

**Teaching about culture, within culture.**

*An explorative study about the extent of culturally responsive teaching competencies of non-professional teachers who execute global citizenship education projects at high schools.*

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## TEACHING ABOUT CULTURE, WITHIN CULTURE: AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY ABOUT THE EXTENT OF CRT COMPETENCE OF NON-PROFESSIONAL TEACHERS

### **Abstract**

This study explored the extent of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) competencies of non-professional teachers during the implementation of global citizenship education projects at high schools. Due to the increasing culturally and ethnically diverse classrooms, many studies have been conducted on the CRT competencies of teachers. This study aimed to fill the gap in research about the CRT competencies of non-professional teachers. A qualitative study with 16 participants who carry out the citizenship project of the ngo Cross Your Borders was conducted. All participants are interns at the organisation and can be seen as non-professional teachers. An observation has been conducted by a teacher who was present in class during the execution of a project by one of the participants. In addition, interviews with the participants were conducted in order to explore how they perceived their CRT competencies. Also, to explore which potential factors might explain differences between them and other participants. Results revealed that the non-professional teachers showed some extent of CRT competencies, however unconsciously and occasionally. The main differences between non-professional teachers seemed to lay in their educational background and their experiences in education. The insights of this study provided multiple aspects that should be included during the preparation of non-professional teachers before they will be teaching. An extended pedagogic and didactic training should be provided followed up by a training on how to implement CRT in class.

*Keywords:* Culturally responsive teaching, non-professional teachers, global citizenship education, high school students

### **Samenvatting**

Deze studie heeft de competentie in cultureel responsief lesgeven (CRT) onderzocht bij niet-professionele leerkrachten tijdens de uitvoering van wereldburgerschapseducatie projecten op middelbare scholen. Door de toenemende cultureel en etnisch diverse klassen is er veel onderzoek gedaan naar de CRT competentie van leerkrachten. Deze studie tracht het gebrek in onderzoek naar niet-professionele leerkrachten op te vullen door een exploratief onderzoek te doen naar hun CRT competentie. Een kwalitatief onderzoek is uitgevoerd met 16 participanten die voor de ngo Cross Your Borders burgerschapsprojecten uitvoeren. Alle participanten lopen stage bij deze organisatie en kunnen gezien worden als niet-professionele leerkracht. Een observatie is uitgevoerd door de leerkracht die in de klas aanwezig was tijdens de uitvoering van het project door een participant. Daarnaast zijn er interviews afgenomen met de participanten om te onderzoeken hoe zij hun CRT competentie ervaren en om

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mogelijke factoren te ontdekken die verschillen in CRT competentie tussen hen en de andere participanten kunnen verklaren. Uit de resultaten bleek dat de niet-professionele leerkrachten enige mate van CRT competentie toonden, echter vaak onbewust en incidenteel. De belangrijkste verschillen tussen niet-professionele leerkrachten bleken te liggen in hun opleidingsachtergrond en hun eerdere ervaringen in het onderwijs. Inzichten van deze studie zijn dat er een uitgebreide pedagogische en didactische training geven moet worden aan niet-professionele leerkrachten. Met daaropvolgend een training over het implementeren van CRT in de klas.

*Sleutelwoorden:* cultureel responsief lesgeven, niet-professionele leerkrachten, wereld burgerschapsvorming, middelbare scholieren

### Teaching about culture, within culture

Due to globalization, schools and classrooms in Western Europe have become increasingly culturally and ethnically diverse (Phalet et al., 2004). Challenges for teachers are the multiple perspectives and expectations within a classroom that ethnic diversity brings along (Abacioglu et al., 2020). Tensions could rise when students and teachers belong to different cultures and certain behaviours are perceived as inappropriate by teachers (Tanase, 2020). Often, schools are seen as sites of intercultural tension (Thijs et al., 2014). Besides that, it is known that ethnic minority students' educational achievement is still disadvantaged compared to their ethnic majority peers (OECD, 2014). Ullucci and Howard (2015) stated that *"teachers may adopt and maintain deficit and pathological thinking about the academic potential of students who come from impoverished backgrounds"* (p.172). They urged to offer teacher new perspectives on educating those students to bridge a cultural mismatch (Ullucci and Howard, 2015).

Phalet et al. (2004) argued that more attention should be paid to factors that may support the educational success of ethnic minority students. Generally, all students feel more valued, capable of learning and engaged with their learning environment when their teacher is responsive to their needs (Gay 2010; Nieto, 2004). How to address these needs of students with bicultural and ethnic minority background is described in the framework of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) (Gay, 2010). Gay (2010) defined CRT as *"using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them"* (p. 31). Implementing CRT is related to positive students' outcomes, like increased student engagement, better achievement, and more positive peer relationships (Abacioglu et al., 2020). Also, the implementation of CRT proved benefits for all students on multiple kinds of content subjects (Aronson &

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Laughter, 2016). Quantitative and longitudinal research has shown the benefits of culturally content teaching strategies for students from various minority and traditionally marginalized groups (Dee & Penner, 2017; Matthews & López, 2019).

Culturally responsive teaching aims to teach racially diverse students both *within* and *beyond* their own cultural and experiential contexts (Milner, 2010). Gay (2015) stated that “*students should be taught about the multiple cultural and ethnic heritages of nation states around the world, as well as the cultures and contributions of their own ethnic groups*” (p.125). CRT therefore contextualizes ideas of reality, representation, equality, justice and social transformation (Gay, 2015). Within education, CRT seems to have multiple interfaces with the concept of global citizenship education (GCE). Currently, a specific definition of global citizenship is not yet adopted. However, three overarching dimensions are consistently noted in literature which are social responsibility, global competence, and global civic engagement (Morais & Ogden, 2010). Both CRT and GCE aim to strengthen civic engagement and responsibility. In culturally responsive classes, students are taught to balance classroom components with social responsibility as well as commitment to community change (Ladson-Billings, 2009). By understanding the imperfections of society, students are encouraged to uncover the root causes of social injustice and their consciousness is raised. Given the fact that the concepts of CRT and GCE are closely related to each other, a research about CRT within the field of GCE seems to be interesting. Because, GCE seems to offer good opportunities to implement and observe CRT.

### **Culturally responsive teaching competencies**

The competencies teachers need according to CRT are a positive attitude towards cultural diversity, knowledge about different cultural backgrounds and skills to use their attitude and knowledge to stimulate learning in all children (Spanierman et al., 2011). Culturally responsive teachers place culture at the centre of their teaching to improve the performance of underachieving minority students, because they understand the powerful role of culture (Gay, 2010). Teachers who are culturally competent acquire a knowledge base about ethnic and cultural diversity. In addition, they are continually culturally self-aware and conscious about their actions and their effects (Gay, 2010).

Some studies investigated the competence in culturally responsive teaching of teachers (Abacioglu et al., 2020; Civitillo et al., 2019; Agirdag et al., 2016). Research about the competence in CRT by persons who are involved in education but are not educated teachers is yet lacking. For example, people who come from organisations that carry out guest lessons or projects at schools. Teaching culturally responsive could be extra challenging for non-professional teachers since they might lack

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pedagogical knowledge or didactic skills and they have less time to build a relationship with their students. The latter is seen as an important feature of CRT (Cruz et al., 2020).

Non-professional teachers seemed to be employed by organisations which work within the field of citizenship education. Due to Dutch regulations schools are obligated to teach about citizenship (SLO, 2019). Multiple projects about global citizenship education are offered to high schools by independent organisations. The regulation does not demand a professional level of the educator of citizenship education (Eidhof, 2020). Therefore, organisations often seem to carry out projects with non-professional teachers. Yet is unknown how many organisations work this way. The Dutch Inspection of Education (2011) have expressed their concerns about teachers who are not certified or not educated in a formal teacher education program, since it is resulting in an increasing problem for the quality of education. The better teachers are formally educated, the more effective education is provided, especially compared to those non-professional teachers who did not receive any specific training (Boyd et al., 2009; Helms-Lorenz et al., 2015). In addition, Eidhof (2020) stated that the effectiveness of a citizenship project or program does not only rely on the content, but mostly on the person that carries it out. Hence, he considers it important for schools to question whether the skills of the educator meets the needs of the target group. Especially, when the program contains sensitive or controversial topics it should be questioned whether the educator is able to create a safe space and deal with students who are dominantly present (Eidhof, 2020). From a wider perspective, schools might reconsider the effectiveness of those kinds of programs. Thus, it could be questioned whether the education of non-professional teachers is sufficient enough for students to learn from.

### **Culturally responsive teaching competencies of non-professional teachers**

Within the next few years, the importance of attention to culture and minority students will be persistent in the diverse classrooms. Therefore, culturally responsive teaching will remain important in education. Multiple studies aimed to investigate whether teachers are competent in CRT (Civitillo et al., 2019; Abacioglu et al., 2020; Tanase, 2021). Due to the lack of research about the CRT competencies of non-professional teachers, explorative research is needed to gain insight and a clear view of the current situation. Thus, the goal of this study is to close that gap in research and examine the competencies of non-professional teachers regarding culturally responsive teaching. The following explorative research question has been set up: *“What level of culturally responsive teaching (CRT) competence are non-professional teachers able to implement during the execution of a global citizenship project at high schools and what explanatory factors could be found for potential differences between them?”* The

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results of this study may provide a clear view of the feasible competencies in CRT non-professional teachers could gain.

This study will focus on the non-professional teachers who are involved at the organisation called Cross Your Borders (CYB). CYB is an organisation that executes projects about global citizenship education at high schools for two or three full days. The aim of CYB is to raise global and social awareness among high school students. Within the projects of CYB, themes like unfair trade, female rights, human rights, and deforestation will be discussed within the activities (Cross Your Borders, n. d.). CYB works with students who are doing an internship for one year or half a year at the organisation. They execute the projects of CYB at high schools. Therefore, the interns could be seen as non-professional teachers. They have different educational backgrounds, but all chose to do their internship at CYB voluntarily. Within the projects of CYB some specific CRT dimensions, as described in the culturally responsive instruction observation protocol (CRIOP) by Correll et al. (2015), could potentially be identified. Therefore, those dimensions should be considered important for this specific research. The dimensions are *instruction practices*, *critical discourse* and *socio-political consciousness*.

*Instruction practices* could also be seen as culturally responsive instruction (CRI) that incorporates students' cultural knowledge and affirms their racial and cultural identity (Cox, 2011). Teachers use students' prior learning to plan and guide instruction, emphasize vocabulary development, and incorporate opportunities for students to learn collaborative and inquiry-based experiences (Powell & Rightmeyer, 2011).

*Critical discourse* stands for the provision of opportunities for student conversation and explicitly teach 'the language of power' (Powell & Rightmeyer, 2011). Elements of discourse include valuing students' home languages, incorporating strategies to prompt academic conversations and developing language objectives that lead to linguistic competence.

*Socio-political consciousness* stands for the exploration of issues important to students and their families, encouraging students to engage in problem-solving of real-world issues and analysing biases in texts and aspects of popular culture (Powell & Rightmeyer, 2011). Socio-political consciousness encourages the students to be critical thinkers, to consider diverse perspectives and to examine the ideological messages embedded in texts (Powell et al., 2013). This requires a teacher who is cognizant of her own race, class, and gender biases and to be committed to work towards social equity (Powell et al., 2013). In the case of this study, the emphasis will be on the encouragement to explore and be engaged in real-world issues, problem-solving aspects, and the aspect of working toward social equity.

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### **Potential differences between non-professional teachers**

To further analyse the competence in culturally responsive teaching of non-professional teachers, literature that might help declare potential differences between them is discussed within this next section. Teachers are individuals that have their own ideas and preferences, they differ from each other in their beliefs about diversity (Hachfeld et al., 2011) and their implicit ethnic attitude (Vezzali et al., 2012). Those individual differences can affect their ethnic diversity teaching (Gay, 2010).

Many studies aimed to do research about CRT competencies of teachers (Civitillo et al., 2019; Abacioglu et al., 2020; Agirdag et al., 2016; Cruz et al., 2019). These studies have mostly resulted in a conclusion that self-reflection is the key to teach culturally responsive. Teachers who reported high on self-reflection, also reported high on CRT competencies (Civitillo et al., 2019). Also, as a result of that is that perspective-taking is a strong predictor for CRT competencies (Abacioglu et al., 2020). Therefore, it could be assumed that non-professional teachers who report to be reflective or good at perspective taking, also show a greater extent of CRT.

Another potential difference between non-professional teachers could be explained by their cultural background. For example, research has shown that ethnic minority teachers have more multicultural competencies (McAllister & Irvine, 2000). Multicultural competencies can be understood as the ability to question your own beliefs, attitudes and perceptions, identity practices that are biased and change your perception of self and other (Keengwe, 2010). Other research showed that ethnic minority teachers practice multicultural education to a greater extent (Agirdag et al., 2016). Also, that they have more open conversations about cultural diversity (Gay, 2010). However, teachers from a minority background may lack experience and knowledge of other (minority) cultures (McAllister & Irvine, 2000). Having an ethnic minority background seems to stimulate the implementation of CRT. Hence, ethnic minority cultural background teachers are expected to have a more extended CRT competence level than ethnic majorized background teachers (Agirdag et al., 2016). This underlying mechanism might be observed within the group of non-professional teachers as well.

Other research showed that age may also affect competence. Munroe and Pearson (2006) stated that younger teachers tend to have weaker multicultural attitudes. Besides, Spanierman et al. (2011) argued that younger teachers may have less cultural knowledge and experience. Therefore, age may also affect the CRT competence of non-professional teachers. Having a younger age seems to be a cause for a less extended CRT competence level (Spanierman, 2011).

Another factor that could influence differences between non-professional teachers is their self-efficacy. Self-efficacy is a person's own belief in their own efficacy which could be seen as their

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judgement of one's own personal ability to teach (Bandura, 1999). Nordlöf et al. (2017) stated that self-efficacy among teaching varies, depending on factors such as experience, education, interest, subject content, time for preparation or the actual teaching situation. When it comes down to self-efficacy in CRT, the study of Cruz et al. (2019) reported that teachers mostly felt high in self-efficacy regarding building trust and personal relationships with students. Those two aspects are necessary in order to fulfil two important features of CRT which are student-centred instructions and positive relationships (Cruz et al., 2019). Also, teachers reported feeling less confident in possessing specific cultural knowledge. Which is more concerning considering the fact that incorporating students' cultural experiences and their cultural capital in ways that build their academic skills are key tenets of CRT (Cruz et al., 2019).

Unique in this study is the fact that the non-professional teachers are all interns at Cross Your Borders as well as they are students. Therefore, another potential difference between non-professional teachers this study could find are based upon their educational background. They differ in educational level (mbo, hbo or university) and in study background. When they are coming from a pedagogical background, they might be more sensitive than others since they it could be considered that they have more pedagogical knowledge. Someone who is doing a study related to culture (e.g. cultural anthropology or cultural studies) might be more aware of different kinds of culture within a class. An educational background in pedagogical or cultural might increase the extent of CRT competencies.

In addition, all interns are participating voluntary and are probably involved with CYB because of the specific method of the organisation and the topics they address. However, potential differences within the motivation to choose for this internship might be found in their interest. For example, some might be mostly interested in organizing a trip for high school students, were others could be more interested in the addressed topics or in the experience of teaching. For this study, it could be interesting to explore the interns' motivation to be involved at CYB. A greater interest in teaching or culture might stimulate the competence in CRT of a non-professional teacher.

### **Method**

A qualitative analysis method was chosen to be able to develop a rich explanation from an individuals' reported experience (Willig, 2001). Especially, since there is yet little known about non-professional teachers, a qualitative study is the most obvious (Baarda, 2009).

### **Participants**

Cross Your Borders is an organisation that offers internships to students on a temporary basis. The organisation has a small team of permanent employees and works with a large group of interns



TEACHING ABOUT CULTURE, WITHIN CULTURE: AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY ABOUT THE EXTENT OF CRT COMPETENCE OF NON-PROFESSIONAL TEACHERS (currently around ninety interns). The interns carry out the global citizenship projects at high schools and could therefore be seen as non-professional teachers. The data of this study were drawn from a group of non-professional teachers who are doing an internship at the organisation Cross Your Borders. A convenience sample was drawn, because this seemed to be easiest sample method considering the fact that interns are grouped already to execute a project at a high school. The group of interns who were the first to execute a project after the instruments of this study were developed, were asked to participate in this study. A small and select target group is perceived as a good way to do explorative research (Crouch & McKenzie, 2006), thus 20 interns were approached of which 16 wanted to participate. Of the total sample (N=16), 14 participants are female and 2 are male. The sample consisted of participants from an educational background in Mbo (N=2), in Hbo (N=6), and in University (N=8). The execution of the observation took place at two different high schools, in two different weeks. The participants were approached for this research by email and WhatsApp.

Almost all participants are doing their internship at Cross Your Borders since February for 5 months. Only one participant is involved at the organisation since September and doing her internship for 10 months. They have participated in at least three trainings about the execution of the global citizenship projects, about the content of the project and about didactics. The main focus within the didactic training was on asking questions about the content of the project, being confident, keeping order, motivation, showing emotion and students with special needs. All participants have executed at least around five projects at different high schools before they participated in this research.

### **Instruments**

**Observation.** This study contains an observation, followed by an interview. Observations of human behaviour will provide a clear view of the current situation on which this research focuses. Civitillo et al. (2019) suggested that the use of the Culturally Responsive Instruction Observation Protocol (CRIOP) observation protocol (Correll et al., 2015) represents a valuable instrument for measuring culturally responsive teaching. The CRIOP tool operationalizes six holistic dimensions of culturally responsive teaching. However, not all six dimensions will be used in the observation since they seem to be unfeasible for non-professional teachers who are within a class only temporarily. The observation instrument of this study is based upon three dimensions of the CRIOP observation tool. The three elements that will be used are *instruction practices*, *critical discourse*, and *socio-political consciousness*. The CRIOP dimensions that are left out in this study are *classroom relationships*, *assessment practices* and *family collaboration*.

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Within the observation, the dimensions are translated to teacher behaviour in class (Appendix A). Before the observation, one high school teacher and three fellow students have reviewed the observation tool after which small adjustments were made. The observation is carried out by a teacher who usually teaches the class in which the non-professional teacher executes project. Those teachers are briefed shortly beforehand. The observation tool was administered in Dutch to ensure that they understood the observation tool. The CRIOP observation assessment measures CRT using a four-point Likert style scale: 1= not at all, 2= occasionally, 3= often, and 4= to a great extent. This is perceived as an ordinal scale since the order is clear but differences are not concretely established.

For this study specific, the focus was set upon certain items of one of the CRIOP dimensions. For example, the dimension *socio-political consciousness* emphasized critical thinking as well as analysing texts on cultural biases. The latter is not applicable in the projects of CYB and therefore excluded in this study. Thus, the aspects that are used in this observation are also renamed in order to emphasize the main focus. Next, a brief explanation of each dimension is given with the illustrations of the original items of the CRIOP observation and illustrations of how they are translated into aspects including teacher behaviour for this study. The three dimensions are translated into four aspects in the observation. The dimension *instruction practices* have been split up into two aspects, because of the comprehensive items that the CRIOP observation contained. The four renamed aspects of the observation in this study are: 1) contextualized instruction, 2) building upon prior knowledge, 3) space for multiple perspectives, 4) critical thinking.

First, the dimension *instruction practices* which stand for an instruction that engages the students' lives and builds upon their prior cultural knowledge is highlighted. The CRIOP observation contained six items (e.g., '*instruction is contextualized in students' lives, experiences and individual abilities*'). For this study, they are translated into two aspects. The first aspect is named *contextualized instruction* and contained four items (e.g., '*The teacher uses examples students gave about their experiences; travels, daily live, extra-ordinary circumstances*'). The second aspect is named *building upon prior cultural knowledge* and contained four items (e.g., '*The teacher builds upon prior knowledge of students by checking the understanding of the students.*').

Secondly, the dimension *critical discourse* will be set forth. This dimension stands for the provision of opportunities for student conversation and explicitly teach the language of power. This domain contained four items on the CRIOP observation (e.g. '*The teacher provides opportunities for students to develop linguistic.*'). For this study, this third aspect is named *space for multiple perspectives*

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and contained four items (e.g., *'The teacher provides space to share one's idea and perspective upon a cultural issue.'*).

Lastly, the dimension socio-political consciousness will be discussed. This dimension stands for the exploration of issues important to students and encourages students to be critical thinkers. This domain contained three items on the CRIOP observation (e.g., *'The curriculum and planned learning experiences provide opportunities for the inclusion of issues important to classroom, school and community.'*). For this study, this fourth aspect is named *critical thinking* which contains five items (e.g., *the teaching stimulates the students to think about their own cultural beliefs or identity.'*).

**Interview.** A semi-open interview has been chosen to get insight in the experiences and perceptions of the participants (Dicicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006). A characteristic from a semi-open interview is to explore the topic using multiple topics that needs to be discussed (Fossey et al., 2002). Based on the literature review among professional teachers, some topics has been established beforehand which are teaching skills, age, educational background, knowledge of cultures, motivation regarding their internship, and interest in citizenship. The interview was administered in Dutch to ensure that the participants, whom all speak Dutch, can speak freely during the interview.

The observation and interview were related to each other. During the interview, the participants were asked whether they implement CRT. The observation could confirm or refute this. In addition, specific questions were asked about different parts of the observation form. For example, whether the participants often ask for input from students.

The transcripts of the interview are analysed with the use of the Constant Comparative Method (CCM) as described by Strauss and Corbin (1998). This is a methodology derived from the grounded theory methodology. Within CCM, data points within an interview are constantly compared to other data points within the same or other interviews, to form categories and concepts (Clandinin, 2005). As information is obtained, it is compared with previously gathered data. Patterns emerge from the data set and are then coded (placed in a category) (DePoy & Gitlin, 2016). The transcripts were open coded first in Word. Secondly, the open codes were translated to axial codes in Microsoft Excel. Lastly, selective coding was done to select core categories and relate them to other categories.

Comparisons are made within a single interview, between interviews, between different perspectives and experiences and between pairs of interviews. Those comparisons made emerged from the first three steps out of the five-step analysis procedure as described in the empirical study of Boeije (2002). Within this study, multiple groups are compared. For example, a group of participants who did felt comfortable asking personal questions to students and a group who did not.

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**Results**

This results section will be presented according to the dimensions of CRT which are incorporated in the observation form. Those are *instructional practices*, *critical discourse* and *socio-political consciousness*. The aim of this research is to explore the extent of implementation of cultural responsive teaching (CRT) competencies by non-professional teachers during the execution of global citizenship projects at high schools and to explain potential differences between them. Thus, competencies of the participant are described as well as the explanations participants gave for their CRT competencies and differences between them and other non-professional teachers from the organisation Cross Your Borders (CYB). The findings will be described according to the four aspects related to CRT that have been incorporated in the observation form.

Ten out of the sixteen observation forms were properly filled in by teachers who were present in class. The results of the observation form are processed in Table 1. There are no participants who generally scored relatively lower or higher than others. In addition, there are often various scores within an observation. For example, relatively high on the first aspect and less high on the second aspect that has been tested.

**Table 1**

*Data observation form*

	Contextualized instruction	Building upon prior cultural knowledge	Space for multiple perspectives	Critical thinking
(almost) Never	40%	20%	0%	50%
Occasionally	60%	50%	60%	50%
Often	0%	10%	40%	0%
(almost) Always	0%	20%	0%	0%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

*Note.* 100% = 10 participants.

**Contextualized instruction.** First, the dimension of *instruction practices* will be set forth. The item related to the contextualization of students' lives, experiences, and individual abilities within an instruction is first highlighted. Some participants reported asking questions and stimulating students to share personal stories because of the impact they have of fellow students.

*"When you hear a story of somebody else, people will think like woow, indeed, it is pretty heavy. Refugees, they do come with good intentions. And when you hear more real stories and experiences of people, you might also be able to make negative opinions more positive."* (P12)

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Even though many participants did mention the importance during the interview, most participants scored *occasionally* when it comes down to implementing this aspect of CRT. Participants who scored relatively high on this aspect belonged to one of the following groups: being a student of applied psychology or being bicultural. The first group is based upon the education of some participants which seemed to affect their behaviour. The group of participants who reported feeling confident asking questions is also enrolled in an applied psychology study. They specifically mentioned that they developed the skill to ask questions and go more in-depth during conversations with others. Written notes on some of their observation forms confirmed this behaviour.

*"I am studying applied psychology and therefore I got a lot of courses about conversational skills, in which the emphasis is on asking open questions, be objective and ask more questions." (P12)*

The second group is based upon the report of participants who identify themselves as bicultural. Some of them reported being able to empathize well with students who also identify as bicultural. The cautious way in which one specific participant refers to different cultures was also striking.

*"I think, when you are coming from a cultural background different from a western background, I think when you hear opinions of students who are also coming from a different cultural background, you might be more tended to listen to them too, it is like recognizing when they are also from a different background." (P9)*

Nevertheless, other participants reported being scared to ask about personal stories of students, because they thought they would not be able to cope with touchy stories or disrespectful reactions of fellow students.

*"The last question about refugees, I thought it is whether someone knows a refugee. I must confess that I think it is a tough question to ask, because I am afraid of the reactions I might get." (P1)*

Fieldnotes worthy to be mentioned are two conversations with teachers who were observing the participants. Both teachers remarked on the absence of a connection between the students' identity or lives and the content of the project. For example, one teacher reported that his class contained at least four bicultural students, but they were not asked for input. Even though, he did observe several opportunities to include them in the conversation. The other teacher observed a lack of personal conversations between the non-professional teacher and the students. She mentioned that sharing experiences from both sides would stimulate the bond between them and create a more open atmosphere. Both stated that the project should leave more room for this.

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***Building upon prior cultural knowledge.*** Secondly, the items about scaffolding on cultural knowledge of students, which also belongs to the dimension *instructional practices*, will be clarified. An important competence within this aspect is having enough cultural knowledge yourself (Spanierman et al., 2011). Many participants reported having not so much or a basic cultural knowledge.

*"I cannot say that I have much cultural knowledge. Globally, I know that there are different cultures with different rules and norms and values. No, not much knowledge." (P14)*

The observed behaviour (rephrasing, check the understanding, thinking out loud, and explaining difficult words) hardly came up as a topic in the interviews. Some participants scored high on this aspect on the observation form. The two highest-scoring participants did not mention implementing this CRT aspect themselves. The score on the observation forms could be perceived as average when they are compared to the other aspects.

***Space for multiple perspectives.*** Thirdly, the dimension *critical discourse* will be addressed. An aspect of this dimension is to promote active student engagement and conversation. Many participants reported valuing creating space for multiple opinions and perspectives in a discussion highly, which is confirmed by the data of the observation forms.

*"I think that I am always trying to bring up multiple opinions. For example, when somebody thinks differently about something, to also talk about that." (P9)*

Relatively speaking, the participants gained the highest score on this aspect of CRT. Some participants reported being very aware of the multiple cultures within a class and the power of language. The observation form did confirm that they also scored to a greater extent on providing space for multiple perspectives in comparison to other participants. Those participants are all enrolled in a study that has something to do with culture (e.g., cultural anthropology or international studies), also mentioned their study as a reason for being very open to other perspectives.

*"As I already said, about different perspectives and they all... they all exist next to each other, your own perspective is also just a perspective. I really learned that within my study". (P3)*

Themes that hinder this aspect of CRT were also raised by participants discussed during the interviews. For example, many participants reported the pressure of time during the project as an obstacle. Participants mentioned that because of the time pressure, it is hard to go in depth upon opinions and provide space for students to react to each other. Even to actually get to the point of a discussion.

*"I actually lack time quite often causing that I have no time left for the parts in which a discussion could be brought up." (P10)*

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In addition, participants reported feeling pressure to emphasize the vision of Cross Your Borders and spend time to that as well.

*"It is hard listen to what students think and to give the right answer within the given time. The answer that CYB aims for and then also to talk about that. Sometimes you do have space for it, however sometimes you have to continue quickly to the next part." (P3)*

Something else related to this topic is the report of some participants about following the instruction manual. They reported that some people are more focused on following each step of the manual where others feel more freedom to give it their own twist.

*"As an intern, you just follow the steps from the manual that you have to follow. And the question about who knows a refugee is in it, so you ask it." (P15)*

Some participants reported that the manual should contain more space for opinions and CRT overall.

*"I think that it could be longer yes. That more time should be provided. Discussions does appear and I think and there are moments in which you could do so, but it could be more." (P14)*

**Critical thinking.** The fourth part of the observation consisted of the dimension of *critical discourse* and *socio-political consciousness*. Important within this part is the encouragement to be a critical thinker and the development of consciousness of biases. For a teacher specifically, it is important to be committed to work toward social equity.

Many participants remarked that all interns of CYB are open-minded people and interested in topics related to social injustice and culture. They often reported that choosing for an internship at Cross Your Borders also means that you are interested in the themes the organisation addresses. This could be perceived as having a will to make a change and therefore be involved in an organisation with a vision to create change. Most participants reported themselves as open-minded and therefore culturally aware.

*"I have experienced that the interns of CYB all share the same vision, which makes us the same kind of humans, because otherwise you would not go and stand in front of a class to educate about how tough some things are." (P1)*

Many participants reported that they have always been interested in topics involving culture, social injustice or world problems.

*"That interest is something I always had, in culture differences, in different countries... and mostly the awareness of how well we have it here, that was always here." (P7)*

Multiple reasons were given for the open-minded or culturally aware attitude that participants developed. First, upbringing was reported as an influence on their open-minded view.

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*"I also think that my parents, just my parents, one is French and the other Dutch, and my dad is also very... he has done a lot of work in Africa and South-Amerika to help people, he knows a lot about it, and he really shaped me... I come from a very open family." (P11)*

Besides upbringing, a person's social and geographical environment were also mentioned as causes for being open-minded. Especially, being in touch with friends and roommates who are bicultural or living in a big city were mentioned as stimulating factors of cultural awareness.

*"With my college friend and also many colleagues from my work, we are in that bubble who cares about multiple structures of powers... I will call it like that just for now, that counts for culture within education as well, so therefore you are more responsive to it." (P3)*

Also, travel experience and voluntary work abroad were mentioned by some participants as factors which made them more culturally aware and open-minded.

*"I think my travel to Malawi contributed to that. The people there have nothing and I also had nothing... so that is something I have to think about when we are talking about people who have nothing. That feeling comes back then." (P1)*

Even though many participants reported being open-minded, the data of the observation reported that the overall score on this aspect was the lowest in comparison with the other aspects. Often written on the observation forms is that the items were not applied. This is something remarkable since almost all participants did mention their open-mindedness or awareness of cultures. However, they seem not to concretely implement their insights into practice.

Overall, there was little consistency in CRT scores of the different testes aspects of the observation form. Therefore, it is hard to state who is doing well in CRT competencies and who is not. More clear results that could be presented are the potential differences in CRT competence between non-professional teachers. A frequently given answer to the question of what influences different extents of CRT competence was one's educational background. Many participants reported this as the biggest influencing factor, due to acquired knowledge. Thereafter, a person's interest in the topics that the projects of CYB addresses seemed to be a relevant influence according to the participants. Next, upbringing and environment seemed to be of influence according to most of the participants. Lastly, the topic of age has also been discussed. Some participants reported that they thought the generation that they are in is more aware of issues related to culture than other older generations. However, they also mentioned that the life experiences of teachers who teach for a longer period seem to be of a bigger influence than cultural awareness.



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Another finding that should be shared is related to teacher competencies. The interviews revealed that participants who reported lacking experience in education also seemed to lack confidence in keeping order in class. Those participants reported having trouble with setting rules, being strict, or getting the class' attention. A striking report from those participants is that they want to be seen as a nice teacher rather than a strict teacher. This was a leading topic during their interviews. On the other hand, participants who reported having previous experience in education and who reported feeling confident in front of the class had a primary emphasis on applying CRT during the interview.

### **Discussion**

This study aimed to explore the extent of implementation of culturally responsive teaching competencies by non-professional teachers during the execution of global citizenship education projects. Also, to explain potential differences between non-professional teachers and to find out what influencing factors were involved.

The results of this study show that non-professional teachers seem to implement CRT to a small extent and rather accidentally and unconsciously than purposefully. The observation forms revealed a varied and relatively low score on the CRT dimensions that were examined. The interviews revealed that many participants did not seem to be aware of the possibility of taking into account the cultures within a class in their teaching. The following section will highlight the differences found and relate this to earlier mentioned or new literature.

First, one of the main findings of differences in the implementation of CRT by the participants was found in basic teaching skills. Some participants seemed to have gained those skills in previous experiences were others did not. For example, keeping order and setting rules. Participants who seemed to be skilled in this also seemed to be more confident and have more room to think about other aspects related to CRT during their teaching. Liakopoulou (2011) described didactic and pedagogical skills as the tools which make up the profile of a 'good teacher'. In addition, the possession of pedagogical knowledge is also seen as required for a successful performance of a teachers' pedagogical and didactic work (Liakopoulou, 2011). The lack of didactic and pedagogic skills could also be perceived as an alternative explanation for the little extent of CRT competence by the non-professional teachers who participated in this study.

Secondly, it can be concluded that educational background seemed to be of influence on the extent of CRT competencies. The knowledge of participants that came along with their educational background did influence the extent of some of the specific CRT aspects that have been tested. The data analysis confirmed this for participants enrolled in studies related to culture and most specifically

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participants who study applied psychology. Therefore, it can be assumed that educational background does influence the extent of CRT competencies of a non-professional teacher. Organisations that find it important that CRT is applied could therefore consider hiring mainly non-professional teachers coming from one of the mentioned educational backgrounds.

Thirdly, the expectation that bicultural teachers are implementing CRT to a greater extent (Agirdag et al., 2016) has been appointed in the interview by participants who are bicultural as well. Those participants stated to be able to empathize well because of their cultural background. This is not proven comprehensively with the observation form and therefore it cannot be determined whether the statement of Agirdag et al. (2016) also applies to this study. However, the reported awareness of the participants might not be recognized or observed by the teachers due to a lack of their awareness or due to the temporary observation. It could have been observed differently by another teacher and in another teaching situation. When we emphasize the findings of the interviews, it can be supposed that bicultural non-professional teachers are more aware of cultural diversity and therefore more culturally responsive.

Fourthly, age did not seem to be a remarkable influence on the CRT competencies according to the data of this study. This might be due to the small variance of ages between the participants and interns from Cross Your Borders overall. The participants did mention differences in generations when it comes down to implementing CRT. They thought younger generations are more aware of culture than older generations. Nevertheless, a contradicting was the report that life experience might influence CRT and therefore older teachers might be more CRT competent. Only the latter finding is slightly in line with earlier mentioned research that states that younger teachers tend to have weaker multicultural attitudes (Munroe & Pearson, 2006) or practice CRT to a smaller extent (Spanierman, 2011).

Lastly, the analysis did not confirm self-reflection and perspective taking as strong predictors for CRT competencies as expected by Civitillo et al. (2019). However, it could be considered that a more clear view would have occurred when they were specifically asked about their reflectiveness or ability to take perspectives.

A possible explanation for the low extent of CRT competence could be because of the finding that the participants are driven to follow the project manual. Suggested is to consider implementing specific questions related to CRT aspects, like contextualizing instructions in order to engage to the students lives', or to create an interactive rather than teacher-driven instruction. By including this within a manual, the implementation of CRT by non-professional teachers is expected to be of a greater extent.

This study must be seen in light of some limitations. There was a remarkable difference between the classes of those two schools in which the observations were conducted. During the observations at

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the first school, the students were less approachable because of their busy behaviour. Due to their behaviour, the teachers who were asked to fill in the observation form often were more involved with keeping order within the classroom than with the observation itself. Therefore, only ten out of the sixteen observation forms are filled in properly. The data could be seen as less reliable. Also, multiple teachers have filled in the observation form. Each teacher could interpret the observation differently which makes the data less objective.

However, the validity in this study is accomplished by using the CRIOP dimensions in the observation form. As said before, the CRIOP observation is considered a valuable instrument for measuring CRT competencies (Civitillo et al., 2019). By using three dimensions of the CRIOP observation that best fit the content of the CYB project, the method fits well with the aim of the research. A close match between the method and the research aim is seen as a contribution to the validity (Neuman, 2014).

Within this study, new insights have been gained with regard to the current situation of non-professional teachers and their CRT competence. The results have provided information about non-professional teachers and therefore filled a gap in the research field of CRT. The findings might be useful for organisations that employ non-professional teachers. Especially because this study revealed that it can not be assumed that non-professional teachers implement CRT. Therefore, a suggestion that came up is to provide extended trainings about pedagogical and didactical skills before non-professional teachers start teaching. An implication for practice that combines both pedagogy and CRT is cultural relevant pedagogy (CRP). CRP is a pedagogy specifically committed to collective, not merely individual empowerment (Gloria Ladson-Billings, 1995). One component of CRP is that culturally relevant pedagogues seek to develop socio-political consciousness. Therefore, it is seen as a teacher's obligation to stimulate students' to recognize, understand, and critique current and social inequalities (Ladson-Billings, 1995). This component of CRP begins with teachers recognizing issues of race, class, and gender in themselves and understanding the causes before then incorporating these issues in their teaching (Gloria Ladson-Billings, 1995). Taking into account culturally relevant pedagogy is highly recommended when preparing non-professional teachers to teach culturally responsive and pedagogically justified.

For future research, it might be interesting to conduct another research on the effect of age on the CRT competence of both teachers and non-professional teachers. The findings that younger non-professional teachers seemed to be more culturally aware, were contradicting the previous literature. Future studies on age in relation to CRT are therefore recommended in order to establish the effect age might have. Also, a study that explores the extent of CRT competencies of non-professional teachers

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who teach for a longer period (longer than half a year) would be interesting. Considering the finding that experience does affect the extent of CRT competencies, a non-professional teacher who teaches for a longer time might be more competent. This might be interesting for organisations like CYB who temporarily work with interns as non-professional teachers.

Regarding the fact that classes are becoming increasingly culturally and ethnically diverse, implementing CRT is considered important. Especially, when culture plays a role within the content of the given education which is often the case in global citizenship education. Some non-professional teachers with an educational background in culture or psychology or with previous experience in education might be able to implement CRT to some extent. However, this study has also shown that it cannot be assumed that all non-professional teachers implement CRT by themselves. When working with non-professional teachers, it should be considered extra important to prepare them in being culturally responsive. If we want to raise the consciousness of students about social injustice and we want to encourage them to engage in civic and social justice initiatives, we should start with educating their teachers properly. Because they have to bring across the message of social responsibility.

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## Appendix A Observation form

### Observatie cultureel responsief lesgeven door aanwezige docent

Datum:.....-.....-.....

Participant nummer:.....

#### **Uitleg observator:**

De docent die aanwezig is in de klas waar een student van Cross Your Borders het project uitvoert, vult deze observatie vragenlijst in. De vragenlijst gaat over cultureel responsief lesgeven. Dit houdt in dat de lesgevende student gebruik maakt van de culturele kennis, ervaringen, referenties en leerstijlen van de leerlingen om het leren relevanter en effectiever te maken voor de leerlingen (Gay, 2010). Meer uitleg hierover vindt u op de achterzijde van dit blad. De observatie maakt deel uit van een afstudeeronderzoek van Céline Janson voor de master Youth, Education and Society, een opleiding van de Universiteit van Utrecht.

De onderzoeksvraag van het onderzoek luidt: *In welke mate worden cultureel responsief onderwijs competenties door niet-professionele leerkrachten getoond binnen het uitvoeren van burgerschapsonderwijs projecten op middelbare scholen?* Het doel van dit onderzoek is om te ontdekken in hoeverre de niet-professionele leerkrachten cultureel responsief competent zijn en hoe hun competent zijn vertaald kan worden naar toekomstige trainingen. Hiermee zou de kwaliteit van de uitvoering van de Cross Your Borders projecten verbeterd kunnen worden.

De observatie bestaat uit 17 gesloten vragen (+ toelichting / voorbeeld) die enkel gaan over het gedrag van de lesgevende student. Op de achterzijde van dit blad kunt u een stuk theorie vinden dat u kan helpen met het invullen van dit observatie formulier.

Zet een kruisje bij de mate waarin u vindt dat de lesgevende student gedrag vertoont. Wanneer u twijfelt tussen twee antwoorden mag u hiertussen zitten, geef dit dan wel goed aan. Geef toelichting en / of een voorbeeld hoe dit gedrag terug te zien is.

Alvast bedankt voor uw inzet!

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Cultuur heeft invloed op de mate van denken, maken en doen, hoe we betekenis geven aan een veranderende samenleving en hoe we met elkaar omgaan en communiceren. Het hebben van culturele kennis is daarom van belang.

Bij culturele vaardigheden gaat het om het effectief kunnen leren, werken en leven met mensen van verschillende etnische, sociale en culturele achtergronden.

Denk bij culturele kennis aan het hebben van kennis van verschillen in sociale en culturele opvattingen (SLO, 2020)

- *Kennis* hebben over cultuur en kunnen *reflecteren* op culturele verschillen
- Het tonen van *inlevingsvermogen* en belangstelling voor anderen
- Het (her)kennen van *gedragscodes* in verschillende sociale situaties
- Constructief kunnen *communiceren* in verschillende sociale en culturele situaties
- *Respect en begrip* hebben voor andere visies, uitingen en gedragingen
- Bewust zijn van de eigen *individuele en collectieve verantwoordelijkheid* in een samenleving
- Eigen gevoelens en opvattingen kunnen benoemen en reflecteren

Culturele diversiteit verwijst naar allerlei verschillen: op het gebied van *afkomst, opleiding of sociale klasse, etniciteit, religie, taal, geslacht of gender, leeftijd, handicap en seksuele oriëntatie*.

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Deel 1: Instructie: Een cultureel responsieve instructie is een instructie waarin culturele kennis van de leerlingen wordt opgenomen en een instructie die hun etnische of culturele identiteit bevestigt (Cox, 2011).

De lesgevende student maakt gebruik van <u>voorbeelden</u> die leerlingen geven over...					Toelichting en voorbeeld
Hun <i>dagelijkse leven</i> : dagelijkse bezigheden, religie, sociale media, eten, hobby's	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	
Hun <i>ervaringen</i> : reizen, dagelijkse gebeurtenissen, bijzondere omstandigheden	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	
Hun <i>vaardigheden</i> : sociale/ cognitieve/ verbale vaardigheden, culturele vaardigheden (omgang mensen verschillende etnische, culturele en sociale achtergrond)	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	
Hun <i>culturele of etnische identiteit</i> : rituelen, feestdagen, heiligen, persoonlijke normen en waarden	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	

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De lesgevende student bouwt voort op de <u>culturele kennis</u> die de leerlingen al hebben door...						Toelichting en voorbeeld
Te herhalen wat gezegd is door leerlingen of wat gezegd is te herformuleren	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd		
Te controleren/checken of de leerlingen het begrepen hebben	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd		
Hardop denkend voor te doen, te demonstreren ( <i>modelen</i> )	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd		
Stil te staan bij moeilijke woorden en leerlingen te vragen deze te definiëren voordat hij of zij dat zelf doet	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd		

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Deel 2: Kritische discours: Staat voor het geven van ruimte aan leerlingen om in gesprek te gaan en expliciet de kracht van taal te stimuleren.

De lesgevende student geeft de leerlingen de <u>ruimte</u> om...					Toelichting en voorbeeld
Zelf (culturele) kennis in te brengen	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	
Vragen te stellen en op elkaar te reageren	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	
Eigen ideeën en perspectieven over een cultureel vraagstuk te delen	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	
Kennis te verwerken in betekenisvolle activiteiten (d.w.z., sluiten aan op de belevingswereld, het ontwikkelingsniveau en interesse van de leerlingen)	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	

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De lesgevende student neemt een <u>houding</u> aan die...					Toelichting en voorbeeld
Stimuleert om bepaalde termen te herzien, zoals <i>'gelukszoekers'</i> , <i>'ontwikkelingslanden'</i> of <i>'arme mensen'</i> .	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	
Stimuleert in te zien hoe de Nederlandse (/Westerse dominante) cultuur in relatie staat met andere culturen	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	
Stimuleert om stil te staan leerlingen hun culturele overtuiging of identiteit. <i>Wat vind jij daar zelf van? Hoe denk je hier zelf over?</i>	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	
Aandacht besteedt aan het erkennen en waarderen van de leerlingen hun culturele overtuigingen ( <i>beliefs</i> ) en praktijken ( <i>practices</i> ) -> leerlingen benoemen wat ze vinden en hoe zij dit uiten.	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	
Stimuleert om culturele overtuigingen te waarderen. ( <i>Hoe belangrijk vind je dat ...</i> )	(Bijna) nooit	Af en toe	Vaak	(Bijna) altijd	