sound like?

15. Last, what do you envision the Mexican American students in the study to do in the next 10 years?

Appendix F: Interview Questions for Mexican American Students

1. Please tell me a bit about yourself: your life story and your experiences with school.
2. In your schooling experiences so far, how many teachers of color have you ever had? In what grade or subject? What was their race and gender?
3. In general, how have your experiences with White teachers been? Can you give me a specific example?
4. Who are the teachers who have made a positive impact on you, and why?
5. Have you had other Chinese American teachers before? If so, tell me a little more about them.
6. Do you think your Chinese American teacher use her or his cultural characteristics in the classroom? If so, give me some examples.
7. In what ways do your Chinese American teacher teach that make it easier for you to understand the lessons? Can you give me a scenario of what you just described?
8. Are there moments when their teaching doesn't make sense or is difficult for you to understand? If so, give me one or two examples and tell me why these were difficult, and what you did.
9. When you decide to ask your Chinese American teacher for help in class, what cues do you use (i.e., body language, eye contact, raising your hand, calling your teacher's name, etc.)? How does your Chinese American teacher respond (or not) to these cues?
10. What does your Chinese American teacher do to make class exciting, fun, and cause you to want to learn. Give me one or two examples of each.
11. What are some materials and activities your Chinese American teacher use that are connected to your cultural backgrounds?
12. Do you ever feel disconnected from or not interested in some of the materials or activities in your Chinese American teacher's class? If so, what are some of them and what would you like to change? Be specific.
13. In what ways do your Chinese American teacher help you study and perform better in and outside school? Give me a few examples.
14. In which areas would you like to receive more support from your Chinese American teacher? Why?
15. Do you feel that your Chinese American teacher care about and for your learning and well-being in school? If so, give me an example.

16. How do you describe your relationship with your Chinese American teacher? Do you think your relationship with her/him has changed since the beginning of the school year? If so, why?
17. How do you describe the relationship of your Chinese American teacher with your parents?
18. Is your Chinese American teacher different from your other teachers? If so, how and why?
19. Do you consider your Chinese American teacher a role model for you? If so, in what ways, and why? If not, why?
20. What are some of the most important things you've learned from your Chinese American teacher's class?
21. If you were to draw a picture of or write a song about your Chinese American teacher, what would it look or sound like?
22. Overall, on a scale of 1-5 (with 1 being very poor, and 5 being the best), how do you rate your Chinese American teacher? Explain why.

Appendix G: Data Analysis Process

