

Pre-Service Teachers Write about Diversity: A Metaphor Analysis

Pamela U. Brown, *Oklahoma State University*
Sue Christian Parsons, *Oklahoma State University*
Virginia Worley, *Oklahoma State University*

Abstract

This study, set in the teacher education program of a large, Midwestern public university, examines metaphors used by elementary pre-service teachers in writing about diversity and teaching in diverse settings with diverse populations. Using metaphor analysis methodology grounded in Lakoff and Johnson's work on conceptual metaphor and working through the lenses of constructivism and critical theory, we as researchers take notice that though students' words apparently mirror those of their professors, the meanings are often misapplied or missing altogether. Although at first glance our results may seem critical of the pre-service teachers, in actuality, we seek to uncover the tensions inherent in teaching "for" diversity. Metaphors identified include *diversity as an object of value; diversity as a guest in the inn; diversity as a construction project; teacher as taxonomist, archaeologist, and/or connoisseur; teacher as voyeur; and student as voyeur.*

Introduction

Assuming the arrogance of certainty, some teacher educators believe that in teaching about diversity, in encouraging students to engage in perspective taking, and in sharing case studies designed to deepen student thinking, they are doing what they can to ensure that pre-service teachers adopt the popular stance, the "proper" way of thinking about diversity. It is far more uncomfortable to mine the tensions of what teacher educators do and what they leave undone in an effort to "teach for social justice" as "student diversity in schools becomes the norm, not the excep-

tion” (Darling-Hammond, French, & Garcia-Lopez, 2002, p. 1). Teacher educators should examine carefully the underlying meaning of any goal for pre-service teachers asking them “to bring to the forefront issues of power, politics, equity, and equality” or to raise “questions about the relationship between schools and the social and cultural reproduction of social classes, gender roles, and racial and ethnic prejudice” (Adams, Shea, Liston, & Deever, 1998, p. ix). Teacher educators who assert the need for pre-service teachers to embrace diversity so specifically are in fact telling pre-service teachers what they must believe; the effect of this expectation actually silences diverse viewpoints. How can teacher educators balance “the paradox of social justice and diversity” (Blackwell, Futrell, & Imig, 2003, p. 359) if they demand students to assimilate our ideas of diversity?

In this study, set in the teacher education program of a large, Midwestern public university, the researchers studied attitudes of elementary pre-service teachers toward diversity and teaching in diverse settings with diverse populations. To examine these attitudes, researchers collected and analyzed diversity essays required of all elementary pre-service teachers as part of a state-mandated portfolio process. The university identifies four core concepts—diversity, integration, professionalism and life-long learning—intended to guide teacher education curricula. Written reflections on these core concepts, typically 500-750 words long, are required as part of the portfolio process that encompasses all teacher education coursework. Students write essays focused on their beliefs and understandings regarding each of the core concepts. The due date for the essays on the four core concepts is set many months in advance, and each student chooses how much time to spend preparing the essays which are written and polished outside of classes. The prompt for the diversity essay appears in the university’s professional education portfolio handbook as follows: “Define and explain your understanding of this concept and how it relates to teaching and learning.”

For this study, we collected and analyzed diversity essays elementary pre-service teachers submitted, using metaphor analysis to interpret the students’ understandings, stances, and attitudes about diversity. Drawing from constructivism and critical theory, we as researchers were especially engaged when noticing that though students’ words apparently mirror those of their professors, the meanings are often misapplied or missing altogether. Although at first glance our results may seem critical of the pre-service teachers, in actuality, we seek to uncover the tensions inherent in teaching “for” diversity (Ayers, Hunt, & Quinn, 1998; Darling-Hammond, et al., 2002; Greene, Ayers, & Miller, 1998).

Research Stance

Critical theory and constructivism serve as the lenses through which the researchers examine metaphors used by pre-service teachers in writing about diversity. Both lenses inform our thinking and practice as teacher educators, and

we see clear connections between the two. Constructivism, the philosophy that knowledge is individually built through an ongoing process of cognitive dissonance, accommodation, and assimilation, is “based on work in psychology, philosophy, and anthropology” and “describes knowledge as temporary, developmental, nonobjective, internally constructed, and socially and culturally mediated” (Fosnot, 1996a, p. ix). The term *constructivism* is most commonly used by early childhood educators to describe how young children build understanding; however, it is increasingly used to describe adult learning. Fosnot (1996b), for example, calls for constructivist teaching in higher education: “Teacher education needs to begin with these traditional beliefs [held by pre-service teachers] and subsequently challenge them through activity, reflection, and discourse in both coursework and field work throughout the duration of the program” (p. 206).

Similarly, critical theory encourages educators to reject the existence of an objective reality in an effort to uncover intent and purposes, particularly in terms of issues of power. Kincheloe and Steinberg (1995) call for critical theory in teacher education:

If teachers fail to develop their theoretical insights, their ability to distinguish and help their students distinguish between “truth” and “social construction” will be undermined. Such differentiation involves the ability to think about thinking. In such a process all “facts” must be questioned; such questioning means that students and teachers must explore the origin of what is known. (p. 8)

As researchers employing metaphor analysis to examine pre-service teachers’ understandings about diversity, we frame our thinking in what we see as the shared space between constructivism and critical theory—a space in which questioning assumptions is the heart of both teaching and learning. Teacher educators teaching toward diversity may teach towards transformation, rightness, and justice (critical theory) while honoring the process of thinking and constructing knowledge associated with constructivism.

The Teacher Educator’s Dilemma

As “student diversity in schools becomes the norm, not the exception” (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2002, p. 1), teacher educators sometimes believe naively that in teaching *about* diversity, they are educating pre-service teachers to teach diverse populations of students within diverse settings. Teacher educators may fail to recognize that teaching *about* diversity, teaching *for* diversity, teaching *how* to be attentive to diversity, and ultimately teaching *towards* social justice are different teaching acts, and that these teaching acts do not necessarily include teaching pre-service teachers to construct their own knowledge, beliefs, and values concerning diversity and social justice. Teaching for diversity, teaching how to be attentive to diversity, and teaching towards social justice at least call for teacher educators to

mine the tensions of what they do and what they leave undone before bringing “to the forefront issues of power, politics, equity, and equality,” and raising “questions about the [relation] between schools and the social and cultural reproduction of social classes, gender roles, [sexual orientation], and racial and ethnic prejudice” (Adams, Shea, Liston, & Deever, 1998, p. ix).

As teacher educators “teach for social justice” (Darling-Hammond, et al., 2002, p. 1) and use inquiry-based strategies to encourage students’ learning to think for themselves, to determine their own beliefs and values, and to discern why they embrace such beliefs and values, the researchers see a possible conflict. Teaching towards transformation—towards social justice—may at some point mean teacher educators *prescribing* rather than students *constructing* what is right and just. Should teacher educators expect pre-service teachers to adopt their professors’ ideas about diversity and social justice or to learn to think and problem-solve for themselves? Do teacher educators want pre-service teachers to construct their own ideas about diversity, their own sense of social justice, and their own ideas and strategies for teaching these things regardless of the outcome? What happens when social justice is the dominant discourse rather than a marginal position?

Methodology: Metaphor Analysis

Defining Metaphor

Lakoff and Johnson (1980) have deepened the linguistic definition of metaphor to examine how metaphor plays a central role in human ways of knowing. The concept of metaphor as a way of knowing as opposed to metaphor as a purely linguistic device (Moser, 2000; Slingerland, 2004) reflects the constructivist premise that as human beings we can only understand the new in terms of the known. Metaphor is a short hand way of demonstrating constructed reality; once voiced, it illuminates certain aspects of a concept while hiding other aspects (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Metaphor is also a tool for creating reality; once noted and voiced, it becomes a reality in itself, directing future meaning construction.

Metaphor as Analytical Tool

Metaphor analysis, a method of discourse analysis, stems largely from the work of Lakoff and Johnson (1980, 1999) in which they explore the role that metaphor plays in human cognition. The premise behind this methodology is that by examining the metaphors that human beings use in describing their experiences and beliefs, researchers can begin to uncover meanings beneath those the writer or speaker directly and consciously articulates.

Moser (2000) argues that metaphor analysis is useful for accessing tacit knowledge and for exploring “social and cultural processes of understanding” (p. 5), while Bullough and Gitlin (1995) stress the power of metaphor analysis to provide insight into assumptions that both “characterize a concept and drive

action” (Bullough, 1991, p. 51). By conducting this study, we hope to contribute to existing scholarly research in education stemming from metaphor analysis, work including the phenomenon of college student as learner (Bozlk, 2002), pre-service teachers’ conceptions of the teaching act (Bullough, 1991; Bullough & Gitlin, 1995), teacher attrition (Sumsion, 2002), school experiences with meeting mandates (Wallace, 2001), and meanings that students and faculty members attach to grades (Goulden & Griffin, 1995).

Students’ making metaphor is significant. The metaphors we analyzed here were created as elementary pre-service teachers strove to convey and represent their knowledge, beliefs, and understandings. As pre-service teachers wrote these essays, they sought, consciously or unconsciously, to reconcile their own worldviews with those they believed were expected of them as they prepared for several months of student teaching internship in PK-12 schools. Metaphor analysis is uniquely suited to exploring texts created in such a complex, negotiated process, providing an accessible way to examine the “interaction of self and context, which is the complex and contradictory process of role negotiation” (Bullough & Gitlin, 1995, p. 51). Since “metaphor provides a deeper and richer understanding of concepts than does literal language” (Goulden & Griffin, 1995, p. 114), metaphor analysis is a productive approach for this study because we seek to uncover students’ understandings of their places in a diverse world, understandings that have powerful implications for their future actions as teachers and for the actions of teacher educators.

Metaphor in Education: Marking Boundaries

Commonly used educational metaphors include such terms as “accountability,” “core curriculum,” “mainstreaming,” and “excellence,” none of which has a precise literal meaning within education. All are metaphorical expressions tying educational phenomena or stances to the significance these words hold outside the field. Taylor (1984) asserts, “In educational, as in other forms of discourse, it is a matter of no little importance that the implications of the metaphors we employ or accept or make explicit, and the ways in which they structure our thought, and even our action, are better understood” (p. 8).

According to Bullough and Gitlin (1995), part of becoming a teacher involves accepting the metaphors that define a teaching community. Metaphors “mark off boundaries and define conditions of membership” (Taylor, 1984, p. 17). The portfolio assignment serves as a gateway into the profession—one must successfully navigate the portfolio assignment to be eligible for certification—so part of the challenge these students face is communicating understandings that “fit” with the gatekeepers’ (most immediately, the professors doing the scoring) discourse. Moreover, since the pre-service teachers’ assigned task is to define diversity and give specific examples from education and other experience to support their definitions, the essay writing task itself, by definition, is built upon marking boundaries, for determining what to include and exclude; what “counts” as

diversity and what does not “count” are integral to the defining process. The act of defining may compel the use of specific metaphors.

Data Collection and Analysis

Mandated professional portfolio essays written by 100 senior-level elementary pre-service teachers provided data. Data for socio-economic status and geographic region of pre-service teachers’ high schools are unavailable. At the university, 84% of elementary pre-service teachers are White, 13% Native American, 3% African American, 81% female, and 19% male. All males in this study are White. With student consent, essays were collected from portfolios, numbered for identification purposes and coded with program/year. The three researchers, teacher educators in the areas of curriculum studies, literacy education, and secondary English, each read the essays independently and sought to identify metaphors used by the essay authors. After this first round of reading and coding, the three researchers met to discuss convergent and divergent ideas about identified metaphors and to refine shared categories. For the next round of reading and coding, each researcher again worked independently, highlighting and coding metaphorical text and working to identify, categorize, and name categories of metaphors. Through repeating this process several times, researchers were able to identify, define, and name/label central metaphors represented in the data. Throughout the process, the researchers used Lakoff and Johnson’s (1980) descriptions as a guide in identifying metaphors.

Though metaphor analysis is itself hermeneutic in nature since it depends upon text interpretation (Reynolds, 1989), the researchers continually returned to the raw data—the pre-service teachers’ own words—examining those words rather than their own interpretations and meanings (Low, 1999). Simply put, the three researchers sought to understand what the metaphors revealed about pre-service teachers’ thinking concerning diversity.

Findings

Teacher educators often assume shared understandings among themselves and their students about the complex term *diversity*. Through examining the metaphors used by pre-service teachers in writing about diversity, this study finds that any such assumed agreement is faulty. The words pre-service teachers write as they wrestle with issues of diversity are important; as Grumet (1988) states, “Metaphor matters” (p. 4).

Several central metaphors appear in the pre-service teachers’ essays on diversity including, *diversity as an object of value*; *diversity as a guest in the inn*; *diversity as a construction project*; *teacher as taxonomist, archaeologist, and/or connoisseur*; *teacher as voyeur*; and *student as voyeur* (see Figure 1). These metaphors at times overlap, and sometimes several metaphors appear in a single

statement. In this section, we define each metaphor and give examples from the pre-service teachers' essays, bold-facing the words that evoke the association.

Diversity as an object of value is characterized by such terms as “asset,” “value,” “enrich,” and “possess.” Pre-service teachers apparently use words borrowed from faculty members, but these borrowed words seem to be an uncomfortable fit for them. They write:

- ◆ *Diversity can truly become an **asset**.*
- ◆ *I will teach my children to **value** the individual differences that everyone possesses.*
- ◆ *Learner, age, gender, ethnic, cultural, socio-economic status, physical, and language abilities are all types of diversities that must be . . . **valued** in students.*
- ◆ *. . . these diversities must be **valued** in the classroom.*
- ◆ *Their differences **enriched** the lives of other students in the school.*
- ◆ *The classroom environment and the lives of students can be **enriched** through diversity.*
- ◆ *Teachers must **account** for the differences in their classrooms.*

Diversity as a guest in the inn describes teachers providing a setting in which diverse students interrelate with one another. Diversity (personified) moves in, and

Figure 1. Diversity Metaphors Used by Pre-service Teachers

Diversity Metaphor	Language Examples
Diversity as <i>object of value</i>	Asset, value, valued, enriched
Diversity as <i>guest in the inn</i>	Accommodated, modify, give, meet, provide for . . . needs, including and treating, individualizing, providing assistance
Diversity as <i>construction project</i>	Tool, breaking down, material items, use, form bonds, barriers, utilized, crating, create, supports
Teacher as detached scientist: ◆ <i>Taxonomist</i>	Multiple forms, learning style, types of diversity must be identified, different types, similarities, labeled
◆ <i>Archaeologist</i>	Field experiences, explore, found, difference in her culture compared to mine
◆ <i>Connoisseur</i>	Cultivated, appreciated, take joy, appreciation
Teacher as <i>voyeur</i>	Observe, perspectives to view from, focus
Student as <i>voyeur</i>	Learn to regard their importance, opportunity to view

teachers must change what they do to meet its needs. Doing so is a challenge, requiring effort and, on occasion, demanding sacrifices. Meeting diversity's needs may involve danger and, therefore, causes fear on the part of the pre-service teacher. In this metaphor, the teacher is somewhat distant, as an innkeeper is—watching and taking care of guests while staying out of their interactions. Pre-service teachers write:

- ◆ *Diversity must be **accommodated**.*
- ◆ *I must **modify** and **accommodate** for diversity.*
- ◆ *By **accommodating** for age and gender diversity, students can truly be **given** the opportunity to succeed.*
- ◆ *Children in wheel chairs or have other disabilities must be **accommodated** for...*
- ◆ *I need to **meet** my students' diverse needs; I need to **provide** for my students' **needs**.*
- ◆ *Finding a balance between **including and treating** all children equally and **individualizing** their education to **meet their needs** is one of the **hardest tasks** for a teacher.*
- ◆ *It is important that educators **provide assistance** for those with diverse needs.*

Diversity as a construction project pictures teachers building an atmosphere to accept/accommodate/celebrate diversity. For these pre-service teachers, considering diversity begins with the teacher, not with the students. Only when the teacher chooses to acknowledge the presence of diversity is it recognized in the classroom milieu. In this metaphor, there is little sense of children appreciating diversity unless the teacher engineers a proper activity or atmosphere. Diversity is a structure with components that may be built in a faulty manner or with faulty parts (stereotypes, for example); faulty structures must be torn down. Teachers may be tools used to build structures or to break down faulty structures. The individual components do not always fit well with each other, which complicates the building process. Teachers as builders must exert effort to force ill-fitting parts together. Similarly, diversity becomes a tool that teachers use, an adhesive to form bonds, a structural support, even a non-descript object or presence pre-service teachers say they will use and teach their students to use. Pre-service teachers write:

- ◆ *By being aware of their differences and special needs, I will be able to provide the necessary **tools** for learning.*
- ◆ *Teachers become a valuable **tool** in **breaking down** stereotypes and helping children see beyond **material items**.*
- ◆ *As a teacher, I desire to **use** diversity to **form bonds** instead of **barriers**.*
- ◆ *... children will learn to **use** the qualities possessed by their classmates.*
- ◆ *Diversity is a core concept that should ... be **utilized** in the classroom.*
- ◆ *It is my hope that I will **utilize** diversity in numerous fashions when I begin teaching.*

- ◆ . . . I comment on the importance of **creating** a classroom community in which children not only accept diversity but **utilize** its presence.
- ◆ It is my personal goal to **use** the diversity in my classroom to **create** well-rounded, kind citizens who are equipped to serve as leaders in diverse communities.
- ◆ I must . . . find new and exciting ways to **illustrate** to students how and why diversity fits into everyday life.
- ◆ Diversity **supports** my goals; diversity **supports** my philosophy of education.

Teacher as taxonomist, archaeologist, and/or connoisseur is related to diversity as an object of value, but emphasizes instead the role of the teacher. The teacher can be characterized as one who identifies, classifies, and names diversity (taxonomist); one who explores, finds, and/or uncovers diversity (archaeologist); or one who collects items and ideas representing diversity as valuable objects (connoisseur). These related metaphors all reveal the teacher as a scientific observer and gatherer of information, suggesting that the teacher may not be actively involved but rather behaves as if watching a Discovery channel special—interested and choosing to engage, but without an interactive role.

Taxonomist

Identifying, classifying, and naming in order to distinguish among group members are tasks one does to understand similarities and differences and, ultimately, to define. It is important to note that the essay assignment itself positioned students to create these defining metaphors, determining what might be included and not included in diversity and identifying particular types of diversity—all part of the process involved in defining (Johannessen, Kahn & Walter, 1982).

Pre-service teachers write:

- ◆ Diversity comes in **multiple forms** . . .
- ◆ By identifying the different learning styles early in the school year, the teacher . . . can modify and adapt lessons throughout the year to ensure that each student **despite their learning style** is able to learn in ways meaningful to them.
- ◆ Learner, age, gender, ethnic, cultural, socio-economic status, physical, and language abilities are all **types of diversities that must be identified** . . . in students.
- ◆ These examples of working with **different types of diversity** will definitely enhance my abilities as a teacher.
- ◆ Though **similarities between** students of various ethnic and cultural backgrounds often **outweigh** the differences among them . . .
- ◆ By **identifying** and appreciating students with different physical abilities, diversity can truly become an asset. (Note: three metaphor categories are represented in this sentence: taxonomist, connoisseur, and object of value.)

◆ *Too often students are afraid to be themselves in school settings, for fear of being labeled “different.”*

◆ *I feel that [special needs students] should be **included** in regular classrooms...*

Archaeologist

The archaeologist’s task involves exploring and locating the site, discovering and uncovering artifacts, inscriptions, and monuments, and identifying, naming/labeling, and classifying what they have discovered and uncovered. Like the taxonomist, the archaeologist works inductively, examining and classifying individual items in order to understand the larger context. While reading pre-service teachers’ essays, we repeatedly sensed that students saw themselves on a sort of archaeological dig, looking to discover, uncover and/or find diversity which they could then identify, classify, and name/label as they attempted to make sense of the concept itself and what the concept means when no longer an abstraction but a presence in their classrooms. Just as the nature of the diversity essay assignment may have moved students toward creating taxonomy metaphors, the widespread use of archaeology as extended metaphor in teacher education—our students have “field experiences” and must furnish “artifacts” for their portfolios—may have inspired this category of metaphors.

◆ *In my **field experiences**, I have had a chance to **explore** . . . [diversity’s] impact in the classroom.*

◆ *I truly believe that diversity is a wonderful quality **found** in all classrooms.*

◆ *In my Wednesday class, learner, age, gender, ethnic, cultural, and socio-economic status diversity **were found**.*

◆ *I **found** . . . that the gender differences were beneficial to our sessions.*

◆ *I learned a lot about diversity from this little girl. She showed me **difference** in her culture compared to mine.*

Connoisseur

Literally meaning “knower,” a connoisseur is a person especially competent to pass critical judgments in an art, especially one of the fine arts, or in matters of taste. Associated with being and/or becoming a connoisseur is the idea of cultivating a taste for something and appreciating it for itself, for the pleasure of seeing, tasting, touching, hearing, and/or smelling it. The connoisseur tends to appreciate beauty for its own sake rather than for its usefulness. Although one may not typically think of a connoisseur alongside a taxonomist or archaeologist, the critical judgments he/she passes involve the same defining processes of identifying, naming/labeling, and classifying in which the taxonomist and archaeologist engage. Pre-service teachers write:

- ◆ *[Diversity] . . . must be **cultivated** and **appreciated** in the classroom.*
- ◆ *I have **grown** to not only accept this diversity but to **appreciate** its presence.*
- ◆ *Diversity . . . promotes **appreciating** oneself as well as others.*
- ◆ *The students . . . learned to **appreciate** each other for the differences that existed in the classroom.*
- ◆ *I learned to **appreciate** differences and to **take joy** in what they offer.*
- ◆ *Children should be taught at an early age that differences should be **appreciated**... I realize that this **appreciation** is something I must model in the classroom.*

Teacher as voyeur illustrates pre-service teachers viewing themselves as observers of diversity, rather than as part of it. This metaphor suggests teachers observing, distanced or hidden from their students, rather than engaging and participating with them. Teacher as voyeur reflects pre-service teachers' identifying themselves as observers of diversity, as other than those they observe. This voyeur metaphor perhaps reflects these pre-service teachers' invisible and unrecognized privilege (Rothenburg, 2000). Pre-service teachers write:

- ◆ *In my field experiences, I have had a chance . . . to **observe** [diversity's] impact in the classroom.*
- ◆ *I had the chance to **observe** diversity in a realistic setting and to understand how to help them.*
- ◆ *Being the same is boring, and offers no other **perspectives to view from**.*
- ◆ *Lessons that **focus** on incorporating these different diversities together can enable the teacher to reach each student. (Note personification of lessons, further distancing the teacher and objectifying the students and "diversities.")*
- ◆ *These types of diversity are often **overlooked**.*

Students as voyeurs (teacher-taught) brings us full circle as the researchers note that these pre-service teachers seem to see themselves providing the setting for their students to themselves become voyeurs who will view/gaze upon/regard diversity in order to learn of its "importance" and its "greatness." Here the researchers notice a sort of domino effect—teacher educators' words *about* recognizing diversity, valuing diversity, learning *about* diversity, appreciating diversity, and such standard education requirements as field experience/observation translate into pre-service teachers' observing, identifying, naming/labeling, classifying, and perhaps teaching their own students to do the same. Part of this domino effect may begin when we as teacher educators teach *about* diversity, itself an act of voyeurism, rather than *for* diversity, and *how* to be attentive to diversity. "Education is about . . . finding the tools and the strengths to participate fully, even to change some of what you find" (Ayers, 2000, p. 1). In schools at all levels, learners have the right to learn in

ways that honor their cultural and experiential ways of knowing and the right to opportunities to explore and expand into other ways of experiencing the world. Our failure to offer opportunities to learn, explore, and expand begins a ripple effect moving from us to our pre-service teachers and from them to their students as they move in the world outside school. Pre-service teachers write:

◆ *[My] students must also understand the different types of diversities so that they can learn to **regard** their importance in the classroom.*

◆ *... students should have the opportunity to **view** the genuine greatness associated with difference.*

Discussion and Implications: Diversity, Discourse, and Power

The generalizability of this study, as is the case with all narrative research, is appropriate only to the extent the findings resonate with pre-service teachers, teacher educators, and others who read the study. The researchers recognize and acknowledge the complexities through which participants in teacher education communally construct perspectives on diversity, and that these perspectives profoundly affect the lives of school children. As pre-service teachers write about diversity, they create metaphors that both illuminate and solidify their understandings. As teacher educators (and parents, religious leaders, and classroom teachers) talk about diverse populations, the metaphors they construct and use pass into the conceptual structures of learners where, in these new minds, they may be adopted and, by the very nature of meaning construction, reconceptualized. In writing about their own beliefs regarding diversity, students who are trying to get the right answer are likely to recycle metaphorical constructions they have experienced from interacting with those in power, namely, their professors. Furthermore, researchers highlighting and interpreting students' metaphors, as we do in this study, must openly admit that in doing so, we give those metaphors, understood through our own perspectives, new power, new legs. By the very act of noting and naming metaphors, we add to their strength.

Heath's (1983) landmark ethnography revealed and described the potential dissonance between the way a child sees the world as a result of private, at-home experiences and the expected knowledge in the public arena of the school. Diversity is an "issue" in schooling in large part because there is a central discourse (Gee, 1996) with attendant concepts, viewpoints, and values that are recognized, embraced, and used for conducting power plays within schools—the discourse of the dominant culture. For children whose ways of being and knowing vary from the dominant culture of the classroom, the already daunting task of mastering content and processes is complicated significantly (Enciso, 2003). Analyzing the discourse surrounding diversity is important to teacher education because diversity matters profoundly in the lives of children in schools.

According to Gee (1996), human beings in society use varied discourses that allow them to operate effectively within various settings:

Primary Discourses are those to which people are apprenticed early in life during their primary socialization as members of particular families within their sociocultural settings...Secondary Discourses are those to which people are apprenticed as part of their socializations within the various local, state, and national groups and institutions outside early home and peer-group socialization. (p. 137)

In order to gain entry and be accepted into the teaching profession (as represented in their experience largely by faculty), each pre-service teachers must master a secondary discourse which may be in tension with his/her primary discourse. Although certain central characteristics, including beliefs, will grant them entry into the ranks of pre-service teachers, teacher educators often fail to reveal the details openly and directly to themselves, much less to their students. The students in PK-12 schools—the “others” that the predominately white, middle-class university students observe, accommodate, and reconstruct—do not appear to share the same ethnicity, social class, or ability as the pre-service teachers. Perhaps, many of pre-service teachers choose the field precisely because they have come to identify themselves as “fitting” with school. If so, a call from their professors to challenge the *status quo* by recognizing and assigning value to the existence of difference may be particularly threatening. Teacher educators must remain respectful of learners and the learning process, engaging both pre-service teachers and faculty members in open and critical examination of social justice discourses in teacher education.

Recommendations

Research recommendations focus on the practice of teacher educators. When teacher educators fail to acknowledge clearly the characteristics (including beliefs and values) of the dominant discourse to themselves and to their students, they leave their students without a clear vision of what is expected of them. Therefore, teacher educators should begin by deconstructing their own stances, perhaps through analyzing their own assumptions and their own metaphors. It is arrogant and probably misguided to assume the presence of a shared stance toward diversity among faculty members, let alone among students. Even more arrogant is the assumption that pre-service teachers are somehow inferior because they demonstrate through their written essays an inability to know as their professors (claim to) know.

A second recommendation is that critical literacy (Edelsky, 1996; Friere & Macedo, 1987; Luke & Freebody, 1997; Shor & Peri, 1999) needs to be central to teacher education practice and a primary component of the curricula teacher educators encourage pre-service teachers to take into PK-12 classrooms. We also must keep in the forefront of teacher education practice the understanding that emancipatory learning happens best in supportive, respectful environments. Pro-

fessors and pre-service teachers should engage in dialogue openly, sharing our truest selves and heeding the value of student voice. Greene (1998) proposes,

There is the need to pay heed to what is being said, what is trying to break out of the silences, where the critique is—and the pain. What is there that people find they hold in common? What social visions do they share . . . And then there is the demand to talk about feasible action, what can be done to heal, to equalize, to repair . . . (p. 156)

A third recommendation is to support intellectual risk-taking among teacher education faculty and pre-service teachers in order to foster knowledge construction and the development of moral imagination. The metaphors used by the pre-service teachers in this study seem to indicate a willingness to consider the unfamiliar and the uncomfortable, but often do not indicate a sense of support for thinking beyond, for the kind of thinking needed in order to construct knowledge. Many avenues to promote such intellectual risk-taking exist. Reflexive metaphor analysis, engaging pre-service teachers and faculty members in communal examination of their own metaphors, may hold particular power. Such examination encourages an interchange between the conventional and the new, inviting heightened awareness and critical examination of faculty and student stances and opening the door to subtle shifts and even paradigmatic changes that may alter engagements in classroom and community. Teacher education faculty must recognize that exploring one's own beliefs is sensitive, personal, and risky. What we expect of pre-service teachers we should demand of ourselves.

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About the Authors

Pamela U. Brown, Ed.D., is Associate Professor of Curriculum Studies at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Sue Christian Parsons, Ph.D., is Associate Professor of Elementary Education/Literacy at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Virginia Worley, Ph.D., is Assistant Professor of English Education at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma.