Identity, Appraisal, and Emotion: The Role of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy Among Latino/a Middle School Students

by

Victoria Rowland Mathieson
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Abstract

Objective: In this thesis, I utilize an experimental design in order to examine how culturally relevant pedagogy impacts the educational experiences of Latino/a middle school students. Method: In this study, 120 students at Hamilton Park Elementary School in Novato, CA in grades six through eight (69 males, 50 females, 1 undisclosed participant) completed a questionnaire. The questionnaire included measures of cultural/ethnic in-group identification, presented a reading passage, and then included measures of reading appraisals and positive and negative emotions relating to the reading passage. There were two versions of the reading passage: a passage taken from a commonly used reading workbook and the same passage, but manipulated slightly to be culturally relevant for Latino/a students. These passages were distributed randomly among the participants. Results: The findings from this study indicate that (a) Latino/a students scored higher than non-Latinos on in-group identification measures of centrality, satisfaction, and in-group homogeneity, (b) while Latino/a students liked both passages to a similar degree, non-Latino/a students liked the original passage more than the culturally relevant passage, (c) there were no significant findings for gender, and (d) Latino/a students reported feeling more positive and negative emotions regardless of which passage they had been assigned. Conclusion: In this thesis, I argue that implementing culturally relevant pedagogy into the United States education system is essential for Latino/a students, due to their rising population and poor academic performance. Considering this study’s findings, more research must be conducted in order to determine the best culturally relevant practices – practices that engage students from all cultural/ethnic backgrounds and improve their academic performance.
Introduction

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

For the past thirty years the term “culturally relevant pedagogy” has been a buzzword for educators and researchers. Although there has been a recent influx of work on culturally relevant pedagogy there has been very little consensus regarding terminology. Different literatures have used a variety of terms to describe culturally relevant pedagogy, ranging from “culturally responsive”, “culturally congruent”, “culturally compatible”, “culturally appropriate”, to “culturally relevant teaching” (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Despite its multiple term designations, culturally relevant pedagogy has a few core aspects that are generally agreed upon. Culturally relevant pedagogy “us(es) the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (Gay 2002, p. 106).

Culturally relevant pedagogy is based on the assumption that “when academic skills and knowledge are situated within the experiences and frames of reference of students, they are more personally meaningful, have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily and thoroughly” (Gay, 2002). As a result, the academic achievement of ethnically diverse students will improve if these students are taught with their culture taken into consideration (Gay 2002). While many different definitions of culturally relevant pedagogy exist, for the purpose of this thesis, I will consider culturally relevant pedagogy a philosophy and methodology to make a student’s academic world relevant to his or her culture. By changing curriculum and altering teaching strategies to be more responsive to students’ cultures, culturally relevant pedagogy allows students to personally connect with their educational experiences.
John Dewey. Although culturally relevant pedagogy has only recently come to the forefront of educational research, the basis of culturally relevant pedagogy is not new. John Dewey (1938/1997), a philosopher and educational reformist, supported the theory of experience-based education and believed education to be a social and interactive experience. Dewey (1938/1997) believed that education is not simply a regurgitation of information from teacher to student but rather that students' human experiences and cultures need to color their education. He argued that the traditional education model believes that information, morals, and standards have been discovered and determined in the past and that the current task at hand is conveying these pieces of information and codes of conduct to students (Dewey, 1938/1997). Progressive education contrasts this view by positing that what is learned in school should be related to what one is currently experiencing in the world around them (Dewey, 1938/1997). In essence, traditional education focuses on the past and the transmission of knowledge, whereas progressive education focuses on the present and future and the creation of knowledge (Dewey, 1938/1997).

In Experience and Education, which was published in 1938, Dewey (1938/1997) wrote, “the beginning of instruction shall be made with the experience learners already have; that this experience and the capacities that have been developed during its course provide the starting point for further learning” (p. 74). By incorporating a student’s culture and past, education becomes student-centric. In discussing progressive education, Dewey (1938/1997) viewed the role of the educator as one who must make education culturally relevant to the student:
“It thus becomes the office of the educator to select those things within the range of existing experience that have the promise and potentiality of presenting new problems which by stimulating new ways of observation and judgment will expand the area of further expertise. He must constantly regard what is already won not as a fixed possession but as an agency and instrumentality for opening new fields which make new demands upon existing powers of observation and of intelligent use of memory” (p. 75).

Given that experiences differ across cultural contexts, the role of a progressive educator, according to Dewey (1938/1997), is to find a way to amalgamate students’ unique experiences and cultures into a classroom environment and use these experiences as a springboard for further learning.

**Paulo Freire.** Much like Dewey, Paulo Freire strongly supported the idea of education as a transformative and student-centric experience. In his book, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire (1970/2000) echoed Dewey’s sentiment by stating that education cannot be deposited but must be co-created by the teacher and the student. Freire (1970/2000) coined the banking model of education as an example of how traditional education is inadequate. He described the banking model of education as one in which students directly demonstrate “how well they fit into the world that the oppressors have created and how little they question it” (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 76). In this model, students act as “receptacles to be filled” (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 72) by the teacher. Freire explained that “the more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world” (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 73). Furthermore, in viewing students as “empty” and “waiting to be filled” (Freire, 1970/2000, p. 72), the student’s agency to
have a voice in his or her own education is quelled. In other words, Freire viewed this form of education as oppressive.

Additionally, Freire (1970/2000) argued that education must include dialogue, a willingness to have students and teacher simultaneously learning together, and an incorporation of one’s background and culture into the education. By encouraging the teacher and the student to co-create, Freire illuminated the importance of the student’s history, culture, and opinions in the educational setting. Freire (1970/2000) believed that “one cannot expect positive results from an educational or political action program which fails to respect the particular view of the world held by the people. Such a program constitutes cultural invasion, good intentions notwithstanding.” (p. 84). Freire (1970/2000) emphasized the idea of a critical consciousness wherein individuals must understand how their culture is perceived educationally and historically. In understanding their position, which Freire (1970/2000) argued is often one of oppression, students may take steps toward liberating themselves. By bringing students’ culture into the curriculum, liberatory education allows students to see education as a means to change; they are able to grow as individuals and affect change and growth in the world around them (Freire, 1970/2000).

Where Freire differed from Dewey is that he built upon Dewey’s progressive education model and expanded it into a liberatory education model. Though most of Dewey’s ideas were conceptualized within the United States, Freire, as a Brazilian educator and philosopher, often focused on students from international countries. Given his exposure to multiple different countries and education systems, Freire overtly acknowledged how differences in culture, class, and the racial-ethnicity of a student could define his or her educational experience. In contrast, Dewey tended to focus on
each individual student’s unique, personal experience and not consider the role of larger societal institutions. Freire (1970/2000) viewed education through a lens of political power, noticing that literacy was a prerequisite to being able to vote. Education equaled power. Freire (1970/2000) argued that the educational system aids the dominant, oppressive social order and thus, offered suggestions on how education should be altered to better benefit “the oppressed”. In accordance with Marxist beliefs, Freire (1970/2000) placed the crux of his argument on the idea of education reform as a political process, a freeing process, which can liberate oppressed students.

John Dewey’s *Education and Experience* and Paulo Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* began the discussion of culturally relevant pedagogy, by demanding that a student’s identity be validated and incorporated into his or her education. By examining the role of experience, culture, and empowerment in education, Dewey and Freire both laid the groundwork for contemporary definitions and implementations of culturally relevant pedagogy.

**Contemporary theoretical frameworks.** In more recent years, many educators, researchers, and scholars have defined culturally relevant pedagogy and created theoretical frameworks for discussing the concept. Many scholars have written on culturally relevant pedagogy, however I have selected a few of the key authors whose work has been published in the past 20 years: Gloria Ladson-Billings, Geneva Gay, Shelly Brown-Jeffy and Jewell E. Cooper. All four of these authors have published critical literature on culturally relevant pedagogy and are considered experts in their field. Many of the opinions and definitions of culturally relevant pedagogy that are brought forth by these authors are in agreement, though there are a few key divergences in the ways they study and conceptualize culturally relevant pedagogy. Thus, in exploring
multiple perspectives and theories, these authors can collectively provide insight into the core tenets of culturally relevant pedagogy.

**Gloria Ladson-Billings.** In 1994, Gloria Ladson-Billings published her book *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African-American Children* in which she documented examples of culturally relevant teachers and teaching strategies that help students “achieve academic success while maintaining a positive identity” (Ladson-Billings, 1994/2009, p. 14). Ladson-Billings (1994/2009) argued that the goal of culturally relevant teaching is to connect academic success with one’s own culture, as opposed to academic success defying one’s culture. Gloria Ladson-Billings’ work focused on African-American students in the United States, and she explained their apparent lack of academic achievement and motivation as historically driven: “Burdened with a history that includes the denial of education, separate and unequal education, and relegation to unsafe, substandard inner-city schools, the quest for quality education remains an elusive dream for the African American community” (Ladson-Billings, 1994/2009, p. xv). While Ladson-Billings’ work is primarily centered on African American students, her research is universal enough to be adapted to other cultural groups who have a history of struggle and oppression in the United States.

At the time of Ladson-Billings’ publication in 1994, she noted that 30% of the American public school population is made up of students of color (Ladson-Billings, 1994/2009, p. xvi); by 2010 the percentage was approximately 48% (“Racial/ethnic enrollment in public schools”, 2013). Of these students of color, most were falling behind their white counterparts on standard academic achievement measures. Presently, according to the 2012 Nation’s Report Card issued by the National Center for Education Statistics (“Trends in academic progress”, 2013), Black and Hispanic students are making
larger gains in achievement in reading and mathematics than ever before, but there is still a long way for these students to go in order to academically “catch up” to White students.

Ladson-Billings outlined her approach to defining culturally relevant pedagogy clearly. In her article “But That’s Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy” Ladson-Billings (1995) explained that “culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria or propositions: (a) Students must experience academic success, (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order” (p. 160).

Ladson-Billings has maintained that culturally relevant teaching can increase academic success by utilizing students’ cultures to transcend the negative effects of the dominant white culture. The negative effects occur when students cannot see their history, culture or background represented in the textbook or curriculum or when students see their history, culture, or background distorted (Ladson-Billings, 1994/2009). Ladson-Billings (1994/2009) argued that not enough teachers are incorporating culturally relevant teaching into the curriculum and that perhaps it is this lack of acknowledging students’ history, culture, and experience that results in decreased academic motivation and thus, decreased success. In terms of academic success Ladson-Billings (1994/2009) specified that strong culturally relevant teachers will not just make students happy but, rather, will focus on academic needs. She declared, “the trick of culturally relevant teaching is to get students to ‘choose’ academic excellence” (p. 160). Students must be intrinsically motivated to succeed.
Ladson-Billings has described cultural competency as a way in which teachers can use a student’s culture as a mechanism for learning. In order for a teacher to be culturally competent he/she must be able to interact with a diverse set of students, acknowledge his or her own culture, and display cross-cultural skills (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Ladson-Billings (1995) described a teacher who displayed cultural competency in her classroom by developing a curriculum that included parents of the students and community members; the teacher hosted an “artist of craftsperson-in-residence program so that the students could both learn from each other’s parents and affirm cultural knowledge” (p. 161). Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasized that it is important for students to see their own culture acknowledged and honored in an academic setting.

Regarding her third criterion, Ladson-Billings unpacked the Freirian notion of “critical consciousness” (Freire, 1970/2000). She stated, “students must develop a broader sociopolitical consciousness that allows them to critique cultural norms, values, mores, and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities” (Ladson-Billings, 1995; 162). While critical consciousness is important for all students to understand and implement, Ladson-Billings (1995) has implied that it may be most important for students who are suffering due to previously established systems of inequality. For example, students may thoughtfully critique the system of inequitable funding that allows middle-class students to have newer textbooks (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Critical consciousness allows students to question the world and their communities and acknowledge multiple perspectives and counter-narratives. Lastly, critical consciousness encourages an equitable and interchangeable relationship between teacher and student where both individuals can be learners and teachers (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 163).
Throughout *The Dreamkeepers: Successful Teachers of African-American Children*, Ladson-Billings offered examples of how teachers can empower students by utilizing their culture as a learning tool. She believed that the best teachers for a culturally-diverse classroom are what she called “Conductors”, teachers who believe that all their students are capable of achieving excellence and who take responsibility for their students’ success (Ladson-Billings, 1994/2009). Ladson-Billings (1994/2009) described how a fifth-grade teacher could use a culturally relevant style while teaching and be a “Conductor”:

“She might begin with a discussion of the bylaws and articles of incorporation that were used to organize a local church or African-American civic association. Thus, the students learn the significance of such documents in forming institutions and shaping ideals while they also learn that their own people are institution-builders” (p. 20).

In depicting examples of strong culturally relevant teachers as well as providing ways to manipulate the curriculum to become more culturally relevant to students, Ladson-Billings began a conversation about the way in which culturally relevant pedagogy can be imbedded into the educational system. Another example that Ladson-Billings (1994/2009) offered in *The Dreamkeepers*, was a teacher named Ann Lewis who taught in a sixth grade classroom. While leading a discussion about the protagonist in the novel that her students are reading Lewis asked, “Do you know anybody who feels like this?” (p. 118). When a student responded affirmatively, Lewis drew a Venn diagram to represent the similarities and differences between the student and the protagonist in the story. She then told the student, “You have your own video of your entire life in your head. Every time you read, you can get an image of how the story connects with your
life” (Ladson-Billings, 1994/2009, p. 118). Thus, Ann Lewis not only made the story character relevant to the student, but she also offered a way to make the actual process of reading more relevant (by comparing it to watching a movie).

Though creating a culturally relevant classroom is not an easy task for a teacher, Ladson-Billings has explained that incorporating culture into the classroom is possible and that the potential outcome of a culturally relevant classroom is more engaged, motivated, and responsible students.


> “Curriculum content should be chosen and delivered in ways that are directly meaningful to the students for whom it is intended. In some instances, this means validating their personal experiences and cultural heritages; in others, it means teaching content entirely new to students but in ways that make it easy for them to comprehend” (p. 112).

Gay focused much of her research on the role of textbooks in classrooms and how textbooks can contain or, as is more often the case, lack cultural relevancy. She explained that textbooks make up 75% - 95% of all classroom instruction and students are inclined to believe that the authority of a textbook is resolute and that the information inside it is accurate (Gay, 2000). However, textbooks used in schools are often published by the United States’ dominant group, European Americans, and confirm its status, culture, and contributions (Gay, 2000). “European American
subjective experience and interpretations of reality are presented as objective truth” (Gay, 2000, p. 113). Even though obvious ethnic and racial stereotypes and discrimination have been removed from textbooks over the past 40 years (Gay, 2000), many textbooks continue to only show certain representations of multicultural characters. For example, Gay (2000) referenced two studies conducted by Ramirez & Dowd (1997) and Rocha & Dowd (1993) that found that “Mexican-American females are too frequently depicted in traditional hairstyles and clothing and too often engaged in music, fiestas, and other celebrations. The characters were rarely shown participating in school activities or employment outside of the home” (p. 121). It is important to not only diversify who is present in the content of the stories, but also what that character is doing, wearing, and saying. Too often, when multicultural characters are presented they are always doing the same activities, wearing the same clothing, or are from the same socio-economic class; this is not an authentic look at cultural diversity in the United States. Furthermore, Gay (2000) argued that often, textbooks only display safe and comforting depictions of multiculturalism. For instance, many textbooks describing African-American Civil Rights will go into detail about Martin Luther King Jr., but will completely omit Malcolm X, an historical figure who some consider controversial.

Beyond textbooks, Gay (2000) argued that “high quality authentic multicultural literature can help children make connections to their personal experiences and provide children with role models. It also is a powerful way to expose students to ethnic groups, cultures, and experiences different from their own” (p. 114). Gay (2000) noted that it is important for all students to engage with multicultural curricula and themes regardless of their ethnic self-identification because offering students a safe space to engage with ethnic and racial groups that differ from their own can “calm some fears, dispel some
myths, and produce some learning” (p. 145). Additionally, Gay (2000) determined that providing cultural content could increase student self-confidence, and student engagement, which would in turn improve standardized test scores and result in higher grade point averages (Gay, 2000).

**Shelly Brown-Jeffy and Jewell E. Cooper.** In 2011, Shelly Brown-Jeffy and Jewell E. Cooper decided to create a new conceptual framework of culturally relevant pedagogy. Brown-Jeffy and Cooper selected five themes to make up their conceptual framework: Identity and Achievement, Equity and Excellence, Developmental Appropriateness, Teaching the Whole Child, and Student-Teacher Relationships (See Figure 1) (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011).

Figure 1. Brown-Jeffy and Cooper’s Principles of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

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“Identity and Achievement” focuses on the necessary re-framing of culture and achievement in the school setting. In terms of achievement, “embracing diversity and affirming it as an asset begins to diminish the idea that the non-White model is wrong or inferior” (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011, p. 74). “Equity and Excellence” draws on the notion that “the content of the curriculum needs to be inclusive of all cultures represented in the classroom” (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011, p. 75) and that multiculturalism can be used as a teaching tool for equality. “Developmental Appropriateness” focuses on how to imbue a classroom with cultural relevancy that is age appropriate and demonstrate that cultural relevancy is important at all age levels (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011).

“Teaching the Whole Child” looks at how “culture, race, and ethnicity influence the academic, social, emotional, and psychological development of students” (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). While defining the notion of “Teaching the Whole Child”, Brown and Jeffy-Cooper acknowledged the importance of cultural capital. Cultural capital is a term first articulated by Pierre Bourdieu. Bourdieu (1986) defines cultural capital as the accumulated cultural knowledge that one possesses. He argued that this knowledge bestows power and status (Bourdieu, 1986). For example, students who are taught cultural skills that are important to the institutions in which they participate, such as school, may be more successful in navigating those institutions. In the United States, the culture that students must learn to adapt to tends to be white, European-American, middle class culture and thus, their skills must include those that are important to that culture (i.e. Speaking English, making eye contact, shaking hands, etc.) (Bourdieu, 1986; Lareau, 2003). In the case of culturally relevant pedagogy, Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) argued that a student's cultural capital must be taken into account within the
school setting. They explained that students arrive to the classroom with a unique set of cultural skills, and that it is the role of the teacher to “scaffold those cultural experiences in order for the students to gain additional meaning and ultimately be successful” (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011, p. 77).

The last theme, “Student-teacher Relationships” encourages teacher to treat all students with respect and understanding and to maintain high expectations for all students (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Much like Freire believed that the teacher and students must be co-teachers and co-learners, Brown-Jeffy and Cooper believed that the students and teachers must work collectively to create a safe, stimulating classroom environment (Brown-Jeffy and Cooper, 2011).

Case studies. In order to offer a realistic view of the implementation of culturally relevant pedagogy, I will be discussing two successful and interesting case studies. The first example will focus on the implementation of culturally relevant pedagogy in a single classroom and the second example will broaden the scope and showcase the application of culturally relevant pedagogy on a school district level.

Making Shakespeare culturally relevant. In the article, “Using Student-Generated Film to Create a Culturally Relevant Community”, author and teacher Jennifer D. Morrison (2002) demonstrated how curricula could be adapted to be more culturally relevant and more engaging for students. In the article, Morrison (2002) described her struggle to teach Shakespeare to a class of ninth graders that was 90% African American. In addition to Shakespeare being a part of the ninth grade curriculum, Morrison (2002) wanted to teach Shakespeare because of her own love of his work and because she felt that “no other author carries the cultural literacy weight of Shakespeare” (p. 47). However, after Morrison showed her students a film clip from A Midsummer
Night's Dream, they were discouraged by the fact that there were no physical representations of their race in the film. One student asked, “Why are there no black people doing Shakespeare?” (Morrison, 2002, p. 48). “Watching the performance by a white-only cast had harmed the learning community” (Morrison, 2002, p. 48), as their enthusiasm for Shakespeare was halted due to their new understanding that perhaps their cultural/ethnic group did not have a place in Shakespeare.

Morrison observed that while watching the Shakespeare film in which all the characters were portrayed by white, European American actors, the students, the majority of whom were African American, came to view Shakespeare as an exclusive topic of study only meant for White, European American audiences. Essentially, they felt that “Shakespeare wasn’t meant for them” (Morrison, 2002, p. 48). According to Fordham and Ogbu (1985), by watching a film that excluded their culture, students may have been subconsciously taught that dissonance existed between Shakespeare and their culture.

Morrison’s next step was not to give up on Shakespeare, but rather to adapt Shakespeare to make it inclusive and culturally relevant for her students. She applied for a grant to cover the cost of videotapes, props, books, and other materials, opened up a discussion with her students about the lack of minority actors in representations of Shakespeare’s plays, and gave the students agency in their study of Shakespeare (Morrison, 2002). Morrison (2002)’s students re-enacted scenes from Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet on film and they were in full control of the process. They developed themes that they wanted to keep in mind throughout the filmmaking process (ex. “People make judgments based on appearances. We cannot control their judgments, only how we respond to them” (Morrison, 2002, p. 49)) and assigned roles to one-another.
such as director, costume designer, and prop person (Morrison, 2002). The result of this project was a new understanding of Shakespeare and a familiarity with Romeo and Juliet, and additionally, a new sense of empowerment (Morrison, 2002). Morrison noted, “The students proudly explained the directorial decisions they had made and why they had made them and justified their choices in light of their original goals” (Morrison, 2002, p. 50). By taking Shakespeare and discovering relatable and common themes within his writing, Morrison was able to teach a successful unit without ostracizing her students. The students were engaged and “saw themselves and their lives in these themes and brought them to life in their own voices” (Morrison, 2002, p. 51).

In this example of culturally relevant pedagogy Morrison utilized the ideas of cultural competency and critical consciousness by reshaping the prescribed curriculum and making explicit the power dynamics and racial make-up of mainstream representations of Shakespeare. Morrison (2002), in the development of her project, understood how “race, culture, and gender all define who people are and how they view themselves” (p. 51). Touching on ideas offered by Gloria Ladson-Billings, Geneva Gay, and Shelly Brown-Jeffy and Jewell E. Cooper, Morrison was able to create a powerful classroom culture and generate engaging curriculum.

**Mexican-American studies program.** In Tucson, Arizona, culturally relevant pedagogy has been implemented on a district level. In 1999, Sean Arce and other community members and teachers in Tucson founded the Mexican-American Studies program, responding to the need for culturally and historically relevant education for Mexican-American students in Arizona (“Our story”, 2011). Evolving from one course taught in one high school to 44 courses offered K-12, the Mexican-American Studies
program expanded rapidly (Arce, 2012). The MAS program offers students an opportunity to take History and English courses that have a more Chicano/a lens and opt out of the traditional humanities courses offered at the school. These courses were not exclusively for Mexican-American students and were available to all students regardless of racial/ethnic orientation (Arce, 2012).

In their article “A Barrio pedagogy: identity, intellectualism, activism, and academic achievement through the evolution of critically compassionate intellectualism,” Augustine Romero, Sean Arce, and Julio Cammarota (2009) explained that the goal of the Mexican American Studies program is to “help students enhance their level of critical, racial, cultural, historical, and social consciousness through a curriculum that meets states standards that affords students the opportunity to develop a more sophisticated critical analysis” (p. 218). The Mexican-American Studies program has six main tenets: The nurturing of blossoming of intellectualism through authentic caring, pedagogy ‘de los barrios’ (i.e. an acknowledgement of the convergence between the school institution and one’s neighborhood/culture), students as creators of knowledge, a focus on collective and individual agency, organic intellectualism (i.e., “the means by which the oppressed do for themselves, for their own good” (Romero, et al., p. 230)), and academic and personal transformation (Romero, et al., 2009).

The program seeks to increase academic achievement for Latino/a students by focusing on academic proficiency as well as academic identity (SaveEthnicStudies.org, 2011). In order to be successful in this goal, the Mexican-American Studies program focuses on (a) incorporating social justice into the curriculum, (b) offering a culturally relevant pedagogy that encourages the Freirian ideas of critical thinking and critical
consciousness and (c) increasing communication and interactions between students, teachers, parents, and community members of multiple racial and ethnic groups (Romero et al., 2009). The MAS program is a strong example of the rejection of traditional education and the transmission of culturally relevant knowledge and skills. Students who take part in the Mexican American Studies program are able to incorporate their experiences in the curriculum and thus, “create knowledge” (Dewey, 1938/1997, p. 17).

In addition to providing courses that focus explicitly on Mexican American history or social justice topics, the MAS program also incorporates its tenets in individual activities (Romero, et al., 2009). For example, in an activity called “four tables” the students interpret a list of complicated key words and theories such as “agency” “hegemony” or “oppression” and in order to make sense of these terms create four distinct boxes. Then the students write the term in the first box, write a word that is associated with the term in the second box, define the term in the third box, and draw a picture or diagram in the fourth box (Romero et al., 2009). In this way, the students are able to “reinvent the ways in which each of these concepts, words, or theories could be explained in more meaningful and authentic ways” (Romero et al., 2009, p. 223). For example, a student can write an associated word that is meaningful to him or herself and draw a picture that contextualizes the term within his or her frames of reference. In this activity, the learning of a complicated term becomes self-relevant and more meaningful that if the word had only been memorized.

One of the most successful indicators of the Mexican American Studies program’s success is its academic and graduation outcome data. In 2011, the program conducted an analysis and evaluation of the Mexican American Studies program, looking
at the Arizona Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS) and graduation rates. In 2010, students who had participated in the Mexican-American Studies program passed the state AIMS reading exam at a 44% rate and the writing exam at a 42% rate (“Proven results, 2011). The control group, made up of students who did not participant in the MAS program passed reading at a 34% rate and writing at a 32% rate. (“Proven results” 2011). From 2005 to 2010, the graduation rate for students participating in the program was 7.7% higher than the graduation rate of students who were not participating in the program (“Proven results”, 2011). In 2010 specifically, 93.6% of all Mexican-American Studies Program participants students graduated (versus 82.7% of their peers) (“Proved results”, 2011).

Shockingly, in 2010, despite the program’s obvious success, in 2010, Arizona legislature decided to pass an anti-ethnic studies law. The law HB-2811 banned the Mexican-American Studies program for “promoting racism and classism toward Anglos, advocating ethnic solidarity, and suggesting an overthrow of the government” (Robbins, 2013). After a long battle between the founders of the program and the Tucson Public School District, federal court has ordered the district to resume the Mexican American Studies program (Robbins, 2013). However, the details and implementation of the Mexican American Studies program are currently being determined (Robbins, 2013).

**In Group Identification and Emotion**

In the discussion of culturally relevant pedagogy it is imperative to look at educational theories, however there are two important factors to culturally relevant pedagogy that have not yet been discussed: in-group identification and emotion. Though a lot of work has been published investigating culturally-relevant pedagogy, literature that
looks at culturally-relevant pedagogy through a social psychology lens, incorporating broader ideas of in-group identification and emotional experience, is much more sparse.

**In-group identification.**

**Models of in-group identification.** In-group identification is an important aspect of culturally relevant pedagogy. The extent to which an individual self-identifies with certain in-groups will undoubtedly alter that student’s relation to culturally relevant pedagogy. It can be posited that culturally relevant curriculum has a stronger impact on those whose culture is an important part of their identity (Ladson-Billings, 1995, Simon & Brown, 1987). For example, if an intervention is made to make a lesson more culturally relevant to African American students, then the extent to which a student self-identifies with his or her African American identity will impact his or her experience with the lesson.

Several models have been developed to measure in-group identification. These models mostly differ in terms of (a) whether identification is seen as an unitary, single construct or as a multifaceted construct, and (b) the specific groups the model is applied to. One such model is the Framework for Collective Identity developed by Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe (2004), which draws upon classic theories such as Tajfel (1978)’s Social Identity Theory (1978), Turner, Hogg, and Oakes (1987)’ Self-Categorization Theory, Stryker (1980, 2000)’s Identity Theory, and Cross (1971, 1991)’s Nigrescence Model. This model acknowledged that it is challenging to create a conceptualization of identity because one must first untangle unclear and often overlapping lexicon. (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin, 2004) noted that, “different terms are often used to refer to psychologically similar or identical concepts”. In their
framework, Ashmore, Deaux, and McLaughlin-Volpe, use the term “collective identification” to refer to in-group identification. They determined a few elements of collective identification: self-categorization, evaluation, importance, attachments and sense of inter-dependence, social embeddedness, behavioral involvement, and content and meaning (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin, 2004, p. 83). They acknowledged that these elements functioned as better measures of identification than other more unitary theories because “collective identity elements do, in fact, combine in various and sometimes unexpected ways to create unique profiles of collective identification” (Ashmore, Deaux, & McLaughlin, 2004, p. 100).

A second, prominent model of identification is the Multidimensional Model of Racial Identity, which was conceptualized by Sellers, Smith, Shelton, Rowley, and Chavous. In this model, Sellers et al. (1998) focused in depth on the identities of African Americans. In their model Sellers, et al. (1998) identified four dimensions of racial identity: salience, centrality, regard, and ideology. This model is unique in that it focuses on how racial identity is heterogeneous: there is “variability in the significance and qualitative meaning that they attribute to being a member of [a racial group]” (Sellers, et al., 1998, p. 19). Essentially, individuals place differing levels of importance and meaning on their racial identity. This notion that is particularly relevant to culturally relevant pedagogy. This framework is useful as it offers integrative components, captures the significance and meaning of being Black, and can be adapted for members of other racial groups (Sellers et al., 1998).

**Leach et al.’s model of in-group identification.** For this thesis, I will be examining and utilizing Colin Wayne Leach et al. (2008)’s Hierarchical Multicomponent
Model of In-Group Identification. I have chosen to utilize this model because it has integrated multiple other models of identification and measurements of identification into a strong and unique model. Furthermore, Leach et al. (2008) tested their model in seven different studies, which included a range of participants and procedures, thus proving the model’s reliability and validity.

Leach et al. (2008) chose to move beyond unitary scales of in-group identification and instead created five components that exist within two general dimensions. Leach et al. (2008) suggested that there are two ways in which individuals identify with an in-group. The first dimension of in-group identification touches on self-investment or “individuals’ positive feelings about their in-group membership as well as a sense that they have a bond with the in-group” (p. 148) and the second dimension focuses on self-definition or “individuals’ perceptions of themselves as similar to the group” (p.148).

Within the dimension of self-investment, Leach et al. determined three critical and distinct components: satisfaction, solidarity, and centrality. The first component is “centrality” which postulates, “identification with an in-group makes the group a central aspect of the individual’s self-concept” (Leach et al., 2008, p. 147). This component is important because the more central an in group is to an individual, the more that individual should have strong feelings when the in-group is praised, threatened, or otherwise evaluated (Leach et al., 2008).

The next component, “solidarity” suggests that “those most identified with an in-group are most inclined to feel a psychological bond with their fellow members” (Leach et al., 2008, p. 147). Leach et al. (2008) explain the difference between solidarity and self-stereotyping by stating that solidarity is “the investment of the self in
coordinated activity with those to whom one feels committed” (p. 147), whereas self-stereotyping focuses less on the investment of the individual to his or her group and more on the way in which the self defines oneself at the group level. This demonstrates why Leach et al. (2008) chose to have two different dimensions for self-definition and self-investment.

Lastly, satisfaction is defined as “one’s positive feelings about the group and one’s membership in it” (Leach et al., 2008, p. 146). Leach et al. (2008) acknowledged that the conceptualization of satisfaction could become complicated as researchers debate whether or not negative feelings toward the in-group should contribute to a composite definition of satisfaction, or whether the satisfaction should only include positive feelings (Leach et al., 2008). Leach et al. (2008), conjectured that the important part of satisfaction must be “maintaining a positive evaluation of the in-group” (p. 147), which could be associated with downplaying negative events or rationalizing negative portrayals of their in-group.

Within the second dimension, self-definition, Leach et al. (2008) identified two components: individual self-stereotyping and in-group homogeneity. Individual self-stereotyping is “indicated by a depersonalized self-perception, whereby individuals come to “self stereotype” themselves as similar to other members of their in-group” (Leach et al., 2008, p. 146). Often the implications for self-stereotyping include individuals believing that they share a common fate with their in-group and share emotionally in their in-group’s triumphs and failures (Leach et al., 2008).

The second component to the dimension self-definition is in-group homogeneity. This component is defined as “the degree to which individuals perceive their entire group as sharing commonalities” (Leach et al., 2008, p. 146). It is assumed
that in-group members will have similar goals and interests and that these distinctions may distinguish the in-group from other out-groups.

This hierarchal model of in-group identification offers many advantages over previous models, because it explains the unique qualities of all five components while exploring their similarities by placing them in more general dimensions (Leach et al., 2008). With this model as a framework, further research can be conducted to look at in-group identification and how this identification can affect one’s experience and emotions. Identifying the extent of an individual’s in-group self-categorization is important in the practice of culturally relevant pedagogy; The degree to which a student in a classroom self-categorizes as belonging to a cultural group will influence their emotional experiences when faced with culturally relevant curricula or practices. If a student identifies strongly with a cultural group then they will be more sensitive to texts and dynamics in the classroom that have to do with their culture.

**Emotion**

Like in-group identification, an understanding of emotion and emotional experiences, is necessary to the study of culturally relevant pedagogy. In this study it is especially important to measure the emotions that the participants feel towards the text because our emotions tell us about the meaning that we give to objects and events around us. If culturally relevant pedagogy is utilized correctly and is significant to a student, then there should be an indication of a positive emotional experience.

In their book, *Emotion and Social Relations*, Brian Parkinson, Agneta H. Fischer, and Antony S.R. Manstead (2004) explain that the term “emotion” is difficult to define given that it is a multi-componential process. Parkinson et al. (2004) described six components of this multi-componential process. First, emotions tend to arise due to
others occurrences and causes in the world around us (Parkinson, et al., 2004). Second, when that occurrence is happening there is a perspective taken toward the event called an appraisal (Parkinson, et al., 2004). One specific theory pertaining to the second element, appraisal, is known as “appraisal theory” (Parkinson, 2004). The appraisal theory posits that “our emotional reactions depend not on the specific characteristics of stimulus events, but rather on the way that we interpret and evaluate what is happening to us” (Parkinson et al., 2004, p. 6). Parkinson et al. (2004) argued that an appraisal is a necessary condition for other components of emotion to unfold (action being taken, bodily responses, facial expressions etc.). Appraisals “determine what modes of coping might be directed at the emotional situation and at the feelings engendered by the situation” (Parkinson et al., 2004, p. 8). Third, Parkinson et al. (2004) explained that after an appraisal has been made, our bodies will elicit some form of a response. Examples of these bodily responses include sweating or having one’s heart rate speed up. Fourth, we often feel the need to take some sort of action. Fifth, certain emotions are connected to specific muscle movements in the body (Parkinson, et al., 2004). Often these movements display emotions to others in the form of subtle facial expressions more exaggerated movements, like clenched fists or turning away from something. Lastly, we attempt to regulate and do something about the emotions that we are experiencing. The experience of emotion is made complex by the combination of these six elements.

Given that the role of emotion is to help us respond and give meaning to events around us, understanding emotion is a key part of understanding culturally relevant pedagogy. In order to identify how students make meaning of culturally relevant pedagogy it is important to measure and understand their emotional experiences. For
example, in this study, it was necessary to measure emotion in order to understand the significance and meaning that the students gave to the different versions of the texts.

**Method**

**Participants**

The participants in this study were 120 middle school students recruited from Hamilton Meadow Park Elementary School in Novato, CA. According to demographic information from the 2012-2013 school year, the Hamilton Meadow Park Elementary School has a population of 764 students in grades K-8 (“Demographics from the 2012-2013 school year”, 2014). Of those 764 students 51.7% are Hispanic or Latino, 62.2% are socioeconomically disadvantaged and 38.1% are English Language Learners (“Demographics from the 2012-2013 school year”, 2014). In its reports on demographics, the Novato school district did not distinguish between the labels “Hispanic” and “Latino”. For the past ten years, all cultural/ethnic subgroups have improved on the California Academic Performance Index (Bexton & Kempkey, 2014). However, in the 2012-2013 school year although the school met the school-wide growth target for the API, the Hispanic-Latino subgroup did not (2012-2013 School Quality Snapshot”, 2013).

The students in this study were sixth-grade, seventh-grade, and eighth-grade students between the ages of 11 and 14. There were 50 sixth graders, 42 seventh graders, and 28 eighth graders who participated in the study. Of the 120 participants, 69 were male and 50 were female. One participant chose to not disclose gender.

Participants were asked what their cultural or ethnic background was and were allowed to select from a list of categories including African American, Asian American, European American, Latino/a, Native American, Pacific Islander/Hawaiian and Other.
The sample was comprised of students who primarily identify culturally and ethnically as African American (10%), Asian American (4.2%), European American (12.5%), Latino/a (55%), Native American (3.3%) and Other (15%). Of the students who selected “Other” many wrote in their cultural/ethnic background.

From these responses, two dichotomous categories were created for cultural/ethnic identification: Latinos/as and non-Latinos/as. The word “Latino” has many different connotations and interpretations, however for the purpose of this study I included all students who identified with a Central or South American country in the Latino/a cultural-ethnic category. Therefore, some of the participants who self-categorized as “Other” were placed in the Latino/a category. After accounting for these additional participants, 61.7% of students were categorized as having a Latino/a cultural/ethnic self-categorization. The majority of the non-Latino/a category was comprised of self-identifying European-American participants.

The majority of participants were born in the United States (91.7%). Many of the participants’ parents were born in the United States as well: mothers (40%); fathers (35%). The majority of parents who were not born in the United States were from Mexico, Guatemala, and El Salvador. 49.2% of participants selected English as their native language, 36.7% selected Spanish as their native language. However, 61.7% of participants selected English as the language that they are most comfortable speaking and 29.2% selected a combination of English and Spanish as the language that they are most comfortable speaking. Overall, 90.9% of students chose English as a language that they are comfortable speaking.
Measures

In this study, a questionnaire was utilized, which included demographic information, in-group identification measures, a short reading passage and, following the passage, reading appraisal and emotion measures.

Demographic information was collected by asking the participants to respond to questions about their gender, age, location of birth, duration of time living in the United States, parents’ location of birth, native language, languages that they are comfortable speaking, and cultural/ethnic background. For each question a blank space was given for the participants to write in their answer, except for the question about cultural/ethnic background (“What is your cultural or ethnic background?”) in which there were seven boxes (African American, Asian American, European American, Latino/Latina, Native American, Pacific Islander, and Other). The participants were able to select as many boxes as they desired. Later, as mentioned above, a variable was created for further analyses: Latino/a and non-Latino/a.

The next set of measures used in the questionnaire was the in-group identification scale by Leach et al. (2008). The scale asked participants to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with several statements about the ethnic or cultural group they had just selected in the demographic section (e.g., African-American). The statements were measures of several components of identification, i.e., Centrality (e.g., “I often think about the fact that I am a member of this group”), Solidarity (e.g., “I feel a bond with my group”), Satisfaction (e.g., “I am glad to be a member of this group”), Individual Self-Stereotyping (e.g., “I have a lot in common with the average group member”), and In-Group Homogeneity (e.g., “People in this group have a lot in
common with each other”). The participants were asked to use a scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). There were 14 statements in total (See Appendix A).

After completing the in-group identification measures, the participants were asked to read a short passage entitled “A Picture Perfect Day” from Spectrum Reading Grade 6, a reading workbook from Carson-Dellosa Publishing Company’s Spectrum Reading Series published in 2007 (“A picture perfect day”, 2007). The reading was selected after consulting with the sixth, seventh, and eight grade English teachers at Hamilton Meadow Park Elementary School that it was at an appropriate reading level for all the students. Additionally, the plot of the story was relatively neutral – a morning at the breakfast table. In the story, the main character is completing a school assignment that involves taking photographs and keeping a photo diary. The passage was presented in English in order to stay consistent with their other school assignments. As mentioned above, 90.9% of the participants chose English as a language that they were comfortable with.

Participants were randomly assigned to read one of two passages – the control passage or a culturally relevant version of the passage. The control version of the passage was the original passage from the workbook. The culturally relevant passage was the same passage from the workbook, but it had been slightly manipulated. Here, the manipulation was intended to be subtle. Given that the study was looking at Latino/as specifically, certain names and words were substituted to better reflect the culture and demographics of the Latino community in Novato, California. The names of the characters were changed from “Dante”, “Mrs. Carter”, “Mr. Carter”, and “Wesley” to “Lorenzo”, “Mrs. Mendez”, “Mr. Mendez”, and “Miguel”, respectively. “Lorenzo” and “Miguel” were listed as a common first names and “Mendez” was listed as a common
surname by a Hamilton Meadow Park Elementary School social worker and two members of the Novato Latino community. Additionally, the sport basketball was changed to soccer and the phrase “NBA” was changed to “World Cup”. The Hamilton Meadow Park Elementary School social worker and the Novato community members felt that young men and women in the Novato community played soccer, more often than basketball. The layout and font of the reading was identical to the original as well as all the remaining words and plotlines (See Appendices A and B).

The next measures were adapted from Sampson and Garrison-Wade’s measures of reading appraisals (2010). More specifically, participants were asked “Did you like this reading” and “Would you prefer to have readings like this one, as compared to the other lessons you receive in school?”. Each of these two questions included a Yes/No answer choice as well as the follow up question “Why or why not?”. Furthermore, participants were also presented with additional adapted statements from the Sampson and Garrison-Wade’s measures (2010). In particular, participants were asked to rate the statements “This reading was relevant to my culture” on a 4-point scale from 1 (not at all) to 4 (very much), “Describe your interest level while reading this passage” on a 3-point scale (i.e., “High”, “Medium”, and “Low”), and “How well did you like this reading passage?” on a 4-point scale from 1 (not at all) to 4 (very much). (See Appendix A).

The last measures were emotion measures from the PANAS-X general dimension scales for Positive and Negative Affect as well as the Joviality (e.g. “delighted”), Self-Assurance (e.g. “bold”), and Attentiveness (e.g. “alert”) Scales (Watson & Clark, 1994). Participants were asked to respond to the question: “How do you feel currently, after having read the passage?”. The participants were given a scale ranging from 1 to 7 (1 = “Not at all”, 2 = “Very slightly”, 3 = “A little”, 4 = “Moderately”, 5 =
“A bit”, 6 = “Quite a bit”, 7 = “Extremely”). After excluding the term “jittery” from the PANAS-X scale after consulting with the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade English teachers, the final list of emotions included: afraid, scared, nervous, irritable, hostile, guilty, ashamed, upset, distressed, active, alert, attentive, determined, enthusiastic, excited, inspired, interested, proud, strong, happy, lively, cheerful, joyful, delighted, energetic, daring, bold, concentrating, confident, and fearless. (See Appendix A).

Procedure

The three English teachers responsible for the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade underwent a short training session to learn how to correctly administer the questionnaire. Teachers were walked through the process of distributing the questionnaires, reading out instructions, and collecting the questionnaires after the participants had completed them. They were instructed to answer student questions in a neutral manner (i.e., without giving any directions or hints to the students about how to answer). The teachers were also trained to respond to questions by repeating the instructions.

The questionnaire was distributed during class and each participant was given an unmarked manila folder with the questionnaire inside. Students were randomly assigned the questionnaire with the original passage or the culturally relevant passage. The participants were given 30 minutes to complete the questionnaire and they were asked to complete the questionnaire in the order in which it was presented without skipping ahead. A parental consent form had been sent home two weeks prior to the study. All parents were sent a consent form in English and in Spanish (Appendix C). Parental consent had been collected at a previous date. Only students who had already received parental consent were eligible to take part in the study. The questionnaire (See Appendix
A) began with a short consent form for the student. The two students who did not consent to the study were asked to read an unrelated text quietly while the other students completed the questionnaire. Once they had consented to the study, the participants filled out demographic information, then the in-group identification measures. Next, the participants read the passage and responded to the appraisal and emotion measures described above. Upon completing the questionnaire the participant placed the paper packet into their manila envelope and raised his or her hand so that the teacher could collect the envelope. After all of the envelopes were collected from the students, each teacher read the debriefing form out loud and then distributed a hard copy to each participant (See Appendix D). Debriefing forms were also sent home to parents in a hard copy and an emailed copy.

**Results**

**Cultural/Ethnic In-Group Identification**

I carried out a series of analysis of variance with ethnic self-categorization (1 = Latino/a, 2 = non-Latino/a) and gender (1= male, 2 = female) as independent factors and each of the in-group identification subscales as the dependent variables. The reliabilities (Cronbach alpha) for the identification subscales were as follows: centrality ($\alpha = .69$), solidarity ($\alpha = .69$), satisfaction ($\alpha = .80$), in-group homogeneity ($\alpha = .64$), self-stereotyping ($\alpha = .77$). Table 1 reports the means and standard deviations for all measures for Latino/a and non-Latino/a students.

For centrality, the main effect of ethnic self-categorization was significant, $F(1, 114) = 3.91, p = .050$. Latino/a participants scored higher on centrality than non-Latino/a participants did (see Table 1). The main effect of gender was not significant, $F$
(1, 114) = .222, \( p = .639 \). The interaction effect was not significant, \( F (1, 114) = .018, p = .895 \).

For solidarity, the main effects of ethnic self-categorization and gender were not significant (ethnic self-categorization: \( F (1, 114) = .351, p = .555 \); gender: \( F (1, 114) = .276, p = .600 \)) and the interaction effect was not significant, \( F (1, 114) = .113, p = .738 \).

For satisfaction, the main effect of gender was not significant, \( F (1, 114) = .008, p = .929 \); however the main effect of ethnic self-categorization was marginally significant, \( F (1, 114) = 3.01, p = .085 \). Latino/a participants scored higher on satisfaction than non-Latino/a participants did (see Table 1). The interaction effect, however, was not significant, \( F (1, 114) = .727, p = .396 \).

For self-stereotyping, the main effects of ethnic self-categorization and gender were not significant (ethnic self-categorization: \( F (1, 114) = .657, p = .419 \); gender: \( F (1, 114) = .325, p = .569 \)). The interaction effect was not significant, \( F (1, 114) = .042, p = .838 \).

For in-group homogeneity, the main effect of ethnic self-categorization was marginally significant, \( F (1, 114) = 3.093, p = .081 \). Latino/a participants scored higher on in-group homogeneity than non-Latino/a participants did (see Table 1). The main effect of gender was not significant, \( F (1, 114) = 1.638, p = .203 \). The interaction effect was not significant, \( F (1, 114) = .270, p = .604 \).
Thus, while gender did not have an effect on the identification sub-scales, ethnic self-categorization influenced centrality, satisfaction, and in-group homogeneity. For all three sub-scales, Latino/a participants scored higher than non-Latino/a participants did. Thus, Latino/a participants were more likely to agree with statements confirming the centrality, satisfaction, and in-group homogeneity of their cultural/ethnic identity. This means that Latino/a participants, as opposed to non-Latino/a participants were more likely to feel that their in-group was a central aspect of their identity, that they had positive feelings about the group and their membership in the group, and that they perceive themselves as similar to other members of their in-group.

**Reading Appraisals**

I also carried out an analysis of variance for the reading appraisal measures. In these analyses, ethnic self-categorization, gender, and text’s cultural relevance (1 =

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scale</th>
<th>Latino/a Participant</th>
<th>Non-Latino/a Participant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Centrality</td>
<td>5.24 (.153)</td>
<td>4.72 (.213)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solidarity</td>
<td>5.35 (.140)</td>
<td>5.20 (.195)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfaction</td>
<td>5.86 (.132)</td>
<td>5.47 (.184)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Group Homogeneity</td>
<td>4.82 (.168)</td>
<td>4.32 (.233)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Stereotyping</td>
<td>4.69 (.161)</td>
<td>4.47 (.223)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
original, 2 = culturally relevant) were the independent factors; the reading appraisal measures were dependent variables.

For liking the reading/text, the main effects were not significant (ethnic self-categorization: $F(1, 111) = .51, p = .47$; gender: $F(1, 111) = .15, p = .699$; text’s cultural relevance: $F(1, 111) = .794, p = .375$). Importantly, the interaction between ethnic self-categorization and text’s cultural relevance was marginally significant, $F(1, 111) = 3.89, p = .051$. Interestingly, Latino/a participants liked the two texts to a somewhat equal degree (see Table 2). In contrast, the non-Latino/a participants liked the original text more than the culturally relevant text. The interaction between ethnic self-categorization and gender was not significant, $F(1,111) = 1.36, p = .246$ nor was the interaction between gender and text’s cultural relevance $F(1,111) = .75, p = .387$. Lastly, the three-way interaction between ethnic self-categorization, gender, and text’s cultural relevance was not significant ($F(1,111) = .90, p = .344$.

For interest, the main effects of gender and text’s cultural relevance were not significant (gender: $F(1, 111) = .093, p = .761$; text’s cultural relevance: $F(1, 111) = .391, p = .533$), however ethnic self-categorization was marginally significant, $F(1, 111) = 3.72, p = .056$ (See Table 2). Latino/a students, on average, were more interested in the reading regardless of which version they received. The interactions between ethnic self-categorization and gender, gender and text’s cultural relevance, and ethnic self-categorization and text’s cultural relevance were not significant (ethnic self-categorization and gender interaction: $F(1,111) = 1.34, p = .250$; gender and text’s cultural relevance interaction: $F(1,111) = .040, p = .843$; ethnic self-categorization and text’s cultural relevance interaction: $F(1,111) = .093, p = .761$). The three-way interaction between
ethnic self-categorization, gender, and text’s cultural relevance was also not significant: \(F(1,111) = .937, p = .335\).

For relevance, the main effects of gender and text’s cultural relevance were not significant (gender: \(F(1,111) = 1.31, p = .255\); text’s cultural relevance: \(F(1,111) = .173, p = .679\)). However, ethnic self-categorization was marginally significant, \(F(1,111) = 2.88, p = .092\). (See Table 2). The interaction between gender and ethnic self-categorization and the interaction between gender and text’s cultural relevance were not significant (gender and ethnic self-categorization interaction: \(F(1,111) = 2.69, p = .104\); gender and text’s cultural relevance interaction: \(F(1,111) = 1.84, p = .178\)). However, the interaction between ethnic self-categorization and text’s cultural relevance was marginally significant: \(F(1,111) = 3.76, p = .055\). Again, like the liking measure, Latino/a students found the two texts to be culturally relevant to a fairly equal degree (see Table 2), whereas the non-Latino/a participants found the original text more relevant than the culturally relevant for Latinos/as text (see Table 2). The three-way interaction between gender, ethnic self-categorization, and text’s cultural relevance was not significant: \(F(1,111) = .738, p = .392\).

Table 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means for Reading Appraisals</th>
<th>Original</th>
<th>Culturally-relevant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Latino/a</td>
<td>Non-Latino/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevance</td>
<td>2.00 (.142)</td>
<td>2.04 (.242)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
<td>2.10 (.091)</td>
<td>1.90 (.156)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liking</td>
<td>2.91 (.132)</td>
<td>3.13 (.225)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Emotion Measures**

With regard to the PANAS-X measures, I first ran a factor analysis to determine the factorial structure of the scale. Two factors emerged that explained 68% of the variance. The first factor included all positive emotion items, whereas the second factor included all negative emotion items. The reliabilities for the positive and negative emotion factors were as follows: positive emotion (α = .97), negative emotion (α = .96). A positive emotion composite score was created by averaging the scores on the positive emotion items, and a negative composite score was created by averaging the scores on the negative emotion items. Next, I carried out an analysis of variance with the newly created positive and negative emotion variables as the dependent measures, and ethnic self-categorization, gender, and text’s cultural relevance as the independent factors.

For the positive emotion variable, the main effect of ethnic self-categorization was significant, $F(1, 109) = 4.949, p = .028$. Latino/a participants scored higher on the positive emotion scale than non-Latino/a participants did. The main effects of gender, $F = (1, 109) = .052, p = .821$, and text’s cultural relevance, $F = (1, 109) = .047, p = .829$, were not significant. The interaction between gender and ethnic self-categorization, the interaction between gender and text’s cultural relevance, and the interaction between ethnic self-categorization and text’s cultural relevance were also not significant (gender and ethnic self categorization interaction: $F(1, 111) = .150, p = .699$; gender and text’s cultural relevance interaction: $F(1, 111) = .054, p = .816$; ethnic self-categorization and text’s cultural relevance interaction: $F(1, 111) = .179, p = .673$). Lastly, the three-way interaction between gender, ethnic self-categorization, and text’s cultural relevance was not significant: $F(1, 111) = .294, p = .589$. 
For the negative emotion variable, the main effect of ethnic self-categorization was significant, $F(1, 109) = 5.851, p = .017$. Latino participants scored higher on the negative emotion scale than non-Latino participants did. (See Table 3). The main effects of gender, $F(1, 109) = .809, p = .371$, and text’s cultural relevance, $F(1, 109) = .108, p = .743$, were not significant. The interactions between gender and ethnic self-categorization, gender and text’s cultural relevance, and ethnic self-categorization and text’s cultural relevance were not significant (gender and ethnic self-categorization interaction: $F(1, 111) = .003, p = .958$; gender and text’s cultural relevance interaction: $F(1, 111) = .966, p = .328$; ethnic self-categorization and text’s cultural relevance interaction: $F(1, 111) = .464, p = .497$). Lastly, the three-way interaction between gender, ethnic self-categorization, and text’s cultural relevance was not significant: $F(1, 111) = .001, p = .973$.

Table 3:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Means for Emotion Scales</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Emotion Scale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative Emotion Scale</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Discussion

Results from this study indicate that cultural relevance plays a critical role in a student’s educational experience (Gay, 2000; Ladson Billings, 1994/2009). This study
looked at Latino/a and non-Latino/a students ranging from grades six to eight in a public school in the California Bay Area. The study utilized an experimental design. By slightly altering a reading passage to make it more culturally relevant to Latino/a middle school students, this study was able to demonstrate the effect a subtle text manipulation can have on the reading appraisals and emotional experiences of students.

In this discussion, I will first elaborate on the study’s implications regarding ethnic/cultural in-group identification, reading appraisals and emotions. Next, I will offer suggestions for educational policy reform. Lastly, I will explore the strengths and limitations of this study.

Implications

**Ethnic/cultural in-group identification.** The findings on ethnic/cultural in-group identification confirmed the theories of Gay (2000) and Ladson-Billings (1994/2009). They both claimed that culturally relevant pedagogy must be integrated into the school environment, because of how strong students’ in-group identification with their cultural-ethnic group is. Although Latino/a participants did not score higher than non-Latino/a participants on the solidarity or individual self-stereotyping measures, they did score higher than their fellow non-Latino/a participants on measures of centrality, satisfaction, and in-group homogeneity. Thus, the Latino/a participants saw their in-group as more central to their identity, felt prouder about being a member of the in-group and saw members of the in-group as more similar to one another. Taken together, these results indicate that Latino/a participants identified more strongly with their in-group as compared to non-Latino/a participants. This finding implies that Latino/a middle school students have a strong sense of cultural or ethnic identity, thus
making interventions based on cultural-ethnic background, like the one in this study, especially meaningful to this particular group.

It is imperative to consider the role of one’s ethnic in-group identification when applying culturally relevant pedagogy. In a recent article Chang and Le (2010) noted that there is a positive link between ethnic identification and academic performance. They stated that, Mexican-American adolescents who reported stronger ethnic identification expressed more favorable educational attitudes. Chang and Lee (2010) argued that “being in a social and academic milieu where cultural diversity is valued may result in meaningful changes in tolerance for diversity and compassion toward ethnic outgroups…and, consequently, better academic outcomes for Hispanic youth” (p. 490). Therefore, culturally relevant pedagogy, which supports multiculturalism and cross-cultural compassion, could especially improve the academic success of Latino/a students who have strong cultural/ethnic identities.

**Reading appraisals.** The findings on reading appraisals corresponded to previous literature; this study determined that students are more engaged with reading materials that are culturally relevant to them (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay 2000; Romero, et al., 2009). The findings of this study show that Latino/a participants liked the original and culturally relevant texts. As indicated by the mean scores, the Latino/a participants did like the culturally relevant text more than the original text and found the culturally relevant text more relevant than the original text (See Table 2), however these small differences in means were not statistically significant.

In contrast, non-Latino/a participants liked the original text more than the culturally relevant to Latinos/as text. Consequently, though Latino/a participants liked both versions of the text, with the culturally relevant text only being preferred slightly
more according to the mean scores, non-Latino/a participants liked the culturally relevant text significantly less than the original text. These findings illuminate the importance of considering all cultural groups, in this study Latinos/as and non-Latinos/as when implementing culturally relevant pedagogy.

The fact that the Latino/a participants liked both texts to an equal degree implies their biculturalism. In the United States, Latino/a students have a Latino/a identity, but they are also exposed to European-American culture, are comfortable with European-American culture, and, therefore it is possible that they identify with aspects of European-American culture. This could explain why Latino/a participants liked both the culturally relevant text and the original text. In contrast, non-Latino/a students, who in the United States are primarily European American (“Racial/ethnic enrollment in public schools”, 2013) are not exposed to Latino/a culture and are accustomed to seeing European-American culture represented in texts. For this reason, European-American students may be more reluctant to embrace educational materials that represent a different culture than their own.

When implementing culturally relevant pedagogy it is important to consider how all students will respond to a change in their normal Eurocentric education model. Here I am defining “Eurocentric education model” as the mainstream education model that over-relied on European history and the experiences of White, European Americans in the United States (Arce, 2012). Although this has been the United States’ teaching model for a long time, students of color in United States public schools deserve to be taught ideas that are relevant to their cultural and ethnic backgrounds. This model must be supplemented with other perspectives as the United States becomes more culturally diverse. This study provides insight into the importance of not only seeing how culturally
relevant pedagogy can benefit students, but also looking into how culturally relevant pedagogy can cause discomfort in other students. There need to be educational interventions for minority students and educational interventions for White, European-American students. The integration of cultural diversity into education curriculum must be done in a thoughtful way that includes all students.

Additional follow-up studies should be done to look more deeply at the results found in this study. For example, it would be interesting to learn more about why non-Latino/a participants did not like the culturally relevant for Latino/as passage and whether or not other non-Latino/a ethnic minority participants disliked the Latino/a relevant passage more or less than self-identified White/European-American students. A deeper understanding of how culturally relevant pedagogy can affect the emotional experience of students is a prominent question for those in the field of education. Additional reform recommendations can be found on page 45.

**Emotion.** Interestingly, in this study Latino/a participants reported feeling more positive and more negative emotions regardless of which version of the reading passage they had been assigned (See Table 3). Given that Latino/a participants had stronger emotional responses regardless of their assigned reading passage, it would be interesting to see further studies on whether or not Latino/a middle school students experience more emotion than other cultural/ethnic groups in non-academic contexts.

In a study comparing the emotional responses of Chinese Americans and Mexican Americans adults, Soto et al. (2005) found that in Mexican culture, “affect is more openly accepted and more highly valued than in Anglo culture” (p.154). Soto et al. (2005) explained that Mexican Americans are likely to display more emotion than Chinese Americans and Anglo Americans. Furthermore, Soto et al. (2005) hypothesized
that Mexican Americans who are more identified with their culture would be more likely to display more emotion. Thus, the high response rates on Latino/a in-group identification in this study may partially explain the findings of strong positive and negative emotional response amongst Latino/a participants. If this is the case, then future research should examine whether Soto et al. (2005)’s research about the emotional experiences of Mexican-Americans could be expanded to all Latino/a individuals. It would be interesting to look more closely at the interconnectedness between cultural/ethnic in-group identification and emotion. Additionally, similar research should be done to determine whether these findings of strong emotional responses could be replicated in a school environment amongst children and young adults.

The fact that the Latino/a participants experienced stronger emotions in this current study is especially interesting because it implies that reading texts may evoke more emotions in Latino/a students, suggesting that they may relate differently to educational materials. This finding is extremely important to consider when designing educational curricula for Latino/a students. For example, if Mexican-American students relate more emotionally to texts and other educational materials, then it would be beneficial for these students to utilize those emotions to further learning the classroom. Teachers and educational professionals should create curricula that incorporate reflective writing and should ask their students emotion-based questions like: “How did reading this passage make you feel?”. By taking into account the interplay between curricula and emotion, teachers could design thoughtful assignments and activities that would allow students to emotionally connect with their schoolwork. This increased emotional engagement would in turn improve academic motivation, and thus, academic achievement (Gay, 2000; Romero et al., 2009).
Gender. While the original question of this study focused on cultural/ethnic identity, the findings about gender provide thought-provoking questions for educators and culturally relevant pedagogy practitioners. Gender did not affect in-group identification. Female and male participants did not differ in levels of cultural/ethnic in-group identification in terms of centrality, solidarity, satisfaction, self-stereotyping, or in-group homogeneity. Additionally, gender did not affect reading appraisals or emotional responses about the reading passage. These findings are consistent with the literature, which has not suggested any preference for culturally relevant pedagogy by gender. The protagonist’s male gender did not produce a significant difference in how female and male participants responded to the text. In addition, the interactions between student’s gender and text’s cultural relevance were not significant.

Several explanations could account for these non-significant interactions. It is possible that the measures of in-group identification may have primed the participants to be thinking about their ethnic/cultural identity instead of their gender identity. It is also possible that gender diversity is more common in school readings than ethnic/cultural diversity. Therefore, there is less of a response to seeing a protagonist with a different gender in a reading passage as there is seeing a protagonist with a different cultural/ethnic identity. In future studies, it would be interesting to see whether these findings on gender would be different if the protagonists in the passage were females.

While gender is an important part of one’s identity and should not be neglected, the participants’ genders did not have any significant implications in this study. There were no significant differences in gender with regard to cultural/ethnic in-group identification, reading appraisals, or emotional responses, therefore this study would
recommend that educators focus more on ethnic/cultural identity rather than on gender, when designing culturally relevant curricula.

**Reform Recommendations**

These findings offer valuable information regarding how culturally relevant pedagogy should be incorporated into school curricula. There is no doubt that education reform is necessary in the United States, particularly for the Latino/a population. While looking at educational demographics for Latinos/as, I will compare Latino/a performance with the performance of their White peers. This comparison is relevant for United States demographics, which show that the majority of students (52%) in the public school system are White (“Racial/ethnic enrollment in public schools”, 2013). According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the United States’ academic achievement demographics place Latino/a performance well below that of their White counterparts in both reading and math in the eighth grade (See Figure 2 and Figure 3; National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). Although achievement has improved for White students and Latino/a students, the score gap between the two groups has remained relatively consistent since 1992 (See Figure 2 and Figure 3; National Center for Education Statistics, 2011).

Figure 2. Reading Achievement Score Gaps Between Hispanic and White Public School Students at Grade 8: Various Years, 1992-2009.
Latino/a student performance does not improve in high school. Latino/a students have the highest dropout rate (22%) relative to other ethnic groups in the United States (Chang & Le, 2010) and are less likely than peer White/European-American students to enroll in college and complete a bachelor’s degree (Fry & Taylor, 2013). Accordingly, the academic achievement of Latino/a students must be prioritized.

The question for education reformers is not if we need to use culturally relevant pedagogy as an intervention, but rather how it should be utilized. One challenge for educators is determining how to include and focus on one cultural group without isolating or causing discomfort in another. As is evident in this study, culturally relevant pedagogy is not always met with enthusiasm. I would hypothesize that the non-Latino/a participants in this study had not been thoroughly exposed to Latino/a culture and that
this lack of exposure caused the participants to feel unfamiliar with the culturally relevant reading passage. One recommendation to quell these feelings of unfamiliarity is to begin the induction of culturally relevant pedagogy into school curricula as early as kindergarten to foster awareness and acceptance of multiculturalism at a young age. This intervention is especially important for majority students, who may not have as much exposure to multiculturalism in their day-to-day life. I would recommend that cultural diversity be implemented into schools as early as possible so that students can become accustomed to seeing less familiar cultures early on and learn that unfamiliarity should not be viewed as a negative thing, but rather, as an opportunity to learn.

Incorporating culturally relevant pedagogy into a multicultural classroom is beneficial for the students for whom the curricula is culturally congruent and for the students who are learning about a new culture. As Gay (2000) noted, it is critical for all students, regardless of their culture to be introduced to a variety of cultures that differ from their own. This is not to say that all Euro-centric education should be omitted, but rather that multiple perspectives and cultural viewpoints, majority and minority, should be made available to all students.

The implementation of culturally relevant pedagogy is not an easy task for teachers and educators, but it is possible. Simple text manipulations, like the one in this study, and creative classroom activities can completely revolutionize a young student’s experience in a classroom and can easily be integrated into the lesson planning process (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Though the intervention used in this study was a text manipulation, there are other interventions that teachers and educational professionals can use to incorporate cultural relevancy into their practices.
For example, one place to include cultural relevancy is in the representation of multiculturalism in the classroom. What readings are being assigned? What authors are being represented? What historical figures are discussed in the classroom? Educators should incorporate students’ interests and backgrounds in the educational process. For example, like Jennifer Morrison (2002) did in her Shakespeare project, teachers and education professionals can utilize a culturally relevant method that the students are interested in, in Morrison’s case film, order to teach topics that may be less engaging for students. Shakespeare should not be replaced with culturally relevant topics, but rather, Shakespeare should be supplemented with other equally important culturally diverse works such as Freire’s *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.

It would be detrimental to students of color if they were not taught certain core authors, ideas, and historical instances that fit with a Eurocentric model of education because this common knowledge is valuable as well and is an important part of being a member of American society. As Bourdieu (1986) and Lareau (2003) would argue, it is beneficial for students to know certain skills and common information that can help them navigate societal institutions. It is important for students to gain this cultural capital (Bourdieu, 1986). Therefore, a careful balance must be reached; curricula must be culturally relevant and exciting, while still getting important information and references across.

A challenge for 21st century educators will be to find a way to include culturally relevant topics and methods into the present educational frameworks. The Mexican-American Studies Program in Tucson is a great example of a program that has faced this challenge head on. For example, the MAS Program would teach its students the process of a bill becoming a law by looking critically at Obama’s Immigration Policies (Arce,
Therefore, the lesson was culturally relevant, not only because many students knew recent immigrants or were, in fact, recent immigrants themselves, but also because Obama’s policies were being debated nationally at the time of the lesson.

**Strengths of this Study**

This study adds to the literature on culturally relevant pedagogy in the following ways. Given that the conversation about culturally relevant pedagogy is relatively new, there is limited experimental research determining the extent to which a small manipulation to make an educational activity culturally relevant can impact the experience of students. For example, Ladson-Billings’ (1994/2009) research is primarily observational. She observed classrooms and noticed the differences between classrooms that utilized culturally relevant materials and teaching strategies and those that did not (Ladson-Billings, 1994/2009). In contrast, this current study had an experimental design and was able to ascertain differences in the experiences of students in the same classroom, with the same teacher, on the same day.

Additionally, this study looked systematically at three different measures – ingroup identification, appraisal, and emotion – all of which to factor into a comprehensive understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy. Additionally, as is the case with Ladson-Billings (1994/2009) and Sampson and Garrison-Wade (2011)’s work, most of the current research on culturally relevant pedagogy focuses on African-American students. This study focused on Latinos/as, given that there is less published work on them as a cultural/ethnic group. Moreover, Latinos/as are the fastest growing cultural population in the United States (Passel & Cohn, 2008) so it is necessary to have research that looks at their specific experience in the United States education system.
This study was able to extract interesting findings that have the potential to catalyze creative and effective educational interventions. By looking at a relevant population and determining how culturally relevant reading passages impact students from multicultural backgrounds, this study offers valuable information for education reformers.

**Limitations**

While interpreting this study’s results, several limitations must be considered. The first limitation is simply that this study only looked at one form of culturally relevant pedagogy. For instance, this study did not look at what Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) deemed the “Student-Teacher Relationship” component of culturally relevant pedagogy. By narrowing the focus of the study to a small manipulation in a reading passage, there were many facets of culturally relevant pedagogy that could not be included. Next, since this study focused primarily on students at one school in Northern California it is hard to say whether or not these findings could be generally applied to other schools and other regions. Another limitation of this study is that, due to constraints placed by the school, socio-economic status information could not be included as a measure in this study and thus, the implications of socioeconomic status were not explored. Lastly, a limitation to this study with regard to the reading appraisal measures is that participants were not persuasively prompted to answer qualitative questions such as “What made you feel interested while reading this passage? Or “What about this passage was relevant to your culture?”. Although an interview design for this study may have limited how many students could participate, it would have offered a deeper understanding of the reasoning behind the results.
Conclusion

Currently, the population of Latinos/as in the United States is at an all-time high (Passel & Cohn, 2008) and in public schools the population of Latino/a students is increasingly approaching the majority ("Racial/ethnic enrollment in public schools", 2013). Now, more than ever, United States schools must incorporate culturally relevant pedagogy into their educational philosophies to benefit Latino/a students. According to Passel & Cohn (2008), Latinos/as are the fastest growing racial/ethnic group in the United States. It is predicted that from 2005 to 2050, Latinos will account for 60% of the nation’s population growth (Passel & Cohn, 2008). Latino/a students are predicted to make up one-third of students aged three to seventeen in the year 2036 (Fry & Lopez, 2012).

While programs, such as the Mexican-American Studies program in Tucson, are embracing a culturally relevant educational philosophy and framework designed for Latino/a students, many cities and school districts do not offer culturally relevant programs. Furthermore, schools that do offer culturally relevant programs are often met with resistance just as the MAS program was. As Freire (1970/2000) would note, the prioritization of culturally relevant pedagogy is a matter of social justice. All students deserve an education that will transform them and prepare them to be leaders in the world.

The United States education system must focus on Latino/a youth because while they are growing in number, their academic success is not moving at as rapid a pace. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics there are significant score gaps between White students and Latino/a students in both reading (24) and math (26) ("Achievement gaps: How Hispanic and White students in public schools perform in
mathematics and reading on the national assessment of educational progress”, 2011) (See Figures 2 & 3). Furthermore, Latino/a students are not adequately represented in institutions of higher learning (Fry & Taylor, 2013). Thus, the demand for successful interventions and increased attention toward Latino/a students is already present.

The discussion regarding culturally relevant pedagogy is rapidly materializing and expanding. Just recently, on March 15th, 2014, Walter Dean Myers published a piece in the New York Times entitled Where are the People of Color in Children’s Books?, in which he laments the lack of cultural diversity in children’s literature and discusses the importance of students being able to see their culture and identity represented in books. He states, “Books transmit values. They explore our common humanity. What is the message when some children are not represented in those books?” (Myers, 2014). By questioning the lack of multiculturalism in education in a New York Times article, Meyers is opening up a discussion of culturally relevant pedagogy to a large audience.

Now, more than ever, culture must be taken into account when designing and implementing school curricula. With the population of culturally diverse students rising, it is our responsibility to face the challenge of educating these students with a relentless and passionate energy. Students must be offered an educational experience that will inspire, comfort, excite, and respect them. There is so much work to be done.
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population-projections-2005-2050/


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Appendix A

Questionnaire

Please let me know if you consent to this study.

☐ Yes ☐ No
1. What gender are you? _____________________

2. How old are you? _____________________

3. Where were you born? _____________________

4. If you were not born in the U.S., how many years have you lived in the U.S.? _____________________

5. Where were your parents born?
Mother: _____________________
Father: _____________________

6. What is your native language? _____________________

7. Which languages do you speak comfortably/fluently? _____________________

8. What is your cultural or ethnic background?
   - □ African–American
   - □ Asian–American
   - □ European–American
   - □ Latino/Latina
   - □ Native American
   - □ Pacific Islander
   - □ Other: ____________
In the following statements, the terms ‘my group’ or ‘this group’ refers to the group you just indicated as your ethnic or cultural background. Please indicate how much you disagree or agree with the following statements. Use the following scale to record your answers:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 – Strongly disagree</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4 – Neither disagree or agree</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7 – Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

• The fact that I am a member of this group is an important part of my identity: ______

• I think that my group has a lot to be proud of: ______

• Members of this group are very similar to each other: ______

• I feel committed to my group: ______

• People in this group have a lot in common with each other: ______

• Being a member of this group is an important part of how I see myself: ______

• I feel a bond with my group: ______

• It is pleasant to be a member of this group: ______

• I often think about the fact that I am a member of this group: ______

• I am similar to the average group member: ______

• Being a member of this group gives me a good feeling: ______

• I am glad to be a member of this group: ______

• I have a lot in common with the average group member: ______

• I feel solidarity with my group: ______
Please read the passage below:
A Picture Perfect Day:
*Have you ever taken any photographs?*

1  “Hold that pose!” said Dante, snapping a photo of his mother.

2  Dante’s mom looked up in surprise and spilled some of the orange juice she was pouring. “Dante, what are you doing?” she asked, setting the carton of juice on the counter.

3  “It’s a project I’m doing for school,” Dante explained, sitting down at the table. “For the next two days, I’m going to keep a photo diary of my life.” He paused and took a bite of cereal from his bowl.

4  Mrs. Carter smiled at her son. “It sounds interesting,” she said. “I’m just not sure that a picture of me in my pajamas pouring orange juice at 7 o’clock in the morning is the most interesting part of your day.”

5  “I’m not supposed to leave anything out,” replied Dante. “It doesn’t really matter if it’s interesting. The diary should be a realistic narrative of my day. You and breakfast are both a part of my day, so I wanted to make sure they were captured on film.”

6  Mrs. Carter nodded and bit into a slice of toast. “What will you do with your photographs when you’re done? Do you have to present them to your class?”

7  “I’m going to mount the photos on a piece of posterboard in chronological order,” Dante said. “Then the class will try to write a brief summary of my day based on the pictures I took.”

8  Do your dad and brother know about your photo diary project?” asked Mrs. Carter. “You might want to give them a bit of advance warning if they’re going to be part of it.”
Just then, Wesley came pounding down the stairs into the kitchen. He was carrying a basketball under one arm and grabbed a piece of toast as he sat down at the table.

“Wesley,” said Dante, peering through the camera lens at his brother, “I’m doing a photo diary for school.”

Wesley grinned directly at the camera as Dante snapped the photo. Mrs. Carter laughed. “I forgot who I was talking about here,” she said, giving Wesley a quick squeeze on the shoulder. “I guess no explanation is necessary for your brother, Dante,” she said.

“I don’t blame him for wanting to get a picture of me,” said Wesley. “When I make it into the NBA, those pictures will probably be pretty valuable,” he joked.

Dante laughed as he got up from the breakfast table. “There are some things you just can’t capture in pictures,” he said, shaking his head. He took his dishes to the sink and then managed to get a picture of his dad.

“Am I famous?” asked Mr. Carter.

“Not yet,” said Dante. “But as a part of my photo diary, you will be with the members of Ms. Rutherford’s class.”

Mr. Carter nodded. He grabbed Mrs. Carter around the waist as she got up to get another cup of coffee. He waltzed her across the kitchen and then dipped her deeply as she laughed. “Isn’t this going to make it into your diary?” he asked Dante.

Dante grinned. “I’m just not sure that my class would be able to work it into the narrative of my day. Like I said, there are some things you just can’t capture in pictures.”
Please respond to the following questions based on the passage you just read.

1. Did you like this reading? Yes ____ No____ (check one). Why or why not?

2. Would you prefer to have readings like this one, as compared to the other lessons you receive in school? Yes____ No____(check one). Why or why not?

3. This reading was relevant to my culture (circle your answer below)

   not at all                     very little                         somewhat               very much
   1------------------2------------------3------------------4

4. Describe your interest level while reading this passage (circle your answer below)

   High                     Medium                     Low

5. How well did you like this reading passage (circle your answer below)

   not at all                     very little                         somewhat               very much
   1------------------2------------------3------------------4
Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to that word. Please indicate: how do you feel currently, after having read this passage?

If you do not know what a word means, you may leave it blank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 – Not at all</th>
<th>2 – Very slightly</th>
<th>3 – A little</th>
<th>4 – Moderately</th>
<th>5 – A bit</th>
<th>6 – Quite a bit</th>
<th>7 – Extremely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Irritable: _______  Proud: _______  Enthusiastic: _______
Alert: _______  Daring: _______  Happy: _______
Interested: _______  Distressed: _______  Nervous: _______
Lively: _______  Excited: _______  Afraid: _______
Joyful: _______  Attentive: _______  Bold: _______
Cheerful: _______  Ashamed: _______  Guilty: _______
Energetic: _______  Determined: _______  Active: _______
Scared: _______  Hostile: _______  Inspired: _______
Delighted: _______  Concentrating: _______  Strong: _______
Confident: _______  Fearless: _______  Upset: _______
Appendix B

Culturally Relevant Passage

Please read the passage below:

A Picture Perfect Day:

*Have you ever taken any photographs?*

1. “Hold that pose!” said Lorenzo, snapping a photo of his mother.

2. Lorenzo’s mom looked up in surprise and spilled some of the orange juice she was pouring. “Lorenzo, what are you doing?” she asked, setting the carton of juice on the counter.

3. “It’s a project I’m doing for school,” Lorenzo explained, sitting down at the table. “For the next two days, I’m going to keep a photo diary of my life.” He paused and took a bite of cereal from his bowl.

4. Mrs. Mendez smiled at her son. “It sounds interesting,” she said. “I’m just not sure that a picture of me in my pajamas pouring orange juice at 7 o’clock in the morning is the most interesting part of your day.”

5. “I’m not supposed to leave anything out,” replied Lorenzo. “It doesn’t really matter if it’s interesting. The diary should be a realistic narrative of my day. You and breakfast are both a part of my day, so I wanted to make sure they were captured on film.”

6. Mrs. Mendez nodded and bit into a slice of toast. “What will you do with your photographs when you’re done? Do you have to present them to your class?”

7. “I’m going to mount the photos on a piece of posterboard in chronological order,” Lorenzo said. “Then the class will try to write a brief summary of my day based on the pictures I took.”

8. Do your dad and brother know about your photo diary project?” asked Mrs. Lorenzo. “You
might want to give them a bit of advance warning if they’re going to be part of it.”

9 Just then, Miguel came pounding down the stairs into the kitchen. He was carrying a soccer ball under one arm and grabbed a piece of toast as he sat down at the table.

10 “Miguel,” said Lorenzo, peering through the camera lens at his brother, “I’m doing a photo diary for school.”

11 Miguel grinned directly at the camera as Lorenzo snapped the photo. Mrs. Mendez laughed. “I forgot who I was talking about here,” she said, giving Miguel a quick squeeze on the shoulder. “I guess no explanation is necessary for your brother, Lorenzo,” she said.

12 “I don’t blame him for wanting to get a picture of me,” said Miguel. “When I make it to the World Cup, those pictures will probably be pretty valuable,” he joked.

13 Lorenzo laughed as he got up from the breakfast table. “There are some things you just can’t capture in pictures,” he said, shaking his head. He took his dishes to the sink and then managed to get a picture of his dad.

14 “Am I famous?” asked Mr. Mendez.

15 “Not yet,” said Lorenzo. “But as a part of my photo diary, you will be with the members of Ms. Rutherford’s class.”

16 Mr. Mendez nodded. He grabbed Mrs. Mendez around the waist as she got up to get another cup of coffee. He waltzed her across the kitchen and then dipped her deeply as she laughed. “Isn’t this going to make it into your diary?” he asked Lorenzo.

17 Lorenzo grinned. “I’m just not sure that my class would be able to work it into the narrative of my day. Like I said, there are some things you just can’t capture in pictures.”
Appendix C

Consent Form in English

Hello Hamilton Families,

My name is Victoria Mathieson and I am a rising senior at Wesleyan University. I am writing to ask for your consent for your children to participate in a study that I am conducting with Professor Rodriguez-Mosquera to investigate the relationship between culturally relevant reading passages and emotional experience.

With your permission, your children will read one of two versions of a short passage from a common workbook (Spectrum Reading) and will respond to questions asking about how they felt when reading the passage (happy, sad, excited, etc.).

The study poses no risk and the identities of your children will remain anonymous. Your child may take breaks at any time or discontinue the study at any time for any reason. Participation is completely voluntary.

I am excited to conduct this study in order to evaluate the ways in which cultural relevancy in an academic setting may improve the emotional experiences of middle school students while in school. I am hoping that this study will have a positive impact on Hamilton Middle School.

If you would like further information about the study, I am eager and willing to answer any and all questions that you may have!

Thank you,

Victoria Mathieson
Wesleyan University
Class of 2014
Phone: 415-419-4220
Email: vmathieson@wesleyan.edu
By signing the following consent form you give permission for your child to participate in an investigation of cultural psychology by Professor Rodriguez Mosquera and Victoria Mathieson:

The nature and purpose of this research have been satisfactorily explained to me and I agree to allow my child to participate in the study described. I understand that my child is free to stop participation at any time if he or she chooses, and that the investigator will gladly answer any questions that arise during the course of the research. I further understand that the risks involved in this study are no greater than those my child would encounter in everyday life. Finally, I understand that if I have any comments, questions, or concerns following the study, I may contact the Culture and Emotion Lab at Wesleyan University at ce-lab@wesleyan.edu or Victoria Mathieson at vmathieson@wesleyan.edu. I may also bring complaints about the study to Dr. Andrea Patalano, Chair of the Wesleyan Psychology Department (860-685-2310).

Name of parent/guardian (please print):

________________________________________

Signature of parent/guardian:

________________________________________

Date: _____/_____/_____

Child’s name: __________________________________________

Child’s date of birth: _____/_____/_____


Consent Form in Spanish

Estimadas Familias de la Escuela Hamilton,

Mi nombre es Victoria Mathieson y soy una estudiante del último grado de Wesleyan University. Les estoy escribiendo para pedirles su consentimiento para que sus hijos(as) puedan participar en un estudio que estoy haciendo con el Profesor Rodríguez Mosquera para investigar la relación entre la lectura culturalmente relevante y la experiencia emocional.

Con su permiso, sus hijos leerán una de las dos versiones de un breve pasaje de un libro de lectura común (Spectrum) y responderán a unas preguntas sobre cómo se sintieron al leer el pasaje (feliz, triste, emocionado, etc.).

El estudio no tiene ningún riesgo y sus hijos participarán de forma anónima. Su hijo(a) podrá tomarse descansos o dejar de participar en el estudio en cualquier momento y por cualquier razón. La participación es completamente voluntaria. Si decide no dar su consentimiento, no habrá consecuencias negativas ni su decisión afectará a su hijo de ninguna manera.

Estoy muy interesada en llevar a cabo este estudio con el fin de evaluar la forma en que la relevancia cultural en el ámbito académico puede mejorar las experiencias emocionales de los estudiantes de secundaria mientras estén en la escuela. Espero que este estudio tenga un impacto positivo en la escuela secundaria de Hamilton.

Si desea más información sobre el estudio, será un placer responder a cualquier pregunta que puedan tener.

Muchas gracias,

Victoria Mathieson
Wesleyan University
Clase del 2014
Teléfono: 415-419-4220
Email: vmathieson@wesleyan.edu
Al firmar el siguiente formulario de consentimiento le da permiso para que su hijo participe en una investigación de la psicología cultural por el Profesor Rodríguez Mosquera y Victoria Mathieson:

La naturaleza y el propósito de esta investigación me han sido explicados con satisfacción y estoy de acuerdo con permitir que mi hijo participe en el estudio descrito. Entiendo que mi hijo es libre de dejar de participar en cualquier momento si él o ella elija, y que el investigador con mucho gusto responderá a cualquiera de mis preguntas que surjan durante el curso de la investigación. Entiendo, además, que los riesgos involucrados en este estudio no son mayores que las que mi hijo va a afrontar en la vida cotidiana. Finalmente, entiendo que si tengo cualquier comentario, preguntas o inquietudes después del estudio, puedo comunicarme con El Laboratorio de Cultura y Emoción en la Universidad de Wesleyan al email ce-lab@wesleyan.edu o con Victoria Mathieson en vmathieson@wesleyan.edu. También puedo presentar reclamaciones sobre el estudio de la Dra. Andrea Patalano, Presidente del Departamento de Psicología de Wesleyan (860-685-2310).

Nombre del Padre/Guardián (por favor imprima):

_____________________________________________________________________

Firma del Padre/Guardián: ____________________________________________

Fecha: ______/_____/______

Nombre de mi hijo/a:

_____________________________________________________

Fecha de Nacimiento de mi hijo/a ______/_____/______
Appendix D

Debriefing for Participants

The goal of this study was to determine whether or not students liked a reading passage more if they could identify with the story from his or her cultural background. We are especially interested in whether or not reading a story with a culturally relevant protagonist and plot would have an effect on the reader’s emotional response to the passage (Did the reading make the student happy? Did the student like the reading? etc.). There was no deception in this study.

We would like to ask that you please not discuss this study with any other students, due to the fact that the study has not yet been completed.

If you would like to learn more about the study please contact:

Victoria Mathieson (vmathieson@wesleyan.edu) or
Patricia Rodriguez-Mosquera (patricia.rodriguezmosquera@wesleyan.edu)

Thank you so much for being a participant in this study. We could not do this research without you!