



How Teachers Learn Racial Competency: The Role of Peers and Contexts

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This paper investigates how teachers learn about race in the school context, with a particular focus on teachers' development of racial competency. Using in-depth, semi-structured interviews we find that teachers learn through three sources: from their peers, from years of experience, and from teacher preparation and in-service experiences. Furthermore, we find that learning occurs both informally and formally and that these sources of learning are moderated by three contextual factors: career status, school culture, and out-of-school factors. We find that teachers rely most on informal avenues and encounters to develop racial competency.

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Abstract: This paper investigates how teachers learn about race in the school context, with a particular focus on teachers' development of racial competency. Using in-depth, semi-structured interviews we find that teachers learn through three sources: from their peers, from years of experience, and from teacher preparation and in-service experiences. Furthermore, we find that learning occurs both informally and formally and that these sources of learning are moderated by three contextual factors: career status, school culture, and out-of-school factors. We find that teachers rely most on informal avenues and encounters to develop racial competency.

Keywords: peer effects, teacher effectiveness, teacher diversity, achievement gaps, racial competency, professional development

Introduction and Background

This paper seeks to understand how teachers improve over time—and specifically how teachers can become more effective for students of color—by bridging three previously distinct literatures in education research: teacher peer effects, the returns to teaching experience, and how interactions and experience lead to learnings about race. Specifically, we investigate how teachers learn in the school context, with a particular focus on teachers’ development of racial competency. Using in-depth, semi-structured interviews we find that teachers learn through primarily three sources: from their peers, as they gain experience teaching a variety of students, and from teacher preparation and in-service experiences. Furthermore, we find that learning occurs both informally and formally and that these sources of learning are moderated by three contextual factors: career status, school culture, and out-of-school factors. We find that teachers rely on informal avenues and encounters most to develop racial competency.

Our study seeks to understand how teachers develop these learnings, with the secondary intent of capturing the challenges that teachers and schools are facing in the current political moment. Learning about race and teaching others about race continues to be a highly charged topic for teachers, administrators, and larger school communities (Duncan, 2019; Modica, 2015; Stoll, 2014). At the same time, education administrators have to respond to a rapidly diversifying public-school student body. Research has consistently shown that having same-race teachers has both short- and long-term benefits for Black students (Gershenson et al., 2022; Lindsay & Hart, 2017, Hart & Lindsay, 2024) and Hispanic/Latino students (Lindsay, Monarrez, & Luetmer, 2022). Indeed, having a high-quality diverse educator workforce benefits all students (Gershenson, Hansen, & Lindsay, 2021). In the near term, however, the public-school teaching workforce will remain majority white and female (Lindsay, Blom & Tilsley, 2017). Therefore,

understanding how teachers develop these learnings is critical for education stakeholders who are interested in closing persistently stubborn racialized achievement gaps, even as they grapple with how to address issues of race and identity in the classroom.

Drawing on interviews with teachers, this study investigates the sources through which teachers learn about race and develop racial competency, as well as the contextual factors that contribute to how teachers learn. According to Ali Michael, teachers who have racial competency “have the and confidence to engage in healthy and reciprocal cross-racial relationships,” which involves honoring differences, confronting racism, remaining open to feedback, and questioning one’s thinking and practice (Michael, 2015, p. 5). We study the development of these competencies in the context of teacher learning. Teachers learn from a variety of sources, including from other teachers; and, in all cases, learning can happen both formally and informally. We also found that these learnings are contingent upon/moderated by school context, the stage of a teachers’ career, and outside factors that impact schools.

Literature Review

Prior work in disparate literatures grounds this important question of how teachers learn racial competency. Broadly, the literature points to four main areas of teacher learning that are particularly relevant for this study: teacher peer effects, returns to experience, interactions and experiences leading to racial learning, and racial competency.

Teacher Peer Effects

Recent literature has demonstrated that teachers benefit from working with effective peers. For instance, Jackson and Bruegmann (2009) examine student achievement and growth

considering teacher-peer contexts finding that teacher effectiveness as measured by value-added modeling can be influenced by joint production and shared resources, motivation or effort of peer teachers, and peer learning. Similarly, Papay and colleagues (2020) find that higher-performing teachers significantly increased the effectiveness of lower-performing teachers when tasked with focusing on skills improvement of lower-performing teachers. Most relevant to the current study, Gershenson et al. 2023 build on the approach of Jackson and Bruegmann (2009) to identify arguably causal “peer learning” effects of Black peers on novice white teachers’ effectiveness with Black students, in terms of improving test scores and reducing suspensions.

Research has also highlighted that teacher efficacy is positively impacted by collaboration on issues such as curriculum, overall school improvement practices, and professional development (Goddard & Kim, 2018; Kini & Podolsky, 2016; Russell, 2015). Such studies demonstrate that teacher learning is positively affected by quality teacher-peer relationships. They demonstrate that high quality teacher-peers can increase effectiveness for other teachers via fostering community, exposure to expertise, increasing connections to school resources, and instructional practices tailored to student needs.

Heterogeneous Returns to Experience

The extant literature finds that multiple forms of learning have a notable impact on teacher effectiveness. Many of these studies have found that returns to experience are highest when said experience is accrued within the same types of classrooms. For example, Ost (2014) observes teachers at their grade level assignment over the course of an 18-year period illuminating the connection between experience or task-specific human capital, productivity, and student outcomes. The study finds that teachers who had more recent experience teaching at the

same grade level demonstrated greater improvements in productivity and their students performed better in math. Likewise, studies found more experience and training for pre-service and in-service on specific ELL strategies relates to gains for ELL students (Master et al., 2016; Russell, 2015). Similarly, studies have shown that teachers increase their effectiveness with prolonged exposure to students of color (Vinopal & Holt, 2019). However, other studies illuminate that the connection between effectiveness and experience is non-linear and more varied. For instance, Hill and Jones (2018) find that teacher effectiveness was positively associated with following a student across grade levels and not necessarily teaching the same subject. Finally, some studies have found that teacher effectiveness increases with better school matches and is not necessarily bound by grade level or subject experience (Jackson, 2013; Kini & Podolsky, 2016).

Overall, these studies support the idea that teacher learning continues during employment and their effectiveness increases over time because of opportunities for productive learning. Although literature largely supports increased effectiveness for novice teachers, some literature is now showing that continued learning can help further these gains later in teacher careers (Kini & Podolsky, 2016). Notably, researchers have highlighted that by and large, literature on teacher effectiveness has been limited in identifying the factors that strengthen its connection to experience (Rice, 2013; Irvine, 2019). We hypothesize that teachers can learn racial competency through accrued years of experience teaching students of color.

Still, this learning may be conditional on other aspects of a teachers' experiences – as research shows that merely being exposed to students of color may not be enough for teachers to learn racial competency. For instance, some studies have shown that teachers often underutilize the cultural capital of their students of color. In her review, Goldenberg (2014) highlights that

cultural clashes often occur between non-white students and a predominantly white teaching force due to white teachers' improper engagement with non-white students' cultural capital. That is, white teachers' lack of understanding of cultural differences, repressed awareness of their own positionalities, and limited capacity to invoke their students' cultural capital pedagogically contributes to the ostracization of these students within the learning environment (Matias, 2013; Michie, 2007; Pollock et al., 2009; Utt & Tochluk, 2020; Von Esch et al., 2020). Additionally, studies support the notion that successful teachers recognize and affirm their student's cultural capital in their language, expression or behaviors, and values/interests; demonstrate the value of their students' culture as evident in curricular choices such as choice of literature (Cross, 2003; Goldenberg, 2014; Roegman et al., 2021). These studies confirms that building teacher competency around race is fundamental to increasing pedagogical effectiveness, especially for white teachers with non-white students.

Interactions and Experience lead to Learnings about Race

Researchers have found that when challenged with iterative, reflective, and educational learning opportunities, teachers develop the capacity for working with racially and culturally diverse students. Studies have found that when teachers engage in interactions that build cultural and racial awareness and insight, they increase their ability to teach across contexts (Delano-Oriaran & Meidl, 2013; Kelly, 2006; Matias, 2013; Michie, 2007; Yoon, 2012; Utt & Tochluk, 2020). Yet, it has been found that even when white teachers participate in formalized training opportunities, they were often still limited in their development due to the design and facilitation of such groups and teachers often walked away from such training unable to disrupt whiteness in their classroom practices (Cross, 2003; Matias, 2013; Pollock et al., 2009; Roegman et al., 2021;

Yoon; 2012). These opportunities neglected to challenge teacher's participation in whiteness and many times reinforced tropes of saviorism, voyeurism, and fears around safety and parent under-involvement. Hence, it appears that it is critical that training opportunities also allow for critical reflection and the bridging of theory and practice are necessary experiences that lead to their ability to effectively teach in diverse and urban contexts (Matias, 2013; Milner & Smithey, 2003; Milner 2006; Pollock et al., 2009; Roegman et al., 2021; Utt & Tochluk, 2020). Teachers learning experiences outside the classroom are not limited to trainings; we also ask about other professional development experiences and informal opportunities that teachers might have. We hypothesize that experiences that are explicitly focused on issues of race and equity can offer teachers the opportunities to learn about race.

Racial Competency

When teachers learn about race - through peer effects, heterogenous returns to experience, and interactions and trainings about race – the hoped-for outcome is racial competency, which in turn enables teachers to more effectively engage with and teach students of color. Studies show that most educators either do not know how to discuss race (Bolgatz, 2005; Stevenson, 2014; Von Esch et al., 2020) or have an inadequate understanding of issues of race and ethnicity, cultural plurality, and its interconnectedness to learning and teaching (Von Esch et al., 2015). Hence, the development of racial competency becomes imperative for modern teachers. Ali Michael (2015) defines racial competency in school settings as:

having the skills and confidence to engage in healthy and reciprocal cross-racial relationships; to recognize and honor difference without judgement; to notice and analyze racial dynamics as they occur; to confront racism at the individual, group, and systems

level; to cultivate support mechanisms for continuing to be involved in antiracist practice even when it is discouraging or conflictual; to speak one's mind and be open to feedback on one's ideas; to ask for feedback about one's ideas and work; and to raise race questions about oneself and one's practice. (p. 5)

Though her study only includes white teachers, racial competency is a set of skills and behaviors that all teachers need in an increasingly diverse world (Shah & Coles, 2020). Indeed, Stevenson (2014) asserts racial competency can be viewed as a growth mindset approach for teachers looking to develop the ability to teach a diverse range of students.

However, gaining these competencies remains a challenge for many teachers. Pollock (2004) theorizes that most educators do not know how to discuss race and that they are in fact 'colormute'. That is, they hesitate to label a person, program, or situation utilizing racial terms. Studies have supported this theory highlighting that many teachers reinforce whiteness in how they discuss race with each other and their students and often encourage silence or politeness instead of direct conversations about race (Picower, 2009; Von Esch et al., 2020; Yoon, 2012). Picower (2009) finds that even pre-service teachers rely on ideological, emotional, and performative tools of whiteness to actively resist disrupting whiteness in the classroom.

Here, we are interested in the ways that teachers work to develop such competency. The literature has offered some insights on how some teachers can and do broach racial topics and improve their racial competency (Bolgatz, 2005; Crowley, 2016; Utt & Tochluk, 2020). For white teachers, Utt & Tochluk (2020) stated that they need to examine how their whiteness interacts with their practice. The researchers discussed that when white teachers in urban schools fail to "hold the tension of recognizing one's connection to whiteness and white culture while working to regain an ethnic or supportive cultural grounding, they enact a number of troubling

behaviors” (ibid, p.135) reflecting the importance of their ability to internalize their understandings of these connections in conjunction with trainings and interactions with students. For teachers of color, improvements in racial competency stem from pre-service training (Cabello & Burstein, 1995; Kohli, 2014; Shah & Coles, 2020) and their ability to incorporate their own lived experiences into their pedagogical expression (Kohli, 2014; Wee et al., 2023).

Methods

Study Design

The present study seeks to understand how teachers learn racial competency, to develop a framework that describes how teachers develop this competency. This study is part of a larger mixed methods project on teacher learning and returns to experience (Gershenson et al., 2023). The mixed methods project involves a quantitative analysis of North Carolina administrative data (to understand the effects of the racial makeup of a teacher’s same-grade colleagues on the teacher’s effectiveness, effort, or persistence) and an exploratory, qualitative analysis of the mechanisms through which teachers learn racial competency. This study utilizes the qualitative data – interviews with 33 teachers – to analyze more deeply how teachers learn racial competency through various sources, mediated by contextual factors.

We conducted semi-structured interviews with teachers of various races, asking questions about how they learn from their students and classroom experiences, what they learn from teachers and mentors, and what they seek from their peers, particularly when it comes to matters of racial competency and in a variety of school settings. Semi-structured interviews allowed us to address the same topics across interviews while also allowing us the flexibility to ask impromptu probing questions when the interviewees touched on areas that were particularly important to

them or that enhanced our understanding of their learning. Ultimately, the interviews allowed us to hear how the teachers have changed their pedagogy, approach to relationship building, communication with peers and students, and classroom management over time, as well as how specific experiences affected their growth over time. We paid particular attention to teachers' utterances related to racial competency, including their interracial interactions and communication in the classroom and their reflections about their own challenges or abilities to work with students of a different race than themselves. Our sample includes teachers of all races, as teachers of color can develop and extend their own racial competency as well (Shah & Coles, 2020).

Participants

Between summer 2022 and summer 2023, our team conducted semi-structured, in-depth interviews with 33 teachers. Creswell and Poth (2018) recommend including between twenty and thirty teachers to develop a well-saturated theory when using grounded theory approaches; hence our team's focus on including at least 30 participants in this study. Given the design of the mixed methods study, which utilizes NC administrative data of teachers and students in elementary grades (including both traditional public and public charter schools), we included only North Carolina teachers teaching in elementary grades in our qualitative interviews. In order to recruit a diverse sample – in terms of teachers' race and gender, years of teaching experience, grade level taught, and geography across the state - we utilized a purposive, snowball sampling approach. Specifically, we sent the study information and contact details to schools and teacher preparation programs (including Master of Arts in teaching programs) and we asked all interview participants to reach out to other teachers they know to see if they would like to participate. Of

the thirty-three teachers interviewed, nine participants had two or less years of teaching experience. Eight participants had three to five years of teaching experience. Nine participants had six to ten years of teaching experience. Seven participants had over eleven years of teaching experience. Participants were given pseudonyms and when they appear in the results, we also identify the participants' race, the grade they teach, and the primary race of the students at the schools in which they teach.

Racial Demographics Table:

Race Category	Count
White	22
Black	6
Native American	1
Latino/x	1
Asian	1
Unknown	2*

2 Participants did not disclose their racial identity in their interviews

Gender Demographics Table:

Gender Category	Count
Female	24
Male	4
Self-Identified/Non-Binary	1
Unknown	4*

4 participants did not disclose their gender identity in their interviews

Data Collection

A team of five interviewers (1 white; 4 black) administered in-depth, semi-structured interviews utilizing the interview protocol (see Appendix 1), which includes questions surrounding the teachers' journey into teaching, teacher preparation, and experiences with their peers and students. All interviews were conducted on Zoom due to the Covid pandemic and were recorded. The interviews typically lasted between an hour and a half and two hours. We incentivized participation by offering gift cards to all participants, to fairly compensate them for their time. All participants signed a consent form and agreed to being recorded. This study was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB).

Because this study involves building theory around the ways teachers learn about race and develop racial competency, we used a formative approach to developing the interview protocol. Specifically, we drafted an initial protocol and, in the summer of 2022, conducted 10 pilot interviews so that we could refine the protocol based on what we heard. Each interviewer wrote a memo after conducting an interview, then refined their memo into a summary of overall impressions, and then pulled out emerging themes from each interview. Some of these themes included, for example: self-awareness or reflections about race, trust in mentors, peer observations, early life experiences or experiences in teacher preparation programs, feeling they can be themselves, connecting with students, struggling with racial differences, staff diversity, feeling stereotyped, etc. Through this process, we realized the importance of refining our interview protocol to ask questions more directly about racial differences – as some of the participants were speaking at length about race, while others spoke more subtly about differences with their students or peers, and others avoiding speaking about race entirely. As such, we refined our interview protocol to ask more directly about teachers' experiences learning about

race, including the racial composition of teachers' early school experiences, the teachers' ideas about equity, teachers' experiences of students who are a different race/ethnicity, teachers' opportunities to learn from peers of different races/ethnicities, the racial/ethnic mix of the students and teachers at their school, etc.

Analytical Approach

The team utilized a multi-phased analytic approach, first generating codes based on the interview protocol as well as themes raised by the participants, then open coding as we analyzed the transcripts to identify further themes. To generate text data for the analysis, our team used an outside transcription service to transcribe the interviews. Once the transcriptions were returned, our team used NVivo software to code text data from the interviews conducted.

In our first phase, we developed a coding tree by using two methods: first, using the research questions and interview protocol to code for important themes; second, utilizing inductive coding by coding based on themes that the participants raised. In our second phase, we analyzed the transcripts using the analytic strategy of grounded theory. Through this approach we worked through the data from the “ground up.” We began with our initial codes but also used the data to refine lines of inquiry as themes emerged (Watson et al., 2016). NVivo allows for both manual coding and automatic coding, which can help identify additional themes through matrices that compare answers to interview questions from different transcripts. The program also allows for an analysis of word frequency, a search for text, and a cross tabulation of co-occurring codes. Interrater reliability was established with a subset of the interviews across three coders. We then analyzed the frequency of coding nodes to look for themes across teachers. Repeated ideas became apparent and were then tagged with open coding. Open coding allowed

for an inductive building of theory (Corbin & Strauss, 2008) that helped us to identify common themes and ideas organically apparent within the data. The research team identified themes using nodal frequency charts highlighting the most common occurring codes. We then cross-checked these to identify the intersections between codes.

Limitations

One of the most important limitations of this study is that it took place during the Covid-19 pandemic and its aftermath, such that teachers were overwhelmed with students' learning losses and the needs of their students – with the result being a more limited number of interviews than we had originally planned. While we arrived at a total of 33 interview participants, which is more than typically recommended for saturation during the use of grounded theory methods (Creswell & Poth, 2018), interviewing more teachers would likely have led to a greater number of Latinx, Asian, and Native American participants. Hearing from more teachers of these races would have led to a more well-rounded theory. Additional research should be done in other states and with teachers of other demographics to build on our findings of how teachers learn.

Results

We identified three broad sources of teachers' learning about race. This learning operates through formal or informal channels. Each of these sources presents an opportunity for teachers to learn about race and student identity writ large. We also identified three moderating contextual categories. These sources of learning are shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Theorized Sources of Teachers’ Racial Competency Learnings

Sources	Formal	Informal
Early/Prep Experiences	Formal Preparation	
Peer Learning	Other Teachers Mentors Diverse Faculty Diverse Non-Teaching Staff/Staff relationships	Other Teachers Diverse Faculty Diverse Non-Teaching Staff/Staff relationships
Formative Student Interactions		Challenging interactions with students dissimilar from self Lack of opportunities to learn from different students
<p><i>Moderating Contextual Factors:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Career Status 2. School Culture/Climate 3. Out of School Factors <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents • Politics 		

Early/Prep Experiences

Early experiences in their teacher preparation and career have a lasting impact on teacher practice (Rondfelt, 2021). Many teachers identified their formal preparation experiences as being key in their learnings about race. Similar to Farinde-Wu et al. (2020), where white teachers in particular learn about race through the clinical experiences of their teacher prep program, many of the teachers interviewed reference their experiences learning about race in their formal educator preparation. The quote below is emblematic of those mentions.

“Also, I would say there were a few things that we learned in my [Master of Arts in Teaching program] that I’ve thought about in my first year that have influenced my practice...That’s been a huge thing. Making sure that the talks that we’ve had about incorporating, especially in an English class, diverse texts because it’s really easy, especially this first year of my career, it’s been really easy to just stick with what’s always been done because there is so much material for it and all the other teachers are teaching those texts and it’s like, okay, it’s just easiest to stick with that and so, I haven’t done it to the extent that I want to, but trying to integrate some diverse texts.”

Peer Learning

Once in the classroom, teachers learn a great deal from their peers. The teachers in our study articulated how critical these experiences were to their growth and development as pedagogues. Several teachers described the formal ways in which they were able to learn from both peer and senior teachers. In particular, the teachers described how formalized time with groups of other teachers was critical in their development. Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and grade level teams are where most reported curriculum implementation as their primary learning opportunities. However, teachers expressed that even in these formal peer learning settings they did not have the opportunity to continue to develop their racial competencies unless it was an explicit focus of the training or experience. Specifically, there was a noticeable lack of discussions related to race outside of professional development activities centered on topics like equity.

“So, my school does planning as a grade level and so almost every day, ... I get to meet with 5 to 6 other 1st grade teachers as well as members of admin, and sometimes the [exceptionality] teachers and [English Language Learner] teachers will be able to come in and collaborate with us on our lessons, and I’ll get to hear from teachers...It is so collaborative, which is not what I saw in student teaching and so when they said we’re going to be planning everything together, I was like, oh my goodness, this sounds like a lot of planning meetings. I hadn’t seen it before, but I’m so glad that I chose this school for that reason because I am able to learn so much from teachers who have decades more experience. As a team, we probably have probably almost 100 years of experience, honestly.” (Lisa, white, 1st grade, mixed race students)

Again, teachers expressed that, when available, professional development opportunities specifically focused on equity provided tremendous value. Jasmine, a Black kindergarten teacher at a school with a predominantly Black student body described the importance of these experiences and how they impacted her pedagogical practices:

“I think there’s been an evolution. A lot of times, as educators of color, we think that we are not the problem. We sometimes oppose those systems [designed for equity] and don’t even know it. So, one thing that was great back then is [the outside equity trainer] was able to look at those practices and help us think about, never come out and say, okay, you’re opposing whiteness He asked us questions to think about it. For example, he’ll give us scenarios where there’s one kid that the teachers asks to do something and the kid quietly protests, like, no, I don’t want to do it versus another kid might be like, NO, absolutely not, stomping their feet and throwing stuff. They’re both being disrespectful and they’re both not doing what you asked them to do, but only one student is in trouble because of how they’re presenting themselves. Those types of scenarios have helped me grow in the sense of okay, we all are subconsciously upholding these things whether we’re Black, white, it’s not something we’re exempt from.”

Similarly, mentors emerged as a key source of learning for the teachers in the study. These teachers largely discussed items surrounding classroom/behavior management and student-centered practices as things learned from formally assigned mentors. Still, the opportunity to receive formalized mentorship around race-related issues was nearly non-existent. Here again Lisa most clearly articulated this reality stating,

“In this district and probably in every county in NC or across the country even, I have to have a mentor at my school who is also a teacher and mine is another 1st grade teacher across the hall and she’s incredible. She’s been teaching for I think 8 years now and she is so wise. She knows how to handle every situation. Any time I don’t know what to do right now, whether it’s I don’t know what to do for centers this week or if it’s I’m having an issue with a student that I don’t know how to resolve right now and I need to take a step back, I need to ask you what you did in this moment because you’ve been there, she’s always willing to stop what she’s doing and help me. I’ve walked into her classroom in the middle of one of her lessons multiple times and she’ll say, okay kids, talk to each other for a second and she’ll stop everything to help me, which I feel really lucky to have that in my life and she’s met with me outside of the school day, which I always tell her, you don’t need to respond to this right now and she’s like, nope, let me know what you need.”

Additionally, these formal opportunities did not explicitly provide opportunities for teachers to learn from teachers of different racial and ethnic backgrounds than themselves.

Teachers spoke to constraints around race-related talks due to the lack of diversity in the profession and in part due to the siloed effect that occurs within schools. Dahlia, a white 2nd grade teacher working with a predominantly Black and Brown student body remarked,

“I think of the lack of diversity in the teaching profession and specifically at the school. While there may be folks in other grade levels, you really only interact with people on your grade level day to day. I don’t really know teachers in other grade levels at all. I feel like there’s not a lot of talk about [race]...because [social studies] is not a priority and that’s the main area where I’d like to talk with other folks about what we’re teaching, but there’s not a lot of time built in and [professional development] to talk about what we’re teaching about History.”

Teachers like Dahlia found more success in their formal learnings about race from diverse non-teaching staff in various settings. However, even these opportunities were limited to specific PD training and/or contexts of social-emotional and language support almost exclusively.

“I wish that just doing a [professional development] would help and fix it all. I’m not saying that all of a sudden, there’s an enlightenment that helps. We’re very fortunate with all of our Title I funds, we get to spend money and hire more people. We’ve got a phenomenal social worker who is very involved with helping staff, helping individual students at our door all day long, texting all day long. ... Our social worker is Caucasian. She’s bilingual in Spanish. Our two counselors are both African American, male, and female. Our EC department, we have 4 resource EC teachers, all women. I want to say two are African American, two are white. Our EB team of teachers who work with a lot of our Hispanic students, all female. Last year, they were all Caucasian. We have a family resource coordinator who’s been there for 15 years. She’s Caucasian. She’s bilingual. So, this is unique to my school. We have a dual language program at my school and so, in each grade level, except for 5th, we have a cohort of students, which is generally two classes who are learning Spanish. They alternate English and Spanish days every other day. So, we have 5 teachers from South American countries who are visiting us on work visas who are native speakers. We’ve got one teacher from Ecuador, 4 from Colombia, and then we have a bunch of teacher assistants from Mexico and Colombia. So, the makeup of our school has become more diverse. The front office, the woman is a native Spanish speaker, making it much more comfortable for families.” (Patricia, white, 3rd grade, Black and Brown students)

Given the lack of opportunities to develop racial competency in formal settings such as PLCs, teachers made space for informal opportunities to learn from their peers. Teachers often spoke about learning from other teachers in their building, personal communities, and those on their subject/grade level teams. These learnings reflected teaching best practices, classroom

management, and reflecting on implicit biases against students of color. Ally, a white EC teacher working predominantly with 5th and 6th grade Black and Brown students articulated this sentiment,

“Yep. I think about...when I taught at [school name], my second summer, I was pulled to the side by a couple Black teachers and they were like, you are being really mean to the Black kids and I was like, what? I broke down and I was like...of course, my initial reaction was, no I’m not! But then I’m like, but everyone [inaudible] is Black. Am I mean to every Black kid? I think that was so hard because I was also trying too...because when I taught 6th grade at [school name], the kids came in sweet and they were this innocent little bunch and then their second summer, they know who they are, they know who their friends are, they know it sucks that they’re there learning during summer time and so, I was trying to be this, you’re going to take me seriously and I think it came across that I hated them, which is bad. I’m glad it happened because in my mind, I was just being a tough teacher and laying down the law and I don’t think they would have pulled me aside and lied about it. If they did that, I’m sure there were things that were reading that way. I was just so embarrassed too. I think I’m an okay person, but something I did could read that way? Way after the fact was I even able to talk about it and deal with it and I think that’s a big reason too of why I try so hard because I never want that to happen ever again.”

Still, teachers spoke to how the overall lack of diversity within the teaching staff created a barrier to learning from peer teachers of different racial/ethnic backgrounds even informally. Teachers lamented this phenomenon as one that constrained their learning and their ability to interact with other teachers of colors and provide representation for their students.

“Sadly, I’ve not had a lot of opportunities. I’ve gone and I’ve visited other 5th grade classrooms, I’ve seen a few times, maybe two times, I’ve gone to other schools to observe other teachers because they were doing something that I heard was really good and I wanted to go see it, but honestly, and this is sadly the makeup of [this part of] NC, it’s not diverse at all and coming from [area], I was really taken aback by that, so there’s hardly any diversity in the school system with the staff. There’s a little bit more with the students, but sadly, the majority of our African American, Hispanic, Asian students do not see themselves represented through our staff. I’m trying to think of our school right now and I don’t think that we have any African American teachers out of a staff of 30-40 people. So, I don’t have that experience working with a diverse group of people, let alone learning from them and observing them.” (Cheryl, white, 5th grade, white students)

This lack of numerical representation also presented challenges for teachers and non-teaching staff and their ability to build community with each other as co-workers. Teachers

reported that the racialized discrepancies in staff/non-teaching staff composition often led to instances of strife. Brittany, a white kindergarten teacher working with mostly white students encapsulated these conflicts in her statement,

“I need to think beyond my team. I think there have been times over the years where there's been a little racial conflict. So, a good chunk of our teacher assistants are Black and I think there have been times where they've been resentful that more of the teachers are not Black and they haven't been happy about that because, as they said in one of the meetings, we feel like we're being ordered around by white people and we don't have the autonomy to do what we think is best. I think our principal's skilled at helping people feel heard and our old school counselor used to... and then she became our assistant principal, she was Black and she was very helpful in dealing with those situations and I'd have to say, that was in our beginning years, probably in the first 5 or 6 years that we were open, and I don't feel like there's been any incidents like that in a long, long time, but we had them before and then another thing that our teachers of color have said is that they're tired of representing all the time. They're tired of having to teach everybody else about students of color and people of color and being the representative of their race. I know that because I've been on the leadership team at school. I don't think amongst all of the people who work at our school that they all know that, but we voiced to leadership team and then our principal and assistant principal and school counselor took it and decided with our equity and diversity committee team what's going to be done about that and I think that they've dealt with it and it's got a better for the teachers of color.”

Overall, teachers reflect that the lack of PD opportunities and the sheer absence of teachers of color creates barriers to learn formally and informally on issues surrounding race. They identify that even when provided with formal learning opportunities, they often find these are limited in scope. Lastly, the continued discrepancy in racial representation along staff/non-teaching staff divides creates new challenges that can result in a less cohesive and supportive work environment.

Formative Student Interactions

Fortunately, however, teachers revealed that interacting with students was a key element in their learning about race. Teachers identified moments of reflection and growth after challenging moments with students that caused them to confront their own biases and

internalized stereotypes. This held true during both race-matched and race-mixed teacher-student interactions. Here again, Ally provides an accurate articulation of this phenomenon,

“I think if the interaction I had with the one Black student this year who had attitude and would be defiant just for the fun of it. I don’t want you to think I’m a racist, but I also need to respond to your disrespectful behavior. I struggle because I don’t want to.... I want to be so conscious of what I say because I want to correct negative behavior that will eventually hurt the kid, not behavior about who they are as a being and that they have a little bit of an attitude. I hope I’m not characterizing this horribly. I don’t want to be a teacher that someone’s describing now, like, she was so awful, and I hate what she said to me, and it impacted me in a really negative way. I’m thankful that those teachers came to me and told me I was coming across really negatively. Those are challenges I want to do well, and I want for every kid to be appreciated for who they are and not feel like who they are is bad. I guess that goes back to the good and bad.”

In fact, many teachers expressed the benefit of learning from students who have different racial backgrounds than themselves. The teachers in the study spoke about how exposure to diverse students provided them the opportunity to become more reflective of their pedagogy and that of their peers. In many instances, these formative interactions caused them to become more critical of the curriculum and overall school culture. For example, Valerie, a white 2nd grade ESL teacher working with a predominantly Hispanic student body remarked,

“Yes. I quite often feel like I don’t know how to talk about race with my kids because how can I from my privileged white background effectively and I don’t think you have to understand it to talk about it, but I feel like how can I bring it up the best way that doesn’t make my students feel othered because I am not a person of color, so how can I not make my students feel othered with myself leading the conversation and how do I bring it up in the right way and this is something with our 3rd grade curriculum, we’ve really struggled with. We have a lot of units that needed some work and different teachers approach them differently and so, we had to come together and find a resolution. We were teaching a unit on...what’s the name of the woman who freed slaves?

Interviewer: Harriet Tubman?

Valerie: Thank you! Harriet Tubman, we teach a unit on her every year and the kids in one classroom left the lesson sobbing and in my classroom with my co-teacher, they did not leave sobbing and so, we had to have a real conversation about what does that mean for us? What went wrong? How did we both teach the same lesson differently? What did they do right? What did we do right? I think that’s been one of those moments for me where I was struggling to know the best way for my kids to bring those conversations. To be honest, I really don’t agree with what this teacher did. She kind of made them step foot into it and her intention was not to have these kids fall apart. Her intention was that she wanted them to understand that they were Black and

the people who were reading about were Black, but she didn't go about it the right way and made them...it was a bunch of 3rd graders too. They left feeling really crummy and didn't get the takeaway that she wanted them to take away, so I think they were not necessarily given the opportunity to speak out because I don't think she framed this lesson well and giving them the space to talk about it. But I have seen it done very well in a different classroom. I have a teacher who with a lot of the news, allowed his students to talk and I thought it was really great. He would answer their questions, but it was really student led discourse, which I think is really where a lot of my stuff comes back to is that when we let the students take the floor and let them have a discussion and we take a seat back and allow these conversations and are equal participants, not leaders, I think it really helps guide these conversations in a much better place, which is a lot easier said than done."

However, these types of opportunities to learn from students with different racial/ethnic backgrounds were almost entirely absent for the Black and Latinx teachers in the study. For instance, Black teachers reported spending most, if not all their career in classrooms populated predominantly by students of color if not exclusively Black students at that. Sheila, a Black, 2nd grade teacher to a "100% African American" student body and in her 12th year of teaching expressed this occurrence,

"Interviewer: Have you had to teach a lot of students from different races or ethnicities from yourself?

Sheila: No. Most of the schools I've taught in have mostly been minorities.

Interviewer: So, you've never had a ton of experience teaching Hispanic or white kids.

Sheila: No."

Our Latinx teachers spoke to having a similar experience even when working in schools that had a predominantly white student body. Specifically, our Latinx teachers reported that regardless of school makeup they often found that their classroom composition was overwhelmingly Latinx.

"My classroom is predominantly Latin. The school itself is 50% white, 45% Latin, and then I'm pretty sure they put more Latin kids in my classroom. They had an accommodation to go to ELL, but they [inaudible]. I have a lot of Mexican kids. I have a lot of Latin kids and whenever I'm teaching kids outside of my background, that's where it's more so curriculum. A lot of the information, the scripted curriculum, it's very basic and very supposed to be very general. It's George Washington, bees, plants, 9 / 16 animals. But because I have a lot of Mexican kids and

working-class parents...the kids know that their parents work. They understand the concept of work. I would just bring in a lot of materials in Spanish or bring a lot of materials that is Mexican or all these other things like Latin and the kids got it. And then the kids who didn't speak Spanish, they also got cultural things. The English-speaking kids started saying Spanish words and they would always laugh, and I would say things and switch to Spanish and they all understood what that meant. They were open to learning...and how the classroom works, very dual lingual. In terms of making sure that it's culturally relevant. I have some kids who...we learned a lot of stuff about Spanish. He was a Black student, and he was like...[inaudible], but he always thought it was cool to learn about Spanish words. His main friend group were Spanish speaking kids that he thought were cool and so, the curriculum itself is very generally culturally white, but I make sure that I put a lot of things that were Spanish or Mexican cultural that the kids are excited to engage with. They would say, my mom does that or I understand what that is and if not, other kids would explain it to them, and they caught on real quick." (Christina, Latinx, 3rd grade, predominantly white students)

Hence, while formative student interactions remain crucial for teacher's racial competency development, the opportunity to learn from students different than themselves remains an unequal opportunity. Even when teachers of color are placed in mixed-race or predominantly white schools, they find themselves in front of same-raced students. Such a discrepancy almost guarantees that only white teachers develop such competencies.

Contextual moderators

Career status

In the present study, we consider career stage to be a theoretical contextual mediator that changes how the sources of learning impact teachers' understandings of race. In quantitative analyses using 20 years of North Carolina schools' administrative data, Gershenson et al. (2023) find that novice white teachers (defined as those in the first three years of their career) benefit particular from having at least one Black peer teacher in terms of the value-added scores of their Black students. Using a similar analytical framework to Jackson & Bruegman (2009), the authors find that novice white teachers of Black students who have at least one Black peer teacher have higher average growth scores than their peers who only have white peers. In our interviews,

teachers expressed the value of learning from more experiences and diverse peers early in their career. Leslie, a white 2nd-grade teacher who works with a mostly Black and Brown student body, said that more experienced teachers are critical in professional learning for novice teachers. She viewed the number of experienced teachers at her school as particularly valuable for these newer teachers:

“Yeah, actually I think a lot of the teachers at our school have a lot of experience. I don’t know numbers of years, but I think, this coming year, one teacher on our team is going to be a first-year teacher. I think everybody else has had plenty of experience. I think the downfall is maybe with our admin not having experience. Our master teachers are really great resources when they have time to help out too. They’ve had experience as classroom teachers. Mostly, I think everybody is pretty experienced.”

Teachers remarked that this learning was more effective when the experienced teachers were those of color. Sabrina, a novice white Kindergarten and 1st grade teacher working with mostly Black and Brown students commented,

Sabrina: “I feel like in college, I had a professor who was African American, and she ended up becoming the SPED director for the county and that was during my student teaching, so I got to see her in those two roles and that was pretty cool to learn from her in the different ways.

Interviewer: Is there anything in particular that you feel like you learned from her?

Sabrina: I’d say, knowing that I can go elsewhere in the field if I don’t see myself being a teacher forever, maybe I can work for the county or still work in SPED with this population, but maybe not necessarily as a teacher. So, that was cool to witness. I’d say my peers at school, over half of our school is from Spanish speaking households.

Interviewer: Students?

Sabrina: Yes. So, we have a lot of partnership teachers that came from other countries to teach here, so they bring their backgrounds and language, which is cool to learn from them about different things like Day of the Dead and Hispanic heritage month, we learn a lot.”

School culture/climate

Existing research on school climate provides substantial evidence of an association between measured dimensions of school climate and students’ academic and social outcomes

(e.g., (Borman et al., 2003; Bryk et al, 2010; Cook et al., 2000; Durlak et al., 2011; Klugman, 2017; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012; West et al., 2016). Perceptions of racial climate (e.g., race relations, racial fairness, racial treatment, and experiences of racism in the school) shape student experiences and medium-run trajectories. Such perceptions were echoed by the teachers in our study. Here again Leslie represents our sample stating,

“I’ve noticed that with our dual language program, I’ve noticed that it’s not widely accepted and there’s a lot of teachers that disagree with it, which I think it speaks volumes and a lot of teachers or staff in general that are unsupportive and think that it’s not a priority, not helpful, not something that kids should be doing. I’m not really sure. So, that’s one form of racism that I have noticed. I don’t think that some of my coworkers on the dual language team or on my teaching team, in general, I feel like haven’t always been as accepted as I would say even for myself, as an incoming new teacher. They’ve been there for years, and their opinion is more valid than mine, but I think it wouldn’t have always been heard as much as mine would have been with admin. With our AIG program, there’s no minority representation and I personally have found this as a really big problem, especially even with the...which doesn’t determine everything, but I forget the name of the test, the cognitive test, I’ve sent the AIG teachers lots of messages, kind ones, but asking why is this only in English and why is this showing that they’re all white kids that are in this? So, there’s definitely some big problems with that that hopefully, we’ll continue to address this year. I did learn and found out that that test can be and it’s universal, so it could be in any language, I mean administered in any language. So, it’s something I’m really going to work for this year too.”

Out of School Factors

One particular challenge teachers in the study described in their interviews was the role of out-of-school factors in how they learned about or approached race. The interviewees noted how parents often stymie their efforts to use culturally relevant texts or engage in certain race-related discussions in the classroom:

“I also think that sometimes we face challenges at the state and country level for educators and the ever-evolving expectations and new things that we’re supposed to just pick up and also meet these testing guidelines and I think there’s hoops to jump through sometimes that’s specific to public education that can be difficult, and especially as a young teacher, sometimes, I face difficulties with parent communities and explaining why I’m doing what I’m doing and how it’s going to help their child.” (Cynthia, white, 5th grade, white students)

Additionally, teachers named politics as being a factor in their learning and classroom choices. They identified how current cultural contentions plague the classroom altering their pedagogy. Again, Cynthia represents our sample's sentiment,

“The outside culture and current events is definitely a factor that influences my teaching. It has pushed by nature of current events, courageous conversations in the classroom and my 5th grade kids hear what's going on and it's not like K or 1st grade where you can pretend it's not happening. So, on multiple ends of the spectrum, so we have racial violence that has really pushed courageous conversations about race, about safety, and about bias. Those factors have influenced the climate of the classroom and then also my literacy instruction and culturally responsive non-fiction texts and representative novels and all of that has been very much influenced by what my kids are telling me and what I know the outside world is telling them...”

By and large, our study sample elucidated the impact that school climate/culture, parents, politics, and teacher experience can have on their learning and engagement with race-related topics within and outside the classroom. Namely, although they seek out opportunities to increase their racial competency and proactively learn from more experienced teachers, they often find that their ability to translate these learnings into pedagogy is limited by parental and political influences.

Discussion

Understanding how teachers learn throughout the course of their work is critical for those interested in the continued professional development of teachers. As the public-school student body grows increasingly diverse, understanding how teachers learn about race and develop racial competency is an essential part of understanding how to create and maintain a high quality, diverse workforce that effectively serves students from a variety of backgrounds. In our interviews with 33 North Carolina teachers across a range of grades and schools, we found that teachers learn about race in a variety of ways, with three major sources of learning that happen in formal and informal ways. Our interviews revealed that most learning happens from experiences

and peer interactions that offer opportunities for teachers to grow their understandings around race, and that informal experiences that arise from day-to-day practice, informal mentoring, and student interactions seem to especially salient for teacher learning. When formalized opportunities for learning explicitly focus on race, they can be helpful as well.

We also observed differences in how these processes operate for white teachers differently from teachers of color, which was mostly dependent on the school culture and context. We found that white teachers developed competency from a combination of training, personal reflection, and interactions with teachers and students of color. The teachers in our sample enumerated the ways in which these sources of learning helped them to update their previous learnings or biases around how to instruct students of color, and they articulated the benefits from having teachers of color to assist with their growth and development. Interestingly, the teachers of color in the study developed competency in training experiences with minor impact from other teachers or students, as they were most likely to be in racially homogenous environments.

Initially, we expected teachers to identify their motivations to enter the teaching field and influences from administrators as factors contributing to their development of racial competency. However, the data showed that these factors were not as common and largely devoid of race-centered discussions or influences. Motivating factors to enter teaching predominantly stemmed from family influences or general interests in education; almost no teachers mentioned their motivations stemming from race-centered ideologies or concerns. Similarly, teachers described being taught strategies around curriculum implementation and instruction formally by administrators. Even when specifically discussing student progress or student-centered interventions, teachers were not coached to be mindful of cultural differences.

Conclusion

Our results can offer useful information for district and school level leaders looking to develop racial competency amongst their teaching staff. There was valuable informal learning that took place from having teachers and other staff of color in the school, and from being able to learn from students with different backgrounds. These findings have implications for teacher training- teacher candidates would benefit from being placed into clinical experiences where the opportunities for informally learning and development can supplement their formalized experiences and learnings. Future research should analyze the relationship between the types of learning, racial competency, and student outcomes.

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Appendix A. Interview Guide

I. Background

1. Tell me about your job. *Probes:*
 - a. What grade do you teach? What subject(s) do you teach?
 - b. What school do you teach at?
 - c. What is the composition of your class like?
 - d. How different is the composition of your class this year from previous years?
 - e. For how long have you been teaching?
2. What were your schools like growing up? Tell me more about that. *Probes:*
 - f. What were your teachers like?
 - g. Did you feel a sense of belonging at your schools?
 - h. Did you have teachers that looked like you and also ones that looked different from you? Peers?

II. Teaching–General

3. How would you describe how you approach teaching? Tell me more about that. *Probes:*
 - a. How have you developed your teaching over time?
 - b. Tell me about your journey as a teacher. What were some of the challenges you faced when you first started teaching?
 - c. Tell me about some hopes or goals you have for your students
 - d. What do you enjoy most about working with students?
 - e. Tell me about some hopes or goals you have for yourself as a teacher.
4. What challenges do you face in your job?
 - i. What other factors influence how you do your job?
5. Describe the mentorship you've received over the course of your career.
 - a. How would you characterize your mentor(s) and your relationship to them?
 - b. What is something that you have learned from your mentor(s)?
6. What qualities make an effective teacher?
7. Have the schools where you've worked focused on equity?
 - j. What is your definition of equity?
 - k. Where have your ideas about equity come from?
 - l. Describe a moment or experience in your teacher training/education when learned about equity.
 - i. What resources have you used?
 - m. How have your ideas of equity changed over your teaching career?

III. Teaching–Specific

1. We've heard from some teachers that their students have had a big influence on how they teach and from others that their students have not had such a big influence. How about you?
2. We hear from some teachers that they have to teach a lot of students of different races/ethnicities from them, and others not so much. What about you?
 - n. What has it been like teaching students from different racial backgrounds than yourself?
 - o. Have there ever been times when you've struggled with how to reach students from different races?
3. What sorts of challenges do your students face, inside or outside the classroom?
4. Tell me about your approach to teaching students from a different racial/ethnic background than your own. *Probes:*
 - p. Who has been influential to this approach?
 - q. When did you learn this approach?
 - r. How do you know if you have been successful?
5. We've heard from some teachers that their peers have had a big influence on how they teach and from others that their peers have not had such a big influence. How about you?
6. What opportunities have you had to learn from teachers of a different racial or ethnic background than yourself?
 - f. What have you learned from teachers/personnel of a different racial or ethnic background than yourself?
 - g. What are some barriers to learning from teachers of different racial/ethnic backgrounds?
7. Describe some interactions that you've had with teachers, administrators, or other school personnel of different racial/ethnic backgrounds than yourself.

IV. Current School Environment

8. What is your current school like? *Probes:*
 - s. [If applicable] How would you compare it with your former school(s)?
 - t. Is it title I?
 - u. About how many students are there in total?
 - d. What about the principal? What is their race, gender, and how long have they been the principal at your school?
9. What are the students like? *Probes:*
 - v. Good students? Bad students? What does "good" or "bad" mean for you?
 - w. Tell me about the racial mix at your school. What percent of students are Black would you estimate? White? Latino? Asian? Native American?
10. How would you describe the school climate? *Probes:*
 - x. Tell me about discipline at your school.
 - y. What is the culture like among teachers?

- z. Is the school environment collegial or collaborative?
 - aa. Do you feel like you can easily ask for help when you need it?
 - ii. If so, how do you get help?
 - iii. If not, why not?
 - bb. What are the parents like?
 - iv. How often do you interact with them? What are those interactions like?
11. What are the teachers like? *Probes:*
- cc. What are your relationships with your colleagues like?
 - dd. Tell me about your closest teacher friends at [X].
 - ee. In addition to the teachers who provide you with support and offer a listening ear, are there teachers that push you to grow as a teacher and try new things?"
 - ff. Do you feel like you have enough time to interact with and learn from the other teachers at your school?
 - gg. What types of conversations do you have with other teachers?
2. Tell me about the racial/ethnic mix of teachers at your school.
- hh. Does this mix ever cause conflict?
 - ii. Has that conflict changed anything about your own relationships or anything about the way you teach?"
 - jj. "Do the teachers at your school tend to have a lot of experience?"
 - kk. Does your school feel segregated to you, either in terms of the staff or the students?"
12. What is the principal like? What are other administrative individuals like?
13. What do you like about your school?
14. What do you wish you could change about your school?
15. Do your relationships with teachers or administrators at your school affect any thoughts you have about whether you will stay or leave your school?

V. Past Schools–Career

16. Tell me about schools you've taught at before your most current one?
17. [If multiple, choose the most recent one]: At [your last school]: *Probes:*
- ll. What were the students like?
 - v. Tell me about the racial/ethnic mix at your school. What percent of students were African American would you estimate? White? Hispanic? Asian? Native American?
 - mm. What was the school climate like?
 - nn. What were your colleagues like?
 - vi. What were your relationships with your colleagues like?
 - vii. Tell me about your closest teacher friends at [X].
 - viii. What types of conversations do you have with other teachers?
 - ix. Tell me about the racial/ethnic mix of teachers at this school.

oo. What was the principal like? What was the administration like?

VI. Socio-Demographic Questions

18. What race/ethnicity do you identify as?

19. What gender do you identify as?

20. What is your highest level of education?

21. What is your relationship status?

pp. [If R has a partner] What is your partner's occupation?

22. What is your marital status?

23. [If applicable] How many kids do you have (including children cared for and/or live with the respondent)?

Appendix B. Coding Schema

Codes & sub-codes	Description
<i>Childhood</i>	
Child belonging	Use anytime the teacher mentions having/lacking a sense of belonging or community growing up
Child div-teachers	Use anytime a teacher mentions the racial composition or diversity of the teachers they had growing up
Child div-peers	Use anytime a teacher mentions the racial composition or diversity of the peers they had growing up
<i>Pre-teaching</i>	
Motivations	The teacher's motivations, inspiration, or thought process for becoming a teacher
Prep	Use anytime a teacher describes their teacher preparation, whether formal university preparation or alternative preparation
Life exp	Use anytime a teacher mentions the way their life experience has affected their teaching approach or beliefs
<i>Teaching</i>	
T.approach	The teacher mentions their own teaching approach or style (e.g., being student-centered, bringing in real world examples, using games, focusing on building connections, relationships, or empathy with students, etc.)
T.priorities for stu	The teacher mentions their hopes/goals for their students (e.g., academic growth, social-emotional growth, independence, well-roundedness, etc.)
T.change	Use anytime the teacher mentions their teaching approach or teaching skills changing, growing, or evolving over time
T.goals	Use anytime teacher mentions teaching skills or abilities that they would like to develop, hopes or goals for the kind of teacher they'd like to become
T.discipline	Use anytime a teacher talks about how they discipline their students, their thoughts about discipline, or their individual views about the disciplinary approach of the school
T.novice	Use anytime a teacher discusses challenges/vignettes from their first 3 years of teaching

Future plans	Use anytime a teacher speaks or implies thoughts about leaving/staying at the school or in the teaching profession
Equity	
Equity defn	Use anytime a teacher mentions how they define, visualize, or conceptualize the concept of equity
Equity influences	Use anytime a teacher talks about how their understanding of equity developed as a result of individuals, PD, coaches, preparation, resources, etc.
Learning	
From students	The teacher describes how their students impact their teaching or thinking, the ways students inspire them to alter their lesson plans or approach, or the ways the teacher has considered their students' specific needs while teaching or planning
From mentors	Use anytime a teacher mentions a mentor (formal or informal) or the role that mentors have had on their teaching
From peer teachers	The teacher describes how peers have influenced or affected the teacher's approach, lessons, skills, growth, disciplinary strategies, etc. (including attempts to emulate peer teachers)
From principals	Use anytime a teacher mentions the influence or role of admin/principals in their teaching approach, lessons, skills, growth, disciplinary strategies, etc.
Lack of opp diff race	Use anytime a teacher describes the lack of opportunities they have to learn from teachers of different races than the teacher
Opp diff race	Use anytime a teacher describes the opportunities they have to learn from teachers of different races than the teacher
F.learning	Use for formal learning, including formal PLCs, formal observations, formal coaching, etc.; can be double coded with above (e.g., with 'from mentors' if the mentor is a formal/assigned mentor or with 'from peer teachers' if it's a formal PLC)
I.learning	Use for informal learning, including informally watching peers, self-identified mentors, informal conversations with the principal, etc.; can be double coded with above (e.g., with 'from mentors' if the mentor is an informal, self-identified mentor)
Additional Factors	

Parents	Use anytime the teacher mentions the influence parents have on the school, teaching, discipline, etc.
School climate	
Staff relationships	Use anytime the teacher describes the climate of adult relationships at the school, including the community or collegiality of the teachers and the way the teachers tend to learn or interact and teacher - admin relationships (Including any conflict, feelings of being stereotyped, feelings the teacher can be oneself, micro-aggressions, peer learning systems like PLCs, etc.)
School practices	The management of the school and established school systems and practices, including tracking, schoolwide disciplinary systems, principal leadership techniques, systems for exceptionality, bussing, etc.
School culture	Use anytime the teacher describes the shared beliefs of the people in the school community, the school's overall social environment, and teaching/working conditions (including how students feel at the school, norms of interactions between adults and students, teacher burnout/overwhelm, etc.)
Schoolwide IM	Use anytime the teacher describes the schoolwide instructional materials, including the curriculum, schoolwide resources, etc. (for the teacher's individual choices of instructional materials or resources, code instead 'T.approach or T.approach diff race')
Politics	Use anytime a teacher mentions politics or outside political influences, including anytime a teacher mentions CRT
Pandemic	Use anytime a teacher mentions the way the pandemic has affected their teaching (including changes to virtual learning or blended classrooms)
<i>Teaching diff-race students</i>	
T.approach diff race	The teacher's approach, skills, efforts, and use of instructional materials, lesson planning, or resources to teach students that are a different race than the teacher
T.struggles diff race	Use anytime the teacher mentions their struggles or challenges in teaching, disciplining, or interacting with students that are a different race than the teacher

T.goals diff race	Use anytime a teacher mentions how they know whether they have been successful in teaching different-race students or any goals they have for their students of a different race than the teacher
T.beliefs diff race	Use anytime a teacher mentions, implies, infers, or reveals beliefs they hold about students that are a different race than the teacher
T.disc diff race	Use anytime a teacher mentions student discipline in reference to students of a different race than their own , including their own beliefs and approaches as well as the beliefs and approaches of others in the school (especially include examples or stories of discipline involving different-race students)
Reflexivity	Use anytime a teacher's words demonstrate they are or are not reflecting or have reflected on their journey, struggles, growth, or mistakes with regard to racism, racial self-identity, or the racial identity of others (Including anytime a teacher's words show their self-awareness, cultural humility, growth mindset, deficit-lens, saviorism etc.)
Context	
Teachers race comp	Racial composition of the teacher's peers (the school teaching staff)
Student race comp	Racial composition of the teacher's students/classroom
Student SES comp	SES composition of the teacher's students/classroom
Students' challenges	Use anytime a teacher talks about the challenges their students face (e.g., homelessness, anxiety/depression, trauma, special needs, etc.)
QUOTE	Key or notable quotes
Emergent themes	Other themes we notice while transcribing that do not fit any of the codes above