ABSTRACT

GARBUTT, BAYLEY KAMAU. Understanding Factors Related to Preservice Teachers’ Attitudes and Perceptions Regarding African American Language (Under the direction of Dr. Jessica DeCuir-Gunby).

In the coming years, more culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students will encounter teachers that do not look or sound like them. With the demographics of students in teacher education programs unlikely to change much during this time, this diversity gap is likely to continue. The present study examined relationships between preservice teachers’ (PSTs) characteristics along with various aspects of their background, and their attitudes and perceptions regarding a specific variety of English, namely African American Language (AAL). The relationship between PSTs’ dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy and their attitudes toward AAL was also assessed. Hierarchical regression analysis indicated no significant relationships between the characteristics of PSTs and attitudes toward AAL. In model 2 a significant relationship was observed between PSTs’ disposition for praxis and attitudes; the final model revealed that PSTs’ disposition for social justice was the most significant predictor of attitudes toward AAL. A higher disposition for social justice was associated with more positive attitudes toward AAL. Cluster analysis revealed three clusters of PSTs with varied and increasing levels of dispositions for praxis, community, and social justice. Analysis of variance indicated that the cluster of PSTs with the highest disposition for social justice, possessed significantly higher attitudes towards AAL than the other two clusters. Altogether, these findings suggest that PSTs’ dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy mattered more than their background characteristics in predicting their attitudes toward AAL. The grouping of PSTs into clusters presents a novel approach to preparing teachers to have fair and equitable mindsets for teaching AAL-speaking students. Teacher education programs can capitalize on this
understanding of PSTs through more precise applications of culturally responsive pedagogy that take into account the dispositions PSTs have for engaging in culturally responsive praxis, being open to community and diversity as well as showing a commitment to social justice.
Understanding Factors Related to Preservice Teachers’ Attitudes and Perceptions Regarding African American Language

by
Bayley Kamau Garbutt

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APPROVED BY:

________________________________________  _______________________________________
Jessica DeCuir-Gunby                  DeLeon Gray
Committee Chair

________________________________________  _______________________________________
Angela Wiseman                          Walt Wolfram
DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my parents: my late father Neil Kenneth Garbutt, who in the 62 years of his life set forth the model of perseverance and gumption by which I gauge any success I attain, and my mother, Yvette Rose Bayley Garbutt, who has unfailingly exemplified the model of unwavering support, guidance and love that I hope to be for my own children. When I count my blessings, I start with them.
BIOGRAPHY

Bayley Garbutt was born on July 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 1986, in Fayetteville, North Carolina. His father was a urologist from Belize, Central America, and his mother is a pharmacist from Jamaica, West Indies. His family, including his two older brothers, stayed with his aunt in Fayetteville for a short time and after he was born, they moved to St. Thomas, Virgin Islands where Bayley grew up and attended elementary, middle, and high school. After high school, Bayley attended the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI) on St. Thomas and earned his Bachelor of Arts in psychology in 2009. It was during his time at UVI making friends with students from other Caribbean islands as well as from other parts of the world that he became interested in language variation and cultural diversity. He completed his undergraduate senior seminar thesis examining the codeswitching behavior of UVI students between conversational contexts. Bayley met his wife, Tiffany at UVI while she was earning her Bachelor of Arts in biology. After she graduated in 2010, they moved to North Carolina to the triangle area of Raleigh-Durham-Chapel Hill, to attend graduate school. Bayley enrolled in the psychology master’s program at North Carolina Central University (NCCU) while Tiffany enrolled in the genetics doctoral program at North Carolina State University (NCSU). Bayley earned his master’s in 2013 from NCCU. He completed his thesis on the development and evaluation of a scale for measuring semantic similarity. In 2015, Tiffany gave birth to their first child, Benjamyn Neil Garbutt. Tiffany earned her PhD in genetics in 2017, completed a postdoc at the University of North Carolina in 2020 and is a science editor for a well-known science publication. Bayley has taught general psychology at Wake Tech Community College, as well as worked part time at a local hobby shop where he picked back up an old hobby building scale plastic Gundam models. He is currently an educational psychology consultant in the medical school at Duke University.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I acknowledge God, for without God nothing is possible, but more importantly with God, all things are possible.

I am grateful for my wife, Tiffany Aimeé Garbutt, her love sustained me throughout this adventure we embarked on together, her courage and perseverance challenged me to exercise my own, and her brilliance kept it all so very interesting even in the dimmest of times.

I dedicated this dissertation to my parents, but my Mom is deserving of more and even more honoring. As all children should feel, though perhaps just most but not all actually ever do feel, I don’t have a good sense of what I as her child can do to pay her back for all she has done for me. Sure, really the only way most parents ever acknowledge this is to say just pay it forward instead: be a good person, do your best, and then if you have children then be a good person to them and do your best for them. Well hopefully the accomplishment of the work here fulfills those in some way.

I am grateful for my dissertation chair Dr. Jessica DeCuir-Gunby, from 2013 she saw that I was capable of more even at that point when I was doubting myself, and she steadily and (extremely patiently) encouraged me to see that capability through. Always timely with witty but no-nonsense advice and practical feedback, add me as one more notch on her already bedecked belt evidencing her thoughtful mentorship.

I am also grateful for my committee members, Dr. DeLeon Gray, Dr. Angela Wiseman and Dr. Walt Wolfram. I appreciate their time, their perspectives and their enthusiasm as they aided the development of my research study. I only have the one case to go off of but it felt like I managed to assemble a super committee.
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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

All children should go to school expecting their teachers to affirm their ability to grow and learn, obtaining the skills and knowledge necessary to lead fulfilling and productive lives. However, more and more students of color encounter teachers that hold negative perceptions related to their heritage, race, and cultural background. One way that teachers materialize their negative perceptions is in their attitudes toward the language of these students. Many students of color speak varieties of English that many teachers consider inappropriate for the school context. One such variety is called African American Language (AAL). AAL refers to the variety of English commonly spoken in African American communities. However, AAL is not exclusively spoken by African Americans nor do African Americans speak exclusively using AAL (Wolfram, 2007). Despite this, for many African American AAL-speakers, their language choice is intimately tied to their sense of identity as African Americans. As a recent study suggests most students (minority and White) prefer teachers of color to White teachers (Cherng & Halpin, 2016). It is likely that teachers of color recognize and value the relationship between students’ language and their culture (Lazar, 2013). The reality is though, that most teachers are White, this will continue to be for the foreseeable future (Boston Globe, 2014, Thinkprogress, 2014). Teachers were less likely to attribute students’ low performance to cultural mismatches in the student teacher relationship than they were to characteristics of the students themselves or their families and communities (Sleeter, 2017). If the goal is to develop ways to get current and future teachers to also recognize and value this relationship, then we must first understand what obstacles must be overcome to attain this goal. Thus, the purpose of the present study is to
understand what characteristics and dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy of preservice teachers (PSTs) are related to their perspectives about AAL.

**African American Language**

African American Language is a variation of the English language spoken by many, but not all descendants of Africans brought to the United States as enslaved labor. It has been given various labels throughout the years, such as Ebonics or Black English, though many other labels suggest a level of inferiority such as broken English, Negro dialect, or slang. Linguists, scholars and researchers have also generated labels such as Black English Vernacular, African American English, African American Vernacular English, and in a more autonomy affirming manner, African American Language.

It is a practiced ritual within the literature for a scholar to provide the context for the various labels, and then provide justification for his or her adherence to a particular one throughout their writing. Linguists credited with conducting some of the foundational research identifying and cataloguing the speech behavior of members of African American communities and schools in American cities in the northeast used the label non-standard Negro English in their writing (Labov, 1968; Wolfram, 1970). The word Ebonics is credited to African American education scholars in the 1970s, most notably Robert Williams, who described the language variety as encompassing the communication behaviors of slave descendants from the United States, West Africa, and the Caribbean. The label then is essentially a portmanteau of ebony, an Afrocentric term signifying an appealingly dark complexion, and phonics which is the study of sound.

In the 1980s to early 90s, labels such as African American English (AAE) and African American Vernacular English (AAVE) became more prevalent as researchers adapted to the
zeitgeist of political correctness in their efforts to legitimize the language variety. The communities of people descended from enslaved Africans were now being identified as African American and terms such as ‘colored’ and ‘negro’ were becoming less commonplace in mainstream discourse. Even referring to people as Black in formal contexts saw fluctuations in usage, though it remains a part of our contemporary mainstream discourse.

The label Black English remains in use to describe the language and speech behavior of African American communities. For his recent book, John McWhorter (2016) fulfilled the tacit ritual of discussing his rationale for using the label Black English over other labels. He contended that, contrary to previous thought, there is little identifiable African influence in this language variety, and so there is little validation for the attachment of African to the label. He challenged the use of vernacular as well, by arguing that ‘Black’ Americans can be identified as Black without using slang or grammatical features associated with the language variety. He argued that vernacular disregards standard speech also employed by Black Americans, and which is covered in his book. To preclude the use of African American, McWhorter asserted that as more people immigrate to the United States from Africa, the demographic designation becomes too imprecise to include in the label.

In more recent years, African American Language has gained momentum in being the central label for the language variety. *The Oxford Handbook of African American Language* anthologizes many of the leading thought pieces which describe the language variety and reinforces its historical significance and legitimacy in the United States (Lanehart, 2015). In the handbook, the editor, Sonja Lanehart, described the label as an all-encompassing term signifying all varieties spoken in African American communities, regardless of differences based on region or demographics, such as Gullah or AAL. She eschewed the attachment of English in an effort to
circumvent sociopolitical discord, such as the debate over how much of the language can be attributable to West African language versus English.

Her justification for African American Language resonates with me as a person who identifies as Afro-Caribbean and the son of a Jamaican, whose country is in an ongoing fight to legitimize the majority spoken language ‘patois’ as the national language. It also suitably corresponds well with the theoretical framework discussed in the next section pertaining to critical race theory and the notion of whiteness as property. I have decided to use the label AAL for this study and I will now comply with the tacit norms in outlining my reasons. In my review of the literature I have noticed the increased adoption of AAL amongst the preponderance of more recent research focused on addressing issues of linguistic prejudice in education, the area my research falls squarely into. And while I do acknowledge AAE has comparable prevalence in the literature, there is typically a time period (roughly from the late 90s to the mid 2000s) where its use increases and then tapers off, then one can observe in most of the literature subsequent to this time period that there is a kind of walled garden within the references cited that fail to extend into the current prevailing zeitgeist that has adopted AAL as the standard (either from this time period, or from disciplines outside of linguistics or education that generally have not remained abreast of current considerations). As for AAVE, I do recognize the value in adding vernacular because as Adger, Wolfram and Christian (2007) suggest it refutes the stereotype that all African Americans speak only this language variety and speak it 100% of the time. However, in conducting the present study I employed the label AAL to align my values with the broader ambitions of social justice education and in this domain there should be no half-measure for risk of a flat-out halting of progress. Regardless of what it is called, as McWhorter noted, the discussion of the language variety is more important than the label used to identify it. With the
development and execution of the present study, I argue that specifically the dispositions and attitudes PSTs have toward this language variety are of tantamount importance if we are to effect change in the experiences of AAL-speaking students in our schools.

Some Features of AAL

AAL is categorized by an extensive set of morphosyntactic and phonological features. Morphosyntactic features refer to grammatical variations of one form of a language that are absent in the standard form of that language. Phonological features refer to variation in the vocalization of a language that is readily distinguishable from known standard vocalizations in that language (Rickford, 1999). A comprehensive analysis of pre-service teachers’ knowledge of these features is not a part of the scope of the present study. However, it can be illuminating to recognize how AAL is distinct from standard American English, and yet be likewise systematic and rule based. The following paragraphs provide brief descriptions of a few key morphosyntactic and phonological features. There are many more rule-governed features of AAL. However, the ones discussed here tend to be the most commonly used and cited for AAL. For a more thorough description of the characteristics and features of AAL, see Lisa Green’s textbook: *African American English: A Linguistic Introduction* (2002).

There are several typical and discernible morphosyntactic features of AAL, such as multiple negation, invariant *be*, zero copula, and third-person plural -*s* absence. Multiple negation, also known as negative concord, refers to the use of two or more negative markers on the auxiliary verb and indefinite pronouns. For example, ‘He didn’t do no work!’ which even with the use of two negatives still indicates ‘he’ did no work. Invariant *be* refers to the use of *be* to denote a habitual behavior, such as ‘Peter be thinking about it,’ which means Peter thinks about it often or all the time. Invariant *be* can also replace “will be” to denote a future action. For
example, ‘Kelly be messing with everything when she get there,’ which indicates that Kelly will mess up everything, when she gets there. Zero copula is the dropping of the verb is or are to denote present states or actions. For example, ‘They late.’ This phrase drops are in denoting their present state of being late for a scheduled event. Third-person singular -s, refers to the absence of subject-verb agreement in the third person singular, such as ‘Jackie hate that boy!’

Some phonological features which are typical in AAL include consonant cluster reduction, labialization, and deletion of l after a vowel. Consonant cluster reduction is the reduction of words ending in t or d with two or more consonants, particularly when the word precedes a word beginning with a vowel. For example, rest is vocalized as res, such as in the phrase, ‘where’s the res of them?’ Labialization refers to the substitution of /θ/ for /θ/, such as wif for with in the sentence, ‘I brought these chairs wif me.’ Lastly deletion of l after a vowel occurs at the end of a word, such as roll becoming row in the sentence, ‘she told me they goin row the rest when they get back.’

As stated already, these are just a few key examples of features of AAL and should not be taken as a complete description of AAL. Furthermore, Wolfram (2007) noted that AAL is not spoken uniformly across the United States. Instead it is produced to varying degrees and densities across regions. Even the features described above are produced and reduced with varying frequency in a given population. This lack of uniformity often leads into the limitations researchers face when trying to quantify AAL and can also affect estimates of perceptions and attitudes regarding AAL. There is a lack of consensus and much arbitrariness with regard to the criteria for identifying and tallying certain features in order to assess speakers’ AAL usage. Nonetheless the present study does not rely on any specific sociolinguistic knowledge of AAL or its features. The decision to do so has introduced limitations to the study, but it circumvents that
key dilemma of assuming there could be a well-defined and singular description of AAL of which PSTs should be aware.

**Theoretical Framework**

There are several theories that informed the purpose and strategies of the present study. These theories are combined with my exploration of different areas of research as well as experiences I’ve had in forming the approach taken in this study to understand the matter of teachers’ attitudes regarding AAL and AAL-speaking students.

**Subjectivity Statement**

In this recent atmosphere of “post-racial” critics questioning their relevance, I like to tell people I am twice a graduate of historically black college/universities (HBCU). This is technically true, however qualitatively, I would admit there were essential differences between the University of the Virgin Islands (UVI), where I went for my undergraduate degree, and North Carolina Central University (NCCU), where I earned my Master’s degree. I grew up in St. Thomas, United States Virgin Islands in the West Indies. My experience at UVI is reflective of my experience in St. Thomas more generally. Issues of racial discrimination were recognized but largely relegated to being a “stateside” phenomenon. Prejudice in St. Thomas was much like the rest of the Caribbean, in that it was primarily fueled by “colorism” (Hannon, DeFina & Bruch, 2013), which made judgments of a person’s character, credibility, and likability, based on the lightness of their skin, and other physical features (eye color, hair texture, etc.). This was likely a natural result of the majority African descended populations in the islands after the emancipation of slaves and the proliferation of interracial relationships, both consensual and non-consensual.

However, while growing up I noticed that clear distinctions were often made based on the way a person spoke. There were two distinctions made. The first had to do with whether a person
sounded like they were, “bahn hye,” meaning born in the VI, that is a person of native Virgin Islander heritage (a contentious categorization in and of itself, better left for another bout of scholarship), or from somewhere else, in particular from, “down island,” a derogatory term referring to other leeward islands. The second distinction had to do with how “well” a person talked, whether they used higher amounts of West Indian vernacular or more “standard” English (SE) when they spoke. The use of (SE) seemed to supersede the determination of whether you were from the Virgin Islands or another Caribbean island. If you spoke SE, you were simply seen as having good character and trustworthiness. My parents were from the Caribbean; my mother is from Jamaica and my father was from Belize. They were also both highly educated medical professionals and valued education. But they too, stressed the importance of, “sounding educated,” to both my brothers and me. The combination of my home environment and my school, a private parochial college preparatory school with middle to upper class patronage, led to my speech behavior as one where very few people can determine where I come from. In the very least, since I moved to the mainland US, most people perceive an incongruence with my appearance as a (relatively) young African American male and my limited production of AAL in most circumstances. In truth, this along with the cultural capital invested in me by my parents’ through their hard work (my father was a first-generation college student from a very poor family in a “3rd world” or developing country) grants me a level of privilege that I recognize is nonexistent for many young African Americans and other students of color in the US. I had Black teachers in grade school and in college. I also had White teachers. Most of the Black teachers were from the Caribbean, though some were from the states. Most of the White teachers were from the states, though some had lived in the West Indies and elsewhere for many years. I cannot recall an occasion where a student’s use of vernacular was faulted to the point that the
student lost access to ordinary educational opportunities as what often occurs in stateside schools, though my awareness of such conflicts was likely limited at the time. Recognizing that my experience sharply contrasts with the experiences of students of color in most schools in the US, I set upon the present study to gain an understanding about the perceptions teachers have about the language used by African American students prior to them teaching these students, and why they might have them.

**Substantive Content Theories**

There are several theories that served to guide my efforts in the present study. Critical Race Theory (CRT) is the principal theory that guides the perspective taken by the researcher (Ladson-Billings, 1998). CRT is a liberatory movement comprised of scholars and activists engaged in the effort to understand and transform the relationships between race, racism and power (Delgado and Stefancic, 2017). CRT broke from critical legal studies as a result of the frustration of legal scholars of color, such as Derrick Bell, Richard Delgado and Kimberle Crenshaw, with the criminal justice system’s inattention to the patterned and systematic bias against African Americans and other minority populations (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995), originally proposed that CRT be used to identify and challenge marginalization and racism towards African American students in schools. Educational researchers have since employed the theory to examine the experiences of African American and other minority students with subtle and systematic racism (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004). Scholarship that employs CRT is typically organized around the six tenets of CRT through which relationships of identity and the distribution of power can be examined.
Six Tenets of CRT

One tenet of CRT is racial realism, which presents the reality that racism is not an aberrant, but rather a very normal part of life. A second related tenet is the idea of colorblindness, which furthers the declaration of the normality of racism in that many individuals presume themselves to hold neutral, objective beliefs when in fact they maintain implicit biases and stereotypes. A third tenet is interest convergence, which simply discloses that racism persists to the benefit of affluent white non-minorities and to a lesser extent working-class white non-minorities. It is also revelatory in explaining that elite whites benefited in some significant way in the few instances where racial justice has seemingly been achieved. A fourth tenet is the notion of whiteness as property, which discusses the commodification of and race and in particular white privilege, such that it can be manipulated, endowed onto minority others at the behest of those with said privilege, and then revoked as convenient. Next, the idea of intersectionality within CRT discusses the importance of recognizing the multidimensionality of any single individual’s identity. Each person embodies more than one identity stemming from but not limited to their cultural background, gender identity, socioeconomic status, and therefore should not be essentialized by any one of these, especially race. The final tenet, counterstorytelling, argues for the centering of the historically sidelined and silenced narratives of people of color, in an effort to present a foil to the dominant and marginalizing rhetoric (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017).

Of the tenets discussed above, three in particular, racial realism, colorblindness, and whiteness as property have relevance with the present study. Through the tenet of racial realism, the recognition of racism as a commonplace and pervasive aspect of life enables the confrontation of typically unchallenged notions of meritocracy and colorblindness. In reference
to racial realism, meritocracy refers to the belief that everyone is inherently deemed equal opportunity to succeed provided they simply put in enough effort. Colorblindness, the idea that race does not matter or that individuals that have subsumed a colorblind perspective do not take race into consideration, works in tandem with meritocracy in purporting that no one is denied access to opportunity and success simply because of the color of their skin, therefore a person that is unsuccessful simply has not worked hard enough. These notions are often sown into children’s minds early and tended to by teachers throughout their schooling. The CRT tenet that discusses Whiteness as property places a spotlight on how persons of European descent benefit from white privilege. This privilege trickles down in a similar manner to the before discussed notion of colorism, where persons possessing features associated with whiteness gain them access to privilege that is beyond persons who do not possess such white features. “Sounding white” is often a description applied to the behavior of appearing to use more SE in speech production. For students on the opposite side of this, such as AAL-speaking students, their teachers have often seen the students’ speech behavior as deficient and then focus their efforts on figuring out how to ‘fix’ them.

**QuantCrit**

The social justice emphasis of the present study is congruent with the ethos of CRT, though the quantitative nature of the study stands in contrast to much of the work of critical race theorists. Furthermore, quantitative work is viewed by many CRT scholars with an apt measure of cynicism, considering the history of science using statistics and numbers to justify the subjugation of CLD students and minority groups more generally (Johnson & Zentella, 2017). QuantCrit is an extension of CRT developed by British critical race scholars specifically to provide the tools by which to conduct or analyze quantitative research from a critical race
perspective (Gilborn, Warmington, & Demack, 2018). Much like CRT proper, QuantCrit scholarship stems from a set of principles that undergird the use and review of quantitative research. The first principle, the centrality of racism, corresponds well with the CRT tenet of racial realism. Similarly to the CRT tenet, this first principle argues that race is a complex social construct and should not be reduced to just a variable that can be controlled for or dismissed, as quantitative research often does in the absence of a critical-race conscious perspective. The second principle, numbers are not neutral, extends this line of thought, arguing that quantitative research is often conducted in ways that benefit privileged Whites, by reinforcing deficit ideologies and ignoring the influence of racism. This principle is meant to present a counterargument to assumptions that algorithms (particularly ones that have been implemented to make decisions that previously were accomplished at the discretion of humans) are free from the subjective biases of humans. The third principle states that categories/groups are neither ‘natural’ nor given, although they are often taken for such in quantitative research. The fourth principle makes the case for critical race-conscious researchers to use their voice and give insight into the interpretation of data. Extending from the second principle that numbers are not neutral, this principle states that data cannot and does not speak for itself; there is typically a hegemonic ideology that provides the interpretation of data which often maintains the guise that data is data and therefore is without agenda. Acknowledging that this is false and that all data is developed and derived from a certain perspective, the present study sought to utilize a quantitative approach from a critical race perspective to present data that supports efforts to reduce harm against CLD students. This goal corresponds with and hopefully encompasses the final principle of QuantCrit, which is to use quantitative methodology from a social justice/equity orientation.
Sociolinguistic Theories

The substantial scholarship of sociolinguists studying AAL, spanning decades, also informs the efforts of the present study. Work done in the 1960s by Labov (1972) and over the past 50 years by Wolfram (1998a, 1998b) made significant progress in legitimating AAL as a system of language originating in part from West African language patterns and governed by its own grammatical rules. Despite their efforts most people including African Americans still hold negative, stigmatized attitudes toward AAL and its speakers. Alim (2005) proposed a retooling of Fairclough’s concept of “Critical Language Awareness” (CLA) as an implement for combatting these negative perceptions of AAL. Very similar to the previously discussed origination of CRT, Clark, Fairclough, Ivanič and Martin Jones (2009), advanced CLA as an extension of prior critical language studies but argued that the latter has done little in the realm of language education to pay attention to the social roles of language in everyday life. They called for explicit discussion of how preferred language choices are not necessarily preferred because they are correct but because they are entangled with matters of the social power wielded by a majority group. Fairclough (1989) contended the de facto nature of sociolinguistics is heavy on the what of language variation such as “What language varieties are stigmatized?” and light on the why and how. He argued that instead, sociolinguists should be asking, “How—in terms of the development of social relationships to power—was the existing sociolinguistic order brought into being? How is it sustained? And how might it be changed to the advantage of those who are dominated by it? (pp. 7–8).” Similarly, once again to CRT and its proponents, advocates for CLA seek to shed light on the invisible ways that language is used to oppress speakers of non-standard languages such as AAL while privileging SE speakers to opportunities and cultural capital. CLA emphasizes the identity, and culture of individuals, and disrupts the normalized
perceptions of language difference that members of the dominant group take for granted, but that members of linguistic minorities are forced to deal with on a daily basis (Siegel, 2006).
CHAPTER 2

Review of the Literature

There is an increasingly large cultural divide between our growing student population and our population of teachers (NBC News, 2014). A report from the Center for American Progress reveals that while students of color make up almost half of all public-school students, teachers of color only account for 18% of the teaching force (Boser, 2014). This imbalance can create obstacles for students of color to feel welcome to learn in classrooms where the teachers do not look like them, and in particular for this study, talk like them. Most teachers, whether non-minority or of color, express and can be expected to express non-judgmental, open attitudes toward their students of color. However, many teachers in fact hold negative attitudes about these students (Tenenbaum and Ruck, 2007) and in particular their language (Bowie and Bond, 1994). To address the issue of linguistic prejudice, researchers across many different disciplines from linguistics to teacher education have engaged in scholarship with the goal of creating equitable learning opportunities for culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students. The following section provides a review of the literature pertaining to the attitudes of PSTs regarding CLD students to give the context for the research questions addressed in the present study. First, an overview of the history of AAL in schools, which includes a brief description of the legal and policy-based approaches to AAL-speaking students in public school systems. An overview of individual curriculum-based approaches is provided next. The chapter rounds out the review of the literature with an overview of prior research that has examined the attitudes of teachers and PSTs towards AAL.
A History of Conflict Concerning AAL in Schools

In congruence with the CRT tenet of racial realism, the experiences of African American students in schools continued to be tumultuous, if not worse, after the landmark supreme court decision in Brown v. Board of Education in 1954. In kind, the history of AAL in schools is an equally disquieting one, contributing to the sense that AAL-speaking students are not welcomed even in integrated educational spaces. There have been two significant school board cases reported in the literature that best exemplified how AAL has been addressed in a formal sense: the Ann Arbor Black English case in Ann Arbor, Michigan in 1979 and the Oakland Ebonics Controversy occurred in Oakland, California from 1996 to 1997.

The controversy involved in the Ann Arbor case started in 1979 when a judge ruled that schools must account for the “home language” of students if the schools intend to “bring” (African American) students into mainstream society. The judge contended that teachers that fail to acknowledge students’ home language might cause psychological harm to the students in their efforts to train them to use standard English (Fiske, 1981). Ultimately there was a court ruling in favor of 11 African American students attending Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School, which affirmed students’ use of AAL and held the Ann Arbor School District Board accountable for teachers’ inability to meet the instructional needs of AAL speaking students. This court decision brought some much-needed attention to the reality of the implicit negative attitudes toward AAL held by teachers and the effects they have on AAL-speaking students (Ball & Lardner, 1997).

Seventeen years after the Ann Arbor case, the school district board in Oakland, California responded to poor academic outcomes amongst AAL-speaking students by creating a set of resolutions focused on addressing the effects of linguistic discrimination toward these students.
The resolutions were similar to the Ann Arbor court ruling in that they recognized AAL as a legitimate language system, explicitly delineated the connections between the language variation and the students’ culture and sense of identity and referenced its origins in West Africa. The resolution also made the case for the development of instructional strategies and materials designed to teach SE to AAL-speaking students in ways that are analogous to what is used to teach English Language Learners (ELLs). According to Wolfram (1998), controversy arose when media reports misinterpreted and oversimplified the resolutions. Among the misinterpretations, the reports suggested that schools were intending to have teachers teach using Ebonics instead of SE.

The resolutions compiled by the Oakland school district board were reflective of the diligent efforts of sociolinguists in the decades prior to the controversy. Yet in this span of time, climaxing with the Oakland Ebonics controversy, embedded language ideologies remained unchallenged in the minds of most Americans, even those speaking non-standard variations, such as AAL. Wolfram brought clarity to the misinterpretation of the resolutions by the general public as a result of reductions made by the media. He acknowledged the equity and pluralism evident in the resolutions but diagnosed that the school board was ineffective in getting ahead of the inaccurate reports, so that the general public would get a fair opportunity to make their own interpretations of the resolutions. In the absence of this, most still maintain notions of Ebonics/AAL as being improper and incompatible with learning SE in schools.

Conflicts and Resolutions for AAL in Schools

As illustrated by the Ann Arbor case and the Oakland Ebonics controversy, there are many perspectives in contention for determining what the most appropriate instructional approaches are to meet the needs of AAL-speaking students. Meanwhile, teachers faced with the
decision of what to do about AAL-speaking students in their class tend to default to remedial and sometimes even punitive measures over these students’ AAL usage based on perceptions that AAL is faulty and broken English (Baugh, 1999). Linguists have decades of exhaustive research supporting the legitimacy and grammaticality of AAL as a language system. This is a basic premise, yet it provides a litmus test for evaluating efforts for teaching AAL-speaking students. For example, one early approach was to use corrective instruction, which involved the teacher demarcating students’ AAL in their work and providing the ‘correct’ SE form. Linguists contend that this approach maintains teachers’ negative attitudes about AAL and promotes negative opinions of dialect variation with students (Lippi-Green, 1994). Lippi-Green made a case for dispelling such notions by challenging the idea of an existing ‘standard’ language. She presented this stance against the widely held standard language ideology; it is also held by most sociolinguists studying language variation and connects back to broader concerns about the power the enfranchised have to normalize and enforce their ideals upon the disenfranchised.

In kind with Lippi-Green’s concern for the pervasiveness of standard language ideology, there is a healthy body of work from linguists and educational researchers alike to improve the educational experiences of AAL-students through curriculum-based approaches. Labov (2012) outlined many of these approaches in his overview of problems concerning teaching AAL-speaking students to understand and employ SE. Three of these approaches include using dialect readers, contrastive analysis, and codeswitching. Dialect readers are literary works written by African American writers employing either some AAL features or entirely composed of AAL. Most of these texts recount narratives that reflect the lived experiences and values of AAL-speakers. Labov noted that when dialect readers were first introduced with the publication of Houghton Mifflin’s Bridge: A Cross Cultural Reading Program in 1976, it was effective in
helping AAL-speaking students feel validated in their classrooms, realizing their language was not wholly incompatible with the academic environment. Hill (2013), evaluated three dialect readers as a way to teach students to distinguish between formal and informal contexts for conversation. The dialect readers contained text written in SE and other language varieties including two that featured AAL. Hill found that the teachers she observed used contrastive analysis to develop their students’ ability to distinguish between formal and informal contexts and to identify the appropriate writing conventions for each. Hill provided a few recommendations for teachers using dialect readers with their AAL-speaking students to teach SE writing convention. One key recommendation was for teachers to make conscious effort to not negate students’ AAL-usage. Hill also recommended that teachers reinforce students’ recognition of the grammatical rules of AAL and other language varieties especially when they intersect with SE.

Contrastive analysis refers to an instructional practice where teachers draw students’ attention to semantic equivalencies between SE and AAL, and then delineate the syntactic and morphological differences between the language varieties for the same or similar concept. Wheeler and Swords (2004) examined the effects of contrastive analysis on AAL-speaking students during a Language Arts class. The researchers noted that a correctional model as previously discussed, maintains notions that AAL and therefore AAL-speaking students come to school with a broken system of communication. Instead Wheeler and Swords called for a more pluralistic approach that affirms students’ AAL usage, recognizing students as whole individuals with substantial cultural capital, as opposed to welcoming the child only as a vessel and not their language.
Hill (2009) examined the effects of codeswitching pedagogy on raising students’ awareness of language variation and linguistic prejudice. She observed two students enrolled in a seventh-grade class at an elite middle school. Contrastive analysis was employed in the study which seemed to aid the students in learning the features that differentiate AAL from SE. Hill observed that some students were receptive to the codeswitching strategies, whereas other students denounced it in protest of still actually having to employ SE instead of their more natural AAL.

Fogel and Ehri (2000) conducted an experiment to ascertain the most effective way to teach students to use six SE writing conventions. Their sample was composed of 89 AAL-speaking students in 3rd and 4th grade in a northeastern school. The researchers randomly assigned the participants to one of three treatment conditions. The first level consisted simply of exposure to AAL written text. The second level included the exposure to AAL component, but added explicit instruction of strategies to know for SE. The third level included the exposure condition, the explicit instruction, and added guided practice with specific feedback from the teacher. The first two levels resembled instruction that students are already likely to encounter, whereas the third level presented the novel approach intended to foster self-regulated learning behavior. The researchers measured students’ ability to translate from AAL to SE, their self-efficacy for using SE to write, and their actual proficiency to use SE syntactic forms as observed in collected writing samples. Fogel and Ehri found that the third treatment level was more effective than the first two levels in preparing students to use SE syntactic forms in translation and free writing tasks. The findings pertaining to students’ self-efficacy were less conclusive, though the researchers claimed their sample had atypically high pretest levels of self-efficacy. They noted that students in the third treatment level had lower posttest levels of self-efficacy,
which they saw as a positive result such that the students in this condition gained more realistic and specific metacognition regarding their writing during the guided practice and feedback components. Fogel and Ehri concluded that the first two levels of treatment are inadequate, but the third level which adds the guided practice and specific feedback presents a more suitable approach to draw students’ attention to the connection between features in students’ AAL use and SE syntactic features. Their findings suggest that basic exposure style interventions are not enough to teach AAL-speaking elementary students to use SE writing conventions. However, it would have been even more illuminating to see what attitudes the students had regarding their AAL in relation to the SE they were being taught to employ. In this study Fogel and Ehri did not measure the students’ attitudes nor the teachers. Furthermore, they did not report any details regarding the teachers such as age, gender or race. Fogel and Ehri seemed to later reconcile the importance of teachers’ influence on students in their later study (discussed in a section below) using a similar intervention on teachers in order to enhance their knowledge of students’ language differences and, perhaps more crucially, change their attitudes toward AAL.

A common position that most of the approaches described above seem to share is the conviction that the matter of low academic outcomes for AAL-speaking students in schools has to do with the students themselves and can therefore be resolved by addressing what students learn about their language differences and the way teachers can instruct them in this process. These approaches therefore assume that teachers will swiftly buy into the idea that it is not that their students are speaking incorrectly, but that their instructional techniques are inappropriate for meeting the needs of these students. With CRT as the lens by which to examine this position, this reflects a colorblind view of teachers, where they are assumed to be neutral actors absent any ill perceptions of CLD students.
Language Ideology

Extensive sociolinguistic research on AAL has been conducted over the past five decades which addresses notions of “improper” or “Bad English” (Rickford, 1999). Since the late 1960’s language researchers and prominent sociolinguists have provided substantial bodies of evidence that pronounce the authenticity of AAL as a legitimate system of language governed by its own morphology and syntax (Labov, 1972; Wolfram 1969). Sociolinguists do not make any effort to keep this information to themselves (Wolfram, 1998b; Wolfram, Reaser, and Vaughn, 2008), yet numerous instances show that the general public remains woefully unaware of this sociolinguistic knowledge (Wolfram, 1998a). This reality leads to the prominence of language ideology, which Wolfram defines as a belief system about the way language is and is supposed to be (p. 109). It works best, in accordance with the CRT tenet of racial realism and as with other deeply held stereotypes and biases, when they have been embedded within a dominant culture, and accepted as being natural, factual, or common sense. They also work best when they reside just below the surface, invisible, but accessible to denote what language is proper, and, in fitting with the scope of the present study, what is not.

AAL-speaking Students

Some researchers and educators have sought to empower linguistically diverse students by creating instructional strategies and implementing a curriculum that utilizes AAL-speaking students’ ability to codeswitch (Hill, 2009; Wheeler and Swords, 2004). Codeswitching regarding AAL-speaking students refers to a speaker possessing access to two or more codes or types of speech, such as AAL and SE, and the speaker alternates their code choice as they see fit to best communicate their message. Some of these approaches to developing instructional curricula have been developed with dual purposes; first affirming for AAL-speaking students the
legitimacy of their own language by using it as the foundation for learning academic language conventions, and then *empowering* students to use their codeswitching ability to gain access to SE for academic success.

However, less conscientious approaches to implementing codeswitching have the potential to do more harm than good. Howard (1996) argued that the use of codeswitching pedagogy without first constructing a pluralistic classroom climate that values students’ home language and cultural capital would have the effect of eradication of these students’ sense of identity. Similarly, Alim (2005) warned that non-critical approaches run the risk of causing harm to linguistically marginalized students when trying to produce enfranchisement. Some of these approaches tend to focus solely on how AAL-speaking students learn to codeswitch, enabling them to conquer academic milestones and defy claims of difference as deficit (Fisher and Lapp, 2013). As both Howard and Alim suggest though, this may attain short-term gains while neglecting any affirmation of students’ cultural identity. As the CRT tenet whiteness as property signifies, the behavior of codeswitching for these students gains them privilege but only when actively codeswitching to SE. Their ability to speak using AAL by contrast is less valued, which for these students presents the reality that their teachers do not perceive AAL as valuable and legitimate. To prevent the likelihood of such uncritical applications of codeswitching pedagogy, it may be first necessary to identify and understand the negative attitudes teachers have toward AAL.

**Language Attitudes**

Language attitudes refers to the affective, cognitive, or behavioral index of evaluative reactions toward different language varieties and their speaker, (Ryan, Giles and Sebastian, 1982, as cited in Robinson, 1996). Not all language attitudes are negative. However, the problem of linguistic
discrimination arises from strongly negative and prejudicial language attitudes, usually representing a language ideology as discussed in a previous section. Table 1 below provides brief descriptions of several studies that have examined the attitudes of individuals, teachers and PSTs toward AAL.

**Table 1**

*Non-Exhaustive Literature Review of Research on Attitudes Towards AAL.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Authors</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Measures</th>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Significance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Koch, Gross &amp; Kolts (2001)</td>
<td>97 African American undergraduates</td>
<td>Revised SDAS (literate/illiterate, rich/poor, white collar/blue collar, high social status/low social status, pleasing/displeasing, nice/awful, sweet/sour, and beautiful/ugly, aggressive/unaggressive, active/passive, strong/weak, and loud/soft)</td>
<td>SE and ACS preferred over AAVE and ICS</td>
<td>Listeners are sensitive to context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rodriguez, Cargile &amp; Rich (2004)</td>
<td>(63% female, 44% European American [this was the largest group, second largest was Asian-American at 26.5%])</td>
<td>items from Speech Evaluation Instrument (intelligent-unintelligent, rich-poor, upper class-lower class, educated-uneeducated, kind-unkind, sweet-sour, likable-unlikeable, friendly-unfriendly)</td>
<td>SE and Moderate AAVE preferred over Strong AAVE</td>
<td>Ethnic minority listeners conform to standard language ideologies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blake &amp; Cutler (2003)</td>
<td>(42% female, 67% European American, 13% African American)</td>
<td>items from AAETAS, LAS</td>
<td>Overall positive attitudes, attitudes influenced by pluralist environment in school</td>
<td>School context plays a role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gupta (2010)</td>
<td>(no gender statistics published, 42.9% African American, 52.6% European American)</td>
<td>developed by researcher (attitudes, sense of preparedness to teach AAVE-speaking students)</td>
<td>Overall negative attitudes, teachers felt unprepared to teach AAVE-speaking students, willing to learn more</td>
<td>in service teachers felt unprepared and showed a willingness to learn more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Sample Characteristics</td>
<td>Measure/Tool Descriptions</td>
<td>Findings and Implications</td>
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<td>--------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bowie &amp; Bond (1994)</td>
<td>(92% female, 86% European American)</td>
<td>modified LAS</td>
<td>Overall negative attitudes, exposure to coursework related to attitudes PSTs with some exposure to sociolinguistic coursework displayed less negative attitudes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Cross, Devaney &amp; Jones (2001)</td>
<td>(68% female, 59% European American)</td>
<td>developed by researchers to measure speaker qualities (intelligence, education, consideration, friendliness, honesty, trustworthiness, ambition, social status)</td>
<td>lower ratings of AAVE and low SES than for SE and high SES. European American ratings of AAVE less than African American ratings. White PSTs may draw on experience with people from their ethnic group to rate personality traits.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Champion, Cobb-Roberts, &amp; Bland Stewart (2012)</td>
<td>(75% female, 76.5% European American)</td>
<td>LAS</td>
<td>Overall negative attitudes, European American attitudes less favorable than African American attitudes. Representative sample showing prevalence of negative attitudes amongst European American female PSTs.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newkirk-Turner, Williams, Harris, &amp; McDaniels (2013)</td>
<td>(71% female, 3% European American, 90.3% African American)</td>
<td>Measure from Gupta (2010)</td>
<td>Overall negative attitudes, African American PSTs felt prepared to teach AAVE-speaking students, willing to learn more. Non-representative sample, showing prevalence of negative attitudes amongst African American PSTs, yet they felt prepared.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hakim (2013)</td>
<td>(75% female, 52% African American, 42% European American)</td>
<td>AAETAS, demographic questionnaire (demographics, exposure-to-dialect)</td>
<td>Overall negative attitudes, European American attitudes less favorable than African American attitudes. exposure-to-dialect variables predictive of attitudes PSTs language used at home and hometown population play a role.</td>
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</table>
AAL-speakers have been rated as having less sociointellectual status and aesthetic quality than SE speakers and persons that listened to AAL-speakers were less inclined to get to know or be willing to work with these speakers (Koch, Gross and Kolts, 2001). Furthermore, speakers with stronger AAL accents were rated as less attractive and having less social status than those that use SE or even moderate AAL (Rodriguez, Cargile and Rich, 2004). AAL-speakers along with uneducated sounding speakers were also seen as less favorable than SE and educated sounding speakers. When surveyed, teachers and PSTs also hold similarly negative attitudes (Champion, Cobb-Roberts & Bland Stewart, 2012), though when it comes to AAL-speaking students, teachers tended to feel unprepared by their training to meet the instructional needs of these students (Gupta, 2010), whereas PSTs seemed to feel prepared sufficiently by their teacher preparation program to teach AAL-speaking students (Newkirk-Turner, Williams, Harris & McDaniels, 2013). One on hand, a key distinction that can be made here is the obvious lack of experience PSTs would have with teaching, especially teaching CLD students, in comparison to in-service teachers, which would call into question the amount of stock that should be placed in the PSTs’ sense of preparedness. On the other hand, we can consider differences in the nature of the teacher preparation programs between the teachers surveyed in Gupta, versus the PSTs surveyed in Newkirk et al. such that there might have been a more pluralistic and culturally responsive approach presented to the latter group. A commonality between the two was that the teachers and PSTs both expressed an interest in learning more about how to meet the instructional needs of AAL-speaking students.

Differences in attitudes toward AAL has been observed to be a function of several factors. One factor that has been observed is the race of the listener; generally, listeners tended to rate speakers representing their own group higher than speakers from another ethnic group.
For example, ethnic minorities tended to rate AAL speakers higher on attractiveness and social status than White listeners (Rodriguez et al., 2004), though as an exception, African American listeners still tend to prefer SE to AAL (Koch et al., 2001). Amongst PSTs, White PSTs were more likely than African American PSTs to have negative attitudes toward AAL. Another factor that has been observed to lead to differences in attitudes towards AAL is exposure to linguistics courses, in a manner akin to the efforts of linguistic gratuity by sociolinguists (Wolfram et al. 2008) in an effort to share sociolinguistic knowledge (Blake and Cutler, 2003). Teachers surveyed by Blake and Cutler which were exposed to a school culture of equity and pluralism largely held favorable attitudes toward AAL, viewing it as a legitimate form of English, and recognizing that it possesses its own grammatical system. There is evidence that exposure to sociolinguistic content might lead to more positive attitudes toward AAL amongst PSTs as well, even if attitudes remain largely negative (Bowie and Bond, 1994). In addition to mere exposure to sociolinguistic content being associated with changes in attitudes amongst teachers, more intense instructional strategies such as direct instruction in how to utilize the sociolinguistic content knowledge, and guided practice with specific feedback have been associated with more significant changes in attitudes toward AAL (Fogel and Ehri, 2006). Though movement was observed, the change in attitude observed by Fogel and Ehri only went from slightly negative to neutral, and the researchers neglected to provide a consideration of what a neutral attitude toward AAL means in the real world. Furthermore, teachers were still likely to engage in corrective instruction regarding students’ AAL use, an approach that has been found to maintain (among students) notions of the inappropriateness of (their use of) AAL in schools (Wheeler, 2016). Exposure to sociolinguistic content knowledge during teacher preparation programs have been shown to raise PSTs’ critical language awareness, however in
the absence of an adequately guided approach with instructor feedback (akin to what was observed as effective in Fogel and Ehri, 2006) PSTs defaulted to uncritical ideas and practices that are harmful to CLD students (Godley, Reaser, and Moore, 2014). Moreover, PSTs engaged in significant levels of “white talk” (Haviland, 2008), and neglected to challenge judgments made about students’ code choice as involving normalized systemic biases instead of individual cases of prejudice. There is evidence that professional development and teacher training has some effect on the attitudes of teachers and PSTs toward AAL, yet elicitation of positive attitudes is at best inconsistent and at worst a matter of happenstance. In light of these inconsistencies, the present study presented an examination of the background characteristics of PSTs, which has the potential to increase the effectiveness of teacher education for raising PSTs’ critical language awareness.

**Background Characteristics**

A notable gap in the literature pertains to the lack of attention concerning possible antecedents for the attitudes and perceptions that PSTs have regarding AAL. Hakim (2013) investigated the variation in attitudes amongst PSTs toward AAL, and what variable characteristics about PSTs are associated with the variation in their attitudes. Hakim found that the language used at home by PSTs, and the hometown population of the PSTs (whether rural, urban, or suburban) were significant predictors of attitudes for the PSTs. The findings revealed that a suburban home environment may be related to favorable attitudes toward AAL amongst bidialectal (speaking both SE and AAL), whereas PSTs speaking only SE is associated with the most negative attitudes toward AAL. Hakim concluded in kind with the previously discussed literature, stating the case for more sociolinguistic instruction in teacher education programs. He
also drew attention to the demographic similarities between the PSTs with low attitude scores, and in-service teachers.

**Teacher Dispositions**

It is possible that the missing variable linking personal characteristics of PSTs with their attitudes toward AAL might be the dispositions PSTs have prior to entering their education program. Villegas (2007) defines dispositions as the tendencies for individuals to act in a particular manner under particular circumstances, based on their beliefs.

Many have formalized the notion of teacher dispositions into theories that enable using it as construct to engage in critical inquiry about attitudes about cultural and linguistic diversity (Garmon, 2004, 2005; Jensen, Feinauer Whiting, & Chapman, 2016; Thompson, 2009). Among six factors identified by Garmon (2004) that might play role in determining whether individual PSTs are likely to be responsive to multicultural coursework or experiences, three pertain to the dispositions that PSTs have toward diversity. The other three pertain to multicultural experiences and will be discussed later. These factors were identified using a case study done with a White female PST enrolled in a teacher education program with multicultural coursework opportunities. The three dispositional factors that Garmon identified were openness, self-awareness or self-reflectiveness, and commitment to social justice.

Garmon (2005) described openness as being responsive to several things such as others’ ideas, new information, and various forms of diversity whether racial, cultural, or religious (2005, p. 276). He defined self-awareness as having a sense of your own beliefs and attitudes, and self-reflectiveness as being able and willing to critically think about yourself (p. 277). This refers to a PSTs’ tendency to reflect on their positionality relative to their students recognizing dynamics of power and privilege they have and that their students might not have. Lastly
Garmon described the disposition of a commitment to social justice as having a vested interest in realizing equity and equality for all people (p. 278). This third disposition of having a commitment to social justice can also be found as one of the guiding principles of CRT, such that any research conducted from a critical race perspective should have the goal of ending racial discrimination and other forms of oppression (DeCuir-Gunby, Chapman, Schutz; 2018). Garmon found that the presence of these factors enabled his participant to become responsive to multicultural teacher education coursework. It is likely that the three dispositions have a developmental and hierarchical trajectory. Mills and Ballantyne (2010) conducted an autoethnographic study to examine the relationship between the three dispositions amongst 48 PSTs attending an Australian university. They found that 75% of the PSTs demonstrated self-awareness/self-reflectiveness, 40% demonstrated openness, and 6% demonstrated a commitment to social justice. Of particular noteworthiness to the researchers was that all of the PSTs that demonstrated openness also demonstrated self-awareness/self-reflectiveness, and all the PSTs that demonstrated a commitment to social justice also demonstrated the other two dispositions as well. This would suggest there is a development trajectory starting with self-awareness/self-reflection, moving to openness, and then finishing with a commitment to social justice. This makes intuitive sense and is congruent with other developmental theories such as those that view White racial identity in relation to racism as a process of growth in understanding (Marshall, 2002).

The three factors identified by Garmon (2004, 2005) correspond with the three factors on the Dispositions for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Scale (DCRPS) developed by Whitaker and Valtierra (2018). Culturally responsive pedagogy as defined by Ladson-Billings (1995) is a “pedagogy of opposition not unlike critical pedagogy but specifically committed to collective,
not merely individual, empowerment” (p. 160). Ladson-Billings formulated the pedagogy around three criteria: making sure students attain long term academic success, fostering students’ appreciation for their own culture while developing their ability to access mainstream cultural tools, and prompting students’ critical consciousness. Critical consciousness refers to an individual’s awareness and understanding of hidden, typically politicized structures of power and oppression, as well as the motivation to critique and disrupt these systems and structures in society. These sentiments are not only congruent with critical race theory, with which Ladson-Billings is typically credited, they also correspond well with the previously discussed efforts of sociolinguists and education researchers to lessen the frequency of students’ experiences with linguistic discrimination.

The three factors on the DCRPS are: disposition for praxis which corresponds well with Garmon’s description of self-awareness, disposition for community which corresponds with openness, and disposition for social justice which corresponds with commitment to social justice. This alignment with these dispositions makes the DCRPS an ideal instrument for measuring relationships between PSTs’ dispositions toward diversity and their attitudes toward AAL. In the development of the scale Whitaker and Valtierra noted that it assesses how teachers construct their role, their willingness to collaborate with others, if and how they challenge the status quo and if they perceive diversity as an asset instead of a liability (p. 17). It should follow then that PSTs that display positive dispositions regarding culturally responsive pedagogy, would also have positive attitudes toward CLD students generally and AAL-speaking students specifically.

In addition to these dispositions toward diversity that PSTs can possess, Garmon proposed that three types of experiences can also augment PSTs perceptions toward CLD students. These are experiences with diversity, educational experiences, and support group
experiences. Experience with diversity, can, as Garmon (2005) discussed, occur earlier in life prior to a student’s matriculation in a teacher education program. It has been shown that these prior experiences are related to greater openness (Kyles & Olafson, 2008; McCall, 1995), whereas not having such experiences may inhibit increased openness, (Smith, 2000), but not always (Garmon, 2004). Encouragingly though, all three types of experiences can and do occur within most teacher education programs for PSTs intending to teach CLD students. Experiences with diversity that occur during field experiences in urban and low-income schools and have been connected to more positive beliefs about diversity and CLD students (Tinker & Tinkler, 2013; Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006). Many teacher education programs that employ field experiences also integrate self-reflective practices into the requirements and have found increased levels of self-awareness, and openness to diversity (Causey, Thomas & Armento, 2000). Some have also found that self-reflection has in some cases contributed to and in other cases superseded PSTs' disclosures and discussion during support group experiences (Norris, 2016). With a study focused on raising PSTs’ awareness of linguistic diversity through a sociolinguistics course, Haddix (2008) presented findings for self-reflective educational practices that precisely align with the goals of the present study. In her examination of the effects of these self-reflective opportunities, Haddix made explicit the importance of seeing whether connections were made between assumptions of linguistic variation and assumptions about cultural and racial differences. The findings suggested that although self-reflection on their language ideologies was incited by participation in the sociolinguistics course, the single course was not adequate for deeply upsetting their uncritical ideas about their own racial identity and linguistic behavior (Akiba, 2011; Godley et al., 2015).
The three dispositions described earlier detail, as Villegas suggests, tendencies for PSTs to act in a certain way for a given experience. Thus, paired with the three types of experiences described above, the findings from the present study can be used to produce descriptions of PSTs with high openness, high social awareness, and perhaps even some with a commitment to social justice that would subsequently be receptive to multicultural experiences, including those within their teacher education program. Among the hypotheses for the present study, it was expected that PSTs with such characteristics are the most likely to have the least negative attitudes toward AAL.

Summary

This literature review sought to elucidate the history of controversy surrounding AAL especially as it has been dealt with in schools throughout the US. Linguists and scholars have routed energy over the past five decades or so towards drawing attention to the legitimacy of language varieties such as AAL and the harm that language ideologies have caused on its speakers. In the more recent decades, sociolinguists and researchers in education have worked to identify negative attitudes toward AAL that are held by people and especially teachers regarding students in efforts to change them. Most recently, innovative approaches have examined the relationship between characteristics of teachers and PSTs and their language attitudes. The present study contributes to the scholarly efforts discussed above to gain a better understanding of the factors that are related to the attitudes PSTs have in regard to AAL. As discussed already in regard to language ideology, PSTs’ attitudes toward AAL can also be representative of their broader beliefs about diversity. The present study sought to elucidate relationships between PSTs’ dispositions toward diversity and their attitudes toward AAL specifically. Figure 1 (Appendix B) presents a model of the paths for these relationships. The illumination of such
relationships should provide data for the creation of profiles of PSTs intending to teach CLD students. Furthermore, such profiles could have multiple applications in teacher education programs ranging from enhancing admissions criteria to the creation of more effective English language arts and multiculturalism coursework.
CHAPTER 3

Methodology

The attitudes of teachers and PSTs toward AAL have been examined in prior work using both quantitative and qualitative methods and both domains of scholarship have revealed that PSTs possess largely negative attitudes toward AAL and problematic views toward CLD students more generally. While the qualitative work has broached the matter of where these views and attitudes stem from in a handful of case studies, very few quantitative endeavors have sought to elucidate associations between attitudes and antecedents. Most of the quantitative scholarship has resorted to providing a description of the attitudes and tend not to dwell on characteristics of the participants that hold these attitudes. In fulfilling the critical race perspective guiding this work, the present study sought to reveal any relationships between the background characteristics, dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy and the attitudes toward AAL of PSTs. Furthermore, the quantitative approach taken in the present study is meant to respond to the call by QuantCrit to use numbers in support of a social justice agenda. In light of these charges, the following section describes the methods employed in the present study.

Research Questions

The present study was directed by the following research questions:

1. Is there a relationship between the characteristics of preservice teachers (PSTs) enrolled in teacher education programs at public institutions in the southeastern United States and their attitudes toward African American Language (AAL)?
   a. How do PSTs’ race relate to their attitudes toward AAL?
   b. How do PSTs’ gender relate to their attitudes toward AAL?
   c. How do PSTs’ primary language relate to their attitudes toward AAL?
d. How do the background of PSTs (diverse or predominantly white primary/secondary environment) relate to their attitudes toward AAL?

2. Is there a relationship between the dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy of preservice teachers (PSTs) enrolled in teacher education programs at public institutions in the southeastern United States and their attitudes toward African American Language (AAL)?

   a. How does the PSTs’ level of disposition for praxis relate to their attitudes toward AAL?
   
   b. How does the PSTs’ level of disposition for community relate to their attitudes toward AAL?
   
   c. How does the PSTs’ level of disposition for social justice relate to their attitudes toward AAL?

**Hypotheses**

$H_0^1$: There is a statistically significant relationship between PSTs’ characteristics and their attitudes toward AAL.

$H_0^1a$: There is a statistically significant relationship between PSTs’ race and their attitudes toward AAL.

$H_0^1b$: There is a statistically significant relationship between PSTs’ gender and their attitudes toward AAL.

$H_0^1c$: There is a statistically significant relationship between PSTs’ primary language and their attitudes toward AAL.

$H_0^1d$: There is a statistically significant relationship between PSTs’ background and their attitudes toward AAL.
H02: There is a statistically significant relationship between the dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy of PSTs’ and their attitudes toward AAL.

H02a: There is a statistically significant relationship between PSTs’ disposition for praxis and their attitudes toward AAL.

H02: There is a statistically significant relationship between PSTs’ disposition for community and their attitudes toward AAL.

H02: There is a statistically significant relationship between PST’s disposition for social justice and their attitudes toward AAL.

Sample/Participants

Participants were recruited from teacher education programs at 2 four-year public institutions in the southeastern United States. Both are four-year institutions. One is a predominantly White institutions (PWI), with 72.7% of students identifying as White (NCES 2016). This institution was given the fictitious name Piedmont University. The other institution is an historically black college/university (HBCU) with approximately 77.7% of students identifying as Black or African American (NCES 2018). This institution was likewise given a fictitious name: Heritage University. While studies conducted at PWIs have revealed mostly negative attitudes toward AAL (Cross et al., 2001; Champion et al., 2012, Godley et al., 2015), studies of language attitudes of African Americans have typically also revealed negative attitudes (Koch, Gross & Kolts, 2001; Newkirk et al., 2013) though slightly less negative than white participants (Hakim, 2013). The novel consideration of dispositions for diversity in the present study, enabled the possibility to observe differences between students at the PWI and students at the HBCU in terms of how their prior experiences (or lack thereof) with cultural and/or linguistic diversity relates to their dispositions and language attitudes. The PWI, Piedmont University
(fictitious name) had an undergraduate population of 24,111 students, as of Fall 2015 (NCES 2016). The HBCU, Heritage University, had an undergraduate population of 6,198 students, as of Fall 2015 (NCES 2016). A total of 240 participants were recruited for the study.

In the sample overall, 58% of participants identified as White, 29% identified as Black or African American. Cross-tabulations of the sample by institution indicated that 83% of participants attending Piedmont University identified as White, 3% identified as Black/African American. The participants attending Heritage University indicated the near converse proportions with 76% identifying as Black or African American and 11% identifying as White.

In terms of gender identity, the sample was approximately 80% female identifying and 19% male identifying. Less than 1% of participants identified as either transgender or gender nonconforming. More than half (53%) of participants in the study were between 18 to 20 years old, 30.3% were between 21 and 23 years old, 5.6% were between 24 and 26 years old, and 11.1% were 27 years or older. Table 2 below shows the breakdown of participants by institution, then age, gender and ethnicity.

**Table 2**

*Participant Descriptive Statistics*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Heritage</th>
<th>Piedmont</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-20</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-23</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24-26</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27 or older</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Heritage</th>
<th>Piedmont</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>188</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2 (continued).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transgender/Gender-Nonconforming</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black/African American</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N = 240

Data Collection

The study employed an online survey questionnaire to collect data from participants. Responses to the survey provided data on the attitudes toward AAL of participants, their dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy, and characteristics pertaining to their background and experiences with AAL. The following sections provide descriptions of the instruments that were implemented in the online survey to collect the relevant data.

Instruments

Language Attitudes Scale (Appendix A)

Attitudes toward AAL were measured using a modified version of the Language Attitude Scale (LAS) developed by Taylor (1973). The LAS is a self-report instrument in which participants are asked to indicate their opinion on a set of language statements. The version of the LAS used in the study was modified by the researcher under direction from committee member Walt Wolfram to better capture the data from participants that is relevant to the current study. All items were changed to refer to African American Language (AAL) to align with the updated nomenclature selected for the study. Many items were changed either to reduce ambiguity or simply make more practical sense. A complete description of the changes made to
the LAS, including what items were modified, dropped or added, can be found in Appendix A. The modified LAS has 25 items distributed into four content categories: the structure and inherent usefulness of nonstandard dialects, the consequences of using nonstandard dialects in educational settings, philosophies regarding the use and acceptance of nonstandard dialects, and the cognitive abilities of speakers of nonstandard dialects. The first three categories contain eight items each—four positive and four negative statements—and the final category contains one item. A sample negative item is: “AAL is an inferior language system. A sample positive item is: “Teachers should allow African American Students to use AAL in the Classroom.” Participants are to indicate on a four-point Likert-type scale ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” their level of agreement to the statements in each item. The scoring system was adopted from the system employed during development of the LAS: strong disagreement with a positive statement was assigned 1 point. Strong agreement to a positive statement was assigned 4 points. Strong agreement with a negative statement was assigned 1 point and strong disagreement with a negative statement was assigned 4 points. Therefore, using this scoring system, higher ratings indicated more positive attitudes and lower ratings indicate more negative attitudes. The was no estimate of validity stated in the initial report for the LAS, however since its development it has been used and modified for a number of studies on language attitudes (Blake & Cutler, 2003; Fogel & Ehri, 2006, Champion et al., 2012). The modified LAS has internal validity and reliability as indicated by a Cronbach’s alpha of .90. A full copy of the modified LAS can be found in Appendix A.

The following section provides a description of the participants’ responses on the LAS. All participants responded to the items on the LAS regardless of their major, so discussion of the data from the LAS refer to participants’ attitudes generally and not just PSTs. Participants
responded on a 4-point likert type scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. Higher points indicated more positive attitudes toward AAL; items with negative statements were reverse coded so that disagreement indicated positive attitudes while agreement indicated negative attitudes. Mean responses for items in the LAS ranged from 2.41 to 3.23. The overall mean for the LAS was 72.44, with a standard deviation of 9.17. The lowest score on the LAS was 44, the highest was 98.

**Linguistic Legitimacy Subscale**

The mean for each item on the linguistic legitimacy subscale was 2.72; the standard deviation was .42. Overall reliability for the subscale was α = .73.

**Expressiveness Subscale**

The mean for each item on the disposition for praxis subscale was 3.04, the standard deviation was .38. Overall reliability for the subscale was α = .68.

**Utility Subscale**

The mean for each item on the disposition for praxis subscale was 2.93, the standard deviation was .42. Overall reliability for the subscale was α = .83.

**Dispositions for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Scale (Appendix A)**

The dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy that the participants have were measured using the Dispositions for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Scale or DCRPS (Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018). This self-report instrument contains 19 items across three subscales to assess participants’ disposition for praxis, disposition for community and disposition for social justice, the three dispositions related to culturally responsive pedagogy. A sample item in the disposition for praxis subscale is: “I am willing to examine my own identities.” A sample item in the disposition for community subscale is: “I value dialog as a way to learn about students’ out of
A sample item in the disposition for social justice subscale is: “I believe that schools can reproduce social inequities.” Convergent validity was established by comparing the DCRPS with the Multicultural Disposition Inventory (MDI) by Thompson (2009). Whitaker and Valtierra included subscales from the MDI that assessed multicultural worldview and knowledge of personal and professional skills, which correspond respectively with disposition for community and disposition for praxis on the DCRPS. The correlation between the two measures was 0.62 indicating a moderate level of convergent validity. Discriminant validity was also determined by using the Teacher Attitudes toward inclusion, (TATIS) by Cullen Gregory and Noto (2010, as cited in Whitaker and Valtierra). Whitaker and Valtierra stated that the TATIS is not specifically concerning CLD students and therefore is appropriate for establishing discriminant validity. They used the teacher perception of students with disabilities subscale and the professional roles and functions subscale from the TATIS. The correlation between the two measures was 0.38 indicating that the two scales measure different constructs. The DCRPS had overall reliability as indicated by a Cronbach’s alpha of .92. Responses to the items on the DCRPS allowed for the revealing of the relationships between PSTs attitudes toward AAL and their dispositions. A full copy of the DCRPS can be found in Appendix A.

Many items on the DCRPS ask respondents to consider their values and beliefs as a teacher, so for the present study, these items were limited just to participants that indicated that Education was their major. Mean responses for each item on the DCRPS ranged from 3.25 to 3.80, which shows a high level of agreement with the items amongst the PSTs in the study. Considering that the items on the DCRPS are all best practice statements derived from many professional and credible teacher educators, it is reasonable to expect that PSTs would largely agree to most of the items on the measure.
Disposition for Praxis Subscale

The mean for each item on the disposition for praxis subscale was 3.5, the standard deviation was .39. Overall reliability for the subscale was $\alpha = .82$. Responses to the items on the disposition for praxis subscale show signs of social desirability bias with not a single strongly disagree response to any of the statements and most strongly agree to many of the statements.

Disposition for Community Subscale

The mean for each item on the disposition community subscale was 3.65, the standard deviation was .35. Overall reliability for the subscale was $\alpha = .88$. Responses to the items on the dispositions for community subscale showed similar social desirability bias as with the praxis subscale; all but one item had no “strongly disagree” responses to the statements and that item only received one “strongly disagree response. Many items also did not have any “disagree” responses.

Disposition for Social Justice Subscale

The mean for each item on the disposition for social justice subscale was 3.44, the standard deviation was .41. Overall reliability for the subscale was $\alpha = .72$.

Demographic Questionnaire (Appendix A)

Items on the survey gathered descriptive data about the participants. These items gathered participants’ age, gender, race/ethnicity, socioeconomic background. Additional items adopted from Hakim (2013) assessed participants level of familiarity with AAL. These items asked about the language variety primarily spoken by them and in their home/community, and whether they have taken courses that discussed AAL. One item asked what type of hometown population the participant primarily grew up in, whether rural, urban, or suburban. Hakim noted in his 2002 dissertation study that limited research has been conducted that examines PSTs’ attitudes toward
AAL and though as detailed in the literature review of the present study, some has been conducted since that time, no other studies have considered the relationship between the PSTs’ attitudes toward AAL, and their own language behavior, their hometown environment, or their level of previous exposure to AAL. These items provided a measure of the prior multicultural experiences which Garmon (2005) suggested can catalyze the development of self-awareness/self-reflection, perhaps leading to openness to diversity and maybe even a sense of commitment to social justice. All the items in the demographic questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

**Description of Sample Characteristics**

Participants responded to items querying about aspects of their hometown environment, such as the type of developed environment they grew up in and the variation of English that was spoken predominantly there. Table 3 below depicts the frequencies, percentages of participants that identified their hometown as either rural, urban or suburban, and the variation of English that was spoken in their home community.

**Table 3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relevant Demographics</th>
<th>Hometown Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I consider the population of my hometown to be:</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73 (31.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was raised in a home/community where:</td>
<td>MAE was mainly spoken.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>137 (58.8%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Exposure to AAL Sociolinguistic Content Knowledge in High School and College

Approximately one quarter (25.5%) of all participants indicated that they had a course in high school that discussed AAL. About three quarters of participants (74.5%) indicated that they did not have any high school course that discussed AAL. Even at a quarter it is unlikely that so many participants indeed had a course in high school that discussed AAL. This is likely due to the imprecision of the items that ask participants about this. There’s no description provided with the item that specifies what a course with AAL sociolinguistic content would look like, so there can be individuals that claim they had a course, when it could have been as cursory as the teacher using slang or hip hop to introduce a particular English language concept. 34.5% of participants in the study indicated that they took a course in college that discussed AAL. 65.5% of participants indicated they had not taken a college course that discussed AAL. Table 4 below depicts the frequencies, percentages of participants that indicated they had a course either in high school or college, according to which institution they were attending.

Table 4

*Frequencies (Percentage) of PSTs that had a course that covered AAL*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institution</th>
<th>Heritage University</th>
<th>Piedmont University</th>
<th>Overall</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in high school</td>
<td>28 (46.7%)</td>
<td>32 (53.3%)</td>
<td>60 (25.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in college</td>
<td>31 (38.3%)</td>
<td>50 (61.7%)</td>
<td>81 (34.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Procedures

Prior to collecting data, approval was sought and obtained from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of the host institution. Materials pertaining to the approval and the data collection procedures can be found in Appendix B. The researcher sought approval from the IRB of the second institution in order to collect data from students there, a process which was less than
straightforward. After a prolonged effort to learn the steps needed for approval to be obtained, the IRB of the second institution eventually disclosed that once approval was already obtained from the host institution the two institutions need only enter an agreement in which the researcher can collect data at the second institution as long as the host institution agrees to maintain oversight of the study. This was accomplished and approval to collect data at the second institution was granted.

Participants for the study were identified by instructors of education courses through communication with administrators of teacher education programs at the two institutions. In most cases the researcher attended classes of instructors who agreed to recruitment of participants from their class. The researcher then briefly described the study to the students and provided the information (link to survey) to the instructors for their students to follow up if they were interested in participating. Through their instructors, participants received a link to complete the survey hosted by Qualtrics. When they clicked on the link, they were first presented with a consent form where they were able indicate their willingness to participate in the study. A copy of the consent form can be found in Appendix B. If they decided to participate and provide their consent, they proceeded to the survey. If they decided not to participate, they were presented a brief message thanking them for their initial interest and asking them to close out the window. For individuals that provided consent they were then presented the survey containing the instruments discussed before, including the LAS, the DCRPS and the demographic items including participants’ familiarity with AAL. Once they completed the survey they were thanked for their participation. The data collected from the survey were kept confidential; all participants were reminded of this upon completion of the survey.
Data Processing

The data collected from the surveys were examined, cleaned and entered into the statistical program STATA for analysis. Descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were calculated, inferential statistics procedures were conducted to see how the data responded to the research questions. For the present study, these procedures included correlation analysis and hierarchical regression analysis, which was used to evaluate relationships between the independent and dependent variables. Further analysis involved hierarchical cluster analysis in the effort to make distinctions between certain groups of PSTs that differed in their attitudes toward AAL.

To address research question 1, “How do characteristics of preservice teachers (PSTs) enrolled in teacher education programs at public institutions in the southeastern United States relate to their attitudes toward African American Language (AAL),” The present study sought to determine whether certain characteristics about PSTs are associated with positive or negative attitudes toward AAL. Response data from the LAS and the demographics questionnaire were used. The following discussion describes how the demographics questionnaire provided data for addressing each of the research sub-questions, then the following chapter discusses the analysis conducted using the data to test the hypotheses generated from the research questions.

For research sub-question 1a, “How do PST's race relate to their attitudes toward AAL?” Response data from the LAS and race/ethnicity were used. Descriptive as well as inferential statistics such as correlations and regression coefficients were calculated to investigate the relationship between these PST’s race and their attitudes toward AAL.

For research sub-question 1b, “How do PST's gender relate to their attitudes toward AAL,” response data from the LAS and the gender item on the demographic questionnaire were
used, calculating descriptive as well as inferential statistics to investigate the relationship between PSTs’ gender and their attitudes toward AAL.

For research sub-question 1c, “How do PST's primary language relate to their attitudes toward AAL,” response data collected from the LAS and the demographics questionnaire were used. Descriptive as well as inferential statistics were calculated to investigate the relationship between PSTs’ primary language and their attitudes toward AAL.

For research sub-question 1d, “How does the background (SES, diverse or predominantly white primary/secondary environment) relate to their attitudes toward AAL,” the response data were used to calculate descriptive as well as inferential statistics to investigate the relationship between PSTs’ background and their attitudes toward AAL.

For research question 2, “How do dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy of PSTs’ relate to their attitudes toward AAL,” The researcher sought to identify what dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy of PSTs are associated with their attitudes toward AAL. The response data from the DCRPS and the LAS were used. The following discussion describes how the DCRPS provided data for addressing each of the research sub-questions.

For research sub-question 2a, “How does PST's level of disposition for praxis relate to their attitudes toward AAL? The present study sought to determine what is the relationship between PSTs’ level of disposition for praxis, and their attitudes toward AAL. Descriptive as well as inferential statistics were calculated to investigate this relationship.

For research sub-question 2b, “How does the PSTs’ level of disposition for community relate to their attitudes toward AAL?” The researcher sought to examine the relationship between PSTs’ level of disposition for community and their attitudes toward AAL. Descriptive and
inferential statistics were calculated to investigate if there is a significant relationship between PSTs’ level of disposition for community and their attitudes toward AAL.

For research sub-question 2c, “How does the PSTs’ level of disposition for social justice relate to their attitudes toward AAL?” The researcher sought to examine the relationship between PSTs’ level of disposition for social justice and their attitudes toward AAL. The response data from the DCRPS and the LAS were utilized to calculate descriptive as well as inferential statistics to investigate this relationship.
CHAPTER 4

Analysis

Chapter 4 provides a description and analysis of the data including findings pertaining to the research questions posed in the study. Analysis of the data consists of correlations calculated between predictors as well the outcome variable. Hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted to test the hypotheses concerning the existence of relationships between the predictors included in the study and the language attitude scores calculated for each of the participants in the study. Further analysis entailed hierarchical cluster analysis to identify groupings amongst the PSTs surveyed in terms of their dispositions for culturally relevant pedagogy. The groupings were then subjected to analysis of variance which revealed the groups significantly varied in their attitudes toward AAL.

Correlation Matrix and Analysis

The predictor variables and outcome variables were entered into a correlation matrix for evaluation of any relationships and the strength of such relationships between variables. Pearson’s $r$ data analysis revealed a low positive association between exposure to AAL in high school and exposure to AAL in college, $r = .38, p < .001$. This suggests that participants that had courses in high school that discussed AAL were more likely to have courses in college that also discussed AAL. There was a very weak negative association between hometown language and exposure to AAL in high school, $r = -.22, p < .001$, as well as exposure to AAL in college, $r = -.21, p < .001$. There was a strong positive association between participants’ scores on the disposition for praxis subscale and the disposition for community subscale, $r = .71, p < .001$. As participants’ disposition for praxis in culturally responsive pedagogy increases their disposition for community increases. There was also a positive though moderate association between
participants scores on the disposition for praxis subscale and the disposition for social justice subscale, \( r = .58, p < .001 \). This indicates that as participants disposition for praxis in culturally responsive pedagogy increases, their disposition for social justice increases. There was a moderate positive association between participants’ scores on the disposition for community subscale and the disposition for social justice subscale, \( r = .63, p < .001 \). As participants’ disposition for community increases their disposition for social justice increases. There was a low positive correlation between participants’ scores on the disposition for praxis in the culturally responsive pedagogy subscale and participants’ scores on the language attitude scale, \( r = .34, p < .001 \). As participants’ disposition for praxis increases their attitudes toward AAL become more positive. There was also a low positive association between participants’ scores on the disposition for community subscale and participants’ scores on the language attitude scale, \( r = .33, p < .001 \). As participants’ disposition for community increases their attitudes toward AAL become more positive. Lastly, there was a low positive association between participants’ scores on the disposition for social justice subscale and participants’ scores on the language attitudes scale, \( r = .48, p < .001 \). As participants’ disposition for social justice increases their attitudes toward AAL become more positive. Table 5 below contains the correlation matrix with all the predictors included in the study and the outcome variable of LAS scores.

**Table 5**

*Intercorrelations of Demographic Items, DCRPS, and LAS Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Gender</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Exposure in high school</td>
<td>-0.02</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Exposure in college</td>
<td>-0.05</td>
<td>0.38***</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Type of hometown</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 (continued).

5. Home language  
0.04  0.22*** 0.21** 0.03  -

6. Disp. for praxis  
-0.09 -0.01  0.05  -0.03 0.15*  -

7. Disp. for community  
-0.09 -0.08  -0.03  -0.00 0.06  0.71***  -

8. Disp. for social justice  
-0.06 -0.03  0.13  0.06  0.17* 0.58*** 0.63***  -

9. Language Attitude Scores  
-0.03 -0.04  0.14*  0.04  0.06  0.34*** 0.33*** 0.48***  -

Note. ***p < .001; **p < .01; *p < .05

Inferential Statistics

The Inferential Statistics section reports the results of the hierarchical regression analysis which was used to address the hypotheses developed from research questions 1a through 1d as well as 2a through 2c.

Hierarchical Regression Analysis

Scores on the Language Attitude Scale (LAS) were analyzed using predictors collected in the study. A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted using Stata 15. Prior to conducting the regression analysis, the relevant assumptions were tested. An examination of correlations (see Table 3) indicated that no independent variables were highly correlated, meeting the assumption of multicollinearity. Residual and scatter plots generated supported the assumptions of normality and linearity. The Breush-Pagan Test for Heteroskedasticity was used to test for constant variance across fitted values of dependent variable. Results revealed that the assumption of homoskedasticity was not violated, $\chi^2 (1) = 0.16, p > .05$. Error variances do not appear to increase or decrease based on the predicted values of the dependent variable, scores on the LAS. Continuous predictor variables were centered on their means to ease in interpretation. The nominal variables of ethnicity and gender were entered as dummy coded variables with Black
participants and female participants as the reference groups for these categories, respectively.

Variables were entered in blocks at each step so that coefficients specified at subsequent steps would predict residual variance not explained in previous steps. See Table 6 below for the regression table.

Table 6

Hierarchical Multiple Regression Analyses Predicting Attitudes toward AAL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor variables</th>
<th>Step 1</th>
<th>Step 2</th>
<th>Step 3</th>
<th>Step 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity (Black = reference group)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native American</td>
<td>-8.75</td>
<td>-12.36*</td>
<td>-11.90*</td>
<td>-10.38*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
<td>2.34</td>
<td>2.57</td>
<td>3.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Latinx</td>
<td>5.09</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>2.58</td>
<td>2.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.01</td>
<td>-2.71</td>
<td>-2.69</td>
<td>-4.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>-1.03</td>
<td>-1.62</td>
<td>-1.76</td>
<td>-1.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender (female = reference group)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender nonconforming</td>
<td>12.57</td>
<td>12.02</td>
<td>11.86</td>
<td>8.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>-0.43</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trans-male</td>
<td>-2.80</td>
<td>0.82</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>0.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home Language</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>1.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hometown Population</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.30</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to AAL in High School</td>
<td>-2.24</td>
<td>-2.20</td>
<td>-1.99</td>
<td>-1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exposure to AAL in College</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>2.53</td>
<td>2.64</td>
<td>1.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispositions for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition for Praxis (centered)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition for Community (centered)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disposition for Social Justice (centered)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>0.29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$ change</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.05, **p < 0.01, ***p < 0.001.
Step 1

In Step 1, to respond to the first set of research questions pertaining to the predicted relationship between characteristics of PSTs and their attitudes toward AAL, participants scores on the LAS were regressed onto our predictor variables of ethnicity, gender, home language, hometown population, exposure to AAL in high school, and exposure to AAL in college. The results of the omnibus test of the model indicated no predictive relationship between these predictors included in the model and PSTs’ attitudes toward AAL, $F(12, 220) = 1.38$, $p > .05$. This suggests that for the present study, participants’ ethnicity, their gender, the language they speak/spoke at home, the type of hometown environment and whether they were exposed to sociolinguistic content about AAL in either high school or college, has no effect on the level of attitude they have towards AAL. These findings run counter to the findings reported in a previous study (Abdul-Hakim, 2002) in which the researcher found a significant relationship between PSTs’ home language, hometown population and their attitudes toward AAL. In particular, there was no observed effect of exposure to AAL sociolinguistic content knowledge in high school, $p > .05$; however, there was a significant effect of exposure to AAL sociolinguistic content knowledge in college, $p = .03$. See Step 1 in Table 4 above for the regression table containing the regression coefficients from the omnibus test of PSTs’ characteristics.

Step 2

In Step 2, in addition to ethnicity, gender, home language, hometown population, exposure to AAL in high school, and exposure to AAL in college, PSTs’ disposition for praxis was added to the model. Disposition for praxis accounted for an additional 12% of the variance in PST’s attitudes toward AAL, $R_{\text{change}} = 0.12$, $F_{\text{change}} (1, 176) = 20.61$, $p < .001$. PSTs with
a higher disposition for praxis are expected to have more positive attitudes toward AAL, \( b = 1.21, t(176) = 4.94, p < .001 \).

**Step 3**

In Step 3, in addition to ethnicity, gender, home language, hometown population, exposure to AAL in high school, exposure to AAL in college and disposition for praxis, PSTs’ disposition for community was added to the model. Additional variance was not significantly explained by the inclusion of PSTs’ disposition for community, \( R^2_{\text{change}} = 0.014, F_{\text{change}} (1,174) = 2.673, p > .05 \).

**Step 4**

In Step 4, PSTs’ disposition for social justice was added to the model along with all the predictors from Step 3. Disposition for social justice accounted for an additional 9% of variance in PSTs’ attitudes toward AAL, \( R^2_{\text{change}} = 0.090, F_{\text{change}} (1,173) = 22.098, p < .0001 \). The amount of variance in PSTs’ attitudes toward AAL accounted for by the final model is around 23%. PSTs with a higher disposition for social justice are expected to have more positive attitudes toward AAL, \( b = 2.26, t(173) = 4.70, p < .001 \).

**Cluster Analysis**

Results of the hierarchical regression analysis indicated that PSTs’ disposition for social justice is a significant predictor of attitudes toward AAL. Specifically, PSTs with higher disposition for social justice are likely to have more positive attitudes than PSTs with less disposition for social justice. Prior to the inclusion of disposition for social justice as a predictor in the model, disposition for praxis but not disposition for community was observed to predict variance in PSTs’ attitudes toward AAL. Additionally, correlational analysis conducted indicated that there were moderate to strong associations between the three dispositions, such that
individuals who were high on disposition for social justice were also likely to have high dispositions for community, and praxis. This is congruent with the observations made by Mills and Ballantyne (2010) that PSTs seem to develop a disposition for praxis, and a disposition for community prior to developing a disposition for social justice. To triangulate these patterns observed in the present study and begin to create a set of profiles of the PSTs corresponding with their dispositions and attitudes, hierarchical cluster analysis was conducted using participants scores on the DCRPS subscales. Cluster analysis enabled the grouping of PSTs such that PSTs within a group are similar to each other and different from PSTs outside the group. Participants scores on the subscales were standardized using z-scores for ease of interpretation. PSTs scores on the LAS were used to conduct the cluster analysis using ward’s linkage. Ward’s linkage was chosen because it initially treats each observation as its own cluster and then links each cluster until there is one cluster. This enables the selection of the appropriate number of clusters for an analysis of variance using LAS scores as the dependent variable. The results of the cluster analysis yielded three clusters of PSTs with varying ranges of scores on the disposition subscales. The resulting clusters can be found on Table 7 below.

Table 7

Cluster Analysis Table with Frequencies, Means on DCRPS, LAS for each Cluster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clusters</th>
<th>Freq.</th>
<th>Means on DCRPS Subscales, LAS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Praxis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 (The Middle)</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>20.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 (The Bar)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17.70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 (The Most)</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>23.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>192</td>
<td>21.12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Cluster 1 had a mean of 20.62 on the disposition for praxis subscale, 32.94 on the disposition for community subscale, and 12.8 on the disposition for social justice subscale. PSTs in cluster 1 can be identified as being ‘the Middle’ (of the road), their dispositions are neither the lowest nor are they exceptionally high, just in the middle. PSTs in this cluster are likely to demonstrate culturally responsive praxis, and openness to CLD students and their families, though they may not (yet) demonstrate a commitment to social justice. This group suitably contains the largest number of PSTs, which is reflective of the majority of PSTs in education programs. Teacher educators should expect to encounter PSTs in ‘the Middle’ more than any other type. This begins to delineate where the focus of a critical race-conscious teacher education program should be to produce suitable culturally responsive teacher candidates. Optimal approaches for this cluster of PSTs are described in implications in Chapter 5.

Cluster 2 had a mean of 17.7 on the disposition for praxis subscale, 26.83 on the disposition for community, and 12.3 on the disposition for social justice subscale. PSTs in cluster 2 have the lowest dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy and the lowest attitudes toward AAL. PSTs in this cluster are the least likely to display self-awareness of their positionality relative to CLD students or engage in any culturally responsive praxis such as self-reflection, both of which would be indicators of readiness for subsequent steps to developing more openness for CLD students. This cluster was therefore named the “Bar” in that much like the pole vault event at an athletic competition where vaulters must meet the bare minimum to qualify, this cluster represents the lowest we should hope to see in terms of PSTs’ disposition for CRP and attitudes toward AAL. Garmon (2004) suggested that if PSTs do not demonstrate readiness in terms of their dispositions then it is unlikely that even the most well-designed teacher education program will be effective at raising their critical consciousness and ensuring
they are prepared to teach CLD students. It should be expected then that amongst the PSTs in the three clusters identified in the present study, PSTs in ‘the Bar’ would require the most time and targeted critical race-conscious instruction in a teacher education program.

Cluster 3 had a mean of 23.04 on the disposition for praxis subscale, 35.13 on the disposition for community subscale and 15.46 on the disposition for social justice subscale. The PSTs in cluster 3 possess the highest scores on all three disposition as well as the most positive attitudes toward AAL. Cluster 3 can be identified as (doing) “the Most, and the PSTs in this cluster would be most likely to (be willing to) engage in culturally responsive praxis, display openness to CLD students and families, as well as demonstrate a commitment to social justice and understand the importance of such. PSTs n ‘the Most’ in reality represent the goal of any social justice-oriented teacher education program to fulfill the principle of CRT of creating teachers committed to empowering CLD students through their teaching.

These clusterings support the developmental trajectory proposed by Mills and Ballantyne in not just that PSTs with a high disposition for social justice are likely to be high in the other two dispositions (the Most), but that PSTs high in disposition for praxis and disposition for community may not be high in disposition for social justice (the Middle), or one step before that PSTs who are not high in disposition for praxis are likewise not high in their disposition for community or disposition for social justice (the Bar). The names of the clusters create distinctions between the clusters according to what teacher educators should expect to see from the PSTs who would be categorized into the clusters. For ‘the Bar’ cluster, PSTs in this cluster can be expected to demonstrate the least preparedness for teaching CLD students, and maybe even PSTs that should reconsider what they want to do for their career, whether teaching or otherwise. Teacher educators should expect most PSTs in their classes to occupy ‘the Middle’
cluster, perhaps demonstrating some culturally responsive praxis, such as self-reflection and openness for diversity, but not truly demonstrating a commitment to social justice. Lastly teacher educators might be able to expect PSTs in ‘the Most’ cluster to be doing the most, that is demonstrating self-reflectiveness praxis, showing openness to CLD students and their communities, and evoking a commitment to social justice in their teaching.

ANOVA

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to determine whether the PSTs’ attitudes toward AAL differed as a function of the groupings from the cluster analysis. The results revealed a significant main effect supporting the distinction made between PSTs’ dispositions by the groupings in the cluster analysis. Attitudes toward AAL were significantly different between the cluster groupings, $F(2, 189) = 27.83, p < .001, \eta^2 = .22$. Post-hoc tests using Tukey’s HSD pairwise comparisons revealed that the attitudes toward AAL of the PSTs in ‘the Most’ were significantly higher than the attitudes toward AAL of the PSTs in both ‘the Bar’ and “the Middle.” Recall from the cluster analysis that PSTs in ‘the Most’ had the highest disposition for social justice scores, as well as the highest disposition for praxis and community. The results of this analysis provide further support for the findings of the hierarchical regression analysis that PSTs with higher dispositions for social justice have more positive attitudes toward AAL. These findings also begin to lay the foundation for the development of a set of profiles of PSTs that are most likely to have better attitudes toward AAL, linking it to the dispositions they have for culturally responsive pedagogy.

Summary

This chapter presented the analysis of the data collected from education majors and PSTs regarding their background characteristics, dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy and
attitudes toward AAL. Correlational analysis did not indicate any significant associations between background characteristics, experiences of PSTs and their attitudes toward AAL, but moderate to strong positive associations amongst the three dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy were observed as well as between the dispositions and the attitudes toward AAL. Hierarchical regression analysis indicated that PSTs’ disposition for social justice was a significant predictor of attitudes toward AAL. PSTs with higher disposition for social justice would most likely have better attitudes toward AAL than PSTs with lower disposition for social justice. Disposition for social justice accounted for 23% of the variance in attitudes toward AAL amongst PSTs. Though in the final model of the hierarchical regression, disposition for praxis and disposition for community were not significant predictors of attitudes toward AAL, both of these were significant positively correlated with disposition for social justice, such that PSTs that were high on disposition for social justice were also likely to be high on disposition for community and disposition for praxis. This tendency supports the notion suggested by Mills and Ballantyne (2010) that these dispositions have a developmental trajectory starting with disposition for praxis (or self-awareness/self-reflectiveness as proposed by Garmon, 2005) progressing through a disposition for community (aka having openness to diversity) and culminating in disposition for social justice (commitment to social justice). As such someone who is not high in disposition for praxis may not then be high on disposition for community or disposition for social justice because they must first have self-awareness of their position and privilege relative to CLD students and engage in self-reflective practices. Cluster analysis was conducted which further supported this observation. Three clusters were identified using PSTs’ responses on the DCRPS subscales; the ranges of scores on the subscales for the clusters corresponded with this pattern: Cluster 3 otherwise known as (doing) ‘the Most’ contained PSTs
high on disposition for social justice that were also high on disposition for praxis and community, Cluster 1 or ‘the Middle’ contained PSTs that were not as high as ‘the Most’ on disposition for social justice, but higher than PSTs in ‘the Bar’ on disposition for community and praxis. PSTs in ‘the Bar’ then was not as high as the other two cluster on all three dispositions. This pattern was also reflected in the mean scores on the LAS; had the highest attitudes toward AAL, followed by ‘the Middle’ then “the Bar.” Analysis of variance with post-hoc tests reveal that the attitudes toward AAL of PSTs in ‘the Most’ were significantly higher than PSTs in ‘the Middle’ and ‘the Bar’. 
CHAPTER 5

Conclusions

As the United States becomes increasingly diverse, it should be expected that students in schools will reflect this increase in diversity. It should also be expected that these students’ teachers become increasing more diverse, though we know the changes in the student population will outpace the change in the teacher population for a while to come. If this is to be the case, then what would most benefit the oncoming generations of students would be the diversity of thought amongst teachers such that students with backgrounds different from their teachers feel respected and valued by said teachers.

Summary of Findings

The present study looked at the characteristics, background experiences, and dispositions for CRP of PSTs in regard to their attitudes toward AAL. Correlational analysis indicated no significant associations between PSTs’ characteristics, background experiences and their attitudes toward AAL. PSTs’ dispositions for CRP, however, were positively associated with their attitudes toward AAL. The higher the dispositions for praxis, community, and social justice, the more positive were PSTs’ attitudes toward AAL. A hierarchical regression analysis was conducted to observe any predictive relationships between the dependent variable and the predictor variables. The results of the regression analysis indicated that PSTs’ disposition for social justice was a predictor of attitudes toward AAL. PSTs with higher disposition for social justice were likely to have more positive attitudes toward AAL. The following sections explicate the importance of these findings and their implications for critical research, and teacher education.
Dispositions toward Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Garmon (2004) observed that the PST in his ethnography was able to make clear connections between her self-awareness and her understanding of diversity and experiences she had that likely sparked her awareness of issues of diversity. Others have made similar observations concerning PSTs that demonstrate self-awareness and openness to diversity as a result of experiences in their distant past (McCall, 1995) or recent experiences linked to coursework (Haddix, 2008) and in some of these cases the PSTs has yet to make the connection themselves as was the case with Garmon’s subject. This could be a result of a progressive arc that seems to be associated with the gaining of the dispositions toward diversity. Mills and Ballantyne (2010) proposed that PSTs might progress along the three dispositions from self-awareness/self-reflectiveness to openness, then to a commitment to social justice. They also suggested this progression might be influenced by PSTs’ background and experiences.

This study started with the expectation that there are certain characteristics of the backgrounds and experiences of PSTs that would be associated with the attitudes they have toward AAL. Namely, as was found by Hakim (2002), what kind of home community PSTs came from and what variation of English was predominantly spoken in that environment should play a part in what attitudes the PSTs form toward AAL. Curiously, these factors that were included as items on the survey in identical format to that prior study did not play any role in explaining differences in attitudes toward AAL in the present study.

**Background characteristics did not account for differences in attitudes**

Analysis of the data revealed no significant effect of the various demographics and background characteristics collected in the study on the attitudes PSTs have toward AAL. Specifically, age, gender, ethnicity, hometown population type, and the variety of English
spoken at home were not found to be significant predictors of PSTs’ attitudes toward AAL. Despite contradicting prior research, these findings are not just understandable but encouraging. It is hopeful that age and gender are not factors in the attitudes that PSTs have toward AAL, these are both criteria where recruitment into teacher education programs should not make distinctions, though at times they have (Rosales, 2014, Wong, 2019).

In addition to age and gender, the sample collected for the study from one PWI and one HBCU enabled comparisons across race. Analysis of the data from the present study replicated findings from prior research, that have shown that Black participants often have very similar attitudes toward AAL to what their White counterparts maintain.

**No effect of exposure to AAL sociolinguistic content knowledge in high school or college**

Analysis of the data also suggested that there was no effect of exposure to discussion of AAL or linguistic variation in either high school or college courses. Though the items on the survey that queried the PSTs about this were not capable of capturing the nature of material or coursework they may have encountered, the lack of any relationship observed here could suggest that whatever they have been exposed to failed to arouse critical language awareness as researchers and advocates would seek to do (Alim, 2005) or in the least, uproot the uncritical language attitudes to which PSTs are predisposed (Godley, Reaser, and Moore, 2015). Again, without adequate information concerning the qualities of the coursework, the present study does provide evidence to not make any determination about whether exposure to AAL sociolinguistic content knowledge can be effective for altering attitudes toward AAL. However prior research has observed that some exposure can affect the attitudes of teachers (Fogel and Ehri, 2006), while other research has offered considerations about the characteristics of teacher education curricula, such that it is sufficiently potent for changing PSTs’ awareness and attitudes toward
cultural and linguistic diversity (Haddix, 2008). Haddix contended that sociolinguistic content knowledge on its own is not adequate for raising PSTs’ critical language awareness, it is likely that her contention is made evident here in the findings of the present study if we suppose that the nature of the coursework that participants were exposed to only presented information without any specific opportunity to engage any critical thought. To bolster this shortcoming of these well-intended approaches, Haddix presented evidence of the utility of an approach that promotes PSTs’ self-reflection. Findings in the present study provided support for this approach, as step 2 in the hierarchical regression indicated that PSTs’ higher disposition for praxis (corresponding with self-awareness/self-reflective practices) predicted higher attitudes toward AAL. Despite this, the present study provides stronger support for not just disposition for praxis/self-reflective practices, but ultimately having a disposition for social justice.

**Higher disposition for social justice predicts better attitudes toward AAL.**

The final step in the hierarchical multiple regression analysis conducted in the present study indicated that PSTs’ disposition for social justice accounted for an additional 9% of the variance in attitudes toward AAL, over the 12% accounted for by PSTs’ disposition for praxis, with the overall model predicting about 23% of the change in PSTs’ attitudes toward AAL. Furthermore in the final model only PSTs’ disposition for social justice was observed as a significant predictor of attitudes toward AAL, indicating that it is a stronger predictor than PSTs’ disposition for praxis, which was significant in step 2 of the model but not at step 4 when PSTs’ disposition for social justice was added. Correlational analysis indicated a strong positive association between disposition for praxis and disposition for community, and moderate positive associations between praxis and social justice as well as community and social justice. These associations suggest that PSTs with high dispositions for social justice are also likely to have
high dispositions for praxis and community. This observation resembles the sequential model of dispositions toward diversity proposed by Mills and Ballantyne (2010), such that PSTs’ must develop their self-awareness/self-reflectiveness, and their openness to diversity, prior to adopting a commitment to social justice. Furthermore, the findings of the present study indicated that while PSTs with a disposition for praxis, or self-awareness/self-reflectiveness might demonstrate more positive attitudes toward AAL, PSTs with a disposition for social justice, having also a high disposition for praxis and for community, are likely to have more positive attitudes toward AAL than PSTs with just a high disposition for praxis or community without a high disposition for social justice.

**What does having a disposition for social justice mean?**

Whitaker and Valtierra (2018) discussed having a disposition for social justice in the context of culturally responsive teachers and their recognition of education as a civil right that is often not equitably afforded to all children. Specifically, they state that the items on the disposition for social justice subscale measure “the extent to which teachers recognize schools as sites for the disruption or maintenance of social inequities” (p. 19). To that end, Whitaker and Valtierra assert that teachers should adopt pedagogies that empower students by promoting students’ critical consciousness, elevating their understanding of racism and oppression, and encouraging collaborative efforts to disrupt hegemonic systems which maintain uncritical notions of cultural and linguistic diversity. These objectives correspond well with principles of CRT (DeCuir-Gunby, Chapman, and Schutz; 2018) and especially with CRT as it applies specifically towards an enfranchising education (Ladson-Billings, 1998). Similarly, in Garmon’s (2004, 2005) notion of having the disposition of a commitment to social justice it meant that the person is invested in the idea of true political and in this case educational equity for all persons.
In their qualitative study, Mills and Ballantyne (2010) reported their observed evidence of a commitment to social justice amongst two PSTs. In both cases the PSTs expressed an awareness of inequality based solely on stereotypes and their complicity in these biases, as well as their responsibility to disrupt them through their positioning as teachers. It should be noted that Mills and Ballantyne detailed both PSTs as demonstrating all three dispositions from self-awareness to openness to a commitment to social justice and that in the cited evidence of the PSTs commitment to social justice, self-reflection and openness to diversity were integral to the recognition of their commitment. In light of this, the objective of a productive social justice-oriented teacher education program should be to increase their yield of PSTs that fit in ‘the Most’ cluster, and not just PSTs in ‘the Middle’ which according to the cluster analysis already likely constitute the majority of PSTs enrolled.

**What does having higher attitudes toward African American Language mean?**

According to Godley et al. (2006) higher attitudes toward AAL should mean that PSTs possess an awareness of language ideologies and linguistic biases against AAL. Congruent with the CRT tenet of racial realism, higher attitudes might suggest that PSTs have a sense of the experiences AAL-speaking students have regarding their language behavior in schools. Tying that to the finding of the present study that positive attitudes toward AAL is positively associated with PSTs having a commitment toward social justice might suggest that these PSTs are likely to seek ways to disrupt entrenched language ideologies in their curriculum and instruction materials. Furthermore, according to the cluster analysis, PSTs in ‘the Most’ cluster are the most likely to adopt culturally responsive ways to do this.
Implications

Teacher education programs should focus on moving PSTs toward a commitment to social justice. Much of the literature has focused on affecting aspects of PSTs’ self-awareness, that is getting them to reflect on their own identity and experiences relative to the experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse students and recognizing the shortcomings and outright danger to these students of the beliefs and attitudes they have held up to this point. While this is not necessarily a fruitless endeavor and indeed the findings in step 2 of the hierarchical multiple regression analysis in the present study suggest that a higher disposition for praxis (which encompasses practices of self-awareness and self-reflection) is predictive of more positive attitudes toward AAL, the final model indicated that a disposition for social justice is the strongest predictor of such positive attitudes toward AAL. This suggests that PSTs should ultimately possess a disposition for social justice along with a disposition for community and praxis. This means for teacher education that a successful teacher of culturally and linguistically diverse students is one that demonstrates a commitment to social justice. Teacher education programs generally tend to lean heavily toward progressive and social justice-oriented curricula, and sometimes they involve a component that discusses linguistic prejudice. Linguistics programs often include many sociolinguistic components that address linguistic prejudice and most times they delineate the implicit and explicit connections between linguistic discrimination and the wider concerns of cultural and racial discrimination. Alim (2005) argued that sociolinguistics pedagogies should always draw attention to the interconnectedness between language and the larger sociopolitical and sociohistorical issues that give rise to linguistic prejudice (p. 26). Teacher education programs should match this directive and always include a discussion of language and how linguistic discrimination in schools affects students and as
discussed are tied to broader concerns of injustice. Ideally more interdisciplinary collaboration between colleges of education and linguistics departments would go further to driving the point home with PSTs that are interested in teaching CLD students. The present study has provided evidence to indicate that PSTs with higher dispositions for social justice are likely to have better attitudes toward AAL. Though research from both disciplines have implemented interventions to raise PSTs’ disposition for praxis, self-awareness, self-reflectiveness, (Haddix, 2008, Godley, Reaser & Moore, 2015) this effort has fallen short of truly impacting the attitudes of PSTs. The need to be moved further for PSTs past self-reflective practices, even past having a general openness to diversity; in order to see PSTs with better attitudes toward AAL, teacher education curricula should be trying to move students toward a commitment to social justice. Standard multicultural education as has been employed to varying degrees has not worked and even serves to perpetuate Eurocentric and deficit views and whiteness (Sleeter, 2017). In adopting a CRT approach to generating a commitment to social justice amongst PSTs, more potent teacher education pedagogies should focus on PSTs getting a solid understanding on issues of diversity and race from a historical, contemporary, and critical perspective (Milner & Laughter, 2015). The following section makes the case for using the profiles of PSTs generated in the present study to apply just the most potent approach needed for a certain group, in order to promote a commitment to social justice.

A Stratified Approach to Teacher Education for Social Justice

There is a broad set of strategies in teacher education that can be and have been used to enhance PSTs’ understanding of the issues of cultural diversity and best prepare them to teach CLD students (Civitillo, Juang, & Schachner, 2018; Mills and Ballantyne, 2016). Many of these strategies and approaches are already well established, though a few are truly innovative.
(Cochran-Smith et al., 2015). As a PST’s duration in a teacher education program is a finite and already laden time, the categorization of PSTs into the clusters identified in the present study would enable the optimal application of instructional strategies to just what is needed for PSTs in a certain cluster. Viewing these groupings from a development perspective as Mills and Ballantyne proposed would suggest that PSTs in ‘the Bar’ cluster would require more and different strategies than PSTs in ‘the Middle’, who would then require more and different strategies than PSTs in ‘the Most’ cluster. Simply put, using this cluster categorization for classifying PSTs could serve to reduce efforts wasted applying critical race-conscious teacher education approaches with PSTs that already demonstrate a commitment to social justice, and instead optimally apply the best instructional approaches for PSTs that are lower on their disposition for community and disposition for praxis. Another consideration of taking a developmental perspective is that PSTs can start a program either in ‘the Bar’ cluster or ‘the Middle’ cluster and progress through the program gaining increased dispositions for CRP. A well-designed teacher education program should have more PSTs associated with ‘the Most’ cluster near the end of the program than near the beginning. In such a program, all PSTs should encounter all critical race-conscious instructional approaches through the duration of the program, but the approaches are implemented in what can be described as a staggered implementation schedule. In a staggered schedule PSTs in ‘the Bar’ cluster and ‘the Middle’ cluster experience some of the same instructional approaches, likewise PSTs in ‘the Middle’ cluster and PSTs in ‘the Most’ might experience some of the same, but the approaches that ‘the Most’ PSTs experience would be distinct and notably more advanced than what ‘the Bar’ PSTs experience. I propose assessing students’ dispositions when they matriculate into the education program. The categorization of students would then dictate the track they would occupy.
throughout their program, especially if they make explicit their desire to teach students of color. There should be constant assessment of their dispositions at periodic intervals through the course of the program, making adjustments to students’ coursework accordingly. The emphasis is on progressing students from a disposition for praxis to a disposition for social justice. The following discussion provides a brief description of what this would look like.

**The Bar**

In describing what works for affecting the dispositions and attitudes of PSTs enrolled in teacher education programs it makes sense to start with the most comprehensive approach that should then be appropriately aggressive for addressing PSTs in ‘the Bar’ cluster, that is with the lowest dispositions for CRP and attitudes toward AAL. To begin with, an effective teacher education program should have culturally responsive pedagogy thoroughly integrated across the curriculum instead of sequestered to one or two standalone “cultural diversity” courses (Akiba, 2011; Mills and Ballantyne, 2010; Haddix, 2008). The perpetuation of singleton courses without any cross-curriculum integration gets at the CRT tenet of racial realism, in that there is a notion that only one or two elective courses are necessary to combat issues of racial and cultural discrimination, ignoring the reality of the pervasiveness of systemic racism and structural inequality. Limiting PSTs’ consideration of such issues to these courses can preserve the sense amongst PSTs that racism is minor, at most an asterisk attached to other pressing matters they are likely to encounter in schools.

PSTs in ‘the Bar’ had the lowest scores on the praxis subscale of the DCRPS, indicating these PSTs are the least likely to engage in self-reflection and subsequently demonstrate awareness of their own beliefs and attitudes. One approach to addressing the lack of self-reflection amongst these PSTs is to implement opportunities for self-reflective praxis directly
into coursework. Some self-reflective practices have been observed to enhance PSTs’ sense of their identity relative to CLD students, such as keeping a journal, writing a school memoir, writing a cultural autobiography, writing a family history, and analyzing critical incidents in literary works. In particular, guided reflection using researcher-developed prompts has been shown to impact freshman and sophomore PSTs’ beliefs and attitudes (Markos, 2012). Opportunities for self-reflection have been observed to be most effective when paired with and prefaced by an experiential learning component, that encourages PSTs to engage with CLD students in schools or in community-based experiences (Civtillo, Juang & Schachner, 2018).

This cluster of PSTs was identified as ‘the Bar’ as previously discussed because it represents the bare minimum in terms of dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy that teacher education programs should hope to enroll. This would suggest that it is within this cluster that we are most likely to encounter PSTs that are not suited for teaching, at least not teaching CLD students. One recommendation would be to implement a pre/post evaluation of PSTs including, formally, an assessment of their dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy, and informally, observing how PSTs articulate their understanding of race and inequality. For example, are there instances of white talk (Godley, Reaser, & Moore, 2015), are they discussing racism and the achievement of CLD students in terms of personal attributes and individual, isolated events or in terms of systemic inequities (Sleeter, 2017), are they even engaging in discussions of race and racism or simply avoiding these sensitive topics (Sleeter, Owuor, 2011). This might serve to reveal effects of the strategies mentioned above, though as researchers have noted, such changes are not subject to quick fixes (read: one elective multicultural education course).
The Middle

These are PSTs that are close to the mean on their dispositions for CRP and their attitudes toward AAL. Specifically, their dispositions for praxis and community are very similar to PSTs in ‘the Most’ cluster, but their disposition for social justice still lags behind that cluster. The goal of instructional approaches used with this group should therefore be to develop their commitment to social justice and inspire them to take action. Ritchie, Cone, An, and Bullock (2013) implemented a cross-curriculum social justice-oriented methods block in an elementary teacher education program and found that the connections made across the courses led to PSTs developing a commitment to social justice. Other approaches are likely to enhance PSTs’ disposition for community, such as field placements in schools with CLD student populations, or in community organizations where PSTs can observe talents of CLD students that do not arise in school contexts (McDonald, Tyson, Brayko, Bowman, Delport, & Shimomura, 2011). This approach corresponds with a core principle of CRT that calls for the centering of the experiences of CLD folks; field placements are the best opportunity for PSTs to recognize these and make distinctions to their own experiences. Field placements that are most effective at affecting beliefs and dispositions are ones that offer plenty of opportunities for PSTs to interact with CLD students and communities (Akiba, 2011). Another strategy that can enhance the effectiveness of these field placements would be to have a mentorship component in place for PSTs to model culturally responsive praxis. The results of the cluster analysis can provide insight to this, for example pairing PSTs from ‘the Bar’ cluster with PSTs from ‘the Most’; this strategy is detailed further in the upcoming section on what teacher education programs should have PSTs in ‘the Most’ do to prepare to teach CLD students. Other more specific suggestions to optimize the effectiveness of field placements includes, actively listening to community members in
community-based placements, participating in community activities, and teaching collaboratively with teachers in school placements (Sleeter & Owuor, 2011). It has been noted before that in order to truly promote critical consciousness amongst PSTs experiencing field placements, this instructional strategy should be accompanied by a self-reflective component (Haddix, 2008, Mills & Ballantyne, 2016). Some examples include post-placement classroom discussions or writing self-reflective journal entries. It is possible the key to moving PSTs in this group from a disposition for community to a disposition for social justice is that approaches must move PSTs from thinking about individual instances of discrimination to the broader systemic and structural forms of oppression.

The Most

PSTs in ‘the Most’ cluster possessed the highest dispositions for CRP and attitudes toward AAL of all the PSTs analyzed in the present study. In particular the results of the regression analysis indicated that higher disposition for social justice predicted more positive attitudes toward AAL, and correlational analysis showed positive associations between all three dispositions for CRP. This group was given the label of ‘the Most’ because in contemporary parlance they might be considered as [doing] ‘the most” out of all the PSTs examined in the present study. However, it is beyond the scope of this study to determine exactly if these PSTs are doing anything, a question Cochran-Smith et al. (2015) posed in their overview of teacher preparation research. As discussed above, the developmental view of dispositions for CRP would suggest that PSTs in ‘the Most’ are most likely to be found near the end of well-designed social justice-oriented teacher education programs. This timepoint in such a program should be frontloaded with practicum-based courses and community- placements much like what was discussed with ‘the Middle’ cluster, the difference here with ‘the Most’ PSTs is that they can be
observed demonstrating their commitment to social justice. Such experiences should be markedly different from the service-learning and field-placements that PSTs in ‘the Bar’ and even ‘the Middle’ are likely to encounter which are more oriented towards raising those PSTs self-awareness, and openness to diversity, respectively. An additional strategy that pertains to PSTs in ‘the Most’ cluster would be to use a student-centered approach, such as having the PSTs develop the syllabus and teach the course (Graziano, 2008). Related to this approach is the idea of collaborative learning, both of these strategies offer opportunities for PSTs in ‘the Most’ to model desirable behaviors that PSTs in ‘the Bar’ and ‘the Middle’ can observe then adopt.

According to Sleeter (2017), with PSTs in ‘the Most’ having a commitment to social justice, they should seek to attain conceptual convergence with social justice-minded teacher educators and work as a unified collective. In this collective effort, they should then strive for collective benefit instead of individual recognition (p. 164). With this in mind, PSTs in ‘the Most’ cluster should recognize the greater need for creating a critical mass of culturally responsive teachers, rather than their own personal attainment. In a similar manner to assessing PSTs in the other clusters, this can be used as an indicator of preparedness for PSTs in this cluster, seeing as how they are already likely to demonstrate behaviors associated with having a disposition for praxis and community. Preparing PSTs in ‘the Most’ need not conclude here however, as at this point, they are likely to be considering what their next steps should be for maintaining socially just and equitable circumstances for their CLD students. The concept of culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris and Alim, 2014) provides a framework for ensuring that practices are not just relevant to begin with but remain relevant as the identities of CLD students evolve with each passing year. Paris and Alim argue that while it is crucial to have an understanding and appreciation for the historical significance of young CLD students’ heritage, this understanding should be responsive
to recognize how CLD students enacting and performing practices related to their language and culture is constantly changing as they change. The researchers match this with a complementary argument that a critical stance must still point out how youth cultural practice and language can still at times perpetuate regressive and hegemonic notions, including racism, homophobia and misogyny (p. 92). PSTs are already concerned with relating to their students and developing lesson plans that are engaging and relevant, the argument for culturally sustaining pedagogy is that such concern must acknowledge both the historic, contemporary influences on CLD students’ identities and language.

Discussion

There are two prevailing but dueling views on the matter of teacher beliefs and attitudes toward culturally and linguistically diverse students. This dichotomy is actually akin to the fixed vs. growth mindset contention (Dweck and Legget, 1988). One view is that PSTs’ attitudes and beliefs are relatively stable and only influenced by early experiences. Haberman and Post (1998) argued that teachers most suited for teaching CLD students have had early experiences that equipped them with predispositions and understanding for these students and this is not replicable in teacher education as it is currently formulated.

The other view is that PSTs’ attitudes and beliefs are unstable and dynamic and are therefore influenced by curriculum in teacher education. Basically, any study, including many cited in this present study, that discusses an intervention or a set of strategies for sparking “generative change” or awakening “critical consciousness” would fall under this category. Godley Reaser and Moore (2015), sought to augment PSTs’ attitudes toward language variation through knowledge construction and open discussion, though they found that without guided discussion and moderation their participants failed to challenge their uncritical conclusions about
linguistic and cultural diversity. Ball (2009) argued for generative change in the dispositions and knowledge that PSTs have through diverse experiences, though in concluding she still resigned to needing the best prepared candidates for the schools with the highest needs much like Haberman and Post argued. Milner and Laughter (2015) contended that most teachers have the best intentions for their students already but that teacher education programs need to be reformulated to center issues of race and poverty in ways that truly address how these are affecting CLD students. The findings in the present study makes a case for all of the above. The observation that PSTs with higher disposition for social justice have more positive attitudes toward AAL, yet no background characteristics as predictors of attitudes seems to suggest that what is needed are teachers with the right mindset for engaging with issues dogging CLD students and empowering them to disrupt these oppressive systems. But as they stand teacher education programs at most affect PSTs’ self-awareness/self-reflective praxis and need to be examined and reconfigured to move PSTs toward a commitment to social justice. In line with the goal of QuantCrit, the present study utilized quantitative methodology to produce findings that present a possible solution to promote a critical-race consciousness amongst the extant population of PSTs. Many have argued that the solution to enhancing the experiences of CLD students in schools is to increase the quantity of CLD teachers. This is still a far-off goal, in the immediate time, CLD students are more likely to encounter teachers that do not necessarily share their experiences or language. The findings of the present study provide profiles of PSTs including some with descriptions that might be best suited for teaching CLD students. The development of the profiles then enabled a basic re-envisioning of teacher education curricula toward a more critical race-conscious direction. This outcome confirms the feasibility of using a quantitative approach towards an emancipatory goal.
Implementation of the Principles of QuantCrit

The present study sought to fulfill the charge in the principle of QuantCrit to employ numbers for social justice, by using a quantitative method to collect data which can identify PSTs most suited for teaching CLD students. In this effort the present study turns the lens away from viewing CLD students as bearing the brunt of their own educational limitations and towards their teachers which have, in research but not so much in popular culture, been identified as contributing to the opportunity gap for CLD students.

To further embody the ethos of QuantCrit, I bracketed my own identity with a subjectivity statement, which has been identified as a necessary first step (Garcia, Lopez, and Velez, 2018). In this statement, I acknowledged my own worldview as stemming from my experiences growing up in an Afro-Caribbean upper-middle class family not in the mainland US but in the West Indies, which engendered a slightly different perspective of discrimination and racism. A key takeaway from this self-reflection is that despite appearances I cannot and do not claim to fully know the experiences of my African American male cohorts. Still, as a black male having grown up in a post-slave colony community that still struggles with issues of colonialism, colorism and nativism, I am able to relate and employ critical approaches to conduct research cultural and linguistic discrimination.

In adopting a QuantCrit approach to examining the attitudes of PSTs toward AAL, the present study is duly subject to the methodological and practical criticisms of this approach. One methodological critique that QuantCrit would have for the present study is the use of ethnicity/race as a predictor of attitudes toward AAL, as to say that differences in attitudes can be entirely a function of the color of PSTs’ skin that they associate with their racial identity. QuantCrit urges against assuming categories such as ethnicity are fixed or natural labels that can
be used in quantitative analysis with no repercussion. To use this as a predictor is actually
counter to any consideration of experiential aspects of PSTs’ background such as where they
grew up and the friends and teachers with whom they interacted. Analysis of the data revealed no
significant differences in attitudes toward AAL due to ethnicity, which is a surprising but
encouraging finding; we should not want to see that differences are simply to do something like
race/ethnicity, or that White PSTs simply have more negative attitudes towards AAL than Black
PSTs. Though this finding runs counter to much research that has shown differences in attitudes
by ethnicity, it in fact provides further support to the principles of QuantCrit which argues that
race and racial identity are more complex and often more intersectional than the labels used in
such quantitative approaches ever allow (Covarrubias, Nava, Lara, Burciaga, Vélez, and
Solorzano, 2018).

Another critique QuantCrit would have is in terms of the interpretation of the findings as
they relate to the third tenet of the QuantCrit-adjacent Critical Race Quantitative Intersectionality
with testimonio framework presented by Covarrubias et al. (2018). In this tenet they assert that
interpretation of quantitative findings should rely on more than just tests of significance and
should be corroborated or “grounded” in experiential evidence or testimonios. The cluster
profiles of PSTs generated by the present study are accompanied by presumed behaviors
associated with the varied levels dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy as measured by
the DCRPS, but without any observational data of these behaviors. The profiles can provide a
blueprint for what to expect from PSTs based on the levels of their dispositions and their
attitudes toward AAL, but these are indeed relying on the tests of significance conducted in the
regression analysis and ANOVA.
Significance of the Study

The present study is significant to the field of teacher education in a few meaningful ways. While there are several studies that look at how perceptions teachers have regarding the race or ethnicity of their students can affect these students, much of these studies focus on in-service teachers as opposed to preservice teachers. Also, there is little research that specifically looks at how language and language ideologies play a role in the promulgation of these perceptions. Furthermore, there are only a few research studies examining the factors related to PSTs’ maintenance of these perceptions toward language differences. The findings from the study can help to inform efforts regarding addressing matters of linguistic diversity. Specifically, researchers can use the findings in the development of programs that challenge PSTs’ attitudes regarding dialect differences in schools with diverse populations. Gaining a better understanding of the relationships between characteristics, dispositions of PSTs and their attitudes toward AAL, teacher educators may be better equipped to raise the critical linguistic awareness of PSTs. At minimum, the present study should highlight how attention can be paid to the factors and characteristics that inform the perspectives these students have about language.

Limitations of the Study

There are a few limitations for the present study. One limitation we must contend with is the reality that measures of attitudes relying on self-report may not translate to actual behavior in the form of adopting and adhering to multicultural practices and sociolinguistic content knowledge (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015).

The items on the demographic questionnaire were self-report and many of them relied on the participants’ interpretation of what was being asked, for example what their hometown population was like and whether they took any coursework that discussed AAL. In both of these
cases it was left up to the participant to determine (in the case of the hometown population item) what should be considered rural, urban, and suburban, or (in the case of AAL coursework) what constituted discussion of the language variety in a course. In particular, 25% of participants saying they have taken some coursework that discusses AAL is likely due to the imprecision of the items that ask participants about this. There’s no description provided that specifies what a course with AAL sociolinguistic content would look like, so there can be individuals that claim they had a course, when it could have been as cursory as the teacher using slang or hip hop to introduce a particular English language concept. This ambiguity likely led to participants having differing interpretations of these and other items in the demographics, which might have prohibited a valid read from participants contributing to no significant associations being observed between PSTs’ characteristics and their attitudes toward AAL.

Another limitation also pertains to the self-report data such that using quantitative measures limits the scope of our analysis of these possible relationships between the likely kinds of PSTs we recruit and the attitudes they hold regarding AAL. The discovery of a relationship between prior multicultural experiences and language attitudes by way of dispositions toward diversity may begin to illuminate what teacher education professionals might want to focus on when admitting and instructing PSTs, but it would not indicate whether PSTs are aware of the relationship or specifically what type of prior experiences are responsible for their disposition and attitudes. Such details could be explored qualitatively to provide greater context to the findings of the present study.

There were no observed relationships between PSTs’ characteristics and their dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy or their attitudes toward AAL. As discussed already, this may have to do with the ineffectiveness of the items on the demographics
questionnaire for capturing valid responses from the PSTs. Another reason could be that the sample was not diverse in terms of regional differences. The two institutions from which PSTs were recruited for the study are within 15 miles of each other, and the majority of students at both institutions are in-state. This would suggest that most of the students share similar home environments and experiences, even across ethnicity and certainly across gender.

**Future Directions**

Although much has been accomplished in the past 30 years concerning the attitudes PSTs have toward AAL, the findings of the present study have opened up new avenues that can be pursued to gain a greater sense of the antecedents and related factors. The following are some recommendations for future research.

1. As discussed above, it is highly likely the dispositions PSTs have for culturally responsive pedagogy are influenced by experiences PSTs have either with diversity or the absence of such. More precise items that capture these experiences can be paired with the DCRPS to glean such associations. For example, items that gather from participants what kinds of friends they interacted with the most and where those friends come from might reveal more detail about the language behavior of the participants themselves.

2. Although the DCRPS was very effective in the present study for eliciting the dispositions PSTs have for CRP, as it ties very well into the existing theory on dispositions for diversity, it narrowly focused on CRP instead of addressing multiculturalism more generally, and the subscales mostly contained items that respondents were highly unlikely to disagree with. Another scale that might yield similar but more generalizable findings in the Multicultural Teacher Disposition Scale
(Jensen, Whiting, and Chapman, 2018). This scale also corresponds well with the existing theory on dispositions for diversity but contains items that are less likely to elicit ceiling effects from participants. Instead of presenting the most desirable values for culturally responsive teaching, the MTDS contains statements that run counter to CRT but PSTs with uncritical ideas about diversity are likely to agree with. For example, the MTDS contains the items “Everyone in the United States has pretty much the same opportunities in life”, and “To be fair in the classroom I ignore skin color and other student differences,” which address the CRT tenets of myth of meritocracy and colorblindness respectively, but would otherwise seem benign to PSTs that still maintain such notions of merit and colorblindness when addressing matters of race.

3. The findings of the present study did provide an understanding of the dispositions and attitudes of PSTs located in the region where the two sampled institutions reside. Further examination would benefit from the expansion to other regions outside the southeastern United States and even into more varied environments besides the moderately dense urban and suburban sprawl found in this region. For example, a more densely populated urban environment that makes cultural and linguistic differences more salient in day to day encounters might reveal greater contrasts to what was (not) found in the present study in terms of background experiences and characteristics of PSTs.

4. Further research would benefit from mixed methodology, reexamining characteristics using new and more precise items, a more discerning dispositions for multiculturalism scale, and then adding a qualitative component following up with participants.
(perhaps identified by cluster analysis) that represent exemplars for elaboration. For example, allow the participant to describe their background experiences, provide their understanding of AAL and culturally responsive pedagogy.

5. Future examinations of PSTs attitudes toward AAL as well as their dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy could gather participants at different stages in their program, which might reveal differences in dispositions based on how far they are in the program. In line with the critiques above concerning how potent teacher education programs are for affecting PSTs’ dispositions, this might shed light on what aspects of the program are effective at moving participants toward a commitment to social justice.

Conclusion

The present study found connections between dispositions PSTs have regarding CRP, and the attitudes they have toward AAL. Though the present study did not find any relationship between the experiential and background characteristics of the PSTs and their attitudes toward AAL, it is very unlikely the findings are suggesting that PSTs have inherent differences in their dispositions toward CRP and that they are not accountable by the factors examined in the study. It may simply be that the present study failed to capture the explanatory factors that could likely account for these differences in dispositions for CRP. Still the findings of the study have novelly linked PSTs’ dispositions for CRP with their attitudes toward AAL. This connection affirms the relationship between PSTs’ held ideas about cultural diversity, which can be very amorphous and abstract, and their attitudes toward AAL, a variation of English typically associated with culturally and linguistically diverse students. This revelation gets at the racial realism tenet of CRT, in that there is a tendency to view instances of linguistic discrimination as aberrant and
unconfirmable. In response, here we have the linking of PSTs’ dispositions for CRP with their attitudes toward AAL in a much sharper contrast than before. As prior research looking at how PSTs and in-service teachers treat AAL and students that speak it have demonstrated time and time again, this provides very observable and tangible material to link to the broader concerns of cultural and racial discrimination, such that students that use a non-standard variety of English are also likely to experience other forms of discrimination along with linguistic discrimination. This relationship can be utilized in both linguistics and teacher education curricula to triangulate PSTs’ understanding of matters of cultural bias and discrimination. This can be accomplished through the implementation of the strategies in the stratified staggered scheduled as described above, based on the findings of the cluster analysis in the present study. This would ideally be adopted by teacher education programs intending to produce culturally responsive teachers, as in the very least it is likely to produce PSTs with higher dispositions for culturally responsive pedagogy.
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Appendix A

(Modified) Language Attitude Scale


1. African American Language (AAL) is a misuse of Mainstream American English (MAE).

   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

2. AAL is a clear, thoughtful, and expressive language.

   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

3. AAL has a faulty grammar system.

   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree


   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

5. Teachers should allow African American students to use AAL in the Classroom.

   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

6. As a linguistic system, AAL is as good as MAE.

   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

7. AAL is as effective for communication as is MAE.

   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

8. If use of AAL were encouraged in different situations, speakers of AAL would be more motivated to achieve academically.

   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
9. Teachers should use AAL in predominantly African American schools.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

10. Students should learn about the history and development of AAL in school.
    Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

11. AAL is a more creative language than MAE.
    Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

12. It is important to accept AAL, as a part of accepting linguistic diversity.
    Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

13. Attempts to eliminate AAL in schools may result in situations that can be psychologically damaging to African American children.
    Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

14. When teachers reject the native language of a student, they are rejecting the student.
    Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

15. One of the goals of the American school system should be the standardization of the English language.
    Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

16. AAL should be discouraged in school.
    Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

17. AAL should be accepted in entertainment and performance contexts.
    Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

18. Acceptance of AAL by teachers will lead to a lowering of standards in schools.
    Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

19. The scholastic level of a school will fall if teachers allow AAL to be spoken.
Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

20. AAL is an inferior language system.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

21. A teacher should correct a student’s use of AAL.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

22. One successful method for improving the learning capacity of speakers of AAL would be to replace their dialect with MAE.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

23. AAL sounds sloppy.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

Description of modifications made to the Language Attitude Scale

   Item 7 on the original instrument “AAVE is cool.” was replaced with “As a linguistic system, AAL is as good as MAE.” a statement which is not as vague and open to interpretation. Item 9 was modified from “If use of AAVE were encouraged, speakers of AAVE would be more motivated to achieve academically.” to “If use of AAL were encouraged in different situations, speakers of AAL would be more motivated to achieve academically.” in order to emphasize that students’ that are capable of codeswitching might choose to do so. The item “In a predominantly African American school, AAVE as well as MAE should be taught.” was modified to say, “Teachers should use AAL in predominantly African American schools.” This, in addition to reducing the ambiguity of the original item, directly implicates participants who are PSTs to consider their beliefs regarding the appropriateness and utility of AAL in one context versus the other. The following three items on the original, “Widespread acceptance of AAVE is imperative.”, "AAVE should be considered a bad influence on American culture.” and “AAVE
must be accepted if pride is to develop among African Americans.” were dropped and the statement “Students should learn about the history and development of AAL in school.” was added to better encapsulate the concept of the legitimacy of AAL as a language. Item 11 “AAL is a more creative language than MAE.” was added to again get a sense of what PSTs think about the appropriateness of AAL. Item 12 “It is important to accept AAL, as a part of accepting linguistic diversity.” was added as an indicator of whether PSTs recognize the link between students’ language behavior and their cultural identity. Item 13 “AAL is useful to know for social interaction.” was added to gauge PSTs’ perception of AAL as a useful form of communication. The item “When teachers reject the native language of a student, they do him great harm.” was modified to say, “When teachers reject the native language of a student, they are rejecting the student.” to have more contemporary as well as more direct and logical phrasing. The item “AAVE should be discouraged.” was modified to “AAL should be discouraged in school.” to firmly situate the discussion in the school context. The item “AAVE should be accepted socially.” was modified to “AAL should be accepted in entertainment and performance contexts to reduce the ambiguity of the original item, and also situate the discussion in another context besides school as with the previous item.” An item “AAL should be accepted for general social interaction.” was added to draw a sharper distinction between participants that might accept AAL for entertainment and performance contexts but not for school participants that have less restrictive attitudes toward AAL. The item “AAVE is an inferior language system.” was modified to “MAE is a superior language system to AAL.” in order to reduce vagueness and draw participants into comparing the two language varieties. The item “AAVE sounds sloppy.” was modified to “AAL sounds like it’s broken MAE grammar rules.” to reduce vagueness and prime participants with commonplace notions of AAL being nothing more than
“broken English.” The final item on the original instrument “The sooner we eliminate AAVE the better.” was dropped as it presented a highly charged perspective that is unlikely to garner any serious consideration.
Dispositions for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Scale


1. I value assessing my own teaching practices.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

2. I am aware of my cultural background.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

3. I am willing to take advantage of professional development opportunities focused on issues of diversity.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

4. I am open to feedback about my teaching practices.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

5. I am willing to examine my own identities.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

6. I am willing to be vulnerable.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

7. I value developing personal relationships with students.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

8. I value collaborating with families.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

9. I value collaborating with colleagues.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

10. I value collaborative learning.
Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

11. I value student input into classroom rules.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

12. I value dialog as a way to learn about students’ out of school lives.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

13. I value student differences.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

14. I view myself as a member of the learning community along with students.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

15. I am comfortable with conflict as an inevitable part of the teaching and learning processes.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

16. I believe it is important to acknowledge how issues of power are enacted through schools.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

17. I believe that schools can reproduce social inequities.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

18. I believe that hot topic conversations (e.g., race, gender, sexuality, religion, etc.) should be had in class when necessary and/or relevant.
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree

19. I value equity (giving each student what they individually need) over equality (giving each student the same thing).
   Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree
(Modified) Demographic Questionnaire


1. Please specify your ethnicity.
   - White
   - Hispanic or Latino
   - Black or African American
   - Native American or American Indian
   - Asian / Pacific Islander
   - Other

2. What is your age?
   - 18-20 years old
   - 21-23 years old
   - 24-26 years old
   - 27 years or older

3. Current Gender Identity
   - Female
   - Male
   - Trans male/Trans man
   - Trans female/Trans woman
   - Genderqueer/Gender non-conforming
   - Different identity (please state):_________

4. What institution do you currently attend?
• NCCU
• NCSU
• UNCG
• Other: ________________

5. What is your current occupation?
   • Future teacher
   • Current teacher
   • Other: ________________

6. What grade level are you teaching currently or are planning to teach?
   1. Elementary
   2. Middle Grades
   3. High School

7. What content area do you teach currently or are planning to teach?
   1. English Language Arts/Writing Composition
   2. Math
   3. Science
   4. Social Studies

8. I have had a high school course (English literature, or other) that covered features of African American English?
   • Yes
   • No

9. I have had a college or university course (English literature, or other) that covered features of African American English
• Yes
• No

10. I consider the population of my hometown to be

• Rural
• Urban
• Suburban

11. I was raised in a home/community where

• African American Language was mainly spoken
• Mainstream American English was mainly spoken
• Both were spoken equally

10. I am a US citizen or US resident for 10 years or more?

• Yes
• No
Appendix B

Letter of Consent

INFORMED CONSENT FORM FOR RESEARCH-SURVEY

This consent information is valid August 2018 through December 2018

Title of Study: Understanding Factors Related to Attitudes toward African American Language

Principal Investigator: Bayley Kamau Garbutt

Faculty Sponsor: Dr. Jessica DeCuir-Gunby

What are some general things you should know about research studies? — You are being asked to participate in a research study. Your participation is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate, or to stop participating at any time without penalty. Research studies are conducted to gain a better understanding of a particular topic or issue.

You are not guaranteed any personal benefits from taking part in a study. Research studies also pose potential risks to those that participate. In this consent form you will find specific information about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If you do not understand something in this form it is your right to ask for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If at any point you have questions about your participation, feel free to contact the research named above.

What is the purpose of this study? — The purpose of this study is to examine pre-services teachers’ perceptions regarding language variation, in particular the perceptions they have regarding African American Language, the variety of English spoken mostly by African American students and other members of the African American communities in the United States.
**What will happen if I take part in this study?** – You will be completing an online survey anonymously, no identifying information will be collected or connected to your survey responses. Additionally, I suggest that you complete this survey in a location where you have privacy and consider using your browser in private/incognito mode. If completing on a public computer make sure to completely close out the browser when you complete the survey.

**How long will I be in the study? How many other people will be in the study?** —
Participants will spend about 15-20 minutes participating in this study. We anticipate a total of about 150 individuals to participate in the study.

**Who should participate in the study?** — College students enrolled in education programs, 18 years and over, studying to be teachers.

**What are the risks?** — There is little expected risk. However, for some individuals, the discussion of language and diversity can potentially be unpleasant. You do not need to answer any questions that you do not feel comfortable responding to. It is recommended that you complete the survey in a private location and clear and close your browser when the survey is complete.

**What are the benefits?** — As a participant you will gain insights into your own feelings and beliefs because of the opportunity to consider your perceptions and experiences with linguistic diversity.

**How will your confidentiality be maintained?** — The PI will keep your responses secure and since no identifying information is collected, your responses are anonymous. Data are reported in aggregate further making it impossible to identify any individual’s data. The PI will also use great care in storage of data and materials collected. Data will be held first on a secure password protected server and then on a password protected personal computer. The only online copy of
the data will be held in a 2-factor authenticated Google Drive account accessible only by the principle investigator. At any point in time, only the principal investigator and the faculty advisor for the study will have access to the data.

**How will you be compensated?** — There is no compensation in the study for participants who agree to participate in the study.

**What if you have questions about this study?** — If you have questions at any time about the study itself or the procedures implemented in this study, you may contact the researcher, Bayley Garbutt, via email: bayley_garbutt@ncsu.edu, or phone: 919-396-2354.

**What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?** — If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact the NCSU IRB Office via email at irb-director@ncsu.edu or via phone at 1-919-515-4514.

**Consent to Participate**

“I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which I am otherwise entitled.”

If you are interested in participating in the study, click “YES” to confirm your consent, and proceed forward to respond to the survey.