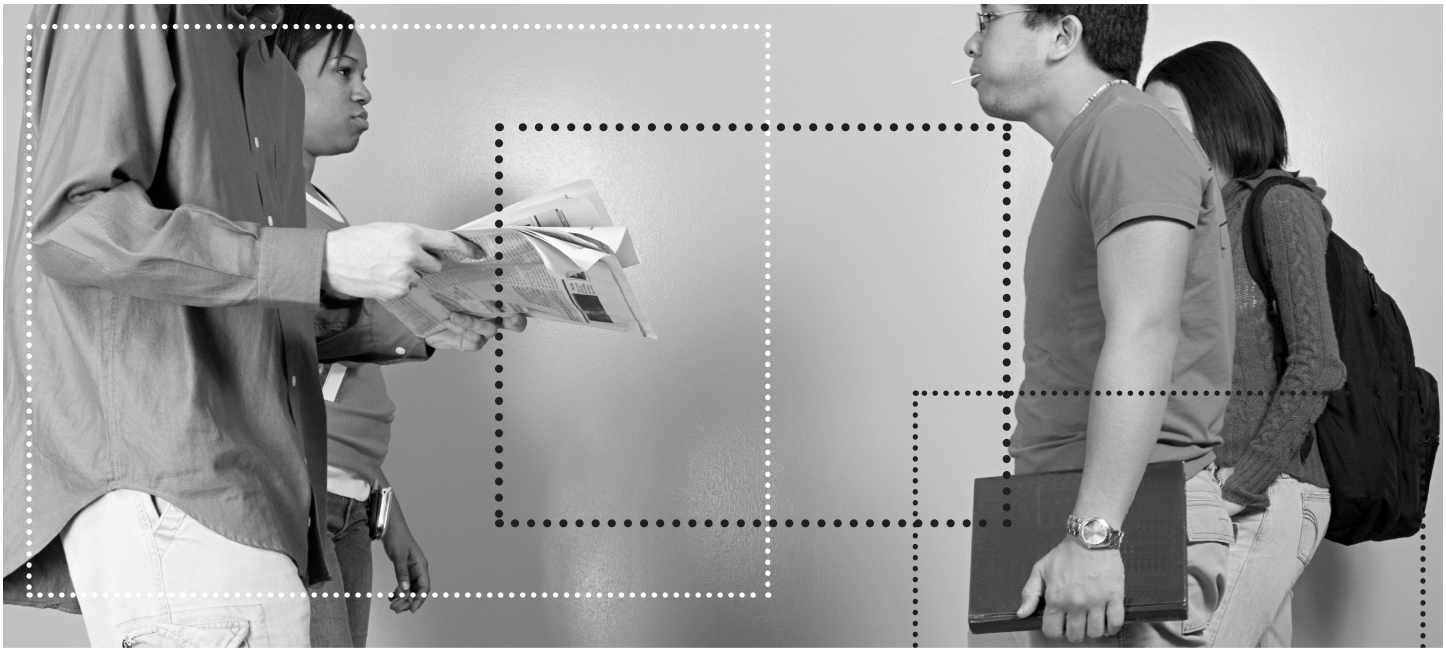

Using Critical Discourse Analysis to Understand Student Resistance to Diversity

Introduction

Diversity is a word used by many people with different meanings and interpretations. Diversity can refer to the existence of differences (e.g., "your interests are so diverse"), as coded language for race (e.g., "this is a very diverse neighborhood"), and sometimes as a tool for labeling conflict between groups (e.g., "there is a problem with diversity in this community"). The differences in the way we understand and use the word diversity pose unique challenges for those who do social justice education.[1] Students and educators may not share the same definition, connotation, or beliefs related to the idea of diversity. When educators attempt to teach content related to diversity, these factors become highly relevant.

The purpose of this article is to explore college student discourse and resistance regarding the concept of diversity during a required diversity workshop on campus. My intention is to illustrate how critical discourse analysis may provide practitioners deeper insight into student resistance in order to inform curriculum design or facilitation pedagogies. While some practitioners may be uncomfortable with such theories and analytical approaches, I believe that social justice educators should constantly seek out new ways to reflect upon our practice in order to increase our impact on student learning.

I have facilitated hundreds of workshops with college students as a social justice workshop facilitator in higher education during my career. While each workshop has had a different flavor and experience unique to itself and the students who participated, I have observed a common tension between the ways I talk about diversity versus how students define, make-meaning, and otherwise internalize this concept for themselves through their words and behaviors.

By the time students attend my workshops, they have had at least 18 years of lived experiences that shapes their understanding and use of diversity. Between the way diversity is talked about among family and friends, framed by popular media, and their own personal experiences, they have numerous influences on their ideas and feelings about diversity.

Sometimes there is alignment between our understandings of diversity; however, there is a divide in the ways we define and apply the term more often than not. When this divide is present, students can be open to the conversation or resistant to the workshop, which can negatively impact the learning experience.

The relationship between student resistance to social justice education and the discourse on diversity used by students and educators is an area worth exploring in order to improve my practice as a facilitator and how I create curriculum on social justice topics.

Methodology

I adopt an action research approach using tools for critical discourse analysis to explore the extent that student discourse regarding the concept of diversity is related to forms of student resistance to learning about diversity and social justice. While my experiences as a workshop facilitator across my career informs this research question, the specific site of analysis discussed here will be restricted to my experiences facilitating a required diversity workshop for all first-year students during the fall 2014 academic term.

I will begin by situating the context of the university setting and summarizing the content of the workshop, including how diversity is defined, framed, and used. Next, I will provide an overview of Griffin and Ouellett's (2007) insights into student resistance to social justice education and identify concrete examples of how this manifested during the workshops related to the concept of diversity. I will then explain and apply both Derrida's concept of différance as well as Gee's (2011) seven

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building blocks of critical discourse analysis to conduct an analysis of student resistance to understand how the dissonance in discourse may be operating.

Lastly, I will offer some conclusions about ways I might improve the specific workshop curriculum used with first-year students in light of these findings. My hope is that these results, which are useful for me, may also inspire others to consider ways in which a critical exploration of discourse can support efforts by social justice educators to enhance student learning about issues of diversity and social justice.

Diversity and the University Environment

The university's value for diversity is evidenced through the student body composition, as well as the number of academic and auxiliary departments which exist to promote learning and support and the explicit naming of diversity and social justice in its mission statement. While a definition of diversity is not explicitly named or shared across campus, it is often discussed related to social identities (specifically race, ethnicity, social class, gender, sexual orientation, and religion), the necessity of acknowledging systems of power, privilege, and oppression, as well as a commitment to social justice and social change.

These aspects of diversity inform the ways departments create educational opportunities for students. My department operationalizes diversity within this framework to encourage students to explore systems of privilege and oppression through their own personal diversity in order to increase critical consciousness and empathy which can lead to a commitment to social justice at an interpersonal, institutional and systemic level.

This large, urban, private, religiously-affiliated university is specifically proud of its demographic profile of students and commitment to diversity. While certainly a predominantly White institution, approximately 35% of its undergraduate students are students of color, 33% are first-generation college students, and 12% come from urban public schools. Given these demographics of the student body, there is a unique mixture of how race, social class, and urban/suburban experiences influence how students may understand the concept of diversity upon entering the university.

The Workshop Curriculum

All new students who enter in the fall are required to complete a freshman class (called the Chicago Quarter) with an attached first year seminar of various college readiness lessons (called the Common Hour). The Common Hour consists of eight required, standardized lesson plans, one of which is entitled Understanding Diversity and Social Justice. This lesson plan is designed to promote definitional knowledge of six core concepts (diversity, social identity, privilege, oppression, social justice, and allyship) and help students explore how these concepts are present in their lived experiences (for definitions of terms used in the workshop see Appendix A).

Specifically, diversity is defined as the differences between people reflected through personal experiences, historical legacies, and treatment based on social identities. The intention is for students to adopt this definition of diversity for three reasons. First, for students to stop using diversity as code for people of color (specifically non-White people) which can reinforce a racial divide between students on campus based on who is and is not "diverse." Second, for students to see themselves as diverse because they hold multiple social identities which by definition frame them as diverse. Third, for students to understand that diversity is a topic that they should be invested in understanding further because they are impacted by diversity because of their race or other social identities.

The intentional framing of diversity in this way strives to accomplish these three goals so that students advance in their college career more open to learning about diversity, with a greater appreciation of diversity, and in the hope that students from dominant groups (specifically White students) do not exempt themselves from

topics of diversity on the grounds that diversity does not apply to them.

The lesson plan attempts to accomplish these goals by defining the six concepts (including diversity) and illustrating their relationships to one another (e.g., to be an ally for social justice requires a person to be aware of and actively embrace their personal diversity across numerous social identities). During the workshop students complete a name-game activity to explore how diversity is connected to one's name stories, complete an identity wheel sheet to explore specific experiences, values, or traditions that relate to their different social identities, and then finally dialogue about the relationship between their identity wheels and the six core concept definitions.

Throughout the workshop, I emphasize how diversity refers to more than race, but also includes the wide range of social identities that we all have. I also emphasize that my unique experiences, histories, and ways of being treated related to my personal social identities as White, male, heterosexual, able-bodied, non-Christian and working class make me diverse.

I position myself during workshops to demonstrate that it is possible to view one as diverse while simultaneously identifying as a dominant group. The final takeaway I share at the end of the 60 minute workshop is that because we are all diverse, we all have a duty and obligation to embrace and explore our various social identities to meaningfully engage the campus community at large.

While on the surface this curriculum may be perceived to reinforce surface-level understanding that ignores difference because we all are different, the intention is to make explicit the relationship between students' personal diversity and their commitment to broader conversations about diversity and its relationship to concepts of power, privilege and oppression that they will engage in future required courses on campus.

The workshop curriculum draws from critical pedagogies and development theories in order to achieve this goal. A mixture of pedagogical frameworks including transformational education, experiential education, consciousness raising, and dialogical methods are employed through the intentional sequence of activities and ways students are invited to participate (Adams, 2007). These pedagogies are grounded within Bennett's (1998) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity and Hardiman and Jackson's (2007) Social Identity Development Model to consider ways to encourage students to progress in their ability to acknowledge differences related to identity as well as experiences of privilege and oppression.

During the implementation of the workshop curriculum, some students were quite active and participating fully in the dialogue. However, some students would have different reactions and ways of engaging the content and their peers that suggested types of resistance to the content.

Resistance to Social Justice Education

According to Griffin and Ouellett (2007), students may express a range of attitudes and behaviors when participating in social justice education experiences. These reactions can include dissonance, anger, immobilization, conversation, and acceptance. When students experience dissonance, their reactions can include claiming the status quo as natural; invalidating the experiences of oppressed groups; protecting members of privileged groups; positioning privileged experiences of pain as equal to those of oppressed groups; focusing on oppressed identities instead of one's privileged identities; invalidating the facilitator; generalizing personal experiences as facts; dominating discussion; or contributing to a hostile silence. Over the course of the fall term, students demonstrated some of these forms of resistance to the curriculum in ways that explicitly revolved around their understanding of diversity.

Sometimes students would talk about diversity in ways that reinforced the normalcy of the status quo. For example, a student would say, "I am not diverse, I am just White" or "I have no culture, I am White." Both of these statements share a common belief that Whiteness is normal and anything else is considered different (or diverse) from this norm. However, because Whiteness is viewed as the norm, its characteristics are not easily noticed by students. This inability to see their own privileged social identities also extended to other privileged identities such as masculinity (gender), heterosexuality (sexual orientation), and being able-bodied (ability status).

Often this type of response would arise when students were invited to complete the identity wheel activity where they were asked to write or draw things that symbolized or represented aspects and/or experiences related to their social identities. The only characteristics noticed are those that deviate from the norm—those which are not-White, not-male, not-heterosexual, or not-able-bodied, which therefore makes them diverse.

A second form of resistance occurred when students would only focus on their oppressed identities in any conversation about diversity. This form of resistance relates to the first form shared because it is a different way of normalizing the status quo. By focusing only on their oppressed identities, students would perpetuate the view of diversity as not related to privileged identities such as Whiteness or maleness. This type of resistance was noticed during the identity wheel activity when some students would only complete the task for their oppressed identities, leaving their other social identities without any words or pictures.

Another way this form of resistance was observed was through student comments in the post-activity dialogue. When asked to reflect on how they saw the core concepts taught to them in their identity wheels, most students talked about diversity using examples of their oppressed identities. Comments would include things like, "I see how I experienced oppression because I am gay" or "I noticed how diverse I was when I could not stop writing things about my Latino culture." Rarely would a student state how they experienced privilege through their Whiteness or maleness, and when said it was not often explicitly connected back to understanding themselves as diverse.

A third type of resistance observed relates to invalidating the experience of oppressed groups, specifically by minimizing diversity as a concept worth exploring. Occasionally students would make statements that reflected a belief that focusing on diversity was either problematic or unnecessary. Questions such as "Isn't talking about diversity only contributing to racism?" or "Why not just focus on our similarities?" both reflect a notion that diversity understood as difference is not productive. Other comments such as, "Talking about diversity is not needed because we are all adults who would know how to treat one another by now," speak to a belief that students do not need to learn about diversity.

It is important to note that these questions and comments were always voiced by a person with privileged social identities, particularly those who were either White or male. These comments and questions invalidate the experience of oppressed groups because diversity is seen as unnecessary for people from privileged groups, which can be viewed as a different way of saying, "this is not our problem." This re-affirms how privileged social identities are seen as normal and the struggles of oppressed people as abnormal and their responsibility alone to address.

Lastly, students' would sometimes demonstrate resistance by engaging in hostile silence. This form of resistance can be hard for some to observe because we cannot know why a student does not participate. However, during workshops some students would noticeably disengage by looking down, working on other things, or talking to their peers instead of participating in the workshop activities or student dialogue questions. Other times students would stare blankly back at me after I would pose a question.

I noticed that more often than not, it was students who appeared to be White who would engage in this type of deliberate non-participation. As a result, the conversations tended to include voices from students of color or other oppressed identities (which were normally claimed in their verbal contributions).

The silence could be attributed to many reasons—confusion, a genuine lack of awareness related to their own diversity of Whiteness, fear of being perceived as racist, not viewing the conversation as relevant or important, intimidation to engage with students of color... the list could go on. I believe that at the core of these reasons is the way diversity is viewed and understood by these students as separate from themselves.

Deconstruction and Critical Discourse Analysis of Diversity

While the above reflection offers statements about students' verbal and non-verbal behavior as forms of resistance, I believe that it is important to critically deconstruct these experiences. Through a critical exploration of these forms of resistance, we can more deeply understand how and why resistance may operate as it did during these workshops. Derrida's theory of deconstruction is useful in this endeavor. According to Derrida, language is never neutral but instead intentionally constructed.

The practice of deconstruction involves the exploration of the relationship between a whole and its parts, in this case the relationship between student resistance via their discourse and its significance related to how diversity is understood. Specifically, Derrida's understanding of différance (the idea that the meaning of a concept is created in its relationship between and against other concepts) is central to understanding what is at work in students' resistance (Dimitriadis & Kamberelis, 2006).

Critical discourse analysis provides a useful methodological tool by which to conduct this investigation into the relationship between discourse and reality (Phillips & Hardy, 2002). Specifically, it can provide a way to explore student understandings of diversity through their discourse and their displays of resistance during the workshop.

Gee (2011b) provides seven tools for critical discourse analysis which include significance, activities, identities, relationships, politics, connections and sign systems. The first tool of *significance* prompts us to ask what the emphasis is or what is most significant. This first tool helps distinguish what is of primary versus secondary importance in what is said. The second tool of *activities* (also referred to as practices) encourages us to ask how language is being used in the participation of the current social activity (e.g., participating in classroom discussion). This tool helps us consider how language operates and is influenced by the way we participate in social life.

The third tool of *identities* explores how the identities of the speaker influence both the way people use language and are seen or experienced using language. This tool reminds us that language simultaneously shapes and is shaped by our identities. The fourth tool of *relationships* encourages us to ask how language is used to build or maintain relationships with other people. Language can be used to intentionally (or unintentionally) strengthen or rupture relationships.

The fifth tool of *politics* refers to the way social goods (resources, positive assumptions, treatment) are distributed by way of language. This tool encourages us to explore the way language operates to create divisions between people which influence which social goods are shared with whom. The sixth tool of *connections* explores the way discourse creates or influences relationships between ideas and concepts. These connections can be explicit through the form and structure of the discourse, or implicit through association. The final tool of *sign systems* requires us to ask what types of knowledge are operating, whose types of knowledge are being validated, and how language is used to generate or validate specific claims to knowledge.

These tools for analysis can be used to explore two different types of meaning tasks present in discourse: utterance-type meaning or utterance-token meaning (Gee, 2011a). Utterance-token meaning refers to the situated or contextual meaning of an utterance. For example, if a politician says, "Chicago is one of the most diverse cities in the United States as evidenced by our neighborhoods" the utterance of diversity most likely refers to numerous ethnic communities across the city. However, if a tourist from a rural area says, "Chicago sure is really diverse" the utterance of diverse most likely refers to the increased presence of different races, specifically people of color.

When embarking on the utterance-token meaning task, one seeks to analyze the context in order to deduce the meaning. In this task, both the subject of the speaker and of the utterance is vital to determine the framing of the utterance and its meaning. As such, this is the type of meaning which is most relevant to our analysis of student resistance.

Analysis of Resistance Using Critical Discourse Analysis

For our purposes here, I will conduct an analysis of the utterance-token meaning for these forces of resistance using Gee's seven tools to provide a holistic analysis of discourse (each concept to be italicized for ease of reading). The *activity* is the same across all four types of resistance, with the facilitator initiating a dialogue among students about how they see themselves as diverse as a result of creating their own identity wheel.

This activity is situated within the broader context of a diversity workshop occurring within an academic class. Beyond this commonality, the remaining six tools of critical discourse analysis look different for each form of resistance. Additionally, Derrida's concept of différance will be vital to the analysis. In order to understand the ways each utterance is used, we must also explore the concepts that are differed and deferred within the analysis.

"I am not diverse, I am just White."

This utterance is an example of resistance which reinforces the status quo as normal. What is most *significant* to the student is the distinction between Whiteness and diversity as opposites of one another. The significance is clear because of how these two ideas are framed relative to one another when the student states explicitly what they are (i.e., White) and are not (i.e., diverse). The concept of diversity and Whiteness are important, but only in their différance. Saying either half of the utterance makes a distinct claim (i.e., "I am just White," "I am not diverse"); however, when students state the entire utterance together signifies that they are trying to convey the tension between these two ideas, thus making the distinction between Whiteness and diversity most significant.

The significance of the utterance suggests that *identity* is operating as a

binary between who is and is not diverse. Specifically, Whites are not diverse. The notion of différance therefore suggests that it is literally non-White people (i.e., people of color) who are diverse. However, the way the student claims being "just White" may also suggest that within this binary of identity Whiteness is viewed as normal—the point of comparison.

Such a binary view of identity normalizes Whiteness while possibly also differentiating all others as diverse and therefore abnormal. Here the *politics* of the utterance emerges that normalcy is a social good bestowed upon those who are White yet denied to people of color. To make this utterance is therefore also making a claim on normalcy by the student which simultaneously bestows abnormality upon people of color.

The *connections* between diversity, racial identity, and normalcy are important when considering the broader societal context that also frames Whiteness (understood as the absence of diversity) as normal. This perspective bestows privileges upon Whites in the distribution of goods and resources. The utterance therefore reinforces the status quo because of how it reflects these beliefs about the world they have internalized about themselves. In this way, the utterance reinforces hegemonic *sign systems* and knowledge of the world. They reinforce perspectives that diversity is abnormal which further obfuscates the ability for students to see themselves as diverse.

The resulting impact of this utterance on *relationships* also reinforces a racial division between students. Relationships between White students remain intact by maintaining a belief that being White simply is. Relationships between White students and students of color remain strained by the underlying significance of the utterance and related beliefs about normalcy it holds.

"I see how I experience oppression because I am gay."

This utterance is an example of resistance when students who share privileged social identities emphasize their oppressed identities with a noticeable lack of awareness of one's own privileged identities. While acknowledging one's oppressed identities is important and necessary for one's development, this type of utterance was noticed to occur by students who identified as White or male as a primary way to relate to diversity.

What is *significant* in this utterance is their oppressed identity is the focus of their reflection (i.e., "I experience oppression because I am gay") relative to their other privileged identities. We know this is significant because of how the student actively claims their identity (i.e., gay) related to oppression instead of privilege. The significance in this utterance is therefore shaped by the way *identity* operates relative to diversity. The student chooses to view and discuss their relationship to diversity primarily through the lens of their oppressed identity.

While not inherently problematic, such perspective may prohibit students from noticing or acknowledging the privilege they simultaneously have as well. It is possible students making this claim on an oppressed identity feel this is the "best" way to relate to diversity, which may in turn prohibit further reflection and development around their privileged identities.

Connections between students' view of themselves, the existence of privileged or oppressed social identities and the meaning of diversity are present given how this utterance was offered specifically after comments were solicited about the ways students see their own diversity during the workshop. Deconstructing these connections illuminate how différance exists between oppression and privilege that parallels a popular view in society of diversity (experiencing oppression) and normalcy (non-diversity and the lack of experiencing oppression, which is the experience of privilege).

As such, privilege serves to reinforce what is assumed to be normative in society and therefore not diverse. The existence of oppressed status may obfuscate or even seem to negate one's privileged status which serves as the only gateway to seeing oneself as diverse. In this way, diversity is viewed as unique to people who experience oppression versus the normal experiences of those who experience privilege, supporting further the idea that what is significant in the utterance is the primacy of one's oppressed social identity.

The type of resistance present suggests the *politics* of this utterance relate to a perception that claiming an oppressed social identity is somehow valuable related to a discourse on diversity. It is possible that students (particularly white students) feel that positioning their relationship to diversity via oppressed experiences gives them legitimacy to enter the conversation. It may also influence how *relationships* can be brokered through claiming solidarity by way of similar experiences (i.e., "I experience oppression [too]").

Students may be able to use this claim as a way to understand the experiences of others and cultivate relationships with students who claim similar or different oppressed identities. However, it can also be used to negate others' experience that do not match up with their own because they feel they now have a legitimate place from which to speak.

This utterance may serve to validate hegemonic *sign systems* and knowledge that diminish the need to examine one's own privileged identities as part of one's own diversity. By highlighting one's oppressed experiences as a source of knowledge related to diversity, it continues to connect oppression and diversity in ways that replicate a perspective that privilege and "not being diverse" is normal. This rationale is why conspicuously positioning one's oppressed identities as a way to enter conversations on diversity is concerning.

"Isn't talking about diversity only contributing to racism?"

This utterance is an example of resistance which invalidates the experiences of oppressed groups. On the surface to some it may sound innocent; however, a closer analysis suggests otherwise. What is *significant* in this utterance is the unnamed yet present belief within the utterance—that focusing on diversity is problematic (i.e., naming racial differences contributes to racism).

This belief suggests that the act of naming racialized experiences which may be different is problematic and attempts to silence those voices and experiences from being heard. The utterance reflects *connections* embedded in the belief between acknowledgement of diversity and both inequality as a social phenomenon (i.e., talking about diversity contributes to racism) as well as the creation of conflict.

Looking closer at the relationship between the concepts of diversity and conflict suggests another parallel binary view; differences lead to conflict, sameness leads to harmony. As such, the utterance creates an interesting relationship between the acknowledgement of diversity and oppression, suggesting that it is recognition of diversity that is problematic, not the ways in which people understand differences for themselves.

Within this context the *politics* of the utterance refers to the distribution of social comfort (e.g., lack of conflict) as a social good. However, this utterance is offered by students from privileged social identities, especially white students. As such, it may follow that the path for social comfort is to focus on sameness. On the contrary, for students of color such discourse may not only fail to create social comfort, but

contribute to anxiety or isolation as elements of their identity are not welcomed for acknowledgment.

The idea that conflict is caused by acknowledging differences validates hegemonic *sign systems* related to views on neutrality and conflict, reinforcing the silence around diversity and difference as not worth the trouble such topics create in and of themselves (for example, the adage of never talking about religion or politics as too divisive). Instead, focusing on similarities through a denial of diversity is suggested as a way to keep the peace, which also serves to maintain current systems of inequality. *Identity* operates as something to be actively ignored, especially experiences of oppression that create conflict with one's view of the world.

This type of view on identity influences a perspective that looking at one's identities is therefore problematic if not at the very least undesirable. If exploration of oppressed identities can cause conflict, exploration of privileged identities may not even be within one's scope of possibilities. The resulting impact on *relationship* cultivation and maintenance rests upon topics that would not lead to conflict (e.g., focusing on similarities, not talking about diversity or identity unless they are the same), or a desire to maintain a homogenous social circle that would reinforce this worldview.

Hostile Silence

This utterance is a unique example of resistance relative to the others because it is a non-verbal utterance (specifically, an active lack of verbal participation) by students who tend to identify as White and/or male. When situated in the context of classroom dialogue, there are connections that can be made between the perception of diversity as relevant to oneself, the social identities of students, the experience of oppression or privilege related to these social identities, and the choice to verbally participate.

If we consider that students have two choices, to verbally participate or not, each choice is connected to the way in which *identity* operates. Verbal participation suggests the student sees diversity as relevant to themselves through at least one of their social identities. Therefore, to not verbally participate suggests the student does not see diversity as relevant to themselves regardless of their social identities.

While this assumption would not be fair to make unilaterally, if we consider that students who identify as White and/or male tend to be more likely than students of color and/or female students to verbally participate, it can be suggested that there is a relationship between privileged (i.e., White, male) and oppressed (i.e., people of color, women) social identities and seeing oneself as having something to contribute to the conversation on diversity.

Understanding these connections between the choice of this non-verbal utterance and the social identities of the students suggests that what is *significant* is the underlying belief that students from privileged social identities do not need to verbally participate in conversations on diversity—perhaps because they have nothing to contribute (because of their social identities) or it is not viewed as relevant and worth their time.

The choice to not verbally participate as a type of utterance is a *political* choice in that it creates a social good related to the choice of the participant. Choosing to not verbally participate emphasizes the right to make a choice to not participate. This good can be shared by other White, male students that is mutually understood (i.e., White, male students have no reason to contribute to the conversation). Because this choice is connected to social identity, it is denied to students of color and women because there would be an expectation for them to verbally participate (a perceived denial of choice) to maintain the conversation because of how identity is operating.

As such, the *sign systems* of this utterance validate the hegemonic belief that privileged groups have nothing to contribute to conversations on diversity. Further, if students from privileged groups do not verbally participate, their views can never be challenged or questioned, which also reinforce hegemonic worldviews. However, the impact of this utterance on *relationships* can create strain between privileged and oppressed groups. It is likely that students will notice who is and is not verbally participating in the conversation. At the same time, shared silence among privileged groups can become a source of mutual discomfort which can be later talked about in ways that reinforce hegemonic beliefs held by these students.

Insights for Facilitation and Curriculum Design

While critical discourse analysis is usually done on larger data sets to make a robust case, I believe that these short phrases are worthy of exploration due to their frequent and repeated use by various students while I facilitated this workshop curriculum during the fall 2014 term. I believe this analysis offers useful insight for thinking differently about curriculum design and facilitation preparation in order to address the deeper meaning students have which lie underneath these utterances.

These insights are offered as a practitioner based in the specific context of my own practice. As such, these insights may be useful for other practitioners in so far as they may resonate with the experiences of others, yet should not be assumed to be generalizable beyond the context from which they are derived.

A common theme across the forms of resistance was a connection between diversity and students' notions that it applies only to oppressed groups, specifically *not* to people who are White and/or male. As such, it may be useful to address internalized beliefs about diversity and for who it is and is not related. This goal could be achieved by having students explore specific aspects of multiple social identities (including their privileged identities) and related experiences that directly map onto the definition of diversity provided.

Explicit attention to students' privileged identities could help focus attention on these elements of diversity that are overlooked or assumed to be commonplace. This may require the identification of concrete categories of diversity, such as traditions and rites of passage or history of one's family, as a way to explicitly link one's own experiences to components of diversity. It may also be useful to consider naming ways that such types of reflection and exploration are useful for students to view such effort as worthwhile.

Another theme that emerged across the forms of resistance was the ways in which différance operates across concepts which creates binaries and divisions. Perhaps the use of a concept map that visually shows the ways different concepts (e.g., sameness/difference & diversity, privilege/oppression, harmony/conflict, normal/abnormal) relate to social identity can be an effective way to explicitly name the ideas and feelings held and experienced by students when engaging in intrapersonal and interpersonal interactions related to diversity.

It is possible that making these ideas and feelings explicit can contribute to greater awareness about one's one relationship to diversity, lead to dialogue about the ways these binaries create barriers in relationships, and generate openness to further exploration and dialogue.

These first two ideas revolve around content in the curriculum, whereas a third idea for activity revisions could involve reframing the way diversity is talked about as a new type of normal through intentional practice during the college experience. This

framing could address the connections students may have between normalcy and harmony (i.e., lack of conflict) through intentional pair and share time with other students explicitly about a privileged social identity and concrete components of diversity previously suggested.

Students could be asked to identify for themselves how these connect to the definition of diversity, which facilitators could explicitly highlight as well. Additionally, debrief questions could center around the ways these conversations felt as opposed to potential pre-conceived notions that talking about diversity is inherently tied to conflict and discomfort, but actually has the potential to feel good when done well.

One final idea relates to the training of facilitators who lead this workshop curriculum is how they can leverage their own stories and experiences regarding their privileged social identities to make new connections between diversity and social identity and the ability to talk openly about these topics. Facilitators could be encouraged to openly identify with their privileged social identities and talk about those identities as appropriate during the workshops. They could be encouraged to reflect upon concrete examples of how talking openly about their diversity, especially their privileged identities and experiences, has led to positive interactions and enriched social experiences. If facilitators serve as role-models in how to talk about themselves as diverse in light of their privileged social identities, they can also be asked to highlight when other students do as well and encourage these types of reflections.

With all of these ideas for workshop curriculum revisions, it is important to explicitly note that these ideas are offered with the goal of addressing resistance to diversity harbored by students from privileged social identities, particularly those who identify as White and/or male. As such, it could be argued that these revisions cater to students with privilege and create another education experience centered on dominant groups. These claims are valid and important, and as such I will not attempt to negate them.

However, I will simultaneously offer the belief that not addressing these forms of resistance held by privileged groups serves to perpetuate hegemonic sign systems and forms of knowledge identified by the analysis provided. These suggestions are provided as ways to think critically about how to change such sign systems through educational workshops as an intervention. In this way, the goal is not to minimize the needs of oppressed students in these workshops, but instead to provide all students with the skills and knowledge to have more productive conversations about diversity that contributes to social justice in the long term.

Conclusion

The use of critical discourse analysis provided a range of insights that I intend to use as I revise workshop curriculum, prepare myself for future facilitation, and train others to facilitate these workshops. However, it is important to highlight the value of using critical discourse analysis as a practitioner. This systematic approach to exploring student resistance is useful to provide a new way of learning about students' beliefs and perspectives in order to engage students in learning. Some facilitators experience such forms of resistance and are either triggered by them, which results in a state of facilitation paralysis, or they or write off the experience simply as "the way things are."

However, a deeper exploration into these forms of resistance offers insight on how to address them in ways that can advance facilitator impact. Using Derrida's process of deconstruction, specifically exploring the way différance occurs in each form of resistance, provides a way to make logical inferences about student participation that can be used to advance the learning process.

Overall, using theoretical tools to guide practitioner reflections on our practice is a way to keep ourselves engaged in the battle against hegemonic worldviews and practices in the pursuit of higher learning for social justice.

Note

[1] I adopt Bell's (2007) definition of social justice education that utilizes interactive and experiential pedagogies to develop necessary skills to analyze and understand social difference and oppressioon in society. Further reflections on the growth of social justice as a contested concept is provided by Adams, Bell, and Griffin (2007) in the preface of their book.

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Appendix A
Definitions of Concepts

Diversity: The differences between people reflected through personal experiences, historical legacies and treatment which are based on social identities.

Social Identity: The way a person defines themselves relative to socio-cultural group memberships (ex: race, social class, gender, faith/religion, ability status, sexual orientation).

Privilege: Refers to unearned benefits, rights and access granted to people based on their socio-cultural group membership; not based on anything they personally have done or accomplished. Operates on an individual, institutional and societal level that supports the perpetuation of social inequality.

Oppression: Refers to benefits, rights and access purposefully denied to people based on their socio-cultural group membership; not based on anything they personally have or have not done or accomplished. Oppression operates on an individual, institutional and societal level that supports the perpetuation of social inequality.

Social Justice: Both a process and a goal that leads to equal participation of all groups in society along with equitable distribution of resources which promotes physical and psychological safety.

Ally: A person who stands up to social injustice by promoting social change at the interpersonal, institutional, and systemic levels. Often an ally is a member of a privileged social identity group.