

AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF  
CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES  
FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE ELLS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore whether certain teacher characteristics impacted teachers' perceived importance and reported use of culturally responsive practices within their classrooms. The numbers of ELLs in US classrooms has increased substantially over the past three decades and districts are mandated by federal law to provide these students appropriate high quality instruction for their language learning needs, as well as their academic achievement. Researchers suggest that teachers need to be culturally responsive while trying to meet the needs of ELLs and this study examined what teacher characteristics contributed to the use of culturally responsive practices within classrooms. The study was conducted in three school districts in a mid-western state and findings indicated that the most important predictor of teachers' perceived importance and reported use of culturally responsive practices in the classroom was teacher attitudes towards ELLs. Implications for current practice and future research are discussed.