

FINDING TRACTION FOR SOCIAL JUSTICE PRACTICES THROUGH THE STUDENT TEACHING SOCIALIZATION TRANSITION

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ABSTRACT

A key issue continuing to plague current educational systems is the intransigent racial and socio-economic achievement gaps for students. Using narrative inquiry and Harré and van Langenhove's (1999) six modes of positioning theory, this study considered preservice teachers' construction of socially just pedagogy within their public school internship contexts. This conceptual lens revealed student teachers are positioned as learners, which gives them a degree of failure resistance (Dweck & Molden, 2005). However, it also puts them in a subverted position where they are susceptible to socialization processes. Transference of social justice and critical pedagogy learning was not always possible because of participants' moral positioning as guests within their internships and pressures, both real and perceived, to conform to micro, meso, and macro structures. A recommendation is to engage preservice teachers in *iterant positioning* (Morrison, 2013) so they are better able to internalize and utilize socially just pedagogy in their own classrooms.

Introduction

The university to career transition can be difficult to navigate for a preservice teacher. It is full of doubt, confusion, change, and risk, and yet this experience is crucial for building the pedagogical, professional, and personal identities of novice educators. How preservice teachers emerge from internships can shape their attitudes and beliefs about students, instruction, and educational systems and even impact their decisions to remain in the field (e.g. Allen, 2009; Brown, 2009; de Jong, Cullity, Sharp, Spiers & Wren, 2010). This is particularly important when considering preservice teachers in urban areas who may encounter students who are racially, ethnically, socio-economically, or linguistically different from themselves.

Academic achievement gaps based on race and socio-economic status continue to dominate most analyses of public school success despite federal and state efforts to ameliorate inequitable educational opportunities. Social programs and increased accountability measures have attempted to close these gaps, but the racial and economic differences in student performance have remained intransigent for the past forty years (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2005). A common recommendation for educational reform to close these gaps has been to train preservice and veteran teachers in social justice and equitable practices (e.g., Ford & Grantham, 2003; Garcia & Guerra, 2004; Jones & Enriquez, 2009).

However, research does not often account for the possibility of this training bumping against other agendas, where high-stakes job survival and testing accountability are in conflict with the enactment of these social justice or anti-deficit plotlines. New teachers in particular are susceptible to the pressures of high accountability testing and federal mandates for proficiency levels and may, therefore, opt to stick to prescriptive curricula and test preparation programs rather than take risks to implement critical pedagogy training they may have received in

preservice coursework (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2005). The teacher as an individual or representative of the educational system cannot be considered in a vacuum exclusive of a broader context.

My study examined how preservice teachers construct socially just education within their personal, social, and institutional contexts. Examining the barriers new teachers experience may help provide teacher education that better prepares novice educators to navigate society's changing demands and serve traditionally marginalized students, thereby closing achievement gaps. This article begins by explaining the conceptual framework and methods of my examination, including participant selection. After I present the study's results, particularly focusing on the case study cross-analysis, I discuss implications and future recommendations.

Conceptual Framework

This study builds on research that considers teacher preparation, particularly the theory-to-practice bridge that occurs as preservice teachers transition into full time classrooms. This bridge is critically important because if preservice teachers acquire strong content and pedagogical knowledge, they feel more prepared and confident (Brown, 2009). They are also less likely to abandon their pedagogical training or “succumb to traditional socialization processes” (Allen, 2009, p. 653) if their ability to serve as change agents is supported within their university and school environments. Therefore, understanding the nature of transference—the degree to which knowledge and skills are carried from the university to classroom settings—can help with providing more powerful opportunities for preservice teachers to implement university learning within their classrooms.

Positioning Theory

Positioning theory, as defined by Harré and van Langenhove (1999), provides a socio-cultural framework to understand how the personal self is manifested in social discourse and recognizes the dynamic nature of positions people take up within a conversation or repeated interactions. It considers interactions between people and accounts for power dynamics. This is important to consider with preservice and new teachers because they are often placed in the middle of existing circumstances with the ability to wield little or no power (Margolis, 2006). With the advent of high stakes assessments and other forms of accountability, teachers and administrators are less willing to turn over their classrooms or incorporate interns' learning for fear of political and fiscal ramifications of top-down mandates (Margolis, 2006). Using positioning theory helps elucidate this multi-leveled power dynamic and its impact on preservice teacher transitions.

For this study, I specifically used Harré and van Langenhove's (1999) six modes of positioning to examine the shifting positions participants took in relation to their story, their environment, and themselves. These six modes of positioning are:

- *first order positioning* - ways that people position themselves in their ongoing storyline
- *second order positioning* - ways the ongoing storyline can be explicitly challenged
- *moral positioning* - the characteristic roles that people assume within storylines based on accepted duties and actions associated with the roles
- *personal positioning* - when characteristic roles are not adhered to in interactions
- *tacit positioning* - unconscious and unintentional positioning

- *intentional positioning* - intentionally striving to position oneself or others
Please note that while all six modes were considered in the analysis, the first three will be primarily used in this article's discussion because they were dominant in the data collected.

Narrative Methodology

This study employed a narrative inquiry methodology informed by Clandinin and Connelly's (2000) framework. This allowed participants to construct their own lived experiences as they were situated "in the midst" (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000, p. 63) of multiple intersecting plotlines and positioned by multiple groups and institutions. I chose to focus on only a few candidates to uncover deep, rich, complex, multilayered experiences over an extended period of time to move away from a generalized grand narrative to specific, uniquely-developed "small stories" (Bamberg, 2006) that provide real time construction of each participants' day-to-day teaching transition plotline. Changing public and cultural narratives that support teacher agency, professionalism, and social justice pedagogy require understanding and valuing the individual narratives and small stories of beginning educators as they undergo this crucial transition into the public school world.

Methods

This article reflects three participants' initial transitions through their student teaching internships and represents part of a longitudinal four-year study that will continue to follow these individuals as they enter early career teaching. This structure was used to focus on the durability and sustainability of social justice and critical pedagogy university training within lived experiences and teaching contexts.

Participants

The participants for this study were three students from a western United States university enrolled in the College of Education teacher training program. All participants received dual certification in elementary education, K-6, and special education, K-12, and all completed two ten-week internships to fulfill these dual licensure requirements. In order to participate in this study, candidates must have taken two different classes I taught, through which I provided instruction on equitable practices and socially just pedagogy to support educational needs of traditionally marginalized students. I also observed and coached their implementation of this pedagogy through an accompanying practicum experience. We had worked together for two years by the time the study began, and I had already observed their growth as potential teachers from pre-program college entrance. This close interaction helped build a trusting relationship where participants were more open about sharing their experiences from the study's onset.

Data Sources

From November, 2012, to March, 2013, I conducted monthly videotaped and audiotaped interviews with participants using Skype and Amolto recording software. Although I began with specific questions for the participants, the interviews became more participant-driven as the months progressed and they had issues or situations they wanted to discuss. While interviews ran

approximately one hour each, these times varied depending upon the participant, the participant's frame of mind at the time of the interview, the time of day the interview took place, the interview content, or changes and events that had occurred since our last contact. I encouraged participants to bring artifacts to the interviews as stimuli to begin narrating their plotlines as they experienced their transitions. Specific interview information is provided in Figure 1, and sample interview questions are provided in Figure 2.

Drawing on Prosser's (2011) concept of visual methodology, I also asked participants in their first interviews to illustrate how they perceived their positioning within educational contexts such as their university, school, and district; pressures they felt; or how they straddled both academic and professional worlds. They emailed the illustration to me before our interviews and then used the drawings to construct their narratives as we talked on Skype. This helped them to consider what they wanted to discuss in our interviews and provided a non-linear, non-verbal way for them to capture their experiences. I then asked the participants to illustrate their positioning a second time after they had been student teaching, and a third time at the end of their internships. Each of these drawings provided discussion points for the participants' interviews, and they were able to compare the drawings to further discuss their transitional journeys.

Lastly, I used participants' reflection journals, which they emailed or postal mailed to me regularly, and my own analytic memos, which I recorded at the end of each session, to provide a broader understanding of the participants' narrative constructions.

Data Analysis Procedures

I considered each participant as a separate case study because I wanted to "close in" on their lived experiences (Flyvbjerg, 2011). Riessman's (2008) conceptions of narrative thematic analysis informed how I analyzed each individual's interview transcript and journal reflection. I engaged in careful textual analysis of each thought segment (topic on which the participant was speaking), highlighting key ideas, noting main points, and charting the different forms of positioning that emerged within the discussions. I then mapped out emerging themes for each interview and highlighted sections of the interview that illustrated these themes. The larger themes that emerged were personal background, university training and experiences, teaching experiences and beliefs, tensions (interpersonal, intrapersonal, institutional), and positioning (six modes). I constructed individual participants' narratives to reflect the philosophies from which each was operating and making decisions since their backgrounds can affect how they position themselves and others in interactions (Jones & Enriquez, 2009). In order to ensure I had written individual narratives that resonated and appropriately reflected participants' experiences, I engaged in member-checking; all the participants approved of their respective narratives without issue.

Because I was interested in the phenomenon of university students transitioning into and through their student teaching experiences, I then conducted a multiple case study (Stake, 2006) to see how the themes that emerged in the individual case studies interconnected or differed across the quintain, defined by Stake (2006) as "the phenomenon or condition to be studied" (p. 6). In this case, the quintain was transitioning to student teaching. The resultant synthesis of emerging themes and positioning theory analysis are summarized in Figure 3.

Results and Analysis

Individual narratives revealed how each participant came to education, how s/he perceived his/her situatedness within transitional spaces, core beliefs, and how those core beliefs were enacted or challenged within the lived experience. For example, Bryan¹ saw his transition as emotionally linear, moving from being "happy and humble" to "excited and anxious," and he relied on philosophies of caring, strong rapport, and creative, "fun" instruction in his decision-making processes (Bryan, December 18, 2012). While this approach often served him well, he also encountered difficulties with tight, prescriptive curricula, low-level reading materials, and a lead teacher who had different dispositions about teaching diverse students. Another participant, Adele, considered herself positioned between two spaces competing for her time, energy, and resources—being a university student and being an intern. Her proactive manner and need to plan and organize demonstrated themselves in her desire for excellent classroom management and routines, while her social and cultural capital, gained from her parents' educational backgrounds, gave her a critical view of her experiences. Her biggest tensions arose from a redundant, unimaginative curriculum and a contentious first grade team, where she felt forced to “take sides” between teachers (Adele, January 21, 2013). Maxwell underwent two key transitions within six months—into his internship and then becoming a full time special education teacher mid-year. His Line Six philosophy—which encompassed teamwork, accountability, and responsibility—permeated every aspect of his transitions and impacted his interactions with both individuals and institutions. It served as a powerful means for him to effectively position himself to handle disruptive students, irate parents, dominating co-teachers, and a test-obsessed school culture. He found his biggest conflicts were when other people rejected being “on his team” (Maxwell, November 27, 2012). The cross-case analysis findings were divided into two key storylines that unfolded during the participants' transitions: 1) stops and starts; and 2) tensions and conflicts.

Thematic Strand #1 - Stops and Starts

The first storyline addressed stops and starts that were often the result of participants' attempts to manage dual positions as student teachers/learners and teachers in full control of a classroom. They tended to engage in *first order positioning* as learners. For example, Bryan described the events of one first-grade lesson:

I used pictures of hamburgers and an alligator to hook students. This worked well, and I built the anticipation by having two student volunteers come up to the front to hold the mysterious pictures (hamburgers). All of the students were engaged and wanted to know what the pictures were of. I used this excitement to teach the concept of greater than and less than. I anticipated that because the lesson was at the end of the day, students would be loud and excited. This was an understatement. It turned out that the opening portion of the lesson worked well, but after the hook, I spent time redirecting misbehavior and gaining student attention. I tried switching gears and using the active board to get some student interaction. This worked briefly, and students seemed to focus when they knew they might get the opportunity to come up to the board and answer a question. From this

¹ All names are participant-chosen pseudonyms.

point, the lesson kind of headed south. I did not get a chance to have a nice closure and review main points from the lesson....On the bright side, I gave my assessment and only a few students did not answer all questions correctly. This made me feel good because although behavior was a problem, learning still took place. In retrospect, I was proud of myself for staying calm and using many management techniques to control behavior. There were things I could have done better, such as explicit directions before handing out a worksheet. However, as a whole I felt like the lesson was a good first observation, and I know with more experience I will improve.

—Week 4 Reflection

Bryan's students challenged his *moral positioning* as teacher, and he had to *intentionally reposition* himself as the authority figure in the classroom by making adjustments to the lesson as it evolved. He also *intentionally positioned* himself as a learner—"there were things I could have done better"—and recognized growth is part of the process. Because of this, he was able to identify what he did well—"staying calm and using many management techniques"—and build on those successes instead of focusing on his mistakes. Bryan took up a dual position of being both a teacher and a learner. He recognized student teaching is a learning process where mistakes will occur, and because of this, he developed what Dweck and Molden (2005) refer to as "failure resilience" because he attributed his mistakes to a learning process, not a reflection of his talent, ability, or character. Even though he encountered stops, he continued to reflect, make repairs, and find a way to get back on the road again.

However, just as he was starting to build momentum and "see a growth in myself; getting comfortable in the situation," he came to another roadblock:

There's a few girls in whole group discussions—some of the responses I get from two or three of them—I can't see the misconception...I'm trying to make an attempt to really understand. Part of it—no excuses—but they receive enrichment; they're Tier 3 [in the RTI structure]. They're not special ed yet, so in that sense, I do feel a little helpless because I don't even know where to start with those three because it's a culmination of things. Behavior. I'm sort of clueless to what's going on in their minds. I mean, not to sound rude, but they'll be sitting there watching me. I'll ask a question, and kids will be responding; we'll be writing stuff on the board. I can tell they're engaged, and I'll ask one a similar question, and I will get an answer completely—the last time I was being observed, the response I got from one of these students, I didn't even know what to say. I couldn't clarify her answer. I just kind of froze for a second, and I was like, "Can you explain a little more?" Then she was trying to explain, and she's also an EL so her accent is kind of hard to understand when she talks...But, I couldn't understand the thinking. I'm trying to see where she's coming from. So, that's one thing I'm still trying to figure out. (February 24, 2013).

In this circumstance, Bryan feels powerless. Positioned as a teacher, he is responsible for student learning and expected to know what to do, but as a *student* teacher, he has not gained the skill set and experience to address the situation. Yet another example of stops and starts occurred when Adele gave a math assessment that students did not do well on. She had to reflect on her own performance and make a decision based on that reflection.

"I did a math activity that just bombed, and I showed [my lead teacher] the papers, and I

said, 'These are awful. They didn't learn anything, and I didn't teach it right. Can I throw these away?' And she said, 'Yeah, sometimes things don't work, and you know what? Just let it go. They're going to get more practice with it in the final lesson and it carries over into the next unit' (January 21, 2013).

Because Adele took up a *first order position* as learner, she was able to realize her execution of the lesson was flawed, and as a result, her students did not learn the concept. Rather than blame students, she took responsibility, and, with the help of her lead teacher, redesigned and retaught the lesson so students could better understand it.

Because Bryan, Adele, and Maxwell were willing to accept their *moral positioning* as *student* teachers with a great deal to learn, they were able to ask for, receive, and effectively use support and guidance from the people overseeing them. For example, Maxwell explained:

My lead teacher was always there for support, which was nice because if I had a question I could go to her. For instance, if we were running behind in reading that afternoon, what should we do? I would ask her because I know that she wants to be at guided reading and STEM questions by 2PM every day. Should we continue reading with the students, or should we stop where we are and break out into small guided reading groups? One of the most important things that I learned from my lead teacher during my internship in 5th grade was that teachers are not perfect, and we do make mistakes. Before my internship I had this idea of what a real teacher was like; now I know that real teachers make mistakes. Teachers are human and can forget to do certain things every once in a while. I learned that if we come across mistakes that the best thing to do is to own up to it (Week 10 Reflection).

In this thematic strand, participants initially took up *first order positions* as students learning from their teachers or professors, and those positions were usually *personal* because the participants modeled themselves after the individuals who demonstrated the traits and characteristics they wanted to emulate. However, when they were faced with faculty members who they did not believe modeled effective instructional practices or pedagogy, they engaged in *second order positioning*, rejecting the models and sometimes even the content from these courses. For example, Maxwell stated:

Engaging the students, questioning each student, building rapport—it seems like you [Jennifer] have really good rapport. It was never bad to come to class in your class. I had a behavior class for special ed just last spring, and it was just like we had two hours and forty-five minutes of PowerPoint. It was just unbelievable—not engaging at all. So, I just learned engaging students, moving. Do not just sit there. Be lively. Don't be boring. No one wants to be the boring teacher. (November 27, 2012).

Thematic Strand #2 - Tensions and Conflicts

The second thematic strand—tensions and conflicts—addressed the negative side of the participants' positioning as learners. They were often confronted with beliefs or situations that did not align with the equitable education theory and best practices they learned in university

classes. For example, Adele became frustrated when two first grade teachers, one of whom was her mentor teacher, were insisting their teaching needed to be the same even though leading and lagging data said the students were performing differently. Her response of “Different students would need different supports, so why, why should it be the same?” (January 21, 2013) indicates she understood the necessity to provide individualized and appropriate instruction for students.

In this case, Adele took a *second order position*, challenging the notion that learning in both classrooms should be identical regardless of student needs. The comparative data made sense from a teacher perspective, but not from an individual student perspective, and this disjointedness caused her uncertainty and ultimately her silence—“I just kept my mouth shut” (January 21, 2013). Because she was positioned by what her lead teacher can say about her in observations and evaluations as well as a desire to impress her, Adele felt she had to take sides. “I am definitely seeing the two different sides because they both made good points, but ultimately, I’m with my lead teacher, so I do what she does” (January 21, 2013). She chooses to accept her subverted *moral position* as simply a learner instead of taking up a *second order position* as an educated colleague and challenging the perceived issue.

While the participants recognized the need to implement more individualized and differentiated instruction, they often refrained from enacting these practices within their mentor teachers' classrooms. There were times when participants saw something in a classroom that countered what they were taught at the university, and they had to reconcile this information. One example is when Bryan met with his lead teacher for the first time, and she explained to him how she grouped students:

She has thirty-four kids in there so she has six groups, and they’re all grouped by ability. She said, “You know, people talk about grouping students by ability or tracking them. If they’re a low group, they’re always going to be low.” But she was like, “This is the way I differentiate. I group them by ability.” She’s like, “By no means am I saying I want them to stay low, but they’re getting the support they need because I know where they’re at and then when we work in small groups, I can work with five at the same time.” (December 18, 2012).

Bryan was conflicted about this because his university training had explicitly taught him grouping by ability could be harmful to students, particularly those who are traditionally marginalized or struggling, and flexible grouping by modality, interest, and readiness levels is a better practice (Morrison lesson plans, EDUC 211, Spring 2010). He suggested to me a way he would enact the instruction occurring in the classroom, though he did not bring this up to his lead teacher:

I would maybe try something different...The data is showing that they [the students] need work on phonics, and they need work with breaking up words and putting [them] together...I would reteach it. I guess, yeah, I’d do maybe something with small groups. That seems to work. [My lead teacher] is doing the phonics and word segmentation as whole group, so maybe that’s not meeting their individual needs. Maybe because they have the whole—the way it’s set up, like whole group reading where she goes through new words for the week. Maybe that’s not—maybe the kids are losing it in the whole group. Maybe they’re just zoning out, I think. And we’re not picking up on the fact that

they're really not there. Even though they seem like they're paying attention, the scores are showing they're not. So scratch whole group and get them through rotation. I think that'd be the only way to me, just for the sheer size of the class, 32 kids, and there's three of us in there. That'll definitely, I think, help. (January 21, 2013).

In this situation, Bryan believed in implementing flexible grouping practices, however because he was positioned subversively as a student teacher working within the confines of the lead teacher's beliefs and routines, he faced tensions between what he wanted to do and what he was able to do. He wanted to take up an *intentional position* as teacher with differentiated grouping practices but was not empowered by his role and circumstances to do so and subsequently yielded to the teacher's milieu, accepting his subverted moral position as learner.

Another example was when Bryan was conflicted about the texts used for Lead 21, the first grade, programmed curriculum. He felt:

“You can't get much from the book because it's so low, even the highest group. The books are maybe 150 words, so there's only so much you can talk about...The books themselves just don't have that much. There's not a whole lot to a basic reader...It's pretty simple answers, but it's alright though” (January 21, 2013).

Bryan spent several minutes elaborating on the lack of critical thinking opportunities available in the books he was required to use. While this was obviously bothering him, he dismissed the problem with “it's alright, though.”

This final comment seems to indicate a resignation and acceptance of the curriculum's limitations. This becomes of particular concern because it is in conflict with the university training Bryan internalized and wants to implement. He made reference to wanting to include engaging and “fun” ways to teach—guided reading, read alouds, group discussions—but the reading program's time constraints and rigid construction did not allow him the opportunity to elevate the level of instruction. Because his lead teacher used the Lead 21 curriculum, Bryan used it. When I asked him about this, he responded, “It just feels like there's not a whole lot of breathing room to say, ‘Hey, let's mix it up.’ So, I'm just going with [my lead teacher's] flow. I guess I don't really have an answer” (January 21, 2013).

It is apparent Bryan has an understanding of the students, the dynamics of the class, and ideas of how to better implement the curriculum. He also has the desire to implement more engaging, higher order thinking within the class context. Instead, because he is *morally positioned* as “learner” and “student teacher” and, therefore, lacks the power to make such changes, he remains quiet and “goes with the flow” of his lead teacher's classroom. He subordinates himself to the processes occurring within the classroom and defers to his lead teacher in most circumstances. This does not mean he disrespected or disliked his lead teacher; in fact the opposite was true—“She and I are very similar,” “She's very good” (January 21, 2013). It does suggest, though, that he was undergoing a level of socialization in order to “survive” this learning experience.

It was apparent that like Bryan, Adele had ideas about how teaching could be done differently based on university training and philosophical stances. Rather than teach the Lead 21 curriculum as it was established in the book, Adele saw herself doing something different:

Mine would be to do some of these projects where it says, ‘Have students create a poster,’

even as a group. Give them a big piece of paper and have each group...create a poster advertising, telling the world how they can protect the earth. They may not be that creative yet, but they could just make a poster with words...I think I would do that to get them to understand how we use and protect earth's treasures. Or go outside and look around. Do we see trash? Is that protecting the earth? Get involved with the theme more. Interact with it more such that...we're not just doing phoneme blending. (January 21, 2013).

While not willing to challenge her *moral position* as student teacher and speak up to her lead teacher, Adele was processing her actions and wanting to break from the conforming curriculum her lead teacher feels bound to follow.

The question then becomes, will both Bryan and Adele be able to retain their training in critical thinking, engaging instruction, and equitable practices—including flexible grouping, differentiation, and problem-based learning—through the student teaching process to implement within their own classrooms, or will the institutional pressures of canned curricula and standardized testing socialize these conceptions out of them? The other question to consider is that by Bryan and Adele's keeping their ideas to themselves in a desire to "not make waves" (Bryan interview, January 21, 2013), is their positioning denying their lead teachers an opportunity to rethink practices, learn new techniques, or find ways to help them more? By not questioning their *moral positions* as learners, do they deny their lead teachers the opportunity to position *themselves* as "learner" and "co-constructors" of curriculum development?

In this thematic strand, participants encountered more conflicts between their moral positions as subverted student teachers and learners and their desired positions as teachers enacting differentiated, engaging, flexible, and critical teaching. They brought with them significant teaching capital—strong core beliefs, student-centered instructional strategies, and implicit knowledge gained through their own observations and classroom experiences (Tomlinson, 1999). However, they often reverted to compliant positions, demonstrating potential socialization in an attempt to make sense of their physical and social environments (Allen, 2009) or survive the multifaceted pressures of the profession (Loughran, Brown & Doecke, 2001).

There were times, though, when they took up *first order positioning* in a more intentional manner than with the stops and starts storyline. In these circumstances, they deliberately and consciously "kept their mouths shut," "did not peep," or "did not cause waves" because they realized they personally had considerable risks at stake in terms of evaluations, rapport, and job opportunities if they spoke out against professionals or established organizational structures, such as curriculum and testing processes, within their schools. They were in the midst of their respective narrative landscapes' plotlines and often disempowered by program policy, hierarchical structures, and relegation to subverted roles.

But they also did not speak up much on their behalf. Perhaps this was because of fear of repercussions including not gaining a job; perhaps it was because socialization processes were occurring and they passively accepted their moral position in an attempt to survive the experience; or perhaps it was because the systems they entered assumed they were "blank" slates. The participants' vacillating and shifting positions demonstrate their attempts to reconcile the plotlines in which they find themselves with the storylines they have lived and those they desire to see in the future. As Maxwell quipped: "I want to finish strong because I definitely want a job here" (December 11, 2012).

Implications

Pedagogical Implications - Apprenticeship of Observation & Socialization

One of the key pedagogical implications of this study is teacher educators must realize preservice teachers model their pedagogical and professional behaviors after them. If we do not appreciate this reality, we are operating in and providing an impoverished pedagogy. All three participants clearly cited examples of teachers and professors who had made a profound impact on their teaching dispositions, both positively and negatively. For instance, Bryan stated: "I consider the teachers in the classes that I just do not look forward to for various reasons. I don't necessarily want to teach how I was taught, particularly in some classes" (November 7, 2012). Lortie's (1975) apprenticeship of observation model has been used to suggest good (and bad) teaching is implicitly transmitted to students who have had positive (or negative) experiences as learners, and subsequently shapes their future teaching practices (Mewborn & Tyminski, 2006). This was not just pertinent to the participants' K-12 experiences; they also drew heavily on the modeling, or lack thereof, they received from professors at the university level.

Teacher education programs are not just about the courses students take; they are also about how the courses are implemented and executed. It is not enough to talk about critical theories or teaching for diversity in an attempt to eliminate racial or socio-economic achievement gaps; teacher educators must demonstrate *how* to implement these concepts and how to navigate internal and external structures that exist within educational contexts. Margolis (2006) contends preservice teachers are less likely to "embody a transformative stance toward teaching" (p. 40) within their internships or even their own classrooms if they have not experienced one themselves. University classes are the most recent "apprenticeship" for aspiring teachers and carry significant sway in influencing preservice teachers' development.

Additional pedagogical implications of the study address the tension between the desire to implement equitable education and the socialization and survival processes experienced by preservice teachers. Student teachers taking up first order, moral positions, which tend to be subverted, gives them little voice in curricular, instructional, or pedagogical decision-making within their own preparation program or within their internship classrooms. This situation is aggravated by the fact that student teachers are often dropped in the midst of existing classroom and institutional plotlines. Therefore, they are *tacitly* and *morally* positioned in a dependent way, relying heavily on their mentor teachers to help them make sense of the complex context in which they are temporarily placed. Because of this dependency, they are fearful to speak up, speak out, or take up a more intentional position of challenge (Liggett, 2011; Margolis, 2006). They experience transition shock as they attempt to apply university learning in a multitude of ways simultaneously. This leaves them vulnerable to socialization processes that can make enactment of social justice and critical pedagogy difficult, especially when these concepts are in conflict with established routines, standards, and curriculum.

Theoretical Implications - Iterant Positioning

The key theoretical implication of this study involves *iterant positioning* (Morrison, 2013), which I am defining here as the process of *intentionally* positioning and repositioning individuals within similar and recursive contexts to practice and develop conceptual or skill construction. According to Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) and Tatum (2003), awareness of

societal inequities is only one of the two prongs necessary to generate true socially just pedagogy. The second prong is action. If teacher educators are to prepare preservice teachers to be transformative in order to close learning and achievement gaps, and if critical theory asks us to not only provide awareness but also opportunity for enactment, we must consider how preservice teachers need to be positioned within their university programs and their transitional stages to be empowered to implement critical pedagogy within their classrooms.

It is not enough for us to merely talk about what to do; preservice teachers need to be *intentionally positioned* to practice equitable educational practices in authentic ways for these conceptions to develop greater traction within new teachers' schemas and deeper internalization within their philosophies. If greater traction can be achieved, preservice teachers may be able to take up more intentional positions as implementers of equitable practices, and through second order positioning, challenge the status quo they may be confronted with. De Jong et. al. (2010) suggest transference is based on a constructivist process which is "actor-oriented" (p. 51) and dependent upon the degree to which an individual is able to accommodate new knowledge and skills within his/her existing repertoire. This means preservice teachers need to know and practice *how* to implement equitable practices and embed social justice conceptions into existing contexts. They need to be deliberately positioned to experience transformative education, perhaps almost to the point of habit, for real social change to occur. If preservice teachers are able to engage in iterant positioning, these paradigms are more likely to become part of the fabric of their thinking when they leave the university

While they do not enter their teaching programs and internships as empty vessels, preservice teachers are still learners who are developing skills, beliefs, and ideas. Just as younger students benefit from a spiral curriculum that introduces conceptions in a recursive manner, increasing complexity and abstraction with each new engagement (Bruner, 1960), so too can preservice teachers. Bruner (1960) suggests: "A curriculum as it develops should revisit the basic ideas repeatedly, building upon them until the student has grasped the full formal apparatus that goes with them" (p.13). This conception is not limited to elementary or secondary learners. Curricula of critical and democratic pedagogy, anti-deficit thinking, and social justice are complex, multifaceted, dynamic, and cannot be internalized within a single course or internship. It is therefore necessary for teacher education programs to consider ways preservice teachers can be iterantly positioned to observe, experience, and practice such curriculum in multiple ways. It may also be necessary to provide preservice teachers guidance in how to navigate their specific circumstances where reinforcement of the status quo, including practices that reify achievement gaps, may be the school or district culture.

Future Research and Closure

As this longitudinal study unfolds, I will continue to look at how preservice teachers learn to become teachers. What do preservice teachers implicitly learn through their apprenticeship of observation (Lortie, 1975) and explicitly gain through their university training regarding equitable education? To what degree can professors utilize the apprenticeship conception to instill educational beliefs, processes, and best practices such as differentiation, flexible grouping, and engaging literacy skills that reflect and reinforce what we know is necessary to achieve equitable education and possibly eliminate achievement gaps? What part of this learning do preservice teachers carry with them into their internships and professional teaching, and what portion do they hold on to for an extended period of time? What factors

hinder their ability to implement the best practices and philosophical core beliefs (anti-deficit thinking) that can reduce or eliminate student achievement gaps? These are all lenses I would like to consider as this study continues.

It is imperative we do not just teach preservice teachers to engage in critical, equitable, and democratic practices; we must ensure they are able to carry this teaching through their intern experiences and into the classroom. These practices should deepen and become enriched through implementation and experience, not dampened and eroded by socialization and survival. Deep conceptual knowledge requires embodied, authentic experiences. After all, if we want to address inequities with students, we must address how our newest and most vulnerable teachers are tacitly and intentionally positioned to work with them.

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