



An Investigation of Culturally Responsive Teaching Activities for Preservice Music Teachers

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Purpose

To investigate PMTs' experience with six specific CRT activities in an undergraduate secondary choral methods course.

Research Questions

1. Personal and professional **benefits** from the CRT activities?
2. How did the process strengthen **awareness** of culturally generated inequalities; foster ability to **recognize** inherent biases; and develop ability to **discuss** racial, ethnic, and cultural identities to **better equip** them for their future careers?
3. Effect on participants' **self-efficacy**?

Participants

- 5 undergraduates
- 3rd year vocal MUED majors
- All identify as White or Caucasian
- 3 identify as female
- 2 identify as male

Natalie Mark Jessica
Jason Katie

Methodology

- 7 lesson unit
 - 1 introductory discussion
 - 6 CRT strategies (McCoy, 2020)
1. Privilege Walk
 2. Mapping the Matrix of Domination/Oppression
 3. Interrogating Culture and Musical Hegemony
 4. Musical Auto-ethnography
 5. Aural Music Learning
 6. Community Inquiry Projects

Data Collection

- Participants' written activity reflections
- Class-generated artifacts
- Class discussion transcripts
- Researcher's self-reflections
- Semi-structured post-unit focus group

Personal/Professional Benefits

Importance of "Having the Conversations"

"It was great to have it formally spoken about...in the classroom." -Natalie

"I definitely think that if we didn't have [these types of] conversations...I would have just taught solfege, notes, and rhythms." -Mark

"This is the first time we've really talked about...CRT in depth in a class. We've had little, maybe tiny units in [other classes], but not really a class that's focused on it [like this has]." -Katie

Specific Tools/Instructional Strategies Importance of a Safe Environment

"If I am not comfortable with the people in the room because I don't know what their mentality is and what their stance is, then I am in danger of being looked down upon." -Mark

"There's a lot of places that I wouldn't feel comfortable doing that [specific activity] with certain students." -Natalie

Modeling Activities PMTs Can Use

"Oh yeah, I can totally use this [activity] in my future classroom with my future students." -Jason

"You hear the term 'authentic learning' all the time, but until the [Oral/Aural Musical Learning] activity, I didn't really quite grasp what that meant." -Mark

"You do this [activity] with high schoolers. It's probably going to be more effective." -Natalie

"Finding Your People"

"It is good to mark down your identity because I think it makes the world feel just a little smaller.... [As an] example-our campus. It's so easy to feel small and so easy to feel isolated on a homogenous campus. And I think circling your identities, you're like, 'okay, I have communities. I have people who can relate to me on these things. I have people who are struggling...with these things just as I am.' It makes the world a little smaller." -Mark

Increase in Self-Efficacy

"These are important concepts that we need to integrate in the classroom. [These conversations] have made me more secure in the fact that I'm going to be a great teacher." -Jason

"It makes me more confident in what kind of education I'm getting here [at my university].... Like I'm glad that we're having this conversation. I think [CRT] should be taught in every education program. And so that's why [I have a] bit more sense of pride of my degree." -Mark

"I feel really super validated right now.... I know that this is something that's really, really important to me. So, it makes me feel really proud that we're not just saying, 'Hey, maybe you should do this.' Like, CRT isn't an option." -Natalie

Increased Awareness

Large-scale/General Issues

"This process brought a lot of attention to underlying issues that I wasn't aware of." -Mark

"I can see now that I have my own inherent privilege to unpack." -Jason

"It was like, 'Oh, of course I should be doing this,' but I hadn't really thought about it before. This got me thinking how am I authentically inclusive rather than just checking the box of inclusivity." -Katie

"This [Oral/Aural Learning Experience] was the 'wow' concept in my brain." -Mark

"That's something I've never even considered. That [sexual orientation] is something that some people will have to negotiate [in school] to feel safe. I never even had to consider that in my personal case. That in itself is also kind of eye opening." -Jessica

Influence of Previous Educational Experience/Exposure

"Looking back, I feel that any non-European or American music I sang in high school was often modeled or performed out of its own context." -Jason

"I can be more mindful about being a more inclusive teacher rather than reverting back to what I know based on my own cultural upbringing." -Katie

"I knew the point of why were doing the [Examine Musical Hegemony] activity and even as I was actively trying to write names that I knew would not just be white European men. I still failed to come up with [hardly] any names due just to the choral repertoire that I have already been singing." -Natalie

Surface Level Understanding

Know What to Do, But Not Specifically How

Participants reported general ideas for addressing or preventing cultural, racial, or ethnic issues in the classroom.

"Know your students"

"Choose diverse composers"

"Be accommodating"

"Don't tokenize musical genres"

"Encourage students to be openminded"

These responses, while appropriate, reflect a surface-level and incomplete understanding about how to effectively accomplish this in the classroom.

Incomplete Understanding of Social Justice Issues

"With [social justice issues], it just makes sense. I know that all [of us as] teachers would make the right classroom choices anyway." -Jessica

"I think we're all intelligent people and we've been through the educational courses for the past two and a half years. I don't think any of us are just going blindly through life." -Jessica

Discussion

- Participants feel that CRT unit was a **worthy endeavor**
- Developed strategies for **use in future classrooms**
- **Increased self-efficacy** in addressing issues in the future
- **Greater understanding** of the importance of CRT in their future classrooms
- ID elements of their **personal** privilege or marginalization
- Greater understanding that unpacking social justice issues is a **life-long endeavor**

Implications for MUED

- CRT strategies were effective but often served as starting points for issues. Additional class discussion, self-reflection, and reinforcement is essential.
- Additional CRT training for PMTs. Importance of deliberate incorporation of CRT concepts and strategies into earlier MUED coursework.
- Music teacher educators must be reflective about the instructional process to be as effective for PMTs as possible.

For More Information

