The Fortuitous Impact of a Cross-Cultural Tutoring Experience on Prospective Teachers' Development Toward Cultural Competency

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Concordia University (Portland)  
College of Education  
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THE FORTUITOUS IMPACT OF A CROSS-CULTURAL TUTORING EXPERIENCE ON PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS’ DEVELOPMENT TOWARD CULTURAL COMPETENCY

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Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the College of Education
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in
Professional Leadership, Inquiry & Transformation

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ABSTRACT

In this study, I explored the possibility of prospective teachers’ development toward cultural competency, fortuitously or incidentally, as a result of intercultural experiences while tutoring diverse preK-12 students. I investigated 25 prospective teachers’ growth toward cultural competency as they participated in a ten-week cross-cultural tutoring program designed to help children from different ethnic, socioeconomic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds develop reading skills. These prospective teachers were composed of first year students in an undergraduate program prior to entering into teacher preparation coursework and pre-service teachers in the final year of teacher preparation program completing their teaching practice in K-12 schools. This phenomenological multiple-case study yielded findings from open-ended online questionnaires, observations, a reflexive journal, review of a final written reflection, and focus group interview sessions and revealed the following findings for prospective teachers: (1) the value of early, community-based field experiences, (2) that fortuitous aspects of intercultural experiences can reduce, to varying degrees, a cultural deficit perspective and (3) how a cross-cultural experience and reflection lead to fortuitous development toward cultural competency. Finally, emerging conceptual change was evidence of prospective teachers’ development toward cultural competency.

Keywords: prospective teachers, cultural competency, fortuitous learning
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Andrew Kondor, and our daughter Natalie.

Andrew, from the moment I dreamed of pursuing my Doctorate in Education you have provided me with love, support and encouragement. Whether it was the countless loads of laundry and dishes you took care of, the extra daddy time you spent so that I could study or write, or how you dried my tears and cheered me on, I truly appreciate your unwavering support along this journey. Thank you for sticking by me, and for the sacrifices you have made, as I would not have been able to produce this work without you.

Natalie, you attended my first doctoral course with me six months before you were born and your joyful spirit has been motivation to achieve this goal ever since. I am so grateful that I get to be your mom, encourage you as you work toward your greatest dreams and celebrate whatever brings you happiness.

I love you, both!
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I am ever grateful for, and in awe of, my dissertation chair, Angela Owusu-Ansah. Your commitment to equity in education, love for learning and research, scholarly knowledge and experience provided just the support, and at times, tough love that was needed to produce this work. Thank you so much for believing in me, and sustaining my efforts. Thank you also to my dissertation committee: Anne Grey, Cathryn Lambeth and Jean Rattigan-Rohr. I appreciate your feedback and guidance that have pushed my thinking and improved both my processes and product. I am very grateful for your dedication to the framework and value of this study.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Out of every three students enrolled in either elementary or secondary school one is of racial or ethnic minority, whereas about 87% of the teachers are White and female (Cross, 2003; Griner & Stewart, 2013; Sleeter, 2001a; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The rate of increase in minority K-12 students, who are often also in poverty, is projected to increase in number to 41% by the year 2020 (NCES, 2007). In contrast “those coming into teaching, and those who teach prospective teachers [remain for the most part] White females who have been raised in middle class homes in rural and suburban communities” (Assaf, Garza, & Battle, 2010, p 115), strengthening the persistence of the existing cultural divide between students and teachers. The cultural divide, disparity between an overwhelmingly homogeneous teaching force and an increasingly diverse student population (Gallego, 2001, Grant & Secada, 1990; Griner & Stewart, 2013), can lead to devastating learning experiences for the students (Anton, 1999; Cho & Reich, 2008; Griner & Stewart, 2013). Griner and Stewart (2013) explain that a cultural divide can present significant barriers in adapting to school processes and expectations linked with the dominant culture and can hamper positive learning outcomes.

Considering this cultural divide, teacher preparation programs are in an imperative position to prepare prospective teachers to mitigate this divide in order to improve outcomes for diverse student populations. In addition, teacher education researchers have stressed the need to increase understanding of how prospective teachers can be effectively prepared to work with diverse student populations (Cochran-Smith, Davis & Fries, 2004; Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Larkin, 2012; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Zeichner, 1996). However, preparing teachers who are willing and able to teach in increasingly diverse classrooms may be one of the most challenging tasks facing teacher preparation programs today (Castro, 2010; Gay, 2002; Villegas, 2008).
Research on promoting effective teaching of culturally diverse student populations addresses gaps and deficits in prospective teachers’ experiences, attitudes, and perceptions (Castro, 2010). For example, Sleeter (as cited in Castro, 2010) delineated four issues that impact the instructional effectiveness of many White prospective teachers. These include a failure to recognize the pervasiveness of racial inequity, holding deficit views about, and lower expectations for, students of color, denying the very significance of race in their practices through a colorblind approach, and “lacking a sense of themselves as cultural beings, resulting in their assumptions that their own cultural lenses represent the norm for all other students” (Castro, 2010, p. 198).

It appears that one way to counter this issue is to develop cultural competency in prospective teachers in teacher preparation programs. Cultural competency is understanding oneself as cultural being, having an appreciation for, and an understanding of, diverse populations and interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences (Cross, 2008; Gallavan, 2005; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). However, studies have revealed prospective teachers’ overwhelming resistance to development toward cultural competency when explicitly taught in their teacher preparation coursework (Brown, 2004; Larkin, 2012; Lenski, Crumpler, Stallworth & Crawford, 2005; Lockhart, 2009; Sleeter, 2001; Taylor, 2010; Zeichner, Grant, Gay, Gillette, Valli & Villegas, 1998).

Despite disappointing research findings related to the impact of coursework on the development toward cultural competency, studies have found that when prospective teachers have prior cross-cultural experiences, they are more likely to glean concepts of cultural competency that lead to culturally responsive teaching (Adams, Bondy & Kuhel, 2005; Burant & Kirby, 2002; Hollins, 2011; Keengwe 2010; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). In addition, there is a
sustained attitudinal change in prospective teachers when they are required to reflect deeply about the experiences (Dewey, 1933; French, 2005; Gallego, 2001; Hernandez, Morales, & Shroyer 2013; Hollingsworth, 1989; Nussbuam, 1997; Taylor, 2010; Wade, 2000).

**Purpose of the Proposed Study**

Consequently, the purpose of this study was to explore the fortuitous impact of a ten-week, cross-cultural, community based tutoring experience conducted during the first year of college on prospective teachers’ development toward cultural competency. Specifically, this study explored the impact of participating in the tutoring experience at two points, at the undergraduate first-year level, during the experience (ongoing and immediate) and again, still at the undergraduate level, but three years after the experience (sustained and long-term). Therefore, the purpose of the study was twofold. First, to explore conceptual changes (an individual’s change their views on a concept through engagement in, and reflection upon, an experience (Larkin, 2012)) toward development of cultural competency of first year undergraduate students who had formally indicated an interest to become teachers. Second, to explore the sustainability of the conceptual changes in final-year pre-service teachers enrolled in the teacher preparation program.

**Conceptual Framework**

Subsequently, this study was framed on studies conducted by Bennett (2013), Capella-Santana (2003) and Miller and Mikulec (2014), who discovered cross-cultural experience and social interaction effects on dismantling stereotypes and increasing understanding as well as the positive impact of fieldwork experiences in culturally and ethnically diverse settings on prospective teachers’ cross-cultural attitudes and knowledge respectively. Models and theorists’ work included in my conceptual framework are Hess, Shipman, Engelmann, Bereiter and
Deutsch and others’ Cultural Deficit Theory; Larkin’s Conceptual Change theory; Mezirow’s Transformational Learning theory; Cross’s theory on Cultural Competency; Dewey, Vygotsky and others’ Situated Learning Theory; and Dewey and Mezirow’s theories on Reflection.

**Cultural deficit theory.** Cultural deficit theorists such as Hess, Shipman, Engelmann, Bereiter and Deutsch, began to build on previous work of Genetic Theorists (Bolima, n.d.). Moving beyond the genetic theory premise that certain cultural groups were intelligently inferior to others, particularly to the group in charge, Cultural deficit theorists began to focus on “nature” versus “nurture” (Bolima, n.d.; Erickson, 1968). The majority of related studies blamed the child's social, cultural or economic environment as being "depraved and deprived" of the elements necessary to achieve the behavior rules and role requirements and, until dealt with, would limit the academic progress of culturally deprived students (Bolima, n.d; Bereiter & Engelmann, 1966; Hess & Shipman, 1965). Overall, Cultural deficit theorists viewed individuals from non-mainstream cultures as inferior and as Martin Deutsch (1967) outlined, not able to sustain middle class values and expectations in the education system. Such Cultural deficit theories conveniently placed the blame of the achievement gap outside the responsibility of the education system (Bolima, n.d.).

**Conceptual change and transformative learning theories.** Larkin’s (2012) conceptual change theory is a “valuable framework for understanding how teachers change their ideas about the pedagogical implications of student diversity (Paine, 1990)” (p. 2); particularly if teachers’ current perspectives reflect cultural deficit theories. Larkin described conceptual change as the transformation from one’s personal view, particularly to the degree a person holds true to that view/conception. First, one has an experience that disrupts a particular viewpoint, then if an
alternate conception is intelligible, plausible, and/or fruitful an individual will modify his or her conception.

Mezirow’s (1991) theory of transformational learning was also important to explore in relationship to experiences and conceptual change. Mezirow (1991) wrote that perceptions change through transformed meaning schemes as a result of “several disorienting dilemmas” (p. 159). Reflecting a similar pattern to Larkin’s theory, Mezirow (1991) explained that, “perspective transformation involves (a) an empowered sense of self, (b) more crucial understanding of how one’s social relationships and culture have shaped one’s beliefs and feelings, and (c) more functional strategies and resources for taking action” (p. 161). Mezirow defined transformative learning as, “reflective assessment of premises, a process predicated upon still another logic, one of movement through cognitive structures by identifying and judging presuppositions” (p. 5). Furthermore, Mezirow claimed, “…it becomes crucial that the individual learn to negotiate meanings, purposes, and values critically, reflectively, and rationally instead of passively accepting the social realities defined by others” (p. 3). According to Mezirow (1997), “We learn together by analyzing the related experiences of others to arrive at a common understanding that holds until new evidence or arguments present themselves” (p. 7). Following this logic and Larkin’s, if a cross-cultural field experience offered prior to participating in a teacher preparation program prompts potential pre-service teachers to question particular deficit viewpoints, when those prospective teachers engage in program coursework, they may be more open to change and continued development toward cultural competency.

**Cultural competency.** In this study, the theory of cultural competency was based on the work of professor, author, social worker and founder of the National Indian Child Welfare Association, Terry Cross and the Cross Model of Cultural Competence (1988). “It described
cultural competency as movement along a continuum that is based on the premise of respect and appreciation of individuals and cultural differences” (Mak, 2002, p. 1). Cultural competency is understanding oneself as a cultural being, having an appreciation for, and an understanding of, diverse populations and interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences (Cross, 2008; Gallavan, 2005; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). Throughout this study, the terms cultural self-awareness and intercultural understandings were used as attributes of cultural competency. Relating these to Cross’s work, an individual must first develop cultural self-awareness, or an understanding of oneself as a cultural being. This would include a personal set of behaviors, attitudes and policies. Intercultural understanding emerges once self-awareness has started to develop (Deardorff, 2004). Intercultural understanding is an understanding of others’ cultures and how to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. Cross (2008) broke down cultural competency by discussing both culture and competence:

The word culture is used because it implies the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thought, communication, actions, customs, beliefs, values and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group. The word competence is used because it implies having the capacity to function effectively. (p. 1)

Therefore, cultural competency in this study included attributes of cultural self-awareness as it related to Cross’s definition of culture as well as intercultural understandings including understanding of others’ culture and how to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

Cross (2008) clearly explained that “becoming culturally competent is a developmental process” (p. 1). Therefore, when I studied prospective teachers I did not expect them to attain full cultural competency, rather their development toward cultural competency was explored. I used Cross’s (2008) Cultural Competency Continuum as a tool to measure prospective teachers’
development toward cultural competency as a result of a cross-cultural tutoring experience. The continuum included the following descriptors:

*Cultural Destructiveness:* negating, disparaging, or purging cultures that are different from your own.

*Cultural incapacity:* elevating the superiority of your own cultural values and beliefs and suppressing cultures that are different from your own.

*Cultural blindness:* acting as if differences among cultures do not exist and refusing to recognize any differences.

*Cultural precompetence:* recognizing that lack of knowledge, experience, and understanding of other cultures limits your ability to effectively interact with them.

*Cultural Competence:* employing any policy, practice, or behavior that uses the essential elements of cultural proficiency on behalf of the school or district. Cultural competence is interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences, motivate you to assess your own skills, expand your knowledge and resources, and, ultimately, cause you to adapt your relational behavior.

*Cultural proficiency:* honoring the differences among cultures, seeing diversity as a benefit, and interacting knowledgeably and respectfully among a variety of cultural groups. (Cross, 2008, pp. 1-3)

**Situated learning theory.** Situated learning theorists suggested that social interactions and intercultural experiences provide opportunities for people to develop understanding and knowledge (Bennett, 2013; Capella-Santana, 2003; Dewey, 1963; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). Greeno, Collins, & Resnick, (1996) characterized the situative perspective in this way:
Success in cognitive functions such as reasoning, remembering, and perceiving is understood as an achievement of a system, with contributions of the individuals who participate, along with tools and artifacts. This means that thinking is situated in a particular context of intentions, social partners, and tools. (p. 20)

This idea regarding contextualizing learning was also reflected in Putnam & Borko’s (2000) three conceptual sociocultural themes fundamental to the situative perspective: cognition is situated in context, social in nature, and distributed across the individual, other persons, and tools. These sociocultural themes have “important implications for research on the learning of pre-service and inservice teachers” (p. 5). Situated learning is grounded in sociocultural perspective, summarized by Hollins (2015):

Learning and cognition are culturally mediated and supported through purposeful activity; learning and the social context in which it occurs transform the person, resulting in a new identity; learning is dependent on the productive use of cultural tools, artifacts, prior knowledge and experiences that are familiar to the learners and that form the basis for constructing new knowledge and understanding; understanding and expertise are developed through extended situated experience that is influenced by affordances, constraints, focus and guidance in a social context with others. (p. 94)

Notably, a majority of pre-service teachers have limited cultural competency (Milner, 2003) because of narrow or no true experience in teaching students of diverse backgrounds. My study explored Bennett’s (2013) work and the situative learning theory by situating the study in an evening cross-cultural field experience. During the second term of undergraduate students’ first year at a four-year university in the Pacific Northwest, those who were pursuing a degree in education were required to participate in an organized cross-cultural field experience.
Participation in this diverse community field experience was a pre-requisite to admission to the teacher education program. Prospective teachers spent four weeks at the beginning of the semester learning how to tutor struggling readers from grades K-8. Prospective teachers worked with reading specialists who trained them to use reading assessment results to plan individualized lessons for a struggling reader. At the end of the four weeks, prospective teachers were matched up with a child who was enrolled in the tutoring program, and taught this same child during each session. Children who participated in the program were from the surrounding neighborhood and were from diverse backgrounds. Of the 49 children, approximately 38% were Black, 31% were White, 27% were Hispanic, and 4% were from other backgrounds. Some children were English language learners whose first language was Spanish. Most children, approximately 66%, were assessed at reading levels below grade level at the onset of the tutoring program. This figure does not include non-readers at the pre-K level. A unique aspect of this tutoring program was a requirement that a parent attend each tutoring session with his or her child.

Sessions occurred one time per week for ten weeks in the evening in the university library. This library not only served the university, but it was also open to the public and had become a hub of the community. On the second floor, a children’s library was frequented by neighborhood children and families. Weekend story hour and community events drew community members to the library on a regular basis.

Each week during this initial field-experience, prospective teachers prepared an individualized reading lesson for their students. Prospective teachers gathered in the library prior to the tutoring sessions to prepare, engaged in the tutoring session for about an hour, communicated with the child’s parents, and finally spent time debriefing with the program
director and fellow prospective teachers.

The cross-cultural tutoring experience that was the focus of this study provided a situated learning experience to prospective teachers who most likely had not had an opportunity to engage with diverse populations. Also noteworthy, was that like Bennett’s (2013) study, the tutoring experience was situated in a community setting rather than a K-12 classroom setting. Although many university teacher-preparation programs require field experiences and student teaching experiences, they often take place in the K-12 classroom, and Sykes & Bird (as cited in Putnam and Borko, 2000, p. 10) explained that situated learning can be problematic when existing professional communities do not represent the kinds of reformed teaching advocated by university teacher education programs. Instead, early and diverse community-based field experience is one of the keys to successful teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1987; Hollins, 2015; Sleeter, 2008; Zeichner, 2010). In addition, Hollins (2015) provided insights from Coffey (2010) who suggested that community-based field experiences “have the power to transform the ways that beginning teachers think about the effects of schooling in their students’ lives and the extent to which social factors influence students’ success in school” (p. 100). Finally, Hollins posited that these field experiences, which happen outside of the classroom, help prospective teachers “re-envision who they might become as a professional self… [as] teachers mediate their stories of self with the cultural and institutional expectations of what it means to be a teacher” (p. 101).

**Reflection.** To further examine Miller and Mikulec (2014), Capella-Santana (2003), and Bennett’s (2013) findings, the situative nature of this study provided a candidate with intercultural interactions as well as opportunities for reflection. Simply working with diverse students would not make a strong impact on a pre-service teacher’s cultural understandings
unless the candidates reflected on the interactions and their own learning based on those interactions (Anders & Richardson, 1991; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985; French, 2005; Gallego, 2001; Hollingsworth, 1989; Taylor, 2010). Studies such as Milner (2006) have found that situative learning in which prospective teachers work with diverse urban populations alone perpetuated racial stereotypes, however, when situated learning was compounded with reflection, pre-service teachers had deeper cultural and racial awareness and insight and were able to bridge theory and practice.

Mezirow (1991) stated that, “Reflection is the process of critically assessing the content, process, or premise(s) of our efforts to interpret and give meaning to an experience” (p. 104). Mezirow’s theory confirmed that, “transformative learning cannot happen unless critical reflection is involved at every stage” (p. 125). Thus transformative education requires prospective teachers to examine basic foundations, systems, and contingencies that unconsciously drive their attitudes, perceptions and ultimate decisions and consider the impact of their perspectives, or worldview, on learners (Lichau & Sanchez, 2012).

Almost a century ago, John Dewey explained reflection in his book How We Think (1933). Rodgers (2002) summarized Dewey’s explanation of reflection into four main criteria: “(1) Reflection is a meaning-making process that moves a learner from one experience into the next with deeper understanding of its relationships with and connections to other experiences and ideas. (2) Reflection is a systematic, rigorous, disciplined way of thinking, with its roots in scientific inquiry. (3) Reflection needs to happen in a community, in interaction with others. (4) Reflection requires attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and of others.” (Rodgers, 2002, p. 845)

Participants in this study were interviewed, observed, and required to reflect deeply. The
reflections were reviewed to determine whether entries and responses demonstrated cross-cultural experience effects on dismantling deficit stereotypes and increasing understanding, if there was a positive impact of fieldwork experiences in a culturally and ethnically diverse setting on prospective teachers’ development toward cultural competency, and if intercultural experiences provided opportunities for students to develop and learn.

**Fortuitous learning.** Literature has found that prospective teachers overwhelmingly resist learning concepts of cultural competency when explicitly taught in their teacher preparation coursework (Brown, 2004; Larkin, 2012; Lenski, Crumpler, Stallworth & Crawford, 2005; Lockhart, 2009; Sleeter, 2001; Taylor, 2010; Xu, 2001; Zeichner, Grant, Gay, Gillette, Valli & Villegas, 1998). Consequently, this study explored if the situation combined with reflection contributed to an incidental, fortuitous conceptual change associated with cultural competency. In other words, was the development of cultural competency an added, or unintentional, benefit to the tutoring experience? “Transmissionist practices in the drive to ensure that prospective teachers leave their teacher preparation courses “with the right answers” about topics concerning diversity… commonly produces resentment and resistance, particularly among White prospective teachers (Clift & Brady, 2005)” (Larkin, 2012, p. 28). In this study, student participants were not taught cultural competency explicitly or as a transmissionist practice. Rather, fortuitously through experience, it provided participants the opportunity to test the cultural deficit theory.

Additionally, research evidence has shown that prior intercultural experiences develop cultural self-awareness and intercultural understandings in prospective teachers (Adams, Bondy & Kuhel, 2005; Burant & Kirby, 2002; Hollins, 2011; Keengwe 2010; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). Milner’s (2006) work, suggested prospective teachers begin to deepen their intercultural
understandings before exposure to theory and practice. The study therefore examined the fortuitous effects of cross-cultural experiences of potential preservice teachers prior to teacher preparation coursework. Furthermore, based on Bova and Kroth’s (2001) research findings that the results of incidental learning can be valuable, although they may not immediately be recognized as such, I asked prospective teachers who were former tutors to consider the impact of the cross-cultural tutoring experience three years later because learning and conceptual change ought to be sustained to have transferable properties in real and needed teaching situations. So my research extended to this second subpopulation, to see if the experience had a sustained impact on their development toward cultural competency. Cross (2008) clearly explained that “becoming culturally competent is a developmental process” (p. 1). Prospective teachers were not expected to attain full cultural competency, rather their development toward cultural competency was explored through a phenomenological, multiple case study.

Rationale, Relevance, and Significance

The results of the study ought to be of benefit to teacher education programs, particularly relating to the planning of clinical experiences. This research is especially pertinent to teacher education programs with essential goals to prepare teachers for increasingly diverse populations of today’s classrooms. As Larkin (2012) pointed out:

Decades ago, Grant and Secada (1990) highlighted the need for such research: A basic tenet of education is that instruction should follow development. Yet we have no maps of how teacher cognitions, beliefs and skills with respect to the teaching of diverse student populations actually develop. We do not know what a beginning teacher really knows versus what successful, experienced colleagues might know about the teaching of diverse student populations. If we could map how teachers move from the former to the latter, we
might be able to plan teacher education programs to help teachers better develop these skills. (p. 5)

I understood that these research results were not generalizable. However, understandings illuminated by the research about how potential teachers develop toward cultural competencies could be applied with caution to other teacher education programs. Findings revealed an impact on an individual’s personal views and the degree to which they hold true to those views, or conceptual change, relating to the development of cultural competency.

**Research Question**

What fortuitous impact does tutoring diverse K-8 students have on prospective teachers’ development toward cultural competency?

**Definitions**

For the purposes of this study, the specific meanings were used for the following terms:

*Conceptual Change.* An individual’s change in his views on a concept through engagement in, and reflection upon, an experience (Larkin, 2012).

*Cross-cultural Experiences/Interactions:* Experiences in which there is opportunity for direct interaction with one or more individuals from a cultural group different from one’s own (Garmon, 2004).

*Cultural Competency:* Cultural competency is understanding oneself as a cultural being, having an appreciation for, and an understanding of, diverse populations and interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences (Cross, 2008; Gallavan, 2005; Miller & Mikulec, 2014).
**Culturally Responsive Teaching:** “Using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them” (Gay, 2000, p. 29).

**Cultural Self-Awareness:** Understanding oneself as cultural being, including a personal set of behaviors, attitudes and policies (Cross, 1988).

**Intercultural Understandings:** An understanding of others’ cultures and how to work effectively in cross-cultural situations in ways that recognize and value their differences (adapted from Cross, 1988).

**Fortuitous:** Incidental learning that “generally takes place without much external facilitation” (Marsick & Watkins, 2001, p. 30), and occurs due to a combination of situated learning and reflection.

**Pre-service Teachers PT (as study participants):** University final-year undergraduate students who completed the tutoring experience in their first year. These participants were enrolled in their student teaching internships.

**Potential Pre-service Teachers PPST (as study participants):** The first subpopulation of study included first year university students who indicated an interest in teacher education and were enrolled in a Teacher Education pre-requisite tutoring experience.

**Prior Cross Cultural Experience:** In this study, a prior cross-cultural experience for a prospective teacher refers to any experience that occurs before entry into a teacher preparation program that fosters relationships that lead to cultural self-awareness and intercultural understandings between individuals from a variety of cultural backgrounds including, but not limited to, personal relationships with others from cultures different from one’s own, field work
in diverse community settings, service learning with diverse populations, or cross-cultural immersion through study or extended time abroad.

*Prospective teachers:* Includes both subpopulations of the study: Potential pre-service teachers (PPST) and Pre-service teachers (PT).

*Reflection.* Reflection in this case included, weekly debriefing after each tutoring session, reflection questions posed by the researcher in online questionnaires and during focus group sessions, and a final reflection paper at the end of the tutoring experience.

*Reflexivity:* A particular kind of reflection grounded in the in-depth, experiential, and interpersonal nature of qualitative inquiry; critical self-exploration of one’s interpretations (Patton, 2015).

*Students from Diverse Backgrounds/Populations:* “students within the United States whose ethnicity is African-American, Asian-American, Hispanic-American, or Native American; who come from poor and working-class families; and/or who speak a primary language other than standard American English” (Au, 1995, p. 85).

*Transformational Learning.* Mezirow (1991) explained that, “perspective transformation involves (a) an empowered sense of self, (b) more crucial understanding of how one’s social relationships and culture have shaped one’s beliefs and feelings, and (c) more functional strategies and resources for taking action” (p. 161).

**Trustworthiness and Credibility**

As a qualitative researcher, I was the instrument of data collection which necessitated trustworthiness. I came to this research with my own biases, including my culture, perceptions, expectations, and position. I was not only a novice researcher at the university, but also an assistant professor who taught in the College of Education. I taught both undergraduate and
graduate level courses, and therefore frequently interacted with faculty, staff, administration and students as well as the tutoring program director. In order to increase the credibility of my research and related data, I employed measures including member checking, triangulation, and researcher reflection and reflexivity.

I recognized credibility margins including participant sampling and time constraints. Because I was studying a case of students who participate in a tutoring program that ran during a typical undergraduate semester, my study was limited to a maximum of 13 weeks. My sample size was also limited to 25 prospective teachers who agreed to participate in the study.

My bias influenced the study because I cared deeply about the development of competent teachers who could meet the needs of diverse learners, and I believed that cross-cultural experiences positively influence cultural competency. I operated under the assumption that cultural competency could be defined and development of it could be measured. I expected my research results to reveal that participation in a cross-cultural tutoring experience with reflective components that occurred prior to enrolling in a teacher preparation program would provide the fortuitous benefit of the participants’ development toward cultural competency. I also expected that responses from PTs in their final semester of the teacher preparation program would reveal themes related to a greater openness toward learning more about culturally responsive teaching during their program coursework.

**Organization of the Remaining Chapters**

In the following chapters, information is provided offering additional insight into this study. Chapter Two includes a review of current literature on situated learning and socio-cultural theory, reflection, early community-based field experiences, conceptual change and cultural competency. Chapter Three includes a detailed description and explanation of the methods used in this study. Chapter Four presents descriptions and analysis of data and themes.
Finally, Chapter 5 includes a discussion of discoveries and future implications of this study related to the field of teacher education.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Newly licensed teacher candidates are lacking needed competencies to teach students from diverse populations. The evidence of increased diversity and cultural segregation in many of America’s public schools presents a critical need to prepare culturally competent teachers. However, “one of the major challenges in preparing pre-service teachers for the 21st-century classroom, as well as for an increasingly competitive job-market, is providing the necessary skills and background to effectively educate diverse populations of students (Sleeter, 2001)” (Miller & Mikulec, 2014, p. 18). Many teacher education programs have included coursework related to diversity, multiculturalism or culturally responsive pedagogy in response to the need to prepare teachers for increasingly diverse K-12 classrooms (Keengwe, 2010). However, Brown (2005) explained, many prospective teachers do not make progress in stand-alone courses that focus on diversity because of their “resentment and/or resistance to multicultural doctrine, instruction, application, and interaction” (pp. 325-326). Instead, a stand-alone course can actually perpetuate a cultural deficit view of students from diverse student populations:

These pre-service teachers rely on stereotypes that they have learned from the media or their parents, for instance. Thus, the examples a teacher employs in a lesson, the nature of questions posed, how students are allowed to express themselves, and whose knowledge is validated (or not) in the classroom (Apple & King, 1990) point to mismatches that must be understood and overcome through cultural and racial interactions. (Brown, 2005, p. 353)

Brown’s conclusions, suggested that cultural and racial interactions are a vital component of preparing prospective teachers who will be responsive to the diverse needs of students in today’s classrooms rather than resistant to the concepts of multiculturalism presented in teacher preparation coursework. I gleaned from such literature that the power of personal connections
and relationships develop through cross-cultural interactions may have a significant impact on
the motivation of prospective teachers to cultivate cultural competency. Additionally, Hollins
(2015) identified other fields such as medicine, law, and social work that have long recognized
the importance of personal and professional growth in relationship to interactions with clients.
Daley (as cited in Hollins, 2015), who studied continued professional education in these fields
found that “relevant practice was critical to making education meaningful, particularly with
regard to interactions with clients” (Hollins, 2015, p. 49). According to Daley (2001), “often, it
was an emotional encounter with a client that changed a professional’s practice, particularly if
confronted with client situations that challenged their knowledge, beliefs, and assumptions”
(p.49). Therefore, if prospective teachers are resistant to a shift in their worldview or
understandings of those who are different from themselves, I concluded from this research that
perhaps meaningful encounters or connections made during interactions with students and
families would have an impact on their views regarding students from diverse backgrounds.

Because the normative approaches to preparing culturally competent teachers through
coursework had not proven effective, I wanted to explore alternative approaches. I wondered if
first-year college students who planned to apply to the college of education would experience
conceptual change and develop toward cultural competency through an alternative approach
including situated learning, intercultural interaction and reflection. The following review of
related literature explored this alternative approach to preparing culturally competent teachers,
including situated learning and reflection, and related details that could lead to changing the
mindset of resistance. Additionally, this review examined the potential sustainability of the
approach.
Situated Learning Theory & Intercultural Interactions

A plethora of research studies have posited that prospective teachers enter preparation programs with their own experiences of education, and it is through this lens they process new information. Consequently, appealing only to cognition through avenues such as lecture, discussion or observation risks perpetuation of previously held views (Bennett, 2013; Brown, 2005; Larkin, 2012; Lenski, Crumpler, Stallworth & Crawford, 2005; Lockhart, 2009; Sleeter, 2001; Taylor, 2010; Zeichner, Grant, Gay, Gillette, Valli & Villegas, 1998). Traditional coursework related to cultural competency focused candidates’ initial learning through an individualized cognitive process, where representation of conceptual and procedural knowledge builds up prior experiences and perceptions primarily in recognition and memory (Billet, 1996). However, studies have revealed that rather than approaching initial learning related to cultural competency through processes that appeal to cognition, prospective teachers may develop toward cultural competency more from experience, or situated learning (Bennett, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Putnam & Borko, 2000; Stairs, 2006). Darling-Hammond (2006) pointed out,

It is impossible to teach people how to teach powerfully by asking them to imagine what they have never seen or to suggest they “do the opposite” of what they have observed in the classroom. No amount of coursework can, by itself, counteract the powerful experiential lessons that shape what teachers actually do. (p. 308)

Rather than appealing solely to cognition, situated learning and sociocultural theorists suggested that people develop understanding and knowledge through social situations and interactions (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Greeno, Collins, & Resnick, (1996) characterized the situative perspective in this way:

Success in cognitive functions such as reasoning, remembering, and perceiving is understood as an achievement of a system, with contributions of the individuals who
participate, along with tools and artifacts. This means that thinking is situated in a particular context of intentions, social partners, and tools. (p. 20)

This idea regarding contextualizing learning was also reflected in Putnam & Borko's (2000) three conceptual sociocultural themes fundamental to the situative perspective: cognition is situated in context, social in nature, and distributed across the individual, other persons, and tools. These sociocultural themes had “important implications for research on the learning of pre-service and inservice teachers” (p. 5). For example, when cognition was understood as situated, pairing university-based and field-based experiences promoted growth of pre-service teachers that was “difficult to accomplish in either setting alone” (p. 7). Furthermore, Putnam & Borko (2000) stated that situated learning experiences were preferable to stand-alone courses, particularly when examining culture and diversity. These researchers indicated, cognitive functions were dependent on a context, meaning that situations provided meaning to ground, or challenge, understandings. Situated learning, grounded in sociocultural perspective, was summarized by Hollins (2015) as:

Learning and cognition are culturally mediated and supported through purposeful activity; learning and the social context in which it occurs transform the person, resulting in a new identity; learning is dependent on the productive use of cultural tools, artifacts, prior knowledge and experiences that are familiar to the learners and that form the basis for constructing new knowledge and understanding; understanding and expertise are developed through extended situated experience that is influenced by affordances, constraints, focus and guidance in a social context with others. (p. 94)

Stairs (2006) researched an integrated course and field experience in an urban school-university partnership and found that through situated learning “pre-service teachers developed
cultural competence… and understood the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy” (p. 159). In a study of eight pre-service teachers who participated in a field based writing tutoring program, Bennett (2013) reported:

Even though the pre-service teachers did not think [the course professor] influenced their understandings about culturally responsive teaching, they noticed the field experience of tutoring at the community center as an impact on their understandings. One pre-service teacher thought, “just working with a very diverse group of kids and their personalities, and their cultural background and their home life,” increased her understandings. (p. 404).

For these prospective teachers in Bennett’s study, a situated learning experience proved to support their development of intercultural understandings.

Non-Classroom based field experiences. Also worth highlighting, was that the experiential learning in Bennett’s (2013) study took place in a community setting. Conversely, many university teacher-preparation programs have required field experiences and student teaching experiences in the K-12 classroom. According to Putnam and Borko, “A concern, however, is that K-12 classrooms embodying the kind of [cultural competency] advocated by university teacher education programs may not be available” (p. 7). Sykes & Bird (as cited in Putnam and Borko, 2000) explained that situated learning can be problematic when existing professional communities do not represent the kinds of reformed teaching advocated by university teacher education programs or, as McLaughlin & Talbert (as cited in Putnam and Borko, 2000) added, when they embody norms and expectations that do not support the experimentation, risk taking, and reflection required to transform practice. Research from Taylor (2010) revealed,
When pre-service and novice teachers, who are mostly from White middle-class backgrounds, work in urban schools where the racial makeup is mostly comprised of poor students from diverse backgrounds, the result is an exacerbation of the problem as the experience serves to confirm their erroneous preconceived notions and beliefs about these students. (p. 25)

An important question faced by researchers and teacher educators is whether experiences can be designed that maintain the situatedness of practica and student teaching while avoiding the "pull" of the traditional school culture (Putnam & Borko, 2000). A non-traditional field experience could be the answer. Kitchen and Hodson (2013) found that a community based program through a university-community partnership provided benefits to prospective teachers. Literature has implied that this may be particularly advantageous for the first-year candidates, who could begin to develop cultural competency prior to entering urban classrooms (Garrison, n.d.; French, 2005; Perry, 1968; Phinney, 1989).

Although a cultural divide and perpetuated stereotypes have been found to emerge with classroom based field experiences, community based field work has been shown to move prospective teachers beyond stereotypical thinking (French, 2005). Zeichner (1996) confirmed that classroom field experiences vary in the quality and clarity in which they exemplified culturally competent practices. They also only provided a singular view of both the teacher and the students. Furthermore, Zeichner explained that many early field experiences are primarily observational, rather than interactive or responsive; thus limiting a perspective teacher from intercultural exchanges. However, an experience is situated within a diverse community, provided greater opportunity for prospective teachers to engage with a variety of students and their families (Gallego, 2001; Zeichner, 1992).
Though teacher education students may be placed in schools with large, culturally diverse student populations, many of these schools are isolated from and not responsive to their local communities and therefore do not provide the kind of contact with communities needed to overcome negative attitudes toward culturally different students and their families and communities (Zeichner, 1992).” (Gallego, 2001, p. 314).

Surprisingly, French (2005) and Hollins (2015) both explained that research examining the impact of school-community fieldwork on pre-service teachers’ cultural competency is lacking. However, Hollins (2015) recent book, *Rethinking Field Experiences in Preservice Teacher Preparation*, defined community-based field experiences and provided an explanation of variations and recent studies. Hollins (2015) defined community-based field experiences as:

Field experiences in teacher education that take place in non-school venues… and have the goal of prompting teacher candidates to explore how school and community histories shape instructional practices and curricular goals and how families and schools interact within these contexts. (p. 115)

Hollins also stated how effective early community-based field experiences can be on preparing successful teachers, “Early and diverse field experiences have been touted as one of the keys to successful teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1987; Sleeter, 2008; Zeichner, 2010)” (p. 100). In addition, Hollins provided insights from Coffey (2010) who suggested that community-based field experiences “have the power to transform the ways that beginning teachers think about the effects of schooling in their students’ lives and the extent to which social factors influence students’ success in school” (p. 100). Finally, Hollins posited that these field experiences, which happen outside of the classroom, help prospective teachers “re-envision who they might become as a professional *self*… [as] teachers
mediate their stories of self with the cultural and institutional expectations of what it means to be a teacher” (p. 101).

An intriguing study by Gallego (2001) analyzed how a community-based field experience enriched teacher candidate learning alongside a classroom field experience. Gallego found that prospective teachers engaging in literacy activities with diverse students and families in an after-school session at a community center granted prospective teachers purposeful cross-cultural interaction. “In addition to interacting with children from backgrounds different from their own, teacher education students’ participation… prompted them to understand the concept of culture as it relates to the values, beliefs, and interactions held by community members” (Gallego, 2001, p. 323).

Miller & Mikulec's (2014) study, grounded in phenomenology, explored the lived experiences of their participants during, what they termed, a radical field-experience. Their goal was to understand the extent to which a field experience in an “atypical clinical site [challenged] the pre-service teacher’s understanding of and commitment to being a culturally responsive teacher” (p. 20). They noted the importance of demystifying diversity, or providing an experience with diversity, rather than relying on a conceptual presentation of diversity in coursework which is “often viewed by pre-service teachers as an intangible concept” (p. 22). The researchers found that

the pre-service teacher participants were initially hesitant and lacked confidence in their ability as future teachers to interact with and relate to students in an urban setting. In demystifying diversity, this clinical experience provided pre-service teachers with a demonstration of diversity in practice, which led to the understanding that “diverse” students have more in common with their peers than meets the eye. (p. 23)
Miller and Mikulec’s work on demystifying diversity provided an example of how a cross-cultural experience can dismantle deficit stereotypes and increase understanding.

**The Value of Prior Cross-Cultural Experiences & Interactions**

In addition to consideration of where a field-experience is situated, the timing of a cross-cultural experience also proved important. Research by Keengwe (2010), Larkin (2012) and Whipp (2013) implied that providing prospective teachers with cross-cultural experiences before they officially enter the college of education gives them an opportunity to get to know children and families from diverse backgrounds and communities that are unfamiliar and an opportunity for a new or modified conceptual understanding, particularly if it is the first time undergraduate prospective teachers engage significantly with students and families who are different from themselves. “There is a pressing need for students to develop, from an early age, the ability to communicate with and relate to others from various racial, cultural, linguistic or national backgrounds” (Keengwe, 2010, p. 197). Hofstede’s (1986) early work on teacher/student interaction highlighted perplexities that arise when teachers and students come from different cultures largely related to social positions, relevance of curriculum, and expectations. According to Hofstede, the responsibility of adaptation in cross-cultural situations is primarily on the teacher and can fall into four main dimensions of cultural differences including: Individualism versus Collectivism, large versus small Power Distance, strong versus weak Uncertainty Avoidance, and Masculinity versus Femininity (Hofstede, 1986).

Garmon (2004) defined cross-cultural experiences as those “in which there [is] opportunity for direct interaction with one or more individuals from a cultural group different than one’s own” (p. 207). Within this definition, Whipp's (2013) research revealed several studies that indicated prospective teachers’ “cross-cultural experiences before entering and adjacent to their teacher preparation programs have been linked to greater openness to diversity.
(Adams, Bondy, & Kuhel, 2005; Garmon 2004) and commitment to teaching in urban and/or high needs schools (Taylor & Frankenberg, 2009)” (Whipp, 2013, p. 455). Taylor & Frankenberg (as cited in Whipp, 2013) found that prospective teachers “without prior urban experiences became less committed to urban teaching over the course of their yearlong urban teacher preparation program than candidates with some prior urban experience” (p. 455). More specifically in relationship to teaching reading, through five case studies, Mercado (2007) strengthened research findings that previous attitudes and beliefs, educational experiences, and intercultural experiences (or the lack there of) do influence the development of visions about teaching reading to students from diverse populations.

A study by Adams, Bondy, & Kuhel (2005) examined pre-service teachers’ “responses to an early community-based field experience in an unfamiliar community and the factors that influenced their responses” (p. 44). They found that “prior knowledge and experiences with diverse populations, community volunteers, and/or activism” (p. 54) affected students’ responses to working with children from cultural backgrounds that were different from their own. Adams et al. (2005) research included interviews of three groups of pre-service teachers participating in the community-based field experience, and who were at different points in the education program at a large university. As data were collected and coded, a variety of levels of student responses relating to cultural competency were identified from Resistance to Passion and Commitment. Rather than being related to the particular group’s time in the program as researcher expected, one of their findings was that the level of competency was greater, in general, for candidates who already had experience with people different from themselves than those for whom it was a novel experience. Thus, “helping pre-service teachers gain insight into lives that are different from their own can enable them to learn the multicultural lessons”
(Adams, et al., 2005, p. 58) that will be a part of the coursework and future classroom-based field experiences in their teacher preparation program when they are accepted into the college of education.

Recognizing the need to provide diversity experiences to pre-service teachers, Keengwe (2010) studied the impact of cross cultural partnerships between pre-service teachers and English Language Learners (ELL) on prospective teachers’ development of “cultural skills, cultural knowledge, and understanding of similarities and differences between/among cultures” (p. 197) through a Cross Cultural Conversation Project. Primarily white, female prospective teachers met with ELL students ten times for an hour each to “converse, play games, and engage in other appropriate social and academic activities” (p. 200). Keengwe explained that prospective teachers were not provided with any prior training on cross-cultural interactions. Therefore, the project “provided pre-service teachers with cross cultural experiences in less threatening social and academic environments since they were all young college students” (p. 200). Keengwe collected project data through the use of journaling and reflection papers which revealed “preservice teachers’ limited knowledge and understanding of other cultures… but also that the project provided them with an understanding of basic cross cultural facts… and [the realization] that they held some stereotypes and bias against other cultures” (p. 200). In addition, all participants “admitted that the ELL project helped them to accept and respect other cultures and people” (p. 202). Based on these results, Keengwe emphasized the importance of providing opportunities to prospective teachers early on in their teacher training to help prepare them to teach in diverse settings.

In addition, Castro (2010) reviewed of themes in research on prospective teachers’ views of cultural diversity and stated that prospective teachers who have had cross-cultural interactions,
or greater exposure to cultural diversity are more open to multicultural ideas. Smith, et al. (as cited in Castro, 2010) proposed that “those who resist multiculturalism may simply lack cross-cultural experiences” (p. 203). Furthermore, Castro reported that research suggested prospective teachers who did not engage in cross-cultural experiences maintained cultural deficit views, and “failed to recognize institutional inequity and did not see how their own biases and stereotypes as future teachers perpetuated these inequities” (p. 203). Castro concluded his analysis of the research by first suggesting that future studies ought to “explore the influence of prior experiences and social interactions with culturally diverse others on pre-service teacher’s openness to diversity… [beginning] with the beliefs, attitudes, and prior experiences that pre-service teachers already possess” (p. 207).

Anderson and Stillman's (2013) meta-analysis of research related to how clinical experiences contributed to preservice teachers’ development as future teachers of students in urban and/or high-needs schools concluded that for prospective teachers, “facilitating learning depends upon deep understanding of learners, as well as deep understanding of the contexts and cultures within which learners learn” (p. 5). Clearly, the chance to engage with diverse populations before participating in teacher preparation coursework contributed to prospective teachers’ cultural competency and readiness to engage with individuals from diverse populations. These findings and Dewey’s (1963) theory of experiential learning, which focused on how individuals make sense of particular interactions in light of their prior interactions, justified the provision of cross-cultural experiences early in a teacher education program.

A dissertation study by Lockhart (2009) was based on “the theory that in situations, people rely upon the habits of thought, feeling, attitude, and action they’ve developed through interaction with others, and that people experience a strong continuity in the use of those habits
during life” (p. iii). Lockhart’s research involved case studies of three white, female pre-service teachers and their attitudes related to students from diverse populations. The study revealed resistance to culturally responsive practices largely related to the teacher candidate’s own successes as students, habits, and attitudes about school and a lack of understanding, or deficit viewpoints, of the students they worked with in the classroom settings. A unique aspect of the study was Lockhart’s argument “for a reconceptualization of resistance that recognizes it as an expected reaction when a piece of an intern's valued identity is under assault by experiences for which habits are largely unequipped to deal” (p. iii). Lockhart used the term *intern*, meaning prospective teacher. His study acknowledged typical resistance, but delved deeper to understand the complex nature of teaching in diverse settings and even more intriguing, the complexity of an intern’s process through conceptualizing what it means to teach children from cultures different from their own who may not have the same positive feelings about school.

**Fortuitous learning through interaction.** Lockhart’s findings about an intern feeling like her identity was under assault, substantiated the question about the possible impact of an experience that may cultivate cross-cultural understandings fortuitously rather than directly addressing cultural competency with prospective teachers. Related research on incidental learning by Marsick & Watkins (2001), suggested enhancing incidental learning because of significant implications for “adult education because of its learner-centered focus and the lessons that can be learned from life experience” (p. 25). They argued that “informal and incidental learning take place wherever people have the need, motivation, and opportunity for learning” (p. 28). The origins of the theory of incidental learning, have been reviewed by us (Marsick and Watkins, 1990) and by Garrick (1998). In these reviews, informal and incidental learning have been linked to related concepts, such as

Researchers have concluded that incidental learning that takes place without a specific motive or a specified formal instruction (McGeoch, 1942; Watkins and Marsick, 1992). Research on incidental learning stemmed primarily from studies related to the workplace, and has been commonly understood as learning which occurs as a by-product of something else (Bova & Kross, 2001). According to Garrick (as cited in Bova & Kroth, 2001) it has been thought of as an invisible or intangible form of learning that rises spontaneously.

According to Bova and Kroth (2001), “Incidental learning is unintentional and unexamined. It is not based on reflection; thus the learning is embedded in the learner's actions” (pp. 3-4). Because incidental learning was not based on reflection, the term fortuitous learning was used in this study instead to combine the concepts of incidental learning, situated learning and reflection.

Although, the relationship between incidental or fortuitous learning and the development toward cultural competency had not been examined in previous research studies, Mealman
(1993) examined incidental learning through a case study on adults in a non-traditional degree program and claimed several outcomes a learner might anticipate through incidental learning including increased competence and increased self-knowledge.

Marsick & Watkins also pointed out that fortuitous learning “generally takes place without much external facilitation or structure” (p. 30). Considering the typical resistance found in prospective teachers to the development of cultural competency when it is explicitly taught in their teacher preparation coursework (Brown, 2005; Larkin, 2012; Lenski, Crumpler, Stallworth & Crawford, 2005; Lockhart, 2009; Sleeter, 2001; Taylor, 2010; Xu, 2001; Zeichner, Grant, Gay, Gillette, Valli & Villegas, 1998) exploration of the development of cultural competency in prospective teachers in a fortuitous manner seemed vital in an effort to discover how a cross-cultural tutoring experience contributed to a reduced level of resentment and resistance, and instead learning that occurred fortuitously though social interactions, cross-cultural experiences and reflection.

**Relationships.** Furthermore, the additional benefit of interaction is motivation to develop cultural competency through established relationships with students. Working one-on-one with a student and his or her parents during tutoring sessions, afforded the opportunity to cultivate a strong personal relationship in a way that isn’t always possible in the classroom setting. Hollins (2015) reported that when twenty students engaged in a field experience where they led digital book clubs with diverse students, ‘the beginning teachers stressed that the relationships they were building with youth during the book club meetings were important for their learning” (p. 105). This research indicated that development of relationships and a deeper understanding of a child’s attitudes and experiences regarding school cultivates a desire for
prospective teachers to learn teaching practices that will make a difference for these students, rather than falling into the typical pattern of resistance and previous habits.

**Conceptual Change**

A risk of integrating a situated learning experience as a pre-requisite to the teacher-preparation program was that the experience would not have a positive impact on a candidate’s cross-cultural understandings, but instead perpetuate pre-conceptions and stereotypes in accordance with Cultural Deficit Theory (Engelmann and Bereiter, 1966; Hess & Shipman, 1965; Keengwe, 2010). As Sleeter (2008) discussed, prospective teachers often enter preparation programs with naïve and stereotypical views, typically of children of color in urban school settings. Surprisingly, French’s (2005) case study results that suggested “fieldwork components had minimal effect on participants’ [cultural competency] development” (p. 2). French’s results indicate that “fieldwork program components reinforced the nonsignificant culturally responsive teaching growth trends” (French, 2005, p. 2). This could be because of a lack of reflective components, as French explained how the participants were not challenged to question their views.

The idea that an individual could change their views through engagement in, and reflection upon, an experience was developed in Larkin’s (2012) Conceptual Change Theory. Conceptual Change Theory originated in Science education as a framework for how students developed scientific concepts:

Within science education, there is a strong tradition of viewing learning as a process of conceptual change (Anderson, 2007), with roots in an influential model of conceptual change learning (Posner et al., 1982) that draws on Piagetian developmental psychology and the history and philosophy of science. Within this tradition, attention is paid
primarily to the conceptions themselves, as well as the justifications that learners offer for holding on to them. (p. 7)

While rooted in science education, Larkin (2012) argued, very convincingly, its application to understanding how prospective teachers change their ideas about working with diverse student populations (Paine, 1990; Larkin, 2012). Larkin described conceptual change as the transformation of one’s personal view and how this transformation begins with an experience that disrupts a particular viewpoint, such as a cultural deficit view, then if an alternate conception is intelligible, plausible, and/or fruitful an individual will modify his or her conception. Similarly, Lee, Eckrich, Lackey, & Showalter (2010) described an individual’s cultural map, or schema, as shaped through experience:

one relates all new experiences to the previously learned map, thereby interpreting the new in terms of the old and possibly also changing the map. It is through this map that perceivers—including teachers and students—identify cultural behaviors in others that are relevant to their own respective culture. (p. 102)

Lee, et al. used the term *map*, or schema, comparable to Larkin’s use of the term *conceptual understanding*. These researchers examine how new experiences or interactions can lead to changes in perceptions and viewpoints. However, Larkin (2012) explained that change also depends on how strongly prospective teachers hold on to original conceptions. He referred to this as *status* or “how strongly a person knows an idea and accepts it to be true” (p. 9). Larkin explained that conceptual change happens when the status of a concept or idea changes. For example, if new evidence prompts questioning of a current idea, one may lower the concept’s status. According to Larkin, “if the prior conceptions that prospective teachers hold about students, schools, learning, society, and, perhaps most important, themselves continue to enjoy
high status within their conceptual ecologies, it seems likely that these concepts will be quite resistant to change” (Larkin, 2012, p. 26). Through interactions with diverse students and families, pre-service teachers were exposed to a variety of perspectives, viewpoints and values that not only differed from their own, but for some, differed from their previous understandings about people from diverse cultures (Bennett, 2013; Brown, 2005; Mercado, 2007). A cross-cultural experience could cause an alternate conception that would be fruitful to their success as educators, particularly in today’s diverse classrooms.

**Transformational learning.** Mezirow’s (1991) theory of transformational learning was also important to explore in relationship to experiences and conceptual change. Mezirow (1991) wrote that perceptions change through transformed meaning schemes as a result of “several disorienting dilemmas” (p. 159). Reflecting a similar pattern to Larkin’s theory, Mezirow (1991) explained that, “perspective transformation involves (a) an empowered sense of self, (b) more crucial understanding of how one’s social relationships and culture have shaped one’s beliefs and feelings, and (c) more functional strategies and resources for taking action” (p. 161). Mezirow defined transformative learning as, “reflective assessment of premises, a process predicated upon still another logic, one of movement through cognitive structures by identifying and judging presuppositions” (p. 5). Furthermore, Mezirow claimed that, “…it becomes crucial that the individual learn to negotiate meanings, purposes, and values critically, reflectively, and rationally instead of passively accepting the social realities defined by others” (p. 3). According to Mezirow (1997), “We learn together by analyzing the related experiences of others to arrive at a common understanding that holds until new evidence or arguments present themselves” (p. 7).

Mezirow (1991) theorized that there are two forms of learning including instrumental learning and communicative learning. A cross-cultural experience could contribute to
communicative learning, as “communicative learning involves understanding purposes, values, beliefs, and feelings” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 6). Mezirow further explained that problem solving in communicative learning occurred when, “the learner actively and purposefully negotiates his or her way through a series of specific encounters by using language and gesture and by anticipating the actions of others” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 79). Prospective teachers in my study had the opportunity to practice problem solving as they used various sources of information including what they gleaned from communicative learning to develop individualized lesson plans each week. The process of considering the experiences and perspectives of others, and engaging in critical reflection lead to conceptual change.

**Reflection.** Additionally, Mezirow (1991) stated that, “Reflection is the process of critically assessing the content, process, or premise(s) of our efforts to interpret and give meaning to an experience” (p. 104). Mezirow’s theory confirmed that, “transformative learning cannot happen unless critical reflection is involved at every stage” (p. 125). Lichau and Sanchez (2012) concluded that transformative education requires prospective teachers to examine basic foundations, systems, and contingencies that unconsciously drive their attitudes, perceptions and ultimate decisions and consider the impact of their perspectives, or worldview, on learners.

Almost a century ago, John Dewey explained reflection in his book *How We Think* (1933). Rodgers (2002) summarized Dewey’s explanation of reflection into four main criteria:

“(1) Reflection is a meaning-making process that moves a learner from one experience into the next with deeper understanding of it relationships with and connections to other experiences and ideas. (2) Reflection is a systematic, rigorous, disciplined way of thinking, with its roots in scientific inquiry. (3) Reflection needs to happen in a
community, in interaction with others. (4) Reflection requires attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and of others.” (Rodgers, 2002, p. 845)

This definition of systematic reflection was important to consider in the exploration of development toward cultural competence, particularly in light of Gallego’s (2001) distinction of an *educative* experience. Upon review of Gallego (2001), the distinction between an experience and an *educative* experience supported the need to combine reflection with situated learning in order for conceptual changes to occur. According to Gallego, “Educative experiences are not simply the assembly of one’s life encounters but are deemed by what persons come to know—about themselves, the context, and their profession—that informs the current situation as well as assists in future development” (Gallego, 2001, p. 313). Gallego explained that when prospective teachers rely primarily on their experiences as guides, they “may ignore prejudices that reside in the habitual use of practices that are based on unexamined attitudes” (Gallego, 2001, p. 313). Reflection is the vehicle for examining one’s attitude. French (2005) explained, “In order for pre-service teachers to change their perceptions they must first be exposed to a direct experience, and then be encouraged to reevaluate their values and perceptions of the world around them through a supportive format” (French, 2005, p. 44). This would be an *educative* experience as well as a *meaning-making process* used to form personal and intellectual growth. Richards & Brumfield’s (2003) research of prospective teachers in field based reading courses at the University of Southern Mississippi incorporated a reflective component, and their results “suggested that pre-service teachers hold remarkable abilities to learn from their own teaching experiences” (p. 63). Sutherland, Howard and Markauskaite’s (2010) research found that one outcome of prospective teachers’ reflection is “the development of their own self-image as a teacher” (p. 455). Wade’s (2000) conclusion to his review of literature on service learning and
its impact on cultural competency further validated the need for reflection. Wade explained that service learning experience coupled with reflection can “lead pre-service teachers to increase their awareness of diversity, to learn to accept or affirm children and families of color, and to begin to question their preexisting attitudes and beliefs” (p. 26).

Taylor (2010) who wrote in his article about creating culturally competent teachers: “Many times teachers are resistant to admitting that they possess prejudices toward certain groups. However, through self-reflection, they can begin to rid themselves of those biases, thereby beginning to build trusting relationships with their students. Those trusting relationships will yield greater opportunities for student success.” (p. 26). Gallego’s study confirmed such findings that pre-service teachers’ consistent opportunities to reflect on their experiences were fundamental to their growth during a field experience. He explained that “without examining current beliefs and assumptions, prospective teachers are likely to incorporate new information into old frameworks and maintain conventional beliefs and practices (Anders & Richardson, 1991; Feiman-Nemser & Buchmann, 1985)” (Gallego, 2001, p. 323). Both Gallego (2001) and Hollingsworth (1989) explained, when pre-service teachers engage in experiences that cause them to realize a discrepancy in their beliefs, reflecting on its incongruity may lead to a change in their worldview. Furthermore, two implications from a study by Hernandez, Morales, & Shroyer (2013) on a model for developing cultural competency in pre-service teachers included that a barrier for candidates was their lack of experience and that debriefing the field experience was a significant factor for growth.

In addition, Hernandez and his colleagues’ conclusions confirmed that providing prospective teachers an opportunity to experience interactions with students from another culture combined with reflection in a community setting fostered growth toward cultural competency.
Whereas reflection was more difficult to attain in a school based field experience because the typically fragmented school schedule and physically separated classrooms could be barriers to collaborative reflection and discussion (Gallego, 2001). Reflection and discussion lead to one’s ability to think critically about his or her beliefs which is a necessity for greater cultural competency (Nussbaum, 1997).

**Moving Toward Development of Culturally Competent Teachers**

Culture itself is essentially what people “think, see, and do”; it is a “socially transmitted set of beliefs” that varies between groups of people from different backgrounds and lifestyles around the world (Frank, 2013, p. 3). Hollins (2011) explained “[Culture] is the lens through which groups and individuals interpret, understand, and respond to the social, physical, and spiritual worlds.” This lens becomes more clear with awareness of the existence of other people’s lenses and the idea that “it is within the context of culture … [that] identity is formed, and values, perceptions, habits of mind, and propensities for learning develop” (Hollins, 2011, p. 106). According to Bennett (2013), “essential to becoming a culturally responsive teacher is awareness of differentness of self and others and relatedness to other people and cultures (Howard, 2006)” (p. 34). Therefore, before prospective teachers could begin understanding their perceptions, attitudes and reactions to unfamiliar people and cultures, they first must gain insight into their own cultural identities.

Furthermore, as Nieto (2004) claimed, developing into a culturally competent teacher requires personal transformation. Providing an intercultural experience such as cross-cultural tutoring during these pivotal college years, Perry (1968) described as Relativism and Phinney (1989) described as transition, could contribute to a transformed sense of cultural self-awareness because of the consistent time spent with students and families who share perceptions, outlooks, and cultures different from their own. William Perry’s work, *Forms of Intellectual and Ethical*
Development in the College Years: A Scheme (1968) reveals developmental patterns of transformation of individuals during the college years. Perry studied the cognitive, intellectual, and moral development of collegiate students and concluded that college students’ progress through three major stages: Dualism, Relativism, and Commitment (Garrison, n.d.). As college students progressed through these stages, they “accept other outlooks on life [culture of others], differing from his own [culture of self], as being valid and valuable, potentially ones he could possess” (Garrison, n.d., p. 90).

Narrowing this focus of transformation during college years to teacher development toward cultural competency during this time, worth noting is Phinney’s (1989) Ethnic Identity Model. In a dissertation on culturally responsive prospective teacher development, French (2005) referred to “Phinney’s (1989) Ethnic Identity Model, paralleling Erickson’s (1968) Social Identity Model [which] consisted of three stages [of transformation].” Stage one is diffusion/foreclosure where a person is not yet self-aware of their cultural identity. During the next stage, which usually occurs during adolescence, “the individual is in a state of self-reflection, exploration or crisis examining their ethnic identity” (French, 2005, p. 37). Finally, the third stage provides resolution where the individual has securely accepted his or her identity. Considering that many first-year college students are rounding out their adolescent years, according to the Ethnic Identity Model, this is a time of transition from exploration to securing a cultural identity. “Typically, [teacher] candidates have not had the opportunity to consider themselves as cultured (Gay, 2000; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) or to develop “an awareness of the ways their culture shapes their views” (Banks et al., 2005, p. 253)” (Bercaw, Schussler, & Stooksberry, 2010, p. 360).
Research by Sassi, Lajimodiere, Bertolini, & Ketterling (2012) related reflection and field experience to multicultural awareness and sensitivity and using Helm’s (1995) model or Racial Identity Ego Statuses and Information Processing Strategies concluded that cultural self-awareness facilitated prospective teachers in working effectively with diverse students. Hollin’s (2008) work on preparing culturally competent teachers supported Sassi et al’s conclusions: “The process of examining racial identity is valuable to the extent that it encourages self-awareness—by increasing the capacity for introspection and reflection; by increasing awareness of the experiences of others; and by increasing awareness of one’s role as an institutional agent maintaining a particular ideology and social structure” (Hollins, 2008, p. 43). Being aware of one’s cultural identity and having a sense of self as a cultural being and the privileges or limitations afforded based on that identity was a precursor to understanding and accepting other, different cultural identities.

Addleman, Nava, Cevallos, Brazo, & Dixon (2014) concluded that there isn’t an agreed upon definition of cultural competency in literature related to culturally responsive teaching despite Cushner’s (2011) statement that it is “the ultimate goal for educators at all levels” (p. 606). According to Addleman et al. (2014), “many educational institutions include common characteristics in their definitions of intercultural competence, such as “awareness, valuing, and understanding of cultural differences; experiencing other cultures; and self-awareness of one’s own culture (Deardorff, 2006, p. 247)” (p. 191). Not only is intercultural competency a component of Culturally Responsive Teaching, according to Banks (1994) the goal of multicultural education is helping students “develop cross-cultural competency within the American national culture, with their own subculture and within and across different subsocieties.
and cultures” (Banks, 1994, p. 9). Jenks, Lee, & Kanpol's (2001) communicated the need for further exploration of how to cultivate Bank’s goal before prospective teachers enter schools:

Because schools are ill prepared to support Banks’s goal of multicultural education and often lack the interest and commitment to change, the importance of teacher education at the pre-service level becomes paramount. Teacher education programs in colleges and universities must make the commitment to encouraging the kind of transformative learning in pre-service educators that eventually will result in powerful multicultural programs for students. Pre-service teachers must learn, for example, how to use culturally sensitive strategies and content; to recognize the cultural underpinnings of their own logic and thought as well as those of others…. Only in this way will they enter the profession able to provide equitable opportunities for academic success, personal development, and individual fulfillment for all students. (p. 89)

A teacher’s cultural competency is key to success for all students (Cross, 1988), and the umbrella for which cultural self-awareness and intercultural understandings fall. Because one cross-cultural, ten-week tutoring experience could not possibly claim development of cultural competency, movement toward cultural self-awareness and understanding and valuing differences in other cultures was explored using Cross’s Cultural Competence Continuum (1988).

Sustainability of growth toward cultural competency. Bennett (2013) found “Pre-service teachers progressively transform from experiences, and their understandings do not occur in one instance or during one semester long course but gradually over time” (p. 381). Additionally, Whipp’s (2013) research revealed cross-cultural experiences before and during teacher preparation as well as program course content and field experiences that challenged
previous thinking were essential to developing culturally responsive prospective teachers. Consideration of the continuum of field experiences brought up the concern regarding transfer across contexts. Without transfer, the value of a situative learning experience would be debatable. Brown, Collins and Dubuid (1989) drew on the work of Whitehead (1929) and illustrated a “distinction between the mere acquisition of inert concepts and the development of useful, robust knowledge” (p. 33) and present the idea that knowledge is a set of tools. Brown et al. (2004) posited, “It is quite possible to acquire a tool but to be unable to use it” (p. 33) and contextualize how a tool is used within a community or culture. They explained,

Unfortunately, students are too often asked to use the tools of a discipline without being able to adopt its culture. To learn to use tools as practitioners use them, a student, like an apprentice, must enter that community and its culture. Thus, in a significant way, learning is, we believe, a process of enculturation. (p. 33)

Brown et al, continued to describe the value of authentic activity in a way that declarative explanations are not, and thus concluded that students need to be exposed to the use of a domain’s conceptual tools. Through tutoring, prospective teachers had the opportunity to practice with the conceptual tools they acquired to teach reading in the course work and expanded their abilities as they continued to work with students in field experiences, student teaching and eventually in the classroom. “Intuitively it would seem that… requiring them to work directly with children or their communities would help them to become better teachers. But does it? We do not really know because pre-service students are not usually followed into teaching” (Sleeter, 2001, p. 100). Surprisingly, there were also few studies that follow the development of prospective teachers’ cultural competency as they progress from initial field experiences and practica into student teaching. In her review of data-based research studies on
preservice teacher preparation for multicultural schools, Sleeter (2001) described only two case studies that found limited results regarding development over time in a teacher preparation program:

Burstein and Cabello (1989) found that although students’ thinking over 2 years shifted away from a deficiency orientation and they gained some strategies for motivating, teaching, and building on children’s first languages, most students still struggled with deep cultural differences and belief systems about schooling. Artiles, Barreto, Peña, & McClafferty (1998) found that two graduates of such a program had actually experienced diverse and disconnected discourses while in the program: their own prior beliefs, conflicting theoretical perspectives with the program (such as critical theory vs. behaviorism), and beliefs of teachers they interacted with in the schools. As a result, they put much of what they had learned in the program aside and learned to teach on the job. (pp. 100-101)

However, Garmon’s (2004) exploratory study of one student’s development of multicultural awareness before, during and at the end of a teacher preparation program attributed growth in relationship to disposition and self-awareness, early intercultural interactions and field experiences, followed by multicultural coursework. Garmon concluded that “multicultural teacher education courses and field experiences are certainly important tools for developing students’ awareness of and sensitivity to diversity” (p. 211). However, he emphasized that experiential factors may be significant to a prospective teacher’s readiness to learn from their coursework.

Summary

A review of research related to situated learning, intercultural interactions, field experiences and reflection yielded valuable insights to the potential impact of cross-cultural
tutoring of children from diverse backgrounds on the prospective teacher’s conceptual change associated with cultural competency. Research supported the idea that an early community-based field experience combined with reflection would fortuitously impact the cultural competency of prospective teachers rather than perpetuate the resistance that typically resulted from higher education coursework on culturally responsive teaching or diversity. Literature also implied engagement with students and families from cultures different from their own, might ignite a conceptual change in some prospective teacher’s views and/or perceptions of students.

The literature clearly suggested further research in the development of culturally competent prospective teachers. This study was built on the premise that such development starts with cultural competency including self-awareness and intercultural understandings. Castro’s (2010) suggestions for further research summed it up well:

First, future studies ought to explore the influence of prior experiences and social interactions with culturally diverse others on pre-service teachers’ openness to diversity. If millennial college students actually do maintain intercultural relationships and have multicultural experiences, how do these pre-service teachers reflect upon and internalize these experiences? Do these experiences create opportunities to challenge stereotypes or only to foster exceptionalism? Future research ought to begin [here]. (p.207)
Chapter 3 Methodology

Today’s prospective and existing teachers face growing student diversity in twenty-first century classrooms and challenges which include a lack of cultural self-awareness, limited understanding of other’s cultures, resistance to multicultural or diversity coursework or professional development, and limited cross-cultural experience (Castro, 2010; Gay, 2002; Villegas, 2008). Assaf, Garza, & Battle (2010) offered one explanation of the challenges as

In contrast to student diversity in the U.S., most of the current teaching force, those coming into teaching, and those who teach prospective teachers are white females who have been raised in middle class homes in rural and suburban communities. (p. 115)

There is a need to increase understanding of prospective teachers on how to effectively work with diverse student populations (Cochran-Smith, Davis & Fries, 2004; Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Larkin, 2012; Villegas & Lucas, 2002b; Zeichner, 1996). Many teacher preparation programs have introduced diversity coursework in response to the growing need, yet (Assaf, Garza & Battle, 2010; Darling-Hammond, Hammerness, Grossman, Rust, & Shulman, 2005) prospective teachers often resist traditional diversity courses which intentionally seek to increase multicultural and intercultural understandings and develop cultural competence.

What if a course in a teacher education program was not a traditional diversity course with diversity course learning outcomes or objectives, yet was situated and required reflections, which could incidentally or fortuitously increase multicultural and intercultural understandings? Could that develop cultural competence in prospective teachers? My study explored the phenomenon in a case study.

In this chapter, I begin with the purpose of my study, followed by my research question, design and instrumentation as well as data collection and analysis. I conclude with how I
planned to establish trustworthiness, credibility, reduced researcher bias and ethical issues, and expected findings.

**Purpose of the Proposed Study**

The purpose of my study was to explore the fortuitous results of participation in a teacher education program’s first-year, ten-week cross-cultural tutoring experience, in an immediate, ongoing setting and in a projected and sustained follow-up. Subsequently, the purpose of the study was twofold. First, I explored fortuitous changes, specifically conceptual changes (change in views on a concept due to exposure to a more appealing concept), toward development of cultural competency, through engagement in, and reflection upon, an experience of first year undergraduate students, who formally indicated an interest in becoming teachers. Second, I examined the sustainability of the changes in final-year pre-service teachers enrolled in the teacher preparation program, and who participated in the ten-week cross-cultural tutoring experience during their first year in college.

**Research Question**

What fortuitous impact does tutoring diverse K-8 students have on prospective teachers’ development toward cultural competency?

**Research Design**

I selected the phenomenological multiple case study based on my desire to investigate the impact of the cross-cultural tutoring experience on the phenomenon of prospective teachers’ fortuitous development toward cultural competency at two different points, in currency and in a sustained piece. The focus of my study was not the case, but the insights that contributed to understanding the development toward cultural competency in prospective teachers. Related research studies primarily used qualitative methodologies including ethnography, phenomenology, or case study research. Lockhart's (2009) ethnographic research examined
patterns of white, female pre-service teachers’ attitudes (mental ideational systems) related to students from diverse populations. I decided against an ethnographic design, because my study did not seek to examine shared patterns of behavior, beliefs and language of an entire culture sharing group (Creswell, 2013), nor did it occur in a natural setting. Griner & Stewart (2013) used a “mixed-method case study design to implement and evaluate [a] culturally responsive teaching tool in the context of a professional development program” (p. 593) to examine the tool’s impact on the beliefs and practice of schools and school staff related to culturally responsive teaching. Miller and Mikulec (2014) used a phenomenological design to investigate pre-service teachers confronting issues of diversity through a radical field experience. Like Griner and Stewart (2013), my study involved particular contextual conditions, as my research was situated in an early community-field experience. I studied the impact of a ten-week lived experience, specifically cross-cultural tutoring in a community setting, on development toward cultural competency.

Also building on Miller and Mikulec’s (2014) study, I investigated the fortuitous impact on prospective teachers of a unique cross-cultural field experience. I wanted to understand how cross-cultural tutoring impacted development toward cultural competency, and I needed to look more at how the phenomenon related to the context. Yin (2014) defined a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (p. 16). Consequently, my study research design was a phenomenological case study.

Furthermore, I employed a multiple case study design (Yin, 2014) looking at how a phenomenon illuminated the pressing issue of developing culturally competent teachers using
units of analysis at more than one level (Yin, 2014). Specifically, I explored the impact of the tutoring experience on two distinct cases: 1) prospective teachers who were currently participating in the tutoring experience, and 2) prospective teachers who were student teaching and participated in the tutoring experience three years prior. Dixon, Singleton and Straights (2016) work on the process of social research supported an approach that explored impact of a social context, or case, on multiple units of analysis particularly for studies related to social and cultural change. They suggested that even after identifying a case to study, a researcher should carefully choose how many units to include. Robinson (2010) used a multiple case research design in a study on cultural awareness. She examined several subpopulations including middle school principals’ self-reported cultural awareness, teachers’ self-reported cultural awareness, and principals’ influence on cultural awareness in a district’s middle schools. Similarly, in my study, a multiple case study design provided snapshots of the cross-cultural tutoring experience’s impact on distinct sub-populations, however the design did not compare the sub-populations, rather examined the impact of the case at two different points.

**Target Population, Sampling Method and Related Procedures**

The primary target population included first year undergraduates participating in the cross-cultural tutoring program during the spring term of the undergraduate program at a private university in the Pacific Northwest. These students participated in the cross-cultural tutoring program as a pre-requisite to entry into the College of Education. I referred to this group of participants as potential pre-service teachers, PPST. There were 26 first year undergraduate students registered for the program who were interested in becoming teachers. Of those 26 PPSTs, 19 of them agreed to participate in my study. By their own accounts provided in an online questionnaire, during class sessions and through individual conversations, many had not had significant experiences with others from cultural backgrounds that differ from their own.
A second target population of participants was comprised of pre-service teachers (PT) in their final year of the teacher preparation program. They participated in the cross-cultural tutoring program three years prior. They were currently engaged in student teaching or teaching in K-12 schools under supervision.

There were 137 undergraduate students enrolled in the College of Education (COE). The demographics of the undergraduate students in the college of education were comparable to national data on teachers in public and private elementary and secondary schools. In the COE, 78% of the students were female and of those who identified an ethnic background, 71% identified themselves as white. These data were relevant to my study because the university PPSTs reflect these demographics and were working with children and families who come from local, urban elementary schools. Children participating in the program were from the surrounding neighborhood and are in grades Kindergarten through 8th grade. Children who participated were from diverse backgrounds. Some children were English language learners whose first language was Spanish. Most children, approximately 66%, were assessed at reading levels below grade level at the onset of the tutoring program.

After obtaining Institutional Review Board approval for conducting my study, I intended to use purposive sampling for my primary sample, however a limited number of PPSTs agreed to participate in my study. Therefore, all PPSTs who volunteered were included in the study. At the onset of the tutoring program, I explained the study to all 26 PPSTs and provided consent forms to the 19 who agreed to participate. After obtaining signatures from the PPSTs on Institutional Review Board approved consent forms, I administered an initial online questionnaire to 19 PPSTs. Of the 19 PPSTs, seven agreed to participate in the focus group sessions and to be observed during tutoring. A university professor prepared the PPSTs for four
weeks in teaching of reading, the cueing systems readers use, how to match readers to appropriate books, and how to coach for success in reading accurately and fluently, with comprehension. All PPSTs completed both district and state background checks to ensure safety in working with children. Following this preparation time, PPSTs engaged once a week for an hour with a Pre-K – Grade 8 struggling reader. During each session, PPSTs taught an individualized reading lesson to a student, or multiple students. Both the site, and individuals were conveniently accessible allowing me to easily collect data (Creswell, 2013). The cross-cultural tutoring program was situated in the university library, which had become a community centered environment due to a partnership with the neighboring public school. There was also a children’s library within this university library that attracted many children and families from the neighborhood. Children and families participated in the ten-week tutoring program voluntarily. However, teachers in the neighboring school often recommended particular children who they thought would benefit from extra reading support. The program had grown over the past several years, mostly through word of mouth.

Although, I interacted with all PPSTs during the program and held informal conversations with them, I focused my observations, field notes of tutoring and debriefing sessions, and interviews on the small groups of PPSTs who volunteered (see Table 1). Focus group interview sessions took place after the fifth tutoring session and finally when all tutoring sessions were completed. Finally, all PPSTs completed a final reflection paper and a questionnaire at the end of the program which I reviewed for further data.

I used convenience sampling for my secondary participants. I sent out an email to all pre-service teachers who were completing their student teaching experiences that explained the study, asked for voluntary participation, and offered an incentive of a $25.00 gift card. In this
email, I specified the method of data collection as a small focus group interview that occurred one time during the final month of the semester. They were informed of confidentiality and anonymity, as well as the risks associated with participation in a focus group interview. Participants completed Institutional Review Board approved consent forms (see Appendix F).

**Data Collection and Measurement Tools**

My study combined aspects of data collection procedures from three recently published research studies, Miller and Mikulec (2014), Bennett (2010), and Hillstrom (2014), as they related to my conceptual framework. Miller and Mikulec and Bennett’s studies examined the development of cultural competence of pre-service teachers based on field experiences that did not take place in a PreK-12 classroom. Miller and Mikulec developed a questionnaire with open-ended self-reflective questions that were administered prior to and upon completion of the experience. Additional data, for the purpose of triangulation, came from field experience reflective journals and reflective papers at the end of the semester, as well as classroom discussions that occurred throughout the semester. (p. 20)

I believed these were useful methods that provided valid and reliable results. However, I wondered if their data would have been enriched by also including interviews with their participants. Bennett used similar data collection methods, but also included interviews. Bennett started with individual interviews of her participants, and then conducted three focus groups. She also collected data through observations, kept field notes using a reflexive journal, and analyzed final reflection papers her participants wrote at the end of the tutoring experience. Hillstrom (2014) employed an online screening questionnaire to his participants, allowing for efficient collection of data that was not influenced by researcher presence. Thus, a combination
of my research question, analysis of related research studies, and components that were already in place in the structure of the tutoring program drove my data collection methods.

Because of difficulty in validating incidental learning as an effective learning strategy due to the fact that the learning is not anticipated, Bova and Kroth (2001) claimed is isn’t easily evaluated. Therefore, I used multiple data collection methods to increase the opportunities to reveal evidence of themes related to fortuitous learning. With the first subpopulation of participants including PPSTs, I employed triangulation of data using five different methods: an initial online interview questionnaire with open-ended questions, focus group interviews, observations, field notes in a reflexive journal, and a review of written reflections. Because my study’s unique niche was in gleaning fortuitous development in cultural competency, I explained the study’s purpose broadly to the participants. I wrote the interview questions using a pattern that wove in the true purpose of the study. If I made the research question and purpose obvious, I would have potentially interfered with my participants’ responses and also jeopardized the trustworthiness of my study by leading participants toward desired outcomes. Participants were told that I hoped to understand the impact of the tutoring experience on their development toward becoming teachers. At the conclusion of the study, I debriefed participants on the general and specific findings of the study. This included both the findings of the general purpose of the study as understood by the participants, and the specific purpose findings. I explained the importance to teacher education programs. I also informed the participants that if they wanted to change their minds about participation, they could withdraw from the study.

**Initial online questionnaire.** Because I had not yet established a report with the PPSTs, I believed a private, online interview would be most conducive to honest answers that were not influenced by my presence, nor the presence of other PPSTs and their potential biases and
stereotypes. I used the tool to collect baseline data from participants. The responses to the interview questions also provided efficient collection of baseline information regarding each potential PPSTs’ levels of cultural competency in accordance with the Cultural Competence Continuum (Cross, 1988) (see Appendix C).

The initial online questionnaire was piloted and reviewed by external parties to assist in approaching validity. After field testing the instrument, I made revisions based on feedback. Next, at the onset of the study and upon receiving informed consent, all 26 PPSTs received an invitation to complete the questionnaire via a secure data collection software that was approved through consultation with IRB, namely “Qualtrics.” The initial questionnaire measured conceptual thinking and attitudes concerning the tutoring experience the PPSTs were about to have. Questions were careful to cover the broad experience and included questions like, “Describe how you are feeling about working with children who are struggling readers” and “What are your goals for the tutoring experience?” (see Appendix A).

Focus group interviews. I conducted two semi-structured focus group interviews of a small group of seven PPSTs during my study (see Appendix B) to “get high quality data in a social context where people could consider their own views in the context of the views of others” (Patton, 2015, p. 475). I believed a focus group interview format would “increase the meaningfulness and validity of findings because perspectives are formed and sustained in social groups” (Patton, 2015, p. 475). Especially because PPSTs were already part of a working group sharing and debriefing the experience, and were used to working and growing together, interviewing them in a group setting provided not only increased meaningfulness and validity, but also a comfort level that promoted a deeper willingness to share. Patton (2015) noted that group interviewing may feel more familiar as most people are “not accustomed to one-on-one
inquiries” (p. 475). Patton also explained that an advantage of interviewing in a group setting is that “our interactions with each other are how we come to more deeply understand our own views, test our knowledge, get in touch with our feelings, and make sense of our behaviors” (p. 475). I valued not only the responses, but also nuances that came from interactions. I also believed that due to the age range of the participants (18-19 years old) and my relationship with them as both a researcher and also a professor in the College of Education, a group interview format was preferable over individual interviews. PPSTs were typically used to interacting in groups to discuss topics related to their education, and could sometimes be intimidated by individual conversations with professors. I understood that there were potential delimitations with group interviewing, particularly if an individual had strong biases or tended to dominate the conversation. In response, I maintained effective *moderation* and debriefed participants on the risks of privacy and confidentiality, informed them that their identities would be protected with pseudonyms, explained the goal of the focus group, and communicated norms such as being open to diverse ideas and self-monitoring share time in comparison to other participants. This created a “permissive, nonthreatening environment that encouraged participants to share perceptions and points of view without pressuring participants to vote or reach consensus” (Casey, as cited in Patton, 2015, p. 475). My role in the focus group was not only to gather data from participants but also ensure reflection, therefore the questions I asked prompted reflection on their experience and growth in working with students from diverse populations.

PPSTs were offered refreshments as an incentive to participate in the focus group sessions. Participants were informed that the focus group interviews will be audio recorded and that their responses would be transcribed for the purposes of finding themes revealed from their responses.
I used a similar focus group interview session to collect data with the second subpopulation of participants including PTs finalizing their student teaching experiences. The sessions were semi-structured (see Appendix C) and the same protocols for explaining the purpose, risks, procedures, and confidentiality were explained and outlined on an Institutional Review Board approved consent form prior to the interview.

**Observations.** I observed PPSTs interactions with children and families and how those interactions changed throughout the program on a weekly basis. I conducted observation as PPSTs prepared for sessions, during scheduled hour long tutoring sessions, after sessions were over when PPSTs interacted with families, and finally during post-tutoring debriefings. I served as a participant observer during weekly tutoring sessions because I was “immersed in the culture under study” (Patton, 2015, p. 100). The degree in which I was involved in the setting of the study varied from closely interacting with PPSTs to separating myself and watching. As Patton (2015) explained, the researcher is the instrument, and according to Bennett (2010), “the credibility relies on the competence of the investigator to analyze the complexities” (p. 86). Therefore, I noted what I observed using a matrix that included attributes of cultural self-awareness and intercultural interaction (see Appendix D) allowing for efficient notation when I was actively involved. I also kept detail descriptions using field notes in a reflexive journal when I was able to remove myself and watch. As the instrument of the inquiry, I not only recorded observations of my participants, but also observations of myself during the process. As Patton (2015) stated my observations were influenced by, “Who [I was], what [brought me] to this inquiry, [my] background, experience, knowledge, and training” (p. 632). Keeping a reflexive journal helped illuminate bias and assisted me in reducing bias when I analyzed the data.
**Review of written reflections.** My final form of data collection was a review of tutors’ final written reflections on the experience. PPSTs were prompted to write a two page reflection that included questions about how their tutee’s progressed over the course of the semester, the kinds of strategies and resources they used and their effectiveness, obstacles they experienced during the tutoring sessions, suggestions for future PPSTs’ interaction with the child’s family, and favorite stories, triumphs and joys from the experience. I gained permission from the program director and the Institutional Review Board to review these reflections, after they had been graded. Also, as part of the consent form, I notified participants that their reflections would be analyzed. My sole purpose was not to grade or contribute to their scores, but to glean evidence of cultural competency development.

**Final online questionnaire.** Similar to the initial questionnaire, the final questionnaire measured conceptual thinking and attitudes concerning the experience the PPST had while tutoring. Questions were careful to cover the broad experience and included questions like, “How were you able to work toward your personal goals for the tutoring experience?” and “What attitude changes can you attribute to the tutoring experience?” (see Appendix E). All PPSTs who agreed to participate in the study received a link to the tool at the end of the tutoring experience. The interview questions provided a method of efficient collection of responses containing growth information regarding each PPSTs’ level of cultural competency in accordance with the Cultural Competence Continuum (Cross, 1988).

**Operationalization of Attributes**

The primary variable that defined my study was cultural competency. I used a combined definition of cultural competency from Cross (2008), Gallavan (2005) and Miller and Mikulec (2014) which was understanding oneself as a cultural being, having an appreciation for, and an understanding of, diverse populations and interacting with other cultural groups in ways that
recognize and value their differences. Throughout this study, I used the terms cultural self-awareness and intercultural understandings as attributes of cultural competency. Relating these to Cross’s work, I believed an individual must first develop cultural self-awareness, or understanding themselves as cultural being. This would include a personal set of behaviors, attitudes and policies. Based on Cross’ (2008) work, I defined intercultural understanding as an understanding of others’ cultures and how to work effectively in cross-cultural situations. Cross (2008) broke down cultural competency by discussing both culture and competence:

The word culture is used because it implies the integrated pattern of human behavior that includes thought, communication, actions, customs, beliefs, values and institutions of a racial, ethnic, religious or social group. The word competence is used because it implies having the capacity to function effectively. (p. 1)

Therefore, cultural competency in this study included attributes of cultural self-awareness as they related to Cross’s definition of culture as well as intercultural understandings including understanding of others’ culture and how to work effectively in cross-cultural situations.

To measure PPSTs’ development toward cultural competency and PTs’ development of cultural competency as a result of a cross-cultural tutoring experience, I used Cross’s (1988) Cultural Competency Continuum.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

As discussed by Miller and Mikulec (2014), using a phenomenological approach to viewing data afforded me the opportunity to search through “lived-experience material that, upon reflective examination, might yield something of its fundamental nature (Van Manen, 1990, p. 53)” (p. 20). I made connections between the lived experiences of individuals who wanted to become teachers to understand to what extent the cross-cultural tutoring experience developed the participants’ cultural competencies. To accomplish this, following Miller and Mikulec as
well as Charmanaz (2006), I implemented “theoretical sampling to develop themes as they emerged in the analysis, which began as soon as data were collected” (Miller & Mikulec, 2014, p. 21). As themes emerged, I returned to the data with a critical eye in an effort to revise and refine the themes as well as organize and glean meaning from them.

I followed the data coding process of constant comparison analysis to examine data gleaned from multiple forms of collection methods and the subunits of the case study for similarities (Glasser, 1965). I believed this would provide the strong evidence of participants’ potential growth toward cultural competency. I used Atlas.ti software to assist with constant comparison as well as coding. ATLAS.ti assisted me with three levels of coding including open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). In open coding, I reviewed word by word all of the data, three times, looking for words and phrases that revealed patterns or themes. Next, in axial coding, I categorized the words or phrases into clusters to make meaning of the data around the explored phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). Multiple themes emerged at varying levels across three different snapshots of data. Finally, during the selective coding process, I identified and named themes that emerged from the previous phases of analysis and continued the comparing process to produce descriptive data. Finally, using pattern matching, or comparing themes to expected outcomes (Yin, 2014), I compared the descriptive data to the Cultural Competence Continuum to identify growth toward cultural competency (Cross, 1988).

**Trustworthiness and Credibility**

As a qualitative researcher, and the instrument of data collection, the establishment of trustworthiness and credibility became essential. I came to this research with my own biases, including my culture, perceptions, expectations, and position.

**Position statement.** I was not only a novice researcher at the university, but also an assistant professor who taught in the College of Education. I taught both undergraduate and
graduate level courses, and therefore frequently interacted with faculty, staff, administration and students as well as the tutoring program director. These relationships, as well as involvement with the functions of the teacher preparation program, presented potential bias. I cared deeply about the development of competent teachers who could meet the needs of diverse learners, and I believed that cross-cultural experiences positively influence cultural competency.

To minimize bias, and possible conflicts of interest related to my relationships with constituents, I employed a lens through which data was collected and viewed using APA’s Ethical Principles and Code of Conduct (American Psychological Association, 2015). The online screening questionnaire and focus group questions were informed by APA’s Ethical Principles, and the administration of the collection procedures and all resulting data was organized, analyzed and compared according to APA’s Code of Conduct.

I recognized credibility margins including participant sampling and time constraints. Recruitment was limited to the 26 PPSTs who were registered for the tutoring experience, and my sample size was further limited to 19 of them who agreed to participate in my study. Because I was studying a case of students who participated in a tutoring program that ran during a typical undergraduate semester, my study was limited to a maximum of 13 weeks.

As described in my data collection and analysis procedures, in order to increase the credibility of my research and related data, I employed measures including member checking, triangulation, and researcher reflection and reflexivity. I understood that my research results would not be generalizable. However, I hoped that understandings illuminated by my research about how potential teachers develop toward cultural competencies might be applied with caution to teacher preparation programs.
Ethical Issues

Potential ethical issues related to my study were reviewed, addressed and approved by the university’s Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Risks and discomforts. IRB, approved of my study’s design and activities with minimal risk. During my study, participants were asked to discuss their perceptions and experiences as they engaged in cross-cultural tutoring. Reflection on such perceptions and experiences was not considered of risk beyond what participants would encounter in daily life. I was a professor at the institution and it was possible that some of the participants had some uneasiness about it. I did not teach or assign a grade to the PPSTs in relationship to the study. Rather, my interest in conducting the study was supported by the fact that I was a reading professor. The second group of participants, pre-service teachers (PTs) had already taken a course with me and we had established a comfortable relationship.

Minimization of discomforts. I learned about participants’ views without manipulation or control, allowing themes to emerge naturally during the study. Answering interview questions was not a “potentially harmful participant experience” (Hillstrom, 2014, p. 118). Participants were informed that participation in study was voluntary and that they could leave the study at any time without consequence. I explained the broad purpose of the study to students, as well as data collection procedures including questionnaires, observations and focus groups so that they were aware of the level of commitment prior to enrolling in the study. I also explained potential risks and benefits of their participation to assist participants in making an informed decision on whether or not to participate. Following, participants signed an informed consent form that reflected this information. Participants were informed both orally and in writing that neither their admittance to the College of Education nor their academic standing were linked to
participation. The tutoring experience was pass/fail, and not dependent on their participation in my study.

**Confidentiality and data protection.** Central to my plan for the data I collected was to put in place measures that protected my participants and kept the data safe. First, I controlled the number of people who had access to my participants’ identities. The tutoring program director and I were the only people who knew the names and email addresses of the participants. Second, any reference I made about my participants was always in the form of codes or numbers. I kept all personal information on a secure server and my password protected work-issued computer. I did not include participants’ personal identification information in any report related to the study. Third, I aggregated and coded data collected via questionnaires, interviews, observations and documents to keep track of participants’ responses, and used the codes during data analysis to avoid reference to personal information and protect participants’ identities.

Although it was impossible to guarantee security of data submitted electronically or in a group setting, I took all possible precautions during the focus groups to adhere to the interview protocol expectations of participants and the use of my university issued password protected computer. All other documentation was electronic and stored on my password protected computer. Consent forms were scanned and stored electronically for at least three years following the study. Upon completion of the study, links or codes to personal information were deleted. After removing identifiable information, beyond the study, only questionnaire and interview responses and observation and field notes were kept on the password protected computer and backed up on Google docs for approximately three years.

**Summary**

This chapter summarized the methods related to conducting this study that would best allow me to explore how a cross-cultural tutoring experience involving individuals who wanted
to become teachers impacted their cultural competency. Through a phenomenological, multiple case study, using two subgroups, I collected data using multiple qualitative methods of interview, observation, field notes using a reflexive journal, and document analysis. In order to analyze data, I used a constant comparison method of analysis and coding to develop categories and identify themes.

In addition to methodological decisions, trustworthiness and credibility, expected findings, researcher bias and ethical issues were all discussed in detail. The combination of each of these processes and considerations lead me to a deeper understanding of the impact a situated learning experience combined with reflection had on the development of cultural competency.
Chapter 4 Data Analysis and Results

The evidence of increased diversity and cultural segregation in many of America’s public schools presents a critical need to prepare culturally competent teachers. However, “one of the major challenges in preparing pre-service teachers for the 21st-century classroom, as well as for an increasingly competitive job-market, is providing the necessary skills and background to effectively educate diverse populations of students (Sleeter, 2001)” (Miller & Mikulec, 2014, p. 18). Considering that newly licensed teacher candidates are lacking needed competencies to teach students from diverse populations, many teacher education programs have required coursework related to diversity, multiculturalism or culturally responsive pedagogy (Keengwe, 2010). However, Brown (2005) explained, many prospective teachers do not make progress in stand-alone courses that focus on diversity because of their “resentment and/or resistance to multicultural doctrine, instruction, application, and interaction” (pp. 325-326). Instead, a stand-alone course can actually perpetuate a cultural deficit view of students from diverse student populations (Brown, 2005). Brown’s conclusions, also suggest that cultural and racial interactions are a vital component of preparing prospective teachers who will be responsive to the diverse needs of students in today’s classrooms rather than resistant to the concepts of multiculturalism presented in teacher preparation coursework. The power of personal connections and relationships that develop through cross-cultural interactions may have a significant impact on the motivation of pre-service teachers to cultivate cultural competency.

Because the normative approaches to preparing culturally competent teachers through coursework have not proven effective, this study explored an alternative approach to understand the development of cultural competency of first-year college students through situated learning, intercultural interaction and reflection. This chapter highlights themes gleaned from an exploration of a first-year, 10-week, cross-cultural, community based tutoring experience.
Specifically, I studied the impact of participating in the tutoring experience at multiple points. The first at the undergraduate level, during the experience (ongoing and immediate) and three years after the experience (sustained and long-term). Consequently, the purpose of the study was twofold. First, I explored conceptual changes toward development of cultural competency of first year undergraduate students who have formally indicated an interest to become teachers. I refer to these students who have indicated an interest in becoming teachers as potential pre-service teachers (PPSTs). Second, I explored the sustainability of the conceptual changes in final-year pre-service teachers enrolled in the teacher preparation program. I refer to these students as pre-service teachers (PTs).

My study was based on previously published studies by Bennett (2013) as well as Miller and Mikulec (2014), who examined the development of cultural competency in field experiences tied with coursework, however my study had a unique aspect to it because the cross-cultural community based tutoring experience did not directly teach the prospective teachers about cultural competency. Based on previous research and my conceptual framework, I expected to find that the tutoring experience, combined with reflection, would fortuitously impact participants’ development toward a natural conceptual change toward cultural competency. In other words, that the development of cultural competency would be an added, or unintentional, benefit to the tutoring experience. Also, because this cross-cultural experience took place before undergraduate students entered the teacher preparation program, I expected to further understand if there was an impact on prospective teachers’ future development of culturally responsive practices. My study added to previous research findings of pre-service teachers’ resistance to ideas of culturally responsive teaching when explicitly taught in their teacher preparation coursework (Brown, 2004; Larkin, 2012; Lenski, Crumpler, Stallworth & Crawford, 2005;
Lockhart, 2009; Sleeter, 2001; Taylor, 2010; Zeichner, Grant, Gay, Gillette, Valli & Villegas, 1998), and that when prospective teachers have prior cross-cultural experiences, they are more likely to glean concepts of cultural competency that lead to culturally responsive pedagogy (Adams, Bondy & Kuhel, 2005; Burant & Kirby, 2002; Hollins, 2011; Keengwe 2010; Miller & Mikulec, 2014).

This phenomenological case study design combined aspects of data collection procedures from three recently published research studies, Miller and Mikulec (2014), Bennett (2010), and Hillstrom (2014), as they related to my conceptual framework including open-ended online questionnaires, observations, a reflexive journal, review of a final written reflection, and focus group interview sessions. With the potential pre-service teachers, I ensured triangulation of data by using five different sources of data described in this chapter. The five sources of data include online initial and final questionnaires, focus groups, observations, and reflections. My roles included that of an interviewer and as a participant observer during weekly tutoring sessions because I was “immersed in the culture under study” (Patton, 2015, p. 100). The degree in which I was involved in the setting of the study varied from closely interacting with PPSTs to separating myself and watching. I followed the data coding process of constant comparison analysis to examine data gleaned from multiple forms of collection methods for similarities (Glasser, 1965). I believed this provided the strongest evidence of participants’ potential growth toward cultural competency. I used Atlas.ti software to assist with constant comparison as well as three levels of coding including open coding, axial coding, and selective coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998).

This chapter reveals themes gleaned from the coding process at three points in time during the spring semester of 2016. These points in time included data from 1) PPSTs at the
onset of the tutoring experience, 2) PPSTs immersed in the tutoring experience and 3) PTs who participated in the experience three years ago. I have organized this chapter first by snapshots, then by themes that emerged during each snapshot including varying levels of cultural competency, cultural deficit perspectives, fear and resistance to cultural responsiveness for PPSTs at the onset of the experience. As PPSTs were immersed in the tutoring program, themes including demystification of diversity, the value of experiential learning as it related to the development toward cultural competency, and the importance of interactions and relationships to cross-cultural understandings. During the final snapshot, PTs revealed similar, yet expanded themes of demystification of diversity, the value of experiential learning as it related to cultural competency, development toward cultural competency, and the importance on interactions and relationships to understanding of, and connections with, persons from diverse populations.

**Description of the Sample**

The primary target population for this study included prospective teachers from an undergraduate program at a private university in the Pacific Northwest at two stages of teacher preparation represented by the PPSTs and PTs in this study. PPSTs included first year undergraduates participating in the cross-cultural tutoring program during the spring semester. These students participated in the cross-cultural tutoring program as a pre-requisite to entry into the College of Education. There were 26 first year undergraduate students registered for the program who were interested in becoming teachers. Out of those 26 students, 19 of them volunteered to participate in this study. All PPSTs were between the ages of 18 and 25, with the exception of one PPST who was 33. Twelve PPSTs were female, and seven were male. Fourteen participants identified as White, two as Asian, and three as Hispanic. All participants completed the initial survey. Different sub-groups of PPSTs volunteered to participate in further
research data collection. An X on the table below indicates data collection methods in which each PPST participated.

Table 1: Data Collection Methods

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<th>Completed Questionnaire 1</th>
<th>Observed</th>
<th>Attended Focus Group 1</th>
<th>Attended Focus Group 2</th>
<th>Completed Questionnaire 2</th>
<th>Final Written Reflection</th>
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A second point of interest in the case study, included six pre-service teachers (PTs) in their final year of the teacher preparation program. They participated in the cross-cultural tutoring program three years prior when they were first-year undergraduate students. They participated in my study’s focus group session at the culmination of their full-time student teaching experience in the final year of the teacher preparation program. All PTs were between the ages of 21 and 25. Five PTs were female, and one was male. Five participants identified as White, and one as Black.
Phenomenological Multiple Case Study

I conducted a phenomenological multiple case study based on my desire to investigate the impact of the cross-cultural tutoring experience on the phenomenon of prospective teachers’ fortuitous development toward cultural competency at two different points, in currency and in a sustained piece. Although bound by a case, the focus of my study was not the case, rather the insights that contributed to understanding the development toward cultural competency in prospective teachers. In related research, Griner & Stewart (2013) used a “mixed-method case study design to implement and evaluate [a] culturally responsive teaching tool in the context of a professional development program” (p. 593) to examine the its impact on the beliefs and practice of schools and school staff related to culturally responsive teaching. Like Griner and Stewart (2013), my study involved particular contextual conditions, as my research was situated in an early community-field experience. I studied the impact of a ten-week lived experience, in cross-cultural tutoring in a community setting, on development toward cultural competency. Furthermore, Miller and Mikulec (2014) used a phenomenological design to investigate pre-service teachers confronting issues of diversity explicitly through a radical field experience. Also building on Miller and Mikulec (2014) study, I investigated the fortuitous impact, rather than explicit impact, on prospective teachers through a cross-cultural field experience. I wanted to explore how cross-cultural tutoring impacted development toward cultural competency, and I needed to examine how the phenomenon related to the context. Yin (2014) defined a case study as “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (p. 16). Consequently, my study research design was a phenomenological case study.
Furthermore, I employed a multiple case study design (Yin, 2014) looking at how a phenomenon illuminated the pressing issue of developing culturally competent teachers using units of analysis at more than one level (Yin, 2014). This approach was the best fit for my study because a multiple case study design provided snapshots of the cross-cultural tutoring experience’s impact on two distinct sub-populations. The design did not compare the sub-populations, rather gleaned an understanding of the impact of the case at different points in time.

Fortuitous learning is not easily evaluated because the learning is not anticipated (Bova & Kroth, 2001). Therefore the use multiple data collection methods was appropriate because it revealed multiple forms of evidence of themes related to fortuitous learning. With the first subpopulation of participants including PPSTs, I employed triangulation of data using five different methods: an initial online interview questionnaire with open-ended questions, focus group interviews with potential follow-up individual interviews, observations, field notes in a reflexive journal, and a review of written reflections. Because the study’s unique niche was in gleaning fortuitous development in cultural competency, I explained the study’s purpose broadly to the participants. I wrote the interview questions using a pattern that wove in the true purpose of the study. If I made the research question and purpose obvious, I would have potentially interfered with my participants’ responses and also jeopardized the trustworthiness of my study by leading participants toward desired outcomes.

**Summary of the Findings**

Patterns gleaned from coding revealed themes at three points in time during the spring semester of 2016. These points in time revealed snapshots of prospective teachers and their experiences, perspectives, reflections and growth. These snapshots included data from 1) PPSTs at the onset of the tutoring program, 2) PPSTs immersed in the tutoring program and 3) PTs who participated in the program three years prior. At the onset of the tutoring program, themes
included varying levels of cultural competency, cultural deficit perspectives, fear and resistance to cultural responsiveness, and a value for interaction. Data sources revealing these themes involved an initial online questionnaire and a focus group interview. As PPSTs were immersed in the tutoring program, themes including demystification of diversity through cross-cultural experience, the value of experiential learning as it relates to the development toward cultural competency, and the importance of interactions and relationships, curricular and instructional impact, and a slight increase in behaviors reflective of cultural competency. Data sources revealing these themes included observations, field notes, a focus group interview, a final online questionnaire, and a document review of PPSTs’ final written reflections. Data collected at the end of the study, or third point of the study, did not involve PPSTs, but the PTs. Through a focus group interview, PTs revealed similar, yet expanded themes of resistance to, and fear of, related coursework, demystification of diversity, development toward cultural competency, the value of experiential learning as it relates to cultural competency, the importance of interactions and relationships to cultural understanding, and a curricular and instructional impact.

**Presentation of Data and Results**

**Snapshot 1: PPSTs during the onset of the tutoring program.** At the onset of the tutoring program, PPSTs completed an online questionnaire and a sub-group participated in a focus group interview. The initial questionnaire measured conceptual thinking and attitudes concerning the experience the prospective pre-service teachers were about to have with tutoring children. Questions were careful to cover the broad experience and included questions like, “Describe how you are feeling about working with children who are struggling readers” and “What are your goals for the tutoring experience?” The two semi-structured focus group interviews of a small group of seven potential pre-service teachers during my study sought “high quality data in a social context where people could consider their own views in the context of the
views of others” (p. 475). This focus group interview format “increased the meaningfulness and validity of findings because perspectives were formed and sustained in [the] social group” (Patton, 2015, p. 475). Especially because PPSTs were already a part of a working group sharing the experience and debriefing regularly and were used to working and growing together, interviewing them in a group setting provided not only increased meaningfulness and validity, but also a comfort level that promoted a deeper willingness to share. Patton noted that group interviewing may feel more familiar as most people are “not accustomed to one-on-one inquiries” (p. 475). Patton (2015) also explained that an advantage of interviewing in a group setting is that “our interactions with each other are how we come to more deeply understand our own views, test our knowledge, get in touch with our feelings, and make sense of our behaviors” (p. 475). From these two data collection methods, the following themes emerged.

**Varying levels of cultural competency.** When asked about their feelings regarding working with students from diverse cultural backgrounds on the initial questionnaire, PPST’s responses reflected various levels of cultural competency as described by Cross (1988) on the Cultural Competency Continuum. Most PPST’s comments reflected that of cultural pre-competence or cultural competence. PPST’s comments included statements such as, “I personally come from a very diverse family. My mom is full Greek and my dad comes from a more American family. I have been immersed in Greek culture my whole life. So I have a very open mind and am a very accepting person. I love experiencing other cultures and am excited to work with children who come from such diverse cultural backgrounds” and “I'm excited about learning how a child from the Portland area finds culture in the world around them since I'm not from here. I'm excited to find out what makes them culturally unique and an asset to the culture they live in.”
Other PPST’s comments from the initial online questionnaire were reflective of cultural blindness or even incapacity. For example, when asked how they felt about working with students from diverse backgrounds, replies included, “I'm nervous that it may cause communication issues” or “I don't mind.” One PPST stated, “I guess my idea was teachers are like, "Oh, I don't look at race or anything like that. Backgrounds or anything." Everybody says that kind of thing. I was trying to avoid that and putting it more focused on an equity standpoint, I guess. Whereas I want to treat most students equally but not have their background really define them.”

During the initial focus group interview which occurred, PPSTs shared examples of interactions during their first tutoring session. When asked what they have learned about themselves and working with students from diverse populations, responses were more reflective of cultural blindness. For example, one PPST replied, “My student is in second grade, so I don't know if she's entirely aware of diversity issues. It hasn't really been something I've thought of really because ... I mean, I've thought about it, but it wasn't something that was on my mind dealing with a second grader. I don't know if I could bring it up and ask, like maybe ask what kind of character she wants. I don't know how to handle that. I've always personally tried to look past that kind of stuff, so it never once occurred to me that a second grader might have their own personal views on diversity.” Another PPST replied, “This conversation could be really hard to have for me because it's like I haven't spent a lot of time around diverse kids ... Kids from diverse backgrounds, I guess. I grew up in a small white town outside of Portland. It's like it can be really hard to have that conversation with a child. It's fine with an adult, but with a child it's a little bit more delicate, I feel like because you're almost in a position of power. They'll listen to you. It's just hard for me because I don't want to say the wrong thing and then she mimes it back
to someone else and it gets mixed up or you know what I mean?” Another PPST discussed challenges related to differences in culture and communication: “I think that's what I found out about myself is I want the parents knowing what their children are doing, but with mine it's challenging because they don't really speak English. They never come up or talk to me when they drop them off. I don't even know if they know what's going on here. It's difficult because I'm used to parents wanting to know what's going on.”

Although most focus group interview responses reflected cultural blindness, one PPST’s response actually reflected cultural proficiency: “Well, my student, he was like ... The second time we met up, he asked me. "Oh, do you speak Spanish?" I'm like, "Yes." He's like, "I do, too, but I don't really like speaking [Spanish]." I said being bilingual is good. He thought about it and then he just went back to reading. Him being curious about that and actually hearing somebody else saying that being bilingual is good is making him think about it.” Furthermore, initial comments from one PPST reflected a fortuitous learning experience that came from conversation with his tutee regarding a book they were reading together: “My student said something really kind of weird last night. We were reading this book. It's about a black family. They described his skin as cocoa cinnamon. She was saying that this book's racist and why didn't they just call it black. We had a discussion about that for a while. She just thought the book was racist. She was like, "But that's okay." I guess, I don't know. It was kind of weird. I chose that book specifically because it did have a young black woman as a protagonist so she could relate to the character. She did because she said, "It's just like me and my family."

In my field notes, I recorded comments of nervousness during the first week of tutoring, such as that a PPST talked to me about how she was nervous about what her child would be like,
and what the parents would do while they were there. One PPST stated that he worried the parent would hover and perhaps be judgmental.

**Cultural deficit perspectives.** Although there were data reflecting varying levels of cultural competency, data displaying themes related to the cultural deficit perspective were prevalent. One PPST described his work with his tutee from a background different from the dominant culture as opening barriers to the future, “I believe working with children from diverse backgrounds, and having them work with us, is critical in the child's young development. Barriers begin to become or even continue to grow open, so it is influential into the future.” The data revealed tendencies to view parents from diverse backgrounds as a challenge, particularly if the parents speak a language other than English. One PPST explained, “I expect the parent to be there physically but maybe not all there mentally. It would honestly make me more nervous to have a parent watch what I am doing. I do not do well with micromanagement. At the same time I think it will be very beneficial to have the parents learn the techniques as well so that way they child can continue to learn throughout the week.” Another PPST stated, “I've never really seen the parents. They never come up or talk to me when they drop them off. I don't even know if they know what's going on here. It's difficult because I'm used to parents wanting to know what's going on. I don't think they don't want to know, but it's weird that they don't ask or have some form of communication.” Similarly, another PPST commented that the parents don’t care and don’t want to know what happened during tutoring. Commentary also included assumptions about home life, and the lack of reading taking place at home, “One of the kids, the parents read to him every night, or he read to the parents. The other student was like, "No, we don't really have that many books in our house and stuff." You could tell one liked to read, the one that the parents were involved with the reading. They liked to read. They were ahead of their grade level.
The other one was behind in the grade level. That one wasn't involved with their parents.” A PPST who heard that statement added, “To kind of build off of that, I experienced the same thing, both of them having a different influence. Not that their parents were negative influences but having a different influence on both of them. It was good thing that happened. That's one of my goals, one of the reasons I want to become a teacher anyway, because you can look at any classroom and see kids who don't really care to be there, don't really want to be there.”

Not only did themes of cultural deficit theory emerge during the initial questionnaire and focus group, but I recorded behaviors in my field notes about a few PPSTs worth including such as not accepting another student’s vernacular during a spelling game, ignoring parent input or questions, and frustration about difficulties in communication. During week 2 of tutoring I noted that the first PPST I observed was playing a word game with his reader. He gave her tiles and asked her to create words with the tiles with a time limit. I first saw her spell “lotta” and the PPST told her it wasn’t a word. She said “yes it is, like a lotta stuff.” He had her look it up in the dictionary on his ipad and she couldn’t find it. She frowned, and changed the l to a g to make “gotta.” The same pattern of interaction occurred. The PPST said, “that’s not a word either.” The reader said, “Yes it is, I gotta get a snack.” He had her look that up as well. Her final word was goth. In another observation that same night, I noted an interaction between a different PPST and a parent who was watching the reading activity taking place with a book about dinosaurs. The PPST did not respond to the parent’s ideas about how the dinosaur would keep itself cool. He just ignored the parent and continued asking questions in a positive tone to the two boys that were learning. During the following week, one PPST was waiting for a parent in order to get a signature on a consent form that allowed the child to be photographed. She used a tone of voice that indicated that she did not want to have to ask the parents. Then she said “…
and it’s harder because they don’t speak English.” The child ended up being dropped off by her aunt, so the PPST did not have a chance to ask for consent.

**Fear and resistance.** Data revealed that many PPSTs were nervous about working with students from diverse backgrounds. On the initial questionnaire responses included statements such as, I’m nervous, apprehensive, or nervous it will cause communication issues. One PPST said he was nervous about what his child would be like, and what the parents would do while they were there. Another PPST stated that he worried the parent would hover and perhaps be judgmental.

**Interaction.** A prevalent theme that emerged from the initial data was the value PPSTs placed on interactions with children in the tutoring program. Answers to questions regarding goals for the experience and what they were looking forward to included, “I think using my skills in interacting with all sorts of people and personalities will be a great exercise,” “My goals for this tutoring experience is to connect to the children I am assigned to. I want to learn about them,” and “I will have to learn how children interact with a teacher and their environment. Hopefully I will be able to take this experience, build upon it and apply it later in my studies and career.” PPSTs looked forward to the connections they would have with their students: “I am hoping for a good and solid connection, but as long as they interact and are excited to read and get to know me, I will be happy” and “I think that this is a critical learning experience in how to appropriately develop a meaningful relationship with a student, and guide them through the value of their own learning.”

**Snapshot 2: PPSTs as they were immersed in the tutoring program.** This snapshot illuminated themes from the latter half of the tutoring sessions and from the culmination of the tutoring program. These themes were gleaned from field notes, a final online questionnaire, a
final written reflection and a focus group interview. Additionally, observation data reflected growth on the cultural competency continuum for 7 PPSTs throughout the tutoring experience.

**Demystification of diversity through cross-cultural experience.** Only a few PPSTs expressed excitement about working with students from diverse populations at the onset of the study. More prevalent themes related to the cultural deficit model and fear of, or resistance to, working with diverse populations from the initial snapshot actually developed into a demystification of diversity throughout the tutoring experience. Miller & Mikulec's (2014) study noted the importance of demystifying diversity, or providing an experience with diversity, rather than relying on a conceptual presentation of diversity in coursework which is “often viewed by pre-service teachers as an intangible concept” (p. 22). The use of the term demystification of diversity captured much of the data from my study, particularly toward the end as PPSTs had engaged in the experience for 8 to 10 weeks.

PPSTs expressed growth and change regarding the views of the families and children they worked with. One PPST explained how she realized how much of an impact a students’ family life had on their readiness to learn. She worked with two children who were cousins. She stated, “They were constantly always worried about each other. If one was late ... Last night, one actually didn't end up showing up, and my girl was like, ‘Well his sister's here, so I don't understand why he's not here.’ It was the last time, so it was fine. She was just obsessed about where he was. Then he's like, ‘Well, I saw her mom downstairs,’ and they were like ten minute conversations, worried about what the other person was doing.” Also, conversely to initial deficit model themes, PPSTs discussed a realization of parent’s desire to be involved and to see their children succeed. For example, a PPST said “Despite the parents' language boundary, it was so nice seeing how invested in their child's education and progress they were in! I really enjoyed it.”
There also seemed to be an overall reduction of assumptions based on cultural background. Related comments included, “don't assume that they have the same background,” and “don't assume that they feel a certain way about this because of where they're from.”

PPSTs who explained that they simply had not experienced interacting with other cultures, as well as PPSTs who explained that they are familiar with interacting with other cultures, commented on how their tutoring experience helped them understand more about others. The following quotes are significant responses from PPSTs who had not previously experienced cross-cultural interactions:

“I don't really come in contact with different ethnicities, but when I attended this class it surprised me. It was a whole new world to me and it was fantastic because I was exposed to different people with different backgrounds. I honestly learned a lot from the kids from my experience.”

“I had one tutee that is from Ethiopia I believe, so he had an accent. His mom spoke English, but she had an accent and didn’t seem to speak very good English. But they both were so nice and respectful and easy to talk/work with. I enjoyed having that experience because I know that when I have my own class, it’ll be full of different cultures!”

“I enjoyed working with families from a different culture. Being able to see how they interact and talk with their families was awesome. Both my kids were from the Portland Metro Area which I got to learn more about.”

“This was my first experience working with children from diverse cultural backgrounds. The issue of race and how we were different came up more frequently than I initially expected. My tutee would comment on how we are different and we would have a short
conversation about it. I personally felt very comfortable having these conversations with her and feel like they are healthy and necessary.”

Overall, many comments from PPSTs echoed the sentiment expressed in this quote: “I think the tutoring experience supported me in my professional journey in terms of experience interacting with youth and youth of other cultures.” The experience was also impactful for PPSTs who claim to have had former significant cross-cultural experiences. A PPST who identified her race as Hispanic explained, “Coming from the south where there is a great Hispanic population, it was nice to have that familiarity with my girl. It was good for me to see the diversity of [the urban area]. Living on campus without a car, you don’t get to go to very many places that you can’t walk to. It was good to see so many people from a neighborhood that I’ve become a part of.” Another PPST commented on the impact the experience had on her attitude toward diverse populations: “My attitude toward people and schools and other people I don't know definitely changed. I was really nervous coming somewhere that no one I know is from, and I knew everyone and everyone's brothers and sisters in my elementary school and middle school and high school. Then coming here, I didn't know anyone. My attitude changed toward [an urban population] in general.”

Through the tutoring experience, PPSTs also began to realize how the dominant culture impacted students from diverse populations. A PPST shared during an oral debrief with all PPSTs following a tutoring session that her reader brought a story to share with her that he wrote. The story was about going to college and how college students need money, but he did not have money for college. I noted in my field notes that there was quite a reaction from the other PPSTs as they heard this, many uncomfortable gasps, surprised faces, and others who mentioned that being a powerful statement. Another example of realization was discussion of
how they discovered it is important to be aware of students’ backgrounds through interaction with their tutees. A PPST shared the following experience during a focus group conversation, “I agree, that you have to be aware. One time, actually, when I just had the girl, she was asking me about who I was voting for because ... She actually physically said, "I hate Donald Trump because he's going to send me away." I didn't know what to say to that because that's not something that really affects me and I ignore it most of the time. I just tried to switch subjects but she kept bringing it up. I had to grab [the director] at one point and I was like, "I really don't know what to say to her," so [the director] talked to her about it for a little, and then we went back to what we were doing. You have to be fully aware of just what they hear around in the world and how it's going to affect them and their background. That was something I had never even thought of, of her bringing that up to me at all. That was just a bigger reality check for me; that we definitely come from different areas. I hadn't really thought about how different we really were until she said that to me a couple weeks ago.”

In addition to building awareness in PPSTs, some reported that the experience helped build their self-confidence around interacting with others who come from different cultures. In particular, one PPST wrote in her final questionnaire response, “I have never actually had the experience to interact extensively 1-on-1 with a black child before the tutoring, and I would say I had a slight nervousness about it. This experience definitely made me feel more comfortable.” Another PPST reported, “I think the tutoring experience supported me in my professional journey in terms of experience interacting with youth and youth of other cultures.” And yet another example from final questionnaire responses, “I have grown more confident in myself by getting to work with such a diverse group of students and cultures. Although I went into this class wanting to make a change in my tutee’s life. I think more than anything [my student] has
changed me and in a way we both changed together. This experience has given me a lot valuable skills that I know will help me as a teacher in the future.”

Development toward greater levels of cultural competency. When asked to identify where they would place themselves on the Cultural Competency Continuum (Cross, 1988) on the final online questionnaire, PPSTs self-reported either growth in cultural competency or no change after participation in the tutoring experience.

Table 2: Final Questionnaire Responses

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<th>PPST</th>
<th>Cultural Destructiveness</th>
<th>Cultural Incapacity</th>
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Field observations. In addition to data collected from self-reports on the online questionnaire, during field observations I noticed patterns of behavior that indicated growth on the cultural competency scale. These patterns included attitude changes, an increase in cross
cultural interactions, development of relationships and cultural consideration when selecting curricular materials and instructional strategies. During the first weeks of tutoring, I noted that in general, PPSTs were nervous about what their child would be like, and what the parents would do while they were there. One PPST stated that he worried the parent would hover and perhaps be judgmental. Interactions with parents was extremely limited. At the end of tutoring sessions, parents asked questions of tutors such as “How did she do?” or “Do you have any suggestions?” PPSTs smiled frequently in response, but seemed unsure of how to respond to these inquiries. In week 3, I noticed relationships seemed to be building already, evidenced by lots of smiles, children rushing to find their tutors from last week, and tutors creating welcome signs and giving high fives. I also noticed that I saw more interactions with parents than the previous weeks. Again in week 4, I observed about two out of six PPSTs connecting with parents, especially at the end of the session. Many parents approached the PPSTs to ask how their child did during the sessions. PPSTs that I observed responded warmly with recaps. However, I did not hear PPSTs ask questions back to the parents. During week 6, I noted a particular PPST’s interaction to parent input during the tutoring session. He did not respond to the parent’s ideas, but rather ignored it and continued asking questions of the student in a positive tone. During week 9, I watched dismissal in the hallway. I noted that most PPSTs dismissed their students out into the hallway without interaction with the parents. However, I observed that in the final week of the program, when students were dropped off, there was quite a bit of interaction, particularly from the parents toward all PPSTs. Parents asked about finals week, and thanked their PPSTs for the work they did with their children. I noticed dancing, singing, and laughing a multiple points of the evening. I also noticed that there was interaction between groups of PPSTs and children,
where as in previous nights, this did not occur. One child drew a detailed picture for her PPST and he said he would hang it up in a special place to remember her.

**Building relationships.** Data collection methods including focus group sessions, final questionnaire and the final reflection revealed a strong appreciation for the relationships that developed between the PPSTs and their students through the tutoring experience. Several PPSTs described building a close relationship as the “best part!” Aspects of the relationship that the PPSTs identified included understanding the students’ families and backgrounds, making connections and identifying likenesses and differences, and becoming more relaxed and comfortable in one another’s presence, and a desire to spend time together. In fact, a few PPSTs shared that there was such a strong mutual enjoyment of being together, that students did not want the experience to end. A PPST shared with me that her tutee was really upset approaching the final session because she loved her PPST and was learning a lot (this is a cross-cultural partnering). Another PPST shared that one of the joys she had was hearing her students “brag to their parents that they did not want to leave and wanted to sleep at [the university’s children’s library]. She grabbed me and hugged me and was glowing with joy. I loved building a relationship with these two kids.” A PPST who wasn’t sure if what she was doing with the children was making a difference or if they were even enjoying the experience, explained that “on the last day both girls had told me that they were sad that there wasn’t going to be any more tutoring. [One child] even told me that she wished I was going to be here during the summer so we could continue our tutoring, and [my other student] had given me a card that she had made herself; it was a picture of us playing with a note in the corner, “I love [my PPST]”. I hadn’t realized that reading to them and helping them with vocabulary would have such an impact that it did. Relationships developing over shared experiences continued to be a common theme,
highlighted by this PPST’s comment, “My favorite story was one night with [my student] we were reading a book by Dr. Seuss about lizards. We started talking about how cool they were and the types of lizards they were. The more we talked about lizards the more we laughed. At the end of the night I said it was time to clean up, and she told me that I would just have to go home with her cause she did not want to go anywhere without me.”

Curricular and instructional impact. Not only did I notice development of interactions and relationships, I also noticed some increase in consideration for students’ backgrounds when making curricular and instructional decisions. During early weeks I did not observe evidence that PPSTs were considering students’ backgrounds when discussing or selecting texts. However, as sessions progressed, I recorded that there was some questioning about students’ connections to, or interpretations about, the text and more text selection reflective of the students’ cultures. An unexpected event that I noted was when, a PPST was in the children’s library trying to find books to use with her reader about two hours before the tutoring sessions started. She asked me for help as I was walking by. I helped her find a book by the call number, and when I pulled it off the shelf, she said “Ya that’s it, its African American Poetry.” She said, “Can I ask you a question, and I don’t even know if it’s okay to ask?” I said of course she could. “Is it good or bad to be finding a book related to African Americans because my reader is African American?” I replied that it’s good to look for books that are reflective of a reader’s culture.” The tutor replied, “okay, that’s good. I wasn’t sure if that was okay.” During week 4, another PPST told me about her book selection process, and explained that the child she was working with told her last week that he did a report in school on Jackie Robinson. The PPST found sports books to use this week during the session, including a biography about Jackie Robinson. The book selection was also reflective of that particular student’s cultural
background. During week 9, I noticed that two of the seven PPSTs of whom I conducted regular observations selected books to use with their readers that had characters that appeared to be of similar racial or cultural backgrounds as the readers.

**Behaviors reflective of cultural competency.** During the 10 weeks of tutoring, nine PPSTs gave me permission to observe their tutoring sessions. I recorded what I observed using a matrix of behaviors gleaned from Cross’s (1988) Cultural Competency Continuum. The matrix included attributes of cultural self-awareness and intercultural interaction (see Appendix D) including frequency of behaviors that indicate “valuing diversity,” having the capacity for cultural self-awareness, and being conscience of the dynamics when cultures interact. The following tables represent data for each of the nine participants from weeks 2-10. The values recorded during weeks 2-7 on the first table, *Frequency of Behaviors that indicate “Valuing Diversity”* represent the total frequency the behavior was observed in a five minute observation period. During weeks 8 - 10, I decided to narrow my observation to 3 PPSTs to see if a longer observation time would yield more data, and therefore observed 3 PPSTs for 15 minutes each. I did not include the table representing *Frequency of Behaviors that Indicate “Having the Capacity for Cultural Self-Awareness”* because those behaviors were not observed and therefore there was a total of zero for each week.
Table 3: Frequency of Behaviors that indicate “Valuing Diversity” (Cross, 2008)

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The values recorded during weeks 2-7 on the next table, *Being Conscious of the Dynamics Inherent when Cultures Interact*, represent the frequency the behavior was observed at each one minute checkpoint during a five minute observation period. During weeks 8 - 10, I decided to narrow my observation to 3 PPSTs to see if a longer observation time would yield more data, and therefore observed 3 PPSTs for 15 minutes each.

Table 4: *Being Conscious of the Dynamics Inherent when Cultures Interact* (Cross, 2008)

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Snapshot 3: PTs who participated in the tutoring program three years prior. PTs participated in a focus group session at the culmination of their full-time student teaching experience in the final year of the teacher preparation program. The following themes emerged.

Resistance to, and fear of, related coursework topics. Although PTs expressed appreciation for the integration of cultural competency topics into teacher preparation course instruction throughout the program, they expressed a strong resistance to the development of cultural competency and topics related to race and diversity when addressed in a single course. A white female PT explained, “I think a lot of our [courses], later on in the program have integrated cultural competency into the instruction. That's the big thing that always stood out to me. I appreciate it because we've been able to look at it in different ways. Either different subjects that we would be teaching or just different situations, I really appreciate about [this university’s] education program. It is like that's a main that's always going to be consistent through the program.” Another white female PT agreed but then added her thoughts about a particular course focused on cultural competency where she didn’t feel safe, “Then I felt, ironically, in the [course] about cultural competency, I didn’t feel safe asking anything. I don't feel like it was a safe environment for me to ask questions or say my true feelings because I felt like I would fail the class if we have an open and honest conversation. That's like the opposite of what you want in a classroom environment.” All other PTs echoed similar feelings and reactions. Another white, female PT explained, “It didn't feel safe, or I feel like I'm being judged really harshly and so I don't want to share. I don't want to ask questions.” This feeling of being unsafe was coupled with additional fears. Two PTs explained that the fear made them self-conscious and as a result, resistant to even talking about cultural competency. “After I took, that [course] I think I instantly felt way more self-conscious and like, "Oh God, I'm doing a
terrible job and I probably seem like a racist, sexist, horrible person." In response, another PT added, “That's true. I feel like that class set me back culturally. Just like talking about it so much and over-talking about it. Not working with students of other cultures, it made me really self-conscious.” Then another PT responded, “It made me think like I'm being punished for being white, really, for being your typical white, middle class, female teacher sort of thing. I felt that class made me more closed off, like I don't want to offend anybody either.” And yet another added, “I was like, I am so sorry for being white, I'll write a hundred times on the board because that's what it felt like. I'm like this could be so much more beneficial.” Before the conversation turned, a PT stated, “It was so frustrating that I felt like a lot of people in my classes like me, you didn't get that. It just felt like really frustrating like, "I'm just not going to say anything because I have nothing to contribute." The only black, female PT in the group happened to have taken an online version of the course, and responded to this conversation with, “I hate that you guys felt that you couldn't speak up. I feel like in a lot of the classes, I'm a voice for African American people. I don't want to be that, but sometimes I feel I have to be.” A white, male PT then shared some thoughts regarding this fear and resistance. “I'm just thinking of people from my hometown who haven't had broad cultural experiences and then coming into a class like that, or if you're thinking, "I'm suddenly being transplanted from this small town to [this urban area] where it's super diverse compared to my hometown. What am I going to do?" Or if you hear on the news or in social media stuff that happens between people getting offended and you're nervous you're going to make some kind of mistake like that.” He continued, “[when you begin the program] you're not really ready for some of those topics.” However, this PT also added that the tutoring experience may have been an opportunity for good fear, “In order to become comfortable with something in order to gain wisdom, you have to be out of your comfort zone.
The fear and the uncomfortable feeling around it is absolutely necessary. Honestly, after the [tutoring experience], I noticed that the group of teacher candidates shrunk quite a bit. I think it was good. That fear was good. It will either tell you I want to do this, or I don't want to do this.”

Demystification of diversity. The PTs also expressed a feeling of resistance or fear when coming to this urban University, however, they felt that their cross-cultural tutoring experience was a positive way to demystify some of those preconceptions. A white male PT explained, “Coming into teaching especially coming into [an urban] school, I had the vision in my mind like those '90s movies like Dangerous Minds. All those where they could be throwing chairs at me. It really isn't. [The cross-cultural tutoring experience] was a really good experience to totally get that out of my brain. It can be culturally diverse, and everybody's not at war with each other all the time. It's totally cool, we can do this, so it was positive in that way. Kind of changed my perception a little bit.” A black, female PT echoed this feeling of demystification, “I think seeing it, seeing different people come together in a room is amazing. I still worked with a kid who was the same color as me, but I think just seeing coaches work with students who were different, which is beautiful to me. It's not something that I see. A lot of you know that I didn't come from [this state], I came from Illinois, so I didn't really see diverse cultures interacting back there, it's just one thing or another thing. When you come here, it's like a whole bunch of things. Just seeing that, I think it's amazing.” Another white female PT added, “Probably especially too, if you are from somewhere that is majority white students, I think there were like five African American people in my hometown and that's about it and everybody else was white. It's something you just don't experience especially if somebody is feeling intimidated by it or really worried about it or anxious for whatever reason, then that's a really good situation to be in because it is one-on-one or small groups, so then you can be okay. If you had this insane fear you
can put it to rest because it's low pressure, low stress, just one-on-one. I think it could be
beneficial in that way if somebody was feeling that kind of anticipation.”

The environment and structure of the tutoring program lowered fear and anxiety. One PT
stated, “I think it's beneficial with the one-on-one environment and also seeing the whole diverse
class. To have that experience and be like, "Okay." It's kind of a reassuring thing.” Other
comments regarding the experience included “eye opening, “wonderful” and “positive.” Another
PT added, “Just that self-realization. Just that little tiny moment of, "Oh yeah, it's okay." I see all
these people working together and it can happen in a positive.” Expanding on this, another PT
explained, “It's nice to see, like what you were saying, the room of people from lots of different
backgrounds working together and then seeing even not just PTs, but there were a couple staff, I
think one of the athletic directors was volunteering with people, so there was a wide variety of
people who were all coming together for this mutually beneficial purpose.

**Development toward greater levels of cultural competency.** Moving from themes of a
reduction of fear and resistance and demystification of diversity, I narrowed the focus in on
cultural competency. PTs in the focus group provided their own definition of cultural
competency, and then when presented with a copy of Cross’s (1988) Cultural Competency
Continuum (see Appendix C), they were asked to describe where they would place themselves
when they began their tutoring experience, and where they would place themselves now. PTs
agreed on the definition of the first participant who replied, “I think cultural competency is just
the ability to work with people that are different from you and understanding their culture, and
their background and where they come from and integrating that into your classrooms. Making
sure kids are seeing that in the classroom library or experiencing that through community circles
or activities where they're working with other students to gain a better understanding.” After
agreeing on this definition and using Cross’s (1988) descriptors on the Cultural Competency Continuum, PTs provided the following responses regarding their self-assessment generally placing themselves currently at the proficient level:

PT 4: “Now, I think I'm at the percent mark [cultural proficiency], which is honoring the differences among cultures seeing diversity as a benefit and then respect a variety of cultural groups. That just comes, I'm at really diverse schools, so just interacting with students on a daily basis. I'm learning about where they come from and my students are comfortable enough to talk about their cultural differences. [When I was in the tutoring program] I think I was at the numbers sign [cultural pre-competence], which is recognizing that lack of knowledge, experience and understanding of other cultures limits your ability to effectively interact with them. I think I was there because I was willing to understand other cultures. I realize that I do come from a town where there's not as much diversity, so I did feel that if I would have understood my students' culture a little bit more I would have been able to more effectively interact with them. I definitely feel like I'm there now and I feel like I'm always going to be working to better understand my students. Each year, I think I'll go back and have to move up the scale again as you're developing relationships with your students, just because everyone's different and you're always learning about people. You don't want to assume that just because they come from a certain culture that they're a certain way.”

PT 5: “Yeah, me too. I feel like when I came in, I was the number sign [cultural pre-competence] because, like I said, back home is very black and white. I didn't have experience with other cultures or other races until I came to [this city]. Then now, in
student teaching and practicum experience I've been able to interact with students from all over the place. I think that's pushed me to the percent sign [cultural proficiency]. Just getting that experience with everybody. Interacting with students, I think that's the most important thing. The interaction. It beats taking classes and everything.”

PT 3: “I think just the nature of my career before I came to school kind of had me at the carrot [cultural competence], because of my job, what I was doing working with other cultures. As soon as I got into the schools, I felt myself moving backwards toward the pound sign [cultural pre-competence], I think now, I'm working up in the percent sign [cultural proficiency]. I'm really making sure I'm keeping myself knowledgeable and up to date on everything, and different kids if they're a culture that I've never heard of before. If they're from someplace I've never even heard of, I do my research, and what type of language they speak so that I can know something about that, so I think I'm working in the percent area [cultural proficiency].”

PT 6: “I would say that freshman year, I didn't feel myself at the number sign [cultural pre-competence], but I think I responded to that by kind of thinking like the star sign [cultural blindness]. I think I recognized that I had this huge lack of knowledge and experience based on where and how I grew up. To respond to that, just like a deer in the headlights with my heart on my sleeve, I wanted to do something too but I didn't know how, so I just acted like there wasn't a difference and just tried to approach everything just like a blank slate which I think is a response that's heartfelt, but not actually competent. Throughout this program, I think I'm now striving and trying to live in the
percentage realm [cultural proficiency] because there's such a difference between recognizing your lack of knowledge and then turning that into honoring the differences that everyone brings into the classroom. I would say for me, my interpretation of what that means, that's like the biggest part of it, is honoring those differences and approaching those differences with a completely open heart, whether that means just saying, "I don't know, let me research. Tell me, show me" and seeing that diversity as benefit. It's not that there isn't diversity, it's that there is and it's a really beautiful and beneficial thing."

PT 1: “I would agree with everybody. Definitely started out in the asterisk [cultural blindness] and pound sign [cultural pre-competence], but just because it was a lack of experience and knowledge, and didn't know what to do or like there was an issue with that really because I never experienced it. Now, I'm also working with a large Russian culture at my school, and I've never experienced that culture really before in my life, so it was just that recognizing that it's different than my own and that they have different, whatever. All of our ELLs are Russian speaking. Recognizing that and also honoring that in a classroom and allowing them to share things. With our kindergartners, we always allow them to share what they're doing in their lives and a lot of them go to church on Sunday, but they get to share that in the class. It doesn't matter, just letting them share that and honor that, so I definitely see myself now more Toward the percent sign, which is really honoring that, and knowing the benefit of being able to interact with people of diverse cultures.
Each PT expressed growth on the continuum; many assessing themselves as culturally blind or pre-competent at the beginning of their tutoring experience, and growing from collective experiences to a level of cultural proficiency.

**Experiential learning as it relates to cultural competency.** PT’s emphasized the value of cross-cultural experiences over teacher preparation coursework concentrating on cultural competency. However, so far, it was not clear to the extent that the tutoring experience contributed to long-term, sustainable growth toward cultural competency when accounting for multiple field experiences in their program. So, I asked them to tell me specifically. Two PTs reported that they didn’t feel any long term impact from their tutoring experience, but that other experiential learning opportunities such as their practicums “where you're working more regularly with a group of students or a classroom were probably the most beneficial.” One PT even stated: “I would say, not really through the [tutoring experience] moved me up the scale, but more so, my experiences being in the classroom and watching students of different backgrounds interact with each other, with yourself and that sort of thing, would definitely move up.”

After some reiteration of this idea, one PT offered a different perspective, “I do think the tutoring experience was beneficial, the progression makes sense. If we had just dove into all these classes, and we skipped those hours in the [tutoring experience], then it would have been hard to picture back. It gave you just an experience to refer back to. A baseline. Something to start with. A kid to picture in your head to make it real, not so abstract. I think that was really important, just to think of the angle. You're not learning all this information for nothing, it's for these kids. I think that was really beneficial and important.” From that comment, more discussion of this pattern continued, “It really was doing something almost subconsciously at that
point” and “If you were to ask me at the end of that class freshman year, how was that tutoring experience in that course? I think I would have said that it's my favorite class at freshman year because it's your first time that you were able to work with students, and I do think that it kind of... We don't realize it now because we've had so many more experiences, but I think it really did make me more culturally competent and more open to working with other students. It was a good first positive reaction that made me want to keep going in the program.” One PT whose student was not from a different cultural background spoke up, “I would have liked to have been immersed in that a little more. Especially since that was my first experience out of school in a school district as diverse as this. I remember being a little disappointed about that. I wanted to work with a kid ... who was ELL or something like that to really challenge myself. It's challenging enough, but it was cool to see everybody else doing it so I was kind of jealous.” Another comment from a PT had a similar message, “I feel like the class freshman year really illustrated that and as I've learned more and gained more of those strategies through the rest of the courses, it starts to, it like adds value to the experience that I see, solidifies it. It shows this is what's important and here's what you can do to help that be even more valuable for the kids.” Furthermore, another PT described how, “looking back, the tutoring experience was beneficial, and I equate it more to what I'm doing now than those other experiences [such as the 10 hour classroom observations or 30 hour field experience]. To get more clarity, I asked “When you say beneficial, do you mean beneficial in regards to cultural competency, or how are you defining beneficial?” The PT replied, “Either way really, because in the classroom for the 10 hours they're like, "Oh, you're a first year student" so you didn't really get to work a lot with the students. Sometimes I got to take a small group and do spelling or whatever, but we're only there for an hour a day and it's random. Sometimes I was there during math, sometimes there during
spelling... One time I was there during lunchtime, so she just had me making copies.” These responses indicated that most PTs saw the tutoring experience as part of a cumulative sequence of experiential learning opportunities, each building upon the previous.

PTs communicated that the tutoring experience was essentially an “application of cultural competency theories that were at least attempted to be taught in some of our later classes.” At this point in the focus group session, there was a lot of cross-talk in agreement and a meaningful statement emerged, “[Exposure to people from diverse cultures] is needed more than the equity class or talking about cultural competence. It's actually when you're talking to a fifth grader and they're sharing their culture with you and there's not any barriers or any discomfort. That to me is more important.”

It was clear that some PTs did not immediately see the impact of their cross-cultural tutoring experience, but through this reflective discussion, most of them concluded that the experience was an essential part of a progression toward cultural competency. An example of this was when a PT stated, “Having the chance to build those relationships in a safe environment where you're actually interacting and learning to notice and respect and honor someone else's culture, and having it be a two-way street, should be happening as often as possible. If you can have that begin freshman year, especially if you're also working on the basics of teaching or even if you're having that interaction over a book with a child. I think that's incredible.” One PT floated the idea that perhaps instruction related to cultural competency should come in the training for the tutoring experience, but immediately others disagreed. One PT stated, “I don't think the cultural competence talks need to come that early in your educational experience. I think if you're passionate about becoming a teacher, you're aware of it at the beginning. I think the most important thing is just working with diverse students.” Continuing with this notion,
another PT explained, “I think [the tutoring experience] was a great opportunity, especially for freshmen or people early on in their education program to be placed in an environment like that because I think it's pretty indicative of what most teachers are going to be seeing, which is good and positive. We should be trained to learn how to perform well in those situations.”

Several PTs also touched on longitudinal application of their experiential learning from a curriculum and instruction perspective, such as this PT’s comment on how he was able to make real connections to his tutoring experiences during subsequent coursework, “When you got to Curriculum Instruction, you're revisiting those things, you can remember back and it gave you a lot of classroom abstract, like where you're going to use this stuff to help these kids. Well, you've already helped a kid to think back to.” In addition, one PT noted that in the course on cultural competency, students would bring up the child they had worked with in their tutoring experiences.

**Interactions and relationships.** One factor of experiential learning that continued to be a part of PTs responses during the focus group was the value of the interactions and relationships that developed during the tutoring experience. As one PT re-iterated, “Having that chance to build those relationships and having that safe environment where you're actually interacting and learning to notice and respect and honor someone else's culture and having it be a two-way street” was instrumental in growth toward cultural competency. Other PT’s shared anecdotes that highlighted their relationships they remembered from three years ago. For example, “Sometimes my students that are of color and they eat different foods at home and they come from different cultures, they're like, ‘Oh, you don't know what we're talking about. That's okay, we'll explain it to you, it's fine.’ To have that sort of relationship with the student I think is really powerful and we can just laugh about it. It's fine, even though it's a bigger subject.”
In addition to building relationships with their students, PTs also recognized the value in interacting with the student’s families. One PT stated, “I think for me it was an eye opener just because I had the experience of working with a special needs student. I was able to build a relationship just because the mom was there, that was a big piece of it. We always were talking and she really wanted to get to know me personally and I really appreciated that. It was a really positive, eye opening realization. Like I said before, this is really what I want to do and I want to work with all different types of students.” Another PT concluded, like in parent-teacher conferences “interacting with parents from other cultures and even parents who don't speak the same language… and still trying to build those relationships with the parent, which ultimately helps relationships with your students, I think is really powerful.”

A PT even made direct connection between relationships formed during the tutoring experience and her long-term development, “For me it was very beneficial, especially now looking back on [the tutoring experience]… even though I haven't thought about it in a long time. That really was the first time I was able to work with a student one-on-one. Maybe I have the skills I do now because it was so positive and I was able to build that relationship.”

Curricular and instructional impact. The PTs were concluding their final week of student teaching following the focus group interview. They shared with me some anecdotes from their student teaching placements. Considering the connections they made between their tutoring experiences and where they are now on the cultural competency continuum, their related stories contribute to understanding the ways in which their cultural competencies are being applied. One PT shared, “The classroom I'm in right now is so open and honest and we do have all these diverse populations. I think all the kids feel really safe in sharing things about their culture. Then we always stop if somebody ever offends somebody else from another culture. We
have a classroom meeting to talk about it. I think a lot of it is just the awareness and also being willing to have those hard conversations, even with first graders or whoever about this stuff so the kids are aware.” An additional example a PT shared was, “We had this conversation in my class the other day because we always watch the CNN student news to start the day. They were doing some interview with the director of homeland security, the terrorist watch list person. They were talking about how do people get on this list, and how can you make this list more effective in catching people? One girl was like, "Maybe if somebody's wearing a turban then they should go on the list." I asked the students, “What do you guys think about this?" We had a conversation about not generalizing a population based on skin color or religion or anything like this because that's like if I said, "Man, this one kid in Miss Tucker's class was the worst student ever and I had a horrible interaction" so I'm going to assume the rest of you are all horribly behaved children. They're like, "That's not fair." I was like, "You can't do that with anybody else then." It was just interesting and they were like, "Oh, okay, yeah." Another PT admitted, “Then sometimes I feel like I don't know when to have those kinds of conversations with my students. This is something I'm asking my cooperating teacher, and I've had interviews and I've asked, "How far should you go as a teacher when talking about race? What's okay, what's not okay to say?"

In addition to teachable moments, PTs talked about intentionality with curricular materials. Such as, “When I go choose a book from the library I'm very conscious now. I'm like, "Okay, we're going to build kites. Oh, here's a book with Hispanic kids in it who are building kites." Now I know that sort of thing has to be at the forefront of my mind rather than, "Oh, we have to just teach them to read."

It was also very interesting to hear them discuss situations they have observed in their student teaching experiences related to racism including: “there is a kid in my class right now
who is African American and he's a bigger kid. Something happened in the cafeteria and a staff member was like, "Drop and give me 20." He's a SPED kid too. He's low, and I was just like, ‘I don't know why you would ever think that's okay.’ I'm like, you're a white woman and now there's all these things on top of it. African American, he's overweight, you're doing it in a public setting, and he's lower on the functioning spectrum and you're telling him to drop and give you 20 in a cafeteria full of people. What is wrong with you?” This story and others contributed to understanding the ways in which her cultural competencies were being applied.

**Summary**

This chapter summarized themes related to how a cross-cultural tutoring experience involving prospective teachers impacted their cultural competency. Through a phenomenological, multiple case study, using two subgroups, I collected data using multiple qualitative methods of interview, observation, field notes using a reflexive journal, and document analysis. Through constant comparison analysis and coding I identified themes connected to the tutoring experience including various levels of cultural competency, cultural deficit perspectives, fear and resistance to cultural responsiveness, demystification of diversity, the value of experiential learning as it relates to the development toward cultural competency, and the importance of interactions and relationships to cultural understanding captured in three snapshots, or points in time. I present an analysis of these data and themes as they relate to a deeper understanding of the impact a situated learning experience combined with reflection on the development of prospective teachers’ cultural competencies in Chapter 5.
Chapter 5: Discussion & Conclusion

In this study, I explore the possibility of prospective teachers’ development toward cultural competency, fortuitously or incidentally, as a result of intercultural experiences while tutoring diverse preK-12 students. This chapter presents and evaluates the results of the study. In this chapter, I share comments and quotes from my research in the spirit of respect and humility, acknowledging as fellow researchers do, that “we are all works in progress” (Murdock & Hamel, 2016, p. 86). The first section provides a context for the study leading into a summary of the results supported with related research. Following the summary of the results, I expand on implications in a discussion of the results as they relate to my conceptual framework. Next, a discussion of the results based on literature makes connections between what it means to the community of practice. A section on delimitations and limitations follows. Finally, this chapter addresses implications of the results for practice, policy, and theory, and recommendations for further research.

Summary of the Results

“The ethnic, racial, and cultural backgrounds of students in PreK–12 U.S. schools are becoming increasingly diverse. However, the teacher candidates populating teacher education programs are, overall, not representative of this student diversity” (Barnes, 2016, p. 149). Considering this fact, it is imperative that teacher preparation programs provide prospective teachers with the necessary skills and background to effectively educate diverse populations of students (Miller & Mikulec, 2014; Sleeter, 2001). According to Cross (1988) a teacher’s cultural competency is key to success for all children. Thus teacher preparation programs must seek to cultivate cultural competency – understanding oneself as a cultural being, having an appreciation for, and an understanding of, diverse populations and interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences (Cross, 2008; Gallavan, 2005; Miller & Mikulec,
2014) in their prospective teachers “so that they might, in turn, provide a just and meaningful education for the diverse students and families with whom they work” (Murdock & Hamel, 2016, p. 87-88). Most teacher preparation programs include coursework or a course related to diversity, multiculturalism or culturally responsive pedagogy, however, newly licensed teacher candidates are commonly in need of further development in cultural competencies to teach students from diverse populations (Keengwe, 2010). Furthermore, studies have found that a stand-alone course in a teacher preparation program can actually perpetuate cultural deficit views because of insufficiency of a course to effectively cover culture comprehensively and dismantle stereotypes. Additionally, prospective teachers do not make desired progress toward cultural competency because of their fear of, resentment and/or resistance to multicultural education (Brown, 2004; Larkin, 2012; Lenski, Crumpler, Stallworth & Crawford, 2005; Lockhart, 2009; Sleeter, 2001; Taylor, 2010; Zeichner, Grant, Gay, Gillette, Valli & Villegas, 1998).

Despite disappointing research findings related to the impact of coursework on prospective teacher development toward cultural competency, other studies indicate that when prospective teachers have cross-cultural experiences prior to coursework, they are more likely to glean concepts of cultural competency (Adams, Bondy & Kuhel, 2005; Burant & Kirby, 2002; Hollins, 2011; Keengwe 2010; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). In addition, there is a sustained attitudinal change in prospective teachers when they are required to reflect deeply about the experiences (Dewey, 1933; French, 2005; Gallego, 2001; Hernandez, Morales, & Shroyer 2013; Hollingsworth, 1989; Nussbuam, 1997; Taylor, 2010; Wade, 2000). Because the normative approaches to preparing culturally competent teachers through coursework have limited or inconclusive results, this study explores an alternative possibility of the development of cultural competency of prospective teachers through situated learning, intercultural interaction and
reflection in the case of a community based cross-cultural tutoring experience occurring prior to teacher preparation coursework.

Subsequently, this study is framed on studies conducted by Bennett (2013), Capella-Santana (2003) and Miller and Mikulec (2014) who discovered cross-cultural experience and social interaction effects on dismantling stereotypes and increasing understanding. These studies also indicate the positive impact of fieldwork experiences in culturally and ethnically diverse settings on prospective teachers’ cultural competency. Although, previously published studies examined the development of cultural competency in field experiences tied with coursework, my study adds a unique aspect to their findings because the cross-cultural community based tutoring experience does not directly teach the prospective teachers about cultural competency. I explore how the experience combined with reflection impacts their development of a natural conceptual change toward cultural competency. I have named this experience of incidental cultural growth through situated learning, intercultural interaction and reflection, fortuitous learning. The development toward cultural competency was indeed an added, or unintentional, benefit to the tutoring experience.

My findings are reflective of theoretical models including Hess and Shipman (1965), Engelmann and Bereiter (1966), Deutsch (1967) and others’ Cultural Deficit theory; Larkin’s (2012) Conceptual Change theory; Mezirow’s (1991) Transformational Learning theory; Cross’s (1988) theory on Cultural Competency; Dewey (1963), Vygotsky (1978), Brown, Campione, Schauble, & Glaser (1996) and others’ Situated Learning Theory; and Dewey (1933) and Mezirow’s (1991) theories on Reflection and reveal themes that contribute to the scholastic knowledge base of teacher education programs preparing prospective teachers with higher levels of cultural competency. Through my analysis of data collected through 25 prospective teachers, I
note findings and important implications regarding the preparation of prospective teachers for
diverse 21st century classrooms. Overall my findings relate to (1) the value of early,
community-based field experiences for prospective teachers, (2) how fortuitous interactions
reduce cultural deficit or culturally blind perspectives in prospective teachers (3) how
prospective teachers fear or resist related coursework and (4) how a cross-cultural experience
and reflection lead to fortuitous development toward cultural competency.

Research supports the idea that an early community-based field experience (Bennett,
2013; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Hollins, 2015) combined with reflection (French, 2005;
fortuitously impact the cultural competency of prospective teachers rather than perpetuate the
resistance that typically results from higher education coursework on culturally responsive
teaching or diversity. Although perpetuated stereotypes have been found to emerge with teacher
preparation coursework and classroom based field experiences due to fear and resistance,
community based field work has been shown to move prospective teachers beyond stereotypical
thinking (French, 2005). Because education researchers agree, recent studies such as work by
Thomas and Mucherah (2016) examine the development of prospective teachers through
immersive learning experiences and posit “The cultural gap that can occur between teachers and
students is great and should be addressed through curriculum interventions such as community-
based immersive programs” (p. 369). In addition to experiences in a community setting,
prospective teachers’ benefit from cross-cultural experiences before entering, and adjacent to,
their teacher preparation programs. Hollins (2015) states how effective community-based field
experiences early in a teacher preparation program can be on preparing successful teachers,
“Early and diverse field experiences have been touted as one of the keys to successful teacher
education programs (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1987; Sleeter, 2008; Zeichner, 2010)” (p. 100). My study is situated in a community setting, and prospective teachers engage in the cross-cultural tutoring experience prior to, or at the onset of, teacher preparation coursework. Such early cross-cultural experiences for prospective teachers have been linked to greater openness to diversity and working with children from cultural backgrounds that were different from their own (Adams, Bondy, & Kuhel, 2005; Castro, 2010; Garmon, 2004; Keengwe, 2010; Whipp, 2013).

My study affirms findings of previous researchers including Castro (2010), Lockhart (2009) and Sleeter (2001) who reveal that many prospective teachers enter coursework with deficit or culturally blind perspectives. This is further illustrated in a recent study by Murdock and Hamel (2016) who ask 42 preservice teachers to reflect upon their beliefs, perceptions and biases about students from diverse cultures. Their findings confirm cultural deficit, and also colorblind, views of prospective teachers and contend that prospective teachers are “particularly vulnerable to fear [of addressing issues related to cultural diversity] as they gain experience, confidence and identity as teachers” (p. 100). Understanding that this fear is prevalent among prospective teachers and often impedes cultural competency development, teacher preparation programs with goals to develop prospective teachers’ cultural competency may find more success with alternative approaches that promote growth while remaining relatively safe. In fact, my study reveals that fortuitous aspects of intercultural experiences can reduce, to varying degrees, a cultural deficit perspective of prospective teachers. Considering Phinney’s Ethnic Identity Model (1989), Erickson’s Social Identity Model (1968), and Vygotsky’s (1978) work related to the Zone of Proximal development, placing prospective teachers in a cross-cultural situated learning opportunity during their early years in an undergraduate teacher preparation
program may provide just the appropriate level of disequilibrium related to cultural interactions to promote growth on the cultural competency continuum. Some prospective teachers reported, typical discomfort or fear at the onset of a cross-cultural experience, however at the culmination of the experience they describe a dismantling of these fears, a reduction of racial stereotypes, and exhibit more comfort and engagement with cross-cultural interactions.

However, critical reflection is necessary to promote such growth. Murdock and Hamel (2016) suggest creating “emotionally safe environments for our preservice teachers” and the importance of “engage[ment] in critical reflection” (p. 99) to allow for analysis and learning about oneself as a cultural being. For example, in a non-threatening environment, pre-service teacher engagement in situated learning experiences that cause them to realize a discrepancy in their beliefs, incorporating reflection on such incongruity may lead to a change in their worldview (Dewey 1963; Gallego, 2001; Hollingsworth, 1989; Larkin, 2012; Mezirow, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). Therefore, field experiences alone, without embedded critical reflection risks the perpetuation of previously held stereotypes. In fact, a recent study by Peters, Fragnoli and Bloom (2016) examining changes in student teachers’ White racial identity and color-blindness following a semester of student teaching in diverse classrooms actually finds “student teachers were more color-blind about institutional discrimination and blatant racial issues at the conclusion of student teaching.” (p. 1). Whereas, a recent study by Barnes (2016) encourages prospective teachers to better understand diverse communities through a community inquiry project coupled with reflection. “An analysis of the reflections of three participants demonstrates how contact with the people and places of the community influenced their understandings of the community itself as well as of themselves as future teachers” (Barnes, 2016, p. 149). My study reveals that an early situated learning experience where 25 prospective teachers engage with
students and families from cultures different from their own in a community setting that incorporates critical reflection contributes to their development toward cultural competency.

My phenomenological multiple case study design explores the impact of the cross-cultural tutoring experience on the phenomenon of prospective teachers’ fortuitous development toward cultural competency at two different points, in currency and in a sustained piece. The focus of my study is not the case, but the insights that contribute to understanding the development toward cultural competency in prospective teachers. I, therefore, study two groups of prospective teachers including potential pre-service teachers (PPSTs) who engaged in the tutoring experience during the study and pre-service teachers (PTs) who participated in the tutoring three years prior. After multiple readings of the data, carefully analyzing the data through coding and categorizing, themes from the data begin to reveal that prospective teachers come into preparation programs with varying levels of cultural competency, and that for the majority of those prospective teachers, particularly those who begin with deficit or culturally blind perspectives, a situated, cross-cultural learning experience is a less-threatening approach to begin a process of conceptual change through deconstructing stereotypes and developing cross-cultural relationships.

An additional finding worth noting is, PTs who were completing their teacher preparation program and who participated in the cross-cultural tutoring program three years prior explain that the experience was a gentle way to begin cultural competency work and was pivotal to their continued work throughout the program which for many, built on this initial experience and over time has contributed to their development of culturally responsive pedagogy. This is significant when considering the incredible attempts to increase the cultural competency of prospective teachers through coursework, books, trainings, and strategy work and the fact that the level of
cultural competency of too many novice teachers is still lacking. The significance of my study strongly relates to Castro’s (2010) meta-analysis which reveals research findings that prospective teachers who do not engage in cross-cultural experiences maintain cultural deficit views, and “fail to recognize institutional inequity and do not see how their own biases and stereotypes as future teachers perpetuate these inequities” (p. 203). Findings are significant because of possible implications for the practice of preparing teachers, policy around teacher licensure and theory related to the relationship between early field experience, fortuitous learning and the development of cultural competency.

**Discussion of the Results**

Themes from data provide further insight into Cultural Deficit Theory, Conceptual Change and Transformational Learning theories, Cultural Competency, Situated Learning Theory, and theories on Reflection as they relate to the development of prospective teachers in the case of a cross-cultural tutoring experience.

**Cultural deficit theory.** Cultural deficit theorists view individuals from non-mainstream cultures as inferior (Bolima, n.d.; Engelmann and Bereiter, 1966; Hess & Shipman, 1965), and as Martin Deutsch (1967) outlines, not able to sustain middle class values and expectations in the education system. While I discuss how data from the onset of my study reflects this theory, I also feel it is important to mention that my findings illuminate some prospective teachers who describe views reflective of cultural pre-competence and cultural competence. However, in general when PPSTs are asked how they felt about working with students from diverse backgrounds, their responses are more reflective of cultural deficit or color blind perspectives. Previous studies such as Sleeter (as cited in Castro, 2010) explain that many White prospective teachers fail to recognize the pervasiveness of racial inequity, holding deficit views about, and lower expectations for, students of color, denying the very significance of race in their practices.
through a colorblind approach. Data from this study illustrate this, for example, PPSTs communicate how they view parents from diverse backgrounds as a challenge, particularly if the parents speak a language other than English. One PPST explains, “I expect the parent to be there physically but maybe not all there mentally. It would honestly make me more nervous to have a parent watch what I am doing. I do not do well with micromanagement. At the same time I think it will be very beneficial to have the parents learn the techniques as well so that way the child can continue to learn throughout the week.” Another PPST states, “I've never really seen the parents. They never come up or talk to me when they drop them off. I don't even know if they know what’s going on here. It's difficult because I'm used to parents wanting to know what's going on. I don't think they don't want to know, but it's weird that they don't ask or have some form of communication.” Similarly, another PPST comments that the parents don’t care and don’t want to know what happens during tutoring.

In addition to cultural deficit perspectives, when asked what they had learned about themselves and working with students from diverse populations during the first few weeks of tutoring, responses were more reflective of cultural blindness, or “acting as if differences among cultures do not exist and refusing to recognize any differences” (Cross, 1988). For example, one PPST replies, “My student is in second grade, so I don't know if she's entirely aware of diversity issues. It hasn't really been something I've thought of really because ... I mean, I've thought about it, but it wasn't something that was on my mind dealing with a second grader. I don't know if I could bring it up and ask, like maybe ask what kind of character she wants. I don't know how to handle that. I've always personally tried to look past that kind of stuff, so it never once occurred to me that a second grader might have their own personal views on diversity.” Furthermore, my field notes reveal some PPSTs not accepting a student’s vernacular during a spelling game,
ignoring parent input or questions, and frustration about difficulties in communication. Each of these examples relate to research on cultural deficit theory, which blamed the child's social, cultural or economic environment as being "depraved and deprived" of the elements necessary to achieve the behavior rules and role requirements and, until dealt with, would limit the academic progress of culturally deprived students (Bolima, n.d.; Engelmann and Bereiter, 1966; Hess & Shipman, 1965).

Although not all PPSTs’ responses and behaviors reveal themes of cultural deficit and blindness perspectives, the plethora of data that do leads me to question further the appropriateness of solely delivering coursework related to diversity or cultural competency to prospective teachers who have not had significant prior cross-cultural experiences, especially when previous research reveals that it can perpetuate these deficit viewpoints. Both previous research, and my findings lead me to believe that it is essential to explore other avenues of developing both cultural self-awareness, and providing opportunities for interactions to naturally develop cultural competency to the point where perhaps prospective teachers are ready to meaningfully engage in, and even embrace, culturally responsive practices. I conclude this, particularly in light of the prevalent theme that emerged from the initial data which was the value PPSTs placed on interactions with children in the tutoring program. Answers to questions regarding goals for the experience and what they were looking forward to included, “I think using my skills in interacting with all sorts of people and personalities will be a great exercise,” “My goal for this tutoring experience is to connect to the children I am assigned too. I want to learn about them,” and “I will have to learn how children interact with a teacher and their environment.
Conceptual change and transformational learning. Larkin’s (2012) conceptual change theory is a “valuable framework for understanding how teachers change their ideas about the pedagogical implications of student diversity (Paine, 1990)” (p. 2); particularly if teachers’ current perspectives reflect cultural deficit theories. Larkin describes conceptual change as the transformation from one’s personal view, particularly to the degree a person holds true to that view/conception. Mezirow’s (1991) theory of transformational learning is also important to consider in relationship to experiences and conceptual change. Mezirow (1991) writes that perceptions change through transformed meaning schemes as a result of “several disorienting dilemmas” (p. 159). Findings throughout the tutoring experience as well as at the culmination are incipient as far as to claim conceptual change or complete transformational learning, but also remarkable, as one piece of a jigsaw puzzle can add a small amount of information that can contribute to the thinkers’ understanding of the image as it develops. Findings from this progressed point in the study can contribute to teacher educators’ overall understandings of how the cultural competency of prospective teachers can begin to develop instead of perpetuation of existing stereotypes and fears, fortuitously through an experience and reflection. First, PPSTs express growth and change regarding the views of the families and children they worked with, essentially beginning to demystify preconceptions and fears. Miller & Mikulec's (2014) study notes the importance of demystifying diversity, or providing an experience with diversity, rather than relying on a conceptual presentation of diversity in coursework which is “often viewed by pre-service teachers as an intangible concept” (p. 22). The use of the term demystification of diversity captures much of the data as PPSTs progress through the tutoring experience. Conversely to initial deficit model themes, as the experience unfolds PPSTs discuss a realization of parent’s desire to be involved and to see their children succeed. For example, a PPST says
“Despite the parents' language boundary, it was so nice seeing how invested in their child's education and progress they were in! I really enjoyed it.” There is seemingly an overall reduction of assumptions based on cultural background as well. Relative comments include, “don't assume that they have the same background,” and “don't assume that they feel a certain way about this because of where they're from.” This demystification happens fortuitously through PPSTs interactions and can be explained through Larkin’s (2012) theory of conceptual change. Larkin describes conceptual change as the transformation of one’s personal view. This transformation begins with an experience that disrupts a particular viewpoint, such as a cultural deficit view, then if an alternate conception is intelligible, plausible, and/or fruitful an individual modifies his or her conception.

Similarly, Lee, Eckrich, Lackey, & Showalter (2010) describe an individual’s cultural map, or schema, as shaped through experiences. PPSTs who explain that they simply had not experienced interacting with other cultures, as well as PPSTs who explain that they are familiar with interacting with other cultures, comment on how their tutoring experience helped them understand more about others. Overall, many comments from PPSTs echo the sentiment expressed in this quote: “I think the tutoring experience supported me in my professional journey in terms of experience interacting with youth and youth of other cultures.” The experience was also impactful for PPSTs who claim to have had former significant cross-cultural experiences. A PPST who identifies her race as Hispanic explains, “Coming from the south where there is a great Hispanic population, it was nice to have that familiarity with my girl. It was good for me to see the diversity of [the urban area]. Living on campus without a car, you don’t get to go to very many places that you can’t walk to. It was good to see so many people from a neighborhood that I’ve become a part of.” Another PPST comments on the impact the
experience has on her attitude toward diverse populations: “My attitude toward people and schools and other people I don't know definitely changed. I was really nervous coming somewhere that no one I know is from, and I knew everyone and everyone's brothers and sisters in my elementary school and middle school and high school. Then coming here, I didn't know anyone. My attitude changed toward [an urban population] in general.”

One PPST’s process of demystification comes through an interaction which brings her from a culturally blind perspective to realizing how the dominant cultural impacts her student differently. She explains this in a focus group session, “One time, actually, when I just had the girl, she was asking me about who I was voting for because ... She actually physically said, "I hate Donald Trump because he's going to send me away." I didn't know what to say to that because that's not something that really affects me and I ignore it most of the time. I just tried to switch subjects but she kept bringing it up. I had to grab [the director] at one point and I was like, "I really don't know what to say to her," so [the director] talked to her about it for a little, and then we went back to what we were doing. You have to be fully aware of just what they hear around in the world and how it's going to affect them and their background. That was something I had never even thought of, of her bringing that up to me at all. That was just a bigger reality check for me; that we definitely come from different areas. I hadn't really thought about how different we really were until she said that to me a couple weeks ago.” For this PPST, the experience of interacting with her student, naturally leads her to an awareness or realization that a culturally blind perspective is insufficient. This kind of subtle interaction pushes her to recognize cultural difference in a good way, whereas prior to this experience she would “ignore it most of the time.” She experiences a conceptual change as a result of this interaction, even though she was not presented with the idea through teacher preparation coursework.
Cultural competency. In this study, the theory of cultural competency is based on the work of professor, author, social worker and founder of the National Indian Child Welfare Association, Terry Cross and the Cross Model of Cultural Competence (1988) (see Appendix C). “It describes cultural competency as movement along a continuum that is based on the premise of respect and appreciation of individuals and cultural differences” (Mak, 2002, p 1). Cultural competency is understanding oneself as a cultural being, having an appreciation for, and an understanding of, diverse populations and interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences (Cross, 2008; Gallavan, 2005; Miller & Mikulec, 2014).

Cultural competency and PPSTs. When I ask PPSTs to identify where they would place themselves on the Cultural Competency Continuum (Cross, 1988) at the culmination of the study, they indicate either growth in cultural competency or no change after participation in the tutoring experience. Adding to these data from PPSTs’ self-assessment, during field observations I notice patterns of behavior that indicate growth on the cultural competency scale. These patterns include attitude changes, an increase in cross cultural interactions, development of relationships and cultural consideration when selecting curricular materials and instructional strategies.

Also worth considering, is how multiple PPSTs indicate that they view themselves to be in the cultural competence and culturally proficient stages of Cross's continuum at the onset of the study, however, during the final focus group session, the group discussion reflects a wrestling between cultural blindness and cultural pre-competence. This indicates that participants perhaps have a perceived level of cultural competence that may or may not coincide with their actual levels of cultural competence. Two PPSTs still feel it is important to ignore cultural differences when it comes to instruction, while others are clearly understanding that is not the ideal.
approach, but aren’t quite sure how to articulate cultural responsiveness. For example, when I ask, “What have you learned about yourself in working with students from diverse populations?” the first response from a participant is, “I'll go for the generic answer, that I tried to look past it and I don't really… try to not consider it when working with the student as best as I can… when I'm working with them, I try to focus on the work.” The second, response is, “I’m very much aware of [a student’s cultural background]… I think you have to be aware of it, and you have to realize that's where they're from. You have to have some sort of sensitivity. I don't know how to say it, but you have to kind of ... Not treat them differently, but treat them with a different level of sensitivity maybe than a middle class white kid that you'd be teaching or something.” When I probe further and ask him to tell me more about cultural sensitivity, he replies, “Flushed out. I don't know. I guess, you can't ... I'm trying to think of a good example. I just feel like I do, but I don't know. Maybe I don't, because I can't think of an example. Now I'm confused.” A third participant jumps in to try to help flush this out. This is the participant who has the interaction with her student regarding Donald Trump, and she explains how that interaction helps her realize cultural differences in a beneficial way. This glimpse of part of the focus group conversation highlights how the group begins to wrestle through cultural blindness and cultural pre-competence. As the discussion progresses, they indicate that they are beginning to understand the value of understanding a child’s cultural background, but they don’t seem quite sure how to navigate it, or even if that is the right approach. Although, at first this may indicate a backwards movement on the cultural competence continuum whereas on their initial questionnaires they had revealed commentary reflective of cultural competence, I believe this is because the experience of tutoring children of different cultural backgrounds provides a context in which their views on
diversity become pragmatic. They are beginning to really understand how their perspectives will have a direct impact on students as well as how they will teach.

I find it interesting that the PPSTs use the term ‘cultural sensitivity’ during the final focus group interview. I think this may be an indication of cultural incapacity, in that they are expressing an expectation that they are to be sensitive to a student's culture, as if it were inferior to the dominant cultural (cultural deficit). I wrestle with whether they are “lacking a sense of themselves as cultural beings, resulting in their assumptions that their own cultural lenses represent the norm for all other students” (Castro, 2010, p. 198), or perhaps they are trying to tell me that recognizing cultural differences is essential in pedagogy. As they continue to wrestle with my question about what is meant by cultural sensitivity, one participant explains, “My English professor had a really good example of having sensitivity in the classroom. He said that in the 60s or 70s he was teaching a class for illiterate black women. He said he was very empathetic but he was ill-equipped and he was really foolish and he said, "Let's write stories about our lives." I guess he got in a lot of trouble with them because they got really upset because their lives were so traumatic that they didn't want to relive it and remember what they've been through. They definitely didn't want to write it and share with a classroom and share with him, which he's like this white doctor college professor guy, you know? I think that's a good example, I guess, that you have to be very aware of people's situations. Children's situations and their lives. You're right, you don't want to be like, "Oh, let's write about our families,“ when some kids don't have families. Their families live in cars and they don't want to tell the class about it. Don't want to write about it.”

**Cultural competency and PTs.** The second group of participants, PTs, provide a very clear definition of cultural competency and assess themselves in general at the culturally
proficient level, while also acknowledging that they would continue to grow and develop in this area and move up and down on the continuum in different points in their lives. During data collection, PTs agree on the definition of the first participant who comments, “I think cultural competency is just the ability to work with people that are different from you and understanding their culture, and their background and where they come from and integrating that into your classrooms. Making sure kids are seeing that in the classroom library or experiencing that through community circles or activities where they’re working with other students to gain a better understanding.” After agreeing on this definition and using Cross’s (1988) descriptors on the Cultural Competency Continuum, PTs self-assess, generally placing themselves as culturally blind or pre-competent at the beginning of their tutoring experience, and growing from collective experiences to a current level of cultural proficiency.

**Situated learning.** Situated learning theorists suggest that social interactions and intercultural experiences provide opportunities for people to develop cultural understanding and knowledge (Bennett, 2013; Capella-Santana, 2003; Dewey, 1963; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Vygotsky, 1978). Findings from my study support the value of situated learning as it relates to the development toward cultural competency. Prospective teachers explain that the tutoring experience helps them break down previous fears or resistance related to working with students from diverse populations, begin to demystify or dismantle stereotypes, begin to form cherished cross-cultural relationships and gain more confidence with working with students who are culturally different from themselves. Following the situated learning experience of cross-cultural tutoring, some PPSTs report that the experience helps build their self-confidence around interacting with others who come from different cultures. In particular, one PPST writes in her final questionnaire response, “I have never actually had the experience to interact extensively 1-
on-1 with a black child before the tutoring, and I would say I had a slight nervousness about it. This experience definitely made me feel more comfortable.” Another PPST reports, “I think the tutoring experience supported me in my professional journey in terms of experience interacting with youth and youth of other cultures.” And yet another example from final questionnaire responses, “I have grown more confident in myself by getting to work with such a diverse group of students and cultures. Although I went into this class wanting to make a change in my tutee’s life. I think more than anything [my student] has changed me and in a way we both changed together. This experience has given me a lot valuable skills that I know will help me as a teacher in the future.” Through interaction, and building relationships during the tutoring experience, PPSTs are able to begin to dismantle previous fears or stereotypes, and feel open to this work rather than more fearful and resistant to concepts of diversity.

**Sustainability.** Including a second group of participants in my study who are farther along in their teacher preparation program is immensely valuable, not only in confirmation of themes from the first group, but also to explore if and how the cross-cultural tutoring experience impacted their overall development toward cultural competency considering that they are currently full-time student teachers who are weeks away from graduation and then probable licensure. In a focus group session, I ask PTs to recall their tutoring experience as well as other factors that have contributed to their development toward cultural competency. Their responses support previous literature, in that PTs overwhelmingly describe reactions of fear and resistance to a teacher preparation stand-alone course on equity and diversity. Their focus group responses also reveal a similar theme of demystification of diversity through situated learning.

Two PTs do not immediately see the impact of their cross-cultural tutoring experience, but through this discussion, most of them conclude that the situated learning experience was an
essential part of a progression toward cultural competency. Once a PT offers her perspective, others begin to agree and add to her conclusions: “I do think the tutoring experience was beneficial, the progression makes sense. If we had just dove into all these classes, and we skipped those hours in the [tutoring experience], then it would have been hard to picture back. It gave you just an experience to refer back to. A baseline. Something to start with. A kid to picture in your head to make it real, not so abstract. I think that was really important, just to think of the angle. You're not learning all this information for nothing, it's for these kids. I think that was really beneficial and important.” From that comment, more discussion of this pattern continues, “It really was doing something almost subconsciously at that point” and “If you were to ask me at the end of that class freshman year, how was that tutoring experience in that course? I think I would have said that it's my favorite class at freshman year because it's your first time that you were able to work with students, and I do think that it kind of ... We don't realize it now because we've had so many more experiences, but I think it really did make me more culturally competent and more open to working with other students. It was a good first positive reaction that made me want to keep going in the program.” Another comment from a PT has a similar message, “I feel like the class freshman year really illustrated that and as I've learned more and gained more of those strategies through the rest of the courses, it starts to, it like adds value to the experience that I see, solidifies it. It shows this is what's important and here's what you can do to help that be even more valuable for the kids.” Furthermore, another PT describes how, “looking back, the tutoring experience was beneficial, and I equate it more to what I'm doing now than those other experiences [such as the 10 hour classroom observations or 30 hour field experience]. PTs communicate that the tutoring experience is essentially an “application of cultural competency theories that were at least attempted to be taught in some of our later
classes,” and that, “[Exposure to people from diverse cultures] is needed more than the equity class or talking about cultural competence. It's actually when you're talking to a fifth grader and they're sharing their culture with you and there's not any barriers or any discomfort. That to me is more important.” These data relate to a recent study by Bodur (2016) who finds that teacher preparation programs that combine fieldwork and coursework impact prospective teachers’ multicultural beliefs and attitudes positively. In my study, several PTs also touch on longitudinal application of their experiential learning from a curriculum and instruction perspective, such as this PT’s comment on how he is able to make real connections to his tutoring experiences during subsequent coursework, “When you got to Curriculum Instruction, you're revisiting those things, you can remember back and it gave you something concrete to help you understand where you're going to use this stuff to help these kids. Well, you've already helped a kid to think back to.” In addition, one PT notes that in the course on cultural competency, prospective teachers would bring up the child they had worked with in their tutoring experiences. As one PT re-iterates, “Having that chance to build those relationships and having that safe environment where you're actually interacting and learning to notice and respect and honor someone else's culture and having it be a two-way street” was instrumental in growth toward cultural competency. Hawkins (2016) calls these experiences that later can be referred back to and contribute to overall, sustained learning, micromoments “based on the notion that learning progresses slowly over time, via many small steps (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 57)” (Hawkins, 2016, p. 1). Hawkins posits that attention to these micromoments is imperative because “the arc of learning is one whose genesis is demonstrated in minute, or micro, moment-to-moment occurrences. Insofar as the goal of a sociocultural approach is to illuminate underlying social processes of learning as they lead to cognitive development” (Hawkins, 2016, p. 1).
**Reflection.** Mezirow (1991) states that, “Reflection is the process of critically assessing the content, process, or premise(s) of our efforts to interpret and give meaning to an experience” (p. 104). Mezirow’s theory confirms that, “transformative learning cannot happen unless critical reflection is involved at every stage” (p. 125). Thus transformative education requires prospective teachers to examine basic foundations, systems, and contingencies that unconsciously drive their attitudes, perceptions and ultimate decisions and consider the impact of their perspectives, or worldview, on learners (Lichau & Sanchez, 2012). The situative nature of this study provides prospective teachers with intercultural interactions as well as opportunities for interpretive reflection. My study reveals, as does Anders and Richarson (1991), Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann (1985), French (2005), Gallego (2001), Hollingsworth (1989), and Taylor (2010) that reflection on cross-cultural interactions, and prospective teachers’ own learning based on those interactions, is critical to their cultural understandings. Additionally, studies such as Milner (2006) have found that situative learning in which prospective teachers’ work with diverse urban populations alone perpetuated racial stereotypes, but when situated learning was compounded with reflection, prospective teachers had deeper cultural and racial awareness and insight and were able to bridge theory and practice. Rodgers (2002) reiterates Dewey’s belief that “reflection needs to happen in a community, in interaction with others and reflection requires attitudes that value the personal and intellectual growth of oneself and of others” (p. 845). In my study, I also find that prospective teachers reflect most deeply when engaging orally in group discussions and value in re-evaluating experience even through retroactive lenses.

Prospective teachers who engage in the cross-cultural tutoring experience have opportunities for reflection including weekly group debriefing sessions and a final written
reflection at the end of the term. Participants in my study also have additional opportunities to reflect through their participation in an online questionnaire at the beginning and end of the study and focus group interviews that involve reflective discussion. My study’s fortuitous nature remains pure, even with reflections because PPSTs are not prompted to reflect solely on culture, diversity, or multicultural issues alone. They are asked many questions about their experience including how they felt about working with children from diverse populations. For a complete list of questions, please refer to Appendix B.

Upon review of participants’ interpretive reflections, both written and oral, I am able to determine whether entries and responses demonstrate cross-cultural experience effects on development toward cultural competency through use of Cross’s model (1988). I was hoping to see evidence in the PPSTs written reflections that through this experience, they were becoming more aware of themselves as cultural beings, and beginning to broaden their world view through reflecting on their interactions and experiences with diverse families. However, in general their responses on the final written reflection and online questionnaires are quite limited. In a study by Kaywork (2011) on analyzing reflective practices with prospective teachers, she finds that prospective teachers share difficulty with getting their thoughts down on paper in an organized manner and appropriate length, and they feel that the written reflections did not “do justice” in providing an appropriate format for them to reflect about their teaching day. However, Kaywork explains that the prospective teachers also meet with each other and the researcher weekly for reflective discussion which gives them the opportunity to thoroughly express their thoughts and reflect on their teaching experiences. In my study, I also find that prospective teachers reflect most deeply when engaging orally in the focus group discussions. Consequently, I believe the data with the most validity originates from oral reflections gleaned from the focus group
interview format. Patton (2015) claims that the focus group format “increases the meaningfulness and validity of findings because our perspectives are formed and sustained in social groups” (p. 475). Especially because PPSTs are already a part of a working group sharing the experience and debriefing regularly and used to working and growing together, interviewing them in a group setting provides not only increased meaningfulness and validity, but also a comfort level that promotes a deeper willingness to share. Patton notes that group interviewing may feel more familiar as most people are “not accustomed to one-on-one inquiries” (p. 475). Patton (2015) also explains that an advantage of interviewing in a group setting is that “our interactions with each other are how we come to more deeply understand our own views, test our knowledge, get in touch with our feelings, and make sense of our behaviors” (p. 475).

Although I did not request written reflections from the second group of participants (PTs), a similar theme that the focus group format in and of itself is a valid avenue for reflection and growth can be gleaned through observation of one particular PT. At the start of the focus group discussion, she begins with comments that reflect cultural blindness such as “I came from a town that's very white. I would say we didn't have a lot of diversity in my hometown, but coming here, I didn't expect anything, but it was nice to work with [students from diverse populations]. I don't think it was anything that was overwhelming. It was just like, she's just like every other kid.” However, toward the end of the session, after listening to comments from her peers and engaging in discussion with them, she begins to make comments that reflect pre-competence such as how she wishes for more opportunities to engage with others from cultures different from her own. She explains, “That would have been so valuable to [interact deeply with] a person of color [in our coursework], somebody different from me, it would be so valuable to feel safe and like asking questions, admitting, "I don't know this, tell me, can you
explain to me your perspective." As seen through this PT, reflection and discussion leads to an ability to think critically about one’s beliefs which is a necessity for greater cultural competency (Nussbaum, 1997).

I acknowledge that findings related to the second group of participants, PTs, include retroactive data in that PTs are asked to recall and reflect on their experiences with cross-cultural tutoring three years later. With every question posed, respondents had to first comprehend and then retrieve relevant information (A. Owusu-Ansah, personal communication, September 8, 2016). Retrieving a response requires PTs to recall or share an opinion. One could question the validity of encoding experiences three years prior, particularly because cognitive psychologists and neuroscientists agree that there is a fundamental difference between short term memory and long term memory. Short term memory is a temporary storage system whereas long term memory is a greater enduring storage system, although decay or forgetting occurs, individuals can retrieve memories for many decades (Tourangeau, Rips, & Rasinski, 2000). Although earlier research suggests that recall can be improved by matching the context of their recall to the context in which they encoded the information originally (Godden & Baddeley, 1975; Lee et al, 1999; Tulving & Thomson, 1973), Fisher and Quigley (1992) find that reinstating context is not necessary, i.e., it is not necessary to physically recreate the original encoding context at the time of recall. This is because people can imagine the original context at the time of recall. People are able to put themselves back in the state they were in when they first encoded or encountered the information they are currently being asked to recall.

It’s worth noting that although data collection occurs three years later, the PTs explain a continuous cycle of reflection involving their experiences with cross-cultural tutoring. PTs comment that during the tutoring sessions, the impact of cross-cultural interactions were not as
apparent to them, but when they began to discuss culturally responsive teaching and cultural competency in their coursework, and as they engaged in later field experiences, they would draw on their early tutoring experience. Therefore, even if preliminary growth toward cultural competency was not initially perceived, over time through reflection, the impact the cross-cultural experience had on their development became more apparent. This process may be supported by the experiential learning research of Boud et al (1985) who emphasized reflection as a tool to learn from an experience. These researchers identify reflection as a process that looks back on experience to obtain new perspectives and inform future behavior in three stages: 1. Returning to an experience; 2. attending to feelings; and 3. re-evaluating the experience.

Furthermore, Bova and Kroth’s (2001) research findings indicate that the results of incidental learning can be valuable, although they may not immediately be recognized as such.

**Fortuitous learning.** I define fortuitous learning as: incidental learning that “generally takes place without much external facilitation” (Marsick & Watkins, 2001, p. 30), and occurs due to a combination of situated learning and reflection. There is research evidence that prior intercultural experiences develop cultural self-awareness and intercultural understandings in pre-service teachers (Adams, Bondy & Kuhel, 2005; Burant & Kirby, 2002; Hollins, 2011; Keengwe 2010; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). My study as well as Milner’s (2006) work, suggests prospective teachers can begin to deepen their intercultural understandings before exposure to theory and practice.

Although I discuss this budding, potential theory further in a subsequent section of this chapter on implications for theory, I would like to share a particular experience during my field observations which highlights this notion. I note an unexpected event in my reflexive journal describing a PPST who was in the children’s library trying to find books to use with her reader
about two hours before the tutoring sessions started. She asked me for help as I was walking by. I helped her find a book by the call number, and when I pulled it off the shelf, she said “Ya that’s it, its African American Poetry.” She said, “Can I ask you a question, and I don’t even know if it’s okay to ask?” I said of course she could. “Is it good or bad to be finding a book related to African Americans because my reader is African American?” I replied that it’s good to look for books that are reflective of a reader’s culture.” The tutor replied, “okay, that’s good. I wasn’t sure if that was okay.” It is worth emphasizing here, that although the participant was taught to consider a child’s instructional reading level when selecting materials, she had not previously received any instruction regarding culturally responsive pedagogy and literature selection.

Instead, a natural and fortuitous curiosity stemmed from her work with her student as to what type of literature to select that would best meet the child’s needs and match the child’s interests. The experience sparked a curiosity in a manner that lead her to asking me the question, she was motivated to discover how to meet the needs of a learner in relationship to culture.

As my discussion of results thus far explains, findings from my study add to the body of knowledge that contributes to understanding how a cross-cultural tutoring experience can fortuitously impact prospective teachers’ development toward cultural competency, which is the central research question. As discussed, findings also reveal that most first-year undergraduate students who have formally indicated an interest in becoming teachers (PPSTs) see themselves in the cultural competence and cultural pre-competent zones on the Cultural Competence Continuum (Cross, 1988) before the cross-cultural tutoring experience and at the cultural competence or culturally proficient zones after the tutoring experience. However, their responses on online questionnaires, during focus group sessions and on a final written reflections generally mirror the descriptions of cultural blindness or cultural pre-competence.
year pre-service teachers (PTs) enrolled in the teacher preparation program, who participated in a first-year ten-week cross-cultural tutoring experience three years prior place themselves as culturally competent or culturally proficient on the Cultural Competence Continuum (Cross, 1988) and explain how they are continually moving toward those zones. Findings also reveal information on how both groups of prospective teachers begin to change their views on working with students from diverse populations, largely through the demystification of diversity.

**Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature**

Higher education is primarily using coursework to develop cultural competency in prospective teachers. The literature, on the other hand, based on ethnographic, phenomenological, and case study research, contends that cultural competency is resisted in coursework (Brown, 2004; Larkin, 2012; Lenski, Crumpler, Stallworth & Crawford, 2005; Lockhart, 2009; Sleeter, 2001; Taylor, 2010; Zeichner, Grant, Gay, Gillette, Valli & Villegas, 1998). For example, Brown (2005) explains, many prospective teachers do not make progress in stand-alone courses that focus on diversity because of their “resentment and/or resistance to multicultural doctrine, instruction, application, and interaction” (pp. 325-326). Instead, a stand-alone course can actually perpetuate a cultural deficit view of students from diverse student populations:

These pre-service teachers rely on stereotypes that they have learned from the media or their parents, for instance. Thus, the examples a teacher employs in a lesson, the nature of questions posed, how students are allowed to express themselves, and whose knowledge is validated (or not) in the classroom (Apple & King, 1990) point to mismatches that must be understood and overcome through cultural and racial interactions. (Brown, 2005, p. 353)
Brown’s and others’ conclusions, suggest that cultural and racial interactions are a vital component of preparing prospective teachers who will be responsive to the diverse needs of students in today’s classrooms rather than resistant to the concepts of multiculturalism presented in teacher preparation coursework. Therefore, the identified gap I address in this research is between the current community of practice in higher education, namely coursework to address cultural competency, and literature findings of resistance and fear rather than development of cultural competency. Thus, this study examines an approach using fortuitous learning through situated learning, intercultural interaction and reflection and reveals an impact on development toward cultural competency in prospective teachers in lieu of relying on a conceptual presentation of diversity in coursework.

More specifically this multiple case study focuses on exploring fortuitous growth toward cultural competency through a cross-cultural tutoring experience that takes place in a community setting prior to formal teacher preparation. My study examines prospective teachers’ reflections and observes their behaviors, providing qualitative data that shows most prospective teachers experience some level of development toward cultural competency through the cross-cultural tutoring.

I use qualitative research methods consistent with the literature. For example, my study is based on previously published studies by Bennett (2013) as well as Miller and Mikulec (2014), who examine the development of cultural competency in field experiences tied with coursework. My study, however, has a unique aspect to it because the cross-cultural community based tutoring experience does not directly teach the prospective teachers about cultural competency. My study combines aspects of data collection procedures from three recently published research studies, Bennett (2010), Hillstrom (2014) and Miller and Mikulec (2014), including online initial
and final questionnaires, focus group interviews, observation, and document review of written reflections. I immerse myself in the tutoring experience each week for the entirety of the sessions. I devise tight layers of confidentiality, employ several measures for trustworthiness, and disclose and wrestle with bias. A literature-based case study analysis using the data coding process of constant comparison analysis is employed to examine data gleaned from multiple forms of collection methods for similarities and to identify themes (Glasser, 1965). Using pattern matching, or comparing themes to outcomes (Yin, 2014), I compare the descriptive data to the Cultural Competence Continuum to identify growth toward cultural competency (Cross, 1988).

**Delimitations and Limitations**

My study is delimited to a maximum of 13 weeks which is the duration of the tutoring program each year in the spring. My sample size is also delimited to 19 students from the 26 who registered and agreed to participate in the study. I intended to use purposive sampling, to select information rich participants to participate in the focus group interview sessions using the responses from the online screening questionnaire and/or recommendations from the program director, however, a limited number of students were willing to be interviewed. Therefore, I include anyone who was willing to participate in the focus group sessions. Although this adds an additional constraint, other data collection methods incorporate data from a greater diversity of participants.

**Implication of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory**

I understand that my research results are not necessarily generalizable. However, I would like to discuss possible implications for the practice of preparing teachers, policy around teacher licensure and theory related to the relationship between early field experience, fortuitous learning and the development of cultural competency.
Practice. I hope that understandings illuminated by my research about how potential teachers develop toward cultural competency may be applied with caution to teacher preparation programs. Building on previous research on the implications of early, community based, cross-cultural field experiences, the results of my study imply a benefit to teacher preparation program practices. Specifically, in consideration of a cross-cultural field experience in a community setting either before, or at the onset of teacher preparation coursework. In my study, I find that prospective teachers increase their levels of cultural competency through a cross-cultural tutoring experience as reflected on Cross’s Cultural Competency Continuum (1988).

Furthermore, my study can contribute to the findings of other related studies which have shown that early and diverse community-based field experience is one of the keys to successful teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1987; Hollins, 2015; Sleeter, 2008; Zeichner, 2010). Providing an intercultural experience early, or at the onset of a teacher preparation program, provides an opportunity that can help prospective teachers dismantle stereotypes and reduce the fear and resistance that typically accompanies related teacher preparation coursework. Such early cross-cultural experiences for prospective teachers have been linked to greater openness to diversity and working with children from cultural backgrounds that were different from their own (Whipp, 2013; Adams, Bondy, & Kuhel, 2005; Garmon 2004; Castro, 2010; Keengwe, 2010). Additionally, community-based field experiences, or experiences that happen outside of the PreK-12 classroom, have the power to transform the ways that novice and prospective teachers think about the effects of schooling and social factors on their students’ lives and consider cultural and institutional expectations of what it means to be a teacher (Coffey, 2010; Hollins, 2015).
Policy. Considering the increasing rate of students from diverse populations in preK-12 classrooms, it is imperative that teacher preparation programs provide candidates with the necessary skills and background to effectively educate diverse populations of students (Sleeter, 2001, Miller & Mikulec, 2014). With a growing body of research indicating a resistance to coursework related to the development of culturally competent teachers, and the effects of cross-cultural situated learning, state licensing agencies may also want to examine their policies related to administrative rules for teacher licensure and requirements for cross-cultural situated learning clinical experiences.

Potential theory. Considering the typical resistance found in prospective teachers to the development of cultural competency when it is explicitly taught in their teacher preparation coursework (Brown, 2005; Larkin, 2012; Lenski, Crumpler, Stallworth & Crawford, 2005; Lockhart, 2009; Sleeter, 2001; Taylor, 2010; Xu, 2001; Zeichner, Grant, Gay, Gillette, Valli & Villegas, 1998) and the findings of my study, continued exploration on fortuitous learning may contribute to theory on development of cultural competency in prospective teachers. Potential theory on fortuitous learning and its relationship with the development of cultural competency should also consider the location and timing of the situated learning experience as well as the integration of critical reflection. Related research studies that examine early, cross-cultural situated learning either take place within a school setting and/or include explicit instruction related to multicultural education, diversity, cultural competency, or culturally responsive teaching practices (Bennett 2013; Capella-Santana, 2003; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). My study explores possible impact on the development of cultural competency in prospective teachers through situated learning, without any training around cultural competency or without being embedded in a school setting. I develop a definition of fortuitous learning based on previous
research on incidental learning and previous research on reflection. In my study, fortuitous learning is incidental learning that “generally takes place without much external facilitation” (Marsick & Watkins, 2001, p. 30), and occurs due to a combination of situated learning and reflection. My study’s fortuitous nature stems from previous research on incidental learning by Marsick & Watkins (2001), who suggest enhancing incidental learning because of significant implications for “adult education because of its learner-centered focus and the lessons that can be learned from life experience” (p. 25). They argue that “informal and incidental learning take place wherever people have the need, motivation, and opportunity for learning” (p. 28).

According to Marsick & Watkins (2001) the origins of the theory of incidental, learning:

have been reviewed by us (Marsick and Watkins, 1990) and by Garrick (1998). In these reviews, informal and incidental learning have been linked to related concepts, such as learning “en passant” (Reischmann, 1986), the distinctions several others have made between formal, informal, and nonformal learning (Coombs and Ahmed, 1974; Mocker and Spear, 1982; Jarvis, 1987), social modeling (Bandura, 1986), experiential learning (Boud, Cohen, and Walker, 1993; Kolb, 1984), self-directed learning (Candy, 1991; Knowles, 1950), action learning as a variant of experiential learning (Revans, 1982), action science (Argyris and Schön, 1974, 1978) and reflection in action (Schön, 1983), critical reflection and transformative learning (Mezirow, 1991), tacit knowing (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995; Polanyi, 1967), situated cognition (Scribner, 1986; Lave and Wenger, 1991), and communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). p 26

Incidental learning takes place without a specific motive or a specified formal instruction (McGeough, 1942; Watkins and Marsick, 1992). Research on incidental learning is not new, but stems primarily from studies related to the workplace, and it is commonly understood as learning
which occurs as a by-product of something else (Bova & Kross, 2001). According to Garrick (as cited in Bova & Kroth, 2001) it is often thought of as an invisible or intangible form of learning that rises spontaneously. According to Bova and Kroth (2001), “Incidental learning is unintentional and unexamined. It is not based on reflection; thus the learning is embedded in the learner's actions” (pp. 3-4). Because incidental learning is not based on reflection, I use the term fortuitous learning in this study instead to combine the concepts of incidental learning and reflection.

Although, the relationship between incidental or fortuitous learning and the development toward cultural competency has not been examined in previous research studies, Mealman (1993) examines incidental learning through a case study on adults in a non-traditional degree program and claims several outcomes a learner might anticipate through incidental learning including increased competence and increased self-knowledge.

Marsick & Watkins also point out that fortuitous learning “generally takes place without much external facilitation or structure” (p. 30). Milner’s (2006) work, also suggests that students begin to deepen their intercultural understandings before exposure to theory and practice. A cross-cultural tutoring experience has the potential to circumvent the production of resentment and resistance, and instead, cultivate learning fortuitously though social interactions, cross-cultural experiences and reflection. Garmon’s (2004) exploratory study of one student’s development of multicultural awareness before, during and at the end of a teacher preparation program attributes growth in relationship to disposition and self-awareness, early intercultural interactions and field experiences, followed by multicultural coursework. Garmon concludes that “multicultural teacher education courses and field experiences are certainly important tools for developing students’ awareness of and sensitivity to diversity” (p. 211). However, he
emphasizes that experiential factors may be significant to a prospective teacher’s readiness to learn from their coursework. This concept is supported in my study through prospective teachers who participate in the cross-cultural tutoring experience three years prior and who conclude that the experience contributed to their overall development toward cultural competency as the progressed through other field experiences and coursework in their teacher preparation program.

Additionally, it is important to reiterate that this tutoring experience takes place in a community setting, where participants are not exposed to guidance from a licensed classroom teacher. A study by French (2005) finds that a cultural divide and perpetuated stereotypes have been found to emerge with classroom based field experiences, but community based field work has been shown to move prospective teachers beyond stereotypical thinking. Zeichner (1996) confirms that classroom field experiences vary in the quality and clarity in which they exemplify culturally competent practices. They also only provide a singular view of both the teacher and the students. Surprisingly, research examining the impact of school-community fieldwork on pre-service teachers’ cultural competency is lacking (French, 2005; Hollins, 2015). However, Hollins (2015) recent book, Rethinking Field Experiences in Preservice Teacher Preparation, defines community-based field experiences and provides an explanation of variations and recent studies. According to Hollins (2015), community-based field experiences are:

Field experiences in teacher education that take place in non-school venues… and have the goal of prompting teacher candidates to explore how school and community histories shape instructional practices and curricular goals and how families and schools interact within these contexts. (p. 115)

Hollins also states how effective early community-based field experiences can be on preparing successful teachers, “Early and diverse field experiences have been touted as one of
the keys to successful teacher education programs (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Feiman-Nemser & Buchman, 1987; Sleeter, 2008; Zeichner, 2010)” (p. 100). Finally, Hollins posits that these field experiences, which happen outside of the classroom, help prospective teachers “re-envision who they might become as a professional self… [as] teachers mediate their stories of self with the cultural and institutional expectations of what it means to be a teacher” (p. 101). My study’s design incorporates these findings related to community based field experiences, and remains fortuitous through this approach as well because participants are not being guided or influenced by a cooperating teacher, instead their own experiences and reflections are drivers of their learning.

In addition to theory related to the development of prospective teachers, experiential learning in cross-cultural situations could be advantageous approaches to professional development for in-service teachers. Newly licensed teachers in particular are commonly in need of further development in cultural competencies to teach students from diverse populations even though most teacher preparation programs include coursework related to diversity, multiculturalism or culturally responsive pedagogy (Keengwe, 2010). Considering current professional development practices for teachers including book studies and workshops/courses/seminars on cultural competency or culturally responsive teaching strategies, teachers in the United States are still searching for ways to improve their pedagogy when working with students from diverse populations. Perhaps a situated learning experience outside of the classroom would be a more essential, more enduring approach to professional development. The fortuitous nature of a cross-cultural situated learning experience does not ask individuals to change their attitude, or retrain their thinking. When planning professional development for teachers, just being open to the opportunity to provide cross-cultural interaction
and planned oral, group reflection to let them grow may be effective, because of the fortuitous nature.

**Recommendations for Further Research**

Recommendations for further research come directly from the data, primarily resulting from delimitations of the study. If replicated, I suggest improvements to qualitative methodology such as an increased, diverse sample size. I would also suggest a longitudinal study using the same participants spanning from the onset of their teacher preparation program through to their first years of teaching, into the field, to better understand the relationship between their situated learning experience and their long-term development of cultural competency.

An alternative recommendation with potential to inform literature is for an in depth exploration of prospective teachers’ process of conceptual change, particularly from culturally blind perspectives to cultural pre-competence. This could be explored in relationship to micromoments (Hawkins, 2016) or gradual development of competencies. Additionally, comparing conceptual change and perspectives when prospective teachers are presented with the limitations of a culturally blind perspective during a course on cultural competence, with those who participate in a cross-cultural situated learning opportunity may have potential to inform literature.

Furthermore, further research on reflection coupled with incidental learning has the potential to inform literature on cultural competency development in new ways. The findings of my study reveal that prompted oral reflection is pivotal to fortuitous learning related to cultural competency. Specifically, future research should continue to examine, the various types of reflection that have the potential to contribute to fortuitous learning.
Conclusion

I explore the impact of a 10-week, cross-cultural, community based tutoring experience conducted prior to teacher preparation coursework on prospective teachers’ development toward cultural competency. This phenomenological multiple-case study reveals a possible alternative approach to the development of cultural competency of prospective teachers through what I refer to as fortuitous learning, which involves situated learning, intercultural interaction and reflection. Findings from my study add to the body of knowledge that contributes to understanding how a cross-cultural situated learning experience can fortuitously impact prospective teachers’ development toward cultural competency, which is the central research question. Other related research studies that examine early, cross-cultural situated learning either take place within a school setting and/or include explicit instruction related to multicultural education, diversity, cultural competency, or culturally responsive teaching practices (Bennett 2013; Capella-Santana, 2003; Miller & Mikulec, 2014). My study explores impact on the development of cultural competency in prospective teachers through situated learning experience in a community setting, without any training around cultural competency. In conclusion, findings indeed reveal prospective teachers’ development toward cultural competency through this approach of an early, community based situated learning experience involving intercultural interaction and reflection; and also reveal information on how prospective teachers begin to change their views on working with students from diverse populations. Although further research is necessary to support these findings, I am optimistic about continued development in understandings about methods to increase the cultural competency of prospective teachers, and moreover the potentially positive impact of increased levels of budding teachers’ cultural competency on the diverse learners of today’s PreK-12 classroom. As Banks et al. (2005) exclaim, “all teachers
need to develop cultural competence in order to effectively teach students with backgrounds different from their own” (p. 237).
References


Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/pqdtglobal/docview/305012318/abstract/8341EB3657DE4771PQ/1?


Online Initial Questionnaire

These questions will be administered using a Qualtrics questionnaire. Included as an introduction to the questionnaire will be the following statement:

Thank you for participating in my research study on how the tutoring experience associated with your Becoming a Reading Coach course impacts your development toward becoming a teacher. Please complete this questionnaire before you begin your tutoring sessions. Completing this questionnaire will take you approximately 10-20 minutes. Your responses will be kept confidential, and once you submit your answers, your name will be removed and replaced with a code so information cannot be linked to you.

1) What is your name?
2) Please briefly describe yourself (who you are, where you are from, etc).
3) Describe how are you feeling about participating in the tutoring sessions associated with the course called Becoming a Reading Coach.
4) Describe how you are feeling about working with children who are struggling readers.
5) Describe how you are feeling about working with children from diverse cultural backgrounds.
6) What are your expectations regarding interacting with the children and their parents?
7) What are your goals for the tutoring experience?
8) How do you think this tutoring experience will support you in your journey toward becoming a teacher?
Appendix B

Focus Group Interview Questions for the Potential Pre-service Teachers

Welcome: My name is Carrie Kondor I am a doctoral student and professor in reading here at Concordia. It’s my pleasure to introduce you to _____. She is a fellow doctoral student who will be assisting me today. I would like to welcome you and thank you for participating in this group interview today. I truly appreciate your time and willingness to discuss your tutoring experiences.

Purpose: The purpose of this focus group interview is to gain more understandings about how the tutoring experience impacts your development toward becoming teachers.

Benefits: Information you provide will help teacher education programs understand how to better prepare potential teachers for success in the field of education. You could benefit from this by reflecting on your experience and how it supports your development toward becoming a teacher through personal response and discussion.

Guidelines (adapted from Krueger (2002)):
There are no wrong answers but rather differing points of view. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said. Keep in mind that I’m just as interested in negative comments as positive comments. You’ve probably noticed the technology. We're tape recording the session because I don’t want to miss any of your comments. People often say very helpful things in these discussions and we can't write fast enough to get them all down. We will be on a first name basis tonight, but let’s avoid using names if possible, and I won’t use any names in my reports to keep your responses confidential. I will moderate the conversation by asking questions and encouraging responses from everyone. If anyone feels that we are getting off-topic, let’s help the group to stay focused by saying something like “Let’s bring it back to…”

Questions:
What has been the best part of tutoring so far? Why?
Describe something that has been challenging during the experience.
Discuss your understandings of your students at this point.
What have you learned about yourself? About others?
What have you learned about teaching struggling readers?
What have you learned about yourself and working with students from diverse populations?
What attitude changes can you attribute to the Reading Coach program experience?
Describe something that has surprised you during the experience.
What will you take with you as you become a teacher?

Ending: Would any of you like to make a final statement, perhaps one that summarizes the experience in tutoring?
Thank you so much for your time and willingness to participate. Upon transcription of the session today, I may follow up with some of you if I have more questions by requesting individual interviews.

Possible Follow-up Interview Questions:
Note: During the focus group interviews, I may identify two or three participants who have more information to share and conduct a further private interview if needed during the mid and end points of the study. This will be a semi-structured interview that will begin by asking participants to respond further, or expand on their answers to, one or more of the original questions posed during the focus group interview sessions.
Appendix C

Focus Group Questions for Pre-service Teachers

Welcome: My name is Carrie Kondor I am a doctoral student and professor in reading here at Concordia. It’s my pleasure to introduce you to ____. She is a fellow doctoral student who will be assisting me today. I would like to welcome you and thank you for participating in this group interview today. I truly appreciate your time and willingness to discuss your tutoring experiences.

Purpose: The purpose of this focus group interview is to gain more understandings about how the tutoring experience associated with the course EDU 200 Becoming a Reading Coach has impacted your development toward becoming teachers, particularly in the area of cultural competency.

Benefits: Information you provide will help teacher education programs understand how to better prepare potential teachers for success in the field of education. You could benefit from this by reflecting on your experience and how it supports your development toward becoming a teacher through personal response and discussion.

Guidelines (adapted from Krueger (2002)):
There are no wrong answers but rather differing points of view. Please feel free to share your point of view even if it differs from what others have said. Keep in mind that I’m just as interested in negative comments as positive comments. You’ve probably noticed the technology. We're tape recording the session because I don't want to miss any of your comments. People often say very helpful things in these discussions and we can't write fast enough to get them all down. We will be on a first name basis tonight, but let’s avoid using names if possible, and I won't use any names in my reports to keep your responses confidential. I will moderate the conversation by asking questions and encouraging responses from everyone. If anyone feels that we are getting off-topic, let’s help the group to stay focused by saying something like “Let’s bring it back to…”

Questions:
Describe your tutoring experience when you participated in Becoming a Reading Coach during your first year.
How has the tutoring experience impacted you in your current role as a student teacher?
What was it like to interact with a student/parent from a culture that was different from your own?
How do you define cultural competency?
What impact do you think the experience in the reading coach program has had on your cultural competency?
Looking back at when you were enrolled in the Reading coach program, where would you have placed yourself on the Cultural Competency Continuum? Why? (a copy will be provided- see below)
The best you can, using the descriptions below, where are you on the Cultural Competency Continuum after tutoring? Now? Why?
Were there any connections between what you learned from the tutoring experience and what you learned in coursework you completed during your teacher preparation program that addressed cultural competency or culturally responsive teaching?
Were there other courses or experiences during your teacher preparation program that impacted your development along the Cultural Competency Continuum?

Ending: Would any of you like to make a final statement, perhaps one that summarizes the experience in tutoring and how it has impacted the development of your cultural competency?
Thank you so much for your time and willingness to participate. Upon transcription of the session today, I may follow up with some of you if I have more questions by requesting individual interviews.

Cultural Competency Continuum (Cross, 1988)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&amp;</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>negating, disparaging, or purging cultures that are different from your own</td>
<td>elevating the superiority of your own cultural values and beliefs and suppressing cultures that are different form your own</td>
<td>acting as if differences among cultures do not exist and refusing to recognize any differences</td>
<td>recognizing that lack of knowledge, experience, and understanding of other cultures limits your ability to effectively interact with them</td>
<td>interacting with other cultural groups in ways that recognize and value their differences, motivate you to assess your own skills, expand your knowledge and resources, and, ultimately, cause you to adapt your relational behavior</td>
<td>honoring the differences among cultures, seeing diversity as a benefit, and interacting knowledgeably and respectfully among a variety of cultural groups</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: Symbols are used rather than terms to avoid labeling or ranking competency and to instead emphasize the descriptors.
Appendix D

Observation Tools

During observations I will look for evidence of three essential elements of cultural competency: valuing diversity, having the capacity for cultural self-awareness and being conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact (Cross, 2008). Evidence will be collected by tallying observable behaviors (looks like, sounds like) that relate to the essential elements. Each element is defined by its observable behaviors in the table below. Bold words from the observable behaviors table serve as matrix headings for observation matrices that relate to the behavior descriptions.

**Observable Behaviors Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Essential Elements (Cross, 2008)</th>
<th>Looks Like</th>
<th>Sounds Like</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valuing Diversity</td>
<td>Welcoming and <strong>inviting</strong> of diverse people through engagement with others that reflects an openness (inviting gestures, smiling, eye contact)</td>
<td>Asks <strong>questions</strong> about the student’s background, interests</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Active listening</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Culturally related questions</strong> asked by students and tutors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Incorporate</strong> relatable aspects of students' lives in lessons (Rajagopal, 2011). And/or relate teaching and learning activities to students' experience or previous knowledge (Wlodkowski &amp; Ginsberg, 1995). (Choice of books are of a range of cultures. Uses student-centered stories, vocabulary, and examples) (Rajagopal, 2011).</td>
<td><strong>Discussion</strong> relating to how people are different and how that is valuable</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Acknowledgment</strong> that different interpretations are valid</td>
<td><strong>Incorporate student dialect</strong> into lesson dialogue (Wlodkowski &amp; Ginsberg, 1995).</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourage students to make <strong>choices</strong> in content and assessment methods based on their experiences, values, needs, and strengths (Wlodkowski &amp; Ginsberg, 1995).</td>
<td>Provides opportunities for <strong>self-assessment</strong> (Wlodkowski &amp; Ginsberg, 1995).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Having the capacity for cultural self-awareness</td>
<td>Incorporates <strong>enhancement of meaning</strong> through critical questioning, posing problems, decision making, investigation of definitions, historical investigations (Rajagopal, 2011; Wlodkowski &amp; Ginsberg, 1995).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Continually interact with students and provide frequent <strong>feedback</strong> (Rajagopal, 2011).</td>
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<td>Clarifies misunderstandings by relating it to a difference in cultural norms or values.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shares about culture of self</td>
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<td>Admits what he/she doesn’t know</td>
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<td>Verbally acknowledges a personal belief, value or perception as relating to culture of self</td>
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<td>Asking about behavioral patterns to find out what the behavior means to the person involved (i.e., eye contact is respectful, or direct eye contact is disrespectful) rather than assuming based on the culture of self</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asks others for feedback to check for assumptions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Being conscious of the dynamics inherent when cultures interact</td>
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<tr>
<td>Welcoming, open, <strong>gestures</strong> such as smiling, appropriate eye contact</td>
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<td>Voice <strong>intonations</strong> reflective of a positive, accepting tone</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Facial expressions</strong> that are attentive, interested focused</td>
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<tr>
<td>Not being surprised at pupil success (unless in jest) (appropriate <strong>acknowledgment of success</strong>)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Body language</strong> including leaning in, arms open, mirroring interactive dynamics</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Observation Protocol

Key: + each time the behavior is observed during the observation.

Date: Time: Site:

Valuing Diversity Observation Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Inviting</th>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Incorporate</th>
<th>Enhancement of Meaning</th>
<th>Questions</th>
<th>Discussion</th>
<th>Self-Assessment</th>
<th>Dialect</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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</tbody>
</table>

Having the Capacity for Cultural Self-Awareness Observation Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Clarifies</th>
<th>Admits</th>
<th>Shares</th>
<th>Culture of Self</th>
<th>Asking</th>
<th>Feedback</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Being Conscious of the Dynamics Inherent when Cultures Interact Observation Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Facial expression</th>
<th>Body language</th>
<th>Gestures</th>
<th>Intonation</th>
<th>Acknowledgment of Success</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Reflexive Field Notes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Descriptive Notes</th>
<th>Reflective Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[Description of Environment</td>
<td>[Questions to self, Observations of nonverbal behavior, Interpretations, Feelings/mood, Reactions]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of participants</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Description of individuals engaged in activity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sequence of activity over time</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Interactions</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unplanned events</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participants comments: expressed in quotes</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Appendix E

Online Final Questionnaire Questions

These questions will be administered using a Qualtrics questionnaire. Included as an introduction to the questionnaire will be the following statement:

Thank you for participating in my research study on how the tutoring experience associated with your Becoming a Reading Coach course impacts your development toward becoming a teacher. Please complete this questionnaire with one week following your final tutoring session.

Completing this questionnaire will take you approximately 10-20 minutes. Your responses will be kept confidential, and once you submit your answers, your name will be removed and replaced with a code so information cannot be linked to you.

1) What is your name?
2) Please briefly describe yourself (who you are, where you are from, etc).
3) Describe your experience working with a struggling reader. Was it as you expected? Why or why not?
4) Describe your experience working with a family from a different cultural background. Was it as you expected? Why or why not?
5) How were you able to work toward your personal goals for the tutoring experience?
6) Using the table below, complete one of the following sentences:

 Prior to the tutoring experience the symbol I would use is ___, and after the tutoring experience the symbol I would use is ___.

OR If there was no movement:

The symbol that best describes me is ___.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>&amp;</th>
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<td>negating, disparaging, or purging cultures that are different from your own</td>
<td>elevating the superiority of your own cultural values and beliefs and suppressing cultures that are different from your own</td>
<td>acting as if differences among cultures do not exist and refusing to recognize any differences.</td>
<td>recognizing that lack of knowledge, experience, and understanding of other cultures limits your ability to effectively interact with them</td>
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<td>honoring the differences among cultures, seeing diversity as a benefit, and interacting knowledgeably and respectfully among a variety of cultural groups</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

7) What attitude changes can you attribute to the Reading Coach tutoring experience?
8) How do you think this tutoring experience has supported you in your journey toward becoming a teacher?
Appendix F

CONSENT FORM A

Potential Pre-service Teachers

**Research Study Title:** The Impact of a Tutoring Experience on the Development toward Becoming Teachers

**Principle Investigator:** Carrie Kondor

**Research Institution:** Concordia University

**Faculty Advisor:** Angela Owusu-Ansah

**Purpose and what you will be doing:**

The purpose of this research study is to understand how the tutoring experience that is part of the *Becoming a Reading Coach* course impacts your development toward becoming teachers. We expect approximately 25 volunteers. No one will be paid to be in the study. We will begin enrollment on February 1, 2016 and end enrollment on April 30, 2016. To be in the study, you will complete two online questionnaires. Each questionnaire will take between 10 and 20 minutes to complete. The researcher will also review your final reflection paper at the end of the tutoring experience. Some of you will also be asked to participate in two focus group interview sessions and allow the principle investigator to observe your tutoring sessions. Each focus group interview session will take approximately an hour of your time, and refreshments will be provided.

**Risks:**

Although we do not foresee serious risks, you might feel self-conscious or shy when answering some questions, participating in focus group interviews, being observed, or sharing your reflections. This is normal and you can expect this. We will get many different answers from all different students. There is no right or wrong answer. Throughout the study, you may withdraw at any time, and if you experience discomfort or stress let the researcher know by phone or email or in person that you would like to withdraw (Carrie Kondor, at 503-493-6230, ckondor@cu-portland.edu who works at Concordia University in Portland).

There are no additional risks to participating in this study. Any personal information you provide will be coded and not linked to you, kept securely via electronic encryption and password protected, and you will not be identified in any publication or report. Your responses will be kept private at all times and destroyed 3 years after we conclude this study.

Your grade in the course, *Becoming a Reading Coach*, is NOT related in any way to your participation in this study. Neither your admittance to the College of Education nor academic standing will be linked to participation in this study.

**Benefits:**
Information you provide will help teacher education programs understand how to better prepare potential teachers for success in the field of education. You could benefit from this by reflecting on your experience and how it supports your development toward becoming a teacher through personal response and discussion.

Confidentiality:
This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. The only exception to this is if you tell us abuse or neglect that makes us seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety.

Right to Withdraw:
Your participation is greatly appreciated, but we acknowledge that the questions we are asking are personal in nature. You are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop the study. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. This study is not required and there is no penalty for not participating. If at any time you experience a bad emotion from answering the questions, we will stop asking you questions.

Contact Information:
You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions you can talk to or write the principle investigator, Carrie Kondor (email ckondor@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6230). If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6390).

Your Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study.

___ YES, I agree to the questionnaires that all participants will do.
If I am selected by the investigator to participate in the additional one or two interview sessions, then
___ YES, I agree to this additional interview process.

__________________________________________________________________________
Participant Name Date

__________________________________________________________________________
Participant Signature Date

__________________________________________________________________________
Investigator Name Date

__________________________________________________________________________
Investigator Signature Date
CONSENT FORM B

Pre-service Teachers

Research Study Title: The Impact of a Tutoring Experience on the Development toward Becoming Teachers
Principle Investigator: Carrie Kondor
Research Institution: Concordia University
Faculty Advisor: Angela Owusu-Ansah

Purpose and what you will be doing:
The purpose of this research study is to understand how the tutoring experience that is part of the Becoming a Reading Coach course has had an impact on your development toward becoming teachers. We expect approximately 6 volunteers. Pre-service teacher participants will be compensated with a $25 gift card. We will begin enrollment on February 1, 2016 and end enrollment on April 30, 2016. To be in the study, you will participate in a group interview session. It will take approximately an hour of your time, and refreshments will be provided.

Risks:
Although we do not foresee serious risks, you might feel self-conscious or shy when answering some questions, participating in focus group interviews, being observed, or sharing your reflections. This is normal and you can expect this. We will get many different answers from all different students. There is no right or wrong answer. Throughout the study, you may withdraw at any time, and if you experience discomfort or stress let the researcher know by phone or email or in person that you would like to withdraw (Carrie Kondor, at 503-493-6230, ckondor@cu-portland.edu who works at Concordia University in Portland).

There are no additional risks to participating in this study. Any personal information you provide will be coded and not linked to you, kept securely via electronic encryption and password protected, and you will not be identified in any publication or report. Your responses will be kept private at all times and destroyed 3 years after we conclude this study.

Benefits:
Information you provide will help teacher education programs understand how to better prepare potential teachers for success in the field of education. You could benefit from this by reflecting on your experience and how it supports your development toward becoming a teacher through personal response and discussion.
Confidentiality:
This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and
confidential. The only exception to this is if you tell us abuse or neglect that makes us
seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety.

Right to Withdraw:
Your participation is greatly appreciated, but we acknowledge that the questions we are
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Your Statement of Consent:
I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions
were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study.

Participant Name ___________________________ Date ___________
Participant Signature ___________________________ Date ___________
Investigator Name ___________________________ Date ___________
Investigator Signature ___________________________ Date ___________