

Pre-service Teacher Cultural Identity Development

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Dedication

This inquiry is dedicated to the educators who shared their stories with me in order to contribute to a deeper understanding of cultural identity development in teacher education and in the hope that teachers will be prepared to identify and meet the needs of diverse student populations.

Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to conduct exploratory qualitative research to investigate how PSTs and practicing teachers experience cultural and racial identity development or changes in identity. Rather than examine the “what” or contributors to identity development, I will explore the “how” or processes of identity development as a result of experiences in teacher preparation programs.

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Chapter 1: Understanding the processes of cultural identity development

As a teacher educator, I am most interested in understanding the processes of cultural identity development experienced by pre-service teachers (PSTs) in the Human Relations course taught in the teacher education program. The course addresses equity and diversity in education and society. For the purposes of this study, cultural identity is defined as how a person understands “the network of meaning to which certain people have access and from which they draw to communicate and recognize one another” (Feinberg, 1998, p. 4). Cultural identity is found in the relationship to the networks of meaning with which a person identifies as well as how he or she understands the cultures of those around them. Our cultural identity can illustrate for us the bigger picture of how we develop a sense of belonging and the ways in which we think, believe, value, and act. When PSTs and teachers are cognizant of how their experiences, values, and actions are shaped by their respective cultures, they may be more likely to understand their students’ cultural identities, connect with them, and truly advocate for them.

Broadly, culture provides a framework for understanding the world and the material through which self-recognition occurs. Through language, beliefs, systems of kinship, and moral system, our cultural identities take shape (Feinberg, 1998), linking us to some and separating us from others. Cultural influences can create very different perspectives on one’s outlook on life and way of being. Our

understanding and interactions with others is shaped by our cultural identity. I believe that PSTs and teachers who experience cultural identity development may be more receptive to their diverse students, be better prepared to engage them in learning, and do a better job of advocating for them.

In this study, PST and teacher cultural identity *development* is approached as something embedded in ways of thinking and being. It is considered to be susceptible to continuous change when influenced by internal and external factors such as self-exploration and exposure to new ideas or experiences. Cultural identity can be challenged and shifts may occur over time. This study explores how particular learning activities catalyze or support these shifts and changes in PSTs cultural identity. I am particularly interested in exploring the connections between PSTs cultural identity development and how they learn to work with diverse students.

Overview of the study

This study investigates elements of the teacher education experience specifically in a course about cultural differences called Human Relations in a Multicultural Society. The course is embedded in a teacher education program to support students in learning about issues of diversity and equity in society. This study also explores the dimensions of cultural identity that can be developed in teacher education programs. The study describes how this Human Relations

course provides opportunities for PSTs to develop their culture identity and concludes with a framework for better understanding what constitutes cultural identity. Further, the study probes the role that this Human Relations course plays in creating opportunities in which PSTs and teachers act, learn, and reflect in ways that further develop their ability to teach and interact with diverse populations.

For the past six years I have taught PSTs in a teacher education program at Blue Earth University (BEU). From my first day of teaching the Human Relations course, I was aware that examining thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and actions of PSTs through a cultural lens might be a challenge. Each semester that I taught in the teacher education program it was apparent that the majority of PSTs initially viewed themselves as the norm and devoid of culture. The PSTs do not expect that the course will be about them or pertain to life experiences they have had or may have in the future. This is important to reflect upon, considering the population of school-aged children in the United States is increasingly diverse while the majority of public school teachers are White, female, and middle-class.

When asked to express their expectations for the course, PSTs typically voice that they will learn about “other cultures.” On one occasion, a male student expressed that he was not looking forward to the class because he was tired of learning about how his ancestors have oppressed every group; he was tired of hearing about what he referred to as “white male bashing.” Discussions about our beliefs and experiences with race and culture appeared to create uncertainty and

tension among students in the class. Dialogue and activities served as a catalyst for an outpouring of emotions, assumptions, and opportunities to address unknowns related to intercultural interactions. I believe that there is a need for teacher education programs to improve upon the ways they facilitate the cultural identity development of PSTs through courses like the one I taught and am now examining more systematically through this research.

I used case study methodology (CSM) to capture a description of the course and the experiences of PSTs who had taken the course. According to Yin (2009), CSM has an advantage over other methodologies when the research is answering “how” or “why” questions. According to Bromley (1990), case study is a “systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest” (p. 302). The phenomenon in this study is cultural identity development.

The eleven participants in this study are PSTs who attend BEU, a mid-sized public university, and graduates of the program who teach in public schools. I interviewed each participant, asking questions that related to how the Human Relations course aided them in the development of their cultural identity. As participants reflected upon their thoughts, feelings, and experiences with respect to cultural identity development, they described their experiences through the lens of their own personal and professional life (Merriam, 2009).

Significance of the study

This study is important because today's teacher population is predominantly White, female, and middle-class (Ball & Tyson, 2011; Brisk, 2008; Grant, 1995; Howard, 2006; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). According to 2000 census data, 40 percent of public school students are racially and ethnically diverse. The population in the United States continues to be more multicultural and multiethnic. As a consequence, culturally diverse schools are growing in number. However, the majority of White, female, middle-class teachers is expected to remain the same (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2012).

According to Kumar and Hamer (2012) White PSTs express a preference for teaching White students over Students of Color. White PSTs are less likely than diverse PSTs to reflect on how their racial and cultural identities may impact their views of and interactions with diverse student populations (Kumar & Hamer, 2012). Now, more than ever, we need to better understand how PSTs construct their cultural identity and identify the instructional practices that will help them become more critically reflective on their intentions, choices, and advocacy for Students of Color they will eventually teach.

I provide recommendations for how teacher education programs might support PSTs in understanding and developing their cultural identity. Descriptions of learning activities and their impact on the PSTs may provide some insight about how to scaffold cultural identity development as well as provide some cautions for

meeting the needs of PSTs who bring with them a variety of cultural backgrounds. I am hopeful that this research will inform teacher educators about how to instructionally support PSTs' cultural identity development in a way that prepares them to identify and meet the needs of their diverse students.

It is my hope that PSTs and K-12 students will benefit from this work. If integrated into teacher education programs, PSTs may have the opportunity to critically reflect on who they are as cultural beings and how they interact with diverse populations. PSTs may be more intentional about the way they instruct and interact with students. They may also be encouraged and empowered to participate in curriculum development which further identifies and meets the needs of their diverse student populations. This may contribute to K-12 students' experiencing improved teacher-student relationships, and more meaningful and relevant curriculum and instruction. Through the actions of and interaction with their teachers, K-12 students may recognize an increased emphasis on the value of cultural differences. As students examine their own cultural identities and learn to value and respect diverse populations and ways of being, they, their families, and their communities may be positively impacted by improved intercultural understanding.

Overview of the dissertation

In Chapter Two, I introduce the theoretical lens, critical theory, through which I conduct this study. It provides a foundation upon which to investigate the ways in which “social and historical factors have influenced students’ academic success and their perceptions of the purposes of schooling” (Kumar & Hamer, 2012). This framework supports the examination and promotion of principles of equity, justice, respect, and equality (Nieto, 2000) in teacher education. Engrained in a critical theory framework are the concepts that PSTs and teachers will critically reflect upon their own biases and stereotypes, have high academic expectations for all students, and appreciate different world views (Kumar & Hamer, 2012). Critical educators perceive school reforms to be rooted in social justice and the understanding that education should be antiracist, universal, and inclusive (Nieto, 2002). Creating classroom and school environments in which students are empowered through learning knowledge and skills that prepare them to identify and address social problems can take place through the practices of culturally relevant pedagogy and equity pedagogy (Banks, 2008).

I hope that this theoretical framework will help to identify the elements of PSTs’ and teachers’ Human Relations course experience that most encouraged and supported their cultural identity development. I focus on this because I believe that PSTs and teachers who have a strong sense of their cultural identity will more likely be interested in, learn about, and advocate for their diverse students.

Accordingly, I would hope that PSTs and teachers might be more inclined to believe in, encourage, and support their students as they employ practices of equity in their teaching.

In Chapter Three, I describe how I use case study methodology to elicit responses and identify themes about how participants' cultural identity development occurs within the Human Relations course. The chapter provides a description of participants in the study, the data collection process, and the data analysis procedures.

In Chapter Four, I present the case study of the Human Relations course. I begin with a description of the Human Relations course that is embedded in the teacher education program at Blue Earth University (BEU). I then introduce the study participants' through brief profiles. This case chapter provides descriptions of particular learning activities that the participants highlighted as supportive in development their cultural identities and provides a discussion on how cultural identity is developed within the Human Relations course.

In Chapter Five, I describe my findings and respond to each of the original research questions. In this chapter I make recommendations for teacher education programs based on the findings from the study. Chapter Five continues with a discussion of limitations and a discussion on potential future studies. Based on interviews and findings I have identified topics that I believe are valuable in the

field of cultural identity development and teacher education program
improvement.

Chapter 2: Cultural Identity Development and Teacher Education

It is not determined in the sense that it can be 'won' or 'lost', sustained or abandoned. Though not without determinate conditions of existence, including the material and symbolic resources required to sustain it, identification is in the end conditional, lodged in contingency.

-Hall and du Gay, 2008

In Chapter Two I will use a critical theory framework to examine how a Human Relations embedded in a teacher education contributes to pre-service teacher (PST) cultural identity development. The literature reviewed in this chapter supports the idea that components of teacher education programs can facilitate cultural identity development among PSTs and future teachers. The notion that societal and institutional contexts play a large role in one's cultural identity development is a key concept of this chapter. Applying the tenets of critical race and critical education theories I inquire into the ways PSTs' cultural identity is further developed during the Human Relations component of the teacher education program. In so doing, I recognize the impact of social, cultural, and political factors in cultural identity development. As a salient component of cultural identity, racial identity development is addressed in this chapter. This chapter is limited primarily to White racial identity in an effort to address the majority White racial composition of PSTs and teachers in this study. It is my hope that literature reviewed on non-traditional ways to explore White identity development may inform the reader about different approaches to White racial identity development within educational contexts. It is my hope that the chapter

will leave the reader with new insights on the factors that support PST and teacher cultural identity development, and that those practices and policies in teacher education programs may lead to greater equity in education.

Critical theory

Critical theory is the framework through which my study was conducted. In an effort to attain a more egalitarian and democratic social order (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000) within an academic context, I used a critical theory lens to explore PST and teacher cultural identity development. Using a critical theory framework I shaped my study in such a way that learning how to perceive and challenge dominant ideology, unmask power, contest hegemony, overcome alienation, pursue liberation, reclaim reason, and practice democracy (Brookfield, 2005) are addressed. I conducted interviews that encouraged participants to critically engage in reflecting on values, beliefs, privilege, and action within the context of cultural identities.

Critical theory, as a lens through which to view the study at hand, is intended to help expose the ways in which oppression can contribute to inequalities, as Antonio Gramsci (as cited in Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000, p. 283) contended. This study examines the ways in which dominant forces win people's consent to domination through cultural institutions such as the media, schools, family, and religion. Critical theory addresses the relationships between social

power processes and educational processes within schools, families, and other institutions.

Research conducted within a critical theory framework aims to promote critical consciousness, and struggles to break down the institutional structures and arrangements which reproduce oppressive ideologies and the social inequalities that are produced and sustained by these social structures and ideologies. This framework presents social criticism with the intent of correcting social injustices, focuses on empowerment and overcoming oppression, and educates for transformational learning to effect institutional change.

hooks (2003) takes a critical approach to examining oppressive relationships. She acknowledges that an individual's social, political, and cultural contexts play a role in recognizing oppression and what one can do to replace it. hooks (as cited in Vaandering, 2010) maintains that in attempting to undo oppression, we need to look inward, change who we are, and educate ourselves and others. hooks stipulates that "interrogating bias uncovers authoritarian institutional educational infrastructures that have bred a culture of fear, shame, and domination" (hooks, 2003, p. 43).

This study seeks to describe the forces that can assist PSTs and teachers in shaping decisions that affect their lives and the lives of their students, and to encourage them to achieve greater degrees of autonomy and human agency (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2000). Using a critical educational theory framework, I

will encourage participants to reflect upon their values, beliefs, ideas, and actions so that they can understand why they make the choices they do. In so doing, they may reflect upon their past, consider the present, and focus on the future. Through conducting this study, I hope that the participants' reflections and interviews will assist teacher educators in recognizing bias in PSTs and teacher education programs, thus increasing the potential for change in PSTs beliefs, values, attitudes, and actions. The current study may also contribute to the continued improvement of teacher education programs' curricula organization, and propensity for producing critical educators who value and promote equity in education.

In this study, cultural identity, as it relates to teacher development, is the principle concept that I explore. Understanding how past and present experiences impact daily relationships between teachers and students can be powerful. It may lead PSTs and teachers to a greater understanding of what they can do to improve ideas about and interactions with their students, and the overall quality of education they provide to diverse student populations.

Critical race theory

Throughout the history of the United States, racial classification has been a hotly contested and ever-changing topic (Boykin & Noguera, 2011; Omi & Winant, 1994). Regardless of what people think about race, research indicates that

race is undeniably linked to quality of life in the United States; “From life expectancy to infant mortality, from dropout rates to incarceration rates, race remains a highly significant variable within the United States population” (Boykin & Noguera, 2011, p. 18). The idea that people of color did not possess the same intellect as Whites was prevalent in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Today the ideas of genetic superiority, biologism, and eugenics have been replaced by a focus on cultural differences accounting for discrepancies in academic achievement.

In this study, race is centralized as the critical component of cultural identity to explore in PSTs and teachers. As Dixon and Rousseau’s (2005) research indicates, studies of White teachers working with Students of Color indicate teachers believe that as long as they treat all students alike, all students should have the ability to attain equal success. In spite of lower academic achievements among Students of Color, teachers would not be inclined to review/reassess their instructional practices, if they believed that they treated students equally.

Several tenets of Critical Race Theory (CRT) have been included as part of the theoretical framework for this study. This came as a result of the central place race holds in participants’ cultural identity development, and experiences and interactions in schools and society. CRT emerged from a wide range of literature of critical theory in law, history, sociology, ethnic studies, and women’s studies

(Yosso, 2005). CRT is a set of interrelated beliefs which emphasize the significance of race/racism and how it operates in contemporary western society, especially the United States (Gillborn, 2006). According to Gillborn (2006), it grew as a radical alternative to dominant perspectives, not only the conservative “mainstream” paradigmatic views, but also the apparently radical tradition of critical legal studies.

In the 1980s, certain scholars sought a “critical space in which race would be foregrounded and a race space where critical themes were central” (Crenshaw, 2002, p. 19). These scholars felt the existence of a chasm between critical theory and conversations about race and racism (Collins, 1986; Crenshaw, 2002). In 1991, Mari Matsuda (as cited in Solorzano & Yosso, 2009) defined CRT space as a venue in which legal scholars worked to develop a jurisprudence that accounted for the role of racism in American law and that worked toward ending racism and subordination.

Critical legal scholars who engaged in the Critical Legal Studies (CLS) movement questioned the ways in which traditional legal practices legitimized oppression in social structures (Yosso, 2005). In large part the movement provided a critique of liberal legal tradition, but neglected to focus on the impact of race and racism. With this omission, scholars Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman proposed that transformation related to social justice and equity was not probable (Yosso, 2005).

As critical race theorists began to focus on the topics of race, racism, and perspectives of the oppressed, they seceded from CLS. Diverse critical race groups such as Latina/o (LatCrit), Native American (TribalCrit), White (WhiteCrit), and Asian/Pacific Americans (AsianCrit) developed to address race issues outside of the Black/White binary. Defining racism as “a system of ignorance, exploitation, and power used to oppress African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Pacific Americans, American Indians, and other people on the basis of ethnicity, culture, mannerisms, and color” (Marable, 1992), CRT studies have addressed racism at its intersections with other forms of subordination (Crenshaw, 1989, 1993).

Matsuda (1993) identified some of the major tenets of CRT:

- recognizes that racism is endemic to American life,
- expresses skepticism toward dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy,
- assumes that racism has contributed to all contemporary manifestations of group advantage and disadvantage,
- insists on the recognition of the experiential knowledge of people of color in communities of origin in analyzing law and society,
- is interdisciplinary, and
- works toward eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all oppression.

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) explained that CRT in legal studies is similar to critical race theory in education. Their work illuminates the value of uncovering the social structures and cultural significance of race in education.

Like Carter G. Woodson in *The Miseducation of the Negro* and W.E.B. Du Bois in

The Souls of Black Folk, they use race as a theoretical lens for assessing social inequity.

Maintaining inequity, on the one hand, and privilege on the other can and has been achieved through various constructions of reality. Dominant groups can justify their position and privilege in society through stories. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995, p. 58) argue that “stories of people of color can catalyze the necessary cognitive conflict to jar dysconscious racism.” In order to identify and analyze inequities in educational systems, people of color must have their voices heard.

Martin (1976, p. 22) believes that activism and scholarship must follow the philosophy of Marcus Garvey, who believed that “the black man was universally oppressed on racial grounds, and that any program of emancipation would have to be built around the question of race first.” According to Delgado (1990), even though one voice cannot represent people of color, experiences of racism can be represented by people of color, using the term “voice.”

Just as CRT in legal studies has focused on “voice,” as defined in this way, so too does CRT in education. Critical race methodology provides a way of producing counter-stories from students of color that can be used to expose, analyze, and challenge the majoritarian stories of racial privilege (Solorzano & Yosso, 2002, p. 32). The CRT lens does not simply provide a forum for voices to be heard. It assists in moving people to action, and creating change that improves the quality of education for people of color (Dixon & Rousseau, 2005).

Just as colorblind analyses of law fails to make connections between social realities and an individual's race (Gotonda, 1991), an "acontextual" view of race in educational systems prevents teachers from reflecting on their own practices and their role in the production of the underachievement of Students of Color (Dixon & Rousseau, 2005). The current study aims at uncovering notions of PST and teacher cultural identity regarding their race, the racial identities of others, and the effect on teaching and learning.

As Dixon and Rousseau (2005) purport, and I emphasize, one of the core values of CRT is the goal of eliminating racial oppression as part of a broader goal to end all forms of oppression (Matsuda, 1993). Included in this process is the active struggle which is comprised of the symbiotic relationship between action and reflection (Lawrence, 1992). Ladson-Billings and Tate (1999) advocate for adopting and adapting CRT as a framework for educational equity as a means of exposing racism in education and proposing radical solutions for addressing it.

Although constructs such as interest convergence and the property value of Whiteness are key components of CRT, the construct of Whiteness as privilege, and its impact on schooling, will be the tenet addressed in this study. According to Vavrus (2002), the content and structure of teacher education programs which prepares educators to identify and meet the needs of Students of Color must be reviewed and redesigned. Using CRT, the concepts of colorblindness and White privilege can be used to examine practices within multicultural education that pose

obstacles to preparing teachers to practice educational equity. CRT proposes that racism is often hidden in the rhetoric of shared ‘normative’ values and ‘neutral’ social scientific principles and practices (Matsuda et al., 1993).

I propose that the notion of Whiteness embodying “normative” and “neutral” cultural values and practices is integrally tied to practices of oppression and the devaluing or dismissing of diverse cultures. In my opinion, White PSTs and teachers are socialized early in life to embrace or reject cultural and racial differences. I believe that people are taught—intentionally or not—and learn what it means to be or not to be White; to be raced or not be raced. The lessons learned are likely to determine how one identifies within and in relationship to racialized groups. The next section discusses these assumptions by the majority White teaching population while also exploring the literature of White racial identity.

Defining cultural identity

Identification, according to Hall and du Gay (2008), is “constructed on the back of recognition of some common origin or shared characteristics with another person or group, or with an ideal, and with natural closure of solidarity and allegiance established on this foundation” (p. 2). In this study, PSTs’ expectedly identified with the various ethnic, religious, gender, and racial cultures.

Participants’ cultural identities appeared to be shaped by aspects of their lives which contributed to who they are on a daily or regular basis. For example, as a

surprise to me, several participants considered their involvement in sports and other activities, to be a part of their cultural identity. With respect to cultural identities, PSTs and teachers arrive in educational settings with strong allegiances to particular ways of thinking and acting regarding diverse cultures. Based on what I have learned from PSTs in the teacher education program at the university in which this study was conducted, PSTs have rarely questioned or challenged these allegiances in critical way prior to. In conjunction with these allegiances, identities are also shaped by factors which may change over time, creating different self-conceptualizations. According to Hall and du Gay (1996), identities are always in the process of becoming, rather than being. Butler (1990) contends that identities are fluid, suggesting that they evolve within the context of one's life. The people, groups, organizations, beliefs, values, and attitudes with whom and which we identify will change as do our environments, interests, and activities. We feel a sense of belonging and place while we simultaneously recognize that we are a part of something and that "others" are not. According to Hall and du Gay (1996), "Identity is a structured representation which only achieves its positive through the narrow eye of the negative. It has to go through the eye of a needle of the other before it can construct itself" (p. 89). I believe that PSTs and teachers must explore their own identities, understand how they may be seen through their students' eyes and experiences, and determine if their cultural

identities interfere with the teaching and learning that will take place in their classrooms.

Exploring cultural identity helps people understand their relationship to the cultures with which they identify and to the cultures of those around them. For this reason, I believe that it is critical to study the cultural identity development of PSTs and practicing classroom teachers. This is especially important as we watch the demographics of our school populations shift while our teaching population remains predominantly White, middle-class, and female (Martin, 1995; Sleeter, 1995).

The majority of PSTs in teacher education programs have had little first-hand exposure to people of diverse backgrounds (Sleeter & McLaren, 2009). Growing up and living in seemingly culturally homogenous communities does not necessarily prepare PSTs and teachers for the rich diversity that they may encounter on many levels in their classrooms. The tendency to minimize issues of race and other cultural differences may happen if PSTs are unaware of the experiences some students have with inequity in schooling and society. In order to prepare PSTs to successfully and meet the needs of their diverse students, I believe they should be competent in addressing the impact of cultural and racial identities on their own lives and students' lives and learning. According to Howard (1994), if Whites (who have been culturally isolated) are interested in growing beyond that which they are familiar, they should become “aware of both differentness and

relatedness to other people and their realities” (p.15). Doing this will provide an opportunity for “. . . whites to participate in direct action rather than only experiences rejection, guilt, denial, or distancing themselves from other diverse populations” (Howard, 1994, p.21). Howard (1994) advocates for seeking meaning within one’s own culture prior to those of others.

The ability to identify political, cultural, and historical contexts that shape diverse students’ identities may be informative with respect to developing positive student-teacher relationships. According to Wood (2009), White teachers’ understandings of Students of Color have been developed from the media, movies, family, and friends. They may lack exposure to and meaningful interaction with people of color, creating a disconnect that impacts student-teacher interactions and student achievement (Gay, 2002). Additionally there are those who profess colorblindness (Berlak, 2009), implying that they see no color and treat everyone the same. This perspective is problematic because an individual’s color is part of his or her identity and does have an impact on life experiences. Claiming colorblindness suggests that there is a lack of interest in students’ cultures and experiences. When people accept the notion of colorblindness, they neglect to recognize those who are considered second-class citizens. PSTs and teachers may be able to refrain from being “lulled” by critically investigating their positionality and how it may affect the students with whom they work. In an attempt to explore race as a key element of cultural identity, I have situated my work in a critical race

theoretical framework. I believe that if PSTs and teachers are afforded opportunities to meaningfully reflect upon and discussion race-related issues in their lives, there is a greater likelihood that they will be able to establish meaningful relationships with their diverse students.

White racial identity

Omi and Winant (1994) define race as an unstable and ‘decentered’ (p. 55) complex of social meanings constantly being transformed by political struggle, which throughout history has played a crucial role in structuring and representing the social world. Think “Whiteness” as a racial identity. The images that may come to mind are skin tones, a hair types, and physical features. Just as particular phenotypes may be associated with Whiteness, the symbolic capital (Bourdieu, 1993) affiliated with Whiteness is also very real. According to Lea and Sims (2008, pp. 2-3):

Whiteness is a complex, hegemonic, and dynamic set of mainstream socioeconomic processes, ways of thinking, feeling, believing, and acting (cultural scripts) that function to obscure the power, privilege, and practices of the dominant social elite. Whiteness drives oppressive individual, group, and corporate practices that adversely impact schools, the wider U.S. society, and indeed societies worldwide. At the same time, whiteness

reproduces inequities, injustices, and inequalities within the educational system and wider society.

In sum, Whiteness can be viewed as a “cultural force or a norm by which all other cultures are measured and as a positionality beyond history and culture, a non-ethnic space” (Omi & Winant, 1994, p.5).

Jupp and Slattery, Jr. (2010) reinforce the need for a “second wave” of White identity study that moves “previous and current research from “static and essentializing endpoints to a generative and production White identifications” (p. 455). In their work, White male teacher identities are deemed multi-faceted, explored through “recasting identities as processes of identification within life histories” (p. 455). They examine how the participants in their study arrive at their identifications through stories told in historical and social contexts. Identity development is viewed as ever emerging. Rather than progressing through phases or stages, Jupp and Slattery Jr. (2010) contend that Whites build racial identifications through “recodings, useful recodings, and race visible identifications.” Whereas recoding entails the dominant narrative pattern in respondents’ life histories” (p. 463), useful recodings provided a channel through which respondents narratives became useful in the teaching of diverse populations. Race visible identifications convey respondents’ understanding of the influence of race in themselves, schooling, curriculum, and students” (p. 468).

According to Howard (2006), Whites have benefitted and continue to benefit from what he calls the “dominance paradigm” (p. 67). The luxury of ignorance, the assumptions of rightness, and the legacy of privilege combine to create this paradigm, which supports and legitimizes White dominance. For example, ideas such as the United States being a melting pot, the push for Anglo-conformity of non-Whites over the course of United States history, and the emphasis on “being American” as opposed to a hyphenated American, have perpetuated the notion that “human difference in itself is a problem” (p. 57). Examining these concepts and their influence(s) on PSTs is critical to the necessary racial identity exploration that should take place in teacher education programs. If PSTs are expected to recognize racial identities, to be advocates for social justice and equity in education, and to understand how to make a difference in the teaching and learning of diverse populations, they will first need to be aware of their own racial identities.

According to Knowles and Lowery (2012), Whites typically resist attributing variances in success achieved to differences in racial background. There is a tendency to believe in meritocracy; that success is obtained by hard work and talent. This way of thinking reinforces a defensive tendency to protect ways of life and to ignore a system that advantages members of the dominant group over other members of society. Specifically, Whites may not consider themselves as having a (White) cultural or racial identity. Their cultural (racial)

identity is unseen. According to Hall and du Gay (1996) the more privileged individuals are, the less likely they tend to recognize that their social status is not necessarily a norm within society.

In this situation individuals are inclined to refrain from viewing the inequity as an “in-group” advantage because this makes it easier not to contest the institutions or systems which create the bias which favors them. According to Tileston (2004, 27-33) different types of bias that are practiced in educational settings include “linguistic bias” (language that is dehumanizing or denies the existence of a group), “stereotyping,” “exclusion” (lack of representation by a group), unreality (misinformation about a group, event, or contribution), “selectivity” (single interpretation of an issue, situation, or conditions), and “isolation” (the separating of groups). I believe that teacher educators can afford PSTs and teachers opportunities to become mindful of the cultures and experiences of people who are unlike them. This means exploring how the power dynamics of race, socioeconomic status, class, gender, language, and other cultural groups operate to produce an individual’s identity and cognizance. Critical reflexivity in teacher education programs as well as in the K-12 educational settings will insure that PSTs and teachers examine the “political and social underpinnings” (p. 4) of power dynamics in race, class, gender, and other cultural relationships (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2009).

An assumption I bring to this study is that PSTs and teachers who may fall into “privileged” categories would benefit from teacher education programs which consistently provide opportunities to explore the implications of cultural identity on teaching and learning. These individuals may better be able to recognize how their cultural identities affect their interactions with their students and consequently, that they may lead to increased chances of success or failure for them.

Inherent in an exploration of these identities is what Howard (2006) identifies as components of a necessary “healing process” (p. 72). Teachers should “experience this process if they are to feel confident and competent to address the topics of diversity and dominance” (p. 73) in education. Honesty, empathy, and advocacy which eventually lead to action are the three factors which comprise the healing process. According to Howard (2006), White teachers may not be able to experience life from the perspectives of their students of color. However, they may be more successful at building relationships and teaching students when they understand diverse perspectives and experiences.

Howard (2006) contends that “being honest with oneself entails challenging assumptions that are held about diverse populations based on culturally conditioned perceptions” (p. 73). Critically reflecting on the realities of one’s own privilege and different experiences can be more revealing than focusing on perceived deficiencies of others. According to bell hooks (1990):

One change in direction that would be real cool would be the production of a discourse on race that interrogates whiteness. It would be just so interesting for all of those white folks who are giving blacks their take on blackness to let them know what's up with whiteness.... Only a persistent, rigorous, and informed critique of whiteness could really determine what forces of denial, fear, and competitions are responsible for creating fundamental gaps between professed political commitment to eradicating racism and the participation in the construction of a discourse on race that perpetuates racial domination. (p. 54)

Second, “empathy requires White teachers to suspend assumptions, let go of egos, and release the privilege of non-engagement...Empathy is the antithesis of dominance, and requires all of our senses and focuses our attention on the perspective and worldview of another person” (p. 77). According to Delpit, “White educators can contribute to the dissolution of these barriers [social positionality] when we suspend the assumptions of dominance and begin to view the schooling experience through the eyes of those who have been marginalized by it” (1995, as cited in Howard, 2006, p.79).

Advocacy, the third component includes informing White people about how to counter assumptions about diverse populations which contribute to the perpetuation of stereotypes, barriers, ignorance, and privilege. People of color have typically been responsible for the re-education of Whites. However, by stimulating cognitive dissonance in the minds of White teachers, and challenging negative reactions to programs and policies that benefit people of color (Howard, 2006), Whites can be held more “accountable for the ways in which we respond to

racism and dominance in our schools and communities today” (Kozol, 2005, in Howard, 2006, p. 82).

Hopefully the combination of honesty, empathy, and advocacy will lead to action among educators. Speaking out against racism, vocally acknowledging past and present suffering and inequities in schools and society, and employing critical approaches to education, are transformative actions, the highest goal of critical pedagogy that White educators can take (Banks, 2004; Howard, 2006; Sleeter, 2001).

Thandeka (1999) asserts that “children and adults [learn] how to think of themselves as White in order to stay out of trouble with their caretakers and in the good graces of their peers or the enforcers of community racial standards” (p.21). According to Thandeka, beginning in childhood, Whites experience an “induction process” into Whiteness (p. 19). The unstated goal includes deterring Whites from showing an interest in, compassion for, and empathy for non-Whites. Inevitably Whites do not dare to venture out of their “nonwhite zones, for fear of rejection and humiliation” (p. 77). If we accept this theory as possible, we must recognize that empathy, honesty, and compassion may be difficult to attain without a mindful approach. It is at this juncture that teacher educators and the programs in which they work can be strategic about embracing PSTs so that shame or hesitation that may immobilize them to think and act within the confines of “this

cultural system of racial dogma” (King, as cited in Thandeka, 1999) may be relinquished.

An understanding of Whiteness must also go beyond the acknowledgement that, as a race, Whiteness is a socially constructed category (Lea, 2009). Although a category may be abolished, the legacy of its impact continues to influence peoples’ attitudes, beliefs, and actions. Whiteness and identities of color, and other categories of diversity should be examined with a goal of uncovering both how they manifest personally and publicly. How we see ourselves, how others see us, and how we view others are embodied in what PSTs and teachers can do as they engage in critical reflection, the development of a critical consciousness, and in understanding multiple perspectives. According to Carr and Lund (2009), addressing diversity without truly understanding Whiteness would be a fruitless effort.

The next section explores additional possibilities for how to think about the development of PSTs’ and teachers’ cultural identity development with an emphasis on race.

Teacher education programs and cultural identity development

If PSTs and teachers recognize that there are hierarchies of inequality and that individuals may be privileged or oppressed based on various intersections of the social categories to which they belong there may be a greater chance that they can connect with their students. For this reason, teacher education programs should embrace the tenets of critical theoretical perspectives on their work which focuses on developing consciousness construction, knowledge production, and modes of oppression as they impact social justice and the creation of democratic communities (Steinberg & Kincheloe, 2009). Analysis of hegemonic processes of race, gender, and other diverse cultures should be an integral piece of teacher education programs. It spotlights the indirect ways in which various “-isms” shape our consciousness and produce our identity-whether we are marginalized or privileged” (p. 15).

To allow for this analysis, teacher education programs must create environments in which PSTs from the dominant as well as marginalized populations can engage in critical reflection of their identities. The space of formal education is an ideal locale for exploring the hegemony of Whiteness, its systematic influences, and the power embedded in creative and multicultural ways of teaching and learning (Lea, 2009). Giroux (1988) contends that teacher education programs must be transformative in nature, embracing the language and skills that enable PSTs and teachers to take on a more critical role “challenging

the social order so as to develop and advance [schools'] democratic imperatives” (p. 184).

In this discussion, I first examine PSTs and their responsibilities in developing a critical frame for examining their own cultural identity. I present examples of stage models of ethnic minority identity development and White racial identity development.

Because of socio-pedagogical dynamics in traditional educational systems and institutions which function to negate the culture, contributions, and identities of diverse populations, this section emphasizes the role critical theory, and particularly critical race theory, can play in teacher education programs with respect to interrogating how PSTs cultural identities are developed and continue to take shape. Dance (2008) states that “no one is born disfigured by racism . . . we are taught to be racist, anti-Semitic, anti-immigrant, and so on” (p. 58). Implied is that we learn and adopt these beliefs and values in our formal and informal learning. She suggests that educators work toward antiracism actively and personally, pushing against the dehumanization of other human beings.

According to Tse (1999), there are four stages of ethnic identity development. The first stage in ethnic identity development is Ethnic Unawareness. Ethnic minorities are unaware of their minority status within the dominant culture. This stage typically ends soon after children enter formal schooling systems. During the second stage, Ethnic Ambivalence,

children/adolescents may attempt to distance themselves from their own ethnic group(s). At this time, they may endeavor to associate and/or identify with peers in the dominant culture. During late adolescence/early adulthood, stage three, or Ethnic Emergence, may be experienced. Individuals may realize that they can never fully assume dominant cultural identities, and turn to other groups with which they can identify. Other groups may include their own ethnic group, or alternative groups. The fourth and final stage of ethnic identity development is Ethnic Identity Incorporation. At this time, individuals are comfortable within their own ethnic groups, and begin to search for ways in which they might reconcile conflicts related to their ethnic identity.

Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) identify additional styles of adaptation that students may experience in the process of identity development. These adaptations are responses to “social mirroring,” (p. 14) the ways in which a sense is positively or negatively affected by outside factors. As may be the case, identity construction is influenced by both inner and outer factors, which results in the ever-shifting characteristic of identities. Suarez-Orozco and Suarez-Orozco (2001) propose that ethnic flight, adversarial identities, and transcultural identities are ways in which children/youth identify with the dominant culture.

Ethnic flight is characterized by a desire to become closely associated with the dominant population. Individuals practicing this adaptation style will attempt to blend in with the dominant population through speech and social affiliations.

This behavior may lead to individuals developing negative feelings about their own ethnic or racial group(s).

At the opposite end of the spectrum is the adversarial identity adaptation style. Those who embrace this style will tend to reject the dominant culture because they believe that it has rejected them (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001). These students are more likely than others to encounter difficulties in school, and to become distanced from the formal educational process. They may be more likely than other students to drop out, join gangs, or end up incarcerated. These students often equate academic success with “acting White,” (Suarez-Orozco & Suarez-Orozco, 2001) and feel powerless and hopeless.

Early in the study of White racial identity, racism was strongly tied to White identity (Gaertner, 1976; Ganter, 1977, Jones, 1972; Kovel, 1970, as cited in Howard, 2006). Work that followed in the 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s emphasized White racial identity detached from racism. Included in this newer perspective of White racial identity are the following tasks in the process of identity development: White racism must be identified in “individual, cultural, and institutional manifestations; individuals should abandon racism and facilitate active resistance to it in various forms, and; positive, non-racist connections should be made between White cultural and racial identity” (Leach, Behrens, & LaFleur, 2002, as cited in Howard, 2006, p. 92). If Whiteness is not examined in social, historical, and cultural contexts, then we are unable to determine how it

plays a role in the lives and identities of Whites. This is one example of how being privileged because of race/ethnicity may go unexamined whereas failing or not meeting educational or societal expectations may be attributed to race.

Like many cultural assumptions, White identity is partially accounted for through the segregated communities that exist throughout the United States. Whether they exist as a result of geography or by residents' choice, they play a large part in determining our beliefs, attitudes, and actions within raced contexts. This is precisely why teacher education programs must include an examination of Whiteness. Both the majority White PST populations and diverse PST populations will benefit by exploring Whiteness and other privileged classes which impact student success in schools and society.

Current theories of racial identity development view race as a socially and psychologically constructed process, as opposed to a biological trait (Omi & Winant, 1986). According to Howard (2006) race is socially constructed, the implications of which may guide our inter-and intra-racial interactions. One such theory describes cultural identity development on a spectrum of racial identity development. The six-stage model of White racial identity development, identified by Helms and Pipher (1996) is divided into two phases. The first entails various stages of abandoning racist identities, and the second focuses on establishing nonracist identities. According to Helms and Pipher, in the earlier stages Whites are first exposed to people of other races through person-to-person contact, virtual,

or media. They typically do not recognize their Whiteness, and the privilege by which it is accompanied, beliefs about other races are usually based on stereotypes, and there is little to no actual experience with other races. Positive interactions with someone of a different race tend to be viewed as an exception to the norm.

Further along the spectrum, conflict between traditional values and viewpoints of race may be challenged by new-found information. Whites are aware that people of color do not experience the same privilege as Whites. Issues of inequities in treatment of People of Color become apparent, and often times the source of shame and guilt (Howard, 2006) for Whites. At this stage, a re-evaluation of their attitudes toward and beliefs about other races may occur.

Continuing along the spectrum, Whites may enter a stage during which they regress to former beliefs of prejudice and racism. Whites tendency of “being staunch defendants of White racial superiority, express beliefs in reverse discrimination” (Giroux, 1997b, pp. 287-288, as cited in Howard, 2006), and will participate in behaviors which degrade other races.

At the beginning of the second phase, Whites may question their role and responsibility in racism. They aspire to make life better for non-Whites, and often become involved in activities that operate to this end. Typically, they do not focus on underlying emotional issues that they may be experiencing (Howard, 2006).

During the next stage of this phase, Whites may develop a genuine interest in examining who they are racially, and in leaving behind negative views of other races. Whites' transition from their perceived role of helping save other races, to becoming more introspective in an attempt to change racist or prejudice beliefs, attitudes and actions.

When, and if Whites reach Helms' final stage of White Racial Identity model, they are aware of personal, cultural, and institutional racism. They understand connections between racism, inequality, and power relations in society. Whites are likely to participate in activities to reduce racism in society (Howard, 2004; Tatum, 2003), and are open to learning more about how to reduce the practice of different "-isms."

Helms (1990) implies that being White in the United States affords one the luxury not to have to think of himself/herself as a racial being. Helms believes that Whites' existence allows them to both feel a sense of superiority while simultaneously being blind to the reality of a White racial identity. He believes that Whites can move beyond this dichotomy to a space where they can overcome issues of ignorance and superiority by addressing specific identity development issues.

Howard (2006) asserts that not all people experience every stage of Helms' model on the identity development spectrum. He asserts that using this model may help Whites identify and explore personal struggles related to race. If this takes

place, there is a greater probability that individuals may recognize injustices that exist, and work toward eliminating them. This study will explore how identity development is multi-faceted and assigning stages to individuals ignores that identity development is not a uniform or holistic development process. There is a dynamic nature to how different facets or dimensions of identity are shaped and reshaped over time.

Seidl and Hancock (2011) present the concept of Whites acquiring a “double image, a sensibility or consciousness that gives White people a deeper understanding of how they are seen and raced by others, particularly People of Color” (p.687). This concept is reminiscent of Dubois’s (1903) theory of “double consciousness” among Blacks in the United States which expresses that there is “a sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of contempt and pity” (p. 4). One’s double image is developed through “work, and it will often create friction and personal discomfort as Whites awaken to the multiple raced images that Whiteness carries in our current racial, political, and social context and begin to perceive themselves as racial beings through the eyes of others” (p. 690). Through creating opportunities for PSTs to “gain insight into the cross-raced encounters, which may increase their ability anticipate the ways in which People of Color might perceive some of their behaviors, responses, and beliefs and to understand the emotions they might raise” (Seidl & Hancock, p. 690) teacher educators can support PSTs in “attaining a level of maturity and a healthy identity that can

sustain the work of challenging racism and working across race lines” (p. 690). These authors suggest that by embracing the concept of a double image, White PSTs can develop “mature antiracist” (p. 689) identities.

Defensiveness, frustration, and anger are among the emotions that PSTs may feel, if they are not fully supported as they “enter racially charged conversations” (Seidl & Hancock, 2011). As teacher educators develop curriculum and structure courses, it is imperative that they consider the goal of nurturing a “critical and sophisticated understanding of race relations, and the varied ways they [PSTs] are perceived as Whites” (Eichstadt, 2001).

Though PSTs may appear to be resistant as they address issues of diversity and race, we must recognize that it may be their “privileged, hegemonic position that makes it especially difficult for them to consider other social realities and, in some cases, that leads them to resist new learning around race, privilege, and racism” (Seidl & Hancock, 2011, p. 691). As Lensmire (2010) purports, Whites’ positionality in society may mean that they have not had to engage with issues of race and racism. When they find themselves in such circumstances, they may tend to be unsure of how to interact and/or react because they have not *needed* to do so. PST behaviors and actions that are interpreted as resistance may be expressions of uncertainty as they transition from one level of understanding about race-related issues to a better understanding. According to Winans (2005):

Analyzing other people's experiences and recognizing the complexity of racial identity—that it is learned and socially created, that it can shift, that people can make choices about how to respond to race, and that it can be experienced differently—open up discussions of race that address the messiness and complexity, rather than leaving students bound within an oppositional framework that seems to offer only two options for white people: innocence or guilt. (p. 264)

This is where teacher educators and teacher education program experiences can be particularly effective in encouraging honest conversations about how we perceive each other across race lines. Honesty, as referred to earlier in this paper, entails critical self-reflection on beliefs and values, and integrating multiculturalism into the curriculum. Here, it is expanded to include being honest in such a way that we can envision “[our]selves within a racist society as well as the insights necessary to work with others across raced lines to challenge racism” (Seidl & Hancock, 2011, p. 695). One way of achieving this is to situate PSTs’ lives within an historical context of race and race relations. When PSTs conceive of themselves as “raced,” temporary as it may be (Seidl & Hancock, 2011), there is increased potential for developing a critical consciousness that will lead to greater cultural competency, and inevitably a beginning sense of culturally relevant teaching” (p. 695).

The role of teacher educators in developing cultural identity of PSTs

Teacher education programs must ensure that PSTs understand the impact of cultural and racial identities. They need to employ various practices that may overcome whatever fear, loathing, and/or shame exists to obstruct intercultural interactions. The discussion that follows is aimed at identifying ways in which teacher educators and preparation programs can achieve the goal of supporting PSTs to be cognizant of the ways they interact with their students (and students' families and communities), and the reasoning behind their actions.

According to state policy, teacher preparation programs must ensure that PSTs have been provided opportunities to engage in learning activities related to “human relations,” and that their competencies in these areas have been assessed by the program. The requirement states that:

Human relations components of programs which lead to licensure in education under authority of the board shall be approved upon submission of evidence:

- A. Showing that the human relations components have been developed with participation of members of various racial, cultural, disabled, and economic groups. Participation in planning shall be equitably distributed between men and women
- B. Showing that the human relations components are planned to develop the ability of applicants to:
 1. understand the contributions and life styles of the various racial, cultural, disabled, and economic groups in our society;
 2. recognize and deal with dehumanizing biases, discrimination, prejudices, and institutional and personal racism and sexism;
 3. create learning environments which contribute to the self-esteem of all persons and to positive interpersonal relations; and
 4. respect human diversity and personal rights.

C. Relating all of the areas enumerated in item B to specific competencies to be developed.

D. Indicating means for assessment of competencies.

(Human Relations course syllabus, 2011)

This state requirement lays the expectation for addressing some issues of multicultural education and provides a beginning point for what teacher preparation programs need to do in order to address the racist and hegemonic expectations of White society. Teacher education programs that commit to social justice and equity in education function to produce teachers who will not continue to perpetuate racist pedagogies and cultural misunderstandings (Delpit, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1999, 2001; McIntyre, 1997; Oakes & Lipton, 2003, in Milner, 2009). In an effort to assist PSTs in improving educational quality for diverse student populations of color, many teacher education programs require them to take one “stand-alone” diversity course (Wood, in Milner, 2009, p. 164). The assumption is that this type of course provides an opportunity for “pre-service teachers to reflect upon and demonstrate” how they work toward achieving equity in education. According to Gay (2002), PSTs should be provided with theoretical knowledge and experiences not only within courses, but also through specialization in multicultural education. This combination of learning and activities increases the likelihood that they will be prepared to identify and meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Even with state requirements and common practices of a course on “diversity,” Rodriguez (2009) claims that White PSTs do not typically examine notions of Whiteness and white privilege. He postulates that in order for PSTs to recognize their place with respect to racism, teacher education programs must present them with occasions to exercise critical consciousness as they consider Whiteness, race, and racism. Teacher educators should be called upon to encourage opportunities for PSTs to examine the “relationships between race and power and [help them] to understand how race and racial identity can change not only from minute to minute, but also historically across time” (Winans, 2005, p. 264).

Teacher education programs must offer PSTs and teachers opportunities, at every level, to scrutinize their curriculum (assignments, material, textbooks, course activities) through a critical lens. In so doing, they inquire as to whether particular discourses/cultural scripts (Lea, 2009, p. 68) are influencing teaching, learning, and the ability to empower students. Teacher education programs which require PSTs to partake in critical reflection are more likely to “recognize and change societal injustices and inequities and to use the terrain of the classroom for such thinking and action” (Rodriguez, 2009, p. 101). By participating in honest conversations about Whiteness, racism, and the relationship between the two, and implications for teaching and learning, PSTs and teachers bring to light the “political and social urgency of a critical pedagogy of Whiteness as integral to the

overall discourse on cultural diversity and teacher education” (Rodriguez, 2009 p. 107).

However, teacher educators and the programs within which they work should not convey messages which are the very essence of that which they attempt to overcome. Viewing PSTs from essentialist perspectives, some of which suggest that they are deficient learners, a homogeneous group (Lowenstein, 2009), and are “cultural dupes” (Seibel, 2002, p. 632) is counter-productive and embraces the very framework that teacher educators should work toward eliminating. An individual’s race, for example, should not be the litmus test used to determine whether she is knowledgeable of and/or experienced interacting with people of diverse cultures. This poem illustrates the perspective of a White, male teacher candidate who pushes back against the cultural assumptions that others hold of him.

**“Our new skins bear the mark of our predecessors.”
–Sumara & Davis, 1998**

WE
I am the white guy you see
who wishes to be seen for what I am
a potential friend.
You curse my privilege;
I am inclined to agree. After all I made it
here in spite of me.
You suspect narrow mindedness;
it’s not true. The opinion I seek
belongs to you.

You judge that I don't care,
but you don't know. I seek the other
because I yearn to grow.
My color erects a wall that hides
the true me. To you I am only that
color that you see.
We're both white so you share a joke
about ghetto life. I guess you've
yet to meet my wife?
My children won't be white like
me. Their un-whiteness is all that
society will see.
-“I-Poem” from White male student (Lea, 2009)

Lowenstein (2009) suggests that teacher educators must challenge themselves to examine their ideas of White PSTs “as deficient learners . . . who lack resources or who have deficient knowledge or experiences from which to build upon when it comes to learning about these issues” (p. 163). Faculty in teacher education may benefit from recognizing that PSTs bring diversity, experiences, and insights to the classroom that may enrich their experiences and the experiences of others. Teacher educators need to integrate throughout their programs time for and activities which will encourage PSTs to reflect on their upbringing, socialization, and informal and formal education within the political and historical contexts of the United States (Seidl & Hancock, 2011). According to Seidl and Hancock (2011), engaging in this type of work will develop a “sincere commitment to rise above history and to build a more just and loving world” (p. 706).

Developing “double images,” examining race structures and racism, addressing White safety and colorblindness, and building on PST’s assets are all ways to raise PSTs’ awareness of cultural and racial identity. According to Lowenstein (2009), these types of practices avoid categorizing PSTs as deficient learners when it comes to studying diversity. When teacher educators refrain from using the homogenization lens which masks the complexity of who White [pre-service] teachers are, PSTs may be more likely to engage in discussions related to diversity.

Another caution to teacher education programs and teacher educators is to critically examine the assumptions behind taking a “color blind” stance when helping PSTs develop their cultural identity. A typical scenario in a Human Relations course that is embedded within a teacher education program, as I have repeatedly observed, might ask White students to profess to be colorblind, to treat everybody equally, and to be anti-racists. For these students, embracing colorblindness is deemed to be positive. However, according to Winans (2005), colorblindness is a way to “preserve white social safety by asserting innocence of racism” (p. 261). They believe that their colorblindness will dismiss any notion that they may be racist. According to Winans’ students, they believe that if they mention race, that they will be seen as racists. There is an underlying assumption that when Whites notice the race of a person of color, they are attaching

stereotypes about that race to the person. By not acknowledging race, the assumption is that they will not be “racially offensive” (p. 261).

If a colorblind stance is maintained, PSTs will not have the opportunity and /or awareness to examine the racism that exists in education and other institutions. They will continue to wonder how they may be affiliated with being racist or with racist behavior. Teacher education programs “need to understand that they cannot practice true color-blindness; in fact, color-blindness is not an appropriate ideal for social justice” (Hayes & Juarez, 2012, p.10). According to Hayes and Juarez (2012), the practice of colorblindness allows individuals to dismiss racial inequities in education, and the greater society. This can happen when race is not deemed to be a characteristic that impacts one’s life experiences.

There are several strategies teacher educators can employ in steering PSTs away from a colorblind mindset. In conjunction with addressing the sociocultural and sociopolitical contexts of race relations in the United States they can emphasize the importance of developing empathy for those of other races/cultures, assume a caring ethic, and create a space that allows for PSTs to “begin to formulate an antiracist white response to white-perpetuated historical injustices” (Trainor, 2002, p. 646). By practicing a “local pedagogy” (Winans, 2005, p. 256), essentially tailoring teaching and learning experiences to meet the needs of their students, teacher educators are able to “listen carefully to what they [PSTs] are struggling to express given the contexts in which they grew up and the local

contexts in which they are speaking and writing” (p.262). Winans (2005) attests to the benefit of creating a local pedagogy that addresses the diverse and complex layers of White students’ experiences with respect to race. It is particularly important to focus on “the social, historical, rhetorical, and discursive context of Whiteness, mapping the ways it makes itself visible and invisible, manifests power, and shapes larger socio-political structures in relation to the micro-dynamics of everyday life” (Kincheloe as cited in Winans, 2005, p. 169).

One clear message from the existing literature is that teacher educators and programs must be intentional about creating safe environments in which PSTs can discuss their views on race and racial relations. This includes how they are perceived by People of Color based on their historical involvement in and as perceived by communities of color (Seidl & Hancock, 2011; Trainor, 2002; Winans, 2005). Critical in this process is that PSTs recognize and “challenge a variety of insecurities, fears, beliefs, and tensions as they deal with the sometimes less-than-positive images they see reflected back at them” (Trainor, 2002, p. 697).

Yet the challenge will be to ensure that teacher educators are prepared to facilitate these critical reflective opportunities. Sleeter (2000-2001, as cited in Lowenstein (2009), purports that the reality is that teacher educators with limited experience in diversity are educating PSTs. It may be a challenge for teacher educators to refrain from essentializing PSTs, from being critical of PSTs’ views that may be parochial in nature (as opposed to focusing on social justice)

regarding race relations, and to provide opportunities for PSTs to voice what they may consider “troubling conservative rhetoric” (Trainor, 2002, p.634). However, teacher educators must take it as their charge to provide “a framework for understanding the psychosocial dimension of political discourses and identity” (Trainor, 2002, p. 694) with which they may not identify.

When working with PSTs it is critical not to “other” them simply because the ideas that they espouse are not aligned with what is socially just. In the same manner that teacher educators work to avoid “othering” members of traditionally-viewed diverse populations, this must be avoided with PSTs. “Racism, classism, sexism, domination, injustice are critical pedagogy’s necessary other” (p. 636). According to Trainor (2002), teacher educators should examine the existence of such political discourses . . . to look at the ways its presence—in our classrooms and beyond them—troubles the narrative of social change that critical pedagogy relies on” (p. 635).

As teacher educators view PSTs in this light and assist them in examining constructions of Whiteness, they must challenge them. Assigning texts and activities that actually “connect texts and classroom talk to students’ actual lives helps them to read the world in a more critical, socially responsible way” (p. 640). Likewise, course material and activities should not be critical of PSTs’ experiences and/or mind-frames. Teacher educators must create space for PSTs to

“formulate an antiracist white response to white-perpetrated historical injustices” (Lowenstein, 2009, p. 645).

When teacher educators create such spaces, PSTs are more likely to feel that racist practices (ways of thinking and being) are separate from their identities as White individuals. Rather than feeling “white-guilt” (Thandeka, 1999, p. 13; Trainor, 2002, p. 643) or “white shame” (Thandeka, 1999, p. 13) which may generate resistance, anger, and frustration, PSTs may be more prone to examine race issues. In this way, teacher educators can “help students articulate anti-essentialist identities as Whites and work through the paradoxes of constructing an antiracist identity” (Trainor, 2002, p. 647). If teacher education programs are not intentional in efforts to not “demonize” (Trainor, 2002, p.647) White PSTs, in the context of discussing race issues, teacher educators run the risk of “doing more harm than good . . . and even create the very values that [they] seek to unravel in [their] teaching.”

Summary

In this chapter, I positioned the examination of cultural identity development within a critical race theoretical framework. This frame provides a context in which race is centralized in the examination of cultural identity development among PSTs and teachers. This chapter addresses the importance of PSTs and teachers continuing to critically examine their cultural identities and

their views of diverse populations in teacher education programs. I identified how such an undertaking may contribute to successfully identifying and meeting the needs of their future students in schools where culture continues to be and has historically been transmitted to the masses. The chapter concludes with an examination of cultural identity development among Whites and People of Color. I suggest that PSTs and teachers can better teach and learn from their students if they establish how they, themselves, identify culturally as human beings and as teachers. Determining this may lead PSTs and teachers to recognize biases or assumptions they hold that can impact the ways in which they relate to their students. I also discussed how White PSTs and teachers might benefit from teacher education programs which consistently provide opportunities to explore the implications of cultural identity on teaching and learning. By identifying elements of Whiteness, and how they impact power dynamics, attitudes, and behaviors in education and society, we can better comprehend the concerns and consequences of Whiteness in society and educational systems. Attempting to explore cultural identity development by acknowledging and referencing the hegemony of Whiteness provides a more meaningful way to understand approaches to cultural diversity.

This review also suggests that faculty in teacher education programs can and should integrate social justice approaches, such as critical multiculturalism, throughout teacher education programs. PSTs, teacher educators, and teacher

education programs should be held accountable for developing the knowledge [and skills] that will prompt them to teach diverse populations of color (Delpit, 1995; Delpit & Kilgour Dowdy, 2002; Hale, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2005; Vann Lynch, 2006, in Milner, 2009, p.148).

In the next chapter, I will introduce my research questions and provide an explanation for my choice of research methodology. Details on research sites, participants, data collection procedures, and data analysis methods will be presented.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Overview of the Study

In this study I examined cultural identity development in pre-service teachers (PSTs). I was interested in defining cultural identity and examining how it develops. I was also interested in exploring the variety of influences that PSTs and teachers describe as part of the cultural identity development experience. The broad research to which this paper will contribute is about the ways in which teacher education programs can foster cultural identity development in PSTs. PSTs and teachers may not recognize their own cultural identity and how it shapes their relationships with students. I wanted to investigate how PSTs' and teachers' cultural identity development shapes their teaching interactions with diverse students.

Assuming that "we know what we experience through perceptions and meanings" (Patton, 2002, p. 9), it is critical to focus on the meanings which individuals construct in efforts to make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world (Merriam, 2009). I employed case study methodology (CSM) as a way to focus on PSTs' cultural identity development within a Human Relations course in a teacher education program. My research questions were:

Research Question 1: What elements of the teacher education experience do PSTs and teachers identify as contributing to their understanding of cultural identities?

Research Question 2: What are dimensions of cultural identity that can be developed in teacher education programs?

The use of case study

I chose case study methodology (CSM) because it would be an approach to help me best answer my research questions about how a Human Relations course provides opportunities for PST cultural identity development. According to Yin (2009), CSM has an advantage over other methodologies when the research is answering “how” or “why” questions. In my study I explore how participants’ cultural identities have taken shape and continue to change. Using case study methodology, I investigate the role that teacher education programs can play in creating a venue in which PSTs and teachers have an opportunity for cultural identity development.

Additionally, when multiple variables are embedded in the situation under investigation, case study is a preferred methodology. In this study, there are multiple variables that impact PST and teacher cultural identity development. Using case study enabled me to access critical pieces in participants’ subjective factors such as thoughts, feelings, and desires. The information gained through this study is grounded in a lived context (Merriam, 2009) of each participant’s experiences. Using CSM, I intended to gain an in-depth understanding of how participants’ lived experiences within a Human Relations course embedded in a

teacher education program can provide insight into how to advance knowledge about how teacher education programs prepare teachers to identify and meet the needs of diverse student populations.

Merriam (2009) emphasizes the “bounded system” that is a component of CSM (p. 40). This refers to the concept that a case study focuses on a single entity—a person, community, or group, for example. CSM focuses on the whole entity—its functions, context, relationships—as opposed to bits and pieces of a whole (Check et al., 2012; Merriam, 2009). I chose CSM because of the opportunity it provides to examine how a particular phenomenon’s components are embedded within a context. In this study, the phenomenon is cultural identity development. The ways in which it develops are embedded within the context of participants’ experiences in and out of their teacher education program and their teaching.

I chose CSM as my research methodology because it can be structured to highlight particular understandings of a situation or phenomenon when there are multiple forms of knowledge obtained. According to Stake (1981) case study knowledge is different from other research knowledge in that it is more concrete, more contextual, further developed by reader interpretation, and based more on reference populations determined by the reader. These characteristics contribute to the strengths of CSM (Stake, 1981). The vividness and sensory features of case study lend themselves to making it resonate more with a reader’s own experiences.

The fact that case study knowledge is more contextual means that experiences are grounded in a context. Development by reader interpretation is another element of case study. It implies that (a reader's) old information will combine with the case study's new information, enabling generalizations to be created.

I was especially interested in CSM because I knew that I would not have the opportunity to engage in long-term field experiences at this time. As illustrated by Yin (2009) case studies do not necessarily require extended field experiences. Yin (2009) states that "you could do a high quality case study without leaving the telephone or Internet, depending on the topic being studied" (p. 18). Fortunately for me, I was able to meet with most participants face-to-face. As addressed elsewhere in the study, circumstances required that I conduct several interviews via Skype or telephone.

Another attraction to CSM is that it does not directly address the issue of causal relationships. In this study, I was not focused on what caused PSTs and teachers to have particular cultural identities. Rather I was interested in learning *how* their cultural identities have developed and if and how they change for PSTs and teachers over time and experiences.

Case study can be characterized as particularistic, descriptive, or heuristic. Essentially, the use of one feature or another can illuminate something different about what is studied, particular situations, or understandings of phenomenon (Merriam, 2009). CSM can be structured to highlight particular understandings of

a situation or phenomenon, there, are multiple forms of knowledge obtained from case study. According to Stake (1981) case study knowledge is different from other research knowledge because it is more concrete, more contextual, more developed by reader interpretation, and based more on reference populations determined by the reader. According to Stake, each of these characteristics contributes to the strengths of CSM. The vividness and sensory features of case study lend themselves to making it resonate more with the reader's own experiences.

Study context

This study was conducted at a mid-sized public Midwestern university, which will be referred to as Blue Earth University (BEU), located in a city of approximately 50,000, and surrounded by rural areas. At BEU, the secondary education department includes programs of study that lead to teacher licensure in Art Education, Dance Education, English Education, Science Education, Math Education, World Languages and Cultures, and Social Studies Education. Elementary Education and Special Education teacher licensure programs are offered in separate departments. At BEU, the undergraduate teacher preparation program is located in the Educational Studies: K-12 and Secondary Programs department in the College of Education. K-12 PSTs typically enter the professional education licensure program in their sophomore or junior year.

PSTs in the K-12 and Secondary Programs (primarily secondary, however there are K-8 license programs) are placed in schools the first semester of their program. PSTs spend 18 hours in middle school and high school classrooms in these early placements. PSTs' responsibilities include, but are not limited to, observing, assisting students with assignments, tutoring, and assisting teachers with administrative tasks. During the second semester, PSTs spend 25 hours in a field experience. PSTs are expected to teach a minimum of three lessons and to partake in typical teacher responsibilities such as grading, attending faculty meetings, and preparing material. In student teaching during the fourth semester of BEU's teacher education program, PSTs spend 16 weeks in their student teaching placement. After approximately 2 weeks, they assume full teaching responsibilities. In the 25-hour field experience and in student teaching, PSTs are matched with cooperating teachers in their content area who serve as mentors and guides. Placements are located at a variety of sites, including schools in rural, suburban, and urban areas.

Participants

The eleven participants in the study were selected in a nonrandom and purposeful manner. Due to the nature of the study it was important that I have participants who had taken the Human Relations course in the teacher education program. I deliberately sought participants who would be able to speak about cultural identity development within the context of the course and program. I

included both PSTs and practicing teachers. I was interested in learning how they view themselves culturally, how they perceive their cultural identity development, and if they believe that their cultural identity influences their interactions with diverse student populations.

PSTs and teachers were recruited through email, in-class announcements made in the teacher education program, and word of mouth. The recruitment material is included in the (Appendix H). I presented my Research and Study Questions and the Consent Form to PSTs in my courses and in other courses within the secondary teacher education program. Using the listserv for past courses, I emailed the same material to former Human Relations students. I was hoping to have a combination of PSTs and current teachers. Due to the low number of responses after my initial mailing, I sent emails several times over the course of the next few weeks. I interviewed eleven students. Five interviews were conducted using SKYPE due to participants' location. The rest were conducted face-to-face near a café on the university campus. Each type of interview afforded me the opportunity to experience the participants' facial expressions and body language. In some cases either or both of these would prompt me to ask further questions or to check for clarification.

PSTs in this study cover all four levels of the teacher education program. Teacher participants are in their first couple of years of teaching. All but one participant identifies as White. The majority of participants are from suburban,

rural, or small town Midwestern state. Two participants grew up in a major metropolitan area and one is from a small-town in another Midwestern state. Participants come from various points on the socio-economic spectrum. Though most identify as middle-class or upper middle-class, two participants culturally identify with being from a lower socio-economic class. Christianity, Agnosticism, and Judaism are among the beliefs represented among participants. Just over half of the participants are male. Among other cultures with which participants identify are ethnic groups (Finnish) and as athletes within particular sports cultures (e.g., basketball, track and field, martial arts).

Participants' shared both positive and negative feelings about the course. They described the ways in which it prompted their own growth. Two students felt that the course did not contribute much to their cultural identity development. A total of eleven participants were interviewed for the study.

	Participant Pseudonym	Gender	Race	SES	Faith	Home	Status
1	Gerald	male	White	middle	N/A	suburb	Level 1
2	Art	male	White	lower	N/A	urban	Level 1
3	Jim	male	White	middle	Christian	Rural	Level 2
4	Kaleb	male	White/Arab	middle	Agnostic	rural	Student teaching
5	Kathy	female	White	middle	Jewish	suburb	Level 2
6	Marc	male	White	Upper-middle	Christian	suburb	Level 1
7	Nora	female	White	middle	N/A	rural	Recent Graduate
8	Phyllis	Female	White	lower	N/A	rural	First-year

							teacher
9	Sheila	female	White	middle	Christian	suburb	Level 2 (Graduate licensure program)
10	Teddy	male	White	middle	Christian	suburb	Second- year teacher
11	Walter	male	White	middle	Christian	suburb	Level 1

Data collection

I collected data for this study during 2012 and 2013. All data gathered from participants was collected with explicit permission from the participants and in full compliance with Institutional Review Board (IRB) guidelines. I gathered demographic data on PSTs and teachers through conducting structured interviews. Additionally, I inquired into their thinking, feelings, and actions with respect to their racial and cultural identity development and experiences with diverse cultures. Data collected from the interviews was triangulated with field notes I took while conducting interviews and member checking.

During the interview process I was mindful about focusing on my original assumptions based on my experiences and addressing my own biases that might affect data collection or analysis. I attempted to be transparent by providing a context for how my values and expectations may have influenced my conduct and conclusions of the study (Maxwell, 2005). For instance, I explained to study participants that their responses would not be used to judge them, would not be

held against them, would remain confidential, and should not be crafted for the purpose of pleasing me. I attempted to make each participant as comfortable as possible by encouraging each to speak freely on any topic within the context of the interview, to refrain from answering questions they prefer not answer, and to meet in locations that were familiar and student-friendly. All in-person interviews were held on campus, in locations agreed upon by the participants. Several participants were unable to meet in person, so I conducted interviews via Skype. In two instances, technological difficulties with Skype required that interviews be completed over the phone. I preferred the face-to-face interviews, whether in-person or on Skype, because the participants' facial expressions, gesticulations, and idiosyncratic movements added meaning to their responses. Kaleb and Kathy's body language, for example, emphasized the frustration or exasperation with which they spoke.

Interviews

I conducted structured interviews in an attempt to gather data on demographics and experiences with diversity. With this variation of interview structures, the wording and order of questions were predetermined, and similar to that in written survey questions (Merriam, 2009). In essence, this type of questioning was useful to create a foundation describing each of the participants.

This interview format allowed me to ask open-ended questions about the participants' knowledge, experience, and ideas. These in-depth interviews (Yin,

2009) were one-on-one and provided me with information upon which I based future, more structured interview questions.

The semi-structured interviews entailed flexibility in questions, were conducted separately with all participants, and comprised the greatest part of the interview. The goal during these focused interviews (Merton, Fiske, & Kendall, 1990 as cited in Yin (2009) was to generate specific data from each participant, though perhaps accessing it in different ways, over the course of approximately an hour.

I took notes on interviews. In order to ensure easy access, organization, and clarity, notes were typed or scanned, placed in a labeled file, and uploaded and saved to a disk. I uploaded documents and tabular material to electronic files and created folders containing the transcriptions with each corresponding participant.

In summary, in my study I have (1) documented all interviews, (2) created a database which yields evidence and presents the circumstances under which data was collected, (3) ensured that the circumstances of data collection were consistent with the CSM protocol, and (4) revealed a connection between the content of the protocol and the original research questions.

Data analysis

Upon completion of the interviews I identified themes which I used to create a multi-faceted set of interpretations about cultural identity development and the potential impact of teacher education programs on that process, rather than

one grand narrative. I grouped participants' responses to the interview questions according to the themes under which they could be categorized. I felt that this would be an efficient way for readers to navigate through and compare participants' responses, one theme at a time. I interspersed my own commentary throughout the presentation of responses to each theme to provide a context for the participants' responses. My findings are presented so that the reader is informed about various participants' responses on particular topics in chapter four.

During each interview, I recorded in a notebook (See Appendix A) the time accompanied by key words or quotes used by participants that I felt were relevant to a topic or question. After reading through each transcription I created a list of twenty-one topics that were addressed by participants. Most of the topics were mentioned by multiple participants and were what I considered to be key points for my research. Examples of the topics include: participants feelings and fears about the unknowns of diverse cultures, the (un)importance of race in society, perspectives on Whiteness, and suggestions for improvements in teacher education. I compiled an aggregation of participants' responses to each of the interview questions. I used a different color pen (blue, pink, yellow, green, and black-See Appendix B) to represent the diverse categories of participants' responses to the interview questions. I read and re-read each transcription, highlighting portions of the interviews which fell into one category or another. After conducting approximately half of the interviews, I was able to identify a

majority of the categories for responses that would continue to emerge throughout the interviews.

I conducted member checking (Merriam, 2009) in an attempt to reduce any biases or misunderstandings that may have occurred in my interpretation of the data. Once interviews were completed and transcribed, the portions of each interview that I incorporated into the study were sent to participants to review. I asked that they provide feedback regarding the accuracy with which their contributions were captured. In one case, with Jim, I conducted a follow-up interview with further questions to elicit greater detail and for purposes of expanding on stories told in the first interview.

The data obtained during the interviews provided me with a better understanding of what PSTs and teachers think, feel, and experience with respect to their racial and cultural identity development. Participants' responses included experiences prior to and during their teacher education program, and (for current teachers) while teaching. Participants discussed the ways in which ideas about their cultural identities and the cultures of others developed. Several participants, including Kaleb, Walter, and Sheila, discussed how their cultural identities have developed with respect to new perspectives and increased interactions with diverse populations.

Generalizability and reliability

In order to ensure the transferability of my findings, I provide rich description, presenting details of the settings and the results of the study (Merriam, 2009). I believe that the study can provide educators an opportunity to extrapolate ideas and nuances from my interpretations, rather than to assume that my findings will hold true across all populations and all times.

According to Patton (as cited in Merriam, 2009, p. 584), “Extrapolations are modest speculations on the likely applicability of findings to other situations under similar, but not identical, conditions. Extrapolations are . . . problem oriented rather than statistical and probabilistic. The notion that “Reliability is problematic in the social sciences simply because human behavior is never static, nor is what many experience necessarily more reliable than what one person experiences” (Merriam, 2009, p. 221) is encouraging with respect to the purpose of my study. It should illuminate for readers the need to address fears, concerns, and unknowns surrounding diversity in schools and society.

Internal and external validity are used to address the rigor and trustworthiness of a study. In the case of qualitative research, internal validity addresses the extent to which the research results align with reality (Merriam, 2009). According to Merriam, “One of the assumptions underlying qualitative research is that reality is holistic, multidimensional, and ever-changing; it is not a

single, fixed, objective phenomenon waiting to be discovered, observed, and measured as in quantitative research” (2009, p. 214).

Due to the nature of qualitative research being based on different realities (of participants, of the researcher), internal validity relies to a greater extent on the degree to which the findings are credible, given the data presented (Lincoln & Guba, as cited in Merriam, 2009). In case study, internal validity refers to the extent to which the study results are credible. Several strategies to improve the credibility of a study will be explored. Member checking, also known as respondent validation (Merriam, 2009) is one way to ensure credibility and validity. In an attempt to reduce researcher biases and misunderstandings in the data, participants are asked for feedback on the researcher’s findings. Essentially, the researcher’s interpretations of data collected should be representative of the participant’s experiences. For this case study, member checks took place throughout the study.

Another strategy I used to increase validity was to make sure there was adequate engagement in data collection (Merriam, 2009). I knew that I collected enough data at the point when the findings appeared to be repeated across the study with relatively no new information surfacing. The repeated data confirmed some of my original beliefs regarding PST and teacher cultural identity development, but it was also important for me to seek data that might support alternative explanations (Patton, 2002) to those presented. For example, this was

illustrated in the form of one PST who did not appear to experience any cultural identity development in the Human Relations course and another PST whose cultural identity was already highly developed as a result of experiences not related to the Human Relations course.

In this study, I make no assumptions that there is any “normalcy” which characterized participants. Regardless of race, gender, and socio-economic class, among other facets of diversity, each participant’s story was unique. Backgrounds, perspectives, cultural identity development processes, and understandings of diverse cultures were experienced in very different ways. Throughout the course of my research and interviews for this study I remained mindful of the fact that the participants were not a homogenous group; I expected their very different cultural identity development experiences to be as enlightening as there were, and to contribute to thought, attitudes, and actions related to teacher education program design. Several participants identified as belonging to socio-economic classes—both lower and middle; they described diverse experiences based on gender and religion, and they talked about the ways in which they connected with their students in the K-12 arena. Whether participants were raised with racist and homophobic parents, parents who accepted everyone, or a parent who *was* the diversity in the neighborhood, they contributed valuable information which can be used to inform teacher educators and the design of teacher education programs.

For me the critical question is whether the findings are consistent with the data that is collected, as opposed to whether the findings will be repeated in future studies. Wolcott (2005) proposes that we need not examine reliability to determine the rigor of a qualitative study because doing so means attempting to equate the similarity of responses with the accuracy of responses. For me, it was not critical that participants had similar experiences, feelings, beliefs, and behaviors. It was important that I uncover *how* their cultural identities continue to develop throughout and after their teacher education programs. According to Shields (as cited in Merriam, 2009), “The strength of qualitative approaches is that they account for and include difference—ideologically, epistemologically, methodologically—and most importantly, humanly” (p. 52).

Ethics of my research

In an effort to maintain high ethical standards when working with participants, no participants were harmed or threatened in any way. I was transparent about the nature of the study, informed participants of their right to confidentiality, obtained consent from participants, and was honest in my collection and dissemination of data. In this study, maintaining high ethical standards in the data analysis process was a high priority. There is always a risk that my biases could affect my interpretations and analysis of the data. My theoretical position, whether or not my positionality conflicts with the data collected, and decisions on what information to include or exclude are factors that

may have posed ethical concerns. As the commitment to ethical practice resides within me, I have carefully considered my treatment of all participants, collection and dissemination of data (including interviews and observations), the use of documents, and data analysis (Hancock, 2006). I have upheld the standards created by the government, institutions, and organizations, which are intended to ensure ethical practices.

All of these practices directly impact my relationship with participants. During interviews I attempted to be cognizant of each participant's comfort level. I considered the interview location, ensured that each participant's voice could be heard, addressed the extent to which questions may have embarrassed or otherwise affected each participant (Merriam, 2009), and the ways I reacted to participants' responses. I had resources, such as the names of diverse community members and organizations, for participants should they be interested in related information after the interview.

Summary

In summary, employing CSM has enabled me to explore how a Human Relations course embedded in a teacher education program fosters the cultural identity development process for PST and teacher cultural identity development. I have done so in a manner which has enabled me to capture very real and honest images of how cultural identity development takes shape. Using CSM I also investigated the ways in which PST and teacher cultural identity may be further

addressed and shaped throughout teacher education programs. The next chapter will present the case of the Human Relations course with particular attention to the participants' experiences in the course as they reported in their interviews.

Chapter Four: Developing identities through human relations

The Human Relations course

The Human Relations course at BEU prepares students to critically examine the social and cultural foundations of inequities in the society and in public education. The course studies relationship-building in diverse communities in schools and the larger community. In this course, diversity refers to all ways in which people differ, including ethnicity, language, religious practices, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic status, gender, and other differences. Students examine the impact of race, ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic class, gender, and identity on schooling opportunities and experiences, and the multiple layers of power and control that influence schools. The course places a strong emphasis on community building. Students are expected to demonstrate open-mindedness, sincerity, intellectual curiosity, respect for the voices, beliefs, and feelings of others, and responsibility for their words and actions (Human Relations in a Multicultural Society Course Syllabus, 2012).

The course addresses numerous items in the state's Board of Teaching Standards of Effective Practice for Teachers (see Appendix D). The objectives listed below are taken from a Human Relations course syllabus at BEU:

Students should be able to:

- recognize and appreciate the contributions, culture, norms/values, oppression which various groups experience in our society
- create a positive, productive and equitable learning environment
- develop personal communication skills and to listen to, respond to others with different ideas and values
- deal with conflict
- develop self-concept/self-esteem
- identify own values, strengths and needs
- develop and act upon personal power in working with diversity
- self-assess and be reflective in professional development
- collaborate with others to create a positive learning environment

Over the past six years I have been one of the Human Relations course instructors, a fixed-term Assistant Professor in BEU's Secondary Education department. Fixed-term status refers to the hiring line which is non-tenure track and up for possible renewal each year. During my first two years teaching in the program, PSTs' primary experience with diversity was going to a diverse high school and middle school environment for one day. The experience was touted, in the course syllabus, as an opportunity to experience a diverse environment. From my first glance at the course syllabus I thought it odd that a

five-hour, non-structured experience should qualify as meaningful exposure to diverse populations. I also felt the choice of wording and the activity had potential for alienating those students who identified as culturally or racially diverse individuals. Considering the fact that they lived the implied “diversity” on a daily basis, were they being acknowledged in the course syllabus?

When I started teaching at BEU, there was a service-learning component of the Human Relations course which consisted of serving thirty hours in a non-school community organization. Students ranked their comfort levels with different populations (see Comfort Level Ranking sheet, Appendix F). Upon completing their rankings, students chose from a list of organizations in which it was recommended, by faculty, that they serve. The goal of this activity was to have students confront their discomfort with diverse populations. Students had to write a service learning reflective analysis paper (Appendix G) including their experiences, concerns, questions, implications for teaching. Over the past few years the Level I field placement has changed significantly. The majority of PSTs currently spend eighteen hours in English Language Learner classrooms at either a high school or junior high school in the vicinity of BEU. In this environment PSTs are exposed to various elements of diversity. The placement includes structured assignments which are aligned with Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) activities. There is no longer a service learning component to the course.

Who takes the Human Relations course?

The Human Relations in a Multicultural Society course at BEU fulfills the state-mandated human relations course requirement that must be taken prior to K-12 teacher licensure in the state in which the study was conducted. At BEU this course is one of two courses taken in the first semester, or Level I, of the teacher education program. It is also a general education course which can be taken by any student on campus to fulfill several course goal areas including writing intensive and diversity requirements. The course addresses numerous items in the state's Board of Teaching Standards of Effective Practice for Teachers (see Appendix D).

At BEU, students apply to the teacher education during the first semester they take teacher education courses. While they take the two courses, Human Relations and Child and Adolescent Development, they apply for entry into the program. There is a minimum credit requirement for acceptance into the teacher education program. For this reason, most students who plan to apply to the teacher education program wait until they have accrued sufficient credits before taking the Human Relations course. Several years ago a first-year student Secondary Education Learning Community was created in the department which houses the teacher education program at BEU. This Learning Community (LC) may consist of up to 25 first-year students who have identified an interest in teaching at the secondary level. To date, the LC has usually consisted of 10-15 students.

Together, the LC students take a common core of classes identified as strong foundational courses by teacher education faculty. The Human Relations course is one of the LC's required courses, so there are usually a handful of first-year students in the Human Relations course. Due to the small number of students in the LC, the LC students generally join an existing Human Relations course section. The existing course sections are composed of either students planning to enter the teacher education program, or students taking the course to meet certain general education requirements.

The majority of teacher education students in the course, as in the teacher education program, are White males and females, from rural and suburban areas of the state in which BEU is located. For many of these students, entering college has provided them their most significant exposure to diversity. The next section describes several PSTs who have participated in this course in more detail.

Coming to an Understanding of Cultural Identity of Self and Others

The majority of PSTs in this study expressed that they did not critically think about their cultural identities until they took the Human Relations course as part of their teacher education program. Most participants in this study identify this as the only course in their teacher education program where cultural diversity is specifically discussed outside and inside the context of teaching and learning.

When asked if and how experiences in BEU's Human Relations course contributed to their understanding of cultural identity development, participants described the value of learning about different cultures, identified their values, attitudes, and actions with respect to diverse populations, and reflected on their needs and concerns as they prepare to enter teaching. The following introductions to some of the PSTs who have taken the Human Relations course within the past seven years will illustrate the typical and varied starting points of understanding cultural identity development of the students in this course.

I describe the eleven PSTs and two teachers who participated in this study. As I will identify, some of them represent the typical PST in the program very well. Others are a bit more uncharacteristic due to their varied experiences and perspectives.

*Marc*¹

Marc is a 19 year-old White heterosexual male. He is in the first level of his teacher education program. He has lead a privileged life, growing up in predominantly White, upper middle-class suburbs and towns in the Midwest. In the high schools he attended the majority of students were of similar backgrounds.

Although I do not intend to essentialize the PSTs in BEU's teacher education program, Marc's experiences represent that of many PSTs in the program. In our interview, Marc shared that his high school did not have much

¹ All participants' names are pseudonyms.

diversity and that many people seemed to espouse similar ideas and beliefs to his own. Marc attributed challenges with interacting with diverse cultures to the limited exposure he had to them growing up.

Since entering college his opportunities to interact with people with a broader range of ideas and backgrounds increased. However, he does not believe that the level of contact has been significant enough to bring out shifts in how he sees his cultural identity or the cultural identities of others. Marc stated that he has always identified as White, upper-middle class, but does not remember being taught about his cultural identity was. Growing up, he took his cues about White upper class, or “normal culture” expectations from the wealthy neighborhoods in which he and his family lived. Marc admitted that for most of his life, he believed that most people lived lives that were upper middle class, White, and heterosexual like the household and community in which he grew up. He stated that he knew there were people who were different, but he would never have known how to interact with someone from a different culture because he had never had to before; he had never experienced life outside of what he considered to be his comfort zone.

Phyllis

Phyllis is a White female in her early twenties who has completed one year of teaching in a public school. She was raised 20 minutes outside of a major metro area, growing up in relative poverty. She lived “in town” but considered herself to

be more of “a farm kid.” Growing up she culturally connected to the “farm side of things” as she was active in 4-H with animals in farm settings. She is currently a first-year teacher in a rural community that has a growing Somali population. According to Phyllis, during her time in BEU’s teacher education program, she was personally experiencing lots of change. Participating in the Human Relations course provided opportunities for her to engage in self-reflection. Phyllis used the phrase “visually seeing who I was” with reference to what was considered an assignment in cultural identity development while in the Human Relations course. This phrase struck me as particularly interesting; something akin to an out-of-body experience in which she observed herself transforming in the process of her cultural identity development. Phyllis stated that she was able to transformation on paper,” a reference to the course assignment will be discussed later.

During our interview, Phyllis described the first time she saw herself and culturally diverse people in a different way. In her Human Relations course field placement and in the classes she is currently teaching, Phyllis has been the racial minority on several occasions. Never having experienced that before, she stated that it gave her the opportunity to expand her views and to empathize with what it felt like to be the minority in a school setting. She believes that have this experience opened her mind to understanding herself culturally and how diverse students “may feel on average on most days.”

Teddy

Teddy is a 25-year old White, middle-class, Christian male. He was raised in what he identifies as a “small, completely White town” in the Midwest. He said that getting out and interacting with different racial or ethnic student groups helped his own cultural identity development because he comes from a place “where it was all White all the time.” He acknowledged that growing up, he and other Whites in his community had this concept of African-Americans being lower class or uneducated. That view completely changed in college. His first exposure to what he considers diverse populations happened when he arrived on the BEU campus. Teddy chose to student teach in a Texas school district where the BEU teacher education program has a student teaching partnership. Recently, Teddy completed his first full year of teaching in a school where he is one of only a few White people in the school. He plans to stay for another couple of years before returning to the Midwest.

Walter

Walter, is a 19 year-old White male PST in the first year of the teacher education program. He grew up in what he stated to be a 97 percent White northern suburb of a major metro area and identifies as Irish and Italian. Walter said he believes that he has always been accepting and accommodating of diverse populations. He acknowledged that the Human Relations course presented him with new and diverse perspectives on race, ability, and sexual orientation.

Jim

Jim is a 29-year old White male PST from a rural part of the state. In addition to being a father of two young children, Jim is currently serving in the United States Army. His military experience has taken him many places in the continental United States. He expressed that his age and life experience set him apart from more traditional PSTs.

Jim contended that the Human Relations course was the first and only class in the teacher education program that specifically devoted time and activities to developing and increasing awareness of cultural identity. He believes that because of his age (29), his upbringing, and his life experiences that he may not be as affected by the Human Relations course as some of the younger, traditional PSTs. He suggested that traditional PSTs' views about cultural diversity may change quite a bit because of the course field experience in a diverse school, material in the textbook about human diversity, and the diversity that can be experienced on campus in contrast to many of their hometown experiences. He stated that class discussions in the Human Relations course influenced his ways of thinking. He valued the different perspectives presented, and the ways they challenged his thinking.

Sheila

Sheila is from a small, predominantly White town outside of a major metropolitan area. She identifies as a White, female, middle-class graduate student

in the Graduate Teaching Licensure program. However, Sheila took the Human Relations course as an undergraduate. Growing up, she did not have many interactions with diverse populations. Her ideas and attitudes about culturally diverse individuals developed primarily from stories told by her father, a police officer. After entering college, her ways of thinking were challenged, if not changed, when she met and interacted with members of diverse populations on a deeper level. In Sheila's case, she recognized that her long-held beliefs about members of certain diverse populations may interfere with the ways in which she views and interacts with them.

Sheila thinks that the Human Relations course made her more aware of misconceptions or judgments that she developed growing up with her police officer father. She said that her father's views of certain populations, typically shaped through negative experiences, were passed on to her. For instance, he would tell her of situations where kids had been abandoned by parents using welfare money to buy and sell drugs. As a result, she finds it challenging to identify with people who need welfare and are in difficult financial situations. She conveyed that she has not always been able to empathize with members of diverse populations. She was concerned because she knows that she needs to be supportive of children who grow up without the resources, family support, or relationships needed to succeed. She expressed that the Human Relations course helped her to see issues in shades of grey, as opposed to in black and white.

Nora

Two participants, Nora and Kathy, had very different perspectives than other participants. Nora identified as a 23-year old self-identified “Caucasian” Finnish-American who grew up in a rural area of the state. She recently completed her Bachelor’s degree and obtained her teaching license. Nora attributed her comfort with diverse cultures to her international experiences in Australia and Costa Rica and friendships that developed while she was abroad. Nora stated that she learned how to navigate interactions with diverse cultures during her experiences abroad with her colleagues from around the world and in courses that incorporated the study of cultural diversity.

Kathy

Kathy is a 20-year old White Jewish female majoring in dance and Alcohol and Drug Studies. She is in the second level of her teacher education program. Kathy explained that her content area coursework where racial and gender discrimination is explored quite a bit, contributed to increasing her ability to engage in racially and culturally charged conversations. According to Kathy, topics of gender and race are a big part of the history of dance; she stated that there were a lot of dance icons who were not White, who were women, or who were both. Through her content courses she has come to understand how issues of race and the feminism relate to the dance world.

Our interview suggests that Kathy’s family provided religious diversity in her suburban hometown. Kathy asserted that she has experienced not being part of what she calls “the norm,” both growing up and in college.

Gerald

Gerald is a White 22-year old male history major from a metro area suburb. He was in the teacher education program at BEU, but took a leave to focus on courses in his major. Gerald said that he does not plan to return to the program because he feels that the program structure and organization need to have a greater focus on teacher education that prepares teachers to understand and to connect with their students. He voiced the importance of having compassion for people coming from different parts of the globe and expressed that people do not seem to understand—or care about—the life situations and histories of populations who come to the United States.

Art

Art is an 18-year old White male. He was raised in a diverse metropolitan community comprising Somalians, Hmong, and African–Americans. Art lived with his grandmother until he moved in with his parents at age 11. He has moved 16 times since birth. He considers himself to be underprivileged because of where he comes from and his socio-economic status. He is the first person in his family

to attend college. According to Art the sport of wrestling was his life while growing up because that was all he knew.

Kaleb

Kaleb is a non-traditional student who identifies as a 27-year old half Arab and German agnostic male. He has spent the last semester of his college career student teaching. Kaleb contends that he does not identify much with his ethnic culture and feels that he should get more into his own ethnicity. He identifies more as “American” than anything else. Kaleb doesn’t think he looks very ethnic, but he is often told he looks Italian or Hispanic. He was raised primarily with his mother, a Christian conservative. He feels that he did not learn “regular” American culture until he was 13. A period of rebellion followed. Although Kaleb has never fit in with cultural conservatives and considers them to be an exclusionary group, he wants to live in a culturally conservative town. According to Kaleb a liberal town would be wrought with crime.

Deepening Understanding of Cultural Identity

Participants identified several learning activities of the Human Relations course that were particularly meaningful and helped deepen their understanding of cultural identity. The participants specifically referenced the Cultural Autobiography (Appendix C), the Wordle assignment (Appendix E), and the field

experience (Appendix D). Both the Cultural Autobiography and the field experience were identified by a majority of participants as being helpful in the process of cultural identity development. A closer examination of these instructional assignments may help us to better understand how to shape experiences that can support the deepening of understanding pre-service teachers' cultural identity.

The Cultural Autobiography

In the Cultural Autobiography assignment, PSTs describe who they are as cultural beings. They address various dimensions of their own diversity including but not limited to socio-economic status, language, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual preference, ability, and religion. PSTs reflect on how and why they identify as the people they are today. The purpose of this assignment is for PSTs to reflect on their cultural background and to examine how their behaviors and attitudes have been influenced by their heritage, experiences, and cultural orientation. PSTs are also required to address how their cultural identity may influence their work as an educator.

When I first joined the faculty, PSTs were required to write an autobiography in the Human Relations course. In that assignment, PSTs wrote about where they were from and their interests and goals. As I continued to teach the Human Relations course, I discussed the benefits of having PSTs create a cultural autobiography with my colleagues. I believed it would bring greater focus

to their experiences with diversity, self-concepts, dealing with conflict, identifying values, strengths and needs, professional goals, and creating positive environments within a multicultural society. With these arguments, the assignment shifted from autobiography to cultural autobiography. When referencing the cultural autobiography in their interviews the participants expressed that they had never thought or written about how they identify culturally. The focus on cultural autobiography as compared to the previous autobiography assignment seemed to afford an opportunity to recognize PSTs cultural plurality and how others might identify with one or more cultures.

Through creating their cultural autobiography and sharing it in the Human Relations class, PSTs become aware of the diversity of cultural identities that exist in their very own communities. Some study participants reported that this prompted them to think more about the diverse cultural identities of their K-12 students. Sheila shared that doing the cultural autobiography helped her to recognize the significance of her cultural identity. She believed that exploring her cultural identity and realizing its significance to her illustrated the importance of learning about her future students' cultures. According to Sheila, the cultural autobiography helped her to:

identify as myself and what I want to be as a teacher and how that changed over the year as I learned [more about diversity]. It was beneficial in the way that before you are getting to know things about your students you have to identify and get to know yourself first. I think it made me more

aware—I don't know if it changed how I saw myself—but just become more aware of misconceptions or judgments that I had or grew up around. Phyllis, too, felt that the cultural autobiography was an important exercise in becoming more self-aware. She stated that it opened her to learning about and connecting with herself at a point in time when she was experiencing many personal changes. By writing her cultural autobiography, Phyllis was able to analyze her faults, to recognize positive characteristics, and to determine what made her the person she is today. She reported that she applied these practices as a PST and as a practicing teacher when getting to know her own students during her first year of teaching. This realization, paired with the notion that people around them identify with a variety of cultures, encouraged the participants to be more aware of diverse values, ways of thinking, and ways of being.

The Wordle

Another learning activity in the Human Relations course is creating a “Wordle.” The Wordle is a collage of words that can be used to express how one identifies. I chose to include this activity in the course because I thought when PSTs create a Wordle they must take time to think about the ways in which they identify. It is an open-ended assignment in which the creator provides very specific information about him or herself, in a concise format. The Wordle can include anything from the things one does, to the things one likes, to goals, and passions. When creating a Wordle, PSTs can also creatively convey the degree to which they identify with a person, place, things, or action. For example, if I

primarily identify as a mother and a horse-back rider to a lesser degree, I may choose to put “MOM” in a capitalized large, colorful, bold font. “Horse-back rider” would be in smaller font and plain text (see appendix for an example).

Kathy commented that the Wordle activity gave her an opportunity to represent who she was to others. She remarked that people do not often have an opportunity to learn where people are “coming from” to the extent afforded by this activity. I agree with Kathy and believe that the Wordle provides PSTs an opportunity to express who they are as diverse beings.

Typically PSTs share their Wordles with colleagues in small groups. This format allows PSTs to introduce themselves to each other and learn something about one another in a relatively short time-frame. The Wordle activity is a thought-provoking activity which promotes camaraderie, communication, and an opportunity to learn about the different ways that people identify.

The Level I Field Experience

This field experience is typically regarded by PSTs as an informative and meaningful experience. It is an opportunity to engage with culturally diverse populations on a regular basis over the course of a semester. PSTs are expected to interact with students and cooperating teachers, providing assistance as requested.

The placements that participants considered meaningful were in English Language Learner (ELL) and mainstream classes with ELLs at Ellington middle

and high school. The students in those classes were primarily Somalian, Sudanese, and Latino. According to Marc, placements in diverse classrooms helped him “learn how to be respectful of a diverse community.”

For some participants, the sustained interactions with ELL students dispelled certain stereotypes. For example, Marc also reported:

My ELL experience at Ellington Junior High... I learned that most of the kids really do want to learn, they just have issues with behavior and paying attention and things like that because they're so bored with it—or that's what I took out of it—they would misbehave or they wouldn't do the work or they would just try to get the answer out of you—and I think all kids do that regardless of their culture and different backgrounds but these kids are doing it on a daily basis. I just imagine myself in their position—I was like, “Wow, I don't blame you” I would do the same thing because it was really really boring and I don't know if there's a way to better that . . . I've heard things about students, bad things about those students that aren't true—like “they're so hard to teach because they're from a different culture, they speak a different language.” But I think really it's just we need to teach them a better way, so my ideas about them and their behavior in class really changed and I understood why they were acting that way.

For Shelia, the field experience helped her recognize that some stereotypes she held were based on the situation and not true of all students. She suggests that “exposure” during her field placements allowed her be in situations that helped broaden her perspectives on students.

You have to take a step back and realize that it's one situation. Seeing the bigger picture and realizing that every situation and everybody is different. Exposure provides you with a better understanding. As much exposure as you can get is better for you. It takes the student teacher putting themselves into those situations as much as possible.

Field placements sometimes did not provide adequate opportunities for PSTs to get to know diverse student populations. For example, when Teddy was in Level I of BEU's teacher education program, PSTs spent a day in an urban middle or high school in an attempt to expose PSTs to a diverse group of students with a variety of learning needs. This field experience no longer exists in the Human relations course. Frequent personnel changes at the high school and middle school did not allow consistent placement with experienced teachers who could demonstrate supportive classroom learning environments. In addition, faculty teaching in Level I of the teacher education program began to explore opportunities closer to campus. Teddy explained that in the short time he was at the school, negative stereotypes he had—"like Blacks being loud all of the time"—were reinforced. In this short time, Teddy only had a snapshot of students' behavior, as opposed to multiple exposures to students interacting in a variety of ways within different school contexts. At the time of this field experience PSTs had not participated in many activities or discussions on cultural identity and diversity in the Human Relations course. In contrast, Teddy commented on how his structured student teaching and full-time teaching experiences in predominantly Black and Latino schools differed. They enabled him to take away more complete pictures of students which in turn prompted him to think more about his own perspectives and cultural identity and contributed to him learning about the cultural identities of his students. He said that he understands "Hispanic

cultures” more. While some situations may reinforce stereotypes, he witnesses plenty of evidence against that. He said:

The kids are certainly not shy about talking about their parents working--standing out in front of Home Depot waiting for a job. That stereotype (not working) is reinforced, but what’s different is that they’re proud, too. They’re upset over [people thinking] they’re lazy but they’re still proud of the fact that they’re [in the United States], even if they’re undocumented. They’re not bothered as much by the stereotype that they’re here undocumented as they are about the stereotype that they’re lazy.

Phyllis said that she learned a lot about her students on-the-job during her first-year of teaching. Phyllis had a high concentration of Somali students in her classroom. She referred to a “fear factor,” not knowing how to relate to culturally diverse students when she entered the teacher education program. She reflected on the importance of Level I in providing opportunities to engage with diverse student populations, giving her the opportunity to begin to face her fears. Prior to the Level I field experience Phyllis had not had experiences with Muslim or Somali students. I interpret facing her fear to be learning how to interact with diverse groups in light of not having had interactions with diverse populations. Getting to know students on a one-on-one basis, learning about some of the students’ life experiences, and not relying solely on urban stereotypes helped Phyllis become more comfortable when she met and interacted with diverse cultures. By the end of her field experience she realized that many of the students were good kids who had faced challenges and experienced life in very different ways than she had imagined.

Phyllis also talked about having a new experience of not being in the “majority” regarding her racial identity during the field experience when she was the only White person in the classroom. This prompted her to empathize with her students; she imagined what they might feel like on a typical day in mainstream America. This experience provided Phyllis an opportunity to think about the way she experiences being White; she determined that she took it for granted. Prior to this time, White was the norm for Phyllis. Expectedly, the experiences she had and the attitudes she developed were from the perspective of being White. Phyllis’ new-found empathy helped her consider what it was like to walk in their shoes.

For Kaleb, the Level I field experience gave him a new perspective of diverse populations with whom he interacted. Kaleb spoke of himself in high school as a “screw-up.” Today he views that identifier as something that has the potential to help him connect with students who may feel similar. At 27-years of age Kaleb does not feel that he is culturally competent. He referred to his ignorance of Somalian culture and how, as a result, he does not know how to identify and meet their needs in the classroom and community in the classroom.

Kaleb claimed that the Level I field experience “softened [his] attitude” toward different cultures. He commented that his views prior to the Human Relations course would not be considered politically correct. It appears that growing up in a conservative Christian household where many diverse groups

were looked down upon influenced the degree to which Kaleb feels prepared to interact with diverse populations.

Both his Level I field experience and student teaching experience provided Kaleb with the opportunity to interact with diverse students.. Kaleb recognized ways that he could identify with some of the students in his classes. On one occasion during the field experience, a child shared with Kaleb a story of horror he experienced before coming to the United States. This sharing of a life experience put things into perspective for Kaleb. Kaleb said that he felt like “a jerk for not knowing that this type of stuff goes on.” He believed that this experience “softened [him] up.” He sensed a difference within himself; he felt more open to things and less self-centered. According to Kaleb, “This 13-year old tells you how he’s sleeping in a hut and guys with guns come in and he’s talking in a way that’s so non-descript. He just—it was just another day. It happened and that was it. That assignment put everything in a different perspective.” For Kaleb, and I believe many other PSTs, there is no textbook or a video or instructor that will have the same impact as a 13-year old boy speaking nonchalantly about the shooting of his mother and the robbing of his home. And he was here to tell the story and Kaleb was there to listen...and begin to understand. I feel that our ability to experience life without understanding others’ life experiences, without slowing down to hear their stories and to share ours, has had an impact on our perceived and actual abilities to interact with and understand each other.

Kaleb's exposure to and work with students seems to have increased his belief that he can connect with students in meaningful ways. The cultural awareness that Kaleb developed in the Human Relations course seems to have equipped him with the interest and motivation to learn more about diverse cultures so that he may be better prepared to do so.

While Kaleb was "softened" by his one-on-one interactions with students, Shelia left her field experience feeling more confused about culture clash. She had difficulty making sense of how the immigrant students in her class were experiencing cultural expectations in the U.S. and how she should navigate her role as a teacher who embodied the dominant cultural norms of the U.S.

If I had to look back upon my ELL classroom experience, it was so eye-opening. I'm working with students who are 16, 17 years old who—and I know this isn't their own culture, but to throw them into this culture, into school—where they're learning what a noun and a verb [are]. To expect them to graduate in this time-frame [is ridiculous]. Or students leave the classroom because they don't want to go to school because they want to get pregnant and have kids. That's their culture and the environment that they grew up in, and what they believe is right. And it was really—sighs—so different....How do you deal with a student who wants to drop out? You can't disrespect their culture or their wishes, but you want more for them. Or to help them realize they could have more if they wanted. I don't know. . . .I want to help people. I like to be a "fixer." . . . It is about providing them with more options and showing them there are other ways. Just like they're showing me another way to go about what they're doing.

Through the field experience, Shelia was confronted with her role as cultural broker and struggled with her identity as a "fixer" when faced with cultural difference between herself and her students. She seems to have left the field

experience with more questions than answers, but at least she now has questions of cultural difference with which to struggle.

Participants in this study considered their Level I field experience to be helpful with respect to understanding their own identities, understanding the identities of diverse populations, and learning how to use their skills to best serve students. The field experience helped to dispel stereotypes about diverse groups; illustrated to PSTs that peoples' experiences may differ based on their cultural identities; and, for several PSTs was their first actual contact with members of diverse populations. Based on Teddy's experience, short, pop-in field experiences run the risk of reinforcing stereotypes. This suggests that the duration of the field experience matters in assisting a PST in shaping their cultural encounters. Kaleb's experience suggests that one-on-one interactions with students can be beneficial in learning more deeply about the experience of others and broadening his perspectives. And for PSTs like Shelia, the field experience may complicate her notions of cultural identities and her responsibilities as a teacher. Although it has not been perfected, the field experience holds promise as one way to facilitate the process of cultural identity development for PSTs.

Cultural identity of self and self in relationship to others

During the interviews I was able to identify several ways that participants benefited from exploring their cultural identities in the Human Relations course.

Based on participants' responses: they come to a better understanding of who they are and how that impacts their experiences, values, beliefs, and actions; their minds open as they learn about different cultural identities and corresponding perspectives within the context of colleagues in the Human Relations class, they begin to identify elements of their cultural identity which can serve as gateways to connecting with diverse populations, and; their perceived and actual confidence levels increase with respect to their ability to interact with members of diverse groups. A significant part of participants' cultural identity is that they are White. For this reason, I have included a focus on concepts of Whiteness as experienced by participants.

Being White

All but one of the participants in this study identified as White. The participant who did not place himself in that category identified as half White and half Arabic. Without exception, each White participant provided similar stories about understanding their White cultural identity and its implications for themselves and others. Participants expressed that prior to taking the Human Relations course they had not consciously considered the meaning of their Whiteness and its impact on their life experiences and interactions with others.

Phyllis reported:

In many ways I guess I really hadn't had an opportunity to think about [being White] before and the [Human Relations] class. You know, I went to a school where the population was mostly White, with a few scatterings of

racial differences, otherwise I hadn't really had a chance to see that come into play and really stop and think about that and how it gave me the opportunities that maybe other races didn't have.

As addressed earlier, course assignments, activities, and particularly class

discussions in the Human Relations course encouraged participants to analyze the

meaning of Whiteness for them as well as others. For Kaleb, the concept of

Whiteness holds much of the same meaning as it does for other participants.

However, he attaches different meanings to the concept of being White versus

being American.

Guess I've never really thought about [the meaning of Whiteness]. I know to a lot of people I'm not White. A lot of people don't understand their own Whiteness. I guess it means the "mainstream." There's a curiosity about other cultures. A lot of women will ask me what it's like to be Arab. It's always nice when someone wants to learn about your culture. But they kind of do it in a way that puts you as an outsider.

Some participants refer to specific ways in which being White decidedly has an advantage over other races. For example, Kathy describes what she thinks about the ways Whites, and White males in particular, are viewed. She said that it is unfortunate, but she feels that diverse populations are always held to the assumed optimal status of White males.

I view race as an obvious exterior component of it—having different colors of your skin—kind of level one. But in my opinion the more important and deeper component is if someone has a different skin color [than White]. The next level [of diversity]-- level two might be "How is their culture different from a White male?"

According to Kathy, she thinks society views “White males,” as the top of the human hierarchy and that everyone who doesn’t fit in the White middle-class male category is viewed as “less than.”

The Human Relations course is neither intended to shame White PSTs, nor to make them feel guilty for who they are or acts of oppression committed by White people or any member of what may be considered privileged groups. Nora, however, had an unpleasant reaction to an activity she participated in when she took the course. She described an activity in which PSTs use Peggy McIntosh’s article, *Unpacking the Backpack*, and accrue points for different ways in which they are privileged. Members of the class total their points and form line from lowest to highest points; those with the highest points presumably having the greatest privilege. This activity is intended to illustrate the extent to which a person has White privilege. In Nora’s experience:

The professor communicated “Let’s take a look where everyone is situated in this line...” Basically he said look who’s in the back and look who’s in the front of the line. And you can see that White people are in the front and he was alluding that there is a lack of culture or something going on there and I was really offended by that. We were discussing being White and all of that kind of stuff. I was like just because someone’s White doesn’t make them this way or that way. That really turned me off to even wanting to go to the class because I felt almost categorized.

I had not heard this perspective about this activity prior to conducting the interviews for this study. The intention was to give participants an opportunity to see how the different ways in which one’s cultural identity may actually impact

their life experiences. Nora left the activity angry and feeling labeled as oppressor. Her perceptions of the activity and the way she felt is indicative of the difficult processes PSTs may experience when they become aware of the inequities in society, and wonder if they have a role in contributing to these inequities. Some PSTs enter the teacher education program believing that racism and other “isms” are virtually non-existent. They express that blatant acts of discrimination are rare, but overlook the manifestations and consequences of everyday biases. When PSTs describe themselves as “accepting, open-minded, or colorblind” they are attempting to send a message that says “I am not prejudiced.” This may be what they truly believe. So, as with Nora, when they find themselves at the front of the line in the above-mentioned activity, it can be startling and disturbing to “see” that they enjoy privileges that are not universally shared.

Talking and listening to others

Participants voiced that they highly valued the “safe” and “comfortable” environment created in the Human Relations course. Class discussions provided an opportunity for “difficult dialogue” on cultural issues to be addressed in a “safe” environment. PSTs appreciated having a space for respectful and open dialogue. They attributed their “openness” or willingness and ability to share diverse perspectives, personal experiences, and fears to the high comfort levels created in the class. Several participants commented on the nature of discussions which transpired during class time. According to Kathy, “group discussions helped

her to learn where someone comes from” and facilitated the process of getting to know themselves and each other. Kathy felt that she learned “how others fit in and what made them feel a sense of belonging.” For Jim, class discussions were most effective in helping him learn about his colleagues’ diverse perspectives on culture-related topics. He expressed that having an open, honest, and safe place to discuss differences and how we arrive at different understandings provided him an opportunity to reassess his thinking. Both Kathy and Jim acknowledged how the safety of the classroom environment contributed to the opportunity for meaningful thinking and interaction to take place. For me, this indicates that they understand the value of creating this space and the role it has in facilitating acting, reflecting, and learning in cultural identity development.

The power of talking and listening to one another was not limited to what happened inside the Human Relationships classroom. Teddy reflected on how engaging in dialogue with diverse groups gave him the opportunity to both teach and learn about cultural identity. He referred to two experiences; the first was with his predominantly Latino and African-American middle school students in an urban school district and the second was in BEU’s Lesbian-Bisexual-Gay-Transgender (LGBT) Center. Teddy said that coming from a middle-class, conservative background, he was not ever aware of being exposed to members of the LGBT communities. Teddy recalled that simply being able to sit and talk with members of the LGBT BEU community in a different space was a completely new

experience. He acknowledged that “Just getting used to those feelings of being in a new place was important for me.” I feel that this is a very important realization. Understanding that a space can be created for these types of interactions is critical to knowing that you, as a teacher, can create them.

I believe that experiences like this one were highly transferable. Teddy continued to address the importance of having discussions with his roommate during student teaching, a Black BEU classmate from the teacher education program. Teddy asserted that being able to discuss issues they were facing in their classrooms was helpful, specifically because of his roommate’s had different perspectives. Hearing about his roommate’s experiences as a Black person and growing up in a Black community broadened his perspectives, making it easier to communicate with his diverse students. He contended that “Being able to talk to them [his students] about what it is like growing up, or even as a White male, brings a different perspective to their thought processes, as well. They’ve had ‘A-ha’ moments, too.”

Kathy explained that her content area, but not Human Relations, coursework contributed to increasing her ability to engage in racially and culturally charged conversations. In spite of the experiences she has in her content area, she explained that she believes information she received is filtered through her cooperating teachers’ beliefs. On several occasions, she has wanted delve deeper into certain discussion topics of conversation. She has, however, refrained

from doing so because her [cooperating] teachers have strong belief systems of their own and do not appear willing or interested in entertaining different perspectives. Kathy said she feels that her professors attempt to be neutral on issues of diversity, but that discussions result in being filtered through their views. She believes that many conversations could have taken place but because of where her [cooperating] teachers were coming from, these conversations did not manifest.

Kathy's responses indicate a desire for greater openness and a feeling of "safety" in teacher education classes. She is very aware of the sentiments expressed by her classmates and professors, and often times feels that she cannot be as vocal as she would like. During our interview, I sensed Kathy's frustration with her teacher education experiences. The exasperation in her voice was disconcerting; it is as if her diminishing passion for teaching could be felt and heard.

Sheila felt that Human Relations class discussions contributed to making PSTs aware of different views than those with which they entered the class. Sheila said that preconceived notions she had about members of diverse populations were challenged during discussions in the Human Relations course. This helped her begin to feel empathy for students from different backgrounds and family situations. In the Human Relations course, Sheila started to feel that she would be able to learn from, identify with, and assist students from a variety of backgrounds

in reaching their full potential as students. I believe that participating in the types of discussions and field experiences mentioned in this section and doing assignments like the ones mentioned gives PSTs a foundation upon which they can continue to develop their cultural identity. They expand PSTs' critical thinking and open-mindedness while honing their abilities to listen to and interact with each other, their students, and diverse members of the greater community. These skills will support them as they explore cultural identities, familiarize themselves with different populations.

Connecting with K-12 students

Every participant commented on the importance of connecting with or building relationships with their students. The value of relationship-building in teaching is not new and is not lost on PSTs and teachers in this study. However, the participants in this study voiced that building relationships with diverse populations may present more of a challenge than they initially anticipated. The fact that K-12 students come and will come from very different walks of life presents added incentive for PSTs to learn about their own cultural identities, the cultural identities of others, and how to establish connections between the two.

In this section I will share six stories of how participants are attempting to connect with diverse populations and the struggles they face when trying to do this. I intend to illustrate different ways PSTs rely on elements of their cultural

identity to navigate the relationship-building process with their students. I will also address how PSTs do not feel that they are being prepared to connect with their students or to be able to advocate for their students within their classrooms and schools.

According to Phyllis, she first considered the value of being able to connect with students when a speaker, who is a graduate of BEU and is now superintendent of a school district, visited her Human Relations course.

I do remember in your class, we had that fellow from Texas, we talked about the different cultures there, and I think that's one of the major interviews that we had that just kind of made you kind of stop and think, okay, how can I use my experience and use my identity to connect with my students. . . . Hearing what he said and how he connected with his students that way, really made it of a more real-world application instead of just learning about it and saying okay, this is what you should do.

Phyllis used the speaker's actions as a model for her own practice. She applied the letter and spirit of the speaker's presentation to the ways in which she interacted with students during student teaching and since she has graduated from the program, as a substitute teacher and teacher.

Kathy expressed a desire to learn more about how to interact, identify and meet the needs of diverse students. Although she felt that her content area studies provided greater opportunities to explore her cultural identity and the identities of others, there are still are "holes" in what she knows about interacting with diverse

students. She would like more experience engaging students in learning. Kathy voiced concerns about knowing how to engage her students in learning.

Kaleb also voiced a concern about his ability to interact with students. He acknowledged that he does not feel prepared to identify and meet the needs of the diverse populations with whom he has worked and may continue to work with in the future. He said that the Level I field experience challenged some of his (negative) ways of thinking about students and his role as a teacher. He admitted that he has become more open-minded and culturally sensitive as a result of his experiences in the program. In spite of this, he does not feel better equipped to engage in culturally or racially charged conversations and situations. Kaleb stated:

We don't learn how to handle race issues in content [courses] or levels two and three [in the teacher education program]. But in Block I, we did. I learned to be more sensitive, I've always said what I feel even if it's politically incorrect. You can't do that as a teacher. In terms of dealing with a racially charged situation, I don't know how I would react.

Jim, the non-traditional student who has had experiences with diversity outside of the teacher education program, feels that he would be able to handle uncomfortable situations including confrontations with African American students. He attributed some of his ability to engage in such situations to the Human Relations course.

We started talking specifically about certain groups of people and their actions and the way that they interact socially and how that might affect or influence our teaching and the classroom

environment, and one thing that stuck out to me was how African-Americans tend to talk really loudly and get really animated, and it's funny because you look around and your average White person, if they were in a room where people were talking very loudly and very animatedly, they would look around kind of nervous. But having been in an environment like that it's just part of their communication, it's just part of how they go about business. And I'm not saying that's that way in every case, but it certainly made me more comfortable in that environment and it made me want to make other people more comfortable in that environment too . . . I could step in and say hey they're not really arguing, they're just being them.

Clarifying that he was not making a blanket statement to be applied to all African-American interactions implies a level of cultural awareness which recognizes that within cultures there are individual differences; this point is emphasized in the Human Relations course.

In another situation, Phyllis reflected on ways she has learned to navigate through diverse cultural territories when it comes to maintaining integrity as a teacher in her content area and valuing diverse aspects of her students' cultures. In the reflection below she comments on a teaching experience with African-American students.

As for reinforcing stereotypes and prejudices, as an English teacher it's tough because we're taught to teach proper English. It is very difficult to know where to stand regarding Ebonics because it's a form of language that [African-Americans] use. Finding a middle ground of teaching them what I'm supposed to teach them, and at the same time accepting parts of their cultural [can be difficult].

Through reflecting on the significance of her cultural identities, she has become aware of the importance of respecting and accepting aspects of

cultural identity that may be important to diverse populations. Rather than be conflicted by the fact that her students are not following guidelines for speaking “proper English,” Phyllis wants to encourage students to embrace components of their culture which may be important to them (speaking styles, in this case) and at the same time expects them to meet required benchmarks.

Exploring her cultural identity has led Sheila to question some of the values and beliefs with which she was raised and how they influence her interactions with diverse populations. Sheila feels that she has the tools to provide an equitable education for all students, but has yet to have the hands-on practice. Though she feels mentally and intellectually prepared to apply theory to practice, Sheila does not feel that she has had sufficient opportunity to do so in her program, as she explained:

I think especially over this last fall (in Level 3), learning about different lesson planning strategies and meeting different student learning needs. Do they need to see it? Hear it? Do they need to feel it? Do they need a hands-on experience, individual attention, a group setting, work with a partner? I think I’ve been provided with a lot of knowledge to implement those things, but over my student teaching it’ll be important to try to incorporate as many of those things as possible. It’s one thing to learn about them but to actually see them in action; and be put in a situation where you actually do have to help a student by doing some of those things, that’s totally different. I think that they provided me with the tools to do so, but just getting that extra practice and hands-on for me to do those things.

Another sentiment articulated by several participants was that they were taught to be accepting of diverse populations and to treat everyone the same; this colorblind framework is evident in attitudes and interactions with diverse populations in and out of the classroom today. A fear seems to exist among PSTs that admitting they see a person's color or other differences implies that they are racist or discriminating based on an identified difference. I believe that teacher educators will have to spend more time addressing the notion of colorblindness, what it implies, and how it impacts providing equity in education. I believe that the social, political, and historic contexts in which education takes place need greater emphasis in the Human Relations course and throughout teacher education programs.

Cultural identity development

On several occasions, Kathy has wanted to delve deeper into certain discussion topics of conversation. She has, however, refrained from doing so because her [cooperating] teachers have strong belief systems of their own and do not appear willing or interested in entertaining different perspectives. Kathy said she feels that her professors attempt to be neutral on issues of diversity, but that discussions result in being filtered through their views. There are many conversations that could have taken place but because of where her [cooperating] teachers were coming from, these conversations did not manifest.

Jim expressed that he understands the next level in his teaching program will address topics including children, families, and differentiated instruction. He was hopeful that discussions on cultural diversity would continue to be woven into the fabric of upcoming conversations and activities in his program. He believed it would help him to become more accepting of and comfortable when interacting with diverse populations.

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On several occasions participants alluded to a lack of bias and racism in their family households. The idea seemed to represent a general sentiment that overtly oppressing non-privileged individuals and groups was unacceptable; it did not seem to imply an acceptance or understanding of diverse cultures. Jim talked

about a significant cultural diversity experience that he had as a child. An African-American boy moved into a house on his block. The boy's family was from Ghana and Jim spent a good deal of time at this friend's house. According to Jim, being immersed in a family situation, really being a part of a different kind of culture, affected [him]. He felt that he "got a feel for a language, the way that the family was run, and the way they interacted socially. It was different, it was nice." In reference to addressing cultural differences Jim stated that "It was always just an open door policy, accept everybody in and hope for the best I guess." Again, as a teacher educator, I believe that we want to encourage PSTs to think critically, consider options, and evaluate decisions. The importance of "being accepting" of others seems to accompany related ways of seeing Whiteness.

According to participants' responses, concepts of Whiteness began to broaden during the Human Relations course; shifting from viewing Whiteness as neutral and the norm to understanding notions of entitlement, superiority, power, advantages, and greater opportunities for success that may accompany it. The idea that Whites have a "strange advantage" over other racial groups did not persist for Jim. He and other participants attribute their change in attitudes about Whiteness to the Human Relations course's introduction to the political, social, and historical contexts in the United States which permitted oppressive conditions. Jim confirmed that the course "opened [his] eyes to some things that I didn't know. He stated that he was "a typical, naïve, middle class White guy, had a heart for other

people, but didn't understand why some of the slighted groups felt slighted." Jim contends that learning what has happened behind the scenes historically has helped him to understand inequities in life based on cultural differences better. He felt that he was not aware of these issues because of his cultural place in life. Having discussions, referencing the course text on cultural diversity in society, Angelo said that he believes he will be less likely to repeat mistakes that may be honest and naïve; but mistakes that hurt and disenfranchise people nonetheless.

Based on notes I took during the interviews, tentativeness, hesitancy, and a need to clarify the interview questions surrounded several participants' responses on Whiteness. Though many of them have had an opportunity to explore what Whiteness means for them and what their Whiteness may mean for others, talking about Whiteness did not always flow unfettered. According to Phyllis, the PST in the graduate teacher licensure program, her Whiteness is not a major component of her identity. She understands that being White may be more of an identifier applied to her by others than a way she identifies herself. Although she does not feel that Whiteness defines who she is or what she can do, Phyllis suggested that her beliefs about the implications of being White may be ignorant. She stated that others may feel her Whiteness entitles her to something special or insinuates that some would believe that she should have more power than someone who is not White. This may invite cause for concern as she enters into experiences with diverse populations. This sentiment does not hold true for all participants.

Participants' physical and social surroundings contributed to their awareness, or lack thereof, of Whiteness as well. These include primarily White schools, neighborhoods, families, and friends. A lack of interaction or direct meaningful contact with diverse populations effectively meant that several PSTs did not *have* to think about themselves as raced and the implications of their Whiteness. According to participants, in-class discussions and direct experience with diverse populations in the Human Relations course provided opportunities to understand how Whiteness has made an impact on their lives and the ways it may color their views of diverse groups. According to Jim, "When you start talking about Whiteness, there definitely is more to it than I had initially thought. I initially thought I could just disregard that whole notion that 'There's this whole White is better notion in the world,' but there's definitely still a lot of that. I think it shows up in mostly subtle ways." Jim suggested that the teacher education program build upon the foundation laid by the Human Relations course:

The one big thing for me is what we did in [Human Relations] and extending that out for the whole program. Bring it (issues and perspective on diversity) up in every other class, bring it up in between field experiences, bring it up after journal assignments are due, bring it up whenever you possibly can. We have content we need to get through, but have that dialogue as much as possible. Keep people thinking about it, keep challenging what people are thinking, and continue to hear from other students, because a lot of us learn most when we have

a discussion with other people so you hear somebody's experience. So dialogue, dialogue, dialogue, diversity, diversity, diversity, because that's what really what the classroom's going to be more about, even in the mainstream classrooms. Small towns like mine, it's no longer you know all white. Pretty soon White people are going to be in the minority in this country you know and not that that's a big deal, but it is a big deal. Having teachers who understand how to interact with people who are different from them is going to be big. Having these conversations on a more consistent basis in our teacher education programs and getting people thinking about why they believe what they believe and challenging what they may be thinking that might not be quite on track, would be hugely beneficial.

Summary

While participants' responses varied in their unique details, I learned that approaches to cultural identity development for PSTs and teachers matter. Cultural identity development can thrive when a space is created in which PSTs can authentically act, reflect upon their actions, and determine what they still need to learn in the process of identifying and meeting the needs of diverse populations. When PSTs and teachers understand their own cultures and the impacts they have on their daily interactions, they may be better prepared to learn about and be accepting of the diverse populations with whom they work.

Prior to this study, I understood that cultural identity development did not necessarily take place on a continuum or in stages. Now, I have learned that for PSTs to experience the potential of who they are as cultural beings they must be presented with opportunities in which they experience this growth. I learned, too, that inherent in cultural identity development is the potential for PSTs and teachers to develop as activists and advocates for their students. The next chapter is divided into two sections.. In the first section I address the elements of Human Relations course that PSTs and teachers identify as contributing to their understanding of cultural identities and in the second I discuss the dimensions of cultural identity that can be developed in teacher education programs.

Chapter 5: Developing Pre-service Teacher Cultural Identity

The main purpose of this study is to conduct exploratory qualitative research to investigate how PSTs experience changes in cultural identity development during a semester in a Human Relations course in a teacher education program. I sought to understand what knowledge and skills related to cultural identity the PSTs developed and what they thought they needed in addition to what they gained from the course. To meet this purpose, I posed two research questions:

- 1) What elements of the teacher education experience, specifically in the Human Relations course, do PSTs and teachers identify as contributing to their understanding of cultural identities?
- 2) What dimensions of cultural identity can be developed in teacher education programs?

I chose to conduct this study because of my seven years of experiences working in a teacher education program. During my first year teaching in teacher education it became clear that the majority of PSTs in the program had not experienced meaningful interactions with many diverse populations. I also observed that PSTs appeared to enjoy and benefit from engaging in activities which encouraged them to focus on their feelings, beliefs, thoughts, and actions about topics including race, sexual orientation, and religion and diverse cultural

groups. Over the years, I have learned much through class discussions, activities, field experiences, and students' written reflections on their personal, educational, and professional experiences.

As a teacher educator I am responsible for preparing PSTs to identify and meet the needs of their students. As K-12 students become more and more culturally diverse, a deep understanding of cultural diversity and cultural identity is critical for beginning teachers. I chose to conduct this study to determine how teacher education programs can best support the cultural identity development of PSTs. I am hopeful that this research will inform teacher education programs about how to better serve PSTs in their cultural identity development as I believe that thorough cultural identity development will prepare teachers to advocate for and support their diverse student populations.

This study focuses on one Human Relations course in one teacher education program. I have chosen to focus on the Human Relations course for several reasons. I would like to respond to PSTs' needs. Even if PSTs are not cognizant of exactly what they need, they have indicated the need for experiences that will better prepare them to teach. Finally, I believe that the course content and objectives lend themselves well to creating a space where PSTs cultural identities have an occasion to truly develop. During the time I have taught the course I continue to consider ways to improve PSTs' opportunities to do, reflect, and learn.

This course was specifically designed to support PSTs in developing an understanding of cultural and racial difference. By focusing on this course, I was able to probe specifically on learning activities and experiences related to cultural identity development. My intention here is to identify dimensions of cultural identity that can be developed in a teacher education program.

This chapter provides a discussion of the study's implications as they apply to the two research questions. I will draw on my data and the case analysis from Chapter four to address each research question. I discuss the ways in which teacher education programs can foster PST cultural identity development. I conclude with possible study limitations and areas for future research.

Learning experiences that contribute to PSTs' cultural identity development

In this section, experiences that contribute to PSTs' cultural identity development during time spent in the Human Relations course, are presented. Exploring Whiteness, building relationships through cultural connections, and critically reflecting on privilege and oppression are several of the topics that PSTs address.

Research Question 1: What elements of the teacher education experience, specifically in the Human Relations course, do PSTs and teachers identify as contributing to their understanding of cultural identities?

Participants identified the Human Relations course in their teacher education program as the primary course that addressed cultural identity development and its implications for teaching and learning in diverse schools and societies. The Human Relations course is the typical “one-shot” diversity course that is required for teacher licensing programs in the state. The course is intended to prepare PSTs with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions they will need to engage with and support diverse student populations. Participants identified relevant course topics, structuring of the class sessions, and the intentional, structured field placement within the course as valuable for exploring their cultural identity development and for strengthening their confidence in interacting in diverse school environments.

Exploring oppressive practices, and the social, political, historical, and cultural contexts in which they occur, assisted PSTs in understanding some of the ways in which privilege and disenfranchisement exist in schooling and society. Examining participants’ life experiences and structuring teacher education programs while using a Critical Race Theory lens can give PSTs and teachers an opportunity to examine how their actions and interactions in the classroom and community can work toward reducing inequities. PSTs and teachers may have an opportunity to critically question the ways in which people justify privilege and their privileged positions within society (Lowenstein, 1992). This may then create a move to action for educators to create positive changes in the quality of

education for diverse student populations (Dixon & Rousseau, 2005). According to Lawrence, a symbiotic relationship between reflection and action can lead to active struggle (1992, p. 17).

In the Human Relations course, PSTs examined their cultural identities through writing Cultural Autobiographies, creating Wordles, and participating in class discussions. They learned about the cultural identities of diverse populations through field placements and service learning experiences. These learning activities align with Steinberg and Kincheloe's (2009) recommendation that PSTs engage in self-exploration and field experiences as they explore political and social power dynamics of race, class, and other categories of diversity. For PSTs—White and of Color—examining social power dynamics is important to address in how they understand their and others' cultural identity because it is often neglected in formal schooling experiences. The following learning experiences were particularly identified by study participants as helpful in their cultural identity development.

Safe and trusting environment for conversation and discussion about culture and race

Participants articulated the importance of experiencing a comfortable, trusting classroom environment that affords them the opportunity to voice their feelings, thoughts, and questions related to sensitive and personal topics. The

syllabus for the Human Relations (Appendix A) course establishes the following working assumptions for the course:

Students are required attend and participate; respect each other as they discuss, question, and challenge ideas; challenge prejudices, assumptions, and interpretations; expect to discuss things not discussed in public, and; recognize that it is okay to feel uncomfortable when we do so.

As a course instructor, I am aware of the importance of following these working assumptions. If students feel that they will be ostracized or made to feel uncomfortable about their contributions to class discussions, they will resent or resist participating in conversations. Talking about issues of diversity, including but not limited to race, religion, sexual orientation, and gender, can be uncomfortable. According to hooks (2002) discomfort should be expected. Discomfort may stem from a fear of the unknown, as referenced by one of the participants (Phyllis) in this study, or a desire not to “say the wrong thing” thereby upsetting others. However, to reach the depth of discussion that several participants credit with influencing their cultural identity development, students must know that they will not be attacked because of their viewpoints and experiences.

Learning from first-hand experiences of others

Several participants mentioned the value of having guest speakers and members of campus cultural groups, and K-12 students who share first hand, lived experiences with PSTs. The school district superintendent and BEU alumnae who

visited the Human Relations course made an impression on PSTs. Like many of the students, he is White and from a small rural town and they identified strongly with him. He created a cultural bond with the PSTs to whom he spoke; they saw themselves in him.

When he presented, he admitted the discomfort he felt with the Latino and Black students he met on his first visit to the school where he eventually took his first job. During his presentation, he described himself and his students. He explained how, in spite of having very different cultural identities, he connected with them. PSTs seemed motivated by the presentation at the time, and in the interviews, many recalled the connection they felt in hearing about his experiences.

This presenter provided PSTs with something akin to a formula for getting to know yourself and others. He emphasized that if he could do it, the PSTs could accomplish it as well. As an example, this empowered Phyllis to feel that through exploring her cultural and racial identities she could make connections with her students' cultural identities. Phyllis could see herself engaging in the same practices described by the guest speaker, making her feel that the speaker was providing a real-world application. In Chapter Four she described how this process took shape in one of her classroom experiences.

According to Marc, "The most effective way to learn about a different culture is to sit down and talk with somebody from that culture." He asserted that,

“people will tell you how they see things and tell you about their lives.” In the last chapter, Marc described how entering BEU had increased his opportunities to interact with diverse populations and that he wanted more opportunities in his preparation to become a teacher for exploring, in depth, some common cultural values and beliefs from specific cultures. He believed that doing this would make him more confident about successfully teaching in a diverse classroom.

Introduction to lenses for critical reflection on issues such as power, privilege, and historical oppression

The PSTs and teachers in this study reflected on their understanding of their own identity when asked to examine it through theoretical lenses that emphasize power, privilege, and historical oppression of marginalized populations. When PSTs and teachers use these lenses, they are required to ask whether particular discourses/cultural scripts (Lea, 2009) are influencing teaching, learning, and the empowerment of students. Prior research tells us that teacher education programs that require PSTs to engage in critical reflection are more likely to produce teachers who “recognize and change societal injustices and inequities and to use the terrain of the classroom for such thinking and action” (Rodriguez, 2009, p. 101). By participating in honest conversations about Whiteness, racism, and the relationship between the two, PSTs bring to light the “political and social urgency of a critical pedagogy of whiteness as integral to the overall discourse on cultural diversity and teacher education” (Rodriguez, 2009, p. 107).

Building relationships with students by connecting culturally

Connecting with K-12 students because of similarities in interests or lived experiences appears to be an important link in the chain of PSTs and teachers connecting with students. For example, several participants found that one or more elements of their cultural identity helped them make connections and empathize with K-12 students during their field placements. Art commented on his involvement in sports culture, as well, and how sports is a channel through which he initiates dialogue and finds common ground with diverse students. Phyllis and Art shared their experiences about how their socio-economic cultural identity assisted them in connecting with students, and in one case created distance between teacher and student. According to Art, he identified with some diverse students through socio-economic status. He believed that understood their situation and why they are tired one day or when they are really hungry. He felt that he could relate to them.

These examples illustrate Lowenstein's (2009) claim that White PSTs should not be viewed as homogenous, deficient learners or Seibel's "cultural dupes" (2002, p. 632). The participants themselves felt challenged in school environments when parts of their own multi-faceted cultural identity were not valued. For example, Phyllis described how, as a teacher, she felt like an outsider while teaching at a high school where many students seemed to identify as upper

class. While at the school, the feeling of shame that Phyllis experienced as a child, that she represented poverty. The feeling of disconnect from her students made it difficult for her in the classroom. She felt that she had to “dig deeper for each of my students to kind of find other places where I could connect with them; to find other things that they might have in common [with me].” Phyllis felt that she needed to seek any commonalities in order to make connections with students, so she began to connect with the German and Irish students and those who enjoyed movies or playing video games.

Having first encounters with diversity

The participants in this study were White, as are most PSTs and teacher in the U.S. Many of the participants in this study also grew up in predominantly White communities and had very limited experiences with diverse populations prior to entering college. The experience of first encountering diversity was significant for these PSTs.

Gerald discussed coming from a very White school and community where there was little diversity. The diversity he experienced was seen on television or in movies at school. He contended that nobody had conversations about race until high school, and for a long time he and his friends were unaware of what the rest of the world was doing. He considered it unfortunate that people in his small town chose to maintain a close-minded atmosphere. Referring to his experiences with racial diversity, Gerald stated that growing up, “Everyone’s White. You only hang

out with White kids. You only talk to White kids. [Arriving on the BEU campus] is a foreign feeling at first. A very cool feeling. Because you start to realize ‘I’ve been missing out on a lot of other things, other cultures, and perspectives.’”

According to Howard (1994), if Whites who have been culturally isolated are interested in growing beyond that which they are familiar, they should become “aware of both differentness and relatedness to other people and their realities” (p.15). Doing this will provide an opportunity for “. . . whites to participate in direct action rather than only experiencing rejection, guilt, denial, or distancing themselves from other diverse populations” (Howard, 1994, p. 21). Howard also advocates for seeking meaning within one’s own culture prior to those of others. My conversation with Gerald illustrates this point when he reflected on how his views of diversity took shape.

I think that we often-times have a small mind about ourselves and the world around us. Unless you take classes like this and you talk about things like this, it’s going to stay that way. If you do talk about it you’re going to be able to gauge who you are and who you are in relation to who everyone else is. It’s about building more perspectives. The more perspective you have, the more you’re going to understand the world and have tolerance and patience for people that don’t believe or do things the same way as you. That’s very valuable.

Sheila also sought experiences beyond her limited cultural encounters from her childhood and adolescence. She recognizes both her limitations and her need to expand her horizons:

I went to a high school where there were four or five African-American students . . . I wouldn't have a problem being put into a diverse atmosphere by any means, but I'm really not that acclimated to it or have spent a lot of time in it. I'm going to Costa Rica in the fall. I think that'll be a good opportunity for me.

Across the interviews, a sense of uncertainty regarding how to interact with diverse students is implied. In several of the interviews, PSTs voiced that they were not able to find the right words for what they wanted to describe with reference to their feelings about or actions with diverse populations. Terms like "tolerance," being able to "deal with," or "being forced" to are examples of the terms some PSTs used. For example, Sheila expressed Lensmire's (2010) contention that Whites may not be sure how to interact with diverse populations because they have not ever needed to do so. She stated that she "wouldn't have a problem being put in a diverse atmosphere." I interpreted that to mean that she would like to be in such an environment, but may not feel prepared to interact with the students there.

Most of Marc's contact with diverse populations came after he arrived to college. As many participants in this study, he expresses growing up in a community where many people seem to think alike; he lived within a comfort zone that seemed to be untouched by cultural diversity. This is an example of Hall and du Gay's (1996) contention that identities are always in the process of becoming, rather than being. PSTs and teachers arrive in educational settings with strong allegiances to particular ways of thinking and acting regarding diverse

cultures. In conjunction with these allegiances, identities are also shaped by factors which may change over time, creating different self-conceptualizations.

Experiencing Whiteness for the first time

Participants were asked to think a point when their understanding about people who are culturally or racially different from themselves changed during their teacher education program or since they have been teaching. Phyllis relayed an experience that prompted her to think more about being White. The way she now understands Whiteness in our society is that it is considered to be supreme. Although she believes that this is unfortunately accepted, Phyllis has observed that in our society, “the more White you are, the more accepted you are, generally speaking.” She feels that Whites have a “step up” over racially diverse groups, especially in rural settings where there is not much racial and cultural diversity. Phyllis contends that being White offers her greater opportunities in her community simply because of the unequal playing field experienced by Whites and some culturally diverse populations.

Gerald reflected on his identity development in seeing himself as White and invokes a sense of White shame (Thandeka, 1999) by acknowledging the resentment he harbors.

I’ve definitely changed a lot of my views. It makes me more resentful toward some of the things [our White culture] has done. On an optimistic note, it’s a way to change what’s gone wrong. To change the things we’re not necessarily very proud of. We have to be aware of that if we want to see legitimate change.

For Gerald, his resentment toward the negative things he believes “White culture” has done became a source of motivation to work toward changing his attitudes and actions.

For Kathy, however, a White identity felt limiting as an identity to embrace. She said:

I think Whiteness is a lot harder for me—it completely contradicts what I said before about the White middle-class male, but on the other hand, things have been changing so much. It’s hard to pinpoint what one race is...a lot of people have a mixture of cultures. I think race could be starting to become an out of date word, almost. It might be easier to say “What is your culture than what is your race?” In high school, we were talking about filling out basic college applications. There was one girl who said “I don’t know what to fill in because my dad’s Hispanic, my mother’s White, and I’m mixed. Am I a sub-category?” She felt really excluded because you had to fill in other. I feel like it might become a self-identification thing. I sometimes write down Jewish for “What is your race?” I almost think that’s valid because I feel like Judaism is as much of a culture as it is a religion.

This response shows the challenge of balancing the introduction of White identity as an individual identity to embrace and confront and the concept of Whiteness that pervades our socio-political ways of interacting in the U.S.

A two-part framework for PSTs’ cultural identity development

In this section, I discuss ways in which teacher education programs can be structured and designed in an effort to contribute to PSTs cultural identity development. Encouraging PSTs to reflect on their emotions (past and present), to

develop their communication skills, and to explore ways in which they can advocate for their students and other diverse populations.

Research Question 2: What dimensions of cultural identity can be developed in teacher education programs?

I would like to propose a two-part framework for PSTs' cultural identity development. The framework incorporates the knowledge about one's own cultural identity and the socio-political cultural histories of others and the action taken in relationship to others who are culturally diverse. As opposed to acquiring knowledge and then applying it to practice, I propose that PSTs engage in knowledge and action simultaneously in order to develop their own cultural identity. The acquisition of knowledge and the actions taken are accompanied by reflective mental and emotional processes which have the potential to generate knowledge of diverse populations as well as action with diverse populations. As PSTs interact with people in situations where they must choose what to say and how to respond, they are simultaneously drawing on what they know and making decisions about how to act. Within this framework, PSTs do not experience a wait-time between learning theory and applying it to practice; they act, learn, and reflect with each new situation.

According to participants' responses, I am interpreting that their cultural identity development, to this point, has been compartmentalized in their understanding and possibly in how they were supported in the Human Relations

course. On the one hand, PSTs reported that their Human Relations course provided them with knowledge. Through field experiences, class readings and discussions, and assignments like the Cultural Autobiography and the Wordle, PSTs learned about other diverse cultures and their own cultural heritage. Within the context of cultures, PSTs explored the social, historical, and political contexts in which they and other cultures live. They considered positionality; that of their cultures and the cultures of others with respect to privilege, being White, and status in society.

On the other hand, they indicated that they felt inadequately prepared to interact with diverse students. They were not confident in knowing what to *do*. If I examine this response through a framework of cultural identity as being both about knowledge and action simultaneously and not dichotomous, then, turning to the concept of dispositions may be helpful. Dispositions for teaching are currently defined in the *Model Core Teaching Standards* from the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) as follows:

Dispositions are neither invisible aspects of a teacher's psyche nor fixed personality traits. They are commitments and habits of thought and action that grow as the teacher learns, acts, and reflects under the guidance of teachers and mentors in a preparation program and in the first year of practice. They are visible in a teacher's decisions and actions over time and especially in the teacher's reflections about the consequences of those decisions and actions. Because dispositions are interdependent with knowledge and skills, their cultivation is tied to the conceptual understanding, refinement of skills in guided application, and thoughtful reflection on practice. (pp. 14-15)

This implies that there is an interactional space of cultural identity development between PSTs and diverse populations. In this study, that space is depicted in stories about how emotion, communication skills, embracing difference, and interceding in the face of adversity impact interactions with diverse populations. For each of these *interactions*, the PSTs must know about cultural identity and diversity and have a disposition toward enactment that will allow them to actually *do* something with confidence.

In the following sections I illustrate the ways in which PSTs' cultural identity is shaped by both their knowledge and action. I hope to illuminate how cultural identity development is bound in both knowing and doing. This part of cultural identity development may be difficult to attain. It may warrant different types of teaching, learning or developmental experiences that BEU's Human Relations course does not yet provide.

Action through emotion

Phyllis described how she had a fear of the unknown when first being exposed to cultural diversity during one of her field experiences in an ELL class. According to Phyllis, many of the students were living in poverty, "in families struggling to make ends meet." Phyllis learned this about some of her students' backgrounds as a result of interacting with them. An emotion was evoked in her interactions, not solely in Phyllis' psyche. Given her new knowledge of something about the students' culture and having an understanding her own identity with

respect to poverty, the emotion she experienced helped shape Phyllis' cultural identity development. Phyllis was able to establish connect with her students, reduce her fear of the unknown, and feel more confident about interacting with students.

Communication skills

According to Kathy: I always feel like I can do more and be more proactive. I feel like I have a different opinion than a lot of the students do. My choice is not to hold back my opposing beliefs [to mainstream thinking] and to [speak] them even though [they may cause] questioning and friction. There's this realization that "Maybe there is this other side of me & that it's valid." And sometimes it causes [discomfort] because it kind of rocks [colleagues'] beliefs a little bit. I think just making that choice not to filter is my way of being a change agent.

The fact that Kathy addresses the validity of her "other side," and that she desires to "do more," leads me to believe that she is very much immersed in her cultural identity development. She takes action through voicing her perspectives which tend to differ from those of her colleagues. Kathy embraces differences and challenges others to consider them as well. Here cultural identity development is represented in the interplay of Kathy's knowledge and action; she knows information that she articulates to her colleagues.

Kaleb felt moved to action during an emotionally charged interaction with a 13-year old student:

This assignment got me to start thinking about things in a different light. I stopped being self-centered. Hearing this kid's story put things into a different perspective.

Kaleb's response to the situation did not necessarily prompt him to immediate action within his teaching practice, but it did have an impact on the way he viewed this student. Kaleb found himself in a one-on-one interactional space with a student. He chose to listen, to really listen to this 13-year old's story. Through this interaction, Kaleb learned about the students' harrowing war experience. How did this interaction help shape Kaleb's identity? From a knowledge stand-point, Kaleb now knows more about the political strife that others experience and that he cannot take his own life circumstances for granted. From an action standpoint, Kaleb has "softened" his attitude toward kids and will be more prone to listen to them and work harder to understand their stories. If Kaleb asks "what should I do to better work with diverse learners?" the action-oriented answer is "listen." Through listening—an interactional process, Kaleb will continue to develop his own understanding of others and himself.

For example, Teddy went to the LGBT center on BEU's campus. It was a place where he believed he would experience a fair amount of discomfort. Yet he found that being able to sit with people and talk was an educational and positive

experience. This interaction helped Teddy understand the importance of spending time in an environment which was not within his comfort zone. He felt that:

Whenever a student a student brings up something I'm not sure about, I like to hear them out and try to connect that that to what I've already known or understood, and try to create a safe environment for them to share that with the other students. I look at that as an opportunity and that's why I'd be confident doing that.

Exploring and understanding difference

PSTs' cultural identity development includes the ability to recognize and understand differences in students and to still be able to interact with them in productive and supportive ways. A challenge herein is that we cannot ask that PSTs embrace identities with which they are not comfortable. For example, it would be difficult to me to be accepting of someone who identified as a misogynist. However, I should be able to learn from that individual, understand how he came to espouse his beliefs and values, and to interact with him in a productive way. The concern is if PSTs view everyone as the same. If this is the case, a facet of their cultural identity has yet to be developed.

Interceding in the face of adversity

This is not only knowing "what to do," it is something that relies on your own identity—your confidence, your willingness to step in and express your stance in the world. The ability to intercede indicates whether a person is a bystander or an advocate. PSTs and teachers who can articulate their positions on racism or

other forms of oppression should be empowered to act upon these views. They respect that people have differences of opinion and that their experiences influence who they are as individuals. Marc and Kathy said they are not sure what to do if a contentious situation arises. This is part of being able to determine what they stand for; know what they consider to be morally or ethically acceptable; and have an idea of how they would act in culturally charged situations. Without having to adhere to a specific formula for “How to be an activist,” once PSTs can articulate who they are, they will be more likely to advocate for others in their classroom and school communities. Marc stated that:

I see myself as maybe starting to develop qualities of somebody who wants to bring about change in the educational system. I am in the beginning stages of being a change agent. I hope to be one in the future.

Both Marc and Kathy may need more time in the spaces created in teacher education programs for action, reflection, and learning. They express a desire to be able to act, but need time to develop the skills required to act.

Sheila has strong convictions about advocating for those who are being mistreated:

If I’m in public and somebody does something rude, I’m embarrassed. I’m really uncomfortable when people are mistreated in the smallest way. So I think I’ll be a good advocate for people. As teachers, for any student—no matter what the situation—you need to be an advocate for them as well as their parents. And to support that student and make them feel comfortable and safe in school. Have signals or signs to let students know that it’s okay to be who you are in my classroom.

As Shelia interacts more with diverse populations she will continue to learn build her repertoire of the ways in which she can be a strong advocate for them. Through opportunities to interact, add skills, and reflection what one knows about others and one's self simultaneously, cultural identity is strengthened and the actions one chooses become sharper.

Nora spoke about wanting to be supportive of her students. However she seems conflicted on how to that on a regular basis in her classroom:

I want to have a point where kids can express themselves: that's who I am that's where I come from. Be able to share that. My goal is to establish an environment that supports that everyone's different. I want it to be a safe environment and I think that's one way people can open up and get to know each other. I would hope that that would carry over through the entire year. But being a science teacher and trying to meet standards I would probably not do another activity that addresses school and community diversity.

The fact that Nora does not feel that she can commit to teaching science and to supporting diversity in her class throughout the year may indicate she is struggling with the aspect of advocacy in her cultural identity.

In Chapter Four, I referred to a communication between Teddy and his students in Texas. I think it is important to address that exchange again here because it illuminates the action element of cultural identity development. For Teddy, being able to talk to his students about what it's like growing up, and more specifically, as a White male who brings a different perspective to their thought process, is action.

Teddy recognizes that he can be viewed as different from the perspectives of his students. He embraces his difference and shares it with his students so that they learn about how he is different from them. This sharing of cultural identity takes place in authentic and reciprocal ways; it is part of who Teddy is as a teacher and is indicative of his commitment to diversity in his everyday teaching.

According to Kaleb:

I haven't been prepared [to be an activist]. Nothing seems to work with respect to race & culture work. I've never seen where one person makes a difference. All I've ever really seen happen is a lot of resistance. If you have big dreams you're going to change the world don't forget your white flag. I'm sorry to say that to you, because I know that you actually believe. I'll tell you the truth. I wanted to believe after that [Human Relations] class. I thought maybe, yeah. Then I got into Block 2 and I saw practice versus theory. You go in wanting to change [helping kids], and it just doesn't take. No one cares about where you came from or what experience you have, even if it's similar. You can really pour your heart out doing stuff and it just doesn't work. When I try to help someone and to see it not work, it's heartbreaking. It feels like a form of rejection. With activism you have to go through a lot of that. If you can do that—keep taking a beating then you're a stronger person than I am. It makes me feel bad and who wants to feel bad all of the time?

Listening to Kaleb's perspective on activism led me to consider the degree to which cultural identity development entails being accepting of who other are and what they want. In Kaleb's case, he may need to be more accepting of the extent to which he can help students help themselves. His desire to change them is not synonymous with understanding who they are and supporting them in their endeavors. Here, Kaleb seems to have given up on his competency to create an environment of tolerance and respect in which he will recognize his students'

uniqueness and guide them reaching their goals. Kaleb implies that he has attempted to apply what he has learned to his interactions with students. This way of thinking reinforces the importance of a cultural identity framework in which acting, reflecting, and learning are intertwined within teacher education assignments and activities; practicing one necessitates practicing all three.

Phyllis is especially accepting of differences in gender orientation and sexual preference among her students. She models this through her show of support for LGBT community members and her interactions with regular students. Earlier in the study Phyllis shared that she experienced times of significant change early in her teacher education program. During her student and in-service teaching Phyllis's cultural identity development has continued to progress. She actively works to assist her students in confronting fears of the unknown, similar to those by which she had earlier been plagued.

Implications

Incorporating diversity into teacher education

I would recommend that teacher education programs be more intentional about addressing diversity at all levels and in all classes. In its current form, the teacher education program reflected in this study primarily relies on the one-shot Human Relations course to address issues of diversity. According to Sleeter and McLaren (2009) and confirmed in this study by participants, PSTs have little

exposure to diversity and do not feel prepared to work with diverse student populations. An increased level of interaction with diverse populations would add to informative classroom discussions and theories promoted in course readings.

There is a consensus among participants that PSTs and teachers benefit tremendously from opportunities to engage in meaningful ways with diverse populations. In participants' discussions about making connections with students it is evident that superficial, fleeting interactions did not suffice. To develop stronger bonds with K-12 students, the level of engagement should be significantly higher than what currently exists in field placements in the teacher education program.

Students in K-12 will benefit when their teachers are better prepared to teach and interact with them. According to participants, texts and other assigned reading surely have their purpose as informational sources and references. However, first-hand exposure to diverse groups helps to dispel stereotypes, unlearn misinformation obtained in both formal and informal settings, and increases PSTs' and teachers' cultural awareness. According to participants' comments, a greater familiarity with individual students and their cultures leads to an increased likelihood of building relationships based on honesty, empathy, and advocacy.

Increasing PST meaningful contact with diverse populations in schools, work places, and communities will benefit teachers and their K-12 students on

both personal and educational levels. Because the two are intertwined, success in one will positively impact achievements in the other.

Pay attention to cultural identity of teacher educators

For example, in Kathy's responses, she seems to feel silenced and at times unwelcome to speak about her views in class. I would recommend that teacher education programs insist that educators create classroom environments and learning opportunities which support PSTs in their learning, teaching, and exploration of cultural identities—theirs and others'. Her concern regarding teacher educator and cooperating teacher bias illustrates Lowenstein's (2009) contention that teacher educators must be diligent about reflecting on their own cultural identities and biases may affect their classroom teaching.

Explicitly address White identity in teacher education

It would behoove teacher educators and teacher education programs to revisit their protocol for racial and cultural identity exploration. Exploring Whiteness is beneficial to White (and other) PSTs and teachers'. It provides an opportunity to examine their positions in society, their relationships with other Whites as well as people of color, and their potential for engagement in positive action and change. The expectation that Whiteness, in teacher education programs and society, may be equated with negative beliefs, attitudes, actions, and social and historical contexts cannot be substantiated in teacher education programs. A

more balanced and productive approach to White cultural identity exploration can enlighten PSTs and teachers who will go on to empower their own students.

Acknowledging and understanding the origins of personal and familial biases, social, political, and historical contexts of race relations in the United States, and the discovering the potential that each PST and teacher may hold in connecting with K-12 students is a considerable part of Jupp and Slattery's (2010) second wave of White studies. Understanding one's ever-emerging place in life can be powerful as PSTs and teachers continue to recognize the ways in which their personal histories can assist them in understanding and empowering others.

Several participants addressed that Whites have more advantages and greater opportunities to attain success in our society. Teacher educators and the curriculum used in teacher education programs must be cognizant about not isolating individuals. Rather than feeling "white-guilt" (Thandeka, 1999, p. 13; Trainor, 2002, p. 643) or "white shame" (Thandeka, 1999, p. 13) which may generate resistance, anger, and frustration, PSTs may be more prone to examine race issues if an understanding is reached that racist practices (ways of thinking and being) are separate from their identities as White individuals. In this way, teacher educators can "help students articulate anti-essentialist identities as Whites and work through the paradoxes of constructing an antiracist identity" (Trainor, 2002, p. 647). If teacher education programs are not intentional in efforts to not "demonize" White PSTs (Trainor, 2002, p.647), teacher educators run the risk of

“doing more harm than good . . . and even create the very values that [they] seek to unravel in [their] teaching.”

Limitations

The limitations of this study will likely not change the implications of the study. The fact that all of the participants knew me prior to interviewing could be one limitation of the study. The PSTs and teachers who agreed to be interviewed had at least one course with me while attending BEU. I have maintained positive relationships with each of the participants. This may impact the nature of the participants’ responses to the interview questions. A desire to please me, a concern for voicing an opinion they may feel is contrary to my own, or the fear of revealing something about one self or someone else may have influenced how participants’ responded to my questions.

I recruited individuals at various levels of the teacher education program because I believed they could provide insight across the teacher education program. However, this could potentially be a limitation of the study. As I interviewed participants in the earlier levels of the program, I was reminded that not all of them were aware of the content and exposure to diverse populations that field placements and future courses would hold. Commentary from these participants regarding elements of the program that may be lacking or deemed inadequate with respect to issues of diversity may be unaware of the extent to

which the program addresses these issues, simply due to the nature of participants' limited program experience.

All participants in the study attended BEU in pursuit of their teaching license. This poses another limitation on the study. In spite of the fact that participants are in different content areas and at different levels of their teacher education program, they are all experiencing the same education curriculum. It would be interesting to conduct the study with participants in different teacher education programs.

Another limitation was that some of my questions may have been difficult for participants to respond to because of the time they had not been in the courses and field placements of which they spoke in quite a long time. This may have affected what they were able to recall about discussions, assignments, and feelings about their experiences.

Areas for Future Study

I look forward to conducting a longitudinal study spanning a course of approximately five to seven years. My intent is to explore the ways in which cultural identity develops *within* individuals across time and experiences and influences their teaching, learning, and interactions with diverse students and communities. In this study, I would seek participants in their first semester of a teacher education program, and follow them through their fourth year of teaching

(at earliest). While conducting the current study I felt that it would be meaningful to interview participants at different points in their teacher education program. I believe that their “fresh” responses would differ from their reflections on the recent past.

I believe that it would be valuable to conduct a study on the cultural identity and cultural competency of teacher educators, from graduate assistants and instructors to Associate and Full Professors. Participants in the current study raised concerns about the degree to which they felt that instructors possessed the dispositions and interest in openly addressing issues of diversity. It is critical that PSTs and teachers feel safe to share opinions in class and school communities, are aware that instructors and supervisors are open to engaging in discussions on controversial topics, and know that issues of diversity are important and warrant a significant attention throughout teacher education programs.

Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter I have addressed the original research questions. I referred to participants’ cases and the scholarly work of researchers cited in Chapter Two of this study to support answers to the study research questions. Based on both sources, I made recommendations for those designing teacher education programs who are interested in placing equity in education and cultural diversity at the heart of their programs.

Teacher educators must be intentional in structuring teacher education programs so that they facilitate the process of developing conscientious, critical thinkers for whom interacting with diverse populations is second nature. This entails listening to, caring for, and supporting PSTs and teachers as they continue to explore their cultural identities and those of others, and identify the roles of these identities in teaching and learning.

Topics of race and Whiteness should be integrated in all courses within teacher education programs, and; extended, meaningful, hands-on experiences with diverse populations would be an effective way of reducing the cultural chasm(s) between teachers' and students' cultural identities in K-12 and community settings.

According to participants' responses, I believe that exploring one's own cultural identity development is a necessary precursor to building relationships with and understanding different cultures of diverse populations. Not only does our cultural identity shape our understanding and interactions, but this study finds that our understanding of and interactions with others shapes our cultural identity. It is reciprocal.

I conducted this study hoping to provide information about the value of cultural identity exploration throughout teacher education programs. I hope the study motivates teacher educators to listen to and experience their own students in a way that will benefit PSTs, teachers, K-12 populations, and greater communities;

that teacher educators will improve upon the quantity and quality of opportunities for PSTs to explore cultural diversity—their own and others.

The study led to several conclusions: exploring own's cultural identity is helpful in building relationships and understanding different cultures; in order to facilitate PST cultural identity development teacher education programs should create spaces for acting, reflecting, and learning, and; cultural identity development in PSTs may lead to increased advocacy and activism when they enter the teaching field. Participants emphasized the value of having opportunities to explore and reflect upon their cultural identities through class discussion and activities. They addressed the extent to which understanding how their cultural identity development may give them an increased interest in and ability to understand the diverse cultures of their students. Participants' experiences, perspectives, and concerns indicated that a more cohesive teacher education program, incorporating diversity throughout, would more thoroughly prepare them to work with diverse students.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Human Relations Course Syllabus

Human Relations in a Multicultural Society Tentative Course Syllabus and Schedule Fall 2011

Instructor	
E-mail	
Tel.	
Office Location	
Office Hours	Mon: 10:30am-2:00pm Wed: 10:30am-2:00pm Fri: By apt.
Class Time/ Location	

Course Description

In this course students will be exposed to many aspects of human relations in a multicultural society. This course prepares students to critically examine the social and cultural foundations of inequality in the society and in public education. This main purpose of this course is the study and application of positive relationships in diverse communities in school and the larger community, through in-class explorations as well as service learning work in schools and the community (18 hrs).

In this course, diversity refers to all ways in which people differ, including ethnicity, language, religious practices, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic status, gender, and other differences. We will examine the impact of race, ethnicity, culture, socioeconomic class, gender, and identity on schooling opportunities and experiences, and the multiple layers of power and control that influence schools.

The course places a strong emphasis on community building. Your success in the course is based on the assumption that all participants demonstrate open-mindedness, sincerity, intellectual curiosity, respect for the voices, beliefs, and feelings of others, and responsibility for your words and actions.

Course Objectives

The mission of this course is to support you in increasing your understanding of:

- issues of diversity in a multicultural society
- recognizing and appreciating the contributions, culture, norms/values, oppression which various groups experience in our society
- how to create a positive, productive and equitable learning environment
- how to develop your personal communication skills and to listen to, respond to others with different ideas and values
- how to deal with conflict
- how to develop your self-concept/self-esteem
- how to identify your own values, strengths and needs
- how to develop and act upon your own personal power in working with diversity
- how to self-assess and be reflective in your own professional development
- how to collaborate with others to create a positive learning environment

Required Course Material

Koppelman, K. L. (2011). *Understanding Human Differences: Multicultural Education for a Diverse America* (3rd

ed.). Pearson. ISBN: 9780131381308

Keirsey Temperament Sorter (.55/.70)

Pipher, M. (2002). *In the middle of everywhere: Helping refugees enter the American community*. Harcourt, Inc.

ISBN: 978- 0156027373

My Writing Lab CD

One-inch binder and tab dividers

Other readings as assigned by instructor

What's special about this course?

Reflection: This course will require you to reflect upon your life experiences. You will have opportunities to explore your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors in

regard to your relations with and impressions of others. In addition to informing and enlightening you, discussions, readings, and writings are intended to assist in developing your interpersonal and teaching skills.

Experience: We know from research that things that are “unknown” and different can cause anxiety and fear. During this class, you will have the ability to practice your skills and knowledge regarding intercultural communication out in the real world through service learning (18 hours required).

Working Assumptions for the Course

1. Attendance and participation are required at all class sessions. You are part of a professional program, thus you are considered a critical part of our learning community. You're expected to behavior according to highest professional standards.
2. We will respect one another. Our beliefs, values, and ideas often differ from one another because we draw from different life experiences. In this class, we will discuss, question, and challenge ideas, but we need to be careful not to attack individuals and create an unsafe and unproductive space.
3. We will challenge our *own* beliefs, values, and ideas. We need to be open to challenging our own prejudices, assumptions, and interpretations. We also need to expect to discuss things we often do not discuss in public but still feel strongly about. It is okay to feel uncomfortable when we do so.
4. We are here for a positive educational experience. Please carefully read and prepare notes and questions to bring to our class sessions. Ask questions, share your thoughts and feelings, and make this class meaningful to you.

You will need this for the Writing Assessment Lab (WAL) for Admission to Professional Education:

- My Writing Lab CD (around \$30)

Assignments and Grading

Your course grade (letter grade of A, B, C, D or F) will be calculated based on the following course assignments and point values. A grade of I (incomplete) is only possible under most extenuating circumstances and necessitates negotiations between the student and the instructor.

Assignment	Points
Quick Quizzes (15)	10 each=150 pts
SCORE Project (5 sections)	125 pts (25 pts per section)
Tasks on Drafts	10 pts each
SCORE Presentation	50 pts
Listening Task	10 pts each
Border Crossings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MN-Based Native American Graphic Organizer • Attend three (3) on campus diversity events (20 pts each) • Interview with an International Student 	30 60 30
Keirse Assessment	10
Other Participation Tasks	5 pts each

See detailed descriptions of each of the assignments in the “Assignments” packet.

<u>Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
A	100 – 90%
B	89 – 80%
C	79 – 70%
D	69 – 60%

Class Policies and Procedures

Turning in assignments

Late assignments will NOT be accepted. Please contact me prior to an assignment due date to negotiate alternative arrangements under *extenuating* circumstances. Assignments will be submitted through D2L in a drop box unless instructed otherwise. Do not email assignments UNLESS instructed, as they will not be reviewed. The opportunity for making up a missed assignment may *not always* be available. All readings should be done **prior** to class session for which they are assigned.

Please note that you cannot pass the course without completing your service learning hours.

Class Attendance

Class attendance and punctuality are required. Infractions will be noted, as this is a professional program. *Negotiate terms as a learning community...*

Professionalism

Demonstrate professionalism through completion of assigned readings and homework, class attendance, professional behavior and comportment. This applies also to the appropriate level of formality in professional communication through e-mail. **Breaches in professionalism may result in a Letter of Concern to the Coordinator for Professional Education.**

In case of student problem behavior and/or lack of professionalism, we will follow the steps described below in resolving these concerns (established by the Professional Education division at MSU):

1. *Informal* – discussion initiated by professor (no formal documentation)
2. *Advisory* – discussion initiated by professor, Communication of Concern form completed and sent to candidate and faculty advisor.
3. *Remediation* – development of an Assistance Plan (sent to candidate, faculty advisor and dept. chair)
4. *Non-continuance* – suspension of training, failure of course and if required, referral out of the program.

Academic integrity

Academic integrity is expected. Deviations from accepted academic behavior will be dealt with in accordance with Minnesota State University, Mankato student policies and guidelines as outlined in your university student handbook. See www.mnstate.edu/acadaf/policies/ for Academic Policies & Procedures. See www.mnstate.edu/supersite/administration/basic-stuff for the Student Handbook.

Communication

- Emails: I will try to respond to your emails within 48 hours. Please make sure to include your FIRST and LAST name, and the course NAME /NUMBER and SECTION (ex. Maurella Cunningham, KSP 220-03)
- Individual questions/concerns: Come to my office during office hours, or schedule a time to meet outside of class.
- “Internetiquette”: It is expected that your email communications to teachers/staff/faculty/guest speakers/etc. are professional in nature (“Dear Mr./Mrs./Dr./etc _____,” as opposed to “Hey,” or “What’s up?!” or any other informal language).

About Me!

I look forward to this semester with excitement! I always learn something new when teaching this course. I believe teachers have one of the most important –and toughest— jobs in our society. I started my teaching career as a high school social studies and foreign language teacher. In addition to Minnesota, I've taught in the desert Southwest, Georgia, Maryland, suburban New York, and New York City. I have been in higher education since 2007. The best part of my job as a teacher is to see students discuss, grow, pursue their dreams, and make a positive difference in the lives they touch. I anticipate a great semester!!

MN Board of Teaching Standards of Effective Practice Addressed in this Course:

- 3D. understand how to recognize and deal with dehumanizing biases, discrimination, prejudices, and institutional and personal racism and sexism;
- 3E. understand how a student's learning is influenced by individual experiences, talents, and prior learning, as well as language, culture, family, and community values;
- 3F. understand the contributions and lifestyles of the various racial, cultural, and economic groups in our society;
- 3G. understand the cultural content, world view, and concepts that comprise Minnesota-based American Indian tribal government, history, language, and culture;
- 3H. understand cultural and community diversity; and know how to learn about and incorporate a student's experiences, cultures, and community resources into instruction;
- 3J. know about community and cultural norms
- 3P. bring multiple perspectives to the discussion of subject matter, including attention to a student's personal, family, and community experiences and cultural norms;
- 5L. design and manage learning communities in which students assume responsibility for themselves and one another, participate in decision making, work both collaboratively and independently, and engage in purposeful learning activities;
- 6B. understand how cultural and gender differences can affect communication in the classroom;
- 6C. understand the importance of nonverbal as well as verbal communication;
- 6D. know effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques;
- 6E. understand the power of language for fostering self-expression, identity development, and learning; 6F. use effective listening techniques;
- 6F. use effective listening techniques;
- 6G. foster sensitive communication by and among all students in the class;
- 6H. use effective communication strategies in conveying ideas and information and in asking questions;
- 6I. support and expand learner expression in speaking, writing, and other media;

9B. understand methods of inquiry, self- assessment, and problem-solving strategies for use in professional self-assessment;

9E. understand the role of reflection and self-assessment on continual learning;

9F. understand the value of critical thinking and self-directed learning

Appendix B: Autobiography (pre-redesign)

Autobiography

In block two, you will have field experience in schools, and you will be required to submit an autobiography to your cooperating teacher, and when you apply for student teaching, you will be required to submit an autobiography. In preparation for these requirements, you will prepare your first draft in this course and save it on your computer for future

Criteria:

*Use size 12 font throughout the text and title page.

*Use double spacing.

*The autobiography has a title page and two pages of text.

*Pages are numbered, with numbers centered at the bottom of the page.

Title page has no number; two text pages are numbered 1 and 2.

***Title page** content: (double spaced, centered on page)

Autobiography

Name

College of Education

Date

About content:

*Include only brief information about your early life, family, and home.

- *Include information about hobbies and interests, especially as they might relate to enhancing your teaching.
- *Include information about significant past educational experiences, particularly if they influenced your decision to become a teacher.
- *Include comments on your experiences with children and youth, indicating how these experiences have affected your decision to enter the teaching profession.
- *Proofread: technically correct: spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, paragraphing.
- *Be aware of your audience---for now, your peers and your instructor; in the future your cooperating teacher and/or principal for student teaching and, perhaps, the person who hires you!

Use the following grading rubric when writing your assignment.

As you proceed through your professional program, you may add comments on your field experiences in your education course work, which may include your Service-Learning experience in this course.

Autobiography: Grading Rubric

Student: _____ **Date:**

Point value key:

- 0 = Not submitted; component(s) missing
- 1 = Unsatisfactory; insufficient; lack of details
- 2 = Satisfactory; all criteria completed
- 3 = exceeds expected criteria; more information, examples, details given to enrich without repetition

Student Check-off	Criteria	(0)	(1)	(2)	(3)
Ideas and Content					
	Introduction				
	Early life, family and home				
	Hobbies and interests, especially as they relate to enhancing your knowledge, skills, dispositions as an educator				
	Significant past educational experiences, particularly if these experiences influenced your decision to become a professional educator				
	Experiences with children and youth, indicating how these experiences affected your decision to enter the education profession				
	Summary				
Writing Skills					
	Sentence Fluency				
	Word Choice				
	Voice				
	Conventions				
Presentation					
	Formatting requirements Title page format Two pages in length				

Instructor Comments:

Appendix C: Cultural Autobiography

Cultural Autobiography

The purpose of this paper is to reflect on your cultural background and how your behaviors and attitudes have been influenced by your heritage, experiences, and cultural orientation. This should include a focus on your ethnicity, nationality, religion, language, gender, sexual orientation, ability, socio-economic class, and any other aspect of your identity that you would like to include. You will address how your cultural orientation may influence your work as an educator.

For your Cultural Autobiography, you will:

- Bring an artifact to class that reflects your cultural practices, values, history, or beliefs (e.g. a recipe book, a weaving, ring, game). You will explain to the class how this artifact reflects who you are.
- Submit a 2-4-page reflection in which you identify your cultural heritage followed by a discussion of your culture. In the paper, explore the following:
 - With what cultural groups do you identify?
 - Discuss your birth/family of origin. Discuss your family culture in terms of values, beliefs, and goals about life success/failure that you have learned.
 - Talk about the cultural history of your parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. Where are they from? What is the primary language, race, religion, culture of your origin?
 - Describe your upbringing. What do you remember about the neighborhood(s) in which you lived? What ethnic groups resided therein? Was there a predominant group? What do you recall about your neighborhood?
 - Focus in particular on attitudes about those who were “different” from you. What was the talk at the dinner table? Were there any teachings that may influence how you feel about any group outside your own?
 - Describe in rich detail a memory relating to race. In essence, recount a clear picture of an incident you had with an individual of a different race that stands out in your mind. This can be either a negative or positive memory. What did you learn about yourself/this person through revisiting that memory?

- Discuss your family culture in terms of values, beliefs, and goals about life success/failure that you have learned.
- What are some verbal and non-verbal communication skills you have learned from your family?
- How has your cultural background affected your present beliefs about yourself and others? Talk about how your cultural background has shaped your views about race, class, gender, ability, and sexuality.
- What messages did you receive about these topics growing up, and what are your current beliefs? How has your culture helped or hindered you in your schooling/teaching?
- Describe yourself now. Discuss your attitudes, feelings, and beliefs about different cultural groups. Discuss how these influence who you are as a student/teacher/other professional and where you need to direct your own learning.

Grading will be on a 30-point scale.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Criteria	Points					
	Unsatisfactory; missing components		Unsatisfactory. Insufficient information, details		Satisfactory. All criteria completed	
Understanding of Concept The author presents clear descriptions of the items listed in the paper description. The author explicitly explains each item, providing clear examples.	0	1	2	3	4	5
Level of Reflection – So What The paper exemplifies a high level of reflection with personal insights, specific examples and goes beyond describing <i>what is to what does this mean to me</i> .	0	1	2	3	4	5
Sources of Information/Experiences The paper incorporates insights from several sources from the course, such as class sessions (discussions, activities, handouts/materials), readings, surveys, inventories, etc.	0	1	2	3	4	5
Personal Voice The author's voice is clearly evident. The paper reflects the author's thoughts, emotions, attitudes and beliefs/values. The author guides the reader through the paper, through his/her experiences and insights. The reader can get a clear understanding of the author	0	1	2	3	4	5
GOING BEYOND THE COURSE – NOW WHAT The paper focuses on ways that the learning experiences in the course relate to the author's experiences beyond the course, in the past, currently and in the future.	0	1	2	3	4	5
WRITING/LANGUAGE The paper is written using strong academic language and writing style, free of typos and grammar errors. The text flows in a cohesive manner and demonstrates high levels of command of writing and language.	0	1	2	3	4	5
TOTAL	30 pts					

*Details subject to change by instructor

Appendix D: Recent Field Experience Packet
SCORE (Student and COMMUNITY Resources) Project
Level 1 Final Reflection

Group Members: _____
 Date: _____

Field Experience Placement (school, grade, cooperating teacher):

Purpose

The Level 1 Final Reflection, consisting of five prompts, asks you to reflect on your field experience tutoring middle or high school students. As a teacher candidate, consider what you have learned about the learner, the learning process and human relations in a multicultural society.

Standards of Effective Practice:

SEP within General Field Experience Participation; The Teacher Must . . .	SEP Specific to Reflection Assignment; The Teacher Must. . .
2A. Understand how students internalize knowledge, acquire skills, and develop thinking behaviors, and know how to use instructional strategies that promote student learning.	2C. Understand developmental progressions of learners and ranges of individual variation within the physical, social, emotional, moral, and cognitive domains, be able to identify levels of readiness in learning, and understand how development in any one domain may affect performance in others.
2F. Link new ideas to familiar ideas; make connections to a student's experiences; provide opportunities for active engagement, manipulation, and testing of ideas and materials; and encourage students to assume responsibility for shaping their learning tasks.	2D. Use a student's strengths as a basis for growth, and a student's errors as opportunities for learning.
3D. Understand how to recognize and deal with dehumanizing biases, discrimination, prejudices, and institutional and personal racism and sexism.	2G. Use a student's thinking and experiences as a resource in planning instructional activities by encouraging discussion, listening and responding to group interaction, and eliciting oral, written, and other samples of student thinking.
3E. Understand how a student's learning is	3B. Know about areas of exceptionality in learning,

influenced by individual experiences, talents, and prior learning, as well as language, culture, family, and community values.	including learning disabilities, perceptual difficulties, and special physical or mental challenges, fits, and talents.
3F. Understand the contributions and lifestyles of the various racial, cultural, and economic groups in our society.	3C. Know about the process of second language acquisition and about strategies to support the learning of students whose first language is not English.
3G. Understand the cultural content, world view, and concepts that comprise Minnesota-based American Indian tribal government, history, language, and culture.	3I. Understand that all students can and should learn at the highest possible levels and persist in helping all students achieve success.
3H. Understand cultural and community diversity; and know how to learn about and incorporate a student's experiences, cultures, and community resources into instruction.	3K. Identify and design instruction appropriate to a student's stages of development, leaning styles, strengths, and needs.
3J. Know about community and cultural norms.	3P. Bring multiple perspectives to the discussion of subject matter, including attention to a student's personal, family, and community experiences and cultural norms.
3O. Use information about students' families, cultures, and communities as the basis for connecting instruction to students' experiences.	5A. Understand human motivation and behavior and draw from the foundational sciences of psychology, anthropology, and sociology to develop strategies for organizing and supporting individual and group work.
6D. Know effective verbal, nonverbal, and media communication techniques.	5J. Recognize the relationship of intrinsic motivation to student lifelong growth and learning.
9C. Understand the influences of the teacher's behavior on student growth and learning.	6A. Understand communication theory, language development, and the role of language in learning.
10C. Understand student rights and teacher responsibilities to equal education, appropriate education for students with disabilities, confidentiality, privacy, appropriate treatment of students, and reporting in situations of known or suspected abuse or neglect.	9A. Understand the historical and philosophical foundations of education.
	10D. Understand the concept of addressing the needs of the whole learner

What Do I Need to Do?

Using the given template, write a one page, single-spaced commentary for each prompt. Your paper is to be written using strong academic language and writing style, free of typos and grammar errors. The academic language you use in your writing will include specific course vocabulary along with references to theories, strategies, the learner, and the learning process. The scoring rubric will guide the development of your reflections. Use pseudonyms for any persons in your writing for purposes of confidentiality.

Commentary Scoring Rubric

	Does Not Meet Expectations	Meets Expectations	Beyond Expectations
Facts, concepts, theories, and principles are used to explain behaviors and as bases for plans. Key Question: how fully is disciplinary knowledge referenced?	Few references to concepts, theories and principles, with little use of exact discipline specific language.	References are complete and beginning mastery of discipline is evident. There are no errors in interpretation of disciplinary content. Adequate reference to field experience examples.	Impressive reference to disciplinary content, with elaborate use of precise language and application to many field experience examples.
Commentary addresses the prompt, including all subparts. Key Question: Is the entire prompt completely addressed?	All subparts of the prompt are not addressed in the commentary, leaving gaps in demonstration of knowledge.	All subparts of the prompt are addressed, and a full demonstration of knowledge is evident.	Prompt is fully addressed and commentary goes further, connecting the discipline to other areas of study.
Commentary is well organized and succinctly written. Key Question: Is the essential meaning of the commentary readily accessed by the reader?	Organization of writing is awkward and ideas seem random. No clear demonstration of discipline knowledge.	Organization of content and construction of paragraphs clearly evidence student understanding of discipline. Essential meaning of commentary is laid out for reader.	Organization and quality of writing makes commentary read extremely well, and the quality of the content is enhanced because of it.

Prompt 1. In what ways did you apply cognitive development theories to your tutoring? Child & Adolescent Development pp. 126-249; end of chapter summary sections. What resources within the school did you become aware of that might allow you to enhance your application of cognitive development theories? Please also consider the Standards of Effective Practice: 2C, 3B, 3E, 3I, 3K, 5J, 9A as they directly relate to this prompt.

Piaget's Theories

Vygotsky's Theories

Information Processing Theories

Intelligence Theories

Prompt 2. How did you use effective language and literacy strategies while tutoring your student(s)? Child & Adolescent Development pp. 251-330; end of chapter summary sections. What resources are available to teachers in and outside of the classroom for enhancing language acquisition and for teaching literacy? Please also consider the Standards of Effective Practice: 3C, 3E, 6A as they directly relate to this

prompt.

Examples:

1. Extended learning opportunities (opportunities to repeat and review, slower pace, multiple exposures)
2. Explicit academic language instruction (vocabulary, reading, writing, listening, speaking, grammar, etc.)
3. Collaboration between individuals (between teachers, between school and home, school and agencies, between support staff and teachers, etc.)

Prompt 3. How did your tutoring or student assistance promote culturally responsive teaching?

What resources are available to teachers both in and outside of the classroom to promote culturally responsive teaching? What resources are available in and outside the classroom for cultural community development?

Understanding Human Differences pp. 334-341; end of chapter summary sections.

Please also consider the Standards of Effective Practice: 3D, 3E, 3F, 3G, 3H, 3J, 3O, 3P as they directly relate to this prompt.

Examples:

1. Family/community/cultural assets or strengths (e.g., cultural norms, student interests, community members, relevant experiences and resources)
2. Community agencies/services/programs (e.g., health care, community education, culture, language/literacy, etc.)
3. Connections between family/community and school

Prompt 4. As a teacher candidate summarize how your tutoring supported the learner and the learning process. What resources were available to you/will be available to you, as a teacher, to support individual learners and their learning?

Please consider the Standards of Effective Practice: 2A, 2D, 2G, 5A, 5J, 10C, 10D as they directly relate to this prompt.

Examples:

1. Academic development (e.g., prior knowledge, key skills, academic language, ways of thinking in the subject areas, developmental levels, and other special educational needs)
2. Social and emotional development (e.g., relationships with each other, expressing themselves in constructive ways, engaging in collaborative learning, contributions to a productive learning environment)
3. Diverse student needs: students with special needs, English Learners, cultural background, interests, learning styles

*This assessment is an adaptation of the TPAC Assessment-Secondary Generic, January 2011.

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Appendix E: Wordle



Appendix F: Comfort Level Ranking

Comfort-Level Ranking

For the purposes of course materials and activities, please rank the following diversity groups based on the level of comfort you feel toward each group. Begin with the one with which you are most comfortable (Number 1 is the group that you feel the most comfortable with).

Comfortable: I have some knowledge/understanding of members of the group, and/or I feel comfortable in their presence.

Ranking my comfort with seven groups that experience oppression:
Ability, age, class, gender, language, race/ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation.

Most Comfortable

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

Least Comfortable

Appendix G: Recruitment Material: Research and Interview Questions

Research and Interview Questions

1. How do teacher preparation experiences assist the PSTs' and teachers' in understanding their cultural and racial identities?
 - Give me an example of when you have discussed your own cultural or racial identity in your teacher preparation program. Was it valuable? What was the effect or impact? Did it change anything about how you see yourself?
 - How did you learn racial identity? Have your views changed from what you were initially taught? If yes, how so?
 - How do you view "race?" What is the meaning of "whiteness" in the context of your daily life?
 - Has your teacher education program prepared you to enter into racially and culturally charged conversations and situations (supporting you in addressing emotions, beliefs, and feelings)? Explain.

2. What elements of the teacher preparation experience do PSTs and teachers identify as contributing to or inhibiting their understanding of their cultural and racial identities?
 - Give me an example of when you think your understanding about people who are culturally or racially different from you was changed (in your teacher education program or while you were teaching)?
 - Are you a change agent in your classroom/school/community? How so? How does/did your teacher education program affect your knowledge about diverse populations?
 - Did your teacher preparation program help you develop a good understanding and awareness of discrimination and racism in society? How did you come to this understanding?
 - Were you or your values and habits ever criticized in your teacher education program? Did others appear to experience this type of criticism?

3. What relationship do PSTs and teachers describe between their own cultural and racial identities and their teaching practices in diverse classrooms?
 - How confident are you in your ability to teach? To teach diverse student populations? What illustrates your confidence or lack thereof?

- Has your exposure to culturally diverse students provided you with a better understanding of them? Has it reinforced prejudices and stereotypes that you may have? Explain.
- What assignments, coursework, readings, or discussions in your teacher education program contributed to your understanding of racial and cultural diversity? What do you do in your teaching practice to achieve this goal?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to conduct exploratory qualitative research to investigate how PSTs and practicing teachers experience cultural and racial identity development or changes in identity. Rather than examine the “what” or contributors to identity development, I will explore the “how” or processes of identity development as a result of experiences in teacher preparation programs. To meet this purpose, I ask:

1. How do teacher preparation experiences assist the PSTs’ and teachers’ in understanding their cultural and racial identities?
2. What elements of the teacher preparation experience do PSTs and teachers identify as contributing to or inhibiting their understanding of their cultural and racial identities?
3. What relationship do PSTs and teachers describe between their own cultural and racial identities and their teaching practices in multi-cultural classrooms?

Appendix H: Recruitment Material: Consent Form

CONSENT FORM

Cultural Identity Development and Teacher Identity

Hello. My name is Maurella Cunningham. I am a Ph.D. candidate in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota. I would like to invite you to participate in research for my dissertation.

You are invited to be in a research study that will contribute to our understanding of how Pre-service teachers and teachers learn about their own cultural and racial identities and provide recommendations to teacher preparation programs about what they can do to support teachers' in developing stronger multi-cultural classroom teaching practices. This study is being conducted by me, Maurella Cunningham, a Ph.D. candidate in the College of Education and Human Development, in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

You were selected as a possible participant because you may currently be teaching, or have formally prepared to teach in the recent past (1-5 years), and may be interested in cultural identity exploration and teaching. I ask that you read carefully and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study. Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the University of Minnesota. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

I would like to provide you with a bit of background information. The main purpose of this study is to conduct exploratory qualitative research to investigate how pre-service teachers and practicing teachers experience cultural and racial identity development or changes in identity. Rather than examine the "what" or contributors to identity development, I will explore the "how" or processes of identity development as a result of experiences in teacher preparation programs.

If you agree to be in this study, I will ask that you participate in either two half-hour interviews or one one-hour interview. The choice is yours. The first portion of the interview will focus on participant demographics and background information. The second will focus on personal, educational, and professional experiences. Some of the questions will ask specifically about your racial and

cultural identity and about your work with students in multicultural classrooms. I do not anticipate any risks for you if you choose to participate, but I do recognize that talking about race can sometimes be uncomfortable.

If you participate in this study, you will receive a twenty dollar gift certificate to a major retail store. The gift certificate will be given to you upon completion of interviews.

I will make sure that the records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report I might publish, I will not include any information that will make it possible to identify you as a participant. Research records will be stored securely and only I will have access to the records. Study data will be encrypted according to current University policy for protection of confidentiality. The primary investigator (me) and transcriptionist will have access to audio recordings. Your identity will not be identified to anyone aside from me. All audio recordings will be destroyed after two years. Transcripts will be destroyed after three years.

Contacts and Questions:

Again, I, Maurella Cunningham, am the researcher conducting the study. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact me at 507-779-6392 or cunn0008@umn.edu. My advisor at the University of Minnesota is Mistilina Sato. She can be contacted at 612-625-7793 or msato@umn.edu.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than me or my advisor, **you are encouraged** to contact the Research Subjects' Advocate Line, D528 Mayo, 420 Delaware St. Southeast, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455; (612) 625-1650.

Do you agree to participate in this study?

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____

Date: _____