

Transforming Multicultural Teacher Education through Participatory Theatre

An Arts-Based Approach to Ethnographic Action Research

by

Masakazu Mitsumura

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Graduate Supervisory Committee:

Joseph Tobin, Chair
Johnny Saldaña
Pamela Sterling

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ABSTRACT

Multivariate forms of social oppression, such as racism, linguisticism, and heterosexism, are manifested in schools that, as part of our communities, reflect the societal stratification and structural inequalities of a larger society. Teacher educators engaged in multicultural education are responsible for providing pre-service teachers with opportunities to critically examine the intricacies of cultural diversity in U.S. classrooms, developing critical multicultural dispositions. What are effective pedagogical strategies that encourage pre-service teachers to develop such critical multicultural practices? The researcher has found that participatory theatre, including Boalian theatre games, Forum Theatre, Image Theatre, and ethnodrama, can be a transformative, emancipatory pedagogical tool to engage students in critical and creative exploration of cultural diversity. The primary objective of this study is to illustrate how pre-service teachers develop critical consciousness through attending the researcher's multicultural teacher education classroom, which was designed at the nexus of Freirean and Boalian critical (performance) pedagogy, followed by analyzing his teaching practice, which focuses mainly on participatory theatre exercises. This doctoral dissertation is an ethnographic documentary of the researcher's striving to challenge the hegemonic status quo in teacher education by liberating himself from the anti-dialogical banking educator, and encouraging his students to liberate themselves as passive consumers of education. Such reflection may provide teacher educators with examples of counter-hegemonic (artistic) practice for social change relating to their own work.

To Dr. Daisaku Ikeda

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|------|
| CHAPTER | |
| 1 CHALLENGE | 1 |
| Introduction..... | 1 |
| Changing Demographics..... | 3 |
| Multicultural Education | 5 |
| Racial Hegemony in Multicultural Teacher Education..... | 6 |
| Purpose of the Study | 10 |
| Significance of the Study | 11 |
| Methods..... | 12 |
| Research Design | 12 |
| Data Collection..... | 15 |
| Data Collection Procedure | 18 |
| Data Analysis | 20 |
| Conceptual Framework for Data Analysis | 25 |
| Course Design and Structure..... | 27 |
| Course Design | 27 |
| Critical Pedagogy | 30 |
| Course Structure..... | 32 |
| Organization of the Dissertation..... | 36 |
| 2 DENIAL | 39 |
| Race and Racial Identity..... | 39 |

| CHAPTER | Page |
|--|------|
| “Everyone is of color.” | 39 |
| “My skin color is not White.” | 41 |
| Boalian Theatre Games and Racial Awareness..... | 42 |
| “I should not hide my ethnicity.” | 47 |
| Racial Stereotypes..... | 48 |
| “My race is the race that makes fun of other races the most.” | 48 |
| “Let the Disney alone.” | 54 |
| 3 RESISTANCE..... | 64 |
| “‘The learning that takes place in your class is priceless.’ .. | 64 |
| Racism..... | 67 |
| “‘It is racism that keeps the concept of race alive.’ | 67 |
| Silence as a Form of Discourse..... | 71 |
| Boalian Theatre Games and Trust Building | 73 |
| Power and Privilege | 80 |
| Privilege Walk..... | 81 |
| White Privilege..... | 90 |
| Boalian Theatre Games and Power Dynamics..... | 94 |
| 4 NEGOTIATION..... | 97 |
| A Class Divided | 98 |
| The Minoritized/Disprivileged Project..... | 101 |
| Dysconscious Racism | 111 |

| CHAPTER | Page |
|--|------------|
| Affirmative Action | 114 |
| Values Clarification..... | 116 |
| Egalitarian Democracy..... | 117 |
| Meritocratic Individualism..... | 122 |
| Ideological Hegemony | 126 |
| Final Thoughts..... | 129 |
| 5 IMAGINATION..... | 132 |
| Linguicism | 132 |
| Joanne | 135 |
| Body Awareness..... | 140 |
| Bilingual Education..... | 142 |
| Ethnodrama | 148 |
| What is Ethnodrama? | 149 |
| Ethnodrama in Action | 150 |
| Ethnodramatic Interviewing Process | 152 |
| Ethnodramatic Writing..... | 157 |
| Ethnodrama Playscript | 158 |
| Ethnodrama Personal Reflection | 165 |
| Ethnodramatic Exploration..... | 166 |
| Ethnodramatic Script Analysis | 167 |
| Empathy Development..... | 168 |
| Ideological De/Reconstruction | 170 |

| CHAPTER | Page |
|---|------|
| 6 COURAGE..... | 174 |
| Heterosexism..... | 174 |
| Walk the Line | 176 |
| Heterosexual Privilege | 179 |
| Jamey | 182 |
| Matthew | 184 |
| Homophobic Bullying and Teacher’s Responsibility | 185 |
| Forum Theatre..... | 188 |
| Forum Theatre Play..... | 189 |
| Forum Theatre and Educational Potential | 195 |
| Student Reaction to Forum Theatre..... | 200 |
| Bullying..... | 207 |
| Definition and Characteristics of Bullying..... | 209 |
| Image Theatre..... | 211 |
| Newspaper Theatre..... | 214 |
| 7 CHANGE..... | 221 |
| Participatory Pedagogy..... | 221 |
| Democratic Environment | 227 |
| Challenging Student Passivity | 229 |
| Dialogic Community Creation via Participatory Theatre . | 232 |
| Problem-Posing Pedagogy via Participatory Theatre | 234 |

| CHAPTER | Page |
|--|------|
| Counter-Hegemonic Knowledge Production via Participatory Theatre | 235 |
| Empathy Development via Participatory Theatre | 236 |
| The Role of Teacher Educators | 237 |
| Change..... | 240 |
| Limitations of the Study..... | 243 |
| Recommendation for Further Research | 245 |
| REFERENCES | 247 |
| APPENDIX | |
| A ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL | 263 |

Chapter 1

CHALLENGE

Introduction

This dissertation tells the story of my attempts to use participatory theatre as the central pedagogical tool to foreground anti-racism in my teaching of undergraduate multicultural education classes to pre-service teachers. It includes reflections on the decisions I made as a teacher in these classes, analyses of how my students responded to this radical curriculum, and how they changed over the course of a semester.

My teaching of this course grew out of my passion and determination to contributing to ending racism. I want to eliminate racism, and all other forms of social oppression and injustice that dehumanize victims or subordinate groups. The biggest challenge that I have faced as a teacher of teachers-to-be is that racism is often invisible. In my multicultural education classes, over several semesters, I have heard groups of students say “Racism no longer exists.” “We all have an equal opportunity and racial differences no longer matter.” “We need to stop talking about race if we ever want to seek a racism-free society.”

Talking about race and racism in a classroom setting is a challenging task. Many students want to avoid it, especially in a racially mixed setting. Discussions of race and racism often create messy relationships between student and teacher as well as among students, because these discussions inevitably evoke a range of emotions and memories. And yet as Jamie, one of the students in my multicultural education class argues, there is much to be gained by such discussions:

A discussion on racism could potentially lead to a heated battle between opposing viewpoints, which is why most avoid it. However, discussing the matter is the only way to bring about an end to, or at least minimize, racism. This in turn leads to less prejudice in children. By discussing this topic, we are providing children with the tools to understand and talk about race, to help them grow and become more socially skilled, rather than perpetuate a cycle of discomfort and intolerance of difference.

As a teacher educator committed to anti-racist education, in my undergraduate classes, I challenged the silence on race and racism and invited my students to do the same. This doctoral dissertation is about the journey that my students and I took together over the course of a semester. Through my teaching practice, I strove to teach prospective teachers anti-racist pedagogy in the hope that they will challenge and break the cycle of social oppression and injustice when they become teachers.

I write this doctoral dissertation for educators engaged in multicultural/anti-oppressive education in anticipation of the transformation of multicultural teacher education. Haberman (1991) notes that in order to bring about change in a multicultural teacher education classroom, a teacher educator must

a) be fully aware of their students' perceptions, b) have powerful activities and experiences to offer students, and c) be willing and able to dialogue with students on an in-depth level over a sustained period in an effort to affect their perceptions (p. 282).

Through this doctoral dissertation, I intend to provide readers with (1) pedagogical efforts to better understand my students and their worldviews; (2) participatory theatre exercises and experiences that I offered my students; and (3) pedagogical strategies to engage my students in a creative and critical dialogical exploration of racism, linguicism, and heterosexism.

Changing Demographics

Student demographics in U.S. public schools are becoming increasingly racially and ethnically heterogeneous. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2007a), 66% of public school children are White, 15% Hispanic, 12% African American, 4% Asian or Pacific Islander, and 1% Native American or Alaskan; more than thirty years ago, in 1980, White student population was 80% of the total public school enrollment, followed by African American population at 12%, Hispanic population at 6%, and Asian or Pacific Islander population at less than 2%. It is predicted that by 2020, nearly half of the elementary and secondary school population will comprise students of color (Gollnick & Chinn, 2010). Regardless of the drastically changing demographic patterns in U.S. schools, the teaching force nationwide still remains mono-racial and monolithic; that is, 84 % of U.S. public elementary and secondary school teachers are White (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007b).

There is a pattern of disparity between White students and students of color in terms of school dropout rates and academic achievements. High school dropout rates by race/ethnicity are as follows: White 5.3%; African American 8.4%; Native American/Alaskan 19.3%; and Hispanic 21.4%. Regarding literary

achievements, 30% of African American, Native American, and Hispanic students scored below basic on English proficiency levels in both 4th and 8th grade reading levels, whereas less than 10% of White and Asian counterparts scored below basic proficiency. In addition, it is reported that more Hispanic students are eligible for free/reduced lunch: 76% at 4th grade and 72% at 8th grade, in comparison with White students: 29% at 4th grade and 24% at 8th grade (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007c).

Ambe (2006) argues that lower academic achievements and higher school dropout rates in students of color stem from “the limited or fragmented representation of these minority cultures . . . in schools that represent mostly white mainstream cultures” (p. 693). Weiler (1998) follows:

Those children whose subcultural knowledge most nearly matches the valued knowledge of the educational system will tend to be most successful. . . . Thus the children of the dominant classes appear to be successful in school because of their natural intelligence, whereas in reality they rise because they *already know* what is valued (p. 10).

Because of this, students from marginalized groups are most likely to face difficulty adjusting to the school environment, where they relentlessly undergo exclusion, isolation, powerlessness, and hopelessness. They can barely identify their own cultures in school curricula and practices, causing psychosomatic pressure on them to discard these cultures, which are thought as “inferior,” in order to be more successful. The hopes and future of students of color are denied by a school system that demotivates them and devalues their cultures.

Non-minority teachers' lack of understanding of culturally diverse students and their cultural backgrounds manifests itself in school. As McCall (1995) notes: "When teachers are not knowledgeable and appreciative of the needs and backgrounds of students of color, they hinder their learning" (p. 341). Mainstream teachers are most likely to recognize that the primary purpose of public education is to assimilate students from diverse cultural communities into the dominant culture, thereby "maintain[ing] the status-quo by imposing their values and standards on subordinate groups of students" (Ambe, 2006, p. 693). U.S. schools reflect structural inequalities and systemic marginalization in the larger American society that maintain the subordination of racial 'Others.' Culturally diverse students, therefore, have long been left out and excluded from U.S. schools' agendas, eventually becoming *invisible* in its school system.

Multicultural Education

Multicultural education, which emerged during the 1980s, aims to provide prospective and in-service teachers with necessary knowledge and skills to meet the educational needs of students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Howard & Aleman, 2008; Souto-Manning, 2010). It also aims to challenge racism and other forms of social oppression manifested in school and society. Multicultural education, as a comprehensive school reform, involves holistic transformation in the entire school environment, which should not be limited to curricular changes (Nieto, 1994; Banks & Banks, 2004). Nieto and Bode (2008) write that "multicultural education permeates schools' curriculum and instructional strategies as well as the interactions among teachers, students, and families and

the very way that schools conceptualize the nature of teaching and learning” (Nieto & Bode, 2008, p. 44). Nieto (1994) notes that school structures, policies, curricula, instructional materials, and pedagogical strategies in a monocultural school environment are predominantly representative of the dominant culture, and cultural differences can only be accepted if they are assimilated into it. On the other hand, in a multicultural school environment, more students can identify themselves as well as their cultures in the school curricula and practices, accordingly feeling less demotivated about their *invisibility*. At the same time, in a multicultural school “many differences that students and their families represent are embraced and accepted as legitimate vehicles for learning and these are then extended” (Nieto, 1994, p. 14). Nieto and Bode (2008) conclude that “nothing is more divisive than a monocultural education, because such an education excludes so many people and perspectives from schools’ curricula and pedagogy” (p. 43), a monocultural education in which students from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse groups experience cultural discontinuities between their cultures and the dominant school culture (Gaitan, 2006). Gibson and Ogbu (1991) recognize such cultural discontinuities as one of the main factors that may cause the persistent disproportionate school failure of students of color.

Racial Hegemony in Multicultural Teacher Education

Despite the fact that there are a myriad of students from diverse racial, linguistic, and cultural backgrounds who are at-risk in schools in terms of their academic performance and achievement as well as dropout rates, teacher education programs have struggled to produce prospective teacher candidates who

are well prepared to confront such challenges. Conventional pedagogies prevalent in the current teacher education programs have failed to respond to the changing needs of the culturally diverse student populations (Jenks, Lee, & Kanpol, 2001; Cochran-Smith, 2003; Marx, 2004; Ambe, 2006). Multicultural education, as a comprehensive educational reform movement, has been expected to bring about change in both teacher education and K-12 classrooms, yet little has changed over the past three decades (Cochran-Smith, 2003; Nieto & Bode, 2008). This crucial phenomenon, sadly enough, can be seen in our teacher education program, in which a multicultural teacher education course is being implemented simply as an add-on course, isolated and disconnected from other courses in the rest of the program. This “marginalized approach” to multicultural education has been pervasive in U.S. teacher education programs (Zeichner, 1992; LaDuke, 2009). There are few teacher education programs that adopt an interdisciplinary approach to multicultural/anti-racist education and that realize “a genuine infusion of multicultural content and perspectives in the entire curriculum” (Rego & Nieto, 2000, p. 417).

Although the teacher education program I have been working in requires a multicultural education course, it was not designed to examine racism, power, and privilege or to challenge the systemic, institutional nature of racism and provide pre-service teacher candidates with opportunities to explore liberatory approaches to empowering minority students. Multicultural teacher education courses have traditionally been designed for predominantly white pre-service teachers who wish to work in culturally homogeneous schools in which there will mostly be

children like themselves (Zeichner, 1992), and to prepare them to “manage the problems” (Sleeter & Bernal, 2004, p. 249) that culturally diverse students may bring to their future classrooms. As a result, most multicultural education offered in teacher preparation programs falls short of the goals of multicultural education in its purest form (Ambe, 2006).

The predominantly white faculty members in colleges of education, according to Ambe’s (2006) observation, still teach pre-service teachers, the majority of whom come from the same racial and socioeconomic backgrounds, that is, middle-class, monolingual European American, who have “deeply embedded notions of deficit thinking” (p. 693) regarding the education of minority students. This consequently obstructs pre-service teachers’ recognition of cultural diversity as funds of knowledge that are “a valuable resource to be extended and preserved” (Cochran-Smith, 2003, p. 11). Such attitudinal patterns manifest themselves in the general K-12 school climate as a consequence of prospective teachers unconsciously carrying them into their classrooms. In this way, the status quo in (teacher) education has been perpetuated. Jay (2003) claims that the current multicultural education program, contrary to its fundamental purposes, has become a “hegemonic device” (p. 3) that secures the dominant ideology. Jay (2003) continues:

Multicultural education becomes incorporated as a terrain on which those in power attempt to negotiate the “oppositional voices” (Storey, 1998) of multiculturalist and multicultural educators, securing for themselves a continued position of leadership. Multiculturalists’ “oppositional voices”

are effectively channeled into “ideological safe harbors,” where they cannot disrupt the system. In this way, the process of hegemony is sustained. Consequently, I argue that multicultural education has become a victim of this process of hegemony (p. 6).

Racial hegemony in teacher education programs produces prospective teachers who enter and exit a multicultural education course “unchanged, often reinforcing their stereotypical perceptions of self and others” (Brown, 2004, p. 325). Gomez’s (1993) observation also supports this crucial opinion, noting that no significant differences can be found in pre-service teachers who took multicultural education programs and those who did not, in terms of their perceptions, attitudes, and beliefs about cultural diversity. As a result, in-service teachers’ lack of understanding and tolerance of the cultures of students from diverse communities, which can partially be derived from non-intervention in pre-service teacher education, hinders the academic success of culturally diverse children (Delpit, 1995; Ambe, 2006). I have found that there is a hegemonic cycle of cultural reproduction that links teacher education programs to K-12 classrooms, and teacher educators tend to contribute to the perpetuation of racial hegemony in the entire American education system. I recognize this cyclical process as one of the primary factors that supports a persistent educational phenomenon by which children of color have long been left behind in U.S. schools.

Ahlquist (1991), however, argues that both teacher educators and pre-service teachers are victims of the American education system because they have not received education that is “empowering, antiracist, problem-posing, or

liberatory” (p. 169) in their professional training at either the undergraduate and graduate level. A more transformative pedagogy, therefore, is necessary for today and future pre-service teacher education programs in order to break the cycle of hegemony in teacher education. Otherwise, teacher education programs will keep producing teaching forces that contribute to the legitimization and perpetuation of racial inequalities in a so-called “post-racial” America. It is our utmost responsibility to challenge the status quo in teacher education, so that we may be able to bring change in K-12 classrooms.

Purpose of the Study

This doctoral dissertation research operated as the nexus of Arts-Based Educational Research (ABER) and ethnographic action research for which the goals were twofold: (1) to document and examine the trajectory of the cognitive process of pre-service teachers’ development of critical consciousness in multicultural practice through attending my multicultural pre-service teacher education course, and (2) analyze the effectiveness of pedagogical strategies that I incorporated in my teaching practice. This doctoral dissertation is an ethnographic documentary sharing the lived experiences of students and their teacher, challenging traditional styles of learning/teaching—what Paulo Freire (1970) in his *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* refers to as the banking concept of education—through incorporating participatory theatre techniques influenced largely by Augusto Boal’s (1985) *Theatre of the Oppressed*.

In this doctoral dissertation research, I pursued the following questions: In what way can participatory theatre be a transformative pedagogical tool for pre-

service teachers to develop critical consciousness in multicultural practice? In what way can participatory theatre be a transformative pedagogical tool to help student and teacher collaboratively challenge the status quo in teacher education, liberating the students from “passive consumers of education” and the teacher from “the anti-dialogical banking educator” (Freire, 1970)? These questions originally guided this doctoral dissertation study and were based on my strong desire as a Freire and Boal advocate to examine and analyze the inherent power and possibilities of Freirean and Boalian critical (performance) pedagogy, which can be a counter-hegemonic practice to bring about positive change in teacher education programs. This doctoral dissertation is my synthesis of the answers to the above stated questions that I have had as a teacher educator engaged in multicultural education.

Significance of the Study

Assaf and Battle (2008) note that “studies of teacher educators—what they are like, what they do, and what they think—are typically overlooked in teacher education research” (p. 95). In this doctoral dissertation research, I shared what I felt (personal reflective thought), what I thought (interpretation and analysis), what I did (pedagogical strategies and instructional practices), and what I believed (teaching beliefs). Hollins (1990) also argues that most teacher education research studies rely heavily on self-reports based on teachers-as-researchers’ *etic* analysis without providing “detailed descriptions . . . that illuminate the live[d] reality of [teachers’] efforts” (p. 163). In this doctoral dissertation, therefore, I attempted to document the lived experiences of my multicultural education classroom,

focusing on daily teaching efforts to engage pre-service teachers in critical conversations on racism, linguicism, and heterosexism, and presented pre-service teacher candidates' *emic* voices and perspectives in participatory (theatre) activities. In addition, there has been little research published, which juxtaposes multicultural teacher education and participatory theatre or *Theatre of the Oppressed*. I attempted to present the detailed descriptions of the participatory theatre works that I incorporated in my teaching practice, and the impact of participatory theatre experiences on pre-service teachers. Lastly, I agree with anti-racist scholars who argue that there is a paucity of multicultural pre-service teacher education research from the perspectives of teachers of color, and that the voices of researchers of color are often marginalized in the dominant authority (Ladson-Billings, 1996; Sleeter, 2001a; Furman, 2008). I hope my perspective as a teacher of color provides a unique contribution to a multicultural teacher education research field and paradigm.

Methods

Research Design

This doctoral dissertation research, by its own nature, is action research in which the researcher as a teacher educator is “committed to *taking action* and *effecting positive educational change*” (Mills, 2011, p. 3) on the lives of students in his teacher education classroom. In this doctoral dissertation, more specifically, I as a teacher-as-researcher engaged in multicultural teacher education illustrate my pedagogical theories, approaches, and practices and examine how they affected pre-service teachers and their perspectives, assumptions, and values, in

the hope that such pedagogical and research efforts will contribute to not only the improvement of a multicultural teacher education research field and paradigm, but also the betterment of K-12 education.

I first defined this doctoral dissertation research as Arts-Based Educational Research (ABER); however, this may be debatable. According to Barone and Eisner (2006), in order to define ABER, two criteria should be applied:

First, arts-based research is engaged in for a purpose often associated with artistic activity: arts-based research is meant to enhance perspectives pertaining to certain human activities. For ABER, those activities are educational in character. Second, arts-based research is defined by the presence of certain aesthetic qualities or *design elements* that infuse the inquiry process and the research “text” (p. 96).

My doctoral dissertation research meets the first criterion in the sense that it aims to enhance pre-service teachers’ perspectives and awareness in multicultural practice through the implementation of artistic activity. More specifically, I implemented participatory theatre in my teaching practice to achieve such a goal. My doctoral dissertation research, however, does not necessarily meet the second criterion. Barone and Eisner (2006) note, “Although [design] elements are, to some degree, evident in all educational research activity, the more pronounced they are, the more the research may be characterized as arts-based” (p. 95). In fact, ABER is more likely to be recognized as an artistic form of data representation. That is, researchers transform qualitative data collected in their research study into diverse artistic forms, such as “poetry, the novel, the novella and short story,

the life story, the ethnodrama, autobiography and self-narrative, readers theatre, sonata from case study” (Barone & Eisner, 2006, p. 99) and display and present such artistic representations of data in the hope that they will contribute to the enhancement of readers’ perspectives, providing “new ways of viewing educational phenomenon” (p. 96) and new approaches to “broaden[ing] and deepen[ing] ongoing conversations about educational policy and practice” (p. 102). ABER challenges a traditional trend in educational research, which focuses mainly on “arriving at knowledge that is highly valid and reliable, as truthful and trustworthy as possible” (Barone & Eisner, 2006, p. 96). Considering Barone and Eisner’s (2006) definition of ABER, my doctoral dissertation may best be described as “an arts-based approach to (ethnographic) action research.”

In this doctoral dissertation research, I adopted participatory theatre as a counter-hegemonic artistic practice that may bring about positive change in multicultural teacher education. Participatory theatre is an interactive theatrical technique systematized by Brazilian theatre activist Augusto Boal (1985) who believed that “theater can also be a weapon for liberation” (p. viiii), thus developing *Theatre of the Oppressed*. In my teaching practice, I applied some of the *Theatre of the Oppressed* techniques, such as Boalian theatre games (*gamercises*), Forum Theatre, and Image Theatre. I also incorporated activities influenced largely by Invisible Theatre and Newspaper Theatre, also derived from *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Furthermore, I implemented ethnodrama under the category of participatory theatre in the sense that students as researchers/playwrights/performers participated in the entire process of

ethnodrama, including ethnographic interviewing and ethnodramatic script writing, followed by performing their constructed ethnodrama play scripts. All of these participatory theatre activities and exercises will be discussed in detail in later chapters.

This doctoral dissertation research also includes an element of ethnography and ethnographic research in the sense that a teacher of color strove to understand the inner (*emic*) perspectives (Wolcott, 1999) of White pre-service teachers in a teacher professional training context. Ethnography is “the study of people in everyday settings, with particular attention to culture—that is, how people make meaning of their lives” (Anderson-Levitt, 2006, p. 279). Spradley (1979) emphasizes the importance of an ethnographic researcher making an effort to “learn the meanings of action and experience from the insider’s or informant’s point of view” (p. 18). In this doctoral dissertation research, an attempt was made to document and examine research participants’ *emic* perspectives and how their *emic* perspectives shifted over the course of the observation semester through the experience of participatory theatre exercises.

Data Collection

Researcher’s role. For the past three years, I have taught two sections of a multicultural education course, each semester, to approximately 400 undergraduate students, the majority of whom were pre-service teacher candidates enrolled in a teacher preparation program. This doctoral dissertation focuses on two particular sections that I taught in the first semester of my final year of teaching. Classes for one section met twice a week, for 75 minutes each time,

over a period of 17 weeks. This multicultural education course is required for education major students, and one of the elective courses for non-education major students to fulfill a cultural awareness requirement.

In this doctoral dissertation study, I played various roles: (1) a teacher educator engaged in multicultural pre-service teacher education; (2) an action researcher collecting data through daily teaching practice and interactions with students; (3) an arts practitioner incorporating participatory theatre activities to engage students in a critical and creative exploration of multicultural education issues; (4) an ethnographer striving to understand the *emic* perspectives of students; and (5) a learner/student joining participatory theatre activities as a member of the learning community. More specifically, I am an Asian male (Japanese), which is really rare in a teacher education program, and not a native speaker of English. I still am an English Language Learner (ELL). I do not come from a theatre background and am an amateur practitioner of Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed*. I am an ethnically and linguistically cultural outsider in this research site. Anderson-Levitt (2006) notes that such cultural *outsiderness* often offers researchers an advantageous position in ethnographic research.

Outside observers may be mystified at first by insiders' behaviors, but they have the advantage of noticing what insiders do not notice. Implicit or explicit comparison with their own insider knowledge makes cultural meaning visible to them (p. 286).

Nevertheless, I may also have to recognize myself as an insider in this research context, because I had been teaching the same multicultural pre-service teacher

education course two years consecutively prior to the observation semester. I had taught approximately 280 students during that time and cannot deny the fact that I had already constructed pedagogical notions, strategies, and approaches that might have affected my teaching attitudes and behavior as well as interactions with students.

Participants. Forty-five students, 90% of the total population of 50 students, enrolled in two sections of my multicultural teacher education course during the observation semester, and volunteered to participate in this doctoral dissertation study. I have taught the same multicultural teacher education course at the main campus of a large Southwestern university for three years, six semesters in a row, except for this observation semester in which I taught the course at the west campus. Most semesters, the racial and gender demographics in classes offered at the main campus were predominantly White female students majoring in early childhood education, elementary education, secondary education, or special education in either freshman or sophomore standing. During the observation semester, the percentage of students of color was higher than in any other semester I have taught. Thirty-five students (70%) were White (27 female and 8 male) and 15 were students of color, including 7 Mexican-American females, 4 Mexican-American males, 1 African-American female, 1 African-American male, 1 Asian-American female, and 1 Cuban-American male. Among them, 25 students (50%) were teacher education majors. Most were between 19 and 21 years old, except two in their late 20s. All names used in this doctoral dissertation are pseudonyms.

Data Collection Procedures

After obtaining an IRB approval from the Human Subjects Review Board at a university that I am affiliated with, I collected data through my participant observation field notes and student journal entries, a minimum of 10 entries reflecting on their classroom experiences. In addition to these two main data collection sources, I also examined student-constructed Forum Theatre and ethnodrama play scripts, as well as three research-based project assignments, including cultural autobiography/memories, the Minoritized/Disprivileged Project, and the Ethnodrama Project. I was originally planning to conduct rounds of individual or focus-group supplementary interviews; however, I decided not to conduct any interviews, because I was afraid that might interfere with the natural dynamics of the student-teacher relationship and that students might feel that they were a research object. I wanted to document the natural phenomena generated through my daily teaching practices and interactions with students in as unaffected a way as possible. I collected data from two sections to “assure reliability across [sections] in terms of findings; consequently, findings are not particular to one [section]” (Souto-Manning, 2011, p. 1001). I implemented the exact same participatory theatre exercises in the two sections.

Participant observation field notes. After finishing each classroom session, I wrote participant observation field notes aimed at producing “descriptive accounts of people, scenes and dialogue, as well as personal experiences and reactions, that is, accounts that minimize explicit theorizing and interpretation” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2001, p. 353). Participant observation

field notes specifically illustrated in-class conversations and reflective thoughts on my own teaching practices as well as students' oral accounts and observable behaviors in responding to them.

Reflective journal entry. Students were asked to write and submit on-line weekly journal entries that portrayed and explored their classroom learning experiences and reflective thoughts on the discussed topics of the week. The specific questions that were asked include:

- The most important thing I learned this week was:
- What I had already known, but was reinforced was:
- What work was challenging for you?
- What do you need to work on?
- To the teacher (question, concern, suggestion, or etc.):
- Debriefing/feedback on cultural diversity awareness activities of the week

Brown (2004) describes the effectiveness of the student reflective journal.

Reflective journals and reaction papers enable students to continually review, reflect, and evaluate their perceptions in a timely manner.

Instructors can use journals to check student comprehension, correct and/or reinforce student perceptions, assist in extending and synthesizing new information, modify future instruction, and bring questions or comments to the class that students expressed discomfort in initiating but wanted to discuss (p. 329).

In addition to the questions provided above, students were asked to write a short essay to answer a question that emerged during in-class conversations of the week.

Data Analysis

The data analysis in this doctoral dissertation study was a very messy procedure. I had over 1,000 pages of a data corpus including my participant observation field notes, students' reflective journal entries, and their multiple writing assignments. At the beginning, I was at a loss for how to initiate a data analytic procedure with this huge amount of data without using any computer assistance for qualitative coding. In the end, I experienced the three stages of coding and decoding. I first read students' reflective journal entries in comparison with my participant observation field notes in order to illuminate and identify *key experiences* that significantly affected students' perspectives, in either positive or negative ways, as the basis for analysis. The identification of key experiences, according to Stringer (2007), is the first analytical stage for an action researcher:

Key experiences can be either positive or negative, and may include the exhilaration/ despair at passing or failing a particularly significant examination, the sense of wonderment (or frustration) emerging from a particularly difficult learning process. . . . [Key experiences] emerge instantaneously—the “a-ha” experience, the “light bulb” that enables a person to say “so what is going on”—or gradually, through a cumulative awareness that emerges through an ongoing process of experience and reflection (p. 88).

Reading their reflective journal entries, I confirmed that students demonstrated remarkable reactions, in both positive and negative ways, particularly to the participatory theatre exercises that they experienced in three multicultural education topics: racism, language, and homophobia.

The second approach an action researcher would take is a more traditional approach to qualitative data analysis, such as “categorizing and coding, that distills large amounts of data into an organized body of concepts and ideas” (Stringer, 2007, p. 87). Stringer (2007) notes, “The purpose of [the second] process is to reveal patterns and themes within the data that enables us to understand more clearly why and how events occur as they do” (p. 88). In this stage, I reread students’ journal entries related to the above-mentioned three topics and went through coding processes in order to identify similar phrases, themes, and patterns and develop and verify “key linkages” (Erickson, 1986). Saldaña (2009) notes, “A code in qualitative inquiry is most often a word or short phrase that symbolically assigns a summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute for a portion of language-based or visual data” (p. 3). From his coding technique, I used In Vivo Coding to identify “prominent themes and patterns rooted in the participants’ own language” (Saldana, 2005, p. 119) and Values Coding to assess “a participant’s integrated value, attitude, and belief systems at work” (p. 86). According to Saldaña (2009), In Vivo coding is “applicable to action research (Stringer, 1999) since one of the genre’s primary goals is to frame the facilitator’s interpretations of terms that the participants use in their everyday lives” (p. 91) and Values Coding is “appropriate particularly for

those that explore cultural values and intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions in case studies” (p. 90).

Saldaña (2009) also suggests that “more than one coding method and at least two different analytic approaches should be explored in every study to enhance accountability and the depth of breadth of findings” (p. 47). In the third stage, which occurred synchronously with the second stage, I integrated “post-structural methods of textual analysis” conceptualized and systematized by Tobin (2000) in his “*Good Guys Don’t Wear Hats*”: *Children’s Talk about the Media* research, in which he attempts to examine the saturation process of research participants’ internalizing dominant, hegemonic ideologies, what Althusser (1972) conceptualizes as the process of *interpellation* (Althusser, 1972). Tobin (2000) views a data analysis stage as a crime scene in a detective story where a detective tries to reconstruct the scene by employing deductive powers retrieved from an imaginative and innovative CSI (crime scene investigation) method, followed by a detective’s narrating the entire crime story, which leads to a clue. This metaphor is derived originally from Zizek’s (1991) *Looking Awry: An Introduction to Jacques Lacan through Popular Culture*, in which he recognizes a detective as a psychoanalyst who “makes a useful distinction between clues that are hard to interpret because they are cryptic/coded and those that are hard to interpret because they are too clear” (Tobin, 2000, p. 61). Taking into consideration Zizek’s psychoanalytical approach to discourse analysis, Tobin (2000) encourages an ethnographic researcher to examine data texts from such a psychoanalytic perspective, which eventually encourages us “to look awry at texts”

(p, 146). Tobin (2000) specifically employed multivariate data analytic tools, which he called “imaginative tools of textual interpretation” (p. 11), retrieved from interdisciplinary fields, such as “literary studies, psychoanalysis, performance studies, critical theory, and ethnography” (p. 12), tools such as 1) Lévi-Strauss’ *cultural binaries*; 2) Freudian *slips*; 3) Voloshinov’s *double-voiced*; 4) Derrida’s *aporia*; 5) Macherey’s *non-did*; and 6) Bakhtin’s *citatonality*. Tobin (2005) writes:

Education is a field, not a discipline. This is a strength more than a weakness, as it invites and encourages the use of multiple disciplinary and methodological perspectives to engage with a core set of problems and issues. Education should not have its own methods—we should continually be bringing in innovative methods from other disciplines (p. 92).

Employing such multidisciplinary interpretative tools helps a researcher “dig deeper into the meaning” (Tobin, 2000, p. 138) of research participants’ constructed discourses, simultaneously offering “more speculative interpretations . . . multiple readings” (p. 138). I reread students’ journal entries using Tobin’s imaginative interpretative tools, writing analytical notes on the right margin of the printed journal entries. In the end, I found Lévi-Strauss’s *cultural binaries*, which can be linked to Versus Coding (Saldaña, 2009), and Bakhtin’s *citatonality* most effective for my analysis, which will be discussed in detail in later chapters.

I used Lévi-Straussian *cultural binaries* and Bakhtinian *citatonality* as a tool for analysis to examine the interpellation process of hegemony, that is, how

dominant, hegemonic ideologies are interpellated and embedded in the discourses of students in a specific local context. Hegemony can be defined as the internalized voices of oppression (i.e., domination and subordination) that indoctrinate one to accept the oppressor's ideology (Cahmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010). Althusser (1972) calls this "workings of ideology on subjects" (Tobin, 2000, p. 3) as *interpellation*. Althusser (1972) defines *interpellation* as follows:

Ideology "acts" or "functions" in such a way that it "recruits" subjects among individuals . . . or transforms individuals into subjects . . . by that very precise operation which I have called interpellations or hailing, and which can be imagined among the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: "Hey you there!" (p. 174).

All coding categories emerged from the data themselves, rather than preconceived categories. However, as a person of color, I have my own racial/ethnic lens that, consciously or unconsciously, guided me to examine and analyze White students' discourses. In this sense, my interpretive and analytical perspectives adopted in this doctoral dissertation research might be biased. Citing Andersen (1993), Saldaña (1997), however, notes that there can be no colorblind approach to qualitative inquiry. Rather, Andersen (1993) notes: "Minority group members have insights about and interpretations of their experiences that are likely different from those generated by white scholars" (p. 43; as cited in Saldaña, 1997, p. 26-27). I want readers to understand that I wrote this doctoral dissertation to offer an alternate perspective that may provide a unique contribution to the

transformation of multicultural teacher education. Once I coded all the data into themes and categories, using Critical Race Theory and its intersectional perspectives, I began to examine the findings to understand racism, Whiteness, White privilege, and other forms of social oppression.

Conceptual Framework for Data Analysis

I want to provide a brief description of Critical Race Theory (CRT) (e.g., Scheurich, 1993; Sleeter, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001; Parker & Lynn, 2002; Smith-Maddox & Solórzono, 2002; Solórzano & Yosso, 2002; López, 2003; Yosso, 2005) as a conceptual framework used to analyze the data. I also will discuss CRT in the main texts of later chapters by applying it to the coded themes. As previously discussed, current multicultural teacher education is not designed critically enough to explore and examine a systemic, institutional nature of racism, power, and privilege. CRT is a theoretical and analytical framework that allows us to problematize “the ways race and racism implicitly and explicitly impact on social structures, practices and discourses” (Yosso, 2005, p. 70). Smith-Maddox and Solórzono (2002) illustrate the following five elements, which conceptually comprise CRT:

- (a) the centrality of race and racism and their intersectionality with other forms of subordination, (b) the challenge to dominant ideology, (c) the commitment to social justice, (d) the centrality of experiential knowledge, and (e) a transdisciplinary perspective (p. 68).

CRT is based on the assumption that “race and racism are central, endemic, permanent and a fundamental part of defining and explaining how U.S. society

functions” (Yosso, 2005, p. 73) and argues that racism is “so enmeshed in the fabric of our social order, it appears both normal and natural to people in this culture” (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 212-213). The central aim of CRT, therefore, is to demystify and deconstruct “the hidden faces of racism” (López, 2003, p. 84) deeply entrenched in institutions and our consciousness and to refute “dominant ideology and White privilege while validating and centering the experiences of People of Color” (Yosso, 2005, p. 74). In sum, CRT is a “social justice project that works toward the liberatory potential of schooling” (Yosso, 2005, p. 74).

Ladson-Billings (1999) notes:

If we require a new way of understanding the inequities of American schooling . . . , critical race theory may have the power “to move us out of a cycle of detailing and ranking research and programs without a systematic examination of their paradigmatic underpinnings and practical strengths” (p. 215).

Parker and Lynn (2002) argue that “in a White supremacist society, racism has not been given full explanatory power in the academy” (p. 8). CRT encourages scholars to challenge racial hegemony pervasive in the American education system from K-12 through higher education, in which the voices of students and teachers of color as well as those of White allies are often marginalized by the dominant authority. Critical race theorists, therefore, strive to identify and examine “how a regime of white supremacy and its subordination of people of color have been created and maintained” (Ladson-Billings, 1999, p. 214) in the American education system and confront “the dominant discourse on

race and racism as it relates to education by examining how educational theory and practice are used to subordinate certain racial and ethnic groups” (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001, p. 2).

Course Design and Structure

Course Design

As previously mentioned, most multicultural education courses are not designed to invite students to fully examine a systemic nature of racism. In my observation, there may be several reasons for this. One may be that instructors simply think race is just one of the cultural diversity topics and nothing more or less than that. Therefore, it should be dealt with, spending an equal amount of time, attention, and resources on it as on other multicultural education topics. In our teacher education program, because of the program-mandated textbook of ten chapters, eight of which discuss different co-cultural topics such as Ethnicity and Race, Class and Socioeconomic status, Gender and Sexual Orientation, Exceptionality, Language, Religion, Geography, and Age, instructors simply follow the chapter sequence and cover every chapter in an equal manner. The section on Race is in the second chapter right after the Introduction, which outlines a basic theoretical understanding of multicultural education. Due to this chapter sequence, instructors discuss race-related topics relatively early in the semester when they are still struggling to create a safe and open learning environment for students. As a result, instructors may encounter unsatisfactory learning outcomes from conversations on race. In addition, only one week (i.e., two classroom sessions; total two and a half hours) is generally allocated for the

Race chapter. The Race chapter is 38-pages long, with approximately two pages devoted solely to discussion of racism. The rest of the pages in the chapter focus mainly on the terminological difference between race and ethnicity; the drastic change in racial and ethnic demographics; the historical movement and litigations for racial desegregation, such as the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education*; the curriculum integration of race and ethnicity, such as Ethnic Studies, Ethnocentric Studies, and Multiethnic Studies; and lastly the achievement gap between minority and nonminority students. The two-page description of racism focuses largely on the manifestation of individual-level racial prejudice and discrimination in school, rather than a close examination of a systemic, institutional nature of racism.

In order to bring about change in multicultural teacher education classrooms, we need to offer powerful instruction and pedagogy that empowers students to engage in critical and creative exploration on race, racism, and privilege, as well as other social oppression forms, and to develop critical consciousness that can lead to constructive interrogation and confrontation of the deficit thinking model, as well as the hegemonic structure of dominance and oppression operating in school. Gorski (2009) notes:

Most of the [multicultural teacher education] courses were designed to prepare teachers with pragmatic skills and personal awareness, but not to prepare them in accordance with the key principles of multicultural education, such as critical consciousness and a commitment to educational equity (p. 309).

Teachers' deficit thinking (Ambe, 2006) as well as "uncritical habit of mind . . . that justifies inequity and exploitation by accepting the existing order of things as given" (King, 1991, p. 135), which cause the perpetual achievement gap dichotomized between minority and nonminority children in America's public schools, must be challenged in multicultural teacher education classrooms. For multicultural teacher education to achieve its fundamental objectives of eradicating racism and producing a just and equitable education system for all learners, it must provide pre-service teachers with transformative experiences in which they develop critical consciousness enabling them to examine an existing racial hierarchy and confront their privileged positionality in U.S. society. The process of developing critical consciousness often entails emotional pain and discomfort, as it is a critical self-reflective journey of challenging one's internalized beliefs that one has assumed are a *de facto* norm. It involves the subversion of internalized consciousness (Boal, 1985). Delpit (1988) posits that teachers "must learn to be vulnerable enough to allow our world to turn upside down in order to allow the realities of others to edge themselves into our consciousness" (p. 297).

The development of critical consciousness can only be achieved through collective dialogical explorations. Thus, it is of great importance for teacher educators to offer a dialogical community in our multicultural education classroom. Many teacher education programs, however, are based largely on traditional teaching/learning, which Freire (1970) conceptualizes as the "banking concept of education" that views students as a receptacle waiting to be filled up

with knowledge distributed by the authoritative teacher. This monocultural teaching/learning style exerts a negative influence on students in terms of promoting passivity in their learning, which leads to what Case and Hemmings (2005) refer to as “White talk” with which White students are likely to disassociate themselves from racial conversations in a heterogeneous classroom context. Teacher educators engaged in multicultural education must challenge the banking concept of education and provide prospective teachers with a collaborative dialogic space that empowers them to challenge their passivity and silence.

Critical Pedagogy

Making our classroom a community of dialogic inquiry is one of the major focuses of critical pedagogy. Critical pedagogy is a reflective and constructive educational process in which educators, as partners of learners, provide transformative teaching/learning experiences that invite students to actively participate in a critical examination of existing knowledge forms as the manifestation of socio-culturally and historically constructed ideology. In this framework, the school serves as an institution and educators as cultural transmitters to disseminate and legitimate those knowledge forms. These three (forms of knowledge, the school, and the educators), according to Apple (2004), “must be situated within the larger nexus of relations of which it is a constitutive part” (p. 3). Critical pedagogues invite students to pursue questions: What knowledge is most valued in schools? Whose knowledge is it? Why is it taught in schools in that way? Who benefits most from that knowledge?

The works of Paulo Freire, the influential philosopher who established the theoretical foundation of critical pedagogy, and Ira Shor, Henry Giroux, bell hooks, and Mariana Souto-Manning, all of whom are advocates of Freirean critical pedagogy, have affected me in terms of theorizing critical multicultural education and designing my own multicultural education course. These critical pedagogues all recognize that “students must be actively involved in and responsible for their educational processes” (Howard, 2004, p. 217), which indicates that teachers must provide a pedagogical space in which students become the authors/owners of their own learning. Critical pedagogues, according to Howard (2004), also believe that:

Education should encourage students to think critically, to analyze social conditions, and to evaluate information—particularly information related to power, identity and representation. To establish this kind of critical pedagogy, educators must create an educational culture that empowers students by leveling the teacher-student hierarchy, and that reflects a re-imagining of the academy’s hegemonic communication patterns, institutional structures, and disciplinary “turf-guarding” (Howard, 1999, pp. 8–9). With this transformation, we create the possibility for teachers to be “transformative intellectuals” (Trend, 1992, p. 25), who facilitate student knowledge and who value student experience (p. 217-18).

Teacher-educators engaged in multicultural/anti-racist education acknowledge the emancipatory power and possibilities of critical pedagogy. Nevertheless, it seems that they often struggle to put theory into practice (Howard,

2004). In my multicultural education classroom, in order to actualize the ideals of Freirean critical pedagogy, participatory theatre, which was influenced largely by Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* techniques, was implemented throughout a semester-long period. The nexus of Freirean and Boalian critical (performance) pedagogy created a multivocal discourse community in which students were transformed into active agents of learning. By means of this pedagogical integration, I wanted to connect theory and practice and fill a fundamental gap that hooks (1994) points out: "We are a nation of citizens who claim that they want to see an end to racism, to racial discrimination. Yet there is clearly a fundamental gap between theory and practice" (p. 28).

Course Structure

In my 17-week long multicultural education course, the semester was divided into three stages: the first stage (Week 1 through Week 4), the second stage (Week 5 through Week 14), and the third stage (Week 15 through Week 17). Except for the first and last week, there were two classroom sessions each week, on Tuesday and Thursday, for one section. One classroom session was 75-minutes long. In the first stage, my chief intention and attention was to get to know each of my students on an individual basis and create an open, safe, and inviting classroom environment for the subsequent stage, which was the main stage in my multicultural education course. In addition, before moving on to the second stage, I wanted students to gain a basic understanding of a critical multicultural education paradigm. In addition, I asked the class as a whole to make their own

conversation guidelines for positive and constructive classroom discussion and explained my open door policy.

It is my every intention to create a safe environment and a comfortable learning community for everyone in the class. If at any time you feel unsafe or uncomfortable, please feel free to address those issues with me. You may contact me via email (call me in an emergency), to set up an immediate appointment to meet outside of class, or anytime directly before or after class sessions.¹

During the second stage, which was 10 weeks long, student teams led cultural presentations on different cultural topics/themes previously assigned, using an entire classroom session (75 minutes) on Tuesdays. In the presentation, each student team was asked to incorporate five different activities: 1) a game exercise as an icebreaker at the beginning of the classroom session; 2) two short video clips related to the cultural topic explored; 3) two cultural diversity awareness activities; 4) a summary activity in which related emergent issues were addressed; and 5) debriefing conversation. The game exercise was not necessarily related to the cultural theme assigned, but the two instructional activities needed to be associated with it. The instructional activities needed to be interactive and participatory in nature and accompany subsequent small-group or whole-class conversation, with one of the activities being theatre-related in a broader sense or containing some theatrical element in it. Student teams were required to create a

¹The original draft of this open door policy was created by Associate Professor Pamela Sterling in her *Theatre for Social Change* course.

PowerPoint summary activity with no more than 10 slides, each using a bullet-point style and size 24 font. I asked each student team to hold team meetings at least twice prior to their cultural presentation outside the classroom. I joined one of their team meetings in which I shared my former students' works and explained Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* exercises. The time length of the student meeting was generally from an hour to an hour and a half, though the longest meeting lasted approximately five hours. These meetings became great opportunities for me to get to know my students in an informal way.

The purpose of a cultural presentation is to create a dialogical space that supports a collaborative exploration of multicultural education topics/themes assigned to the team. Participatory activities are a key to achieving this goal. None of my students had ever done a 75-minute long presentation before. I told them that I would never expect a traditional style of student-led presentation, in which students just make a monotonous PowerPoint file full of direct citations and read them off, standing in front and watching the computer screen with no eye contact or interaction with participants. Instead, I asked students to make their presentation as creative, unique, and collaborative as possible and make their own cultural recipe. I also shared my teaching belief: "Teaching is not about information. It's about having an honest intellectual relationship with your students. It requires no method, no tools, and no training. Just the ability to be real" (Lackhart, 2009, p. 11). Lackhart (2009) also notes:

In particular, you can't teach teaching. Schools of education are a complete crock. Oh, you can take classes in early childhood development

and whatnot, and you can be trained to use a blackboard “effectively” and to prepare an organized “lesson plan” (which, by the way, insures that your lesson will be planned, and therefore false), but you will never be a real teacher if you are unwilling to be a real person. Teaching means openness and honesty, an ability to share excitement, and a love of teaching. Without these, all the education degrees in the world won’t help you, and with them they are completely unnecessary (p. 11).

I also described a Freirean approach to the student-teacher relationship and told students that I would recognize them as a partner in creating a multicultural community in our own classroom.

During the third and last stage, I outlined the concept of culturally responsive pedagogy through critical pedagogy perspectives and reflected on what happened in our classroom throughout the semester. A mandatory written final exam was replaced by a final research paper in which students designed a research question, by themselves, related to any topics explored and examined in our classroom discussions, and answered the question using supportive literature review. On the final class, students provided their summary report.

In addition to the above-mentioned classroom routines, students had three writing assignments: 1) a cultural autobiography/memoir, 2) the Minoritized/Disprivileged Project paper, and 3) the Ethnodrama Project paper. In addition, students participated in weekly reflective journal entries from Week 4 through Week 15. Throughout the semester, I made it less lecture and more conversation by incorporating numerous interactive, participatory (theatre)

activities. Compared to a one-week general exploration of race in other instructors' sections, I designed a six-week long anti-racist workshop, which explored the following issues in holistic and systemic ways: (1) race and racial identity, (2) racial stereotype/prejudice/discrimination, (3) institutional racism and oppression, (4) Whiteness and White privilege, (5) dysconscious racism and colorblindness, and (6) anti-racist education. I also discussed heterosexism, homophobia, linguicism/languagism, Islamophobia, and school bullying. Two topics, classism and sexism, were merged into the race topics. All of the multicultural education topics were examined through critical pedagogy as well as intersectional critical race theory perspectives.

During the observation semester, the class was taught on west campus, a 45-minute drive away from the main campus. The classroom that we used was a traditional lecture-style classroom in which there were 12 rectangular desks and 38 chairs without casters, with two tiny windows placed on the upper side of the back wall, which, according to one of my students, made the classroom look like a "jail." It was a rather depressing physical environment, I admit. The computer screen was much smaller than those usually provided on the main campus and the projector image was constantly distorted. It was impossible to play theatre exercises in the classroom. Thus, we always re-arranged the physical classroom environment to one feasible for theatre work.

Organization of the Dissertation

The following five chapters narrate the description, interpretation, and analysis of the lived experiences in my multicultural education classroom during

the observation semester. Specifically, the chapters illustrate and examine the trajectory of pre-service teachers' developing critical consciousness in multicultural practice through their experience in participatory (theatre) activities, consecutively analyzing the effectiveness of my teaching practice, which focuses mainly on participatory theatre techniques. I focus exclusively on three multicultural education topics: racism, linguicism, and heterosexism. Due to a large amount of time and resources spent for race-related discussions in my course, three chapters are devoted to racism, with two chapters on language and sexual orientation, respectively. In each chapter, I provide (1) a supplementary literature review; (2) participatory activities incorporated; (3) students' responses to the activities, and (4) my interpretation and analysis. In the race chapters, I attempt to examine students' *interpellation* process by decoding their oral and written discourses from classroom discussions and reflective journal entries, through the theoretical lenses borrowed mainly from critical race theory and post-structural theory. I also analyze Boalian theatre games as ways to develop racial/cultural awareness, enhance classroom collaboration, and examine power and privilege. In the language and sexual orientation chapters, I discuss linguistic and homophobic discrimination and analyze the effectiveness of ethnodrama and Forum Theatre, respectively. In the final chapter, I reflect on my teaching practice and analyze in what way participatory theatre exercises help pre-service teachers develop critical consciousness in multicultural practice. I also provide some recommendations for future research in the multicultural teacher education

research field. I hope the findings and my analysis will provide a unique contribution to the improvement and betterment of multicultural teacher education.

Chapter 2

DENIAL

Race and Racial Identity

“Everyone is of color.”

As a starter for the anti-racist workshop, we first defined racial and ethnic key terms that we would use in our multicultural conversation, such as White, Caucasian, Black, African American, Hispanic, Latina/o, Asian, Native American, and People of Color. Among these terms, “people of color” was recognized by White students as particularly “inappropriate” and “offensive.”

Jean: I don’t think that “people of color” is an appropriate phrase.

Everyone is “of color.” When we use this phrase, it seems to be referring to black people—but whites are colored as well. . . . Secondly, why would people use this phrase? To set “people of color” apart from “colorless people”?? People are people—despite what they may look like, own, dress like, or the color of their skin.

Rita: Without sounding simple, the phrase “people of color” is stupid to me. . . . A multitude of students are of a relatively similar skin color, yet there are numerous races among us. I just don’t understand why an entire ethnicity would be considered “of color” when it is not a trait that describes all members. While I could definitely use a tan, my skin is not any more “white” than an African American’s or an Indian’s.

Jean felt discomfort with the terminological dichotomy between White and people of color. Her comment indicates that the term “people of color” creates a

dichotomy between Whites and non-Whites and connotes the disapproval, rejection, and exclusion of Whites from a community. Rita's comment may reflect many mainstream teachers' propensity to use the two terms, ethnicity and race, interchangeably. Race and ethnicity, however, should be differentiated in order to illuminate the illusion of race. Race does not exist in a biological sense, yet was historically constructed as an ideology to defend and legitimate racial slavery and consequent White dominance. In other words, racism created the concept of race. On the contrary, ethnicity is a culturally defined concept, and denotes a cluster of people who have the same cultural roots, such as history and language (Gollnick & Chinn, 2010).

White teachers are likely to disassociate themselves from the racial category of White, yet tend to include themselves in ethnic groups, such as Italian, German, Polish, and within the same conceptual classifications, such as African-American and Native American (Sleeter, 1993). Sleeter and Bernal (2004) note that this disassociation leads them to relinquish their responsibility as teachers to challenge racial inequalities in classrooms. In order to fully explore the nature and function of racism and confront a systemic, institutional nature of racism, students must have a clear understanding of what race is, how it was conceptualized and, most importantly, who invented it. Berlack (1999) notes:

If students do not recognize the social and historical construction of subjectivity they can recognize neither that their own and others' views of race have been shaped by social experience, nor that their views affect and shape the experiences of others (p. 111).

“My skin color is not white.”

We teacher educators engaged in multicultural education often encounter White students’ comments indicating the denial of racial and cultural identity, such as: “I’m not white.” “My skin color is not white.” “We don’t really have a culture.” Scheurich (1993) notes:

We Whites . . . experience ourselves as nonracialized individuals. We do not experience ourselves as defined by our skin color. We especially do not experience ourselves as defined by another race’s actions and attitudes toward us because of our skin color (p. 6).

It is crucial that pre-service teachers are given critical opportunities to explore their racial identity. Nevertheless, according to Clark and Zygmunt-Fillwalk’s observation (2010), many White pre-service teachers struggle with being aware of their racial consciousness and White identity and how it will affect their interactions with students from racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse backgrounds. Teachers’ lack of acknowledgement of their own racial and cultural identities often leads to the denial of their students’ racial, ethnic, and cultural identities, which eventually hinders the vast funds of knowledge and rich experiences that culturally diverse students can bring to the classrooms (Souto-Manning, 2011). To make possible a crucial exploration of racial identity, I encouraged students to reflect on their own racial and cultural identities by engaging them in specific Boalian theatre games.

Boalian Theatre Games and Racial Awareness

Boalian theatre games are widely used to explore issues of power and privilege. I also found the power and possibilities of Boalian theatre games as ways to (1) develop racial and cultural awareness and (2) enhance peer-to-peer and student-teacher collaboration. Every theatre game has its own meaning and metaphor. It is important for teacher educators who are willing to incorporate theatre games in their teaching practices to find unique metaphors and inherent possibilities associated with each game, so that they can design effective questions for discussion in the debriefing conversations, which must subsequently occur. I also asked students to seek possible metaphors while they were playing the theatre games and if they identified any, to report them to the class in debriefing discussions. In our multicultural education classroom, we played 20 different game exercises throughout the observation semester. I recognize Boalian theatre games as a powerful, yet playful pedagogical tool to create a physical, emotional, cognitive, reminiscent, and cultural space for the enhancement of dialogic classroom interaction in which participants are empowered to take risks, sharing their own personal narrative stories. This process resonates with the Freirean cultural circle, a strategy by which he encourages learners to *generate themes* from their own daily struggles and survivals and to *pose problems* derived from the generated themes (Souto-Manning, 2010a).

The theatre games we played during the semester were inspired by Augusto Boal's (1992) *Games for Actors and Non-Actors* ; Michael Rohd's (1998) *Theatre for Community, Conflict & Dialogue*; Melisa Cahnmann-Taylor &

Mariana Souto-Manning's (2010) *Teaching Act Up!: Creating Multicultural Learning Communities through Theatre* as well as others I learned through a theatre course entitled *Theatre for Social Change* offered in 2009 by Associate Professor Pamela Sterling in the School of Theatre and Film. In addition, I read two related books: West's (1997) *201 Icebreakers: Group Mixers, Warm-Ups, Energizers, and Playful Activities* and Pollack and Fusoni's (2005) *Moving Beyond Icebreakers: An Innovative Approach to Group Facilitation, Learning, and Action* in which I found interactive physical game exercises influenced by Boal's theatre work. Specifically, I incorporated the following five theatre games for racial and cultural diversity exploration: Eye to Eye (Sterling, 2009); Yes Game (Sterling, 2009); Come to My Neighbor (Sterling, 2009); Cover the Space (Rohd, 1998); and The Wind Blows (Pollack & Fusoni, 2005). In the following sections, I will discuss Eye to Eye, Yes Game, and Come to My Neighbor, presenting brief synopses of these theatre games. If you have more than thirty students in your class, Come to My Neighbor, Cover the Space, and The Wind Blows may be difficult to play in a regular teacher education classroom. Thus, you may want to take students outside, if weather conditions are acceptable, or reserve a theatre classroom if possible.

Eye to eye. Eye to Eye was used in our classroom for developing racial and cultural awareness. According to some of my students, this was the most “awkward” and “uncomfortable” game exercise that they experienced during the semester, yet some students, and I as a participant, found very powerful messages in it. Indeed, this theatre game helped me to be more aware of each student's

racial and cultural diversity. Eye to Eye is a very simple exercise. You first create a cleared space in your classroom then ask students to make two circles, one inside the other, with each student in the inner circle facing a different person from the outer circle. If you have an even number, you may have to extract yourself. During the exercise, each person locks eyes for seven seconds with the person standing in front of them. You are not allowed to talk (or, of course, laugh). After the seven seconds, those in the outer circle move to the next person over, either clockwise or counter clockwise. Some students giggled in the first few rounds, but then I found my students began to take the game more seriously. While playing this game, I asked myself: Did I really see each student's face when I was teaching a class of about forty students? Have I ever taken a close examination of students' facial expressions as a signal or sign of internal struggle? And how did I respond to it? Did I just ignore it or try to do something about it? In addition, I even began thinking about how these students grew up. I became more curious about students' cultural backgrounds. The exercise encouraged me to see things through my eyes and the eyes of others.

Kailin (1999) shared her teaching experience in an urban high school, noting that “many White high school teachers feared the Black students and avoided speaking to them, even avoiding eye contact” (p. 734). Some pre-service teachers enter teacher education programs without having any sustained and substantial personal interactions with other racial/ethnic group members. In some cases, it was not until college years that White students interacted with different racial/ethnic group members (Causey, Thomas, & Armento, 2000). Although

college classrooms can be a great opportunity to acquire intercultural experiences, there are most likely no intimate interactions in classrooms. Students often do not even know the names of the students sitting next to them. Some students just come to class, sit and use laptops or smart phones while pretending to listen to the instructor's one-way monologue lecture. At the very first class of the semester, I asked students to not use laptops whenever we have a classroom discussion. I also encouraged students to look at the eyes of the person who speaks. In my experience of teaching multicultural education, students encounter many perspectives that are contradictory to their personal beliefs and worldviews. Sometimes students reject those oppositional perspectives by simply turning their eyes away from me or students who speak. Looking at the eyes may be the very first step to being humble and having humility, as Freire (1998) teaches us:

How can I listen to the other, how can I hold a dialogue, if I can only listen to myself, if I can only see myself, if nothing or no one other than myself can touch me or move me? (p. 208)

Eye to Eye is a simple, playful game, yet it can be a catalyst for enhancing positive and healthy student-student and student-teacher relationships in college classrooms, which I hope will have a positive effect on student interaction in the future.

Yes game. Yes Game is one of my favorite game exercises. It can also be used for cultural diversity awareness, yet I found a more significant metaphor in it: cultural acceptance. Unlike the Eye to Eye exercise, one big circle is needed for this game. The facilitator encourages participants to make eye contact as many

times as possible during the game. When two students confirm that they made eye contact with one another, they both say “Yes,” then switch positions. Facilitators may want to encourage students to make eye contact with someone they do not know or are not yet familiar with. As a variation of this game, after completing several rounds students can be asked to introduce themselves to each other in the circle, shaking hands before switching positions.

Cultural acceptance is a crucial element in the development of multicultural competence and a necessary attribute for teachers in a drastically changing multicultural society, yet it is a difficult and challenging task. We have a natural tendency to stick to and feel comfortable with our own cultural beliefs and surroundings. Cultural acceptance often entails internal struggle accompanied by discomfort and pain. I wanted students to challenge their own internalized cultural beliefs and to develop multicultural perspectives through the active influence of other cultural viewpoints encountered in our dialogic community. When teachers adopt a colorblind or cultural-blind approach in their teaching practices, they do not see each student’s unique possibility and inherent potential. On the contrary, when teachers affirm student cultural diversity manifested in the classroom and embrace the funds of knowledge that each student can bring, students will bring forth their highest potential, which leads to the development of self-confidence and self-esteem as well as the improvement of their educational achievements (Gaitan, 2006).

Come to my neighbor. Come to My Neighbor is a game exercise that enables participants to explore cultural diversity in a more verbal manner. Come

to My Neighbor creates a dynamic classroom environment, enabling us to reflect the cultural diversity manifested in a classroom and to visibly see a microcosm of the larger society. This game is conceptually similar to Power Shuffle (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010; Souto-Manning, 2011) and can be a good segue to another game, Privilege Walk, which I will discuss in a later section. This game starts with a facilitator posing a question, raising her or his hand: “Come to my neighbor if you” In the first few rounds, a facilitator can use simple and playful questions such as, “Come to my neighbor if you like Starbucks Coffee.” Those who like Starbucks Coffee have to gather around the facilitator to make a branch. Those who do not like Starbucks Coffee have to take a distance from the facilitator as far away as possible, making another branch. Then, the facilitator encourages someone from either branch to pose a new question in order to make a new branch(es). After a few rounds, the facilitator may want to start posing more personal questions related to students’ racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds, such as “Come to my neighbor if you describe yourself as people of color.” “Come to my neighbor if your first language is other than English.” Then, the facilitator encourages participants to start posing questions pertinent to any racial, ethnic, and cultural identities they wish to explore.

“I should not hide my ethnicity.”

I asked students to share what they learned from playing the Boalian theatre games, which was their very first experience with Boal’s *Theatre of the Oppressed* techniques. Although some students felt quite uncomfortable with the

first theatre game, Eye to Eye, overall they provided positive feedback on these theatre games. White students, who are likely to feel discomfort with racial or cultural separation, which can lead to the obstruction of racial and cultural identity development, became more aware of their cultural surroundings and developed a cultural awareness through the experience of theatre games. In addition, the games empowered students of color to be more comfortable with their own cultural identities. Overall, the theatre games helped enhance cultural interconnectedness in our learning community. Here are some excerpts from students' feedback.

Brynn: I learned how to understand that everyone is very different yet we all still have common things linking us together. Because of the icebreakers I was able to see how we related to each other and how we all shared experiences.

Michele: I learned how to be comfortable being myself and not being shy about who I am. I learned that I should not hide my ethnicity. I learned that it is okay to be different.

Efren: The exercises you have us work with are really amazing for me... [and] are making me more comfortable with who I am, and with others around me

Racial Stereotypes

“My race is the race that makes fun of other races the most.”

Racial stereotypes manifest themselves in classrooms where mainstream teachers hold low expectations on, and adopt the “deficit thinking” approach

toward, students of color (Sleeter, 2008). Citing Tatum (1997), Souto-Manning (2011) notes:

White middle class teachers . . . perceive cultural and linguistic diversities as deviant, as needing to be fixed, or alternatively they believe that certain students cannot be fixed and take a “helping the disadvantaged” teaching approach (p. 998).

Racial stereotype is an impaired consciousness and a historically and culturally perpetuated “stock of knowledge” (Kailin, 1999, p. 745), which mainstream teachers bring into their daily teaching practices. One of the tangible outcomes yielded by racial stereotyping is White in-service teachers’ over-referrals. It has been reported that White teachers are likely to make disproportionate referrals of students of color for placement in a special education program. As a result, the overrepresentation of students of color—African-American students in particular—in special education classrooms can be observable in U.S. schools nationwide. On the contrary, White students are overpopulated in gifted classes (Gollnick & Chinn, 2010). Sleeter (2008) notes:

Many White teachers . . . interpret students’ lack of engagement as disinterest in learning, or their academic problems as inability to learn.

Due to a combination of low expectations and cultural mismatch, White teachers appear to refer students of color to special education. (p. 557)

I wanted my students to challenge their unrecognized stereotypical perceptions of other racial group members, as a crucial step towards decoding and demystifying deficit thinking. Through this deconstruction process, I also wanted

students to search for creative ways in building positive and constructive relationships with future students from culturally diverse communities. In our class, students were engaged in a specific activity to examine racial stereotypes. In this activity, students listed and deconstructed historically and culturally perpetuated racial stereotypes.

Racial stereotype identification activity. A racial stereotype identification activity was led by one of the student teams. The activity was originally inspired by Grady's (2000) *Drama and Diversity: A Pluralistic Perspective for Educational Drama*, in which she demonstrates an activity aimed at examining heterosexual, homophobic stereotypes toward LGBTQ individuals and communities. The student team made a little arrangement in expectation of engaging every student in the activity in a non-coercive manner. The student team first distributed an index card to each student in class, asking them to write lists of stereotypes that they have ever had toward other racial group members. Although this process was facilitated in an anonymous fashion, the student team encouraged students to provide honest opinions, no matter how "politically incorrect" they seemed, in order to make subsequent conversations successful. The student team then asked students to put their written index cards into a small box set in front. The student team picked up and read aloud each index card, simultaneously making lists of stereotypes on a white board, according to different racial groups including: White, African American, Native American, Hispanic, and Asian. After compiling the lists of racial stereotypes, the student team asked students questions such as: "Were the words or phrases you provided subjective

(impressions, feelings, opinions, etc.) or objective (facts that are measurable with a concrete referent)?” “Where did you learn that information?” “What in your experience supports and challenges those notions?” “What do these stereotypes do to those being stereotyped?” (Shaw & Lockhart, 2002)

The success of this exercise relied largely on the facilitator’s sincerity, which exerted a positive influence on the creation of an open and honest classroom environment. I had enormous trust in this student team composed of five racially diverse students, including a White female, an Asian-American female, a White male, a Mexican-American male, and a Cuban-American male. Prior to their presentation, they held two team meetings outside the classroom, one of which took approximately five hours. I joined this team meeting held on a Sunday morning. They designed two interactive instructional activities: a stereotyping activity and an improvised theatre activity, in addition to a game exercise called Human Knot (Pollack & Fusoni, 2005), in which a metaphor is used for solving complicated issues (i.e., racial issues), working together as a classroom community.

Although many students might already have been exposed to the listed stereotypes daily through media or their acquaintances and/or overhearing someone’s private conversations in public spaces, it was the first time for them to examine those racial stereotypes in a deconstructive and analytical way in a formal educational context. The student reflective journal entries of the week showed positive and negative reactions to the activity, but overall, students recognized it as “effective,” “powerful,” and “enlightening.” At the same time,

students were surprised by the fact that most of the racial stereotypes listed on the white board were toward people of color. Some of the comments retrieved from journal entries are:

Jamie: I was aware of the fact that everyone has their own stereotypes and prejudices, but I was surprised to discover that many of my classmates had the same stereotypes.

Antonio: What I found quite shocking was that most of the stereotypes were targeted against minorities (i.e. Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, etc.) but not Whites.

Leigh: I already knew that Caucasian people aren't a race that gets talked about very much. It is mostly African American and Hispanics that do. . . . It was shocking, being a Caucasian person, that my race is the race that makes fun of other races the most.

Some students of color shared their past experiences of being the victim of racial stereotypes.

Antonio: The other day at work a white male walked in and refused to be helped by me. His exact words were, "I don't want no damn border jumper to take my money. He's probably gonna go buy food for his starving family, illegal piece of sh**." Exact words. I have no problem with anyone waiting on another co-worker, but when a white male says all of this stuff to me without even knowing me, it hurt big-time.

Leon: When I first attended school in the United States, I was very quiet in class and did not participate much because I couldn't speak the language

and was afraid of being ridiculed by the other students in the class. This caused the other students to eventually create prejudice towards me; they called me names such as “stupid” or “incompetent.”

Kerry: It was a normal day and there was a greeter at the door the people in front of us were Caucasian. The Caucasian greeted the couple in front of us when we walked in we said hello to him and he looked at us and scoffed, then ignored us and did not give us a cart. . . . Then the Caucasian told us. Let me guess you guys have food stamps then he laughed and said you guys have to wait for the next cashier to come I am off . . . They both denied of service and it was all because of the color of our skin. I had no clue how to react I was sad that some people cannot open their eyes and see that we are all the same. There was a lady behind us she was also Caucasian and she just giggled as the cashier talked to us rudely.

The participatory activities created a dialogical space that encouraged students to examine their unrecognized stereotypes, and to share personal stories of being stereotyped because of racial, ethnic, and cultural identification. Students acknowledged that stereotypes still existed in our daily surroundings, mainly toward people of color. In order to challenge the deficit thinking that negatively affects students of color, we teacher educators need to provide pre-service teachers with critical and creative instruction in which they can confront unrecognized stereotypes they may unconsciously bring to their future classrooms.

“Let the Disney alone.”

We continued our exploration of racial stereotypes. In this session, I wanted students to examine racial stereotypes in relation to racial hegemony. Tobin (2000) conducted an ethnographic research study, using a local context of Hawaii, which was aimed at analyzing how dominant discourses pervasive in the larger American society, through media, interpellated (Althusser, 1972) elementary school children. Specifically, Tobin (2000) showed informants animated Disney films as a stimulus to enhance subsequent multivocal conversations, followed by analyzing the informants’ oral accounts using “a variety of interpretive techniques borrowed from literary studies, psychoanalysis, performance studies, critical theory, and ethnography” (p. 12). Following Tobin’s research agenda and methodological approach, I also strove to examine how hegemonic ideologies are interpellated through animated Disney films in a specific student population. In my case, as the majority of students had already watched multiple animated Disney movies since early childhood, I showed a documentary film, Sun & Picker’s (2002) *Mickey Mouse Monopoly: Disney, Childhood & Corporate Power* (hereafter referred to as *Mickey Mouse Monopoly*) as an alternative, evocative text to enhance conversations on racial stereotypes and racist ideology embedded in animated Disney films. In this documentary film, a total of 15 Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Cultural Studies (CS) scholars present numerous problematic scenes from animated Disney films, such as *The Jungle Book* (1967), *Beauty and the Beast* (1991), *Aladdin* (1992), *The Lion King* (1994), and *Pocahontas* (1995), and argue how Disney films not only perpetuate

racial stereotypes, but also promote racial supremacy. One of the main arguments the scholars make in the film is that racist ideological messages latent in Disney films exert negative effects on children of color in terms of nurturing healthy racial identity development. One of the scholars, for instance, points out that it is obvious how wild animals living in the jungle portrayed in Disney films can be reminded of African Americans when paying close attention to the tone, accent, and intonation those animals use when they speak. Here is a portion of the script excerpt from *Mickey Mouse Monopoly*.

Jacqueline Maloney: In *Jungle Book*, it's that same, you know—the jive, the hustle, the dance, you know, these gorillas and orangutans that sound like black people that want to be like men, but will never be men. The baboons.

[Movie: *The Jungle Book*] (Gorilla) I want to be a man, man cub, and stroll right into town and be just like the other man—I'm tired of walking around. I want to be like you. I want to talk like you, walk like you.

Elizabeth Hadley: We have dealt with decades of *Tarzan* movies, where the white man comes in to the jungle and he tames the animals and he also tames the natives. And he knows the jungle better than the native people do.

Alvin Poussaint: Kids in Africa see it. They see a white man in Africa who is superior, swinging from trees to trees, they see no Africans. They see gorillas being the ones they relate to. What does it mean to an African child? Is it promoting white supremacy to these Black African children

who watch Tarzan in a movie theater in Africa? Of course it will, and it might be promoting it around the world.

Dr. Jacqueline Maloney in *Mickey Mouse Monopoly* argues that in addition to the negative effect on children of color in terms of their internalizing a racially “inferior” status (i.e., subordination) through the subliminal messages coded in animated Disney films, they may also exert a deleterious influence on White children in terms of their internalizing a false assumption of racial superiority (i.e., domination). She shares her personal experience:

I have a girlfriend who, she’s a white woman and her son is about three, and she came to me one day really disturbed and said that she had been coming back from shopping and that her son said, “Mommy, Mommy, the hyenas, the hyenas,” and she looked up and she said there was a group of black children on the carousel and playing. And she said but when you had your back turned to them, they did, they sounded just like the sound, the voicing, the laughing of the hyenas. And she could not move her son away from the attachment of the sound to the image of hyenas in *The Lion King*. And she said, and *further*, he had made the association that they were bad. Then she started to shift in her assessment of what I was saying to her, but also what kinds of images she was allowing her son to see without having conversation.

The session where we watched and discussed *Mickey Mouse Monopoly* culminated in one of the most heated sessions of the observation semester. In the previous semester, I had a class where all students were female, the majority of

them White. I remember that I was a little afraid of bringing up racial issues associated with animated Disney films, because I just knew how the class was going to be. Just as I thought, the session created a teacher vs. student dichotomy. I was observing students' facial expressions while they were watching *Mickey Mouse Monopoly*. Students were rolling their eyes and shaking their heads as observable signs of refusal and discomfort. Regarding this observation semester, however, I had a large number of students of color compared to the previous semesters. I might have expected less anger and hostility from students compared to my previous predominantly monoracial classes, due to the presence of students of color. In addition, I unconsciously expected students of color to agree with the scholarly argument in *Mickey Mouse Monopoly*. But, I was wrong. And, this was a moment in which I reflected on my own racial identity as well as my teaching practice. I thought that I had never attempted to impose my opinions on my students; however, I might have indoctrinated them to accept my assumption, belief, and value in an unconscious manner, thereby becoming an oppressor who silenced them and coerced them to withdraw themselves from racial conversation.

During our classroom discussion, I strove for digging deeper into the meaning of students' discourses, identifying common emerging themes across their discourses. In addition, I attempted to find "core binaries" (Lévi-Strauss, 1969) in their accounts. Tobin (2000) sought to decode core binaries in his informants' transcripts, taking into account Lévi-Strauss's (1969) note that "the beliefs and values of a culture can be elucidated through the identification of core binaries" (p. 12). Following Lévi-Strauss (1969) and Tobin (2000), I wanted to

examine hegemonic ideologies manifested in students' oral and written accounts by identifying emerging themes and core binaries. As a result, I found that there was a binary distinction between female students in general and male students of color. Below are six students' comments: the first three from White female students and the last three from male students of color.

Andy: I understand the root of scholars' arguments, yet I didn't analyze these movies to such an extent while watching them in my childhood. I may have noticed that most Disney characters are white, or that Latinos and Asians characters are negatively illustrated. But, given I made these articulations, I definitely didn't link such to racial stereotyping. In other words, I watched Disney movies countless times, noticed these cultural nuances, and didn't evolve into a racist individual.

Jean: Unless if someone particularly tells them that the monkeys in *The Jungle Book* represent black people trying to be like white people, how are kids supposed to think this way? In addition, as much as the commentators' arguments made sense, all races in every Disney movie were portrayed in some type of animal. The voices of white people were used for the "bad guys" just as well as the "good guys"—just like the voices of people from any other race/ethnicity were used for antagonists or protagonists in the movies.

Lindsay: Tarzan, who is separated from his human family, is still capable of learning and developing as a human would at the hands of a herd of gorillas. Also, people try and say that black people are depicted as the

gorillas and that they are the ‘bad people’ is absurd. In fact, I would say, if anything, the gorillas represent a NATIVE species and for the entirety of the movie it is depicted that the WHITE people are the bad guys (Clayton with his huge gun) and the message is to preserve and protect the native species. Furthermore, despite the fact that Tarzan is a white male, he is the minority in this film and works hard to become accepted by all including the alpha gorilla.

Jamie: I do agree that Disney films give children a false representation of different racial groups. I believe this is harmful because it gives viewers a negative image of others, making them internalize these stereotypes as truth. For example, the scholars mentioned how some movies like Tarzan that contain a White ape man who tames the “animals and natives” portray dominance of one race over another. African Americans portrayed as orangutans, Jive singers, or having certain slangs are some of the many stereotypes depicted in Disney films. In Oliver and Company, the Chihuahua often becomes the stereotypical model of a Latino who has a heavy accent and is associated with Taco Bell. These types of representations do perpetuate negative stereotypes and encourages children to marginalize racial groups different than their own.

Efren: I agree with the scholars in that Disney portrays racism. For instance in the Tarzan there is no black people even though they’re in Africa, he is just surrounded by monkeys. What message is a black kid supposed to take from this? That he is a chimp?

Sean: I have noticed this long before this video was even made, I did not know about the video but I am glad I saw it. Every single Disney movie (especially cartoons) have racism and stereotyping in it. There is never a “minority” who is the hero. And if there happens to be a black person with powers, he is the sidekick taking orders from the white one.

Except for one student, all the White female students’ discourses reached a consensus that there is no harmful intention in animated Disney films, because “they have never judged or defined a race based on watching Disney movies.” Through their personal reflection, students claimed that they had never been influenced negatively by animated Disney films, although they had watched them countless times since their early childhood, which led them to a conclusion that the scholarly argument articulated in *Mickey Mouse Monopoly* has no validity and evidential proof. Dr. Gail Dines, a professor of Women’s Studies, in *Mickey Mouse Monopoly* shares her classroom activity aimed at decoding racist images portrayed in animated Disney films.

One of the first thing students say to me is, “is this intentional—this racism, this sexism?” And of course, the answer to that has to be, well first of all, we do know the vast majority of people in Hollywood, who are in power and who have creative power, and ownership power, basically the vast majority of them are white men, we know that. But the real answer to that is, it doesn’t really matter if they are intentional or unintentional because the effect is ultimately the same. And also, what’s the most important thing is that Mickey Mouse doesn’t write these scripts, these

scripts are written by real people, who themselves have been socialized in this society. And they are going to internalize those norms and those values and so when they produce work, it's bound to come out in some way, unless of course, they make a really conscious decision to operate within an alternative ideology.

I cannot agree more with Dr. Dines, especially when she says that “it doesn't really matter if they are intentional or unintentional because the effect is ultimately the same.” What we need to pay attention to is not how animated Disney films affect us, but how they affect children of color who are being stereotypically portrayed, as well as White children who continuously receive such racist messages. Through Disney films, both children of color and White children construct the meaning of race. A British CS scholar Stuart Hall (2000) also argues that “the media construct for us a definition of what *race* is, what meaning the imagery of race carries, and what the ‘problem of race’ is understood to be” (p. 273). Hall (2000) continued:

The connotations and echoes which [updated images of people of color] reverberate back a very long way. They continue to shape the ways whites see black today . . . and the intention is to show, not the savagery, but the serenity . . . of an ancient people ‘unchanged even down to modern times’ (p. 278).

On the contrary, all male students of color strongly agreed with the scholarly argument in *Mickey Mouse Monopoly*. This is understandable in how Tobin (2000) argues that *interpellation* operates, “not all at once but instead

through the accrual over time of repeated experiences of being hailed by the same ideological message” (p. 4). Male students of color have not been exposed to ideological messages hidden in Disney films, compared to female students, and hence they were able to take a relatively neutral stance when examining the scholarly argument in *Mickey Mouse Monopoly*.

Tobin (2000) points out that “White people subjectively experience the world as one in which they are blameless potential victims of irrational violence from dark-skinned people” (p. 73). Through animated Disney films as well as numerous social media sites, people of color are often stereotypically portrayed as savage and uncivilized human beings who cannot perform reasonable acts and hence are socially incompetent, which provides the dominant group with a rationale to believe: “We have to protect us from their savage traits.” “We have to bring them to our world to save them.” This colonial mentality has been pervasive in American education, particularly since the late 19th century when the U.S. government established Indian Boarding Schools. This is well depicted in a documentary film, Richie, Heape, & Richie’s (2003) *Our Spirits Don’t Speak English: Indian Boarding School*. The U.S. government used a slogan to legitimate the establishment of Indian Boarding Schools: “Kill the Indian, Save the Man.” In the Indian Boarding Schools, Native American children were coerced to learn English, and prohibited to use their native languages. In addition, they were deprived of their Native American names and instead were given new English names. This is how Native Americans lost their native tongues and cultures. I found the same “Kill the Indian, Save the Man” message in animated

Disney films, but in the case of Disney films, their media authenticity is used to legitimate such racist messages. As a result, racist hegemonic ideologies naturally, smoothly, and spontaneously interpellate children without Disney using any coercive efforts. Animated Disney films can be a powerful ideological device, planting racial hegemony into a deeper level of one's consciousness and helping to "create and recreate forms of consciousness that enable social control to be maintained without the necessity of dominant groups having to resort to overt mechanisms of domination" (Apple, 2004, p. 2).

Chapter 3

RESISTANCE

“The learning that takes place in your class is priceless.”

We had so far discussed issues related to race, racial identity, and racial stereotypes, which served as a scaffold for discussion on the next topics: racism, power, and privilege. Before moving on to the new topics, we reflected on what happened in our classroom in the previous weeks. This reflection process can serve not only as an effective segue into new topics, but also as a site where teachers can confirm if there should be any additional instructional intervention for student learning. Through decoding students’ reflective comments, two main themes were identified. First, students recognized that the activities examining racial stereotypes helped challenge their pre-existing views and reduce unrecognized racial stereotypes.

Kristen: I have noticed that my initial judgments have vanished and I have become more accepting and understanding of others.

Leonor: I learned so much more about cultures and beliefs that I never took the time to educate myself on. I’m normally a very open and liberal person, but very set in those beliefs. I learned how to listen to other sides and opinions and see the positive in those. It’s so much more beneficial to not be biased, you will learn so much more.

Leon: I now try to see their point of view on things. I make fewer assumptions about people and their backgrounds because the exterior does not really define who they are.

Second, many students commented that it was observable how the classroom environment was becoming much closer and more collaborative than before, which helped them feel more comfortable sharing their personal thoughts and opinions. Although there were moments in which heated discussions flared up, students were willing to listen to opposing perspectives, rather than simply shutting them off. Students learned about the importance of being influenced by different perspectives. In this sense, discussion was transformed into “dialogue” in which students collaboratively joined a meaning-making process as a classroom community, rather than simply “talking at each other while defending or perpetuating their own ideas” (Butler, 2006, p. 3).

Jenny: I feel like it was super important to listen to everyone’s views on this topic. Nobody is right or wrong in what they are feeling, but you can really learn a lot about somebody when hearing their views. It can resemble their experiences and what really is important to me. I learned that even though somebody sees a situation completely different than me, doesn’t mean that I can’t agree with what they are saying.

Beth: You do a great job at making sure everyone’s voice gets heard. I also like when you give us your opinion when we are in the heated debates! It’s interesting to hear your experiences and views as well as the other classmates.

Jamie: The learning that takes place in your class is priceless. What I like about your class is that we learn something new and valuable every day that is applicable to real life. The various teaching strategies that you

incorporate in the classroom create an environment that is conducive to learning and sharing. Thank you for encouraging us to not only critically think, but to search for solutions for our society's most difficult problems in education.

I particularly owe my deepest gratitude to the team that was willing to take risks opening up conversations on race. Every time a student team finished their cultural presentation, I gave the team a 4-page evaluation report in which I provided my reflection on what I found and felt as a participant observer during their instructional time. Here is an excerpt from my evaluation report given to the student team in charge of the race presentation.

I really liked the way you began your presentation and the game exercise you introduced, which I think activated a subsequent positive classroom climate. However, did you notice that there were a few students who were totally left out of the game exercise? The number of students participating in one of the Human Knots might have been too large. I liked the fact that each of you joined the Human Knot circles, but that prohibited you to observe the exercise from outside as a facilitator. When you join an activity, you have to make sure that everyone in the classroom is being involved, especially when you have a large number of students in your classroom. . . . I also liked the way you shared your personal school/life experiences during the discussion, which motivated other students to share theirs. I noticed that the classroom as a whole was really into the entire presentation, because each of you displayed such a positive attitude

towards the learning contents, although the topic was one of the most difficult subjects that we deal with in our class. I was amazed by how enthusiastic you were toward the subject matter.

We have discussed racial identity and racial stereotypes in a comprehensive manner. I was mostly satisfied with the learning outcomes that students displayed; however, this is really just the early stage of the anti-racist curriculum. We have now entered a real discussion on racism, power, and privilege.

Racism

“It is racism that keeps the concept of race alive.”

Numerous research studies (e.g., King, 1991; Young & Laible, 2000; Sleeter, 2001; Milner, 2008) mention White teachers’ apparent lack of understanding of racism and its manifestations in the classroom. This may be caused by insufficient amount of time spent in conversation on racism in teacher education programs. In addition, even in a multicultural education course, which may be the only chance for prospective teachers to learn about anti-racist pedagogy throughout their entire teacher preparation program, racism in its true definition is not fully explored. Moreover, predominantly White teacher educators engaged in multicultural education, who rely mostly on printed scholarly works to verify the existence of racism and prefer more intellectual exploration on racism, struggle with designing instruction programs that emotionally engage pre-service teachers in the exploration of racism and encourage students to view racism not as

an insubstantial conception printed in textbooks, but as the reality that exerts a crucial influence on the lives of everyone living in contemporary America.

Before initiating a discussion on racism, I wanted to understand students' current understanding of racism. I asked students to define racism in their own words and their current understanding. Students' constructed definitions of racism were categorized into three themes: (1) racism as racial classification/categorization; (2) racism as individual discrimination; and (3) racism as ideology. Here are some excerpts from their constructed definitions:

Theme 1: Racism as racial classification/categorization:

- Racism can be defined as a classification system that defines the culture, ethnicity, religion and social group in which a person is derived from.
- Racism can be defined as categorizing people based on their skin color, ethnicity, cultural norms, etc., with the intention of causing any sort of harm to them.

Theme 2: Racism as individual discrimination

- Racism can be defined as being discriminatory to others based upon race, or being different.
- Racism can be defined as hatred towards a group of people and rejection of people with different skin color, language, and appearance.

Theme 3: Racism as ideology

- Racism is the belief that one race is superior to all races, therefore it [one race] should rule.

- Racism is the belief that one race (most commonly your own) has superiority over all others or certain specific ones. This race feels it has the right to dominate and is better than other races.

In addition to identifying categorical themes, I also examined student-constructed definitions of racism through a Lévi-Straussian (1969) *cultural binary* perspective. As a result, I found different cognitive-epistemological traits between White students and students of color. White students, on the one hand, are most likely to define racism as individual-level discrimination triggered by racial ignorance and/or hatred. Students of color, on the other hand, perceive racism as an ideology that provides a specific racial group with a false assumption of superiority. There were few students who perceived racism as a structured system that creates a racial hierarchy aimed at subordinating people of color. I felt the necessity to clarify that racial discrimination and racism are clearly differentiated in terms of their definitions and manifestation forms.

Critical race theorists (e.g., Lawrence, 1997; Kailin, 1999; Parker & Lynn, 2002; López, 2003; Milner, 2008) all agree that racism must be examined in a broader structural context, rather than on an individual-psychological level of prejudice and discrimination. Racial discrimination, on the one hand, manifests itself as a differential treatment of particular racial groups based on preconceived prejudicial beliefs about them (Gollnick & Chinn, 2010). Racial discrimination occurs against members of any racial groups. Racism, on the other hand, is a belief that one racial group has inherent superiority over other racial groups, which consequently makes the racial group self-identified as “superior” believe

that they have the right to dominate other racial groups, simultaneously legitimating exploitation and inequality between the “superior” and the “inferior” racial groups (Lorde, 1992; Grady, 2000; Solorzano & Yosso, 2001). It is important to know that racism is not merely a conceptual belief, but a dehumanizing practice in which the agent group legitimizes and arrogates dominant power to enforce institutional customs, laws, policies, and systems that benefit the agent group at the expense of the target group (Hardiman & Jackson, 1997; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). In contrast to individual-level racial discrimination, in which identifiable perpetrators can be recognized, racism is mostly invisible in its institutional nature, as it is embedded in one’s consciousness as natural and normal (Hardiman & Jackson, 1997). Ladson-Billing (1999) argues how racism works in classrooms:

Most prospective teachers are not racist in the sense that they overtly discriminate and oppress people of color. Rather, the kind of racism that students face from teachers is more tied to Wellman’s (1977) definition of racism as “culturally sanctioned beliefs which, regardless of the intentions involved, defend the advantages whites have because of the subordinated positions of racial minorities” (p. xviii) (p. 225).

Racism must be examined as a socioculturally constructed ideology aimed at legitimating and perpetuating the racist system of the time. Storey (2009) illustrates the historical origin and development of racism, noting that “racism first emerges as a *defensive ideology* [emphasis added] promulgated in order to defend the economic profits of slavery and the slave trade” (p. 169). The concept

of race was later conceived to “secure and maintain the different forms of racialization” (p. 168) and to veil all the injustices brought on by the system of racism. Storey (2009) concludes that, without the concept of racism, there is no working definition of race, because “it is racism that keeps the concept [of race] alive” (p. 168). The ideology of race was systematized during the nineteenth century in which the human race was dichotomized into Whites considered “superior” and racial ‘Others’ considered “inferior” (Storey, 2009). This ideological view, which places people of color in an inferior status, has long been inherited as the deficit thinking in American education and is still being practiced in U.S. classrooms.

Silence as a Form of Discourse

I could not agree more with Berlak (1999), who notes, “I consider racism a cultural secret in the sense that it remains largely unfelt, unspoken, and unacknowledged in public discourse, in the media, and in schools and university classrooms” (p. 108). The reticence of anti-racist discourse in teacher education programs consequently reinforces racial hegemonic stability in K-12 education. Marx (2004) also views silence as a form of discourse, which is embedded in school as a hidden curriculum that perpetuates racial hegemony.

As one of our society’s major institutions, our education system perpetuates the pervasiveness of whiteness and the passivity of white racism by failing to challenge, and by reproducing this pervasiveness and passivity. By neither questioning nor challenging the neutrality of the

white perspective, most schools and colleges of education silently condone it (p. 32).

It is crucial for multicultural teacher educators to challenge this silent discourse pervasive in teacher education programs. Putting theory into practice, however, has proven to be difficult. Challenging White students' silent discourse entails conflictual negotiations. "Teachers have strategies for educating . . . students; students have tactics they employ to resist their teachers' agendas" (Tobin, 2000, p. 11). I observed that many White female students used silence as a tactic to avoid my instructional strategies that aimed to engage them in conversations on racism, whereas some White male students were likely to dominate the conversation, which often made students of color lapse into silence.

Many action research studies conducted in multicultural teacher education classrooms (e.g. Ahlquist, 1991; Ladson-Billing, 1996; Moon, 1999; Case & Hemmings, 2005; Pennington, 2007) indicate that White students' silence can be interpreted as a sign of resistance for the purpose of disassociating themselves from an ongoing conversation on racism so that they do not need to challenge their existing worldviews. I certainly agree with these arguments derived from their teachers-as-researchers' *etic* perspectives. Nevertheless, we may need to analyze White students' silence from an alternative perspective. For instance we, as teacher educators, may tend to neglect a self-reflective analysis of our own attitudes and/or pedagogical approaches, which may interfere with White students' active participation in racial conversation. In the previous chapter, I discussed my own racially biased assumption as a possible imposition, which suppressed the

students' active participation in conversations on racial stereotypes. As such, silence from White students may stem from the direct/indirect consequences of ineffective instructional strategies we have employed. Therefore, we may want to take a more critical view of what is behind the silence in White students.

Citing Tatum (1992), Souto-Manning (2011) notes that “the adult anti-racist journey begins when the silence about Whiteness is broken” (p. 1003). In order to confront the “cultural secret” (Berlak, 1999) as a racial hegemony pervasive in teacher education classrooms, we first need to abandon our existing assumptions on White students' tactics of silence and reflect on our own attitudes and pedagogical approaches in a cyclical manner in order to fully analyze what perpetuates the silent discourse of White students in our classrooms. Secondly, we need to offer an open dialogical atmosphere in which students feel empowered to challenge their silence and passivity in their own time and space, and not in a coercive manner.

Boalian Theatre Games and Trust Building

In order to close the cognitive and emotional distance between students and anti-racist pedagogy and to engage them in an open, honest, and critical conversation on racism, power, and privilege, teacher educators must create a safe and trusting learning environment (Case & Hemmings, 2005). I follow Marx's (2004) guidance:

In order to talk about such controversial, political, and emotional topics . . . , it was absolutely critical that [students] felt that they could trust [the teacher] at all times. Entwined with trust were kindness,

encouragement, and patience. Without these qualities influencing our relationships, [students] could have easily felt silenced (p. 34).

As teacher educators, who are engaged daily in critical multicultural education, we struggle with creating such a positive and constructive classroom environment in which students can challenge their silence and passivity. In the previous chapter, I explored the possibilities of Boalian theatre games as a way to develop one's racial and cultural awareness. Through my experience of incorporating Boalian theatre games in my teaching practice, I also found the inherent power and possibilities of theatre games as a scaffold to build a collaborative learning environment, which could empower students to participate in subsequent conversations in a more positive, constructive manner. Rohd (1998) also uses Boalian theatre games as trust work to engage more active participants in subsequent, interactive theatrical activities aimed at raising HIV awareness in a local community. Before initiating conversation on racism and White privilege, I felt it necessary to provide such a positive environment in which students could feel safe and comfortable sharing their thoughts, opinions, and past experiences. During the semester, we played 10 different theatre games, all of which aimed at achieving a common goal and enhancing collaboration as a classroom community. Those game exercises were: Human Knots (Pollack & Fusoni, 2005); Trust Falls (Rohd, 1998); Web of Connection (Pollack & Fusoni, 2005); Minefield (Rohd, 1998); Pass the Pulse (Pollack & Fusoni, 2005); Bag Toss (Pollack & Fusoni, 2005); Zip Zap Zop (Rohd, 1998); Psychic Shake (Pollack & Fusoni, 2005); Shake It Up (West, 1996); and Move Together (Pollack & Fusoni, 2005).

I synthesized and analyzed students' written accounts retrieved from their reflective journal entries, which described their experiences of Boalian theatre games. The theatre games helped build a "foundation" to create "a comfortable learning environment" as well as a "comfort zone" in which "experiences and opinions were able to be exchanged easily." As a result, "the whole class let their guard down and become open to new ideas and to be able to talk about more sensitive topics more openly." Theatre games provided each student with a successful internal dialogue, which was in turn linked to collective change in an external environment.

Erica: [Boalian theatre games] allowed everyone to sort of get to know one another in a quick sense, simply allowing there to be a comfort zone there within the classroom. This was important, especially in the touchy and deep topics and discussions we would get into. If you are not comfortable around the people in the classroom, it makes it tough to share your view or opinion and participate at all. It created a multicultural setting by allowing each one of us to interact with one another and learn from each other.

Mary: The icebreakers were great at getting to know your classmates and most importantly yourself. Those specific icebreakers that made you step out of your comfort zone were really beneficial at stopping and taking a look at yourself and things that have happened in your life.

Maureen: Ice-breakers really can set the atmosphere for the whole entire classroom. I think that they are keys given to students that allow them to

determine how open, deep, and sentimental a classroom can be. Overtime, I could see that the icebreakers became more and more personal. It was contagious and it developed trust and understanding with one another. We became a family.

I found the following comment made by Andy, a White female education major, particularly interesting. It indicates that theatre games challenged her pre-existing notions on learning in higher education, which had suppressed her emotional response to the learning content.

Instead of [classmates] being just those people I am in cultural diversity class they have become more familiar. This familiarity makes me feel more comfortable and able to share not just my textbook opinions but what I feel. The most challenging work in the class has been letting my feeling come out in the classroom. I have been taught in my last two years of college that the classroom is not the place to let your feelings out but a place to use logic, reasons and textbook references.

In my observation, White students are likely to prefer an intellectual approach to the subject of racism in order to maintain an emotional distance from it. In Andy's case, Boalian theatre games served as an emotive trigger that assisted her in developing an emotional attachment to the subject of racism. I found that this is a very important process for White pre-service teachers in terms of challenging their silence and passivity. Another, Liz mentioned that theatre games helped her develop "empathy" toward her peers. Empathy is an indispensable attribute when teaching children about racial 'Others.' By constantly incorporating Boalian

theatre games, coupled with debriefing conversations as a pedagogical routine to creating a positive classroom culture, students got to know each other better than they had in any of their other college classroom experiences. Boalian theatre games created a humanizing space, which empowered students to challenge our limitations and bring forth our higher potential. Citing Vygotsky (1978), Souto-Manning (2011) analyzes the power and possibilities of Boalian theatre games, as follows:

As in the focus of a magnifying glass, play contains all the developmental tendencies in a condensed form; in play it is as though the child were trying to jump above the level of his normal behavior” (p. 70). Play, thus, serves as a zone of proximal development (p. 999).

Boalian theatre game protocol. Theatre games can be played at the beginning, in the middle, and/or at the end of the class. It depends on how and for what purpose facilitators wish to use theatre games. In our classroom, we generally played them at the beginning of class, but sometimes we played them at the end, particularly when there was intense discussion, such as on racism, White privilege, and homophobia. This allowed students to let out uncompleted emotions left inside. It is crucial to have a debriefing conversation following theatre games, even though it simply asks students to share their feelings in one word (such as using a simple adjective), which some theatre activists call a “Check Out” activity. Citing Derman-Sparks and Ramsey (2006), Souto-Manning (2011) indicates the importance of having a debriefing discussion in order to prevent students’ withdrawal “into their oblivion about race and refusing to

participate in any discussion about racial issues” (p. 23). Souto-Manning (2011) continues:

Finally, play can be coupled with dialogue so that there is a collective deconstructing and tackling of issues. . . . [C]ombining play and dialogue using Theatre of the Oppressed (Boal, 1979) games as codifications of and sites for problematizing status quo perspectives in combination with the dialogic practices promoted in Pedagogy of the Oppressed (Freire, 1970)—can provide sites in which issues of double-consciousness are not only discussed but embodied by White teachers who are bound to educate children of color (p. 1003).

Boalian theatre games may be influential not only to students, but teachers as well. In my case, theatre games served as an energizer. The observation semester may have been one of my most challenging semesters due to numerous academic and personal engagements. But no matter how distressed I was, I wanted to be energetic, passionate, and enthusiastic in front of my students, because my previous teaching experience taught me that teacher attitude affects a classroom in either a positive or negative way. A classroom’s climate is reflective of teachers’ overt and covert attitudes, behaviors, and messages. This climate consequently affects students’ motivation to learn. By participating in Boalian theatre games, I felt energized and empowered, therefore able to bring forth passion and enthusiasm. Boalian theatre games most certainly served as the source of energy in my daily teaching practice.

As previously discussed, I always joined in the theatre games as part of our learning community, which was positively perceived by the students. One of the students indicated that my participation in theatre games provided her with a “friendly vibe,” which “makes it easy to get more involved and speak out more.” Another student voiced: “I really like how you try to engage yourself in the activities, as if you were one of the students.” In debriefing conversations following the theatre games, I also shared my personal experiences according to the related themes. Theatre games coupled with a debriefing conversation became a democratic space, which enabled me to share the power with my students. I always kept in mind hooks’s guidance (1994):

Professors who expect students to share confessional narratives but who are themselves unwilling to share are exercising power in a manner that could be coercive. In my classrooms, I do not expect students to take any risks that I would not take, to share in any way that I would not share. When professors bring narratives of their experiences into classroom discussions it eliminates the possibility that we can function as all-knowing, silent interrogators. It is often productive if professors take the first risk, linking confessional narratives to academic discussions so as to show how experience can illuminate and enhance our understanding of academic material (p. 21).

Following hooks, I always tried to “take the first risk” by sharing my own personal stories. Students voiced:

Silvia: I love how everyone is so open in the classroom and honest with things they have gone through. We would not have been able to become so open and comfortable if it wasn't for you sharing all that you have shared with us and more. You have helped us to become comfortable when talking about hardships.

Jenny: I haven't taken a class that was so open and your style of teaching is different but very effective and I admire how you make yourself so open to all of the students.

Beth: Your personality allows us students to open up more and share our own stories we normally would not.

Power and Privilege

Solórzano and Yosso (2002) note that “White privilege is seen and unseen. It's both a byproduct of racism and what fuels racism, especially when it's unexposed” (p. 162). What are powerful and transformative learning experiences which encourage students to examine power and privilege? How can we make the invisibility of Whiteness visible in our multicultural education classrooms? Solomona, Portelli, Daniel, and Campbell (2005) argue that “the failure to examine notions of whiteness facilitates the maintenance of its incorporeal nature thereby re-inscribing its dominating power” (p. 148). It is a critical responsibility as critical multicultural teacher educators to provide pre-service teacher candidates with opportunities for engagement in critical and constructive conversations on power and privilege. To achieve this goal, I incorporated an exercise called Privilege Walk, or Walking through Privilege. In addition, I

integrated specific Boalian theatre games to examine power and privilege.

Through these participatory instructional strategies, I wanted students to examine their privileged and racialized positionality in U.S. society. This crucial process echoes Freire's (1970) notion: "When people reflect on their domination they begin a first step in changing their relationship to the world" (p. 62).

Privilege Walk

Privilege Walk is an exercise that "provide[s] . . . students with an opportunity to . . . challenge themselves and understand some of the privileges that have been granted to them because of their race, religion, education, family upbringing, etc" (Young, 2006, p. 2). There are many variations of Privilege Walk that may be derived from the original version. In my class, I used the one designed by Young (2006). The Privilege Walk exercise is often considered "controversial," because it reenacts, in a visible way, a racial dichotomy between privileged and marginalized groups. In my classroom, Privilege Walk elicited a wide variety of emotions from students, such as "guilt," "shame," "anger," "sadness," "appreciation," and "pride," by making them "think through [their] life and memories." The instructions for the Privilege Walk exercise notes:

This is a very "high risk" activity that requires trust building and safety for participants; introducing this activity too early in the training or before building trust risks creating resentment and hurt that can inhibit further sharing and openness.

It is important that teacher educators be willing to incorporate the Privilege Walk exercise in their instructional techniques to ensure that a trusting

environment has been set prior to the exercise, and that plenty of time has been secured for student engagement in the debriefing conversation following, both of which may be crucial to achieving positive learning outcomes.

Privilege Walk is similar to Power Shuffle (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010; Souto-Manning, 2011). In Power Shuffle, participants who are standing in one line on the side of a room are asked to cross to the other side when they fit within the category called out. These categories include various cultural identifications, such as age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, race, ethnicity, language, and socioeconomic status, as well as socio-culturally defined privileges derivative of those micro-cultural identifications. Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning (2010) explains Power Shuffle:

This game challenges the good intentions many teachers have to see all students as the same, regardless of differences in race, class, gender, parents' educational background, etc. This color blind and difference-blind orientation overlooks important historical and social differences that place unfair obstacles and burdens on some more than others (p. 53).

I found Privilege Walk more effective and powerful than Power Shuffle in terms of allowing students to examine unrecognized privileges in a more vicarious way. Privilege Walk re-creates, in our own classroom, a microcosm of the larger American society that reflects a hierarchical structure, creating a cultural division between dominant and subordinate groups.

Privilege walk protocol. In the Privilege Walk exercise, participants are asked to stand in a single-file line, shoulder to shoulder, leaving space in front and

behind, in a cleared space of the room. Once the exercise begins, participants will be asked to step forward or backward when they fit within the sentences read aloud by a facilitator, sentences examining privileges and disadvantages that racial, ethnic, and cultural identities bring upon U.S. society. The exercise is not competition. It is of great importance that facilitators encourage participants to be honest and sincere when answering each question called out during the exercise, but also to make sure that participants use their own judgment criteria in their response. The exercise itself takes approximately 25 minutes, but, similar to Boalian theatre games, it is absolutely essential to having a debriefing conversation following the exercise, which takes approximately half an hour depending on the number of debriefing questions as well as participants' active participation. It may be difficult to do this exercise in a regular teacher education classroom. It may be best to take students outside, if weather conditions are acceptable, or reserve a theatre classroom if possible. Some of the questions used in the exercise are as follows. These questions were retrieved from Young's (2006) Privilege Walk and should be asked randomly during the exercise.

Please take one-step back:

- If your ancestors were forced to come to the USA not by choice.
- If you were ever called names because of your race, class, ethnicity, gender, and sexual orientation.
- If you were ever ashamed or embarrassed of your clothes, house, car, etc.

- If you were raised in an area, where there was prostitution, drug activity, etc.
- If you ever had to skip a meal because there was not enough money to buy food when you were growing up.
- If you were ever accused of cheating or lying because of your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation.
- If you were ever stopped or questioned by the police because of your race, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation (p. 5-7).

Please take one-step forward:

- If one or both of your parents has a college degree.
- If there were more than 50 books in your house when you grew up.
- If you attended private school.
- If you were encouraged to attend college by your parents.
- If you were born in the United States.
- If English is your first language (p. 5-7).

Privilege walk debriefing protocol. After the Privilege Walk exercise, I first asked students to “remain in their positions and to look at their position in relation to the line and the positions of the other participants” (Young, 2006, p. 7). We then made a big circle, sitting on the ground. I expressed my deep appreciation for their active participation, followed by asking each of them to share their feelings using one simple word, such as “eye-opening,” “exposed,” “thought-provoking,” “uncomfortable,” “challenging,” or just “pass.” We then moved on to a debriefing conversation in which the following questions (See

Young, 2006, p. 7-8) were asked: “Would anyone like to share more about your feelings?” “What were your thoughts as you did this exercise?” “How did it feel to be one of the students on the back/front side of the line or to be alone on one side?” “Were there certain sentences that were more impactful than others?” “What have you learned from this exercise?”

In the next class session, I spent a little time conducting the content analysis of Privilege Walk by examining some of the questions used in the exercise. In addition, I verbally introduced a similar exercise called *The American Dream*, which contains questions related more directly to specific racial and ethnic groups. I learned the American Dream exercise from the same theatre course introduced in the previous chapter. The American Dream, as an example, includes the following:

- African-American and Latino men have the highest rate of cancer and heart disease in the U.S. All African-American and Latino men take a baby step back.
- The primary cause of death among young Black males between 18 and 24 years old in the U.S. is murder. All Black males take a giant step back.
- The high school drop-out rate for Latinos, Native Americans, and African Americans is over 50%. Latinos, African Americans, and Native Americans take a giant step back.
- Native Americans have the highest rate of infant and mother mortality in the U.S. All Native Americans take a giant step back.

- African Americans, Native Americans, Chinese, and Mexicans were slaves in the U.S. All those whose ancestors were not members of these groups, take a giant step forward.

In my case, I included some questions in the Privilege Walk game, which were retrieved from The American Dream exercise. Both exercises can be a powerful instructional tool to examine privileges and disadvantages alive in U.S. society. However, I sensed that The American Dream may produce more powerful educational outcomes when conducted in a more racially diverse classroom.

Privilege walk student reflection. The majority of students recognized that the Privilege Walk exercise was very “impactful” and “eye opening.” The exercise “accomplished its purpose of getting students to look at the privileges they have or have not been granted” (Jenny, a White female student). It seems that the exercise had more impact on White students. “How privileged I am to be white, I don’t usually think about it,” Kristen voiced. The Privilege Walk exercise helped White pre-service teachers examine the unrecognized privileges they had taken for granted in their daily lives. On the contrary, a male student of color commented that the exercise did not “surprise [him] at all,” because “everything that was read, [he] knew already”.

A few White students mentioned that they felt “guilty for not having had to deal with a lot of the things that were said.” Citing Helms (1995), Souto-Manning (2011) notes that “it is important to reach disequilibrium—when people feel guilty and overwhelmed and ‘discover’ that racism is real and pervasive—in

the White identity development” (p. 1005). Here are some White students’ comments:

Alicia: When we first began the workshop, I felt that it was silly and it would not have an impact on me. But, I felt privileged after we completed the workshop. I felt like I learned a lot about my classmates and about myself.

Sally: This workshop made me feel privileged as well as empathetic towards my classmates. Some of the questions were very deep and when people took that step it hit me hard to know someone had to go through that.

Nancy: [The exercise] made me realize that I took for granted some of the things I had growing up. When we were doing the workshop I felt a little upset because I didn’t realize that many people didn’t have what I had growing up. As we were doing the workshop I continued to step forward, and I didn’t realize that people were stepping back.

The Privilege Walk exercise also helped White students become more cognizant of the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity surrounding them, which caused them to have more empathy and respect for their peers in the classroom.

Beth: I was amazed at the honesty of my classmates and their courage to step forward or back even when it was a difficult question to answer. I have much more respect for my fellow classmates now than I did before this workshop.

Erica: It really opened my eyes and reiterated to me how I need to be more observant and knowledgeable of my classmates and surroundings.

Students of color have a clear apprehension of the privileges granted to White people. The following are from journal entries of two students of color.

Kerry: I do believe that white privilege does exist only because for many years now if you were white and you were older you would never be told no. I just feel like whites have it easier sometimes and they know it they think it's okay to treat people who are different colors horribly or like they are less than. The fact that we have affirmative action proves that it was necessary to let them know they are not ruling the world and everyone needs to have a fair chance.

Jamie: I do believe that in many sectors of our society, whites have more privileges than those who are colored. Inequality can easily be seen when you look at the facts: "White-sounding" names are 50% more likely to receive a call back than people with "black-sounding" names, despite equal resume quality between the two racial groups. . . . Lastly, it is argued that the material that black and other minority children are tested on in school is often culturally biased, not taking into consideration dialect and other differences between populations.

Although I found many positive effects of the Privilege Walk exercise on students, I also realized, through decoding students' comments, that the exercise may have reinforced the invisibility of Whiteness by allowing a group of students to affirm that everyone has privileges and disadvantages in some way, regardless

of their race, ethnic, and cultural identities. For instance, two White students commented that privileges are influenced mostly by geographical location:

Nick: I believe that each race has its own privilege depending on the geographic location. For instance in my workplace I feel as though I am less privileged because I am white and feel that the Hispanics are privileged.

Lindsey: When I lived on the reservation, which is predominately Native American people living there, they don't have to pay taxes, they get lots of land for very cheap, they have socialized medicine so they don't have to pay for Medicare and they get money from our government to do with what they please. As a white person living there the only benefits we reaped from this situation was we weren't taxed when we purchased food. Other than that, we never received money from the government. They were very privileged but they were still racist towards white people.

When I read some of my students' comments, I felt as if I had encountered an insurmountable barrier dividing White people and people of color in U.S. society. In front of this racial division, which invisibly exists in an inner world and visibly exists in an outer world, I felt a sense of immaturity and powerlessness as a teacher educator engaged in multicultural/anti-racist education, yet I was more determined to take on this experience as a life-long challenge to seek social transformation beginning in my own classroom.

White Privilege

In the previous section, students examined their unrecognized privileges as well as the existing hierarchical structure in U.S. society that dichotomizes privileged and disadvantaged groups. As previously discussed, however, the Privilege Walk exercise may have reinforced the invisibility of and the conceptual foundation for Whiteness, provoking tension and further resistance in a group of White students to viewing themselves as privileged and racialized beings. The following comments, made by two White students, may best summarize a group of White students' discourses at this moment.

Leonor: I don't see that there are people that are granted more privileges based on their cultural identity, it's mostly the opposite. I think more often people are denied equal opportunity based on their cultural identity.

Andy: I can't say that "white privilege" doesn't exist, given that non-white races believe in its presence. As someone who is white, I feel biased either way. I don't necessarily perceive such privilege within my own life, but the lack of perception could be on account of my race. Maybe I've been naively unaware of something that has occurred throughout my life—I can't say for certain. I guess I acknowledge "white privilege" without having tangible evidence to back its existence.

These two students' comments resonate with McIntosh's (1990) personal testimonial in her article *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* (hereafter referred to as *White Privilege*):

As a White person, I realized I had been taught about racism as something which puts others at a disadvantage, but had been taught not to see its corollary aspects, White privilege, which puts me at an advantage. I think whites are carefully taught not to recognize white privilege (p. 291).

The McIntosh *White Privilege* article is widely used in gender and anti-racism studies. I used to assign this article as one of the required reading materials, but during this observation semester, we instead read a brief summary version of the article in class and projected the lists of White privilege on a slide screen. The McIntosh article includes 50 lists, which examine the effect of White privilege in one's daily life, and is created from her personal perspective as a White individual. The McIntosh (1988) list of White privilege includes, as an example:

- I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
- If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area which I can afford and in which I would want to live.
- Whether I use checks, credit cards or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
- I can if I wish arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
- I can remain oblivious of the language and customs of persons of color who constitute the world's majority without feeling in my culture any penalty for such oblivion.

- When I am told about our national heritage or about “civilization,” I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
- I can choose public accommodation without fearing that people of my race cannot get in or will be mistreated in the places I have chosen.
- I can be sure that my children will be given curricular materials that testify to the existence of their race.

In addition to the privilege list provided by McIntosh (1990), I made a different version of a White privilege list by adding other privileges argued by White scholars from other whiteness/white privilege studies: Sleeter’s (2000) *Diversity Vs. White Privilege*; Moore and Wright’s (2005) *White Privilege 101: Getting in on the Conversation*; Butler and Butler’s (2006) *Mirrors of Privilege: Making Whiteness Visible*; and Wise’s (2008) *White Power and Privilege*.

Prior to reading each privilege list, I emphasized that this was a self-exploratory exercise. I encouraged students to internalize each list by reflecting it on their daily life, rather than perceiving it as someone else’s problem, thereby disassociating themselves from the entire exercise. After the exercise, a group of White students expressed their feelings: “uncomfortable,” “frustrated,” and “anger.” Rita voiced: “[The exercise] was difficult for me. I disagreed with most of the points in the article as being evident of white privilege and this frustrated me a lot.” At the same time, in reflective journal entries of the week, I found some White students began to reflect on their White privileges, influenced by the McIntosh article. As an example, Mary narrated an actual incident through which she recognized White privilege.

The white population often rejects the notion of white privilege because it implies that merit has not been awarded based solely on hard work, but also by the arbitrary factor of race. It is easy for a Caucasian to admit that African Americans are often underprivileged. The part that is difficult is getting a Caucasian to admit that the underprivileged population allows for a privileged population. There have been many instances where I have experienced white privilege. Not too long ago I got pulled over for speeding. I left my wallet at home so I had no license, no insurance card and my registration tags were expired. I was going 20 mph over the speed limit. I explained to the police officer that I had the updated tags at home but I had not put them on yet. He winded up citing me for expired tags but explained that if I show the court my updated tags I will have no penalty. Afterwards, I remember thinking that if I was Mexican, I probably would have been arrested, but I did not even receive a speeding ticket. . . . It is instances like this that bring me to form the opinions I have regarding white privilege. I do not look at it so much as a privilege that I have, but a privilege that they do not. Minorities are commonly disadvantaged which allows the perpetuation of the advantaged white population.

Moore and Wright (2005) note that “[White] privileges have been institutionalized in all aspects of our society and only through acknowledgement of these privileges can equality or equity between races begin to exist” (p. 6). Exploring White privilege is a crucial step to “White racial identity development” (Helms, 1990) and “ideological clarity” (Bartolomé, 2004). Lawrence (1997)

posits that “White teachers with more fully developed racial identities are likely to experience greater success in multicultural teaching situations than those with poorly developed racial identities” (p. 114). The process of White racial identity development, however, takes deliberate and continuous efforts, because White students display various tactics, i.e. silence, withdrawal from conversation, conversation domination, blaming people of color, and embracing egalitarian democratic beliefs. Although resistant Whiteness could still be seen in the White students in my multicultural education classroom, they were given critical opportunities to explore their privileged positions in U.S. society. Citing Freire (1970), Souto-Manning (2011) notes that “the first step towards changing something is identifying and naming it, becoming aware of its existence, developing what he called *conscientização*” (p. 999). Through the experience of diverse participatory exercises, students have identified issues of racism and privilege and have become more aware of their existence, regardless of their standpoints. When White teachers recognize themselves as privileged, racialized beings, they will view their classrooms as a microcosm of the larger society that reflects racial inequalities and transform their classrooms into one that affords a humanistic foundation for affirming multiculturalism and achieving equitable educational outcomes for all learners (Souto-Manning, 2011).

Boalian Theatre Games and Power Dynamics

During the semester, we also played Boalian theatre games to examine power and privilege. Practitioners of *Theatre of the Oppressed* are most likely to use Boalian theatre games for this purpose. Boal’s (1992) *Games for Actors and*

Non-Actors provides numerous theatre games, which allow us to explore our own internalized oppression. Souto-Manning (2011) incorporates Boalian theatre games as a pedagogical tool “to bring about dynamics of power often absent from teacher education classrooms” (p. 999). In our classroom, we played the following theatre games to explore power relationships in a kinetic way: Red Light, Green Light (Grady, 2000); Follow the Leader (Pollack & Fusoni, 2005); Group the Group (Pollack & Fusoni, 2005); Circle Dash (Rohd, 1998); and Defender (Rohd, 1998).

On one occasion, I used Follow the Leader as a variation of Columbian Hypnosis (Boal, 1992). To play this exercise, you need to clear space for a big circle of people. Or, if you are in a regular teacher education classroom, you may need to make a few smaller circles. Participants in the circle must follow every movement the appointed Leader makes. The Leader, as a “hypnotizer,” forces participants into “all sorts of ridiculous, grotesque, uncomfortable positions” (Boal, 1992, p. 51). On another occasion, I used Defender as a continuum of Cover the Space (Rohd, 1998). In Defender, participants must continuously walk around a cleared space throughout the exercise, silently picking both an *enemy* and a *defender*. The purpose of this exercise is to “keep their defender between themselves and their enemy at all times” (Rohd, 1998, p. 17). Through these game exercises, we explored issues of power by connecting the hypothetical context created by the exercises to the context of our everyday lives, which made us more aware of existing power relations in our personal surroundings.

Compared to the Boalian theatre games that we played in hopes of developing racial and cultural awareness and of enhancing classroom collaboration, it seems that students did not find the effectiveness of these theatre games as an exploration of power. For instance, Red Light, Green Light, Group the Group, and Circle Dash culminated as merely a fun game and competition, and students could not connect them with issues of power.

We may need more research data to analyze the effectiveness of Boalian theatre games in a pre-service teacher education context. Souto-Manning (2011) notes that although there are teacher educators using *Theatre of the Oppressed* in their teaching practices, there are few incorporating Boalian theatre games as a pedagogical tool to engage pre-service teachers in conversation on multiculturalism and anti-racism. I hope that data findings related to Boalian theatre games reported in this doctoral dissertation study will encourage multicultural teacher educators to integrate Boalian theatre games in their daily teaching practices as a way to create a pedagogical space in which genuine dialogue on multiculturalism/anti-racism can occur.

Chapter 4

NEGOTIATION

In the *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* exercise, students examined privileges through a White person's perspective. This time, I wanted students to examine privilege and marginalization through a minoritized/disprivileged person's perspective. In order to achieve this, I incorporated two activities: one is an in-class activity, Peter's (2003) *A Class Divided* and the other is an out-of-class activity called the Minoritized/Disprivileged Project, both of which were inspired originally by Boal's Invisible Theatre. Invisible Theatre takes place in a public space, such as in a market place, in a restaurant, on a ferryboat, on a Metro train, on the streets, or even in a school cafeteria. Invisible Theatre is "theatrical performance that is performed outside of the theatre, in real life, centering on oppression and social issues" (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010, p.121). Boal (1992) writes:

The actors must play their parts as if they were playing in a traditional theatre, for a traditional audience. However, when the play is ready, it will be performed in a place which is not a theatre and for an audience which is not an audience. . . . [I]n the Invisible Theatre, the actors must perform just like real actors; that is, they must live (p. 277).

Passers-by or spectators who happen to be present in a theatrical space of Invisible Theatre "are not aware of the theatrical nature of performance—they believe it to be real" (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 121). By witnessing social injustice hypothetically delivered by performers, spectators are

asked to make a choice: if they simply remain passive bystanders pretending not to see, and leave a discriminatory scene, or if they take a courageous stand against injustice to change an oppressive circumstance. Although one assumes that this may be a virtual context in a theatrical sense, life after all is like theatre in which we always need to make a choice to take action or do nothing.

A Class Divided

I wanted students to understand that a classroom is a microcosm of the larger society, thus reflecting systemic inequality and structural marginalization and that there are children who are not provided equitable education because of their race, ethnicity, language, and culture. Is there any way to re/create such segregation even in a hypothetical way in our classrooms? There was a White female teacher who used her own classroom as a humanizing space for social justice to confront racism back in the 1960s right after the Martin Luther King Jr. assassination. Her name is Ms. Jane Elliot, and she taught as a 3rd grade teacher for an elementary school located in a small, all-white rural town in Iowa.

Ms. Elliot wanted her all White 3rd grade students to be engaged in conversation on racism and segregation. She designed a participatory activity known as *A Class Divided*, which was videotaped and later broadcast on national television. On the first day of the instruction, she divided her class into two separate groups: Brown Eyed People and Blue Eyed People by providing two different types of colored scarves: brown scarves and blue scarves, asking students to wear them according to the previously assigned eye colors. She explained that those wearing brown scarves (i.e., Brown Eyed People) would be

deprived of certain privileges during the whole day, such as recess, access to a playground, using water fountains, etc. Those wearing blue scarves (i.e., Blue Eyed People) are allowed access to all facilities, because they were told that they were “superior” to Brown Eyed People. During the day when she was teaching the subject matters, she constantly treated Brown Eyed People as if they were intellectually deficient, ignoring them or devaluing their opinions. Blue Eyed People, on the contrary, got called on more often than Brown Eyed People throughout the classroom sessions, and were praised by her every time they expressed their opinions. It was observed that, as time passed, Brown Eyed People gradually showed noticeable symptoms of demotivation, stress, irritation, and depression, whereas Blue Eyed People showed more vigorous and confident attitudes. Moreover, Blue Eyed People showed verbal aggression in the relationship with Brown Eyed People. Teachers recognized *A Class Divided* as highly controversial. Ms. Elliot, however, believed that this type of anti-racist instruction must be adopted at an early stage of elementary school education, because it can be more effective, producing more powerful educational outcomes.

We tried to recreate *A Class Divided* in our classroom. Ms. Elliot was performed by two students. Before initiating the activity, the classroom was arranged: there were two tables in front and a large empty space (no desks or chairs) in the back. Different from the original activity, other students were uninformed of what would happen and were simply provided two types of colored tags at the beginning of the classroom session. Eight students who were randomly provided blue tags were escorted to sit at the front table on which there were some

refreshments. The rest of the students were simply directed to move to the back of the classroom and asked to keep standing. The lights at the back of the classroom were turned off. The teacher (i.e., two students) started showing some PowerPoint slides as if it were a typical student-led presentation. Some of the Brown Tagged People whispered something; the teacher instantly warned them: “Hey, be quiet!” “Just don’t interrupt.” When one of the Brown Tagged People spoke up, the teacher interrupted him and did not let him finish by saying: “I’m not interested in your opinion.” I was observing the class, standing in the middle between the Blue and Brown Tagged People. I sensed that students in both groups came to recognize that this was a hypothetical activity, but I noticed that Blue Tagged People, even so, laughed when Brown Tagged People were treated unfairly, whereas other Brown Tagged People remained silent. There was a difference in reaction between Brown and Blue Tagged People when Brown Tagged People were excluded from the teacher’s agenda. Considering the age level of these students, this activity may not be as effective as the original activity conducted in Ms. Elliot’s Class. Students, however, could put themselves in the shoes of minoritized/disprivileged children who have long been segregated in U.S. classrooms. Students were able to connect this hypothetical experience to the experience of children of color excluded from mainstream teachers’ agendas. For instance, we discussed that many students of color are forcibly put into special education classrooms due to White teachers’ over-referrals derived from the deficit-thinking mentality. Through this experience, students became more aware of the classroom dynamics and how teachers’ beliefs and attitudes may affect

children of color and their learning. Although students had intellectually understood the definition of deficit thinking, they saw how it might be practiced in classrooms. This activity was much more alive than printed information, which students are most likely to rely on in order to learn about racial issues. Through *A Class Divided*, students might have caught a glimpse of the invisibility of racism in American education.

The Minoritized/Disprivileged Project

The Minoritized/Disprivileged Project² was conducted outside the classroom. Participating in an out-of-classroom, time-consuming activity seems to be perceived negatively by teacher education students who prefer traditional learning styles (e.g., monologue lectures, no group interaction, in-class exams). I wanted students to take this project assignment seriously, thereby becoming a transformative learning experience. I wanted to avoid this assignment having negative learning outcomes with disastrous consequences: for instance, students view this assignment as a joke or just one of the course assignments to complete in order to get at least reasonable grades. I also wanted to avoid students perceiving this assignment as just another interesting intercultural experience, like a trip to a museum displaying cultural artifacts.

In order to motivate students to be actively engaged in this project assignment, I showed a video clip in which Invisible Theatre was practiced and social justice issues that we had discussed were explored. I used this video clip as

² The title and part of “The Minoritized Project” was developed by my colleague Dr. Man-Chiu Lin.

an explanatory resource to introduce Invisible Theatre and the Minoritized/Disprivileged Project as well as an evocative text for conversation on issues of racism and linguicism. In this clip, two Mexican immigrant workers who rarely speak English are being refused coffee at a local coffee shop by a racist Caucasian male clerk showing severe discriminatory attitudes to them in front of other customers. “This is America. Speak English.” “How do I know you’re not illegal?” “Go back to Mexico!” This video is an experimental research of racism and linguicism, a research aimed at examining bystanders’ attitudes and behaviors in response to an ongoing Invisible Theatre play performed by three actors who play the roles of an antagonist and two protagonists. During the play, three major attitudes and behaviors among customers, who were mostly Caucasian, were observed: The customers 1) remain “disengaged onlookers” (Olweus, 1993) by ignoring the event (i.e., saying or doing nothing); 2) became “passive supporters” (Olweus, 1993) by laughing at the discriminatory words uttered by the antagonist; and 3) turned to be “followers” (Olweus, 1993) by making racial slurs, along with the antagonist, toward the protagonists. At the end of the video, the researcher who originally conducted this research interviewed one Mexican worker named Mario, who acted as one of the protagonists. During the interview, Mario, who seemed to be around 50 years old, cried, saying in Spanish: “We didn’t do anything wrong. Why they are treating us like that? We are also human beings.” After watching the video, Maureen, a Mexican female student, shared her personal experience of being discriminated against because of her racial identity. It was a recent experience she had in which a racial slur was made by a White

male in a car when she was riding a bicycle coming to the west campus. She cried when she was telling us her story. Here is her reflective journal of the week.

After having experienced my own prejudices because of my color, it really upset me to watch the clip. As a Mexican it really hurt to see that not one person stood up for the Mexican men who were trying to get some breakfast. It made me even more upset to see that so many of the people even chimed in on the racial slurs directed towards them. It really hurt me deep inside because I knew that those men could easily be one of my relatives or a representation of what my family goes through. It's not right and no matter what color of skin, language we speak we are all made the same and carry the same flesh.

Following this line of thought, I shared my personal experience of being discriminated against because of my skin color. It was similar to Maureen's.

One afternoon I was just walking down the street. An unknown vehicle approached me from behind. The next moment I found myself soaked in water because of a water bottle thrown from the car full of young White men watching me. As it happened so suddenly, I was just shocked, not knowing how to react to it. At that moment, I was not able to associate the incident with my race or ethnicity. Is this just a bad joke made by some fools? Or is this an intended act based on a racially discriminatory purpose?

Salma, another Mexican female student, told us that the video reminded her of her father who has worked as a day laborer for years in order to support her family.

She said, “If my father was treated like that” She could not continue her words. I told my students that I really wanted them to take this assignment seriously in order to feel what it feels like to be excluded. One of the students commented after he completed the assignment: “I was a culturally diverse child that day. . . . I believe who ever took this assignment as a joke, really missed out of a growing experience for themselves.”

The minoritized/disprivileged project protocol. The objective of the Minoritized/Disprivileged Project was to examine one’s unrecognized privileges through firsthand experience of putting oneself in a minoritized/disprivileged position. Each student needs to find or create a cultural site in which she or he can be a cultural minority. Through this exercise, I wanted students to see things from marginalized perspectives, thereby enabling the examination of their unrecognized privileges from a renewed and alternative perspective and the development of the “Cultural Eye” (Irvine, 2003), which resonates with what Du Bois (1897) refers to as “double-consciousness.” During the Project, students needed to make a conscious effort to self-examine their minoritized cultural position in relation to the dominant culture and to observe their major attitudinal and behavioral change. Students’ constructed sites had a wide range of cultural themes including race, language, class, exceptionality, and religion. Through this exercise, for instance, students experienced:

- Racial minority by attending an event in which she was the only White and all the other participants were African Americans.

- Language minority by attending an event in which he was the only English-speaking White and others were Spanish-speaking Mexicans.
- Homelessness by a middle-class male's sleeping outside three nights in row.
- Exceptionality by an able-bodied female's acting as a blind person.
- Religious minority by a pious Christian White female's wearing a *burka*³

Here are three examples of the Minoritized/Disprivileged Project that students completed.

There are moments when I feel that culturally, we are worlds apart. The word “moments” might be an exaggeration; it is more like tiny glimpses of reality that infrequently pop up and remind us we are different. This difference is not physical nor is it a part of our consciousness, it is a cultural distinction deeply imbedded in our subconscious. . . . Immediately upon entering [the club] I felt stupid because on top of being the only white person, I was very over-dressed. I felt as if others looked down on me because they felt that I looked down on them. I felt judged, like people assumed I was stuck up. So I found myself being extra nice to people, smiling a lot and saying please and thank you. This behavior was interesting to me and made me wonder if other people do this in moments of discomfort. And if so, if someone is continuously uncomfortable, are

³ An Islamic dress covering a woman's whole body traditionally worn by Muslim women in specific Middle Eastern countries.

they forced to continuously act fake? . . . I was bombarded with glares from African American women. [Her African American friend] and I have always noticed that when we are together in public, the majority of stink eyes that we receive come from older white men and African American women. . . . I was the only white girl in the club, and it seemed as if my presence unified the other females. Do they hate me because society favors light skin? Do they hate me because they feel like I took away one of their eligible black bachelors? Do they hate me because they have had negative experiences with people of my race? These among other questions swirled through my head as I stood at the bar waiting for my drink. . . . (*An elderly African American male approached her, asking her to dance.*) I was not so much afraid for my safety as I was afraid of affirming any negative stereotypes about me. I did not want to be seen as a snob, I did not want my refusal to dance to be attributed to race. This made me think about Peggy McIntosh's article discussing white privilege. When I am in an environment where the majority of the people are of my same race, I do not worry about anything being attributed to race. As a minority, race was always in my consciousness (Mary, a White female student).

The reason I chose this particular site was due to all of the negativity being associated with the Islamic culture as a result of 9/11. By constantly being inundated with adverse stereotypes, attitudes, and perceptions of this

group, I found myself adopting a mildly similar attitude toward them. . . .

In going to the [Islamic] center, there were three main ways I felt “minoritized.” First of all, I was used to being in situations where being white meant that I was part of the majority and not usually subject to discrimination or feeling like I stood out in any kind of negative way. Second, being a woman, I found that I felt very self-conscious as I had preconceived notions that in the Islamic culture women were considered second-class citizens and therefore treated as such. Lastly, I was going to the center as a Christian, something I take for granted as an overwhelming majority of the country claims to be the same. . . . Here I was going into a situation completely unfamiliar to me. I had no idea what the correct protocol was, where I was allowed to go, what the customs were, and if I should conduct myself in any particular way. I was very worried about offending someone at the center and being viewed as insensitive (Jenny, a White female student).

I decided to create my own cultural site which related to what it felt like to be a homeless student. . . . Through this cultural site, I felt that I gained some perspective on what a homeless kid goes through in their day by day life. . . . For three days, from October 20th to October 22nd I decided to live on campus. Knowing that sleeping out in the streets can be pretty dangerous, especially when you are unconscious, I decided to stay at the library and the garden to be outside. . . . Thursday was my first day that I

decided to stay on campus. I was thinking of taking some sort of equipment like covers and a pillow but I know that a lot of homeless people are not fortunate enough to afford those luxuries. All I had with me was my backpack, which had my school things and my computer. My clothing consisted of shoes, socks, jeans, shirt, and a sweater. I did not want to take much clothing either to have a better experience of what people feel. . . . As the day passed and I pretty much had nothing to do. I felt really dirty and sticky and I really wanted to shower, but all I can do is just wash my face at a bathroom and hope for the best. Whenever I would meet up with some friends I would just act normal and pretend that nothing was wrong so that the subject would not come up. We would just talk about the same things we would always talk about, fraternity and school related issues. That Friday felt like the longest day in the world. . . . Once the sun began to go down I decided to go to the secret garden so that I can see if there was a comfortable place to sleep. I wanted to experience being outside the whole night and not in a building. The secret garden was the only place that I can think of that I could stay outside and not be out in the open and reducing the risk of anything happening to me. . . . That night I woke up a couple of times throughout the night. One of the reasons was that I felt cold, and I was feeling a little sick. Another reason is that I was nervous and did not want anything to happen to me so with any little noise I would get spooked and wake up. Another thing that I had to worry about was about animals, like spiders or something. I did not want to get bit by

anything that may have been poisonous. I think that night was the worst night sleep that I have ever had. . . . The next day I woke up and I felt horrible. I felt like if I had slept for an hour the whole night, also like if I slept on a very rough rock. . . . Being homeless must be something really hard to go through. Not only for the fact that you have nowhere to stay but also because you have to be careful and make sure you are safe at all times because you never know when somebody can come and try to rob you as well as all the other dangers there are out in the world. I know I am very grateful for many things that I have in my life, but I also know that I take a lot of other things for granted (Efren, a Mexican-American male student).

It seems problematic that pre-service teachers learn about racial issues solely from printed materials prepared by teacher educators. In this sense, the Minoritized/Disprivileged Project challenged the status quo in teacher education. Such prepared materials in many cases cannot provide an affective stimulus and hence students can easily dissociate themselves from the subject of racism.

Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning (2010) note:

In teacher education, concern has been expressed that multiculturalism is too often entirely text-based, whereby students read and feel a cathartic release, experiencing the oppression through text and leaving the classroom without any real social engagement (p. 145).

Through this activity, students examined their privileges from a marginalized perspective and became more conscious of their power in

relationship to privileges. Students also connected this experience to the experiences of the culturally diverse students:

Emma: I was able to step out of my comfort zone and do something I would never do, I was humiliated and hurt, but I was able to see how students can feel when they're put into that position.

Efren: In order for me to achieve my goal of having a similar experience to what it feels like to be homeless, I had to take this experiment seriously. There were moments when I was tempted to go and regain my regular life, but I felt that these kids do not have that luxury of a choice. It was that thought that kept forcing me back to continue with the project. Also, the fact that I was having trouble that week in school, due to my new change of living allowed me to see how hard it must be for a kid with no home to sleep or do his or her homework. I believe the teachers of these children perhaps have no idea of the student's situation outside of school. This makes the homeless child feel more isolated because they get the idea that the schools do not really care for them. This is something the school system must address with urgency. Schools and people in general need to consider how difficult the lives of these children are both in and out of school.

Liz: I can now relate to the culturally diverse child in a classroom setting because I have felt how it feels to be left out and ignored. . . . This is especially true if the child doesn't know English. . . . I feel that all teachers should specialize in diverse languages to reach out to the culturally diverse

child. Every single student matters and it is our responsibility as teachers to reach out to every single student that we have. It makes me sad to think that the culturally diverse child is left out and ignored for the fact that their culture/language is different. Also I feel that it was challenging for me to be left, as well as trying to fit in with my surroundings. I can see how much more difficult it is for a child that is culturally diverse because they are so young that they don't know how to adapt yet. I feel that it is our responsibility as teachers to make sure that these children are included in the classroom setting. The student may forget what you said, but they will never forget how you made them feel.

The Minoritized/Disprivileged Project, most importantly, helped pre-service teachers develop empathy, which is linked positively to the development of critical consciousness. Developing empathy helps challenge one's ego and self-interested individualism, which provides an alternative approach to viewing one's internalized domination. Levans (2007) points out that the development of empathy and critical consciousness are positively correlated.

Equitable applications of critical thought in our shared world appear more likely if the motivation and basis for engaging in critical thought rests on the tenets of empathy and compassion rather than self-interested individualistic ambitions (p. 18).

Dysconscious Racism

At the beginning of the 20th century, Du Bois (1903) in his historical treatise *The Souls of Black Folk* voiced: "The problem of the 20th century is the

problem of the color-line” (p. 29). Over a century has passed. What would Du Bois say if he saw today’s U.S. schools and society? Compared to the civil rights era, overt displays of racial hatred may have decreased. Racism, however, is still alive in today’s U.S. society, transforming its manifest form. Critical race theorist Gerardo R. López (2003) notes:

The fact of the matter is that racism . . . has never waned despite the passage of federal and state mandates that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race. The only difference between racism today and of the past is that modern-day racism is more subtle, invisible, and insidious. Popular beliefs such as color blindness and equal opportunity have only served to drive racism underground, making it increasingly difficult for people of color to name their reality (p. 82).

One of my students, Maureen, a Mexican-American student, views racism in today’s society as follows:

Racism is a choice that we have to deny and shut down when we see it every single day. It is a simple solution but it is so much more complex because it is hidden in so many daily and common surroundings. We have to tune our ears and redirect our thoughts even from our own racism, it starts within a person and then it can be shared.

In American society today, as Maureen says, racism becomes a cultural norm hidden everywhere in our daily life and in our consciousness. This racial norm interpellates dominant group members, where it operates as a defensive mechanism to perpetuate racial inequality as the status quo. It also is internalized

by oppressed group members who accept their subordinate position as natural and inevitable. In this sense, the problem of the 21st century may be said that racism has become “common sense” (Hall, 2000), being hidden under colorblindness espoused by meritocratic and democratic ideologies and entrenched in institutional policies, customs, and practices. Kailin (1999) argues that White people have always witnessed the marginalization of people of color throughout U.S. history, from genocide against Native Americans, slavery, and segregation to the present; however, they rarely “face and counteract the contradictions between the so-called American creed of equality and the American reality of inequality and relative White privilege and power” (p. 742). King (1991) argues that racism manipulates dominant group members’ consciousness and indoctrinates them not to see racial injustice in a contemporary American society. King (1991) conceptualizes such “impaired consciousness” as “dysconscious racism,” which he defines as:

a form of racism that tacitly accepts dominant white norms and privileges. It is not the absence of consciousness (that is, not unconsciousness) but an impaired consciousness or distorted way of thinking about race as compared to, for example, critical consciousness. Uncritical ways of thinking about racial inequity accept certain culturally sanctioned assumptions, myths and beliefs that justify the social and economic advantages white people have as a result of subordinating diverse others (p. 135).

Affirmative Action

In the final class on racial conversation, we discussed racial issues faced by our local community. In 2010 alone, the state of Arizona passed legislation and laws, one after another, that deprived members of a minority group of their full and equitable participation in school and society, such as the notorious racial-profiling provision (SB10-70) on April 23, 2010, the abolishment of the ethnic studies programs (HB 2281) on May 11, 2010, and the elimination of the affirmative action programs (Prop 107) on November 2, 2010. In addition, the Arizona Department of Education mandated that teachers, whose English-language proficiency was recognized as “inadequate” (i.e., non-native language teachers), must be removed from public school classrooms.

Specifically, we examined one of the above-mentioned programs, an affirmative action program, by using a game exercise called Values Clarification (Rohd, 1998). I attempted to examine students’ discourses generated during the exercise. Gee (1999) notes that “discourses are inherently ideological. . . . [T]hey crucially involve a set of values and viewpoints about the relationship between people and the distribution of social goods” (p. 21). Following Gee (1999), I recognized student-constructed discourses on racial issues surrounding the elimination of the affirmative action program as ideological statements. Tobin (2000) argues that individual ideological discourses on race and ethnicity can be recognized as a microcosm “of the conflictual and incommensurable discourses on race and ethnicity that exist in the larger American society” (p. 13).

Furthermore, Hall (2000) also explains the reciprocity between micro-level (individual) and macro-level (societal) ideological discourses:

Ideological statements are made by individuals: but ideologies are not the product of individual consciousness or intention. Rather we formulate our intentions within ideology. . . . We have to ‘speak through’ the ideologies which are active in our society and which provide us with the means of ‘making sense’ of social relations and our place in them (p. 272).

As a teacher-as-researcher, I attempted to analyze students’ internalized ideology or inner workings of ideology (Tobin, 2000); that is, how hegemonic racial discourse in the larger American society interpellates (Althusser, 1972) a specific student body, by decoding their constructed ideological statements generated during the Value Clarification exercise. As an action researcher, I also encouraged students to join this research journey. I asked them to listen and read carefully students’ discourses generated in class and on-line discussions and recognize them as qualitative data, followed by identifying common ideological themes and perspective from both opponent and proponent teams and examining how those different perspectives can be negotiated. I explained a basic textual analysis method in qualitative research, Althusser’s *interpellation*, and Bakhtinian *citationality*. I provided students with a survey questionnaire form which asks: “Do you agree or disagree with Affirmative Action in College Admissions? If yes, why? If no, why not? Please provide your concrete and precise opinion.” By using this survey questionnaire form, students were encouraged to collect additional

data from their peers or classmates in other classes. Some students used this experience for their final research project.

Values Clarification

In a cleared space of the classroom, I invited all students to stand up. I put down three different signs indicating Agree, Disagree, and Unsure in separate locations. In the Values Clarification activity, a facilitator reads a statement and each participant then needs to decide how they feel and move to the sign most representing their feeling/position about the statement. After taking their position, each participant is encouraged to provide why they made that choice. The exercise can start off with a simple question, just like Come to My Neighbor, (e.g., “I think that Starbucks Coffee is better than any other competitor.”). After a few rounds, the facilitator may want to shift questions to those examining cultural beliefs and values on the subject matters (e.g., “I think that animated Disney films perpetuate racial stereotypes.”). It is of absolute importance that the facilitator ensures a safe environment and tells participants that this activity should be nonjudgmental. The aim of this exercise is to listen to and learn from other points of view. During the exercise, participants can visibly see the dynamics and diversity of opinions on the subject matters explored.

During the Values Clarification activity specifically exploring an affirmative action program, a question was posed: “Arizona should keep an affirmative action program in college admission.” Only two male students of color stood in front of the sign indicating Agree. I found all the female students of color and a few White students standing in front of the sign indicating Unsure.

The rest of the White students took the position of Disagree. They started exchanging their opinions. Students from the proponent group argued that affirmative action was absolutely necessary for achieving educational equality. They also maintained that affirmative action would serve as a compensation for the past injustices and wrongs. Students from the opponent group, on the contrary, believed that affirmative action was preferential treatment based on race, that is, racial quotas that would benefit only people of color and hence it should be recognized as “reverse racism” against Whites. They claimed that affirmative action suppressed a White community in ethical and financial ways.

Egalitarian Democracy

By decoding students’ discourses from the opponent group, two major emergent themes were identified. The first theme is an “ethical issue” underlying the affirmative action program. During the Values Clarification activity, students from the opponent group shared their beliefs that the affirmative action program by its nature is “unethical and morally wrong,” because “it separates people by race,” which leads to the negation of democratic ideals embracing egalitarianism in American society. They also voiced: “There should be no button where you have to put what race you are.” “We as a nation will never get past racial barriers so long as we keep the concept of race as a subject of admissions or employment.” By these statements, they claimed the legitimacy of colorblindness. The following provides other comments questioning the ethical issue of affirmative action:

Shane: I don’t agree with basing a student’s admission on their race, I know people of color are taken more into consideration when applying for

a college, but I think in general we're all people, so we all should have the same chance in getting into college.

Toby: I just think people should be looked at as people . . . not the race or color. . . . I think it might be "over done" if you will when people always want to include minorities or go out of their way to say something about that kind of stuff.

Nick: I do not believe that one group should have an easier time to get into college. I believe it was needed in the past, but now that most people are treated equally in public schools.

The same ethical and moral argument can be found in an open public letter written by Tom Horne, Superintendent of Arizona Public Instruction (Horne, 2007). The letter was sent to the citizens of Tucson, Arizona. In the letter, Horne censured the ethnic studies program adopted within the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD), soliciting citizenry support for passing the bill aimed at eliminating the program. The bill was eventually signed into law in late 2010 by Arizona Governor Jan Brewer, and came into effect in early 2011. The following is the first three paragraphs excerpted from Horne's letter, paragraphs in which he shares his personal ideology urging him to abolish the ethnic studies program in TUSD.

The citizens of Tucson, of all mainstream political ideologies, would call for the elimination of the Tucson Unified School District's ethnic studies program if they knew what was happening there. I believe this is true of citizens of all mainstream political ideologies. The purpose of this letter is

to bring these facts out into the open. The decision of whether or not to eliminate this program will rest with the citizens of Tucson through their elected school board.

First, let's spend a minute on underlying philosophy. I believe people are individuals, not exemplars of racial groups. What is important about people is what they know, what they can do, their ability to appreciate beauty, their character, and not what race into which they are born. They are entitled to be treated that way. It is fundamentally wrong to divide students up according to their racial group, and teach them separately.

In the summer of 1963, having recently graduated from high school, I participated in the civil rights march on Washington, in which Martin Luther King stated that he wanted his children to be judged by the content of their character rather than the color of their skin. That has been a fundamental principle for me my entire life, and Ethnic Studies teaches the opposite (p. 1).

The argument shared by some of the students above, as well as Horne's letter, is based on the belief in racial colorblindness derived partially from egalitarian democratic ideology. A previous study indicates that White educators in both K-12 and higher education are still more likely to adopt a colorblind approach in their teaching practices, espousing an idea that race and ethnicity should not be taken into consideration in terms of interactions with and recognition of their students (LaDuke, 2009; Gollnick & Chinn, 2010; Clark & Zygmunt-Fillwalk,

2010), which “therefore relieves teachers of the responsibility of explicitly addressing race and ethnicity in their classrooms” (LaDuke, 2009, p. 37). I often heard students say: “I will treat every child as equal regardless of their race.” “I won’t deal with a kid as a Black kid or a Mexican kid. I’ll just see a kid.” “The less we care about a child’s skin tone, the less discrimination we are going to have in our classroom.” Almost all White pre-service teachers recognize colorblindness as a core democratic value that one should embrace for a racism-free society. Citing Gallagher (2003), Gollnick and Chinn (2010), however, argue that White teachers are unaware of a crucial aspect of colorblindness in the sense that it helps “maintain *white privilege* because it fails to recognize the existence of racial inequalities in schools” (p. 69). Frankenberg (1993) notes that colorblindness is “a mode of thinking about race organized around an effort not to ‘see,’ or at any rate not to acknowledge race differences” (p. 42). Following Frankenberg, it can be argued that colorblindness is not passive ignorance of race and racism, but an active effort to try to stay ignorant of race and racism. It is quite insightful that Marable (1992) defines racism as a “system of ignorance.” Felman (1987) articulates the productive nature of ignorance:

Ignorance is nothing other than a desire to ignore: its nature is less cognitive than performative. . . . It is not a simple lack of information but the incapacity—or the refusal—to acknowledge one’s own implication in the information” (p. 79).

Colorblindness must be examined as an active psychological state that serves as an internal *defensive mechanism* to legitimate and perpetuate racial hegemonic

inequalities as the status quo. Lesko and Bloom (2010) note: “Ignorance is an *effect* of particular knowledge, not an absence of knowledge” (p. 380). It can be concluded that colorblindness is culturally constructed knowledge, which replaces the past legalized racial segregation and now gains institutional power as a new form of racism.

A few students from the opponent group questioned affirmative action by associating it with privilege, thereby denying the idea of privilege granted solely to a White community. Leonor notes: “I don’t really believe that anyone gets privileged because of their race However, affirmative action is a form of a privilege because of your race.” Lindsay followed her: “[Affirmative action] is reverse racism against Caucasians and plays off of the also very controversial belief of white privilege.” A group of White students reclaimed their racialized positionality in society from an alternate perspective, simultaneously “call[ing] for equal protection . . . to prove discrimination or racial harm against [Whites]” (Rópez, 2003, p. 83). Case and Hemmings (2005) also found the same rhetoric from students in her teacher education classroom:

A few White women were convinced that Whites were becoming victims of reverse discrimination and that was why many people were racist. They were critical of affirmative action and other initiatives that appeared to be blocking qualified White people from access to good schools and jobs. In doing so, they transferred the blame for racism away from social forces that have privileged Whites to policies they feel are privileging people of

color and framed themselves as disadvantaged, rather than advantaged, by racism (p. 621).

Meritocratic Individualism

The second emergent theme identified through decoding students' discourses delivered by the opponent group was about meritocratic individualism. Students argued that affirmative action leads to retrogression of meritocratic fairness in a capitalist society in which merits and awards are associated only with individual efforts and achievements that are not influenced by external factors. "We live in a country in which everyone gets an equal chance. Affirmative action is not fair for those who work hard," Shane voiced. Nick follows: "Those who don't work hard enough should not get any special treatment. People should get what they deserve." Compared to the first identified theme, which is more ideological, students seemed to be more enthusiastic about the second theme. It may be because supporting affirmative action in some sense leads to the denial of their individual efforts, achievements, and struggles of the past. Privileged individuals, however, are unlikely to recognize the fact that their success may stem from unearned privileges that they took for granted. Furthermore, there were a few students who implicitly blamed people of color for plundering limited funding opportunities that they might otherwise have received. Here are excerpts from students from the opponent group; these comments are more garrulous than those of the first theme.

Toby: I'm an opponent of affirmative action because instead of looking directly at grades and test scores the universities using affirmative action

are racially selecting students rather than selecting the best students to attend their universities. On the other hand a proponent of affirmative action could argue that minorities without affirmative action in a university may be overlooked because they haven't had the same advantages as others because of where they grew up. But I would then argue that it's not somebody else's fault that they didn't apply themselves as much as someone else has and worked as hard. We live in a country in which opportunity isn't handed to anybody, but rather opportunity is worked for and attained through dedication and hard work.

Lindsay: I agree with those that oppose affirmative action because it doesn't make sense to turn away a student who worked hard and obtained good grades because of something they cannot control such as their cultural and racial background. In the large scheme of things, that is setting up students who are admitted that do not have the work ethic or good grades to fail because they won't be able to handle the workload, nor would they have the drive to continue.

Emily: Although affirmative action may seem ideal on paper, it is not only unfair but also destructive to the educational system. It is unfair because by having to fill certain quotas, universities would be denying some students who are more qualified than others. You could always satisfy yourself with the idea that the better students would be accepted and that affirmative action would only take place in the cases where students are equal, but when is one individual ever equal to another (race aside)? And

say that for once, there were two students who were exactly the same— why should an individual be accepted over another based off of race, something they cannot control themselves? Just because one is part of a minority, it does not mean that they have had a harder life. . . . And how would it be fair for majority students to be denied because of their race in addition to giving minority students specific scholarships just for being a part of a minority?

In students' discourses, I found a so-called "optimistic" individualism assertion embraced by a meritocratic capitalist society. Students of color are often blamed for their underachievement by "optimistic" teachers who believe that their academic failure is influenced solely by lack of their own individual efforts. As a result, mainstream teachers are unable to recognize an external structural mechanism of racial inequalities that affect the academic achievements of students of color. Scheurich (1993) notes that "the problem with individualism . . . is that it hides the inequalities in our social structures, especially racial inequities" (p. 6, 7).

Pre-service teacher candidates tend to believe that schools operate as an equitable and inclusive institution for all learners, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, and do not recognize the fact that schools also "serve as vehicles to perpetuate inequality" (LaDuke, 2009, p. 37). For instance, teacher education students were most likely to do well academically in schools and thus tend to assume that the learning style that they preferred in K-12 can be applicable to any other cultural group members and any other teaching contexts (Souto-Manning,

2011). Citing Haddix (2008), Souto-Manning (2011) points out that pre-service teacher candidates “already knew exactly how to teach before entering teacher education programs” (p. 998). Critical multicultural educators, however, challenge the traditional elements of the teaching/learning style as a way of benefiting mostly the dominant group members. Souto-Manning (2011) contends:

The reality is that [pre-service teachers] do not know how to teach—just like they learned—in unjust systems that continue to perpetuate inequities and segregate academic success. If left unchallenged [in teacher education programs], such beliefs will continue to enact savage inequalities in our schools (p. 998).

When mainstream teachers impose their preferential learning styles on students of color, they unconsciously perpetuate status quo pedagogies and create cultural discontinuity leading to the exclusion of students of color from their classroom agendas (Gaitan, 2006).

A few students from the opponent group commented that racial equality has been achieved to a large extent in contemporary American society, thereby blaming students of color for current racial inequalities. I heard a few students mention what Sleeter and Grant (1988) refer to as the “illusion of progress,” which can be explained as

small but mostly superficial examples of people of color and women in places of some power and responsibility that tend to obscure the reality that racism and sexism continue to be major forces in the lives of many people (Ahlquist, 1999, p. 162).

It is true that there are some children who succeed or fail in both dominant and subordinate cultural groups; however, the chances of success, on average, are substantially better for children raised in families of the dominant culture (Case & Hemmings, 2005). Children from subordinated families “have a chance to succeed if they learn the ways of the dominant groups and if are socially or economically closer to the top of the hierarchy” (Scheurich, 1993, p. 7). Ladson-Billings (2006) views racial hierarchy that creates persistent inequalities as a historical debt accumulated in American society. I wanted my students to recognize their responsibility as teachers, and take a stand in their own classrooms to confront racial hierarchy and inequality by making continuous instructional efforts in their daily teaching practices and by providing unwavering humanistic support to children from culturally diverse backgrounds.

Ideological Hegemony

In a contemporary American society, we are being led to believe that inequality is *inevitable* and *necessary* (Bowles & Gintis, 1977; Arum & Beattie, 2000; Apple, 2004). Schools in a race- and class-divided society teach a hidden curriculum to make this inequality seem natural and hegemonic ideologies are transmitted through a hidden curriculum to perpetuate the ruling-class domination (Apple, 2004). Schools, which are “cultural apparatuses involved in the production and transmission of ideologies” (Giroux, 1997, p. 74), encourage teachers to use the banking concept of education (Freire, 1970), which makes students passive consumers of education, because “the passivity of the individual increases with the ability to plug into a vast source of external power”

(Williamson, 1978, p. 142). Citing Williams (1973), Apple (2004) points out that students who have experienced a contemporary educational system come to believe, in the best natural way, that “the educational, economic, and social world we see, and the commonsense interpretations we put on it, becomes the world *tout court*, the only world” (p. 5).

Ideologies are not just distributed by producers and received passively by consumers. Rather, they “are actively made in consumption” (Gay et al., 1997, p. 5). Bakhtin (1981) provides an analytic lens, which enables us to examine the process of how ideologies are actively made in consumption at the individual level, that is, how ideologies are interpellated and embedded in one’s consciousness and come to make sense to her or him. Bakhtin views a speaking person as an *ideologue*, as discourse is a “particular way of viewing the world, one that strives for social significance” (p. 333). Tappan (2005) notes:

To understand the formation of an individual’s own ideology (and hence her identity), therefore, we must consider the process by which she appropriates others’ words, language and forms of discourse, as she constructs her own ideologically mediated perspective on the world (p. 54).

The appropriation process of ideology can be well understood by examining Bakhtinian *citatoriality*. Bakhtin recognizes one’s discourse as not a self-contained or self-structured organism, but a space for collective dialogic interaction of multiple voices, perspectives, and interpretations (Waghmare, 2011). Bakhtin (1981) writes that every word is “full of transmissions and interpretations of other people’s words” (p. 338). People always quote someone’s previously

constructed utterances; however, as meaning is contextual, when using them in a new context, the meaning becomes new (Tobin, 2000).

Bakhtin (1981) decomposes one's discourse into a binary concept: authoritative (enforced) discourse and internally persuasive discourse. Assaf and Dooley (2006) note that "as a person interacts within society, authoritative discourses can actually bleed into and become internally persuasive discourses. Theoretically, the two discourses are always in back-and-forth movement as an individual's ideologies are shaped" (p. 43). Authoritative discourse, on the one hand, can be recognized as an internal voice, which is only transmitted and cannot be represented (Bakhtin, 1981) and based on "the authoritativeness of tradition, of generally acknowledged truths, of the official line and other similar authorities" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 344). On the other hand, internally persuasive discourse is, "as it is affirmed through assimilation, tightly interwoven with 'one's own world'" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 346). The distinction between authoritative discourse and internally persuasive discourse relies on "the degree of 'ownership' (including both authority and responsibility) that one accepts (or can accept) for what one says, and does" (Tappan, 2005, p. 54). Authoritative discourse is considered by the subject as the absolute truth that cannot be questioned and therefore, there is no dialogue. Authoritative discourse only serves other people's intentions (Bakhtin, 1981). On the contrary, internally persuasive discourse is more fluid and adaptable than authoritative discourse and hence it is inherently dialogical. In the process of one's ideological development (i.e., Bakhtinian *ideological becoming*), one appropriates the "discourse of others with whom one is in dialogue, and, in so

doing, struggles to strike a balance between ‘authoritative’ and ‘internally persuasive’ forms of discourse” (Tappan, 2005, p. 57).

Pre-service teacher candidates enter a teacher preparation program with worldviews formed by authoritative discourses legitimated and perpetuated by the larger society (Assaf & Battle, 2008). By encountering diverse cultural discourses, different from and contradictory to theirs, through classroom dialogic interactions in a sustained and substantial manner, pre-service teachers experience “an intense interaction, a struggle with other internally persuasive discourses” (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 346), which is a crucial step for pre-service teachers to achieve “ideological clarity” (Bartolomé, 2004). Through experiencing diverse participatory exercises in which the voices of cultural ‘Others’ were present, pre-service teachers were able to reflect their own internalized ideologies in relation to “the realities that shape the lives of students from socioeconomic, linguistic, and culturally diverse backgrounds” (Assaf & Battle, 2008, p. 94). Through this ideological reflection process, students experienced ideological negotiation to take “ownership for one’s own beliefs and taking responsibility for one’s growth” (Causey et al., 2000, p. 35). This reflection (deconstruction) and negotiation (reconstruction) processes helped pre-service teachers develop their critical consciousness in multicultural practice, although the processes entailed repeated denial and resistance.

Final Thoughts

During the anti-racist workshop, I faced continuous ethical dilemma as an anti-racist educator and as a Freirean dialogical educator. This dilemma is best

illustrated by the following anti-racist educator Cochran-Smith's (1995) reflective journal.

The tension between inviting students to formulate new and perhaps disconcerting insights, on the one hand, and on the other hand, using the power of one's position as a professor to impose those [antiracist] perspectives (p. 561).

I kept asking myself: How can I teach such anti-racist perspectives without being impositional, yet still fulfill answerability/responsibility as an anti-racist educator? Throughout the workshop, I was striving to find a harmonious way to take full responsibility in teaching students anti-racist pedagogy and to create a Freirean classroom in which students take ownership of their own learning. I am still trying to find an answer to the question stated above. Engaging White pre-service teachers in a critical examination of Whiteness and their privileged positionality needs continuous efforts. It cannot be achieved overnight. It is not a simple linear progression, but most likely is a complex spiral (Souto-Manning, 2011) repeating a gradual progression that is hardly observable and a drastic regression that sometimes breaks down teachers' motivation. We as teacher educators have to be patient and should not be discouraged by students' denial and resistance. I always kept in mind a question that Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning (2010) posed: "How can teachers face . . . everyday challenges and dilemmas in the classroom . . . with hope, compassion, and a sense of humor?" (p. 2). I recognize these three virtues as catalysts, which empower multicultural teacher educators to teach an anti-racist curriculum. In addition, I want to make

continuous efforts to offer a humanizing pedagogy for students to bring forth their altruistic motivation, such as compassion, empathy, and courage, which may empower them to confront their internalized oppression.

Chapter 5

IMAGINATION

Linguicism

Linguistic division in contemporary America is becoming increasingly apparent. In a school system where students who are non-native speakers of English are often labeled or seen as “handicapped” (Nieto, 2004, p. 214) and intellectually or cognitively inferior, students from linguistically diverse backgrounds are encouraged to abandon their native language and culture as quickly and submissively as possible so as to be functioning, if not patriotic, Americans. Souto-Manning (2010b) laments by citing Rymes (2009): “Every day, students from diverse backgrounds fail academically because their teachers cannot recognize their knowledge and their brilliance” (p. 260). Nonminority teachers’ cultural ignorance and intolerance obstructs their recognition of the funds of knowledge that culturally diverse students can bring to the classroom (Verdugo & Flores, 2007).

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the number of English Language Learners (ELLs) from 5 to 17 years of age has been increasing drastically over the last two decades and one out of four students enters elementary school without displaying adequate English language proficiency. There are more than 5 million ELLs currently enrolled in Pre-K-12, which is equivalent to approximately 10 percent of total public school student enrollment (Gollnick & Chinn, 2010). In addition, it is predicted that there will be approximately 15 million students with Limited English Proficiency (LEP)

enrolled in U.S. schools by 2026, and by 2030 40% of the K-12 school age population nationwide will be composed of children whose first language is other than English. Among those LEP children, the Hispanic population shows a marked increase (Lucas & Ginberg, 2008). ELL/LEP students are more likely to be at risk in terms of poor academic performance than their English-speaking counterparts (Verdugo & Flores, 2007). The dropout rate of Latina/o students is disproportionately high, reaching 44.2% in the year 2001, compared to 7.4% among the non-Latina/o student population (Gollnick & Chinn, 2010). Verdugo and Flores (2007) argue:

Although the challenges posed by ELL students are significant, it is less clear what strategies and programs educators can use to improve the educational experiences of this population. Much of this ambiguity is due to the lack of research and information, inappropriate educational policies, and the inability of educators to understand ELL students and their backgrounds (p. 168).

The inability of mainstream teachers to understand ELL students and their cultural backgrounds may stem from “pitifully homogeneous nature of diversity” (Rego & Nieto, 2000, p. 417) in teacher education programs, in which approximately 88% of White teacher educators are preparing approximately 86% of pre-service teacher candidates who are White, middle-class, female, and monolingual (Ambe, 2006). In this homogeneous learning environment, pre-service teachers learn about cultural and linguistic diversity mainly through traditional printed materials prepared by teacher educators and are not offered

instruction that answers the changing needs of an increasingly linguistically diverse population. In addition, at a public university located in a state that mandates English-only instruction in its K-12 public school system, teacher education programs do not recognize the imminent necessity of embracing the entirety of linguistic diversity. As a result, prospective teacher candidates exit teacher education programs without acquiring necessary skills to understand, affirm, and embrace the lived experience of linguistically and culturally diverse learners. The homogeneity of teacher education programs has also been supported by an apparent lack of efforts to recruit students of color and bilingual students, which consequently leads to the persistent underrepresentation of teachers of color and the overrepresentation of monolingual educators in both K-12 and higher education.

I want to introduce an episode, which has positively affected monolingual prospective teachers in terms of their development of empathy and critical multicultural awareness, demonstrating how students of color and bilingual students can bring a rich experience and fund of knowledge to a pre-service teacher education classroom. The episode is about one of the classroom sessions in which a student team, which included a bilingual Mexican-American student, led a classroom discussion on issues related to linguistic diversity and discrimination. Approximately 20 minutes had passed since the beginning of the class. Joanne was showing some statistical data related to English Language Learners on a PowerPoint slide on the screen. It looked like a typical student-led presentation until she said. . . .

Joanne

(JOANNE standing in front of the computer monitor stand; stops her presentation; brief pose; speaks to students)

JOANNE: But these might as well be meaningless numbers if you have no idea what it's like to live day after day in a nation whose native language is one you simply just don't understand. The emotional pain a lot of English Language Learners feel becomes a physical pain so overwhelming that many of them don't know how to handle it. *(brief pause)* Now I want you all to stand up and push all the desks and chairs back against the walls to make a cleared space.

(Shortly after, there is a large empty space in the middle of the classroom, students standing straight, dispersed; JOANNE walks toward the door and turns off the lights; The classroom turns dark; Little sunbeam-like light is shining in through the two tiny windows situated in relatively high places on the back wall; JOANNE picks up a paper)

JOANNE: I am going to read a story. The story is about a 15-year old boy named Esteban whose parents recently immigrated to the United States from Mexico. *(brief pause)* I want you to close your eyes and squat down. It helps deal with physical pain. While reading, I may tap your shoulders. If you get tapped once, you can stand up. If you get tapped one more time, you can open your eyes. Once your eyes are open, you may tap only one other person. Do you understand the instruction?

(Some students say yes; some just nod; JOANNE starts reading the story; While reading, JOANNE keeps walking around the classroom and taps students' shoulders randomly)

JOANNE: Esteban was a 15-year old boy whose parents immigrated to the United States only 7 months ago. He was an eager kid, fascinated with literature; his parents were sure he was destined for greatness. His parents didn't want the move to affect his schooling so he was enrolled in the high school nearest to his house even though Esteban did not understand a single word of English. He attended a predominantly white school and the students treated him like he was less than they were because they couldn't understand him. He was constantly penalized and publicly ridiculed by his teachers for not completing assignments and turning his homework in late; the people one would expect would help a boy in need of acceptance. Esteban was a diligent worker, very smart and quite determined, but Esteban grew tired of being humiliated by everyone. He hid at his desk, avoiding eye-contact with everyone so as to not provoke any more ridicule and began to live a life in seclusion. Because his parents were suffering economic hardships, Esteban kept the torture he lived at school to himself. His parents noticed the shift in Esteban's attitude but didn't begin to worry until he didn't even want to go to school in the mornings. His mother had to fight him every day just to get him out of bed. His grades began to tumble because he just couldn't keep up with the pace. He tried to reach out to several people, his teachers, his peers, his counselor, but it was

useless, it seemed that nobody had the time or the patience to help Esteban succeed. Seven months after having come to the United States, Esteban was desperate for acceptance, desperate for a sense of belonging. He wanted an escape from the horrible feeling of being isolated for not speaking a certain language. One day, while Esteban was getting his lunch at the cafeteria he tried to ask one of the lunch ladies if he could have a fork, he failed at pronouncing the word correctly and began to demonstrate with his hands that he needed something to eat with. The lunch lady knew exactly what he wanted but instead chose to further ridicule him by proclaiming loud and clear for the entire cafeteria to hear “YO NO SPEAK-O ESPANOL.” A burst of laughter erupted across the entire lunch room, as Esteban stood there, in confusion, taking it all in. He had done nothing wrong, why were these people treating him like he was some kind of trash? Esteban couldn't understand why they were all being so cruel. He left the room with his head down and began to walk home. Because he knew nobody would be home, Esteban went into his mother's medicine cabinet in search for his mother's prescribed sleeping pills; he went on to take the full bottle of medicine and curl up in his parent's bed to await his destiny as he remembered everything he had experienced in the past seven months.

(JOANNE lifts her face; some students who got tapped during the exercise have already stood up; some still remain squatting down)

JOANNE: Now you can open your eyes and stand up. (*waits for everyone to stand up*) The physical pain you felt is just temporary, but there are many ELLs just like Esteban looking for someone to reach out to them, they feel the physical pain every single day someone puts them down for being different.

The entire script about Esteban in the above dramatized scene was created solely by Joanne, whose own family immigrated to the United States when she was an elementary school child. She was an ELL. The Esteban character was created from a combination of her own memory as an ELL and perspectives shared by other ELLs whom she has met. Except for its painful ending, the story is based on actual incidents that Joanne and other ELLs experienced in schools. In their reflective journal entries, students commented:

Jenny: I have to admit that this has been the most emotional lesson I have ever experienced. I thought it was so eye-opening how the activity was directly related to students who struggled in the system. For just one class, we were able to experience strenuous conditions of what it was like to be an outsider in a class that didn't speak our language while still having the pressure to have to learn and respond accordingly.

Nancy: [The activity] put us in the shoes of students that are going through all these types of problems. The only difference is that we only experienced that for a couple of minutes when these students go through that same problem every single day.

Silvia: It helped us become aware of our own stereotypical and prejudicial perceptions that may affect our interactions with ELLs by making the class more tolerant, understanding, and accepting of them. Instead of ignoring them, I feel like the class now knows the importance of helping them, trying to teach/explain things and make sure they do not feel isolated.

Rita reflected on her own past behavior toward non-English speaking customers at her workplace.

In the past (working in customer service) when I was presented with a situation where the customer was not fluent in English, my patience often depended on the amount of effort on the other person's side to communicate with me in English. Many times I had people come to me who sincerely tried to use their minimal English knowledge to speak to me, and I would usually be more apt to offer patience or to speak to them in their language if they were a Spanish speaker. When people just made no effort to understand my language, I usually equaled their efforts. Now I can understand a little bit more what it's like to be in their shoes, and I can say I'm not sure how hard I'd work at learning another language when it was as difficult and discouraging as it can be.

In subsequent debriefing conversation following the exercise, students discussed symbolic metaphors manifested in the action of "tapping" or "getting tapped." One student pointed out that those who got tapped during the exercise may represent ELLs who are, fortunately, able to receive support from their

teachers and/or peers. On the contrary, those who never got tapped during the exercise were the majority of ELLs who are ignored and excluded in school, yet still waiting for help. This student-designed activity aroused conversations on critical issues pertaining to an ELL community, such as the English-only instruction policy and the Structured English Immersion (SEI) program; the abolition of Bilingual Education in Arizona public schools; ELLs having a disproportionately high dropout rate, compared to their native English speaking counterparts; foreign-born Latina/o ELL student dropouts accounting for approximately 25% of all dropouts in U.S. schools; and ELLs' being misplaced into special education programs by teachers' over-referral (Gollnick & Chinn, 2010). Following Joanne's criticism, however, statistical facts printed on the textbook are just "meaningless numbers," if we make no effort to try to understand ELLs' inner (*emic*) perspectives and sufferings.

Body Awareness

The significance of this activity was not just its powerful counter-narrative storyline, but also the underlying instructional strategy aimed at creating an aesthetic space that engaged students in experiencing the connection between physical and emotional pain. The activity served "as an invitation for the body to join the mind in a transformative approach to teacher education" (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 22). The activity awakened students' cognitive and affective empathy for ELL students, rather than simply having students feel sympathy toward ELLs. As a teacher-educator, I had observed numerous student-led activities. I would not have been at all amazed by her instruction if Joanne had

simply read the script, letting students remain seated. Harman and French (2004) emphasize the importance of developing body awareness in teacher education classrooms, stating that “the collaborative and contextualized use of bodies in specific local spaces can help students and teachers to connect viscerally to the issues raised and analyzed in critical multicultural teacher education programs” (p. 107). Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning (2010) also indicate that the development of body awareness may help pre-service teachers awaken “the relationship between self and other and [their] capacity to restructure [their] expressive and communicative potential” (p. 40).

During the exercise, I sensed that the entire classroom became giant human clay sculpted by Joanne. Through this exercise, Joanne named and identified issues in a Freirean manner to problematize them, which is recognized by Freire (1970) as the first step toward social change (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010). In addition, we were all collective human clay that reflected and projected the inner world of Esteban as well as Joanne herself, which allowed us to see things from their marginalized perspectives. The wordless space that Joanne created, which resonates with Boal’s Image Theatre, enhanced students’ development of imaginative empathy for ELL students. Hearing Joanne’s script, I came to think that this must have been a physical, cognitive, emotional, aesthetic, and cultural space that both Freire and Boal wanted to actualize through their critical (performance) pedagogy. The embodied practice (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010), like this exercise, can be a transformative pedagogy in multicultural teacher education to produce humanistic

teachers who understand, affirm, and embrace the rich experiences and vast funds of knowledge that culturally and linguistically diverse children can bring to their future classrooms.

In a traditional teacher education classroom that fosters a teacher-student hierarchical relationship, pre-service teachers consider the textbook “the ultimate source of and authorities for knowledge” (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 16). In this banking style of education (Freire, 1970), student voices are most likely devalued by authoritative teachers. In a Freirean dialogic classroom, however, the role of teacher is blurred and students are positioned “as experts from whom much can (and should) be learned” (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 18). Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning (2010) note:

We believe that changing the dynamics of teacher education from top-down, text-based monologic methods to those that encourage cooperative, life-based dialogues between teacher-educators and pre- or in-service teachers will allow teachers to learn methodologies to be employed in their own settings and to experiment with teaching, consequently pushing the limits of what’s possible in the critical multicultural classroom (p. 137).

Joanne, by practicing Freirean pedagogy, allowed us to challenge “top-down, text-based monologic methods” pervasive in teacher education classrooms.

Bilingual Education

We entered into a discussion on the English-only instruction policy. The state of Arizona has mandated the English-only instruction policy and the Structured English Immersion (SEI) program under the current legislation titled

Arizona Proposition (Prop) 203, also known as the English Language Education for Children in Public Schools Act. In order to enforce English-only instruction, Bilingual Education (BE) was banned in Arizona public schools. Arizona's Prop 203 prohibits in-service teachers in K-12 education to use any other languages except English throughout their instruction time. If a child, when entering school, is recognized as an English Language Learner, that child must be educated through the SEI program, which lasts for one year. Once completing the SEI program, the child will be transferred to a mainstream classroom, regardless of her or his English proficiency. As a result, many ELLs and immigrant students join regular classrooms without having adequate evidence of language proficiency. ELLs feel anxiety, exclusion, and isolation on a daily basis, because they are not able to engage themselves in instructed learning in class. Arizona is one of the three remaining states currently adopting the English-only instruction policy. As previously discussed, monolingual teachers are unlikely to understand linguistically and culturally diverse children, their daily classroom experiences and struggles, and, most importantly, what it feels like to be excluded, as many prospective teachers are not given critical opportunities to examine linguistic isolation and exclusion in teacher education programs.

The English-only instruction policy was approved by 63% of Arizona voters on November 7, 2000. It was more than a decade ago. I wanted to know how current students, the majority of whom grew up in Arizona public schools, which adopt English-only instruction, perceive issues related to the abolition of Bilingual Education and the enforcement of English-only instruction.

Some White students criticized a traditional ethnocentric mentality pervasive in American society and pointed out that there may be “emotional resistance” to Bilingual Education. A group of students perceived resistance to Bilingual Education as an unwarranted, irrational fear of English-speakers becoming the minority. Hilary, a White female student, notes: “Fear is a real and very motivational factor in why our county has done some of the horrible things they have done. Fear is the real factor on why our county refuses to embrace multicultural education and bilingualism.” Leonor (a White female student) and Kerry (an African-American female student) follow Hilary:

Leonor: I also think people are fearful of being a minority in “their” own home. It is also a matter of ignorance in some way. Plenty of other developed countries learn to speak more than just their native language, and have great success with that. Americans have a mentality of being better than everyone else, and it’s “our way or the highway”.

Kerry: I feel like there is much resistance to bilingualism because people feel threatened if they only know one language. . . . I feel like no one should have the right to take someone’s culture away and telling people not to speak their native tongue is very unfair. When Mr. M showed us that video *Our Spirits Don’t Speak English*, it was very touching because the Native American man could not remember his language he could only remember his name in his language. I feel like that school took away something they never had the right to take his culture.

The majority of students including both White students and students of color displayed a positive attitude toward Bilingual Education, whereas a small number of White students supported English-only instruction: “If people who come to this country as a foreigner not knowing English, they should learn English for it was their choice to be here.” Lindsay voiced:

I felt like there was a constant one-sided negative approach towards the American education system. I agree, it has its faults and such, but I find it a continuous contradiction when bilingual persons demand to be treated equal in education but then complain when education systems require them to be instructed in English only. In my opinion, in order to be a society of people who are able to work together and communicate with one another (and be ACCEPTING of other cultures), we need to have a universal language—aka English—to do so. The fact that our American education systems require children to be taught in English makes sense and is fine by me. In extreme situations such as the Native American man who attended an Indian boarding school was wrong and I agree, there could have been a better approach; he should have been able to continue speaking his native language. But in today’s society, the situation is not as intense.

This may represent a dominant discourse pervasive in English-speaking monolingual teachers, that this idea leads to their unwillingness to support ELLs and withdrawal from taking any responsibility to confront the underachievement of ELLs. ELLs need additional support from their teachers; however, their

teachers cannot find a legitimate reason that moves them to support ELLs, because they believe that ELLs deserve what they suffer. “This is America. Speak English!” I cannot find any difference between numerous bystanders in the video who did nothing—although they were witnessing right in front of them overt discrimination against the Mexican workers—and English-speaking monolingual teachers who do nothing for ELLs in their classrooms. The following excerpts are all from Mexican-American students who used to be ELLs.

Efren: The reason why I think this country is so against other languages is because when you grow up here and don't get to know other cultures or anything different you get used to one way of life. That being said, many Americans are afraid of change and are very stubborn. They view anything different than what they are used to, and they automatically assume that it is bad and that whoever is different should adapt to the “American” way.

Jamie: I believe there is a strong resistance to bilingualism for a number of reasons. Some opponents will argue that it is simply too expensive to fund programs that require instructors to fluently understand and be trained to teach in multiple languages. Another is that it delays students' mastery of the English language. Some may be resistant because they are used to the “status quo” of English-only instruction. They do not want another language to compete or dominate the de facto language. In a way, they feel threatened to interact with different cultures. Instead, opponents prefer to advocate the use of English as a common language, a “melting-pot” view of society. The consequence of this advocacy is that it leads to over-

dependence in one language and gradually rids minorities of their native language, thus alienating them from their culture and heritage. Schools and society in general should not only advocate but practice bilingualism for its language and cognitive advantages.

Joanne: I believe that being bilingual is extremely beneficial and educationally enriching. This may be the case but it is not what is accepted in today's society. As we face the problem with illegal immigration, I think that the government has lost the best interest of a child and has created an education as an act of revenge towards illegal immigrants and non-English speaking students. Instead of creating a place where any student can exceed in the U.S. and have equal opportunities they begin the weeding out process as early as grade school. By secluding ELL or ESL students, we push and hold them back while other more native U.S. citizens can exceed. This is what our government has made out of our nation's educational system. This is the basis of future generations in a country that is a land of the free amongst people who are equal among one another. It's the great contradiction.

English-only instruction is based on an idea that native languages and cultures must be *decultured* and assimilated into one big melting pot, so as to be "real Americans," which is fundamentally irreconcilable with the idea of Bilingual Education's inherent emancipatory potential to empower traditionally subordinated group members (Nieto & Bode, 2008). Under English-only instruction, ELLs are recognized as "deficient" by being categorized as Limited

English Proficiency (LEP). I disagree with an epistemology surrounding the term LEP, because I have the same standpoint shared by Ramirez (1998), who argues:

Traditionally federal and state policy makers tend to use the more pejorative term, Limited English Proficient, which connotes a deficiency on the part of the student by emphasizing what the student does not know. In actuality, the student already knows another language and is ‘adding’ English as a second language (p. 2).

Through the abolition of Bilingual Education and the enforcement of English-only instruction, ELLs are being deprived of the fundamental right to receive equal educational opportunities. As a result, a myriad of immigrant ELLs are failing in, and dropping out of, school. Taking Ramirez’s criticism (1998) into consideration, we may have to view the underachievement of ELLs from an alternative perspective: “White people (English-speaking, in this case) are the ones who consider language minority children to be at risk” (Sleeter, 1993, p. 14).

Ethnodrama

As previously discussed, English-speaking monolingual teachers’ understanding of linguistically and culturally diverse students, their cultural backgrounds, and their internal struggles is of utmost importance in order to create an inclusive learning environment. In this artistic research project, called the Ethnodrama Project, I had students engage in the process of constructing ethnodrama play scripts aimed at portraying critical issues pertaining to the exclusion of ELL students and individuals in school and community. I have found ethnodrama to be a transformative/emancipatory pedagogical tool to promote

learning in action for de/reconstructing one's own internalized ideology in relation to hegemony, thereby developing critical consciousness (Freire, 1970), and for enlarging one's capacity for imaginative empathy (Ikeda, 2010).

What Is Ethnodrama?

An *ethnodrama*, an amalgam of two words or human science fields, *ethnography* and *drama*, is a dramatized script constructed by transforming qualitative data collected through ethnographic data sources, such as ethnographic interview transcripts, participant observation field notes, hand-written or online journal entries, retrospective memories, and/or printing or media artifacts (Saldaña, 2005a). An ethnodrama “may not be an exact rendition of lived reality; however, it is most certainly a powerful translation of lived experience” (Nimmon, 2007, p. 384) and of “plausible accounts of the everyday world” (Mienczakowski, 1995, p. 364).

The ultimate goal of ethnodrama is to “create space and time for *marginalized voices to be heard*” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 31), seeking for “social transformation and emancipation” (Nimmon, 2007, p. 392). Through the construction of ethnodrama play scripts, ethnodramatic researchers affirm the voices of informants, striving to make such forgotten, silenced voices heard through a dramatic art form/piece and recognized as legitimate voices in an oppressive society. According to Saldaña (2011), ethnodramatic playwrights “maintain explicit *social justice* or *social change* agendas, hoping that their events serve as cautionary tales for the public to never let the inequities portrayed in their plays ever happen again” (p. 31). Nimmon (2007) continues:

An ethnodrama can create an opportunity to promote critical reflection and empathy about real-life situations that often are silenced. It provides an outlet for audience members to discuss the possibilities of transforming the oppressive elements of the experience of others, culminating in collective social action. This involves a dynamic form of reflection and action or praxis and ultimately is linked to the concept central to Freire's participatory processes (p. 394).

Ethnodrama in Action

In my multicultural pre-service teacher education class, my students create ethnodrama play scripts. They interview an ELL or non-native speaker of English, asking them about their school and life experiences after immigrating to America, and then create an ethnodramatic play script based on the analyzed interview data they collected. Many ELL interviewees shared their experiences of frustration, isolation, and exclusion based on their limited language proficiency or public language usage, including pronunciation, accent, and/or intonation. In our ethnodramatic play scriptwriting project, an ELL student or non-native speaker of English is chosen as an interviewee/ informant, mainly because of the sociopolitical context of Arizona where a myriad of Mexican immigrant ELLs attend schools without demonstrating adequate English proficiency, and thus suffer from the English-only instruction. An interviewee/informant may need to be carefully chosen, considering the unique geographical, demographic, cultural, societal, and political context that one belongs to, for a more critical exploration in illuminating and confronting issues faced by the specific local context.

The student-constructed ethnodrama play scripts are later used in Forum Theatre (See Boal, 1991; Rohd, 1998) or simply Reader's Theatre (See Donmoyer & Yennie-Donmoyer, 1995) formats in order to enhance critical reflection and analysis in in-class and online journal entries. Forum Theatre focuses on a moment of decision usually located in the last part of the script that provides the audience with a catalyst to think of alternative endings or interventions that are more ideal and just to them. Through this participatory interaction in Forum Theatre, the audience members (i.e., spectators) are transformed into what Boal terms "Spect/Actors," as they begin to discuss their own experiences and ethnographic research in relation to the ethnodrama they have just observed, collaboratively experiencing a critical meaning-making process as ethno-ethnographers (Tobin, Wu, & Davidson, 1984).

A leading ethnodramatic researcher and artist Johnny Saldaña (2005a, 2011) provides numerous examples of ethnodramatic works in diverse fields. The following ethnodramatic texts are ones that are easy to read for novice ethnodramatic researchers and/or teacher educators, like myself, using ethnodrama as a pedagogical tool in their teaching practices. All of the following ethnodramatic scripts portray issues pertaining to multicultural education: Pifer's (1999) *Small Town Race: A Performance Text*; Goldstein's (2001) *Hong Kong, Canada: Playwriting as Critical Ethnography*; Baldwin and Kaufman's (2001) *The Laramie Project*; Karam's (2007) *Columbinus*; Saldaña's (2008) *Second Chair: An Autoethnodrama*; and Randolph and Weems's (2010) *Speak Truth and Shame the Devil: An Ethnodrama in Response to Racism in the Academy*.

Moreover, Mienczakowski (1995), Pifer (1999), Goldstein (2001), Saldaña (2003, 2005a, 2010, 2011), and Nimmon (2007) provide readers with more technical and practical issues surrounding the process of constructing an ethnodrama play script.

Ethnodramatic Interviewing Process

As ethnodrama is not recognized for entertainment purposes, at least in my class, I have no expectation for technical proficiency (e.g., techniques to entertain an audience) in students' constructing play scripts; rather, I recognize that the processes of their dialogical interaction experiences are of greater importance, interactions that take place between interviewees and interviewers during assigned ethnographic interviews, as well as among students in classroom discussions, or in interactive online journal entries aiming to analyze ethnodramatic play scripts. In one of the class sessions, I demonstrated good and bad examples of ethnographic interviewing by improvising a performance in which I became an ethnographic interviewer and one of my students became an interviewee in a hypothetical ethnographic interview. Through this improvised play, I emphasized the importance of creating an interview environment of respect and good rapport. Here are my directions to students for the interviewing phase (Nieto & Bode, 2008) of the Ethnodrama Project.

Conduct a 60-minute interview of an individual whose native language is other than English, an interview focusing on the thoughts/feelings of the interviewee(s) about their culture and personal/school experiences.

- Make an appointment for your interview.

- Prepare an interview agenda with open-ended questions. (I provided sample interview questions beforehand.)
- Start the interview by identifying personal information regarding ethnicity/age/gender/occupation/etc.
- Encourage the sharing of personal stories/specific examples from their life/school experiences.
- Elicit actual incidents from your interviewee.
- Tape record the interview (with permission), if possible, for eye contact.
- Listen carefully. Let your interviewee talk!!

Through my own personal experience of being involved in qualitative research studies, I also emphasized the importance of recognizing an interviewee/informant as a *teacher*, which does not simply mean that an interviewer needs to pay careful attention to what the interviewee is saying, but also needs to have a sincere attitude as a *student* to learn from their interviewee. In some of the students' reflective journal entries, I found the following comments describing how the interviewing process was important for the Ethnodrama Project.

Jamie: The most important thing I have ever learned from the ethnodrama project was how to listen, and that doesn't mean just pay attention to what the person is saying but to truly cherish their words and genuinely give them your full focus.

Emma: It's crucial to pay attention to detail for writing. If you don't get the exact details of the scene when conducting the interview, then when you are writing the script out it won't make complete full sense in the story. . . . You have to make sure you are asking the right question, in specific detailed related to the scene. . . . This entails us to get a full description of what [an interviewee] went through in particular.

As ethnographic interviewing often elicits past traumatic experiences from interviewees, a group of students found the interview process very challenging.

Rita: This project was pretty much just uncomfortable for me. I was very self-conscious about asking [an interviewee] about all his personal and sensitive issues he's had about his ethnicity. I'm incredibly glad I was able to learn all that I did through this though.

Liz: Interviews can be good or bad; you could bring up bad memories from the interviewee or you can get a positive reaction out of them about their past and things that have made them who they are today.

Ellen: One challenging part of the interview was how reluctant [an interviewee] was talking too much about his past. He's pretty isolated with his emotions and what went on in his childhood.

The following is a reflection of the Ethnodrama project offered by one student, Danna. It describes well how she conducted an interview. She encountered some struggles and challenges before, during, and after.

My interviewee was my grandfather, or *abuelito*, as it's said in Spanish. Since he is a close family member to mine, I was able to conduct this

interview at an informal location, his home, on Tuesday, November 22nd. The interview lasted for about an hour, although I stayed in his home for longer after we were done. Overall, I believe the interview was a success and that we both learned a lot about ourselves and each other. Although I've known him for years, I learned a whole lot more that I wouldn't normally if it weren't for this assignment, so thank you. . . . As for the script-writing process, the most important thing I learned was empathy and I feel as if I am a little less ignorant than before since I have finally been able to be put in the shoes of someone who was personally attacked by an American with the intention to hurt them because of their inability to speak English. I feel terrible that people have had to go through this awful experience(s) and still suffer today at the hands of cruel, spiteful, uneducated individuals.

Challenges I encountered before the interview include choosing whom to interview since I wanted it to be with someone who I knew had the time to sit down with me and was willing to share such a personal story which wouldn't be always pleasant to hear about, less so to speak out and recall sometimes painful memories yet overall learning experiences. I also experienced an internal struggle since I after chose [the interviewee's name] as my interviewee, I wasn't sure how he would feel about me writing about his personal life, especially about when he was at his weakest, as an immigrant from rural Mexico to urban Arizona without knowing any English whatsoever and being thrust into a whole new world.

I also wasn't sure if I wanted to write about him like that since it is a cultural expectation for Latin Americans/Hispanics/Mexicans, etc., to hide their weaknesses and emotions such as sadness and pain. I was inclined to pick someone else because of this emotional conflict that was taking a toll on me and my motivation to complete this assignment. Fortunately, after speaking to both my mother and grandfather, who are two of the biggest influences on my life are the only ones I trust the most, they settled my heart and encouraged me to complete this to the best of my ability with their full support.

Challenges I encountered on the day of the interview were remaining objective while he told me how his life was many years ago. The most impressionable story he told me, which had a huge impact on him, had to do with his very first experience in Arizona. They were heartbreaking to listen to, especially as he became more and more open with details, like specific phrases that were said to him to make him inferior and names he was called that signified his mistreatment by people he had once aspired to become. I started getting emotional because I couldn't believe how people could be so vicious to other human beings. Even when I see it today, either on the news or in my own life, the ruthlessness of some people is equally astounding and upsetting each and every time.

Challenges I encountered after the interview were interpreting my *abuelito's* answers to my interview questions and applying them towards

the creation of an ethnodrama script. I'm a pretty good writer, I think, and it isn't all that hard to write what I feel and write objectively for me. But this type of writing didn't come easy to me. I felt as if I was being too vague and repetitive at times but after revising it a couple of times, each time with fresh eyes, I knew that I wrote to the best of my ability, which I think is enough. At least it is to satisfy myself, a semi-perfectionist and overachiever.

Ethnodramatic Writing

After the interview, students create ethnodrama scripts that should be based on one of the actual incidents that their interviewees experienced and shared during the interview. Students, although it is not mandatory, were encouraged to create a dialogic script in a Forum Theatre format that portrays a conflictual scene between a protagonist (oppressed) and an antagonist (oppressor). According to Rohd (1998), in Forum Theatre:

- A conflict is clear
- A scene revolves around a “moment of decision”—what would s/he (as a protagonist) do?—and her/his decision left us (the audience) wanting something different.
 - A clear idea of what the protagonist wanted and didn't want.
 - The protagonist's failure to get what s/he wanted.
- The reason for failure lies in the strong actions, attitudes, and choices of the antagonist(s).

- A clear sense that the protagonist has inner voices, or desires that reinforced her/his inability to succeed (p. 102-103).

I shared a Forum Theatre script, constructed by one of my students, as an example.

Except for this script, I did not teach students any scriptwriting techniques.

SALMA: Look, I'm just trying to get a job. I have a one year old that I'm trying to raise, but I just lost my job. I'm a hard worker, I'll be here on time, and I learn fast, please.

SUPERVISOR: Calm down ma'am (*stands up from a chair; a little upset face*), I understand that you may be confused and you are going through hard times, but we have plenty of other applicant that are probably going through the same problems.

SALMA: (*brief pause*) Sir, I am not here to argue, I just want an equal opportunity for the position, all I need is the chance.

SUPERVISOR: Well ma'am, let's say we did hold an interview for you today. First of all, we do want to hire the best possible person for that position and to be perfectly honest with you, I feel that your accent would be a little too strong for this position. If people were to hear that on the telephone, what do you think their initial thought would be? I'll tell you, a lack of professionalism.

SALMA: (*silent; sad face*) . . .

Ethnodrama Playscript

The following texts are excerpts from six of my students' constructed ethnodramatic plays, all of which are based on their interviewees' previous school

experiences. Student-constructed ethnodrama scripts are shared every semester in my multicultural education classrooms as *alternative* texts, and adopted over time as “a permanent product rather than a disposable one” (Sleeter, Torres & Laughlin, 2004, p. 95). The following scripts are not necessarily considered Forum Theatre, yet they well describe how ELLs are being oppressed in school.

ACT 1: FRANCISCO

TEACHER: *(excited with a big smile on her face)* Hi, welcome to class! I’m your teacher Mrs. Spring, tell me what your name is and I will help find where your seat is.

FRANCISCO: *(does not understand a word she says, except for the word name and replies in a Spanish accent)* Francisco?

TEACHER: *(with a weird expression on her face)* Francisco this is your seat and welcome to class... I am assuming that you are probably used to speaking Spanish at home, but while you are here at school let’s use English, okay?

FRANCISCO: *(feels scared, alone, and confused; does not understand a word that she says; so remains silent)* ...

TEACHER: Francisco, I know that today is the first day, but here at school when the teacher is talking to you, you have to answer them... It is the polite thing to do.

FRANCISCO: *(gaining some courage; replying in Spanish)* I do not understand English.

ACT 2: DIEGO

DIEGO: *(with her soft Spanish accent)* I am having trouble doing my assignment... Can you help me?

TEACHER: *(with a stern voice)* My job is to teach you during school hours.

DIEGO: But I still do not understand how to do it.

TEACHER: You should have learned all of this in elementary!

DIEGO: But I was never taught this material when I attended elementary in Mexico.

TEACHER: What do you mean you were never taught this?

DIEGO: In my hometown, our classrooms were overcrowded and the students were loud and not used to the classroom environment so I never got to learn all of the material.

TEACHER: What does this have to do with your situation?

DIEGO: I was trying to explain why I did not have a chance to understand the material.

TEACHER: I told you, I went over it in class.

ACT 3: JOSE

TEACHER: Okay, everyone; pull out a sheet of paper so that you can write notes on the guidelines for the assignment. *(looks around the room)* I know I have already gone over them, but it seems as if some of you didn't understand me the first time.

(JOSE notices that the teacher is staring at him; turns his head away, embarrassed and ashamed; Class starts laughing because they realize that the teacher is looking at JOSE)

TEACHER: *(addresses the class again)* I'm going to show you an example of what not to do on your paper! You see, JOSE over here forgot to check his spelling in his paper before he turned it in, and his sentences are not grammatically correct. His paper overall doesn't make sense!

JOSE: *(with an accent)* I really tried *(stutters)* my hardest *(stutters)* do the assignment right.

(JOSE starts to get teary eyed; feels ashamed, looking away because he doesn't want anyone to see him crying. Class laughs again)

TEACHER: *(addresses the class again)* This is why we need to make sure to check our work before we turn it in because you don't want to sound like this in your paper.

TOM: *(speaks in a condescending tone)* It's probably because he's Mexican and doesn't know English! *(looks at JOSE)* Maybe you should learn English before you decide to move here. Don't you know that we speak English in America?

JOSE: *(silent; feels completely degraded)*

TEACHER: *(wants to get back on task)* Okay everyone, now that we have gone over the guidelines, start working on your papers.

(JOSE leaves the classroom silently; feels ashamed to be in the room with everyone making fun of him for not knowing English.)

ACT 4: QUINNE

(QUINNE really wanted to be like all the other students, so she sat with the girls who looked like the “cool” crowd during lunch and attempted to be just like them.)

QUINNE: *(sits down hesitantly; speaks with a heavy accent)* Hello, is it ok if I sit here?

VERONICA: Sure, new girl. *(starts to laugh with her friends)*

(QUINNE starts to unpack the lunch her mother packed. A napkin falls to her lap and says, “Have a great day at your new school pumpkin!”)

VERONICA: What is that you have in your hands new girl?

QUINNE: . . . *(hesitating; looks around not understanding what VERONICA has just said)*

VERONICA: Do you not speak E-N-G-L-I-S-H? *(points to the napkin)*

QUINNE: Yes, it’s uh nothing. *(feeling uncomfortable, like she isn’t wanted here)*

VERONICA: *(becomes impatient; snatches the napkin out from the bag)*

This doesn’t look like nothing sweetheart, is this a note from your mommy? Awh, the little princess still gets notes from her mommy.

(Other girls laugh and mimic VERONICA. QUINNE does not know what is going on or what is being just said, so she starts to laugh along with the girls. VERONICA stops laughing, along with the other girls, stares at QUINNE.)

VERONICA: We don't want you here sweetie. You do not belong here, why don't you go back to your little smelly country because you aren't and never will be one of us you dirty rat!

(QUINNE pushes her chair back and runs to the bathroom tears streaming down her face.)

ACT 5: BRISEIDA

(BRISEIDA is a 6th grade student who has only been in America for a short amount of time. LUPE is one of her very first friends. BRISEIDA sits in the bus. LUPE gets on.)

LUPE: *(in Spanish)* How was your day?

BRISEIDA: *(in Spanish)* Good. . . except for the fact that some kids in my class stole my belongings and there was nothing I could do about it because I couldn't tell the teacher since I don't speak English.

LUPE: I'm sorry to hear that. Maybe we can go in and talk to her tomorrow.

(ROBBIE and LUKE get on the bus and overhear LUPE and BRISEIDA talking in Spanish. ROBBIE and LUKE approach BRISEIDA and LUPE.)

ROBBIE: Oh, those Mexican girls are speaking in Spanish again.

LUKE: You know we speak English in America, right?

LUPE: *(in English)* She's in the process of learning English.

LUKE: Well, she needs to go back to Mexico where she belongs.

LUPE: Your ancestors are from England, but we aren't telling you to go back to England.

LUKE: So? America is for people who know how to speak English. If she can't learn it then she needs to leave.

LUPE: Why do you always have to pick on us, because we're speaking Spanish? It's a part of our culture. We don't make fun of you for speaking English.

BRISEIDA: Lupe I just want to know why they are so mean to me. I have never done anything wrong to them.

(LUPE translates and tells LUKE what BRISEIDA said.)

LUKE: Because she's from Mexico and doesn't know English.

ACT 6: ROBERTO

(ROBERTO waits for the after school bus when three other students approach him.)

BOY 1: Hola, hahaha!, what are you even doing here?

BOY 2: Yeah! Why didn't you just stay where you belong back in Mexico?

ROBERTO: *(with a heavy accent)* No trouble.

BOY 3: Hahaha!! What a little girl, is that all you know how to say?

BOY 2: *(punches ROBERTO's palm)* I don't give a crap what he can say or not, we don't like you little Mexican boy and just wait till you get off the bus. *(points to the bus as it arrives)*

(ROBERTO runs to the bus hoping those kids do not follow him, but they do. Desperate for help he speaks to the bus driver.)

ROBERTO: Oiga, señor, ayudeme! Aquellos niños me kieren golpear, creo que cuando me vaje del camion [Excuse me sir, help me! Those kids want to hurt me when I get off the bus, I think]

DRIVER: Yeah, yeah, yeah, just sit down; I know where you live. I'll get you home.

(Terrified, ROBERTO just waits for his stop; as soon as ROBERTO gets off the bus he tries to run, but he is surrounded. The bus leaves.)

BOY 2: Why don't you go back to Mexico and go eat beans?

(ROBERTO hears one of the kids scream at him, and before he turns around to see what it is, he gets hit in the back of his head and all three kids begin to punch and kick him while he is on the floor.)

Ethnodrama Personal Reflection

Along with their constructed ethnodrama scripts, students were also asked to submit a personal reflection paper that portrayed the most important thing they learned from their interviewees and their shared stories. Here is an excerpt from one of my students' reflections. Her interviewee was her own mother.

One of my mom's most recent jobs was working for a school as a nighttime custodian. In a recent and quite emotional conversation we had, she broke down and confessed she wished she would have done more with her life to make her children proud. She then went on to describe the humiliation she faced at work. She told me how the teachers chewed up

and placed wads of gum on the light switches so that she would have to touch them when she turned on the lights, how she had to disinfect the stalls of the men's restrooms where men had purposely urinated on the floors to give her "something to do," and how she had to singlehandedly carry multiple trash bags that weighed up to 50 pounds each all around campus because her supervisor didn't like her. That's what put her down the most, when people decided they didn't like her because of what she looked like. This was the moment my mom broke down crying. Watching her cry has been one of the most heart-breaking experiences I have ever lived through. That's when it hit me that no culture is necessarily more beautiful than another. What gave those teachers the right to treat my mom that way? What gives *any* culture the right to think they're better than anyone else? . . . It took a long time for me to realize that I'm not Disney princess material. I'm a Mexican and I'm done trying to hide something so obvious and beautiful.

Ethnodramatic Exploration

In the Ethnodrama Project, the scriptwriting process is of great importance. It is a process of the ethnodramatic researcher's affirmation of the marginalized voices of informants, allowing them to be heard through their construction.

Students voiced:

Hilary: When writing the ethnodrama I came to truly put myself in [the interviewee's] shoes, trying to understand what he experiences, with his thoughts and emotions included, every day as a bilingual and ELL. I

appreciate this opportunity to learn from [the interviewee] and hope to keep this interview in mind while I teach.

Madeleine: What made an impact on me was writing the script. When I was writing the script I felt like I was in [the interviewee's] situation and I saw how frustrating it was. This whole interview really made me think of how it must feel to be an ELL student.

Mienczakowski (1995) notes that in ethnodrama, the play makes “the ownership and determination of the play’s stories remain with the informants (p. 371-372); however, I wanted to make the Ethnodrama Project a mutual effort and intention of both interviewees (ELLs) and interviewers (my students), which resonates with what Shor (1993) refers to as “co-intentionality” between student and teacher. I wanted students to feel connected with their interviewees, as the authors of ethnodrama, “becoming” an ally to the oppressed (Boal, 1985). Ethnodrama writing is counter-narrative construction. It “dis-invent[s]” (Chappell & Faltis, 2012) hegemonic scripts drafted with the dominant cultural values that stigmatize people of color as deficit and deviant and stratify them into the lowest of a caste-like system.

Ethnodramatic Script Analysis

The Ethnodrama Project served as an emancipatory pedagogical tool to facilitate pre-service teacher candidates in their empathy development and ideological de/reconstruction. The collaborative exploration and analysis of student-constructed ethnodrama play scripts, as “evocative, contextual, and vernacular [texts]” (Barone & Eisner, 2006, p. 97), enhance Bakhtinian dialogic

interactions (Mienczakowski, 1995), offering “multiple interpretations of text, multiple points of view” (Styslinger, 2000, p. 185); that is, the ethnodramatic exploration of script construction and analysis enables one to examine the binary perspectives of the characters portrayed: an antagonist’s (oppressor) and a protagonist’s (oppressed).

Through writing this ethnodrama I learned about trying to understand all the parts in a situation, how each person is feeling and acting, as well as why they are saying what they say. This makes you evaluate all the parts instead of just the outcome, a very interesting and clever technique!

(Emma)

On the one hand, by examining protagonists’ (oppressed) inner (*emic*) perspectives and listening to these inner voices, which are marginalized in schools and society, one may develop imaginative empathy (Ikeda, 2010) by awakening “the ordinary unseen, unheard, and unexpected” (Green, 1995, p. 28). On the other hand, by analyzing antagonists’ (oppressor) assumptions, attitudes, and behaviors, comparing them to one’s own, one may self-reflectively examine one’s own unacknowledged privilege, prejudice, and power as well as “the oppressor consciousness embodied in the social institutions of power” (Styslinger, 2000, p. 196).

Empathy Development

Examining protagonists’ viewpoints portrayed in ethnodramatic scripts helps pre-service teacher candidates nurture imaginative empathy by scrutinizing the ELLs’ voices that have been silenced due to limited language proficiency

and/or teachers' lack of understanding of linguistic and cultural diversity. Citing Darling-Hammond (2008), Canhmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning (2010) write that "to put oneself in the shoes of the learner and to understand the meaning of that experience in terms of learning . . . [is] perhaps the most important role of teacher preparation" (p. 21). Many students who experienced the Ethnodrama Project voiced that it positively affected them in terms of developing compassionate empathy toward ELLs and non-native speakers.

Jenny: I had never realized how much compassion you can develop from a simple one on one interview. . . . I could never imagine a child feeling hopeless because of teachers showing them that they will never make it.

Erica: This whole process made me realize just how many facets of [the interviewee's] and her family's lives were affected by being a non-English speaker. I think that seeing the hardships [the interviewee] encountered, I will be more empathetic not just to my future students, but to the ELL community and non-native speakers in general.

Silvia: My awareness of ELL students has been greatly broadened. I know that when I become a teacher I want to make my classroom a place where all students feel comfortable. . . . This experience really opened my eyes and allowed me to experience situations I had never had to go through before.

Using student-constructed ethnodramatic play scripts as a generative, localized text for posing educational questions and problems prevalent in local schools and communities, pre-service teacher candidates can explore, from an

empathetic standpoint, creative ways and approaches to building a supportive learning environment for ELLs. A previous study has confirmed that monolingual teachers, even though they do not understand students' native languages, can create such a positive school climate supportive to linguistic diverse students (Gollnick & Chinn, 2010). Verdugo and Flores (2007) indicate that "a positive school climate provides ELL students with positive experiences as well as academic achievements" (p. 169). ELL students, however, are often demotivated and disheartened, eventually dropping out of school, when they experience unfair treatment by their teachers (Verdugo & Flores, 2007). My own personal experience as an ELL and working with Asian immigrant students helps me understand that ELL students are very sensitive to their teachers' facial expressions and nonverbal communication, as they excel in visual cognitive development to compensate for their lack of listening comprehension.

Ideological De/Reconstruction

Ethnodramatic script analysis has the potential pedagogical benefit to help pre-service teacher candidates to de/reconstruct their own internalized assumptions, values, and beliefs that guide their attitudes and behaviors. It has been observed that pre-service teachers enter teacher preparation programs "with eyes that have learned to see in ways the dominant culture has trained [them] all to see" (Tozer, 1993, p. 20) and "with assumptions and beliefs shaped by authoritative discourses encountered prior to entering the program" (Assaf & Battle, 2008, p. 94). In order to challenge the dominant cultural values and the oppressor consciousness, it is crucial for prospective teachers to be given critical

opportunities to deconstruct their own internalized ideology in relation to dominant authoritative discourses and reconstruct counter-hegemonic, critical consciousness. To achieve this, I asked pre-service teachers to “understand their ideologies and political positions and compare these against the realities that shape the lives of students from socioeconomic, linguistic, and culturally diverse backgrounds” (Assaf & Battle, 2008, p. 94). This critical process of examining one’s own internalized ideology resonates with what Bartolomé (2004) refers to as “ideological clarity.” Ideological clarity is a cultural process of liberatory engagement in which one self-reflectively and dialectically examines one’s own internalized ideology in relation to dominant hegemonic discourses. As we analyzed ethnodramatic plays portraying the lived experiences of ELLs and non-native speakers of English, pre-service teachers were given critical opportunities to examine/analyze their own internalized racism manifested in their values and beliefs about speakers of languages other than English. In the following students’ discourses, we can see how students deconstruct authoritative discourses by challenging the oppressor consciousness, and reconstruct counter-hegemonic values by becoming an ally to ELLs and non-native speakers.

Leigh: The whole time he [a Mexican interviewee] was talking about his school experience, I kept asking myself why the teacher’s did not try to help him. His interview was really important because it showed me just how little some teachers do to help their ELL students. As educators one of the most important things to pass on to students, is the love of learning. If students hate school, then they are not going to want to go. Eventually

this can lead to students dropping out of school. His stories made me realize how important it is to give ELL students the extra help they need. . . . Had his teachers spent more time helping him, and less time criticizing him he might have had a whole different outlook on school.

Andy: I developed a new awareness of non-native speakers when hearing [the interviewee's] talk about his experiences. He really expressed the discrimination he went through because of his accent, or even people just *seeing* his last name. . . . Even to this day, as a 65-year-old man, he stills deals with it some. He made me aware of the fact that the ELL student is aware of the racism they are receiving even if you think they are not. He said something that I found really powerful, "They may not speak English as well as you, but that doesn't make them dumb. They can read body language and hateful eyes."

Sally: One major problem [the interviewee] did face was the level of support and interaction with his non-Hispanic teachers. They were very unsympathetic towards him and the other ELL students. Also the level of interaction between his non-Hispanic teachers and the ELL students was very minimal. He felt that they were only doing enough to help the ELL students get by, and not actually involving them enough to be engaged in the classroom and learn. When hearing that portion of his story it really opened my eyes to one of what I think is the biggest issues with ELL students, which is they do not get enough support, sympathy and interaction with the teacher and classmates to actually learn the language

and feel involved. Plus when the teachers are not including ELLs other students may develop the idea that it is okay to not include them either.

We as teacher educators play a pivotal role in encouraging pre-service teacher candidates to examine and confront their own internalized oppression by providing them with transformative/emancipatory teaching/learning approaches developed through our daily teaching/research efforts. Through empathy development and ideological de/reconstruction as a consequence of ethnodramatic exploration, we as teacher educators may be able to help change the way that teachers view their students' linguistic and cultural diversity (Nieto, 2004). These changes would exert a significant influence on the academic achievements of linguistically diverse students. Through inner transformation, prospective teacher candidates in turn may be able to "transform the school environment in which they work" (Ambe, 2006, p. 694), if not through a single multicultural education experience, then through commitment to such ethnographic work in small doses over time.

Chapter 6

COURAGE

Heterosexism

Homophobia manifests itself everywhere in our everyday lives. It is reported that the most common hate-motivated crime at a society-wide level is one toward sexual-minority communities. Similarly, lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students are disproportionately at risk of being the target of verbal, psychological, and physical in-school harassment (Sherwin & Jennings, 2006). The dominant discourse embedded in American education and culture stigmatizing homosexuality as “a sin, a moral failure, a sickness, or a crime” (Gollnick & Chinn, 2010, p. 131) fuels homophobic prejudice and discrimination toward LGBT individuals in schools and society. It is a shame that until 1973 the American Psychological Association had defined homosexuality as a mental illness (Gollnick & Chinn, 2010). The effect of such stigma and marginalization toward LGBT students affects their academic achievements, youth development, and emotional and physical health. An estimated 30% of juvenile suicide reported in the Western world is related to lesbian and gay sexuality (Robinson & Ferfolja, 2001; Sherwin & Jennings, 2006).

LGBT issues are constantly positioned within a discourse of compulsory heterosexuality. Heterosexual teachers, for instance, are unlikely to recognize the importance of incorporating LGBT issues in their classroom agendas, because they simply assume that LGBT issues are merely “minority” issues, irrelevant and unrelated to the majority of “normal” students in their classrooms, thereby finding

them less important (Ferfolja & Robinson, 2004). Robinson and Ferfolja (2001) note:

Misunderstandings fuelled by stereotypical myths, poor education or religious/cultural discourses, reinforce the ease with which some pre-service teachers are prepared to gloss over or totally expunge this social justice issue. Lesbian and gay pupils largely feel isolated and marginalized in mainstream classrooms, which is reinforced through the overt and hidden curricula, the lack of visibility and support demonstrated by schools and teachers, and through hegemonic heteronormative discourses prevailing in schools (p. 128).

LGBT issues are perceived as “controversial” by heterosexual pre-service teachers, because they believe that LGBT issues are associated closely with one’s religious and personal beliefs/views and hence often silenced in teacher education classrooms (Robinson & Ferfolja, 2001). If homophobia and discrimination toward LGBT students are not addressed sufficiently and substantially in teacher education programs, pre-service teacher candidates may carry socially constructed prejudicial perceptions of LGBT communities to their future classrooms, which legitimates the perpetuation of hegemonic heteronormative standards. By challenging homophobia and discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, we are not only fighting against the marginalization of specific oppressed groups, but also fighting for the creation of a just and equitable society that affirms and embraces differences and diversity (Robinson & Ferfolja, 2004).

Walk the Line

In order to explore issues related to homophobia and discrimination toward LGBT students, one of the student teams designed an activity called Walk the Line. The Walk the Line exercise, according to the student team, was designed to “discuss the types of hatred and negative reactions that occur when same-sex couples are seen in school and society.” One of the team members later shared, through his reflective journal entry, why they designed the Walk the Line exercise.

The important message in which I wanted to convey is just to have the class get a true understanding of what homosexuality is and is not. I think it's truly important for others to be educated upon the subject and become familiar with it, otherwise it stays “abnormal” and “uncommon” in society. I wanted everyone to see that there is nothing wrong with being gay, and all of the myths and negativities that come along with it are only misleading and difficult roadblocks. Treating someone in a negative fashion based upon their sexuality, the factor of whom they love, is wrong in every sense possible. Bullying, teasing, name-calling, and degrading someone, in general, are wrong. I know it's impossible to get everyone to view being gay as something that is right and necessarily “agree” with it, but I want everyone to grow accepting of it.

Walk the line protocol. Before the exercise began, the student team first asked for three pairs of volunteers (two males, two females, and one male and one female) and guided them outside the classroom so that the team could explain the role the three pairs would play during the upcoming exercise. In the meantime,

other students in the classroom were asked to divide into two large groups in a cleared space of the classroom, and form two straight, separate lines facing each other. Once the lines were set, the student team asked each pair to come in one by one. The first pair was two students playing the role of a heterosexual couple, holding hands. The heterosexual couple walked through, between the lines, to the end and then returned to the outside, remaining silent the entire time. The second pair represented a lesbian couple. The lesbian couple also walked through between the lines, holding hands. The third and last pair was two male students playing the role of a gay couple. They did the same as the last two pairs.

In a subsequent debriefing and discussion, the student team asked students to share their initial thoughts on the exercise, particularly what they felt when each pair walked between the lines and how their feelings, according to the pairs, were different. Students agreed that the last gay couple could most likely be a target of “hatred and negative reactions.” The student team also invited students to join a conversation on how homophobia manifests itself in school.

Roger: It manifests its way into schools through what is brought up in the public eye. For example, what students see in media, in politics or religion, affects how people view the subject. Since it is made out to be such a “bad” and “negative” thing in society, students then think it is okay to look down upon it and is commended to react in such a way.

Eflen: Homophobia manifests itself in schools through social media, religion, culture, and family backgrounds. People are ignorant and unknowledgeable of others’ sexuality. They are not willing to accept what

is outside the “social norm.” Educators can practice being facilitators and co-learners for their students. Their actions and views reflect the way a student behaves in a classroom setting, and possibly in the society.

Some students believed that homophobic attitudes and behavior within adolescent peer groups were legitimated and perpetuated by teachers’ non-intervention in the occurrence of homophobic bullying and discrimination.

Emily: Homophobia in schools is caused by many different factors. There are bullies, there are those who are indifferent, and there are teachers that do nothing. It is sad but true. In my elementary school, my best friend was bullied. He was harassed every single day, called names like “faggot” and “queer.” He was written horrible notes and threatened. It got worse when I, and about 10 other girls, started to stand up and fight for him. Kids were terrible, saying things like: “You’re too much of a bitch! You have girls fight your battles” and so on. Teachers did absolutely nothing, even though my fist was about to go down someone’s throat. It just shows how ignorant and careless people are. It makes no sense because as a teacher, it should have been their job to stand up for their students.

Liz: Homophobia stems from the home life in which the student is living because it is a learned behavior. Homophobia doesn’t just happen at a young age, but it happens when a child learns a behavior/attitude towards the subject. It then is passed on into schools because students bring it to school from their home life. Also, another aspect of why it manifests in schools is because of teacher’s being ok with students discriminating

against LGBT students. There are some teachers/administrators who don't believe in LGBT, and therefore they are condoning the negative behavior being implemented. If we as teachers/administrators see any kind of activity like that happening (regardless of our own beliefs) we must stop it immediately and enforce the consequences.

I recognize heterosexual teachers' non-intervention, or adopting a hands-off approach to homophobic bullying and discrimination, not as passive ignorance, but as their active participation in homophobic discrimination. By "[doing] nothing" and "condoning the negative behavior being implemented," teachers not only send students a covert message that it is OK to bully and humiliate LGBT students, but are also indirectly involved in discrimination against LGBT students, with the aid of students' verbal and physical violence.

Heterosexual Privilege

Ferfolja & Robinson (2004) argue that "teachers are often unaware that they reinforce heterosexuality daily through heterosexist policy, curriculum and pedagogical practices" (p. 15). In order to challenge heteronormativity pervasive in school, therefore, it is of great importance for pre-service teachers to be given opportunities to examine their own unrecognized heterosexual privileges.

Influenced largely by McIntosh's *White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* (1990), Geller (2007) created a list of privileges that heterosexual individuals unconsciously take for granted in their daily lives. Geller (2007) emphasizes the importance of one's self-introspection and self-awareness, which

can be the first step to confronting one's internalized compulsory heterosexuality and homophobia. He notes:

To be other than a heterosexual is to be at a disadvantage; thus, as a heterosexual I have privileges and advantages that gays, bisexuals, and lesbians do not have. These are privileges that no one ever bothered to point out to me or teach me about or ask me to consider. I never thought about this until I read the article by Peggy. Here privileges, conditions that she could count on but her Black colleagues could not, guided me in my initial list of heterosexual privileges. My list grows as I think of those opportunities that I have come to take for granted, but are denied to my gay, lesbian and bisexual colleagues. What I have come to realize is that I did not earn or work to have these privileges afforded me. I was automatically given them and was able to use them, because I'm heterosexual. . . . The more involved [in introspection] I have become as an ally, the more privileges I see" (p. 11).

Here are some excerpts from the list he created of heterosexual privileges.

- I can arrange to be in the company of people of my sexual orientation if I want, any time I want.
- If I have to move I can be reasonably assured of financing based on the household's two incomes.
- I can be reasonably sure my neighbors will be pleasant towards me.
- I can walk the streets with my significant other and feel safe when holding hands or kissing or hugging.

- I can turn to the news media and see or read of issues that are important to me.
- Curriculum materials of my children will address my sexual orientation.
- When I go into a bookstore or record shop, I will readily find things that pertain to my sexual orientation.
- While traveling on public transportation, I can read materials pertaining to my sexual orientation.
- I can speak out in public and have it looked at positively.
- When I am in the hospital, no one questions who is in my immediate family (p. 11-12).

By identifying and deconstructing heterosexual privileges, pre-service teachers examined the existing social inequalities of LGBT individuals and how such inequalities were entrenched in institutional policies, customs, and practices as the *de facto* norm. Through this deconstruction process, pre-service teachers challenged their own lived experiences that might have legitimated heteronormativity, and that might have justified the reality of heterosexual domination. We teachers are “active agents in the construction of [our] own subjectivity who are influential in the development of the subjectivity of [students]” (Robinson & Ferfolja, 2004, p. 123) and hence, we need to be aware that our beliefs and assumptions expressed *overtly* and/or *covertly* in our daily teaching practices and interactions with students exert an influence on students’ behavioral idiosyncrasies in both positive and negative ways. Regardless of the

actual occurrence of homophobic bullying and discrimination in school, therefore, teachers must always make continuous efforts to challenge heterosexual hegemony in our classrooms in order to provide an equitable and inclusive school environment for LGBT students.

Jamey

Our discussion also focused on a tragic juvenile suicide as a consequence of a homophobic bullying incident and hate crime. Jamey Rodemeyer, a 14-year-old boy, took his own life on September 18, 2011, after having received constant homophobic bullying in school. During his lifetime, Jamey, regardless of his own victimized situation, uploaded a video clip onto a video-sharing site in order to encourage other LGBT students being victimized by homophobic bullying in school, saying, “It gets better. I promise.” It Gets Better is now an Internet-based video project in which LGBT youth upload their self-interview clips onto a video-sharing site to support other LGBT youth and help prevent acts of suicide. In our class, we watched one of the most-watched It Gets Better clips, which had more than 1,800,000 views. This clip is about two openly gay men named Dan and Terry sharing their experiences of homophobic prejudice and discrimination in their school days. Dan and Terry constantly faced numerous types of verbal, physical, and emotional abuse and harassment in high school in particular. Terry, for instance, was beaten up and thrown against walls, lockers and windows. Perpetrators of homophobic bullying scratched his car, broke its windows, and even defecated on his car. To seek intervention from school authority, Terry’s parents talked to administrators; however, what they were told was: “If you look

that way, talk that way, walk that way, act that way, then there is nothing we can do to help your son.” In this clip, Dan and Terry are trying to encourage LGBT students currently enrolled in K-12 to just be patient a few more years, because “it gets better” once they finish and leave school. This message, given by Dan and Terry, accurately yet sadly enough reflects school today. That is, students who are not part of the dominant/mainstream culture are marginalized, being deprived of their fundamental human rights and equal educational opportunities. If these subordinated students ever choose to stay in school, they have to accept all types of suffering one can imagine, including verbal, physical, and emotional humiliation, exclusion, isolation, abuse, and harassment. If they accepted the idea that their cultures are *inferior* and assimilated themselves into the dominant culture, looking, talking, walking, and acting accordingly, however, they may finally enjoy schooling. This is the school that we created. Although I admit that Dan and Terry’s encouragement may have some transient, positive effects on LGBT students, it does not solve the fundamental problem underlying homophobic bullying and discrimination. From a critical perspective, Dan and Terry encourage LGBT students to internalize subordination and accept an idea that school is a place where marginalized students are destined to suffer for inequitable and unfair treatment. According to Hardiman and Jackson (1997), internalized subordination can be manifested when oppressed group members accept the oppressor’s hegemonic ideology and recognize their subordinated status as “deserved” and “normal.” On the contrary, when members of the oppressor group accept *false assumption of superiority* as “natural” and

“inevitable,” they internalize domination. Heterosexism manifests itself in one’s internalized dominant belief and assumption under the named superiority of heterosexuality.

Matthew

Along with Jamey Rodemeyer, we talked about Matthew Shepard who died on October 12, 1998. He was a gay 21-year-old university student in Laramie, Wyoming. He was brutally beaten to death by two homophobic hate crime offenders and left to die, tied to a fence on a remote hill in suburban Laramie. Matthew’s story later became a theatrical performance called *The Laramie Project* (2001), by Moisés Kaufman and the Tectonic Theatre Project, which adopted an ethnotheatre technique. The Ethnodrama Project in my multicultural education class was originally influenced by *The Laramie Project*, in which Moisés Kaufman and members of the Tectonic Theatre Project conducted approximately 200 hours of ethnographic interviews with more than 200 people in Laramie investigating the murder of Matthew, then created a play based on the informants’ actual testimonials. Kaufman (2001) starts *The Laramie Project* by stating:

There are moments in history when a particular event brings the various ideologies and beliefs prevailing in a culture into sharp focus. At these junctures the event becomes a lightning rod of sorts, attracting and distilling the essence of these philosophies and convictions. By paying careful attention in moments like this to people’s words, one is able to

hear the way these prevailing ideas affect not only individual lives but also the culture at large.

In our class, we read a few pages excerpted from the script of *The Laramie Project* in a reader's theatre format, a scene that portrays a court trial in which Dennis, Matthew's father, supplicates the jury for mercy toward the two criminals, Aaron McKinney and Russell Henderson. Influenced largely by this, Aaron and Russell were sentenced to life in prison. Eleven years after Matthew's death, on October 28, 2009, the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, also known as the Matthew Shepard Act, was signed into law by President Obama. The enactment of the Matthew Shepard Act has significant meaning in terms of protecting the safety of LGBT students in school. According to Sherwin and Jennings (2006), only 25% of U.S. states currently had laws aimed at protecting students from harassment and discrimination. The Matthew Shepard Act, however, makes harassment and discrimination based on sexual orientation and gender identity a federal hate crime and accordingly, the U.S. Justice Department has legal authority to prosecute such hate crime (Lucas, 2009).

Homophobic Bullying and Teachers' Responsibility

Teachers "have a professional, moral and legal obligation to intervene in discrimination based on sexual orientation and to promote critical understandings of sexual 'difference' throughout all stages of education" (Ferfolja & Robinson, 2004, p. 10). Nearly 85% of the students surveyed, however, report that teachers "never intervened" or "intervened only some of the time" when homophobic bullying and harassment occurred (Sherwin & Jennings, 2006). The statistics

related to homophobic bullying and discrimination show devastating results.

According to the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network's (GLSEN)

national school climate survey (as cited in Kosciw, 2004):

- 84% of sexual-minority students report being verbally harassed and nearly 40% report being physically harassed because of their sexual orientation.
- More than 90% of these students regularly heard homophobic/heterosexist comments while at school, including comments from teachers and staff.
- 75% of youth who reported feeling unsafe at school claimed that these feelings were due to either their sexual orientation or how they express their gender (p. 12).

It is of urgent importance that pre-service teachers recognize their critical responsibility and roles to confront homophobic bullying in school. Students discussed how they thought they would be able to promote anti-homophobia education in school.

Roger: Teachers can help by raising awareness. Talking and having discussions is the first step. Having students be knowledgeable of what it truly is, and not what they "think" or perceive it as, is critical. If students are left unaware, it means they are left ignorant. They need to know that homophobia and bullying is NEVER the answer and is NOT right.

Emma: Homophobia is just like racism, is comes from growing up and knowing what you're familiar with and what you're not familiar with.

People are “homophobic” because it isn’t natural for them to see a homosexual couple holding hands or kissing each other. I think educators can eliminate it by bringing it up in class, having discussions about it and teaching the students that there is nothing wrong with it. If we can teach them that at an early age, I think they would be better off in the future.

Jamie: Because of ignorance, prejudice, and fear, homophobia spreads, and the lack of intervention allows it to continue. To end this discrimination, schools need to be converted into one culture in which faculty and staff are all united and share common goals. When the entire school is united, it is then critical to implement an anti-bullying program that has a zero-tolerance policy on discrimination of any sort. But a zero-tolerance policy is not enough. As teachers we have to go further by showing and promoting acceptance and fairness to our students. Building trust with our students is also crucial. We must prove to them that we are reliable and trustworthy, and that they can confide with us if they become a victim of bullying. As trust between the teachers and students grow, the instances of bullying can then be dealt with accordingly and rules can be reinforced. Promoting this culture of trust and justice in turn leads to the eradication of bullying.

When supportive teachers take a stand to promote anti-homophobia education in school, however, they are most likely to encounter resistance from conservative parents (Gollnick & Chinn, 2010). I found Boal’s Forum Theatre an effective and

powerful pedagogical tool as a rehearsal for change to prepare pre-service teacher candidates for such a crucial situation.

Forum Theatre

Forum Theatre aims to transform the passive audience, or spectators, into an active audience called “Spect/Actors,” a Boal term, by providing them with improvisational acting opportunities in an oppressive theatrical scene. According to Kaptani and Yuval-Davis (2008), Forum Theatre:

constructs dramatic scenes involving conflictual oppressive situations in small groups, and shows them to the other participants who intervene by taking the place of the protagonists and suggesting better strategies for achieving their goals (p. 7).

Technically speaking, a Forum Theatre play can be divided into three different stages. In the first stage, performers enact a scripted Forum Theatre play for the audience. As briefly discussed in the previous chapter, Forum Theatre plays illuminate an oppressive issue and end a scene leaving the protagonist and audience members with a moment of decision. In the second stage, a facilitator, called *Joker*, encourages an audience member to come on stage and join the scene in order to replace a protagonist role and to offer, through the improvisational performance, an alternate ending she or he finds more ideal. In the third and last stage, everyone engaged in the Forum Theatre play deconstructs and re-explores constructed scenes and discusses implications and other recommendations on the issues explored. Boal (1992) notes that the central intention of Forum Theatre is to:

transform the spectator into the Protagonist of the theatrical action and, by this transformation, to try to change society rather than contenting ourselves with interpreting it (p. 4).

Forum Theatre Play

Students and I created two Forum Theatre scripts, both of which portrayed conflictual situations in which supportive teachers confront homophobic parents and teachers in a school context. These scripts are not entirely original. I provided students with a variety of case study scenarios from Pearson Education's *My Education Lab for Multicultural Education* (<http://www.myeducationlab.com/>) The following textbook resources also provide multicultural teacher educators with numerous ethnographic case studies: Ramirez's (2005) *Voices of Diversity: Stories, Activities, and Resources for the Multicultural Classroom*; Nieto and Bode's (2008) *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education*; Au's (2009) *Rethinking Multicultural Education: Teaching for Racial and Cultural Justice*; and Koppelman's (2010) *Perspectives of Human Differences: Selected Readings on Diversity in America*. Students modified the scenarios into dialogic Forum Theatre scripts. They also collected related pictures, such as those of a classroom, an instructor's meeting, and a parent night, and projected them through PowerPoint on a screen. Here are two Forum Theatre plays related to homophobic parents and teachers that we played in our class. A few examples of student-constructed scripts responding to the Forum Theatre plays are attached.

ACT 1: MS. MATTHEWS

(Slide: MS. MATTHEWS has her class do a project by having each of them create family albums to display during the Open House in which all families are welcome to attend.)

(GABRIELLE walks up to ETHAN to ask about his album.)

GABRIELLE: Ethan where is your Mommy in these pictures?

ETHAN: I have two fathers raising me, my mother just helped me come into this world.

GABRIELLE: I don't get it; you should have a mother and a father like me. That's just weird that you don't have a Mom.

(GABRIELLE walks away and ETHAN continues with his work.)

(Slide: The Open House)

(GABRIELLE and her father MR. TATUM walks into the Open House; MR. TATUM automatically walks over to ETHAN's album and looks at it in disgust; MR. TATUM approaches MS. MATTHEWS)

MR. TATUM: *(pointing at Ethan's family album)*What is this garbage?

MS. MATTHEWS: This exhibit is by Ethan Holmes. Ethan did an excellent job of making his family album.

MR. TATUM: *(glares at MS. MATTHEWS)*Why are you being politically correct here? Don't you get it? I don't want my kid to see this bad example of a sinful lifestyle. Do you want my daughter to think it's OK to be gay?

(ETHAN's fathers are standing toward the back of the classroom and have heard everything that was said. MR. TATUM starts to approach ETHAN's fathers very quickly, looking as if he will start a shoving match.)

ROGER: *(rushing in the middle of MR. TATUM's path)* Mr. Tatum, that is enough! You acting this way sends a negative message, not only to the surrounding students, but to your very own daughter! You don't need to necessarily agree with this, but it exists and you need to learn to be more accepting of others. You would not go around making racial slurs about others, would you? So why go around making homophobic remarks? This is NOT affecting you negatively in any sense, yet IS affecting others, such as Ethan's dads. You need to apologize to them and be more accepting, or else I'm going to unfortunately have to ask you to leave.

BERNARD: Mr. Tatum, can we step outside for a minute, I must speak with you. I am aware of everyone having their own individual values, morals and just on how to live a personal life and it is a right which we have in this country according to the Constitution which the founding fathers created and wanted to ensure their people to have while creating this country. But must I suggest you not to start a problem here in my classroom. As a teacher, I teach students not only the academics but also rights of each individual on who and what they want to be and not only accept each personal value and morality but celebrate each of our differences as a single unit. I understand on the reasons why you don't

want your child to be exposed of but you will only blind the child. But that is not the matter at hand here. I want to suggest you to go in there and apologize to Ethan and his parents for the slurs you have said. In my classroom we treat each other with respect no matter how different each of them are between among themselves and students will learn that in my classroom, but it all starts as role models. Meaning that it starts with us adults acting and following that role which we teach the child when begin to understand us. And if you want to continue this conversation between you and Ethan's parent I would suggest that you two get together and try to get to know each other. So can we get back to enjoy the rest of tonight since tonight is about celebrating each student's success throughout the year?

ACT 2: MS. PEREZ

(SLIDE: A student named HALEY attempted suicide after having received severe verbal and physical harassment by several students in her class because of her sexual orientation. Fortunately, HALEY survived her suicide attempt, but will not be returning to the school. Although she will not be returning to the school, Ms. Perez decides to call a staff meeting to address this issue with other teachers.)

MS. PEREZ: The entire school must come together to combat homophobia and homophobic actions and slurs. I want to stop homophobic remarks such as the seemingly innocuous 'That's so gay' as

well as specific slurs like ‘butch,’ ‘dyke,’ ‘fag,’ and ‘fairy.’ In addition, I want all the teachers to step in whenever any student is being physically bullied. Pinching and pushing, even if seen as just horseplay, should not be tolerated.

MRS. HESS: *(interrupting Ms. Perez)* You know... I don’t want to sit around and police whatever the students do. I mean, words are just words, and pinching is really not a huge deal like actually punching someone in the face. Besides, Haley made some poor choices that led her to receive negative attention.

MS. PEREZ: But, it is our responsibility to insure that we do not allow any bullying to be used in this school. When we remain silent, it inherently gives the students permission to continue bullying the victims. In addition, I think that there needs to be some kind of consistency in how we respond to homophobic actions and language because when we attempt to condemn offensive remarks, the students often claim that “other teachers don’t care.” So, everyone in this room needs to take an active stance to stop homophobia.

(The rest of the room is silent; MR. HENRY cuts in to say)

MR. HENRY: I’m the math teacher here. I just teach math, period. During homeroom, students do homework. Besides, Haley was acting out and trying to get attention. I think she just needed some serious help. Claiming to like girls at this age means this young woman is confused and disturbed.

(MR. HENRY and MRS. HESS both stand up in anger and are about to walk out of the meeting.)

ROGER: You need to understand the importance of your role as their teacher. You have the greatest influence among them all. You are what they look to for an example. If they see you act a certain way, they will sure as hell act the exact same way. With this being said, you need to stand up for those being bullied, no matter what the situation is. Bullying is NEVER the answer, and standing by letting it happen is not either, it's just as bad. What if she were your daughter, and the teacher just sat back and let it happen. How would you feel? Well, she is, in fact, someone's daughter. Another young human being, who is just looking to live life happily. Is that too much to ask for?

JAMIE: I cannot and will not tolerate bullying of any sort. What happened to Haley is a perfect example of what ignorance and indifference can cause. A student was physically, emotionally, and verbally abused, even attempted suicide, and nobody bothered to step in and defend her. Calling someone by derogatory and homophobic slurs is unacceptable in this school. If we are to create a safe and positive environment for our students, how can we let this continue? Mr. Henry, you are not only a math teacher, but also a role model for these kids. And as a role model you should uphold your students to the highest standards when it comes to respect and

acceptance. All I am asking is that you act accordingly when you see a child being bullied or harassed so that it does not continue.

Forum Theatre and Educational Potential

In addition to the two Forum Theatre plays addressing issues of homophobia, we performed four other Forum Theatre plays during the semester: a play portraying gender harassment, two plays related to Islamophobia, and a play about bullying. Except for the play about gender harassment retrieved directly from Rohd's (1998) *Theatre for Community, Conflict, and Dialogue: The Hope is Vital Training Manual*, three plays were constructed through the textual modification of case-study scenarios retrieved from Pearson Education's *My Education Lab for Multicultural Education*. Although I treated those six scripts as Forum Theatre plays, it might be questionable if they can be defined as Forum Theatre in its truest form in which a protagonist receiving unequal treatment from an antagonist strives for change by taking a stand for her or himself and subverts an oppressive situation. In the original form of Forum Theatre, a conflictual, dichotomous relationship between a protagonist (an oppressed) and an antagonist (an oppressor) is clear (Rohd, 1998). In each of the six Forum Theatre plays that we performed in our class, however, there was always a teacher as a bystander between the oppressed and the oppressor, who strived to step into the situation, becoming an ally to the oppressed.

Linds (1998) and Emert (2003) argue that Forum Theatre may work well for a homogeneous audience, which specifically means an oppressed group.

Emert (2003) notes:

[Boal's] work focused primarily on those who fit easily into the category of "oppressed"—those who for socio-economic, political, or for reasons connected to race or gender remain underprivileged in a world where privilege is acknowledged and often wielded like a weapon (p. 20).

The primary goal of Forum Theatre is to empower members of the oppressed group by providing them with the opportunity to develop critical consciousness through engagement in critical reflection of internalized oppression that relates to an external oppressive situation, encouraging them to change both internal and external subordinate status through a theatrical rehearsal, thereby promoting liberatory, emancipatory change in their real-life situations (Boal, 1985). Its primary intention is to fight against the oppressor's language, hegemony, and social injustice. Considering this fundamental nature of Forum Theatre, I had to think about what was necessary to make it more effective in the specific learning context in which the majority of learners were from the dominant, or heterosexual, group. My answer to this question was to create Forum Theatre scripts in which the dominant group could transform themselves from passive bystanders into allies fighting with the oppressed for the creation of an equitable and just environment. With this modification, Forum Theatre became more applicable and acclimated to the heterosexual audience. But, at the same time, with this modification, I might have lost the original intention of Forum Theatre, that is, teachers' actions in the Forum Theatre plays might have not been recognized as "an exploration of liberation," yet merely "moral teaching." Linds (1998) notes:

Boal makes the point that unless I, as an audience member, can really identify with your oppression, how can I replace you? In this case, if identification isn't there, any action becomes advice or moral teaching, not an exploration of liberation and empowerment (para. 7).

In a Forum Theatre play, there is a conflictual negotiation between a protagonist and an antagonist, that is, a protagonist attempts to subvert an oppressive practice whereas an antagonist uses every possible, unjust or cruel authoritative power in order to keep that oppressive practice. There should be a dialogic interaction between a protagonist and an antagonist, yet in our Forum Theatre plays, it became merely a monologue statement from a protagonist to an antagonist. But, this was my fault. I should have performed the role of antagonist for at least the first time, but I asked students, from the beginning, to play every character in the Forum Theatre plays. It must have been difficult for students to play the antagonist's role. Nevertheless, it was still a powerful learning experience for students to speak up and take a stand, as an ally to the oppressed, against social injustice.

It is also ideal if the contents of Forum Theatre plays are generated through audience members' discussion of shared concerns or challenges that they encounter in their daily lives (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010). This process clearly resonates with Freire's Cultural Circles in which he encourages learners to generate common issues that oppress their daily life situations, followed by finding solutions to the issues through collective dialogic interactions (Souto-Manning, 2010a). In our class for instance, we could have included this

element of the Forum Theatre scriptwriting process by asking students to discuss homophobic incidents they had experienced in their school days, rather than simply providing them with already constructed Forum Theatre play scripts. With a limited time schedule, however, it was difficult to spend a large amount of time on the scriptwriting process.

I also found that Forum Theatre may work well when its scripts portray oppression that is more overt, observable, and describable. From my view as an amateur practitioner of *Theatre of the Oppressed*, Forum Theatre may not be effective in portraying a subtle, invisible form of social oppression. For instance, we could write a Forum Theatre play describing a discriminatory incident that contains tangible evidence, such as homophobic slurs, hate crimes, or physical assault. In this case, there is a visible perpetrator (an antagonist) that can clearly be portrayed in a play script. However, how can we create a Forum Theatre script in which an antagonist does not recognize her or his oppressive role, and the audience also has no clue for identifying what is exactly wrong with an antagonist's attitude and behavior? In the two Forum Theatre plays previously introduced, antagonists' motives are clear, but how about a case in which an antagonist does not openly express her or his heterosexist and homophobic world view? In many cases, heterosexual teachers' heteronormativity would take on a more subtle form. If misused, Forum Theatre can be a hegemonic device that reinforces heterosexual hegemony by focusing solely on a covert form of individual-level homophobic discrimination, which simultaneously turns the eyes of the audience away from a more systemic, institutional nature of heterosexism.

This argument, of course, can be applicable to other social oppression forms, such as racism, sexism, classism, linguisticism, and religious oppression.

I implemented Boal's Forum Theatre as a pedagogical strategy aimed at bringing about positive change in the lives of students. Through Forum Theatre, I wanted my students to "understand that if people want to make change, they must engage the problem and find solutions rather than hoping someone else might determine and enforce resolution" (Howard, 2004, p. 220). I admit that there is a lot of room for criticism from theatre practitioners in my usage of *Theatre of the Oppressed*, yet I found the unique potential and possibilities of Forum Theatre as emancipatory, transformative pedagogical tools to engage students in critical and creative exploration of multicultural/anti-oppressive education issues. Sadly, there are few existing Forum Theatre scripts that are available related to multiculturalism. Nevertheless, Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning (2010) played a pioneering role in providing teacher educators with the technical skills to develop a Forum Theatre play in a teacher's professional-training context. They explained in detail how a Forum Theatre play script could be constructed through the collaborative exploration of challenging issues commonly faced by in-service teachers in a specific local school context. Following Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning's innovative work, I myself want to create diverse multicultural Forum Theatre play scripts through conducting ethnographic interviews with individuals who are oppressed because of their cultural identification, so that teacher educators engaged in multicultural/anti-oppressive education may feel

more comfortable incorporating participatory theatre work into their teaching profession.

Student Reaction to Forum Theatre

As a teacher-as-researcher, I attempted to examine how Forum Theatre affected students. I asked students to evaluate Forum Theatre as a pedagogical strategy and discuss what they have learned through Forum Theatre experiences. There were several students who expressed antipathy toward Forum Theatre due to performance anxiety, yet those students commented that they still acknowledged the effectiveness of Forum Theatre as an instructional tool to engage students in conversation on multicultural education topics.

Rita: I didn't enjoy the theater activities because I don't like to act in front of people but they did help me grasp different scenarios and it helped me understand different students' way of learning.

Andy: As I notably experienced discomfort during icebreaker activities, I similarly disliked the forum theater. Notwithstanding, I understand that your forum theater routines were necessary in establishing the foreground of culturally-related scenarios and equally instrumental in encouraging dialogue amongst students regarding their multicultural opinions. In other words, I think that your forum theater exercises were very successful in promoting critical awareness, yet I felt uncomfortable participating in such. I would've preferred to read said scenarios instead of watching their portrayal. I'd like to note that while I didn't physically participate in

forum theater activities, I actively partook in these routines through silent listening and internal assessment of each scenario.

A majority of the students provided positive comments on Forum Theatre. They found Forum Theatre a very effective and impactful learning tool for teacher professional training. Before the semester started, none of them knew about Augusto Boal, *Theatre of the Oppressed*, and Forum Theatre. In addition, none of them had any previous theatrical experience. This was the very first encounter with participatory theatre for all of my students. Although *Theatre of the Oppressed* does not require any professional theatrical performance skills, it is still a big challenge for students to present an improvisational performance in front of other students in a regular teacher education classroom. Considering all of these situations, I am very proud of my students and their willingness to engage themselves in all the participatory theatre activities that we played during the semester. Different from Boalian theatre games in which everyone in class was engaged, I have to admit that not everyone was engaged in Forum Theatre plays. There were students who remained silent until the end, yet, like Andy's comment represents, they also learned something from indirectly participating in Forum Theatre. Forum Theatre creates a community space in which everyone present in its theatrical space learns something from the plays and following dialogue. One student shared her dilemma about not being able to step in during a Forum Theatre play, because she was shy and could not find the right words to change an oppressive situation; however, inside herself, she was struggling and tried to

become an ally to the oppressed, fighting against the unjust treatment that she was witnessing.

Through analyzing students' comments on Forum Theatre, I recognize that students found the three inherent possibilities of Forum Theatre: 1) a reality check; 2) a vicarious experience; and 3) a rehearsal for change. These three themes are correlated, and the first and second themes can be merged into the third.

Reality check. First, through Forum Theatre plays, students were provided “a visual of a real life scenario” and able to conduct a “reality check” on how oppression manifests itself in school. “The visual set a stronger example in [their] minds.” Madeleine voiced:

The forum theaters provided us an example of a real life scenario that we may run into as a teacher, and it allowed us to think about a realistic, appropriate action that we could take to help the situation.

Examining existing forms of social oppression followed by exploring the practice of anti-oppressive approaches to the oppressive situations was much livelier and more effective than simply reading and learning about oppression and anti-oppression pedagogy printed in the textbook. Kaptani and Yuval-Davis (2008) note:

Drama is exposure, confrontation and contradiction which lead to recognition and analysis, which in turn awaken understanding. When the spectator enters into the theatre space, s/he enters into the reality of the situation enacted and thus, even when relating to personal or collective

past, theatre praxis is always enacted and asserted in the present. This is what can make theatre more real than the normal stream of consciousness and thus most effective (para. 13).

Vicarious experience. Second, through performing Forum Theatre plays, students gained a vicarious experience of the events portrayed in the plays.

Throughout the semester, we attempted to see things from the perspectives of the marginalized and oppressed. Courtney (1988) notes that “when we ‘put ourselves in someone else’s shoes’ we understand the Other through the Self and the Self through the Other—and the resulting meaning is greater than either” (p. 125).

Through this perspective transformation, one can learn not “a Knowing ABOUT” (p. 126), yet “a Knowing IN—a tacit, often unconscious, way of knowing within the living event” (p. 126). Students commented:

Roger: The forum theaters were heavily effective as well and a great learning experience for sure. I really like the fact that you can truly put yourself into someone else’s shoes, and really get the chance to realize how they feel or view a subject. It allowed everyone to see how that person would react, and more importantly why they would react in that manner. It really got the class involved and able to visualize it, put themselves out there and feel how others feel.

Maureen: I think using dramas allows people to experience situations in the shoes of a person they may never get to experience. They are able to draw up those emotions and observe situations just like they would be in

real life. It is also a productive tool for students to observe and connect with the people they know.

Kerry: Theater activities were a great way for us to put ourselves in different positions and discuss as a class what we would do in different circumstances. I really loved being able to act out different scenarios and see what needed to be done in a class room to resolve the problems.

Rehearsal for change. Third and last, this theme may most resonate with Boal's intention in developing Forum Theatre. Boal (1992) views a theatre space created through *Theatre of the Oppressed* as a microcosm of the larger society. Through empowering Spect/Actors to change an oppressive situation in a theatrical scene, Boal hopes for their inner transformation, which he believes leads to the larger transformation of society. In this sense, pre-service teachers participated in a mock rehearsal that may bring about positive change in their future classrooms.

Jamie: These theatre activities served as examples of the injustices that people endure on a daily basis. Bullying, harassment, discrimination, hate, stereotypes, prejudice.... these were all portrayed effectively in theatre activities. It got us to ask, "What would I do in that situation?"

Leon: The theater activities were very helpful for the students who planned to be teacher in the future. These skits presented the class with real situations that a teacher might have to come across in their career.

Having seen the issue the students then had to come up with a solution to

the problem, this gave the students a mentality of a teacher and it demonstrated what is the right course of actions in a certain situation.

Ellen: The theatre activities were very impactful and powerful. They were raw and real, and I enjoyed the scripts because they gave me situations that I might have to deal with in my future classrooms. The situations were real and Mr. M always made sure that we understood how to handle each situation. Whether it had to deal with students, parents, or even co-workers, I feel that I have a good grip on how I'd handle most situations when dealing with racism, bullying, or voicing an opinion to a co-worker or a parent.

Forum Theatre, on the one hand, enhanced an internal dialogical activity in which each student faced a choice in the teacher's role: if she or he would remain a passive bystander, letting oppression toward her or his student continue; or would take a courageous stand to subvert it to support her or his student. On the other hand, Forum Theatre created an external collective dialogical space in which students as a classroom community collaboratively tackled issues presented, providing multiple interpretations, perspectives, approaches, and solutions (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010). This collaborative learning space, from my perspective as a teacher, helped me become a part of the community and equal learning partner to my students.

Robin commented: "Forum Theatre helped bring to life lessons about what we were learning and gave us a chance to see and hear different ideas and viewpoints than what our own might have been." Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-

Manning (2010) note that Forum Theatre is “not to find absolute answers, but rather to seek options, to debate alternatives, and to cultivate a sense of multiplicity, flexibility, and possibilities for change” (p. 93). This multiplicity is of great importance for pre-service teachers to challenge “traditional forms of education oriented toward single-answer solutions,” which can oftentimes be seen in teacher education classrooms (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 95).

Through experiencing Forum Theatre plays, students deconstruct dominant hegemonic discourses/scripts by refusing and fighting against the antagonist’s agenda and reconstruct/re-inscribe counter-hegemonic discourses/scripts by being an ally to the oppressed. In this sense, the entire process of Forum Theatre may resonate with “ideological clarity” (Bartolomé, 2004). Through this process, students nurtured imagination and courage that empowers them to fight against social injustice and inequalities that they will face in their future classrooms. Brown and Gillespie (1997) mention a positive virtue that Forum Theatre can bring about:

Such rehearsal is indispensable for developing courage. As Aristotle advised, virtues such as courage are reinforced through habitual encounters with opportunities to demonstrate virtuousness (p. 117).

Forum Theatre is based on the idea that “there are no bystanders and neutral observers: Each person is either part of the problem or part of the solution” (Derman-Sparks & Phillips, 1997, p. 24). Through participating in a Forum Theatre space, pre-service teachers internalized Boal’s message that when we as

teachers choose to be silent bystanders, we simultaneously cooperate with the legitimization and perpetuation of homophobia, discrimination, and heteronormativity in school. Our everyday courageous action in school, as a microcosm of society, leads to breaking the cycle of oppression in the larger society. I cannot agree more with Boal's advocates and teacher educators Cahnmann-Taylor and Souto-Manning (2010), who note:

Our goals in advocating the use of Forum Theatre in teacher's professional training is to help increase the numbers of educators who see themselves as truly capable of promoting change (p. 91).

Bullying

As previously discussed, students complained about teachers' being not present and/or unwilling to stop bullying incidents. Regardless of students' criticism, 70% of teachers, according to statistics, claim that they "almost always" intervene in bullying incidents. However, 75% of students disagreed with this assessment. In addition, 66% of victimized children of bullying claim that school professionals responded poorly to the bullying incidents (Bauman, 2008). There is a clear distinction between student and teacher in terms of how they perceive bullying incidents and intervention. Some students questioned the validity of statistics provided by teachers, claiming that teachers did not provide accurate, honest information as to bullying intervention. Students exchanged their opinions:

Leonor: Statistics are often biased. When teachers are asked how efficiently and effectively they react to bullying in schools, they probably either do not want to admit to their incompetence or do not realize their

ineptitude in dealing with the problem at hand. In addition to this, students who are bullied or witness abuse of some sort may not always approach teachers (or adults in general) about it in fear of making the situation(s) worse.

Joanne: There is no way to explain this. Teachers are claiming false information and they are not providing factual information because they are afraid. This shows that they are aware of bullying, but they are just as guilty as bullies because they are bystanders. As teachers we should provide a safe and secure environment. By becoming bystanders, we are practicing pure negligence and that does not make us good role-models or teachers.

Also, some students assume that teachers are not capable of dealing with bullying incidents because they are not trained enough, thereby remaining ignorant on how to handle it, or “too busy minding their own business.”

Keira: I believe not all teachers respond to bullying because most of the time I don't think they know what to do. They don't know how to handle it properly so they try to pretend like they don't know what's going on. Also in the case of older teachers, I think they believe it is just a part of the school experience. Back in the day kids didn't get suspended or expelled for fighting, it was just a detention. If you had a problem with a fellow student, you would take matter into your own hands and deal with the kid, not tell a teacher, so the older teachers don't think they need to do anything.

Emma: I don't think very many educators intervene at all, mainly because they aren't around to see it or they are busy doing something else. For those that do see it, I think they don't know how to respond or don't think it is a big deal which is not okay.

Rita: Teachers think they respond to bullying, but a lot of it happens behind their backs. They are too busy worrying about themselves instead of taking care of the classroom. I wish this wasn't so true, but if every teacher cared, bullying could be stopped.

In addition, students assumed that there might be a distinction between student and teacher in terms of how they define and perceive bullying intervention.

Leon: Teacher and students do not have the same perspective on what intervention means, meaning that sometimes when a teacher believes he/she stopped bullying from occurring in reality she really did not and the bullied child could still be in danger from his aggressor.

Jamie: There may also be some misunderstanding on what bullying is. Is it just name-calling or does it include pushing, shoving, and punching?

Definition and Characteristics of Bullying

It is of great importance for everyone in school to have a concrete understanding of bullying and to share the same definition of it. Characteristics and forms of bullying are contextual and hence it may be difficult to develop a universally accepted definition of bullying (Farrington, 1993). Nevertheless, Farrington (1993) identified three major aspects of bullying that can be applicable to different contexts, defining bullying as:

physical, verbal, or psychological attack or intimidation that is intended to cause fear, distress, or harm to the victim; as imbalance of power, with the more powerful child oppressing the less powerful one; absence of provocation by the victim; and repeated incidents between the same children over a prolonged period (p. 384).

The definition of bullying centers around three major aspects: (1) malicious intentionality; (2) an unequal power relationship; and (3) repetition. Bullying should not be dealt with as an isolated act, yet must be examined through a continuum of intentionality (Cullingford & Morrison, 1995) and perceived as an “action script” derived from malicious intentionality that aims to inflict physical, verbal, or psychological pain on a victimized child (Smorti, Menesini, & Smith, 2003). Furthermore, Cullingford (1993) adds “context” as the fourth element that constitutes bullying. Citing Cullingford (1993), Cullingford and Morrison (1995) note that “bullying is not a matter of clearly isolated incidents, taken out of context. It is an extreme, a pathological, form of a more common collective experience” (p. 549). Taking these scholars’ insights into consideration, it can be argued that intentionality and context are correlated. A classroom has environmental characteristics. Negative intentionality is generated through the negative aspect of human nature, such as hate, anger, cruelty, and apathy, which consequently exerts a negative influence on the classroom environment that is tolerant of bullying. In turn, a negative environment accelerates the negative nature of human beings. Therefore, it is of great importance that we as teachers need to make every effort in our daily teaching practices to create such a positive

environment that can bring forth children's positive human qualities, such as love, compassion, empathy, and thoughtfulness, to prevent bullying before it starts.

Image Theatre

I used Image Theatre in order to further explore school bullying at a more in-depth, personal level. Image Theatre is one of Boal's participatory theatre techniques. In Image Theatre, a frozen image is used to explore participants' "perception of a situation or perspective on the world" (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2000, p. 30). Participants silently use their bodies as sculptural clay to portray an oppressive event and to express their internal or external oppression, followed by "chang[ing] their sculpture into less oppressive portrayals" (Placier, et al., 2005, p. 134). Some practitioners use a "dynamisation" process in which they encourage the audience members to vocalize the internal voices of each sculpture. In last, similar to Forum Theatre, the audience members "are invited to join the Image Theatre participants in dialogue and analysis of the movement from oppression toward non-oppression" (Placier, et al., 2005, p. 134). Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning (2000) note:

[Image Theatre] provides opening in which participants can start interrogating multiple viewpoints, making differences visible and examining competing narratives and writing counternarratives to dominant discourses" (p. 87).

In my multicultural education class, I asked my students to create a frozen image of the oppression of bullying, followed by asking the audience to vocalize the internal voices of each piece of sculptural clay. Salma commented:

We were able to see both sides of every story as the protagonist and antagonist side of the story. Also seeing people misinterpret our frozen images and making up their own story, definitely showed how many things get misinterpreted within our society.

Then, we pursued the three questions to examine the root causes of bullying and seek solutions to eradicate it from school: “How does bullying start (what is the root cause of bullying)?” “What leads people to let bullying continue?” “What can we as teachers do to stop bullying before it starts?” Here are examples of students’ comments regarding each question.

Instructor: How does bullying start?

Jamie: I think the environment that a child is exposed to may influence bullying. Research has shown that many children who bully are bullied at home, either by siblings or one or both parents. This is because children who lack adult supervision or who are abused at home are more likely to become bullies. If a person comes from a home that lacks warm and affectionate parental relationships, he might take his anger on an unfortunate victim. Lack of discipline from the home could also fuel bullying. When bullies do not experience consequences for their negative behavior from authoritative figures they are more likely to continue that behavior.

Instructor: What leads people to let bullying continue?

Jean: In my opinion, spectators in oppression or abuse of some sort who do not report or stand up against the persecutor(s) are mainly afraid. It is easy to preach fighting against your (or someone else's) oppressor(s), but not as easy to actually do so—standing up against bullying is tough, and not all individuals have the strength or feel the obligation to fight back (both children and adults alike). In addition, getting involved in matters such as these can be complicated. It's difficult to "make a difference"—and we have to understand that not everyone is up to the challenge.

Instructor: To stop bullying before it starts, what do you think we can do?

Leonor: Make it known and clear on the first day that you do not, whatsoever, tolerate any form of bullying. Make sure the children feel safe coming and talking to you about anything. Build strong relationships with your students so they feel safe and comfortable with you, and a lot of times you will probably have more success with them academically as well. I also think it's important to build a relationship with a child that is a bully, most of the time there is some sort of sad cause or reason to why they are treating people that way, and a lot of times they are a victim as well. If you are able to reach out to them and help them that will be the most effective way of ridding of their bullying tendencies.

Jamie: To stop bullying, not only do we need a zero-tolerance policy, but we also need to create a school culture that promotes the norms of nonviolence and social bonding. It is necessary to establish a concrete

policy that makes clear the consequences of bullying so that it won't continue. Publicizing the anti-bullying policy to the entire school so that all students know what the policy is and how serious teacher and administrators are about it is also important. Lastly, we need to encourage students to report bullying to school authorities and educate parents about the anti-bullying policies. Parents need to know what steps to take when their child comes to them with bullying problems. Parents also must know that school authorities are as serious as they are about stopping bullies.

Newspaper Theatre

In the last class of the second stage, we discussed two actual bullying cases: Curtis's case in the United States in 1993 and Hirofumi's case in Japan in 1986. Curtis and Hirofumi were both 8th graders when they committed suicide to escape from bullying. I asked volunteers to read a letter that Curtis's father sent to the *Chicago Tribune* and a letter that Hirofumi himself wrote before he hung himself and that his parents later published.

Curtis. Curtis Taylor was 14 years old, an 8th grader at the Oak Street Middle School in Burlington, Iowa. On the night of March 22, 1993, Curtis shot himself to death and was found by his 5-year-old brother. His father Bill Taylor wrote (Green, 1993):

Curtis told us that the other students had grabbed his head and kept banging it into a locker. . . . They gathered around and tripped him in the hallways. When he was walking in the hallways, they would come up to him again and again and knock things out of his hands, and when he'd

pick the things up they'd knock them to the floor again. . . . He really didn't have friends. . . . He tried to make friends with some boys from another neighborhood. But then they joined up with the group of kids who were tormenting Curtis, and they ganged up on him, too. So he was alone again. . . . I tried to let [administrators] know what all of this was doing to Curtis, but I don't think they understood. . . . It was getting worse. . . . The name-calling had increased. He had broken his foot, and it had been in a cast, they'd kick the cast. He had two books that meant a lot to him, and they stole the books from him. He had a sweat shirt that he liked, and they poured chocolate milk on it in front of other students. He was crying and he said he just didn't want to go back to school anymore. . . . When my boy died, there was a memorial service held for him, and at the school a big piece of paper was placed on his hall locker for the students to sign and say goodbye. . . . A lot of them wrote that they thought Curtis was a nice person. But I could only think, where were you kids? Why weren't you his friends?

Hirofumi. Hirofumi Shikagawa was 13 years old, an 8th grader at the Nakano Fujimi Middle School in Tokyo, Japan. On February 1, 1986, he took his own life to escape from bullying. Hirofumi had been a scapegoat of severe emotional abuse and psychological bullying by his entire classmates as well as his homeroom teacher for the previous eight months. It was a systematically structured form of bullying, which can be categorized as social ostracism. Hirofumi left his suicide note, which was later published by his parents, a note

that illustrated how he was treated in school and why he had to decide to take his own life. His tragic suicide letter says: “My life is the same as living in hell.” For instance, every day the perpetrators drew a mustache on Hirofumi’s face with a marker and forced him to dance and sing in the hallways and the schoolyard. In the middle of November in 1985, those bullies planned a mock funeral using Hirofumi’s desk, creating a forged letter of condolence signed by not only his classmates, but four teachers including his own homeroom teacher named Namio Fujisaki, a 57-year-old veteran teacher, who wrote “May his soul sleep in peace.” After this incident, Hirofumi constantly complained of stomachaches or headaches to avoid entering the classroom. In January 1986, in the last month before he committed a suicide, his attendance was only 11 days, yet the school authority did nothing about it (Kobayashi, 1999). On February 1, 1986, Hirofumi hung himself silently in the bathroom of the train station in his father’s hometown. Five years later in 1991, the Tokyo district court judged this case as not bullying, yet one episode of school violence. In addition, the mock funeral was recognized as just “teasing and joking by his classmates.” The judicial decision of the Tokyo district court was something that made me doubt my ears. The Tokyo district court ordered the accused school to pay, according to the exchange rate of the time, only three million yen (approximately U.S. \$22,400) and one million yen (approximately U.S. \$7,500) for a lawyer’s fee (Morita, Soeda, Soeda, & Taki, 1999). I told my students how I felt when I first heard about this story.

Upon hearing this news in my university freshman year, I could not stop shedding tears. At the same time, I could not restrain my anger. I asked

myself: Why did Hirofumi have to kill himself? Who killed him? What was his teacher doing? But, in this bullying case, four teachers, including his homeroom teacher, were involved. It is those teachers who killed Hirofumi. Hirofumi was killed by the school that never admitted that the bullying had ever occurred. Why couldn't his classmates feel his inner pain and sorrow? Why are children in a contemporary society so apathetic about others' feelings?

I recreated Hirofumi's bullying case in my own classroom by following Boal's Newspaper Theatre. According to Boland and Cameron (2005), Newspaper Theatre "can be created by taking a story from a newspaper and re-contextualising" (p. 3) a specific scene through improvisation "on stage to explore/exploit variants and possibilities" (p. 4). I first secured a cleared space of the classroom and put a single desk in the center of the room. Students sat in the peripheries, surrounding the desk, which made our classroom look like an amphitheater. Then, I put a white flower, a card, and an incense stick on the desk. I played the role of Hirofumi.

(Slide: On November 15, 1985; a screen then shows a classroom picture.)

(HIROFUMI enters the classroom.)

CLASSMATES: *(whispering)*

(HIROFUMI approaches his desk; finds his photograph along with an identified card and a white chrysanthemum on his desk.)

HIROFUMI: *(dubiously looks around, wondering what is going on)*

CLASSMATES: *(some laughter)*

(HIROFUMI picks up a card and takes a look at it; the laughter stops; the classroom becomes completely silent; the entire class is watching him; HIROFUMI starts reading the card.)

(Slide: “Goodbye and have a peaceful sleep. We’re glad you’re gone”; with numerous signatures)

NARRATOR: His entire classmates signed their signatures and wrote some condolence words on the card. Among those signatures, Hirofumi found his own homeroom teacher’s name with other three teachers’. He realized that his desk was being used as an altar and that this was a mock funeral.

HIROFUMI: *(standing silent; sobbing)*

CLASSMATES: *(big laughter)*

(Slide: On February 1, 1986; a screen then shows a train station picture)

NARRATOR: Please close your eyes. On February 1, 1986, Hirofumi alone took a train to go to his father’s hometown, a few hours away from where he lived. His father later assumed that he might have gone to see his grandfather. Hirofumi arrived at the nearest station, yet never left the station. He entered a restroom, leaned his umbrella against the door, and slowly wrapped a rope around his neck, making it tighter and tighter, until he breathed his last breath. *(pause)* Can you see him? *(pause)* I want you to feel him in your heart and imagine what he was thinking at his very last

moment. And, I want to ask yourself if you still want to see bullying in your school.

I performed the role of Hirofumi, not including the part on February 1, 1986, silently throughout the improvisation play, paying careful attention to the change in facial expressions. Experiencing this improvised Newspaper Theatre, students commented in their reflective journal entries of the week.

Andy: Though each group-based presentation was powerful in conveying new information and sharing diversified opinions, I think your bullying workshop proved most powerful. The activities facilitated in regards to bullying were very informative, as were the statistics relating to bullying within schools. Hearing my classmates' experiences was equally telling, since I wasn't teased throughout my schooling. I didn't have realistic perceptions of such, and listening to others share their painful memories of victimization lent greater insight into the unfortunate epidemic of bullying in educational institutions.

Leonor: Talking about suicide and bullying. That was the hardest class to sit through. Since my best friend committed suicide when I was fifteen hearing other real stories was literally unbearable. It was hard to not be able to hold back my tears and have little control of my emotions. I went to a school with SO much bullying and I felt like I did everything in my power to stop it but made little advances because the teachers seemed like they didn't care.

Beth: When we discussed the topic of bullying I was really shocked at the statistics for bullying, and how many stand by and let it happen. This class has given me the tools to help stop the allowance of bullying. As a teacher it is our job to provide every student a safe learning environment. This class has helped show me how to handle bullying.

At the end of the class, I sent a message to my students: “I want you to become a teacher who can feel the inner pain, sorrow, and struggle of your students and want you to make every effort to stop bullying before it starts. We can stop and completely eradicate bullying from school when one teacher in the school is determined and takes a courageous stand. I want you to become the one. It is our utmost responsibility as a teacher to create a safe, positive, and inclusive classroom environment in which students can bring forth their highest potential, unique possibility, and fundamental goodness within.”

Chapter 7

CHANGE

Participatory Pedagogy

In my multicultural education course, I incorporated diverse participatory pedagogies to engage students in a critical and creative exploration of racism, linguicism, and heterosexism, such as *Theatre of the Oppressed* (Boalian theatre games, Forum Theatre, and Image Theatre) and the participatory research projects (the Minoritized/Disprivileged Project and the Ethnodrama Project). One of the central research questions pursued in this doctoral dissertation study was: In what way can participatory theatre be a transformative pedagogical tool to help student and teacher collaboratively challenge the status quo in teacher education, liberating the students from being passive consumers of education and the teacher from the anti-dialogical banking educator (Freire, 1970)? In the previous chapters, I examined three main participatory theatre exercises: Boalian theatre games (Ch. 2 and 3), ethnodrama (Ch. 5), and Forum Theatre (Ch. 6) respectively, by coding and analyzing student reactions in, and responses to, those participatory theatre activities. At the end of the semester, I asked students to reevaluate in a holistic manner the participatory pedagogy, focusing on the three major participatory theatre exercises, in terms of how it affected them and helped them challenge traditional learning style as the status quo in teacher education. Students voiced:

Roger: [If this class adopts a traditional learning/teaching style] my classroom experience was different for it was a life changing class, versus being a class in which you learn strictly to pass a test. I have learned more

from this class than any traditional class I have ever taken. It literally has changed my life, and I'm not just saying that. It truly has made such an impact on who I am, and I feel like I have grown so much since the beginning of the semester. These ways of teaching stick with you and make it so you remember it, unlike having to read traditionally (which no one ever does), take quizzes/test (which people just learn for that test then forget the info), or pay attention to a boring lecture every single day (which no one ever pays attention to). These methods were outstanding and successful.

Ellen: I think that if we did written tests and everything was book and paper-based, I do not feel I would have a good sense of how a multicultural classroom should be taught. By incorporating these three methods, I feel that I have a good idea on how I would practice them in my own classrooms. It is different when a professor stands up and just gives lectures—I feel as if I do not have the best grip on the material. However, when the professor includes the students to help with the activities, I get a better sense of what is being taught and implemented.

Jean: Through Mr. M.'s activities and icebreakers, we were able to really understand the material and what was going on in the classroom. Because we were able to interact and understand each other, we were able to hold conversations in the classrooms about tense topics and still attempt to listen and consider each other's opinions (regardless of whether or not we agreed or disagreed). It was truly a great environment to learn in.

Joanne: This was by far the best class I have ever had. It was because of all these instructional strategies that allowed all of us students to connect in a way that I have never felt in any other University classroom. I also have never experienced all 3 at one time. I can truly say that I have learned more things in this classroom that I will hold dear to my heart, than I will in any class from here on out. The relationships that I have built with all the other students will forever be remembered and it really saddens me to have to leave this classroom. It has made the best and greatest impact ever!

Andy: Personally speaking, I've always learned best through listening and visually acquiring information in my own regard. I've never favored student-led activities, icebreakers, and/or theater exercises; therefore, my opinions regarding their inclusion are biased and somewhat selfish.

Notwithstanding, I think the majority of students would agree that said instructional strategies are helpful in creating classroom unity and establishing connections with the professor.

Students affirmed that the participatory pedagogy helped them challenge a traditional, conventional, and standardized learning style, bringing about positive change in their learning process. Through experiencing the participatory theatre exercises, students were able to “actively participate in discussions” on multicultural education topics and “feel cultural diversity” and the subject matters, rather than mechanically memorizing texts/scripts monologically narrated by the textbook and the authoritative teacher, which was a “much more human

experience.” In the participatory theatre exercises, students “were able to hold conversations . . . about tense topics and still attempt to listen and consider each other’s opinions.” Such “real life opinions” were “much more beneficial than reading about them in a textbook.” Joanne voiced: “The entire class was a powerful learning experience. The real emotions that we all expressed, from tears, anger and laughter, it was all so impactful.” The participatory theatre exercises encouraged students to actively share their thoughts, feelings, and experiences on controversial topics and issues. Students sometimes shed tears, listening to other students’ personal stories. Students sometimes showed their anger about the unequal treatment that their peers had to endure in the past. Students sometimes rejoiced at their peers’ overcoming challenges. There were real emotions alive in our classroom. We shared a cognitive, physical, emotional, aesthetic, and cultural space, which made our classroom a united multicultural community and helped us (myself included) bring forth positive aspects of human nature, such as compassion, empathy, enthusiasm, and courage.

Students’ final reflections illustrate that they particularly found Boalian theatre games a powerful experience. In the previous chapters, I discussed the three inherent possibilities of Boalian theatre games: (1) promoting racial and cultural awareness; (2) fostering a respectful, trusting, and collaborative classroom environment; and (3) examining power and privilege. By playing Boalian theatre games as a community of practice in our classroom routine throughout the semester, students acknowledged that Boalian theatre games

helped them develop cultural interconnectedness with each other, “regardless of [their] differences,” and “create a multicultural learning community.”

Ellen: This is a very effective method in helping us create a multicultural learning community because it helped us open up to one another. The questions and exercises created were sometimes simple and sometimes challenging. Either way, it helped me feel connected to other classmates and understand each person individually. It helped create a strong multicultural learning community and helped create a positive atmosphere.

Kerry: I feel like after our icebreakers we were all so much more closer [and] we all could relate to each other. I think icebreakers are needed so when we talk about heated topics such as racism we can do it without going crazy and fighting. I loved getting close to my class and it helped us build a community we got to really understand each other.

Jean: If it hadn't been for these exercises, I don't believe that our class would have been able to connect as strongly. Icebreakers allowed us to understand each other better and connect with other people that we normally wouldn't have interacted with in the first place.

In a multicultural teacher education classroom, this real-life classroom experience is of great importance. It may be easier to just preach multiculturalism as a theory, yet it is difficult to make the ideal of multiculturalism a reality. Students commented:

Liz: I loved how the class talked about how we could make all students feel safe and comfortable in a classroom setting, but we actually

implemented that in our own classroom. It helped us learn how to do the same in our future classroom. Everything about this class was beneficial and powerful.

Lindsay: I think the fact that not only did we talk about making a classroom accepting and comfortable for students but this idea was really implemented within our own class. It's one thing to talk about doing something but it's another entirely to actually make those ideas reality.

The participatory theatre exercise demonstrated the translation of theory into praxis by helping us actualize multiculturalism in our own classroom. Pre-service teachers will bring this real-life classroom experience into their future classrooms, recreating multiculturalism and helping culturally diverse children feel safe and comfortable enough to express and share their cultural identities, which promotes positive youth development.

Students' reflective comments affirm that the participatory pedagogy created a pedagogical space that empowered them to challenge traditional learning style as the status quo in teacher education and to become active agents of their own learning. The three main participatory theatre exercises: Boalian theatre games, Forum Theatre, and ethnodrama each made a unique contribution to our multicultural teacher education classroom, achieving positive educational outcomes on students' learning process. The central question of this doctoral dissertation research was: In what way can participatory theatre help students develop critical consciousness in multicultural practice? In this section, I attempt to examine the three main participatory theatre activities in relation to the central

research question through my perspective as a teacher educator and teacher-as-researcher.

As students' analysis illustrated, I also recognized that the participatory theatre exercises, Boalian theatre games in particular, served as a theoretical and practical scaffolding to create a pedagogical space in which students could challenge their passivity in their own learning process, through their own efforts, and appreciate a democratic responsibility to contribute to our classroom community through their active and constructive engagement. Furthermore, the participatory theatre activities helped create a multivocal discourse community in which multiple voices, interpretations, and perspectives were present and students strove to find their own voices influenced by, and comparing them with, the perspectives of cultural 'Others.' This multivocal community enhanced "constructive confrontation and critical interrogation" (hooks, 1994, p. 36-37) of the students' own internalized, authoritative knowledge in relation to dominant, hegemonic ideologies, thereby simultaneously reconstructing counter-hegemonic knowledge.

Democratic Environment

Boalian theatre games, from students' perspectives, served as a catalyst to develop a sense of community, which encouraged students to take a democratic responsibility to contribute to the creation of a positive, constructive learning space. hooks (1994) notes, "Making the classroom a democratic setting where everyone feels a responsibility to contribute is a central goal of transformative pedagogy" (p. 39). Boalian theatre games, from my perspective as a teacher

educator, helped me become part of the learning community. Through my participation in Boalian theatre games, I better understood the students and their cultural backgrounds, which turned out to be an essential source in building a positive relationship with my students. In debriefing conversations following theatre games, we first contextualized the activities (Benson, 2003) and then shared our personal narratives related to the themes that we explored in the games. Keeping hooks's (1994) teaching guidance in mind, I took the first risk and "broke my own silence . . . and invited my students to do the same" (Pennington, 2007, p. 99). Through Boalian theatre games, I strove to affirm each student's presence and embrace the vast funds of knowledge and rich experiences that each student could bring to our learning community. In turn, students confirmed that their presence and voices were recognized by the teacher. This mutual recognition between student and teacher brought us a sense of solidarity, which encouraged students to deconstruct "the traditional notion that only the professor is responsible for classroom dynamics" (hooks, 1994, p. 8) and reconstruct a notion that "everyone influences the classroom dynamics, that everyone contributes" (p. 8). Through changing the classroom dynamics this way, I wanted to challenge the hegemonic hierarchy pervasive in teacher education programs. That is, teacher educators constantly play the role of the authoritative depositor, while students merely are passive depositories (Freire, 1970). Freire (1970) notes, "Education must begin the solution of the teacher-student contradiction, by reconciling the poles of the contradictions so that both are simultaneously teachers and students" (p. 72). Boalian theatre games helped each of us make a unique contribution to

our learning community, subvert a traditional banking-style education classroom, and instead create a Freirean democratic classroom in which student and teacher worked as equal partners in each student's learning experience.

Challenging Student Passivity

Collaboration and collective efforts that we made through Boalian theatre games brought our classroom not only a sense of solidarity and responsibility, but a sense of excitement as well. This excitement, however, has often been recognized by authoritative banking educators "as potentially disruptive of the atmosphere of seriousness assumed to be essential to the learning process" (hooks, 1994, p. 7). Conservative educators espousing the banking concept of education may recognize that Boalian theatre games are merely a waste of time and also inappropriate for a college classroom, in which they have thought there should be strict, formal teacher-student hierarchy for "effective" learning and "efficient" classroom management. Anti-banking educators, however, recognize that Boalian theatre games coupled with subsequent dialogic conversations can be a pedagogical catalyst to create an exciting learning adventure through which students challenge their passivity and actively share narratives based on their real-life experiences.

At the beginning of the semester, I faced student passivity in the participatory pedagogy. Several students expressed their learning preference for traditional classroom teaching/learning (i.e., lecture style, individualized learning, preparation for exams, absolutely no group work outside the classroom, etc.). A few students questioned the appropriateness and effectiveness of Boalian theatre

games. hooks (1994) shares her own teaching experience in which she encountered students' resistance to her Freirean engaged pedagogy.

It was also full of “resisting” students who did not want to learn new pedagogical processes, who did not want to be in a classroom that differed in any way from the norm. To these students, transgressing boundaries was frightening. And though they were not the majority, their spirit of rigid resistance seemed always to be more powerful than any will to intellectual openness and pleasure in learning (p. 9).

I found, across semesters, that some students after experiencing all the years of K-12 became masters of passive learning, yet they are still good at “doing school” (Pope, 2003). Such mis-educated students believe that education must occur when they, as subordinated consumers, unquestionably absorb information delivered by the teacher as the absolute authority (Freire, 1970). In this dogmatic learning environment, students are fully dependent on the teacher and do not make any internal construction efforts throughout their entire learning process. Shor (1993) notes:

In traditional classrooms, students develop authority-dependence; they rehearse their futures as passive citizens and workers by learning that education means listening to teachers tell them what to do and what things mean (p. 29).

Freire (1970) views student passivity as the consequence of the internal working of hegemonic stability. Freire (1970) argues that students' passivity in their learning process may be more convenient for authoritarian teachers who

“take advantage of that passivity to ‘fill’ [the submerged state of consciousness]” (p. 95), which makes students be less critical and more vulnerable to hegemonic orders (Apple, 2004). Freire (2003) notes:

The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they develop critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to the fragmented view of reality deposited in them (p. 58).

White students’ passivity in racial conversation. In the beginning, student passivity worked as “the escapism of White talk” (McIntyre, 1997). As previously discussed, the signs White students show of discomfort and consequent disassociation in conversations on racial issues is widely observed by teacher educators engaged in multicultural teacher education programs (e.g., Lawrence, 1997; Rego & Nieto, 2000; Vavrus, 2002; Gay & Kirkland, 2003). According to Lesko and Bloom (2010), citing Allsup’s observation (1995), when teachers of color teach a multicultural education course, it is more likely to create a “stormy environment” (p. 378) that increases White students’ resistance. LaDuke (2009) also reports that teachers of color are likely to receive lower student evaluation scores compared to their White teacher educator counterparts.

Research studies across a decade have observed that White students’ silence can be recognized as resistance to protect their worldview and existing beliefs, which are often contradictory to perspectives provided by a critical

multicultural education paradigm (Ahlquist, 1991; Ladson-Billing, 1996; Moon, 1999; Case & Hemmings, 2005; Pennington, 2007). Pre-service teachers, therefore, tend to use existing belief and knowledge, influenced by authoritative, dominant discourses, as a “defensive filter” through which they reject new information brought by multicultural education (Causey et al., 2000), so that they can “minimize internal conflict and reinforce biased beliefs about self and others” (Brown, 2004, p. 326). This defensive mechanism is a very strong force, which perpetuates racial hegemony throughout the American education system from K-12 to higher education. Through experiencing the participatory theatre exercises, however, students were given critical opportunities, in sustainable and substantial ways, to challenge their passivity and “the escapism of White talk” (McIntyre, 1997), thus breaking their own silence. Souto-Manning (2011) notes that “education may be transformed by teachers who come to recognize themselves as privileged cultural beings” (p. 999). Throughout the semester, students were challenged to acknowledge and examine their cultural being-ness and their unrecognized racial, linguistic, and heterosexual privileges.

Dialogic Community Creation via Participatory Theatre

A democratic classroom environment in which students felt solidarity and a sense of responsibility to challenge their passivity enhanced an honest and genuine dialogical interaction in our multicultural education classroom. We made a collaborative effort to challenge the status quo in teacher education where “students and teachers often feel comfortable with the lack of student voice” (Ladson-Billings, 1996, p. 82). I always kept in mind Freirean educator Ira Shor’s

(1993) teaching philosophy: “Classroom dies as intellectual centers when they become delivery systems for lifeless bodies of knowledge” (p. 25). Following Freire and Shor, I strove to create a dialogical space in which student and teacher “find themselves conducting a kind of collaborative search, each from her or his lived situation” (Green, 1995, p. 23). The participatory theatre exercises that activated a dialogical collaborative search helped me actualize the ideals of Freirean pedagogy in my classroom. In Freire and Shor’s pedagogical practices, dialogue does not simply mean a talk, it involves a humanizing process of value creation. Ikeda (2009) notes:

The English word *dialogue* derives from the Greek *dialogos*, meaning ‘through discourse meaning is shared.’ Dialogue is not simply two people asserting their opinions, nor is it just a simple exchange of words. Through conversing, we can gain a shared insight into each other’s point of view and intent. It is also a process of creating something of new and positive value.

Both Freire and Boal believe the innate power of dialogue “to achieve ‘praxis’— i.e., reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it” (Emert, 2003, p. 101). Freirean and Boalian critical (performance) pedagogy aims for social transformation, yet both Freire and Boal believe that social transformation should start with inner transformation at the individual level.

We as teacher educators engaged in multicultural/anti-oppressive education must acknowledge that we could instantly become an oppressor when we attempt to “clone ourselves and our thinking” (Lesko & Bloom, 2010, p. 380)

about a multicultural education paradigm. A dialogical space brought by the participatory theatre exercises helped me relinquish my authoritative power and instead, without being impositional (Ahlquist, 1999), empower students to engage themselves in a critical and creative interrogation of their own privileged positionality, which is the first step for an anti-oppressive journey.

Problem-Posing Pedagogy via Participatory Theatre

The participatory pedagogy problematized “existing knowledge as a historical product deeply invested with the values of those who developed such knowledge” (Shor, 1993, p. 22) and instead encouraged us to use real-life materials derived from our lived experiences. Using the participatory theatre exercises, we identified and problematized emergent issues, which were derived from students’ cultural identities and backgrounds (Boalian theatre games), faced by a local community (ethnodrama), and entrenched in social and political conflict in a larger society (Forum Theatre). We as a reflective learning community then analyzed the root causes of the problems and strove to find multivariate approaches and solutions to the problems (Freire, 1970; Shor, 1993; Smith-Maddox & Solórzano, 2002). Through this Freirean problem-posing pedagogy via the participatory theatre exercises, students subverted the traditional banking concept of education, acquiring a critical habit to “question answers rather than merely to answer questions” (Shor, 1993, p. 25) and recognizing “education as something they do, not as something done to them (p. 25). Freirean problem-posing pedagogy helped us challenge hegemonic ideologies that indoctrinate us to view existing social inequalities and structural marginalization

as natural, inevitable, and necessary (Freire, 1970; Apple 2004; Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2000), thereby viewing social problems as ones “that can be resolved, not as a reality to be accepted” (Smith-Maddox & Solórzano, 2002, p. 70).

Counter-hegemonic Knowledge Production via Participatory Theatre

By creating a multivocal discourse community through the employment of Freirean and Boalian pedagogical theory and praxis, we problematized the existing knowledge offered us and the consciousness derived from that knowledge (Freire, 1970; Shor, 1993; Apple, 2004). Ideological hegemony imposed by the dominant culture makes us believe that knowledge is neutral and cultural-free (Souto-Manning, 2011). Knowledge forms, however, should be examined as “the expression of historical moments where some groups exercise dominant power over others” (Shor, 1993, p. 28). Students experienced a cultural reflection process wherein they deconstructed authoritative knowledge forms, which had shaped their internalized consciousness, by re/negotiating multiple voices, interpretations, and perspectives offered through dialogic interactions that occurred as a consequence of the participatory theatre exercises. In other words, students “challenged to integrate . . . new perspectives with their existing worldviews” (LaDuke, 2009, p. 38), which resonates with the Bakhtinian “ideological becoming,” in which the “individual’s internally persuasive discourses interact with authoritative discourses” (p. 38). Through the students’ experience of this internal ideological negotiation process, “old knowledge and assumptions collided with new knowledge” (Souto-Manning, 2010, p.84), which

led to an action stage in which students “reconstruct[ed] their own knowledge from a critical perspective” (p. 84). Shor (1993) notes: “To learn is to recreate the way we see ourselves, our education, and our society” (p. 26). Through the participatory theatre exercises, students confronted and deconstructed existing knowledge forms that benefited the dominant group at the expense of the subordinated groups, affirmed the “Outside knowledge” brought by a multicultural education paradigm (Nieto & Bode, 2008), and reconstructed “transgressive knowledge” that would liberate one from one’s own internalized oppression (hooks, 1994; Yosso, 2005). Through the experience of this entire process, students developed critical consciousness in multicultural practice.

Empathy Development via Participatory Theatre

Through the experience of the participatory theatre exercises, students also nurtured empathy. Purpel and McLaurin (2004) criticize the current educational system that “narrows and undermines [an] impulse to care [for others]” (p. 53), noting that “we have bought into a psychology that urges us to consider that we are responsible individually for our feelings and behavior and that we are responsible only to and for ourselves” (p. 53). Through experiencing Boalian theatre games, ethnodrama, and Forum Theatre, students cultivated imagination and empathy to reach out to and care for others. McAllister and Irvine (2002) note: “An empathic disposition has been seen as a desirable trait for teachers in diverse settings. This disposition has been associated with increased sensitivity to different cultures” (p. 433). I have held the conviction from an educational standpoint that empathy development is of great importance for pre-service

teacher candidates who were mis-educated in the current school system to undermine compassionate empathy, which places a significant emphasis on individual, meritocratic competition (Purpel & McLaurin, 2004). I have recognized that this phenomenon, which can be found cross-culturally in so-called “developed” countries, is a harmful influence particularly on pre-service teachers who teach the children of cultural ‘Others.’ McAllister and Irvine (2002) continue:

Empathetic people take on the perspective of another culture and respond to another individual from that person’s perspective. Noddings (1984) referred to this as “feeling with,” wherein one does not feel for or act on behalf of an individual; rather, one is with the individual in a nonjudgmental fashion. . . . This type of empathy has also been referred to as “altruism,” which implies action on behalf or in service to others’ needs (p. 433-34).

As previously discussed, empathetic development helped cultivate altruistic motivation in the students to see things from the perspectives of the marginalized/oppressed, which simultaneously contributed to the enhancement of critical consciousness.

The Role of Teacher Educators

As a teacher educator, I strove to bring about positive change in multicultural teacher education and invited students to join this journey. In this doctoral dissertation, the primary research focus was on examining how participatory theatre as a transformative pedagogical tool helped students develop

critical awareness in multicultural practice. As I have focused exclusively on the examination of pedagogy and its effect on students, in this section I want to analyze myself as an “environmental factor” (Ikeda, 2001) that might have exerted an influence on students. In what way did I as a teacher educator affect my students and their learning process? At the end of the semester, I asked my students to evaluate my teaching practice and analyzed their comments to find common themes.

Hilary: Any student that comes in into your class will walk away a better person. You don't just tell students what they need to learn; you let them figure out the lesson all on their own.

Jean: I have always felt like you cared about us as students in the classroom . . . and your compassion for other people and your students was contagious to us, as we started to care about each other as well and start thinking of ways that we could help the world as well.

Liz: I loved how passionate you were about the subject, and I think that I would never have learned so much without you. You have shown me some amazing teaching qualities to keep with me forever and to pass down to my own students. I wish that everyone had to take your class and become more aware of the issues that face our country, or even world. You truly made a difference in my life, and everyone in our class.

Ellen: This class was one of the only classes that made me think beyond any other class. I had to rethink my judgment and how I react to certain things. I would say that throughout college, this class is one of the only

classes that I will take with me for the rest of my life not only as a teacher, but as a person.

Jamie: I feel you prepared me immensely for when I become a teacher.

Whenever I encounter a dilemma in my profession, I will simply reflect back to this class to find a solution, and ask myself, “What would Mr. M do?” You have encouraged me to be more than just a teacher, but a mediator, an advocate of social justice, and supporter of multiculturalism.

It may be true that some faculties in colleges of education view teaching as a “less valuable aspect of the academic profession” (hooks, 1994, p. 12) and thus, prospective teachers devalue the student-teacher human relationship and may come to recognize that teaching should not be *causal* inference on learners and their motivation to learn. Giggs (2001), however, believes in a positive correlation in the level of human connection between student and teacher.

Jim Cummins (1997) wrote that “human relationships are at the heart of education.” Similarly, Richard Courtney (1988) argued: “It is people who, objectively, most affect the student.” In almost *any* classroom, the focus, intent, and success of the learning activity are dependent on strong and vital connections (of various kinds) between learners and teacher, as well as among learners themselves. A potentially productive metaphor for these relationships is that of an electrical circuit. It might be argued that one of the teacher’s central functions is to foster and promote the vitality and strength of these connections—to keep the circuit closed—so that the electricity between and among “the terminals” can continue to flow (p. 25).

One of the themes that I found through their comments is that students learned something they want to “pass down to [their] own students” from my teaching practice. I recognize this as a humanistic bond between student and teacher. This humanistic bond that we created will pass down to my students’ future classrooms, as a positive, counter-hegemonic cyclical reproduction, in which they re-create a humanistic bond with their students. In addition, from my cultural perspective, this humanistic bond can also be recognized as a cultural bond between students and myself as a teacher of color. Most of my students grew up in a monolithic school environment in which the vast majority of teachers were White, whose cultural backgrounds and values were similar to theirs. To some of them I was the first teacher of color they had ever had, and to most of them I was the first Asian teacher. The positive cultural experience that students gained through the cultural bond built between us will also hopefully pass down to their future classrooms, in which they recreate a positive cultural bond with students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

Change

Can one multicultural education classroom bring about change in students? Previous research studies have observed that a single multicultural education course may not be able to expect much change in pre-service teacher candidates (Larke, 1990; Ahlquist, 1991; Gomez, 1993; Lawrence, 1997; Causey, et. al., 2000). Ahlquist (1991), for instance, notes that “it is unlikely that a few semesters in a teacher education program can turn racists or homophobes into teachers who carefully and joyfully educate the children of ‘Others’ ” (p. 126).

This doctoral dissertation study, however, may contradict their findings. At the very beginning of this dissertation, I identified the three aspects that may bring about change in multicultural teacher education: 1) a teacher's being fully aware of her or his students and their cultural worldviews, 2) providing powerful and transformative pedagogy, and 3) achieving genuine dialogic interactions (Haberman, 1991). When teacher educators can offer these three simultaneously, we may be able to see change in students.

Sleeter, Torres, & Laughlin (2004) note that inner transformation in Freirean and Boalian pedagogy "rarely is a one-time awakening, but rather it is a process with multiple avenues of insightful moments as well as difficult times of denial and pain" (p. 83). As an accumulation of the "insightful moments" and a continuum of the "difficult times of denial and pain" that my students experienced through the participatory theatre exercises, I found positive change in students. However, I do not have any evidential proof that the change that I saw in students will "result in longer term changes" (Causey et al., 2000, p. 37). In addition, the change in students may be temporary or a very small amount of change. I agree with Ahlquist's (1991) noting that "true consciousness often comes very slowly" (p. 167), Doyle's (1993) noting that "transformation . . . usually comes in small doses and usually happens over time" (p. 130), and Price and Valli's (2005) noting that "changes did not arise in a vacuum" (p. 64). I believe, however, that I planted seeds of change in students and cannot agree more with Saldaña's (2005b) encouragement.

As Boal advocates, we may have planted seeds in hopes that they would take root. And one cannot tell from a seed just planted whether it will die underground; sprout but then wither; or grow, flourish, and mature (p. 132).

Gandhi (1913) once stated: “We but mirror the world. All the tendencies present in the outer world are to be found in the world of our body. If we could change ourselves, the tendencies in the world would also change” (p. 241; as cited in Urbain, 2010, p. 93). Both Freire and Boal would agree that “whatever transformation one wishes to see outside should be used as a source of inspiration to accomplish a change inside” (Urbain, 2010, p. 99). The participatory theatre exercises helped us to explore the unrecognized habitual patterns in our mind and body (Cahnmann-Taylor & Souto-Manning, 2010), thereby enabling us to explore the hegemonic patterns that domesticate us, both in inner and outer worlds. I used my classroom as a humanizing “space to facilitate and promote change” (Souto-Manning, 2010, p. 108), fighting against existing social injustice. Eradicating racism, linguicism, heterosexism, and all other social oppression forms from our society may take boundless time and need countless efforts, yet we as multicultural teacher educators go to a classroom striving to achieve each student’s inner transformation through continuous dialogic interactions, which eventually leads to the just and equitable society we hope to achieve. We as multicultural teacher educators believe that we can change the world one classroom at a time. Ikeda (2009) notes:

A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step, as they say. We can never achieve victory in a journey toward a distant aspiration if we don't take that first step. Similarly, human revolution, or an inner transformation in people's hearts . . . starts with sincere dialogue with a single individual. Engaging in dialogue is a struggle to positively transform our own life as well as that of others. It is the act of breaking out the shell of our lesser self, surmounting the wall of our callous ego, and creating and expanding positive connections with others. When we have the courage to meet and talk with people about our ideals, we are taking the first and surest step in our human revolution (p. 91-92).

Limitations of the Study

A limitation of this study is that I was not able to include the perspectives of all of the students in the classes. All the data analyzed and presented in this study came from the forty-five students in my multicultural education courses who provided me with their consent for this research study. Five other students did not give consent and therefore their perspectives are not included. This is a concern because their not giving consent is likely to be highly correlated with their negative feelings about the class, meaning that their exclusion from my study skews the findings, giving the impression that the class was uniformly well received.

For example, there was a student, within the 10% who did not participate in this study, who demonstrated strong verbal resistance to my anti-racist pedagogical approaches. Similarly, I have encountered a segment of students,

across semesters, who questioned the way my multicultural teacher education course was designed. These students accused me of White (male) bashing; of examining the complexity of US society solely from the perspectives of people of color, thereby resulting in a complete lack of White perspectives; and intending to teach “political correctness” on specific issues, such as affirmative action and same-sex marriage. This critical segment of students claimed that no change had occurred during and after having taken my multicultural education course. As a teacher educator, I strove to find the common cognitive and behavioral patterns of students who showed negative reactions to my anti-racist pedagogy in order to better my teaching practice. But, as an action researcher in this IRB approved research, I needed to exclude any comments made by the aforementioned students from the data synthesis and analysis procedures.

Is it too good to be true? How much reliability can this doctoral dissertation study claim in terms of the data analysis and presentation? In participatory action research in which teachers conduct research studies in their own classrooms, the impact of a student-teacher power relationship cannot be ignored. For instance, no what how I claim that I succeeded in relinquishing my authority through the incorporation of participatory pedagogy, I cannot entirely deny the possible effect of my authority as a teacher, as long as I have to evaluate my students through grades. At the beginning of the semester, I carefully explained that their participation in this research study would be voluntary and any comments and criticism that they made would not affect their grades at all. Nevertheless, it is possible that there may be students who were still concerned

about how I would perceive them, which exerted some influence on their comments, thereby bringing about relatively positive comments and feedbacks.

All the data presented in this doctoral dissertation study were collected before final grades were posted. In addition to the final reflection activity discussed in this last chapter, students also participated in an official student evaluation administered by the education department of the university at which I am affiliated. This official student evaluation was conducted at the very end of the observation semester. Students were informed, through an e-mail sent by the department, that the results of this official student evaluation would be viewed by the instructor only after all the grades are posted and therefore, their evaluation would not affect their final grades at all. I compared the student evaluations collected through the final reflection activity conducted in my class with the official student evaluations. The official student evaluations supported the positive educational results evident in students' discourses, which were retrieved from the final reflection activity. This provided me with confidence in terms of the success of my anti-racist pedagogy in this specific student population.

Lastly, as discussed earlier, the reliability of the data in this study may need to be assessed through a longitudinal perspective, that is, through examining how the changes that I saw in my students will be sustained over time.

Recommendation for Further Research

As Brown (2004) asks, "Does change hold over time?" (p. 338), there should definitely be a more longitudinal research study to examine longer-term changes (Brown, 2004; Furman, 2008; Sleeter, 2008). In addition, as Cochran-

Smith, Davis, and Fries (2003) note, “We need research that looks backward to identify causes or determinates of success” (p. 964). We need a longitudinal research study to examine a “positive correlation between teacher preparation/certification and pupil achievement” (Cochran-Smith, 2005, p. 412). I hope that I will be able to conduct a longitudinal research study in which I examine in what ways and to what extent the changes that I saw in my students during the observation semester affect their teaching practices and interactions with their own students in future classrooms, as well as the academic achievements and positive youth development of their culturally diverse students. I expect that this type of multicultural education research will be conducted by a research team composed of teacher educators from diverse racial backgrounds. With this, multiple approaches, perspectives, and interpretations can be manifested in data collection and analysis phases. Racially diverse teacher educators working together in their research process may also lead to the improvement and betterment of a multicultural education course.

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APPENDIX A

ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

APPROVAL

To: Joseph Tobin
EDUCATION

From: *for* Mark Roosa, Chair *MR*
Soc Beh IRB

Date: 06/29/2011

Committee Action: Exemption Granted

IRB Action Date: 06/29/2011

IRB Protocol #: 1106006569

Study Title: Multicultural Preservice Teacher Education Ethnographic Action Research

The above-referenced protocol is considered exempt after review by the Institutional Review Board pursuant to Federal regulations, 45 CFR Part 46.101(b)(1).

This part of the federal regulations requires that the information be recorded by investigators in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects. It is necessary that the information obtained not be such that if disclosed outside the research, it could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability, or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

You should retain a copy of this letter for your records.