Understanding & Using the CR-SE Framework

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An outline

- What is CR-SE?
  - Gloria Ladson-Billings
- What is CRT doing in a nice field like education?
- What can we do? Implications for our work
- Being an agent of change takes daring, courage, empathy
- Q&A
Culturally Responsive-Sustaining (CR-S) Education

- This framework is intended to help education stakeholders create student-centered learning environments that affirm cultural identities; foster positive academic outcomes; develop students’ abilities to connect across lines of difference; elevate historically marginalized voices; empower students as agents of social change; and contribute to individual student engagement, learning, growth, and achievement through the cultivation of critical thinking.

Vision of Ed System that creates...

I. Students who experience academic success

Students are prepared for rigor and independent learning. Students understand themselves as contributing members of an academically-rigorous, intellectually-challenging school and classroom community. Students demonstrate an ability to use critical reasoning, take academic risks, and leverage a growth mindset to learn from mistakes. Students are self-motivated, setting and revising academic personal goals to drive their own learning and growth.

II. Students who are sociopolitically conscious and socioculturally responsive

Students acknowledge the limitations of their own perspectives. They have empathy for others while they appreciate and respect others’ differences. They demonstrate cooperation and teamwork, using active listening and communication skills to resolve conflict. They use interpersonal skills to build and maintain strong relationships, including those along lines of difference, in their class and school communities.

All layers of the environment in which students learn (classroom, school, family, and community) affirm and value the various aspects of students’ cultural identities (i.e. race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, disability, religion, socioeconomic background). Role models in the classroom, school, family, and community recognize student strengths and offer opportunities for students to grow and learn.

III. Students who have a critical lens through which they challenge inequitable systems of access, power, and privilege.

Students bring a critical lens to the world as they study historical and contemporary conditions of inequity and learn from historically marginalized voices. Students learn about power and privilege in the context of various communities and are empowered as agents of positive social change.
Just what is critical race theory and what’s it doing in a nice field like education?

GLORIA LADSON-BILLINGS
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
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Critical race theory (CRT) first emerged as a counterlegal scholarship to the positivist and liberal legal discourse of civil rights. This scholarly tradition argues against the slow pace of racial reform in the United States. Critical race theory begins with the notion that racism is normal in American society. It departs from mainstream legal scholarship by sometimes employing storytelling. It critiques liberalism and argues that Whites have been the primary beneficiaries of civil rights legislation. Since schooling in the USA purports to prepare citizens, CRT looks at how citizenship and race might interact. Critical race theory’s usefulness in understanding education inequity is in its infancy. It requires a critique of some of the civil rights era’s most cherished legal victories and educational reform movements, such as multiculturalism. The paper concludes with words of caution about the use of CRT in education without a more thorough analysis of the legal literature upon which it is based.
Levels of Discrimination

**Individual**
- Individual attitudes and behaviors

**Organizational**
- Established rules, policies, practices of an organization, department, institution; can be regarded as the way of doing business

Institutional structures, policies, and practices "operate to pass on and reinforce historic patterns of privilege and disadvantage" (in Dowd & Bensimon, p. 3)

**Structural**
- Self-sustaining processes that occur within fields and between systems, i.e. education, employment, law

Adapted from U.S. Commission on Civil Rights’ “the problem: discrimination” (1981)

Basic Tenets of CRT
- Racism in the U.S. is normal
- Whiteness as property
- Counter storytelling
- Intersectionality
- Interest Convergence

Richard Delgado & Jean Stefancic
Also Founders of CRT
Normalization of Racism

- Racism is normal, commonplace, and deeply embedded in the social, political, and cultural systems in the United States (Patton et al., 2007)
- Permanence and pervasiveness of racism (Delgado)

What might/does this look like in Education?

BIPOC children continue to face educational inequities when compared to their White Counterparts:
- Low standardized Test Scores
- Discipline (Suspension/Expulsion)
- Gifted Programs
- Special Education
- Graduate Rates
- Segregated Schools
- Lack of Culturally Appropriate Curriculum

Conceptual Race (King, in Ladson-Billings, 1998)

Conceptual Whiteness
- Achievement
- Intelligence
- Beauty
- Excellence
- Authenticity
- Professionalism

Conceptual Blackness
- Welfare recipients
- At-risk
- Gangs
- Under-served
- Disadvantaged
- Urban
Whiteness as Property

Society in the U.S. is based on property rights and being White carries more status than being a person of color (Patton et al., 2007).

Derived historically wherein a person who did not own property could not participate in the “governance of the union” (Capper, p. 803)

In education, the curriculum is a valued “property”.

What might this look like in Education

- Skepticism and challenges to objectivity, neutrality, meritocracy, colorblindness

Interest Convergence

Change occurs when there is a convergence of interest between Whites and non-Whites. Interest convergence is the belief that those that hold power will only adjust power dynamics if it serves an interest for them. (Delgado & Stephancic, 2016).

Presently, we are witnessing the reverse of this process; a period of pronounced “interest-divergence,” when White power-holders imagine that a direct advantage will accrue from the further exclusion and oppression of racially minoritized groups in society.

- Challenge: Strategically employ interest convergence as a tool for equity change” (Capper, p. 814).
Intersectionality

What this may look like in Education
- Sensitivity to social and cultural identity differences in the classroom and school activities.
- Exploring our own sociocultural identity differences and the way our orientations toward teaching are shaped through this lens.

Counternarratives

Counternarratives are the use of storytelling from the perspective of marginalized groups and is critical in understanding how race functions within U.S. systems (Howard-Hamilton, 2003).

These "counterstories to the White norm at the individual, institutional, societal, and epistemological levels make visible the daily microaggressions and societal and institutional racism that people of color experience" (Capper, p. 808).

What this may look like in Education
- Amplify/make visible the perspectives (‘stories’) of individuals from diverse backgrounds
- Focus on assets, not deficits

Flipping the Question
- From: What’s wrong with [Black, Latinx, MLL/ELL] students and their parents, families, communities?
- To: What’s right with [Black, Latinx, MLL/ELL] students and their parents, families, communities?
“[Culturally Relevant Pedagogy] is not just endorsing or validating the culture kids come with; it's giving them access to at least one other culture, so they leave school at least biculturally competent. You are covering not just black or brown kids, but white kids; white kids should not go out into a very international, global workforce and only understand themselves or their culture.”

- Glorinda Ladson-Billings in “Research, Pedagogy, and the Academy,” Ed Week

- Culturally Relevant Pedagogy:
  - “Students must experience academic success”
  - “Students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence”
  - “Students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order” (Ladson-Billings, 2001, p.143).

“Talking about gender [race, ethnicity], for most people, is the equivalent of fish talking about water” (Judith Lorber)
- What would an inventory of your classroom library or the school library reveal regarding who is represented and how?
- Who are the protagonists in these books?
- Does the protagonist represented in a specific group have agency?
- What authors are represented?

Interrogate Curriculum

- **Explicit**: what is taught; content and concrete teaching methods
- **Implicit** (or hidden): habitual practices, behaviors, and attitudes that happen but typically go unnoticed
- **Null**: what we teach by what we don’t teach; what we’re teaching through what (or who) we leave out

  - Possible causes: preferences of educational administrators, teacher’s lack of knowledge, or deeply ingrained assumptions and biases of instructors.

  (Eisner, 1985)
What do you do?

What do you do in your teaching to
- Create welcoming & affirming environment?
- Foster high expectations & rigorous instruction?
- Develop inclusive curriculum & assessment?
- Share what you do and post your ideas on the Jamboard

4 corners Jamboard

- How do you “Engage in ongoing professional learning?”
- Develop critically conscious lens
Critical Consciousness

- Critical thinking: “…ability to interpret, evaluate, and make informed judgments about the adequacy of arguments, data, and conclusions” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991, p. 118).

- In contrast, critically conscious thinking
  - Awareness of societal systems of advantage and disadvantage rooted in sociocultural identity differences
  - Differentiated by its focus on social change
  - Linked to political and intellectual liberation

Dare to Speak

- Crenshaw (1991) argued we must “summon the courage to challenge groups that are after all, in one sense, ‘home’ to us,” and she wondered how we might “dare to speak” and “call attention to how the identity of ‘the group’ has been centered on the intersectional identities of a few” (p. 1299).

“The courage to be vulnerable is not about winning or losing, it’s about the courage to show up when you can’t predict or control the outcome.”

- Brené Brown
Do Something

- Make noise, be seen – Break the silence
- Interrupt “business as usual”
- Dare to make people feel uncomfortable, beginning with yourself.
  - Justice workers may be viewed as being too controversial and face possible negative repercussions
  - Cultivate an armor of allies

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Creative Resistance

- With each strand of the knot of privilege that we help to unravel, we don’t act simply for ourselves; rather, we join a process of creative resistance to oppression
- Dare to make a difference – to look at things as they are, to imagine something better, and to plant seeds of change in yourself, in others and in the world.

“The only person who is better than you is embedded in you” (Chris Emdin)
#HipHopEd
Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.

Maya Angelou

Wrapping up (Q&A)

Respond in chat box or unmute & share:

- I’m left wondering about...
- I hadn’t thought about...
- I was struck by...
- Today’s dialogue has me thinking about...
- One thing I can do is...
- I’d like to learn more about...
Selected References


Resources


Saad, L. E. (2020). Me and white supremacy: Combat racism, change the world, and become a good ancestor. Sourcebooks, Inc.
