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A CRITICAL LENS OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN PUERTO RICO

Robin Marion
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A CRITICAL LENS OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN PUERTO RICO

A Dissertation Presented

by

ROBIN L. MARION

Submitted to the Graduate School of the
University of Massachusetts Amherst in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

February 2019

Department of Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies
Language Literacy and Culture Program

College of Education

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A Dissertation Presented

By

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DEDICATION

With love I dedicate this dissertation to my Mom, Barbara Jane Boyle Marion: thank you for loving and believing in me at every turn and for raising me and my sisters with love and grace. I also want to dedicate this to my five sisters, Brenda, Paula, Lisa, Tracy, and Jamie - they are all a part of me.

I dedicate this dissertation to my husband Bill O'Connell, poet and love of my life who reminds me to notice the beauty and wonder each day brings. Finally, I dedicate this dissertation with love from the core of my being to my son Benjamin and daughter Rose who are my north stars and constant touch stones as I move through this life. You have been my teachers from the moment you were born.

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ABSTRACT

A CRITICAL LENS OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING IN PUERTO RICO

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Teacher education research has shown that ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse students have been historically under-served in U.S. public schools (Bennett, 2013; Gay, 2010). Scholars attribute the under-serving of diverse students to a deficit perspective that exists in many schools across the United States, both in classrooms and within school administration. This deficit perspective devalues the cultural and linguistic resources many students possess (Sleeter, 2011; Delpit, 2006). Teacher education research has consistently claimed culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogical practices are critical to preparing pre-service teachers (PSTs) to teach all students. Culturally responsive pedagogy recognizes the significance of students' cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and racial identities as resources to support academic learning (Ladson-Billings, 1995; 2014; Bennett, 2013; Paris, 2012; Gay, 2010). When culturally responsive pedagogy is woven throughout coursework, it can guide and support pre-service teachers' best practices through praxis (connecting theory to practice) within fieldwork experiences (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Bennett, 2013; Gay, 2010; Sleeter, 2011). The purpose of this case study is to explore how a cultural and language immersion critical service learning (CSL) travel study course to Puerto Rico might open spaces for

pre-service teachers to address preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases of others who are different from themselves in respect to culture, race, ethnicity, language, and socioeconomics.

Critical service learning is a pedagogy within civic engagement work that uses a social justice framework focused on the disruption and redistribution of power systems for social change (Mitchell, 2008). The intersection of experiential learning, cultural and language immersion, and critical service learning allows participants to engage with individuals from a culture divergent from their own sociocultural worlds (Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010). When these culturally responsive pedagogical practices align, “Cultural immersion engages individuals in meaningful, direct cross-cultural interactions, thereby increasing the likelihood of developing cultural understanding and empathy” (Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010, p.167).

This case study examines how participants in an experiential learning travel study course make sense of their individual and collective experiences. Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) is, "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Knowledge results from the combination of grasping and transforming experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 41). During the travel study course participants engaged with Puerto Rican culture, history, ethnicity, language, and race through guided coursework, excursions, critical service learning, and Spanish language immersion. Through the lens of culturally responsive, sustaining pedagogy and language ideologies, this study explores how individuals think about others who differ racially, ethnically, socioeconomically, and linguistically from themselves. The study further examines how

implicit and explicit language and race ideologies impact PSTs' asset and deficit perspectives of others.

The research questions delve into how participants synthesize their new understandings along with their preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases through the lens of being Spanish language learners, learning about the culture and history of Puerto Rico, and critically reflecting on their own and others' sociocultural and linguistic identities. The study explores how a cultural and language immersion, critical service learning designed course contributes to participants engaging in critically reflective practices. The study analyzes data collected through nightly course seminars, final reflection papers, semi-structured interviews, focus group conversations, and course-related artifacts.

Findings from the case study affirm that the language and cultural immersion components of the course supported shifts for students as they experienced what it was like to be a Spanish language learner, to walk in the shoes of English language learners, and begin to understand what it feels like to be immersed in a new language and culture. Findings also communicated how experiencing a place, people, and culture, and having authentic human exchanges in real time, can plant the seeds for participants to critically examine their preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases. Findings showed participants were able to identify what culturally responsive pedagogy looks like through the caring and empathy they observed by the Puerto Rican teacher hosts at the Spanish Language School (SLS) and the School Rehabilitation Center (SRC) sites.

Finally, the study finds that four specific elements were critical to the success of the travel study course. The first two elements were the culturally responsive designed

coursework and guided instruction, and the fact that one of the instructors was a Puerto Rican cultural insider. The third element was the continual reflexivity by and between the co-instructors. The instructors' reflexivity included observing what was going well and noticing what was problematic in relation to SRC partners and the undergraduate course participants. As a result of the reflexive practice, the co-instructors made shifts within the experiential components of the course, pedagogical changes within the coursework and seminars during the course, and further changes within long-term planning to ensure shifts would be implemented for future travel study coursework. The fourth element was the presence of Haniah and Maria, two participants of color, and their willingness to share personal and difficult stories that serve as a testimony to the criticality of developing diverse teacher preparation cohorts.

This case study is significant as it points to the implications and potential benefits of civic engagement and service learning through experiential learning with the unique connection between classroom pedagogy, cultural and language immersion, critical service learning, and praxis in the field.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The United States public school system, originally built to create democratic citizens for the public good with learning at the center, has evolved and devolved over the years (Labaree, 2010). Horace Mann believed the purpose of schooling should be centered on a combination of civic virtue and learning in order to create citizens engaged in their local and global communities for the good of humanity. Mann was elected to be the secretary of the Massachusetts Board of Education in 1837, and he became a driving force in the Common School Movement, the first publicly funded education system in the United States. His hope was that young people would gain knowledge and then contribute within their communities as equal members. The focus of public schooling has taken many turns since 1837 and has now sharply veered away from the original intentions. Instead of creating a system that provides equitable access to education, public schooling often marginalizes individuals, groups, and communities who are socioeconomically, ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse (Labaree, 2010).

Teacher education scholars have argued that pre-service teachers must develop culturally responsive pedagogical practices and consciously work to shift preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases in order to effectively teach children in ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse communities (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay & Kirkland, 2002; Bennett, 2013). Ladson-Billings (1995) stresses that in order for academic success to be achieved, pre-service teachers (PSTs) need to be prepared to teach these diverse learners.

Through the years, teacher education scholars and teacher preparation programs have responded to the concern of preparing teacher candidates to effectively teach the rising number of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse student populations in schools across the United States. These efforts initially resulted in the creation of multicultural education coursework that focused on culturally responsive and social justice pedagogy. Addressing culturally responsive teaching in one or two courses became a pervasive practice across the field of teacher preparation programs.

More recently in 2014, the Department of Justice (DOJ) addressed the inequity for English language learner (ELL) students in the public schools of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. The DOJ mandated the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) to provide Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) to all English language learners in the Commonwealth (2013). DESE then required that by 2016 Massachusetts teacher preparation programs institute an SEI Endorsement course for teacher candidates to successfully complete in order to be eligible to obtain initial teacher licensure. The newly required SEI course embedded culturally responsive pedagogy within the instruction and curriculum. While the multicultural education and SEI courses are uniquely supportive and designed with culturally responsive pedagogical practices, it becomes problematic when they function as silos for culturally responsive pedagogy. Sleeter (2011) addresses the concern of positioning culturally responsive pedagogy within specific coursework. Sleeter claims that a program-wide culturally responsive pedagogical teaching practice is necessary to effectively support how PSTs layer and build understandings about their own and others' sociocultural identities prior to and throughout their fieldwork placements.

Villegas and Lucas (2002) further define the criticality of PSTs understanding their own sociocultural identities and how that influences their teaching:

To understand their future students, prospective teachers must first examine their own sociocultural identities (Banks, 1991; Bennett, 1995; Zeichner & Hoefft, 1996). Although some prospective teachers enter their teacher preparation programs with a strong sense of who they are socially and culturally, most need to engage in autobiographical exploration, reflection, and critical self-analysis to develop that sense. They need to explore the various social and cultural groups to which they belong, including those identified with race, ethnicity, social class, language, and gender. They also need to inspect the nature and extent of their attachments to those groups and how membership in them has shaped their personal and family histories. (p. 22)

Critical service learning scholars and researchers have suggested that cultural immersion through experiential learning can provide meaningful opportunities for pre-service teachers (PSTs) to engage in critical reflection about their own and others' sociocultural identities as a first step toward building culturally responsive practices (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Gay & Kirkland, 2003). However, other scholars in the field of service learning warn against the harm service-learners and university partners can have on public schools, students, their families, and communities when they come in with a white savior mentality that positions service learners and university members as the ones with knowledge to bestow upon students, families, and their community. This power differential often reifies the institutionalized inequitable power structures already in place (Shabazz & Cooks, 2014).

My case study suggests that a cultural and language immersion, critical service learning (CSL) travel study course is an effective and unique pathway to incorporate culturally responsive sustaining pedagogy in teacher education programs. This study promotes a course designed with critical service learning as opposed to traditional service

learning in order to intentionally move away from the service-learner “helping the needy” mentality and toward a social justice approach, designed to address historical institutionalized inequities (Pompa, 2002; Ginwright, 2002).

Statement of Problem and Purpose of Study

This case study addresses a problem that is prevalent in U.S. teacher preparation programs that often situates culturally responsive pedagogy in specific courses rather than weaving it throughout the entire program (Sleeter, 2011). Sleeter claims that many pre and in-service teachers focus on what they themselves perceive as culturally important rather than focusing on the work of building relationships that will in turn provide opportunities to learn about their students’ race, language, ethnicity, and individual learning needs. Further, Sleeter (2011) and Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) assert that authentic culturally responsive pedagogy practices are politically based. These scholars’ premise that to be effective, teacher education preparation should address the culture and racism connected to current test-driven schooling that marginalizes students who are ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse.

Critical service learning (CSL) scholars have suggested that cultural immersion through experiential learning provides opportunities for PSTs and other service-learning participants to critically reflect on their own and others’ sociocultural identities, which in turn serves to scaffold culturally responsive practices (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Gay & Kirkland, 2003). Teacher education research further claims culturally responsive pedagogy is often positioned within multicultural education coursework. Sleeter (2011) recommends teacher educators should intentionally institute program-wide culturally responsive pedagogical practices to layer on and to guide how PSTs build their

understandings about their own and others' sociocultural identities before, during, and after fieldwork experiences.

The purpose of this study is to contribute to the knowledge base in the field of teacher preparation and to explore how a travel study course designed with culturally responsive pedagogical practices can better prepare teacher candidates to teach in ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse communities as well as in predominantly White and middle-class communities. Through the findings of my study I hope to inform educational and civic engagement researchers and teacher educators by fine-tuning existing theoretical understandings of critical service learning through exploring culturally responsive pedagogy, attitudes, beliefs, biases, and language ideologies within a uniquely designed cultural and language immersion CSL travel study course to Puerto Rico (Pompa, 2002; Ginwright, 2002). This case study explores how the design of a critical service learning travel course can effectively guide and open spaces for participants to examine their own sociocultural and linguistic identities, attitudes, beliefs, and biases, and then lead to understanding and implementing culturally responsive thinking and practices (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Bennett, 2013).

This qualitative case study examined 15 participants with a smaller group of three White female focal participants to understand how they experienced and made sense of cultural and language immersion combined with critical service learning. The data was collected before, during, and after a two-week course to Puerto Rico. This social justice-oriented course was offered as a Civic Engagement, Education Department elective at Western Massachusetts University (WMU) and was designed to explore how participants

develop a critical consciousness about their own and others' identities.

Significance of Study

This qualitative case study is significant as it explores the social phenomenon of how pre-service teachers examine and reflect on their own sociocultural identities through participation in a cultural and language immersion, critical service learning designed travel study course in Puerto Rico. This study draws attention to a gap within teacher preparation and presents the significant potential that a cultural and language immersion, CSL travel course has to uniquely bridge social justice, culturally responsive practices, cultural and language immersion, and critical service learning for pre-service teachers. Scholars, administrators, and instructors in the field of teacher preparation and civic engagement need to know that short-term travel experiential learning courses, when intentionally designed with a social justice, culturally responsive, and sustaining pedagogy, can provide a significant opportunity to explicitly engage participants in critical reflection of their own and others' sociocultural identities.

Implementing a case study allowed me to employ a variety of data sources to better understand the participants' experiences and the many ways that the participants were expressing and making sense of their cultural beliefs, attitudes, and biases through the lenses of their language ideologies while immersed in the travel study course (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Conducting a case study helped to facilitate a multi-layered and unique understanding of this specific phenomenon. The study used a variety of sources and engaged many lenses to understand how the participants made sense of their cultural and language immersion and their service learning in Puerto Rico (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Research data included transcriptions of field notes from observations and

casual conversations as well as transcribed audio-recordings of nightly seminar discussions while in Puerto Rico. The post-travel data collection included participants' final reflection papers, transcribed audio-recordings of semi-structured individual interviews, focus group conversations with the three focal participants, and field notes from follow up member checking conversations. Utilizing a case study has allowed me to contribute to the understanding of how pre-service teachers experience and express their critical self-reflection of cultural, linguistic, and racial attitudes, beliefs, and biases. Through critical reflection participants provided evidence of how their sociocultural identities played a role in this process. I explored participants' expression of their reflective thoughts both written and orally through the triangulation of data in relation to how participants understand their own and others' sociocultural identities.

The dissertation will address the following research questions:

- How do pre-service teachers describe their experiences as Spanish language learners, and learning about the culture and history of Puerto Rico?
- What connections do travel study participants make to their own and others' sociocultural and linguistic identities?
- What connections do participants make between their travel study course experiences in relation to culturally responsive pedagogy, sociocultural identity, language diversity, racial consciousness, caring, empathy, and the work of teaching?
- In what ways does a cultural and language immersion, critical service learning designed course contribute to participants engaging in critically reflective practice?

Overview of Chapters

Through a review of literature in chapter two I explore the role of critical reflective practices as a tool to examine one's own sociocultural identity and to analyze why this practice is significant in order for pre-service teachers to identify and reflect on the attitudes, beliefs, and biases they express. The review of literature also explores how language ideologies and *raciolinguistics* (Alim, Rickford & Ball, 2016) play a role in PSTs' cultural and racial beliefs and biases, and how it influences ways participants do or do not make personal connections to students or shift their understandings and preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases. Chapter two also discusses the role of caring and empathy, and further identifies authentic caring as central to building relationships with students to support their whole being and tap into the cultural and linguistic resources they bring into the classroom. Finally, chapter two explores the benefits of a transformative experiential learning course based in critical service learning and culturally responsive pedagogy as a unique pathway to support teacher educators in the field.

In chapter three I lay out the research rationale, the research design, and the methodology used to conduct my research within the case study. Chapter three presents the grounded theory approach I employed to analyze the data corpus. Chapter three also discusses the multiple steps I undertook to ensure a trustworthy study. Chapters four and five present the findings through a series of participant excerpts that I introduce and provide analysis for. The excerpts are culled from the data corpus of fieldnotes, transcriptions of seminars, interviews, focus group conversations, and participant final reflection papers. Chapter six includes a summary and conclusions, and also identifies

implications, discusses the possibilities of moving forward, and presents the study's limitations.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Culturally responsive pedagogy has been defined in a number of ways over the past 18 years by leading scholars. Ladson-Billings (1995) articulated the term “culturally responsive” to specifically highlight the unique connection between home, community, and the school community, "a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (p. 382). Ladson-Billings (1995) defines cultural referents as ethnic, linguistic, and cultural assets of students that are essential for educators to recognize in order to bridge individual cultural resources to support academic learning. This literature review will explore the increased possibilities of academic success when PSTs view all their students' and families' cultural, racial, and linguistic capital as rich resources to draw from, to successfully teach not only students who look like them, but also students who are different racially, ethnically, linguistically, and culturally from themselves. Culturally responsive pedagogy, combined with practice in the field, connects theory to practice (defined as praxis) and is foundational to pre-service teacher preparation. Understanding one's own sociocultural identity occurs through first developing a sociocultural consciousness about oneself, and then about others. This is part of the critically reflective process of learning about others' social worlds and how these worlds are connected to race, ethnicity, socioeconomic class, and language ideologies (Banks, 1996; 1991).

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Teacher education scholars agree that to be effective culturally responsive pedagogy must begin with the following: critical self-reflection of one's own

sociocultural identity; developing authentic caring and empathy about one's students and their families; engaging in relationship building and collaborative teaching and learning practices with one's students; and valuing one's students' cultural and linguistic resources (Bennett, 2013; Nieto, 2013; Nieto, 2012; Gay, 2010; Noddings, 2005; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999). Gay & Kirkland (2003) believe that before PSTs can build relationships with their students and begin to understand the identities of their students and their community, they need to critically reflect on and understand their own sociocultural identity first.

Gay (2010) describes culturally responsive pedagogy to include curriculum development within teaching and learning practices that is relevant to students' sociocultural identity (Gay, 2010):

Teachers in all educational levels should create, clarify and articulate clearly defined beliefs about cultural diversity generally and in education specifically because personal beliefs drive instructional behaviors. (p. 216)

In her article Ladson-Billings (2014) delivers an historical overview of how she originally theorized and practiced culturally responsive pedagogy and culturally relevant pedagogy and various blends of culturally sustaining pedagogy. Ladson-Billings embraces and features the work that other scholars are engaging in as they continue to move and shake up the boundaries to support students in present day public schools. Ladson-Billings refers to Paris (2012) and the work of adapting instruction to support student needs when she states:

In developing this theory, culturally sustaining pedagogy (Paris, 2012), these authors use culturally relevant pedagogy as the place where the "beat drops" and then layer the multiple ways that this notion of pedagogy shifts, changes, adapts, recycles, and recreates instructional spaces to ensure that consistently marginalized students are repositioned into a place of normativity - that is, that they become subjects in the instructional process, not mere objects (p. 76).

In her current work, Ladson-Billings (2014) expands on her original version of culturally responsive pedagogy with an evolved version of culturally sustaining pedagogy. Paris (2012) discusses how culturally sustaining pedagogy can address the new challenges of today's test-driven classrooms:

In this era of state-mandated high-stakes testing, it is nearly impossible for teachers to ignore mundane content and skills-focused curricula. However, teachers undertaking culturally informed pedagogies take on the dual responsibility of external performance assessments as well as community and student-driven learning. The real beauty of a culturally sustaining pedagogy is its ability to meet both demands without diminishing either (pp. 83-84).

In their study, Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) examine Puerto Rican student experiences and claim that authentic culturally responsive pedagogy occurs when teachers make personal and sociocultural connections with students and their families to support academic success. Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) present their expanded theory of culturally responsive pedagogy that supports Puerto Rican students and families who have lived on the mainland for generations as well as those who have recently arrived. The authors illustrate their meaning of expanded culturally responsive pedagogy when they say:

There is no rubric of 'best practices' that will work with all Puerto Rican students. Rather, teachers need to immerse themselves in the communities of their students, allow themselves to be taught by members of the community, and use what they have learned to inform their practice (p. 54).

The authors are advocating for the need to build personal relationships with individual students, as opposed to a one-size-fits-all CRP practice for an entire ethnic group.

Bennett (2013) framed her qualitative study of culturally responsive teaching for pre-service teachers using three tenets to define culturally responsive pedagogy: "1) Teachers recognize conceptions of self and others; 2) Teachers understand the

significance of social interaction and promote social engagement in the classroom; 3) Teachers consider the conception of knowledge” (p. 382). In their study, Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) add additional complexity to the meaning of culturally responsive pedagogy through the lens of challenging existing oppressive systems that marginalize Latino/a students. Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) *Ricanstruct* what it means to be culturally responsive with Latino/a students. Their goal is to:

introduce new voices to the field – thereby RicanStructing the discourse – in the hope that they will serve not only as a powerful counter-narrative to a skewed portrayal of Puerto Rican students, but also to encourage other teachers to modify their practice in their work with these students” (p. 39).

Irizarry & Antrop-González posit that, “... teachers need to immerse themselves in the communities of their students, allow themselves to be taught by members of the community, and use what they have learned to inform their practice” (p. 54).

Pre-service Teacher Preparation

Cultural and Linguistic Capital

Research in the field premises that pre-service teachers develop cultural responsiveness by knowing who their students are, and by connecting with parents, family members, and the community. These connections widen their understandings and knowledge of the cultural, linguistic, ethnic, and socioeconomic identities of their students (Bennett, 2013; Nieto, 2013; Nieto, 2012; Gay, 2010; Noddings, 2005; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999).

Yosso (2005) discusses cultural and linguistic capital in her, “model of community cultural wealth, adapted from Oliver and Shapiro, 1995” (pp.78-79). Yosso describes linguistic capital within this model when she states:

Linguistic capital reflects the idea that Students of Color arrive at school with multiple language and communication skills. In addition, these children most often have been engaged participants in a storytelling tradition, that may include listening to and recounting oral histories, Figure 2. A model of community cultural wealth. Adapted from: Oliver & Shapiro, 1995 Downloaded by [University of Nevada Las Vegas] at 16:29 27 October 2013 Cultural capital and critical race theory 79 parables, stories (cuentos) and proverbs (dichos). (pp. 78-79)

Yosso includes the multimodalities of art, music, poetry, and other dramatic representations that individuals use for communication and translation for themselves in their learning and social experiences, as well as to support parents and family members (Yosso, 2005). Yosso further affirms the value of familial capital to highlight the rich cultural knowledge as resources held by family members and the larger community.

This form of cultural wealth engages a commitment to community well being and expands the concept of family to include a more broad understanding of kinship. Acknowledging the racialized, classed and heterosexualized inferences that comprise traditional understandings of 'family', familial capital is nurtured by our 'extended family', which may include immediate family (living or long passed on) as well as aunts, uncles, grandparents and friends who we might consider part of our familia. (p. 79)

In their theoretical paper, Villegas & Lucas (2002) also focus on culturally responsive teaching practices that include valuing the cultural and linguistic identities of students. Additionally, they stress the need for culturally responsive pedagogy to be threaded throughout curriculum in teacher preparation programs. The authors assert that culturally responsive pedagogy is the vehicle to promote and address equity and social justice in our local communities and the larger world. Villegas & Lucas identified six strands to address this:

Sociocultural consciousness; creating an affirming attitude in relation to culturally and linguistically diverse students; commitment to becoming agents of change; developing constructionist views of learning; knowing who your students are; and learning and building culturally responsive teaching practices (p. 20).

Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía framed their mixed method case study with teacher candidate (TC) participants using Latino children's literature as a pathway for TCs to engage in the Latino texts, "To prepare our (mostly white) teacher candidates (TCs) to be culturally responsive teachers, knowledge must be supplemented with heart" (p. 240). The authors cite Anaya (1992) who advocates for the use of Latino children's literature as a culturally responsive pedagogy within teacher preparation programs. Anaya states:

Our challenge is to incorporate into the curriculum all the voices of our country. We must use the literature of the barrio, of the neighborhood, of the region, of the ethnic group as a tool of engagement, a way to put students in touch with their social reality, and to build a positive self- image. We begin this journey by teaching our teachers to use this literature in school (p. 19)

Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía (2003) three-year case study addresses the growing cultural gap between the predominant White teaching force and the increasing numbers of students of color and English language learners in the public schools across the U.S. Their study was conducted in an urban school district in Colorado in three partner public schools, with 75% of the student population being Latino, Spanish speaking, and low income (Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía, 2003). The TCs ethnicity and gender breakdown of the TC participants was described in their study as: 4 Latino; 1 Asian; 0 Black; 1 Native American/White, and 21 White, with a total of 27 participants. Two participants were male and 25 were female. Seven of the TCs were in the Literacy program and 20 were Bilingual/ESL majors. The study was guided by the following three research questions: "Does reading Latino children's literature help teacher candidates develop or expand their knowledge base about Mexicans and Mexican Americans and other Latino groups? Are teacher candidates able to relate Latino literature to their own life experiences? Are teacher candidates willing to utilize Latino children's books when teaching?" (241).

Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía took on the role of mentors and coaches in the partner schools where the TCs were doing their fieldwork within literacy and bilingual education placements. All TCs participated in their fieldwork four days per week for 14 weeks. They also attended monthly seminars and participated in small literature groups. The seminars were led by the two researchers/instructors. The groups were assigned Latino children's texts to read and were asked to respond to the following three questions: "1. What has this book led you to think about? 2. Have you had any experiences similar to this? In what way? 3. Would you use this book with students? Why/Why not?" (p. 242). The responses were coded by the following categories: "(a) cultural; (b) general or universal; (c) negative; or (d) no response or opinion" (p. 242).

Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía (2003) concluded that while the TCs as a group were compassionate and caring in their responses, this did not necessarily translate into having gained more knowledge about the Mexican and Mexican-American cultures of their students as represented in the texts. Moving forward the researchers plan to focus more on teaching about Mexican and Mexican-American culture and history. The researchers also concluded that most of the TCs were uncomfortable dealing with their own biases about others' or willing to take risks to address controversial cultural issues within the texts during discussions (Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía, 2003).

Shifting Teaching Practices

Villegas & Lucas, like Ladson-Billings, view the work and role of teacher educators who work with PSTs, to understand and implement the criticalness of building connections and spaces between their students' home/community and their school/community. The authors posit that culturally responsive best teaching practices

should include instructors guiding and supporting culturally responsive practices as PSTs move back and forth between coursework and fieldwork within their teacher preparation programs (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Bennett (2013) in her empirical study agrees there is a deficit within teacher education programs that often fails to thread culturally responsive teaching practices throughout coursework. The author believes many teacher education programs offer a one-time review of culturally responsive practices instead of embedding culturally responsive pedagogy as an underlying theme throughout program coursework. In her theoretical paper, Sleeter (2011), like Bennett, addresses the surface ways culturally responsive pedagogy is practiced. Sleeter asserts culturally responsive pedagogy should not include, “cultural celebration, trivialization, essentializing culture, and substituting cultural for political analysis of inequalities” (p. 12). Instead, Sleeter believes culturally responsive pedagogy practices should be embedded throughout teacher preparation programs so pre-service teachers can engage in a continual analysis of the inequalities within school communities. The deeper critical analysis that Sleeter (2011) discusses in her theoretical paper calls for culturally responsive practices to be guided and supported within field placements. Sleeter believes that teachers need to be conscious of their students’ race and ethnicity in order to build relationships that support their academic learning. Sleeter (2011), Gay & Kirkland (2003), and Lucas & Villegas (2013) agree that teacher education programs should move away from positioning multicultural education courses as the central place where students begin to have these reflective discussions to critically analyze their social identity. Instead, these opportunities should be threaded throughout entire programs, so PSTs can continue to expand their understandings as they

connect theory to practice during fieldwork in order to begin the work of shifting their teaching practices.

Cultural Consciousness

Affirming Cultural and Linguistic Capital

Culturally responsive teachers must consider home language and culture as resources to support academic language learning in the classroom and as a bridge to home and community (Irizarry & Antrop-González, 2007). In their case study, Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) examine the inequity in urban school districts of families and communities who are ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse. Their study focuses on improving learning opportunities for Puerto Rican students and addresses the cultural distances or differences in language and cultural heritage between students, their communities, and their teachers. Irizarry & Antrop-González strive to *RicanStruct* what academic success and hope looks like for Puerto Rican students. The participants in their study included Puerto Rican high school students and high school teachers from a public high school in Springfield, Massachusetts. The teachers were chosen through community nomination method (Foster, 1991). Ten teachers identified as working positively with Puerto Rican students were invited from nominations made by parents, students, and community members: five White, three Puerto Rican, and two African American. All were between the ages of 22 and 56 and had been teaching for 1-36 years. Of the student participants the majority identified as Puerto Rican, while some identified as multi-ethnic Latinas/os. All were aged 17-19 and had attended urban public schools for their entire school career.

Irizarry & Antrop-González used cross case and cross group comparisons to identify common themes and differences (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The methodology included in-depth interviews and field notes from classroom observations at schools in the following three cities: Chicago, Illinois; Milwaukee, Wisconsin; and Springfield, Massachusetts. The researchers created ethnographic case studies from data collected. At the Springfield, Massachusetts site Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) used the following questions to learn about the participants' lives and how they make meaning of their social worlds within the high school setting: "1) How do teachers construct their narratives so that they positively inform their practice with Puerto Rican students? 2) What factors do Puerto Rican students identify as instrumental to their academic success? 3) How can the intersections of student experiences and teacher development forge new visions for school success among Puerto Rican students in U.S. Schools?" (p. 45).

The main findings of their study claim that authentic caring (Noddings, 2005) based on building personal relationships, as well as the role of family and community, are central to validating students' identities. The authors concluded that students' cultural and linguistic resources must be viewed as an asset to student learning by teachers and administrators. Further, Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) believe that teachers who share racial or ethnic aspects of one's students is not enough, and assert that culturally responsive pedagogy must be expanded, and spaces intentionally created to value Puerto Rican culture and community knowledge. Irizarry & Antrop-González also suggest that collaborative teaching and learning must be a foundational pedagogical practice where teachers and administrators work to build relationships with students and their families. The authors believe community engagement by teachers and school administrators will

ultimately provide a model for students to later return to work and become mentors in their community.

Irizarry & Antrop-González framed their findings using Yosso's (2005) expanded definition of cultural capital that includes, "aspirational, familial, social, resistant, navigational, and linguistic capital" (p. 46). The authors noticed how teacher participants practiced culturally responsive pedagogy through the lens of Yosso's theory of cultural capital by actively affirming their students' Puerto Rican culture. One teacher in the study noted: "Culture is a big thing that needs to be affirmed. My students feel very strong about being Puerto Rican" (p. 46). The authors believe school administrators and teachers must see family engagement as an asset and not a deficit.

Nieto (2013) like Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) in her qualitative study interviewed in-service teachers across the United States. One of the main threads throughout her text stressed that cultural responsiveness results from teachers consciously shifting their teaching practice to accommodate the needs of students in their classrooms. Like Bennett (2013) and Oncore & Gildin (2010), Nieto addresses the challenges many middle class, White pre-service and in-service teachers face as they begin teaching in ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse communities. However, like Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007), Nieto also studied teachers of color as she explored culturally responsive teaching and ways these teachers effectively practiced culturally responsive pedagogy. These practices included: critical self-reflection; valuing language and culture; insisting on high-quality teaching; excellent work expectations from all students; honoring families; and a commitment to lifelong learning (Nieto, 2013).

Sociocultural Identity & Critical Self Reflection

Gay & Kirkland (2010) discuss the underlying pedagogical practices that educators must work towards to be culturally responsive. They analyze this through a summary of scholarly works by Danielewicz (2001), Gay (2000), Ladson-Billings (2001), Palmer (1998), Schön (1983), Valli (1992), and Zeichner and Liston (1996) and articulate the role critical racial and cultural consciousness and self-reflection plays in this work:

They explain that teachers knowing who they are as people, understanding the contexts in which they teach, and questioning their knowledge and assumptions are as important as the mastery of techniques for instructional effectiveness. Critical racial and cultural consciousness should be coupled with self-reflection in both preservice teacher education and in-service staff development. (Gay & Kirkland, 2010, p. 181)

Ladson-Billings (1995), Gay & Kirkland (2003), Bennett (2013), and Nieto (2013) argue that it is essential for pre-service teachers to understand their own sociocultural identity first in order to teach effectively in diverse communities. The authors believe teaching and learning practices are connected to and guided by one's sociocultural identity, and that teachers should build a critical, racial, and cultural consciousness that involves reflective practice. This reflective practice places the onus on pre-service teachers to reflect on their own cultural and social identities and experiences with the ultimate goal of understanding how their sociocultural identities impact and contribute to their pedagogical practices. As PSTs begin to engage in critical reflective practice about their own identities, they will then be in the position to engage in one-to-one relationships that create spaces for caring about the ethnic, racial and linguistic identities that each of their students bring to the classroom.

Challenges White Teachers Face

There is an overwhelming presence of White, middle class, and predominantly female pre-service candidates in teacher education programs across the United States (Knight-Diop 2011; Commins & Miramontes, 2006). Because of the current demographics, these White teachers will be the largest representation of the new workforce that will be teaching the growing ethnically and linguistically diverse students in communities nationwide (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). Gay & Kirkland believe that it is necessary to layer reflective practices in order to guide White PSTs to effectively navigate critical consciousness and attain success for students of color:

Self-reflection and cultural critical consciousness are imperative to improving the educational opportunities and outcomes for students of color. They involve thoroughly analyzing and carefully monitoring both personal beliefs and instructional behaviors about the value of cultural diversity, and the best ways to teach ethnically different students for maximum positive effects. (p. 182)

Gay & Kirkland (2003) believe it is essential for White PSTs to engage in consciousness-raising work to become more aware of racial, ethnic, linguistic, and cultural differences in order to shift their teaching practices. Similarly, Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) address the complexity of culturally responsive pedagogy and examine ways teachers and their Puerto Rican students experience academic success through culturally responsive teaching and learning practices. Irizarry & Antrop-González stress the necessity of teachers learning about who their students and families are, while understanding that teaching is about making social change and being willing and able to shift teaching practices to connect students' worlds to the classroom curriculum. These authors promote a more activist stance for teachers; the authors believe, to be culturally responsive in their practices, instructors must be agents of change within their daily teaching.

Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) suggest “dismantling” (p. 39) the existing institutional oppressive systems within public education that prevent many Puerto Rican students from achieving success (Irizarry & Antrop-González, 2007). They attribute the academic success experienced by Puerto Rican students in their study to the students’ dedicated hard work and what they consider to be pure luck in having connected to a culturally responsive teacher or administrator who encouraged and supported their Puerto Rican cultural identity. Irizarry & Antrop-González found that the personal connections students felt with their teachers and administrators were key factors contributing to their academic success. The authors also claim that just because a teacher is of Latinx ethnicity, it is not necessarily a guarantee that they will possess the reflective practices that support culturally responsive pedagogy. Irizarry & Antrop-González assert that all teachers need to value the cultural resources of all their students and be willing to engage in mutually beneficial teaching and learning with their students (Irizarry & Antrop-González, 2007).

The connection between examining one’s sociocultural identity and developing culturally responsive pedagogy is further supported by Delpit (2006) when she discusses the role group identity plays in a student’s individual choice to use his or her own dialect to communicate within the classroom. Delpit links students’ home/community language and a student’s preference to it over Standard English as a unique connection to a student’s cultural identity, an asset to build further learning upon. Delpit highlights this when she says, “First, they should recognize that the linguistic form a student brings to school is intimately connected with loved ones, community, and personal identity”

(p.53). Delpit (2006) like Nieto (2013) premises that teachers need to become advocates for their students' cultural and language identities. Delpit states:

Nowhere do we foster inquiry into who our students really are or encourage teachers to develop links to the often rich home lives of students, yet teachers cannot hope to begin to understand who sits before them unless they can connect with the families and communities from which their students come. (p.179)

The asset perspective of teaching and learning that Delpit (2006) points to can grow out of the collaborative efforts by classroom teachers as they engage with community and family members to learn more about their individual student's culture, race, and language. Relationship building can also be utilized within teacher education curriculum and fieldwork and contribute exponentially to a student's academic success in the classroom.

DiAngelo (2012) uses a whiteness theoretical framework to challenge white silence and identifies the role it plays in perpetuating racism. Through a series of student quotes related to white silence around anti-racism, DiAngelo emphasizes the perils of silence and how we become complicit when we do not speak up. First DiAngelo provides a definition of racism as described by Hilliard (1992):

as encompassing economic, political, social, and cultural structures, actions, and beliefs that systematize and perpetuate an unequal distribution of privileges, resources, and power among white people and people of color" as understood by whiteness scholars. (p.3)

DiAngelo reminds us of the dangerous norms that exist in white society when we don't talk about race and attempt to make it invisible. DiAngelo (2012) urges the reader to examine how racism is threaded through all the layers of our social worlds. The author further posits that the practice of silence contributes to fortifying systematic racism within our society, which then leaves the anti-racism work to either people of color or

white allies. Breaking this silence, DiAngelo insists, will interrupt white power and disrupt the privilege that comes with whiteness.

DiAngelo (2012) aligns with Frankenberg (2001) about whiteness and the domination whites historically and systemically hold over people of color: “This domination is enacted moment by moment on individual, interpersonal, cultural, and institutional levels” (Frankenberg, 2001). DiAngelo similarly agrees with McIntosh, (1988) that it is important to make the connection between white dominant society and the sociopolitical dynamics at play that reinforce white privilege, rather than seeing white dominance as an individual only behavior. McIntosh states:

One factor seems clear about all of the interlocking oppressions. They take both active forms which we can see and embedded forms which as a member of the dominant group one is not taught to see. In my class and place, I did not see myself as a racist because I was taught to recognize racism only in individual acts of meanness by members of my group, never in the invisible systems conferring unsought racial dominance on my group from birth. Disapproving of the systems won't be enough to change them. I was taught to think that racism could end if white individuals changed their attitudes. (But) a “white” skin in the United States opens many doors for whites whether or not we approve of the way dominance has been conferred on us. Individual acts can palliate, but cannot end, these problems. (p. 3)

In their theoretical text Cutrie & Johnson (2010) examined the deficit theory in relation to preparing pre-service teachers to teach all students from an asset-based pedagogy. Cutrie & Johnson note:

The majority of teachers in the United States continue to come from white, middle class, English-speaking, Christian backgrounds (Ladson-Billings, 2005; Slater, 2008). The demographics of teachers contrast sharply with the demographics of today's students. ELLs are the fastest growing group of public school students, and this group is expected to keep growing with increased density across the U.S. (NCELA, 2009). (p. 192)

Cutrie & Johnson point to the rapidly changing demographics and juxtapose it

with the rising number of English language learners alongside the mostly White middle-class candidates entering the teaching field across the nation. These diverging demographics make it critical to examine and make changes within teacher education programs to better prepare new teachers to teach all students.

Empathy, Caring and Relationship Building

When practitioners engage in authentic caring, they consider the whole student, which is a central component to culturally responsive teaching (Noddings, 2005; 1992; 1984; Valenzuela, 1999). Noddings elaborates on the relational aspect of caring when she states, “Caring is a way of being in relation, not a set of specific behaviors” (p. 17). Noddings defines authentic caring as a mutually experienced exchange between teachers and students.

Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) in their study expand on the concept of authentic caring. They note that the role of family and community is key to bridge the cultural capital Puerto Rican students bring to the classroom. Within their study, Irizarry & Antrop-González define authentic forms of caring as when teachers and administrators affirm Puerto Rican culture and Spanish language as rich resources, and when educators create spaces for families and communities to contribute their valuable knowledge to support learning experiences within the school community. Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) believe that developing personal trust with students and families is central to authentic relationship building that can then lead to increased academic success.

Noddings (2005; 1992) in her theoretical texts posits that teachers must focus on relational caring in order to be effective. Noddings’ connects to other scholars like Valenzuela (1999) and Sleeter (2001) who claim that teacher and learner roles are

complex, and both teachers and students need time to build trusting relationships.

Noddings (2005) states:

All children need to feel safe in their relations with teachers. It must be acceptable to admit error, confusion, or even distaste for the subject at hand. But students must also accept responsibility for communicating their needs to teachers. They must understand that their responses enliven or dampen their teachers' enthusiasm. Students have tremendous effects on their teachers, and these possibilities should be discussed openly. The contributions of teachers and students are necessarily unequal, but they are nonetheless mutual; the relationship is marked by reciprocity. (p. 108)

Noddings further stresses that trust must be built into authentic relationships as the underlying basis of caring. The author believes this understanding about building authentic relationships can lead to a new construct of what authentic caring should look like. However, Nodding notes this remains challenging, as schools often do not support spaces for teachers and students to create these individual relationships.

Valenzuela (1999) refers to Noddings' belief that caring is intertwined with relationship building. Valenzuela and Noddings believe this concept of caring is at the heart of teaching – teachers build relationships with students because they care about the individuals they are connecting with. Noddings insists that caring must be mutually experienced, meaning that the person being cared for must feel or experience the care as authentic and vice versa.

Valenzuela (1999) explores the relationship-building concept more critically in her three-year ethnographic study of Mexican-American students in Houston, Texas. As a participant observer, Valenzuela shares the experiences of high school students and their teachers through the lens of noticing what authentic caring versus aesthetic caring looks like. Valenzuela agrees with Noddings' (2005; 1992) definition of authentic caring that includes considering the physical, psychological, and spiritual elements within the child.

This perspective of caring is preferred, as opposed to “aesthetic caring” (Noddings, 2005) that focuses on “things and ideas” (p. 22). Authentic caring is focused on humanizing students and considering their whole being. In practice this translates to learning about students’ sociocultural and linguistic identities, creating spaces for bi-cultural experiences, and making personal connections between students, their families, and teachers. In her ethnographic mixed methods study Valenzuela uses a combination of participant observations, field notes, and interviews with students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members. The author employed quantitative data collection through questionnaires, interviews, and historical and curriculum-related documents. Additionally, Valenzuela utilized qualitative practices in her open-ended interviews with students and teachers, as well as in focus groups. Valenzuela (1999) believes that to create an environment where authentic caring can evolve, we need:

To make schools truly caring institutions for members of historically oppressed subordinate groups like Mexican Americans, authentic caring, as currently described in the literature, is necessary but not sufficient. Students’ cultural world and their structural position must also be fully apprehended, with school-based adults deliberately bringing issues of race, difference, and power into central focus. (p. 109)

Similar to Valenzuela, Bennett (2013) highlights the importance of personal connections in her qualitative case study that included eight White PSTs aged 19-24, divided into two groups of four, selected from 35 students in an education course from those who participated in tutoring. Bennett’s (2013) research questions included: “While pre-service teachers tutor diverse student populations, what effective facets of field experience contribute to developing understanding about culturally responsive teaching? While preservice teachers tutor diverse student populations, what ineffective facets of

field experience provide limited contributions to developing understanding about culturally responsive pedagogy?” (p. 387).

Bennett observed that the four PSTs she named *Group A* engaged more with their students than the four PSTs she identified as *Group B*. The participants in *Group A* displayed a higher level of self-awareness as shown through critical self-reflection and articulated that the connections they made with students influenced their culturally responsive practices. They noticed themselves evolving as they learned about the differences between their students and themselves.

Despite the fact that both groups initially stereotyped students as “at risk” with little interest in learning, only *Group A* demonstrated self-reflexivity as they recognized the deficit assumptions, they had originally made, were wrong. The increased self-awareness of understanding their students’ identity came directly as a result of the one-to-one tutoring that the pre-service teachers engaged in with the students. During tutoring, *Group A* engaged in relationship building, which led the PSTs to make personal connections with students. The PSTs in *Group A* interacted one-to-one with students through tutoring and conversations, and they purposely arranged themselves physically at eye level during these exchanges. Conversely, the PSTs in *Group B* chose to remain in a small group, hanging back and watching rather than engaging with individual students. *Group B* also demonstrated deficit perspectives as they made assumptions about these students in the afterschool program; they incorrectly believed that all the students must have come from “lower socioeconomic” homes because they participated in the afterschool program. Bennett attributed this to the fact that *Group B* did not develop relationships with the students and never really knew who they were. According to

Bennett, the one-to-one student connections, relationship building, and critical self-reflection that the PSTs in *Group A* engaged in, contributed to the shift in their understanding about critically responsive teaching practices and how to best connect to their students.

Previously to Bennett (2013), Oncore & Gildin (2010) examined pre-service teacher preparation practices in respect to ethnically, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse communities and found that building personal relationships with students is central to disrupting the deficit perspective that many PSTs come in with. In their qualitative study, the PSTs were positioned as participant observers in an afterschool program called *All Stars Project (ASP)*. The participants were engaged in the *All Stars Talent Show*. The PSTs reflected on their observations at rehearsals, on bus rides with students, during activities, and while volunteering for the show. They also engaged in reflective practices through written reflections. One participant wrote:

The more contact I had with the people who were my future students, the more textured my understandings of them became and the less likely I was to base those understandings on stuff I read or imagined. (p. 39)

This PST participant articulated the criticality of understanding her students and displayed an asset perspective of her students' sociocultural identity. Oncore & Gildin claim this type of engagement has the potential to lead teacher candidates to a wider social and emotional understanding of family, language, and cultural identity within the student's community. Oncore & Gildin (2010) found that collaboration was built upon the evolving relationships between the teacher/school community and the student/family community.

Antrop-González & De Jesus' (2006) qualitative study focuses on *educational caring* and connects to Nieto (2013), Valenzuela (1999), Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007), and other leaders in this scholarship who present caring as a foundation of culturally responsive pedagogy. The authors explored the experiences of academically successful Puerto Rican high school students and their teachers in two Puerto Rican/Latino communities – the Dr. Pedro Albizu Campos High School (PACHS) in Chicago, Illinois and El Puente Academy for Peace and Justice (El Puente) in Brooklyn, New York. An ethnographic methodology was used by Antrop-González & De Jesus to collect data through semi-structured interviews, participant observations, and historical documents. The authors included McKamey's (2004) theoretical framework of *critical care* as a lens and cited his three theories of caring: "Teacher caring theory, caring community theory and difference theory" (p. 411) to understand how the two schools in their study were able to create a positive learning experience. According to Antrop-González & De Jesus (2006) both schools "...create a culture of high academic expectations for their students, value high quality interpersonal relationships between student and teachers, and privilege the funds of knowledge that students and their respective communities bring to school" (p. 409).

Antrop-González & De Jesus' (2006) study continues the work of Valenzuela (1999) and her discussion of subtractive schooling, a theoretical framework that recognizes how schools devalue Latinx cultural and linguistic identities and the U.S. schooling practices that pressure immigrant students to assimilate. Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) connect with Antrop-González & De Jesus's (2006) findings that challenge the existing concept of caring within Latinx communities. The authors'

findings presented through the student participants' lenses reveal that, "...authentic forms of caring based on Latina/o values and their struggles for educational rights are embedded in the formal and informal structures and curricula of both schools" (p. 429).

Antrop-González & De Jesus (2006) include the following summary by participants from PACHS and El Puente about the authentic caring they experienced from their teachers:

Students explained that caring teachers offered them guidance and friendship inside and outside the classroom, held them to high academic expectations, and demonstrated a sense of solidarity by being active co-learners and facilitators rather than authoritarian teachers. (p. 423)

Antrop-González & De Jesus (2006) present caring as foundational to the practice of culturally responsive teachers. The continuum of caring that the authors discuss is defined when the researchers state:

facilitators and administrators were accessible, listened to them and were willing to invest time with them to support them academically or with other concerns. Students did not describe caring ambiguously; rather, they linked it directly to facilitators' insistence on their academic success and the support they provided toward this end. (p. 424)

Because of the time spent and investment made by administrators and teachers, students felt cared for and as a result, experienced increased academic success, and is an example of the authentic caring that Antrop-González & De Jesus (2006) discuss as effective culturally responsive approaches to engage in with their students.

Experiential Critical Service Learning

Kolb's (1999) experiential learning theory (ELT) promotes a form of learning through being immersed in an experience and suggests individuals gain knowledge through the changing that occurs through the cumulative experiences during the immersive learning. Leading scholars and researchers have moved Kolb's theory forward via coursework that combines experiential learning with cultural immersion.

Experiential Learning

In their study, Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke (2010) state:

Developing meaningful relationships with people from diverse backgrounds and experiences and taking opportunities to directly experience different cultures through travel are identified as ways of supplementing intellectual knowledge with experiential learning. (Mio et al., 2006; Sue & Sue, 2008, as cited in Tomlinson-Clarke, 2010, p. 167)

Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke (2010) expand on and address the experiential learning approach through a community centered, cultural immersion course held in South Africa. The experiential, cultural immersion course was based out of a University in the Northeast that is predominantly White. The cultural immersion course grew out of a partnership between the university and the host country, South Africa. The course was led by two instructors, the Director of Continuing Education and Global Programs and an Education Psychology faculty member. The instructors framed the course using a cultural immersion model that included the following seven phases: "...program development, recruitment and selection, orientation, pretrip departure seminars and training, implementation, debriefing and evaluation, and culminating event" (Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010, pp. 169-170). Participants included 14 graduate students from the counseling program who had taken either multicultural coursework or related training as part of their graduate program (Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010). The course included: seminars, lectures, reflection journals, and experiential service learning. The authors' noticed participants initially held preconceived beliefs and stereotypes about cultural differences prior to the travel course, and that these assumptions shifted during the course through cross-cultural interactions and guided instruction. Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke note:

The majority of participants reported increased cultural competence resulting

from their international cultural immersion experiences. One participant wrote about the ongoing challenge of developing cultural competence: "My greatest challenge is just listening, withholding opinions about their culture and systems, staying focused with a willingness and openness to learn." (p.172)

After nine years of running the course, the authors concluded that the cultural immersion training model within their course proved to be a successful framework. Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke (2010) suggest moving forward that, there must be a collaborative and equal relationship between the participants and the community members; the length of time in cultural immersion experience is critical, recruiting a diverse racial-ethnic participant group and a diverse cultural representation of course and host country facilitators is critical to developing a collaborative relationship and teaching and learning experience; pre training to begin discussions and prepare participants for cultural immersion in the host country; journal keeping; and structuring a continual debriefing and guided instruction during the cultural immersion experience is essential (Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke, 2010).

Cai & Sankaran (2015), like Tomlinson-Clarke & Clarke (2010) conducted a qualitative study in an experiential learning, cultural immersion travel course to China. Cai & Sankaran examined whether the promotion of critical thinking, cultural immersion and thematic interdisciplinary coursework, guided by cross-departmental faculty and combined with specific goals and rigorous coursework, can scaffold "global understanding", "cultural competency", and "intellectual development" (p. 38). Cai and Sankaran state:

Thus, students in modern times have to become proficient in understanding the process of globalization, and yet have the openness of understanding different perspectives, and readiness to utilize some of the principles and practices of other cultures. Such an ongoing effort in their educational journey is facilitated by experiences that immerse them in cultures different from their own allowing for

their understanding the world through a horizontal rather than a vertical perspective. (p. 39)

Cai & Sankaran (2015) claim that an interdisciplinary short-term study abroad experience can be successful in developing critical thinking skills among students. The authors also claim that cultural immersion experiences can support students' own understanding of their culture and others' cultures, as well as support the development of critical thinking skills and the ability to connect to "real life" issues (p. 47). Participants included 12 students: 3 female and 9 male students. The participants, aged 19-22, were in their second, third, or fourth year of study, and came from two different U.S. universities. Students were enrolled in the following disciplines: political science, history, elementary education, public health, economics, and environmental science. Nine students were Caucasian, including one international student from Greece who was studying abroad at an American university. Two students were African American, and the study described one student as Asian. This was the first study abroad experience for all but one of the students. Two students had studied one semester of Mandarin before this study abroad course to China. The faculty members were from the departments of Education, Public Health, and Environmental Health. They collaborated on course development and instruction, each contributing within their area of expertise. All faculty members had previous international travel experiences in different countries. Two faculty members were born outside of the U.S. and are bilingual. The third was a Fulbright scholar in Asia for one semester.

Cai & Sankaran (2015) employed a qualitative research design based on site visits, activities, course assignments, and the personal reflections that students recorded in their daily journals and written final reports. Faculty assessed students through

formative and summative evaluation based on students' written reflections and final report. The use of the faculty's thematic disciplinary approach sparked critical thinking among students and supported the goal of students making connections to real life issues while developing an understanding of their own and others' cultural identities. The thematic interdisciplinary approach evidenced within student reflections showed critical thinking skill development through cultural immersion. Cai & Sankaran (2015) claim that a theme-based interdisciplinary curriculum study abroad course, supported by cultural immersion, can successfully promote critical thinking and promote a wider understanding of other cultures.

Critical Service Learning versus Traditional Service Learning

Collaborative work with family and community is central to critical service learning (CSL). CSL begins with the idea of working in collaboration with, as opposed to working or doing for community members. This praxis shifts the power dynamic by positioning the community members as holders of knowledge and agents of change in their social worlds (Pompa, 2002). Within the critical service learning movement there is a consensus among scholars that service learning without the critical reflective and social justice component may, in fact, be more harmful than helpful to communities. These scholars believe that service learning often works to create a deficit perspective, positioning service learners, as the knowers, while community members become the receivers of this knowledge or help. This model of traditional service learning places the power in the hands of the service-learning faculty and university students instead of with community members (Pompa, 2002). Ginwright (2002) further expands the definition of CSL to include care and consciousness and connects social concerns to the wider

institutional inequities that exist. CSL occurs when service engagement is combined with pedagogical practices framed in critical thinking and a social justice pedagogical approach (Mitchell, 2008).

In her literature review, Mitchell (2008) problematizes traditional service learning when she presents critical service learning as a deeper, complex social justice pedagogical model: “The work to realize the potential of this pedagogy and avoid paternalism demands a social change orientation, working to redistribute power, and developing authentic relationships as central to the classroom and community experience” (Mitchell, 2008, p. 52). Mitchell frames the differences between traditional and critical service learning within Figure 1 below:

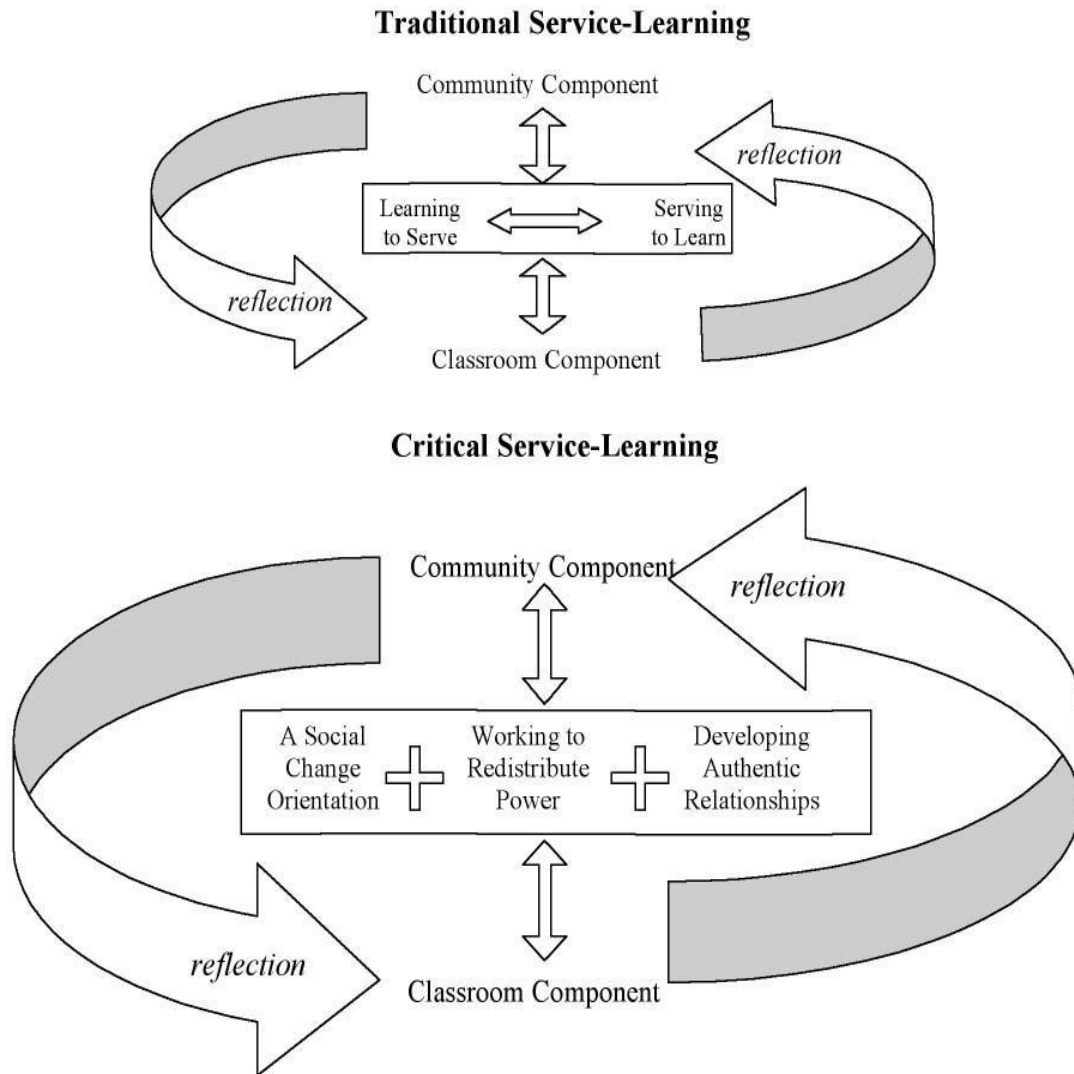


Figure 1 Traditional vs. Critical Service-Learning. Reprinted from “Traditional vs. Critical Service-Learning: Engaging the Literature to Differentiate Two Models” by T.D. Mitchell, 2008, Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning, 14(2), p. 53.

Mitchell represents the reflection and the community components as two consistent elements in both models as depicted in Figure 1 above. The critical elements in this model emphasize social change while at the same time recognizing the inequity that exists within the power dynamics, with the goal to change those dynamics through relationship building. This social justice approach is what defines critical service learning as a critically responsive pedagogical practice that supports effective and authentic social justice praxis.

Shabazz & Cooks (2014) examine community service-learning pedagogy through the theoretical frameworks of critical race, critical pedagogy, and whiteness situated in a media project with middle school youth and UMass students. Through their “Re-Envisioning Media Project”, the authors suggest that critical service learning pedagogy can move beyond the helping mode that often positions communities as having deficits while the university partners and university students are positioned as the helpers with knowledge and power. Shabazz & Cooks specifically look at how moving from a deficit-based discourse to an asset-based discourse can play a significant role in shifting the power within these college and community partnerships. The authors outline the essentialness of race and class discourse in relation to service work in many community partnerships. Shabazz & Cooks note that the university students are mostly White and middle class, and that the communities they are going into are often high poverty communities and ethnically diverse. The authors’ research is focused within a middle school in Holyoke with 6th graders. The students in the school are 75% Latino and the school are identified by the Massachusetts Education Department as underperforming (Shabazz & Cooks, 2014). The authors utilized a mixed methodology that included qualitative and quantitative research that used journals, video interviews, pre and post surveys, and self-reflections to collect data. The 6th graders examined and discussed race, ethnicity, and nationality and then produced a media project that represented these concepts within their community. Shabazz & Cooks point to Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) when they discuss “asset-mapping”. Kretzmann and McKnight (1993) also argue for a focus on the strengths within a community and advocate for “asset-mapping” which outlines the method of locating what is valued in the identification of problems and

problem solving as a community. This process directly affects their lives, as they themselves become agents of social change to disrupt the unequal power dynamics that play out when outsiders come in to affect change for them. Kretzmann and McKnight cite relationship building between community members and partners as key to successful critical service learning. Shabazz and Cooks summarize Kretzman & McKnight's "asset mapping" when they state:

Assets are the strengths and talents already present in communities that often go unrecognized in a server-client or needs-based framework. Assets are not merely a code word for resources but are the result of a strategy that requires the identification of deeply held values and defining problems and developing solutions from within the community. (p. 5)

Shabazz & Cooks (2014) used critical race theory (CRT) to problematize service learning work that often does not address the perceived deficit representations of communities that is pervasive within schools, communities, and the media. CRT theorist Green (2001) calls for critical service learning scholars to closely examine their pedagogy and to push the predominant White students/teachers to place race, ethnicity, class, and whiteness at the center of discussion in this work and research. The theoretical framework used by Shabazz & Cooks (2014) is based on how language is used in the university classroom in relation to the community participants. Cooks & Scharrer (2006) assert that this work does not happen by itself and is linked to relationship building within these experiences that enriches the community service learning and lays the foundation for social change through challenging the inequity of power. The authors posit that critical service learning pedagogy must move out of the deficit-based discourses in relation to how they view and talk about communities, and into an asset-based approach

where community members are valued, and the work engaged in, is collaborative (Shabazz & Cooks, 2014).

Transformative Shifts

Bennett (2013) highlights critical self-reflexivity and further claims that experiential learning combined with guided coursework and instructional mentoring helps to shift PSTs' cultural understandings towards an asset model. In her study, Bennett describes pre-service teacher transformations that occurred through service learning as positive shifts in how PSTs view their students' culture and multiple identities. Bennett further underscores how these new understandings inform PSTs teaching, as they consciously modify their understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy during and after interactions with their students. These shifts evolved as PSTs learned about their students' culture, language, race, and ethnicity through their personal one-to-one connections within the service-learning field experience.

Bennett's findings conclude that cultural immersion through experiential fieldwork in ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse school communities can support deeper, authentic connections for PSTs. Bennett's findings suggest that these authentic connections happen when PSTs engage in critical reflective practices and receive very explicit instructional guidance that connects theory within coursework to practice in the field. Further, Bennett (2013) finds that the process of PSTs developing one-to-one relations with students is an essential component to successfully develop culturally responsive practices. Bennett claims that:

Multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy should become intertwined into curriculum throughout teacher education programs (Hill, 2009; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Zeichner & Hoefft, 1996). Preservice teachers progressively transform from experiences, and their understandings do not occur

in one instance or during one semester long course but gradually over time, as ascertained in my research. (p. 409)

Bennett points to positive transformations in PSTs when their field experiences are layered onto each other and evolve throughout the tenure of their teacher preparation program.

In their empirical study, Maynes, Hatt & Wideman (2013) also explore the possible transformative social-political shifts that could occur for PSTs in a four-week service-learning placement outside of a classroom. The purpose of their study was to examine “liberatory” learning (Chambers, 2009) that, “...involves transformational shifts in social consciousness and provides service of benefit to both the participant and the host organization” (p. 80). Maynes, Hatt & Wideman examined 17 PSTs and 17 supervising mentors in a variety of community organizations that work with children or youth or have an educational component within their organization. The authors used pre and post survey questionnaires and anchored their study using Chambers’ (2009) four levels of service learning: “level 1- Experiential learning, level 2- Social learning, level 3- Student Development, and level 4- Liberatory Learning” (p. 81). The authors hoped the outcome would include PSTs experiencing liberatory learning. Liberatory learning is a social justice construct based on the theory that PSTs would increase consciousness as they grew and changed, and as they became immersed in social change and dialogue within the community (Freire, 1970; 2011; 2012). This critical consciousness process includes in-depth critical reflections by the participants. The methodology included positioning the study within a pre-practicum course in the fourth year of the teaching preparation program. The study’s findings concluded the course experience was a positive and collaborative model. However, the authors suggested a more structured reflection process

should be built into the methodology, as well as a structured debriefing process to make the learning and consciousness development that occurred within the experience more explicit.

Pre-Service Teachers Benefits from Experiential Service Learning

Chambers & Lavery (2012), similarly to Maynes, Hatt & Wideman (2013), Oncore & Gildin (2010), and Bennett (2013) examined experiential learning in their qualitative study of a service-learning program in the School of Education at the University of Notre Dame Australia (UNDA). This qualitative study explored service learning as a pedagogical practice. They posed the research question: “What are the experiences of preservice teachers undertaking specific service-learning units as a component of their undergraduate teaching program?” (p. 131). Chambers & Lavery (2012) posit that service learning should address real community needs and frame service and learning as equally essential. The authors believe that there should be a mutually beneficial exchange between the pre-service teachers and the community, where the community identifies what they need, and the pre-service teachers work with the community to support their needs. Chambers & Lavery note that the implementation for this process has four stages that are dependent on each other: “preparation, action, reflection and demonstration” (p. 129). The authors framed their study using a social justice theoretical framework. Discourse analysis was utilized to explore how PSTs’ were making sense of their experiences. Researchers examined the PST’s reflective responses by coding segments of their reflections into themes. The study noticed pre-service teachers expressed empathy in connection with their experiences. The authors identified six themes: “empathy, leadership, self and societal reflection, confidence, professional

practice and increased knowledge and skills” (p. 132). Chambers & Lavery found that most of the PSTs’ reflective responses were positive and they connected the negative responses to logistical time management issues. The combination of service and academic learning, combined with the reflective and critical thinking participants engaged in, were identified as key factors in what made the experiential learning explicit (Chambers & Lavery, 2012):

However, at its heart, “service-learning is a form of experiential learning that employs service as its modus operandi” (Crews, 1995, p. 1). Specifically, service-learning is a teaching method “which combines community service and academic instruction as it focuses on critical, reflective thinking and civic responsibility” (Centre for Service and Leadership, n.d., p. 1). (p. 129)

In their analysis, Chambers and Lavery outline the criticality of combining the service and the academics to raise it to the level of what CSL demands in the realm of reflection and developing a sense of civic mindedness and responsibility.

Research by Oncore & Gildin (2010) challenges existing ways teacher education programs prepare PSTs to work in culturally, linguistically, and economically diverse communities. In their qualitative case study, Oncore & Gildin (2010) premise that teaching is social activism connected to the local community through civic engagement. They observed that collaborative partnerships happened when relationships between the teacher/school community and the student/family community evolved. The authors posed that engagement in service learning or community projects is an opportunity for PSTs to create spaces for learners to develop and showcase existing and new literacies. They premise that this type of engagement has the potential to lead teacher candidates to a wider social and emotional understanding of family, language, and cultural identity within the student’s individual and community worlds. Oncore & Gildin (2010) examine the theory of how transformative experiences, when embedded in alternative learning

experiences outside of school-based initiatives, can disrupt the deficit views of pre-service teachers and instead create an asset model of how pre-service teachers see ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse student populations. Oncore & Gildin (2010) claim:

For teachers to enact their roles as public professionals, they would have to go beyond seeing education as a component of social life to education and community as co-participants in the construction of a new and better community life. (p. 31)

Oncore & Gildin address the realities of moving beyond the teacher centered classroom and out into the student-centered community in order to be effective teachers by engaging with the community outside of the school and classroom.

In her theoretical paper, Knight-Diop (2011) presents civic engagement in teacher education as a pathway for PSTs to engage with immigrant youth populations in urban communities. The author poses the following questions:

Who is responsible in teacher education programs to teach civic engagement? How can teacher educators address the role of civic engagement in teacher education in relation to urban communities? How can teacher education programs build culturally relevant practices to address, connect, and support teachers' and their diverse students' civic identities and engagement work? (p. 362)

Knight-Diop agrees with Commins & Miramontes (2006) in their assertion that teacher preparation pedagogical practices have a major effect on academic outcomes of teachers within their classrooms and schools. These scholars believe civic engagement should be a central component of fieldwork for pre-service teacher educators. In their theoretical paper, Commins & Miramontes (2006) pose that educators must be conscious of language, culture, and the intersections of these dynamics within their classrooms and schools. Further, they conclude that it is the responsibility of teacher education programs to provide the structure and framework for PSTs to engage and reflect on these

understandings throughout their course and fieldwork. Commins & Miramontes view the preparation for working with linguistically and culturally diverse student populations as a critical piece of preparing teacher educators throughout their programs.

Language Ideologies

Alim, Rickford, & Ball (2016) frame raciolinguistics through their scholarly work titled, *How Language Shapes Our Ideas About Race: Raciolinguistics*:

The chapters in this section undertake the project of *linguaging race*; that is, the contributors theorize race through the lens of language. These chapters collectively enhance our understanding of the processes of racialization by highlighting language's central role in the construction, maintenance, and transformation of racial and ethnic identities. (p. 7)

In their text, Alim, Rickford, & Ball (2016) analyze how language and racism are intertwined. Through the lens of raciolinguistics, the intersections of linguistic, racial, ethnic, and economic identities influence how students, who are considered to be language minorities, are positioned within educational settings and the larger community (Alim, Rickford & Ball, 2016). Raciolinguistics supports an in-depth examination of how perspectives of race are evidenced in language communication and identifies the wide-reaching effects these layered meanings have in our social worlds.

Language ideologies specifically contribute to asset and deficit perspectives in pre-service teachers (PSTs) as these teacher candidates explore their preconceived cultural beliefs and biases about their students and others' linguistic, racial, ethnic, and economic identities. In U.S. public schooling, English language learning can be a positive or negative experience for minority language learners. Understanding language diversity as a resource is a key element to building culturally responsive teaching and learning practices in order to then shift preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases to promote positive learning experiences. These shifts have the potential to occur when pre-service

teachers begin to critically reflect on their own and others' cultural, linguistic and racial identities (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay & Kirkland, 2002; Bennett, 2013).

Shabazz & Cooks (2014) examine language viewed as a problem through the theoretical lens of deficit discourses:

Deficit discourses often frame "problems" based in a hierarchical system of social capital, where some groups have inherently more resources than others. This conception of resources, and their relative lack or fulfillment, drives the model of social programs designed to address the ills of groups on the margins of society. More insidious, however, is the degree to which deficit language becomes the measure upon which marginalized groups are defined against white middle class society in the United States. (p. 16)

Understanding that possessing language is power makes it imperative for scholars and educators to question and challenge pre-existing language ideologies and practices within our education system that position English as the language of power. Because English is often positioned as the dominant language, subsequently students' and families' native languages and cultural identities are not considered resources to enhance learning. It is critical for educators and scholars to examine whose knowledge is considered valuable and whose is not, in order to address the devaluation of heritage languages in the classroom, and warrants further exploration to address this problematic concern within language diversity ideologies (Wei & Moyer, 2008).

The Social Worlds of Linguaging

Wei & Moyer (2008) offer new insights about negotiations that bilingual and multilingual speakers continually make as they determine when and which language to speak. This discernment that multilingual speakers undertake shows the complex decision-making processes individuals must continually traverse in their social worlds of linguaging, or how they make decisions to communicate. For example, when in a multilingual setting, individuals must determine whose language to speak, whether there

is a shared language, and when to code-switch (García & Wei, 2014). These are all ongoing sociolinguistic, complex language/speech decisions individual students are making through their daily conversations and within their academic work. These language navigations should be understood and supported by both PSTs and in-service teachers.

Kress & Hodge (1979) discuss language ideologies that examine culture, class, and the tensions that exist within those power structures. Their linguistic research is grounded in the construct that all language is situated within, connected to, and cannot be separated from the unique social worlds of the speakers. Scholars who come from a *sociolinguistic perspective* view language as a socially constructed phenomenon that is an integral part of one's identity (Wei & Moyer, 2008). The sociolinguistic perspective examines the need for PSTs to understand their own sociocultural identity, which includes critically reflecting on their linguistic perspectives, as the first step towards the consciousness needed to learn about and understand others' identities. These scholars frame language identity as an evolving process negotiated by the individual (Wei & Moyer, 2008).

This construct fits into others' research that stresses the importance of individual teachers building relationships with Puerto Rican students as essential to support academic success (Irizarry & Antrop-González, 2007). Irizarry & Antrop-González posit that each Puerto Rican student comes in with unique sociocultural identities and that being Puerto Rican is not a one size fits all identity. The process of humanizing individuals through ongoing relationship building is a key element in culturally responsive pedagogy.

Socio-Political Language Ideologies in Education

Language ideologies within educational fields are framed both socially and politically. A socio-political framework shows how languages and speakers and listeners of languages become positioned in society and how this positioning continues to evolve. Societal positioning trickles down from larger social systems and occurs in relation to who has power and how that power is used to determine whether speakers' and listeners' knowledge is valued (Valenzuela, 1999).

A new insight that further shifted my understanding of the powerful role language ideologies play in public education comes from Flores & Rosa (2015). In their discussion of language diversity, they emphasize the criticality of moving away from *appropriateness-based approaches*. Flores & Rosa (2015) push back against other leading scholars' language ideology research and beliefs. Flores & Rosa argue against Delpit's (2006) "codes of power" based on the goal of minority language speakers using appropriate English language approaches as a pathway to gain access to English dominant worlds and push against the oppressive, racist systems they are navigating (Flores & Rosa, 2015). *Appropriateness-based approaches* work to further legitimize the existing racial hierarchies in the smaller and larger social worlds of our students and their families. This critique of appropriate language connects to García & Wei's (2014) discussion of *dynamic bilingualism*. Dynamic bilingualism uses an ATV metaphor to visualize the complex and tricky navigation necessary for emergent bilinguals. This navigation is balanced with a banyan tree metaphor that notices the multi-level interconnections that occur within the contexts of individual experiences and the processing of these experiences (Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008).

Makoni & Pennycook (2006) address the prevalent English dominant policies in public schools through the reconstruction of language ideologies. Makoni & Pennycook (2006) provide a roadmap to how language ideologies often work to marginalize certain groups of people while placing others in positions of power. Their work calls for reconstructing language ideologies to enact social change. Makoni and Pennycook examine the negative effects public school language policies have on individuals, families, and whole communities who experience heritage language loss and how these deficit language ideologies contribute to subtractive schooling (Valenzuela, 1999). The focus on shifting policy through the reconstruction of language ideologies and practices is crucial to shifting inequities experienced by individuals whose first language is not English (Valenzuela, 1999).

Ruiz (1984) describes three orientations of language: language-as-right, language-as-problem, and language-as-resource. These orientations continue to guide current language diversity discussions occurring globally. Within U.S. public schooling exists the problematic perceptions of language-as-right and language-as-problem, reaffirming the power structure that positions dominant English speakers as the knowers and others at a disadvantage educationally, socially, and financially. Positioning language as a problem, combined with U.S. public school's use of English as right, also reaffirms institutionalized racism and reifies 'othering' deficit practices and beliefs. Language as a resource is an effective pedagogical practice that supports academic success and values individuals as human beings. Language as resource pedagogically has the ability to shift language practices locally, nationally, and globally (Ruiz, 1984).

Translanguaging: Bilingualism, Multilingualism and Flexible Languageing

Translanguaging originated from a Welsh language practice and was developed to support meaning making by individuals who use two languages in order to better express their thoughts and understandings (Baker, 2011). Speakers who use translanguaging do so by integrating both languages into their communications with others. Translanguaging as a culturally responsive pedagogical practice supports academic success by both utilizing home language and providing a space to build connections between school, home, and the larger community (García & Wei, 2014).

In their text, García & Wei (2014) discuss the differences between translanguaging and code-switching. These differences encompass: translanguaging as a norm; translanguaging as creating a third space; the relationship between translanguaging; the dynamic systems theory; the linguistic theory of linguistic creativity; and fluid language practices of bilingual speakers through translanguaging (García & Wei, 2014). Alternatively, code-switching is a language practice that occurs with multilingual speakers who choose to keep their two languages separate, both within their thinking processes as well as in how and when they choose to use each language. The iPhone metaphor that García uses clearly highlights the differences. She compares texting, a form of translanguaging that has a wide array of features to choose from, to the iPhone language switch function, a form of code-switching that forces the user to opt for one or the other and therefore separates and isolates the use of each language (García & Wei, 2014).

García & Wei (2014) and Hornberger & Link (2012) address bilingual education and flexible language use. They assert that translanguaging is a social justice-oriented

language practice that supports bi-literacy in students. Historically bilingual education in the United States does not typically engage in these supportive language practices, and in fact often works to remove or subtract home language (Valenzuela, 1999) rather than support bilingual learning. In the U.S., bilingual education is taught through additive and subtractive instruction models. Subtractive bilingualism instruction occurs when a student's home language is slowly removed from use within the classroom. Emergent bilingual students eventually move into mainstream classrooms with dominant English language instruction which often results in loss of their heritage language, thus becoming monolingual, not bilingual (García & Wei, 2014). Alternatively, when an additive language approach is practiced, and the second language is added onto the individual's first language, a true bilingual language exchange occurs.

Hornberger & Link (2012) identify language practices that offer new spaces and unique programs that scaffold asset-based language practices that validate the varied levels of communicative repertoires and funds of knowledge that students come in with. The bi-literate pedagogical practices Hornberger & Link (2012) present provide a counter-narrative to the various and inconsistent bilingual education models used in U.S. public schools. García & Wei (2014) similarly discuss bi-literacy language practices that occur through *dynamic bilingualism*. This occurs when multiple language interactions are happening on various levels and spaces among multilingual speakers. These bi-literacy language practices resist and challenge the subtractive language practices that are often present in U.S. public schools (Valenzuela, 1999).

García & Wei (2014) discuss resisting and contesting separate language instruction when they cite students and teachers 'violating' language instruction policies

as they mix, code-switch, and translanguage to facilitate maximum learning and communication. However, there continues to be a punitive practice that marginalizes so many non-dominant English-speaking students. These emergent bilingual students continue to be punished and dehumanized by the high stakes testing they are required to undergo. Their personal, academic, and future economic success is held hostage by U.S. public schooling language policies that are prevalent in public schools.

Language Ideologies and Schooling

Doolan, Palmer & Henderson's (2015) mixed-methods study examines administrator and teacher language ideologies in dual language bilingual education (DLBE) programs. The study was conducted in order to understand: 1) what are prevalent language ideologies in DLBE schools; 2) how and to what extent language ideologies vary by: participation in DLBE; level of teaching experience; educator's home language, and degree of DLBE training; 3) how do educators perceive the attempted program shift to DLBE (Doolan, Palmer & Henderson, 2015). Doolan, Palmer & Henderson find that despite the varied language ideologies that districts, schools, and communities engage in, it is ultimately the beliefs of the individuals that determine which practices are employed. Doolan, Palmer & Henderson, like García & Wei (2014) focus on developing authentic and effective professional development to support translanguaging pedagogical practices. Additionally, Doolan, Palmer & Henderson address tensions that exist within public schools, among administrators, teachers, and policy makers, that prevent the realization of fully incorporating translanguaging or bilingual practices in classrooms and schools or the ability to implement these practices within assessments.

Teaching Translanguaging: Even Once a Week

García & Wei (2014) define language as a series of social interactions performed by speakers. The authors align with Makoni & Pennycook (2010) who believe language is an activity, something you do, not a static system. Translanguaging as a dynamic language practice includes creative and critical use of linguistic resources (Hornberger, 2003).

García (2015) pushes for even more inclusiveness when she frames U.S. Spanish bilingual language practices as a sustainable model that calls for an expanded understanding of Spanish bilingual language practices in the United States. García presents an example of this practice in her Study Group webinar: “Me gusta ir en los swings” García (2015). This is an example of how García notices U.S. children in Spanish/English bilingual communities often create new ways of speaking. These new language practices are what García is calling for – she advocates for the validation of these practices in order to open new spaces to grow, develop, and protect dynamic bilingual language practices (García, 2015).

The approach that García & Wei advocate for, to grow and adapt one’s teaching within a continuum model, and to take small steps to practice translanguaging even once a week, is a realistic pathway to build up dynamic bilingualism practices for teacher educators (García & Wei, 2014). This pedagogical approach is a relevant and culturally responsive practice to share with pre-service teachers as they begin to wrestle with English-only language policies during fieldwork, and as they move closer to teaching in their own classrooms.

Conclusion

This literature review underscores how culturally responsive pedagogical practices are often situated within specific coursework in teacher preparation programs (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Bennett, 2013; Gay, 2010; Irizarry & Antrop-González, 2007). Literature overwhelmingly supports the need to weave culturally responsive pedagogy throughout all education coursework, so PSTs continue to build on how they understand their own identities in relationship to how they understand others' identities. Many scholars agree that culturally responsive pedagogy includes critically reflecting on one's sociocultural identity and that this practice directly relates to the ways pre-service and in-service teachers connect or fail to connect relationally to their students.

The literature reviewed within this dissertation identifies student/teacher relationship building as a key step to successful academic learning. Effective relationship building during fieldwork occurs when PSTs and students mutually develop connections through one-to-one conversations during classroom instructional support or tutoring and enrichment experiences in after school programs (Bennett, 2013; Nieto, 2013; Nieto, 2012; Gay; 2010; Noddings, 2005; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Valenzuela, 1999). Leading scholars who focus on Puerto Rican academic success specifically stress intentional relationship building between teachers, administrators, and their Puerto Rican students to make authentic connections (Irizarry & Antrop-González, 2007). When these personal connections are made, educators better understand that their students' cultural and linguistic identity is cultural capital, a resource to be used to support academic success (Yosso, 2005). These one-to-one experiences are the spaces where PSTs can actively engage with their students and begin to understand how one's sociocultural identity can

be an asset on which to scaffold learning experiences. The literature highlights caring and empathy as an integral practice within these relationship-building experiences (Noddings, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999).

To become culturally responsive teachers, Gay & Kirkland (2003) and Nieto (2013) argue that it is essential for pre-service teachers to first understand their own sociocultural identity and then work to understand the identities of all their students. These scholars' premise that teachers should build a critical, racial, and cultural consciousness that involves examining one's teaching beliefs and practices and adjusting those practices to support the cultural and linguistic identities of their students. This reflective practice places the onus on pre-service teachers to critically reflect on their own identities in order to begin to understand how their ethnic, linguistic, and socioeconomic identities impact and contribute to how and what they teach to ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse students.

The literature review highlights how language ideologies specifically contribute to both asset and deficit perspectives in ways pre-service teachers (PSTs) explore their preconceived cultural biases and beliefs about their students and others' linguistic, racial, ethnic, and economic identities. Doolan, Palmer & Henderson (2015) and García & Wei (2014) highlight the necessity for administrators, teachers, and policy makers to engage in continual training, professional development, and research in order to develop asset-based language ideologies that see language as a resource. Similarly, García & Wei (2014) believe it is essential for educators to have specific guidelines to support their understanding of what translinguaging looks like in action. These scholars advocate that educators should view language as a resource, a living, breathing, evolving process.

Current literature within this review supports my research inquiry that identifies a gap in teacher education programs. This research addresses how teacher preparation can more effectively guide PSTs to critically think, reflect, and engage in culturally responsive sustaining practices within their academic courses, pre-practicum, practicum, and experiential learning fieldwork. The literature review supports the need for continued research to understand how culturally responsive, sustaining pedagogy does or does not impact academic learning for all learners. Finally, the review of literature suggests a need for further research to continue identifying what culturally responsive, sustaining pedagogy looks like or should look like in order to better prepare PSTs to effectively address race and cultural consciousness and relationship building, in order to support individual student learning in today's test-driven classrooms.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Design and Rationale

Context and Participants

Research for this case study was primarily conducted during a Western Massachusetts University (WMU) January 2017 short-term travel course to Puerto Rico. The data collection continued upon return to campus at WMU during the spring 2017 semester with individual semi-structured interviews, focus group conversations, and data collected from the participants' final reflection papers. WMU is located in the western part of Massachusetts and enrolls 5,000 day-students with an additional 1,000 enrolled in continuing education and graduate programs. As of January 2017, 51% of the student population identified as female and 49% identified as male. At WMU, 91% of the students receive financial aid. The university primarily serves students from the New England area. The campus attracts both residential and commuter students from surrounding communities and is a host for many transfer students from nearby community colleges.

The WMU course *Civic Engagement and Language Immersion in Puerto Rico*, is a two-week long travel course held in January 2017 in Puerto Rico with two pre-departure seminars held in the fall 2016 semester. The course focused on exploring aspects of Puerto Rico's rich history, culture, people, and natural resources through Spanish language immersion, civic engagement and cultural excursions. In Puerto Rico, participants were immersed in a Spanish linguistic setting that positioned them as second language learners. Frequent excursions and our daily use of public transportation to

navigate the city of San Juan provided opportunities for participants to engage with Puerto Ricans on the island and practice speaking Spanish. The language immersion experience and the daily interactions were supported through classes provided by the Spanish Language School (SLS) in San Juan. Practicing Spanish created spaces for participants to reflect on what it might feel and look like to be a language learner. Participants also engaged in civic engagement through service work with elementary students, faculty, and staff members at the School and Rehabilitation Center (SRC) in San Juan. The civic engagement experience was designed to expose students to the social, cultural, linguistic, economic, and historical perspectives of the communities on the island and to introduce them to local communities and schools that partner with WMU on the mainland. Throughout the course participants visited a number of historical, cultural, and natural resources considered central to the cultural tapestry of Puerto Rico.

This travel study course was designed to help participants develop an appreciation for Puerto Rican culture with the goal of shifting preconceived ideas of culture, language, and identity differences from a deficit to an asset model. The course is based in the Education Department at WMU. However, the course is open to students in all majors who are in their sophomore, junior or senior year. While many of the participants are Education majors, other majors have included Music, Spanish, Social Work, Communications, Political Science, Criminal Justice, and Psychology majors. This travel study course offers all participants the opportunity to be briefly immersed in another culture and language while developing a deeper understanding of their own sociocultural and linguistic identities.

This civic engagement course fits into the broader goals of WMU's Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) mission and the wider mission of the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education and Civic Learning. Additionally, the course is supported through the International Office and run through the Continuing Education Office at WMU. The *Civic Engagement and Language Immersion in Puerto Rico* course was developed through the support of the newly formed and grant funded Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement (CLDE) committee at WMU.

During the first year of CLDE, the committee posted a call for proposals seeking the development of new civic engagement courses. At the time of the call I was a member of the WMU CLDE committee. I discussed the possibilities with other WMU colleagues and was successful in recruiting two faculty members, one from the Education Department and one from the Music Department. Both faculty members collaborated on the proposal to develop a civic engagement travel study course to Puerto Rico. The co-written proposal was accepted, and we received grant funding that allowed us to travel to Puerto Rico to meet and plan with potential vendors to develop the course. After the planning visit to Puerto Rico, I continued to work with the same two faculty members along with an additional Education faculty member, Luna, who is Puerto Rican and grew up in Puerto Rico. Luna, the two other faculty members, and I agreed that it was essential for a native Puerto Rican to co-lead the course and we collectively agreed that Luna and myself would co-lead the pilot course in 2015. We agreed to work with the director of a language school in San Juan who would be our liaison and vendor.

The underlying rationale that drove the development of this course was that WMU has an active cross-departmental partnership with Cambria Public Schools in

Massachusetts and local community organizations that serve a predominantly Puerto Rican student population. Increasing diversity in our local communities reflects our national and global realities. These demographics point to an urgency for teacher educators to develop sociocultural awareness of self and others, and for teacher preparation programs to better prepare future educators and service workers to engage with individuals from diverse cultural identities. These demographics are evident in the city of Cambria where Latinos form the largest minority group. Percentage-wise, Cambria has the largest Puerto Rican population of any city in the United States outside Puerto Rico. The entire Latino population of Cambria, as cited in the 2010 census, was 19,313 or 48.4% of the city's total population of 39,880 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

The Puerto Rico travel study course ran for the first time in 2015 with 9 participants - this was a pilot course and we were allowed to run it below the 12-participant minimum required by the university. The following year the course was approved as a WMU Civic Engagement course and we recruited for the January 2016 course. We were unable to run the course in 2016 due to under enrollment – we were unsuccessful in recruiting the minimum of 12 registered students with deposits. The following year through our marketing efforts, we recruited 15 participants for the January 2017 travel course. I conducted my study during this January 2017 course.

Language Immersion

During the two-week course in Puerto Rico, students participated in small group language immersion classes at the Spanish Language School (SLS) in San Juan, Puerto Rico. These Spanish language classes occurred during the second week and were held 9am-12pm for five consecutive days. On the first morning of language classes,

participants were assessed individually. They had previously completed forms asking about their language experiences, and then were assessed verbally, in person, one-to-one, to test their receptive and verbal Spanish language skill level. The breakdown of skill levels for the 15 participants included nine beginners, four intermediate, and two advanced. The 15 participants were placed into small group classes, according to their Spanish language assessment results. SLS provided daily lunch that was brought in from local restaurants, and students were encouraged to eat with their small group language classes. Most of the classes included individuals from other universities or individuals who were independently there to learn or improve their Spanish language skills. The integrated classes provided an opportunity for participants to engage with individuals from other global locations, both in the U.S. as well as abroad. The Spanish language classes offered opportunities for cultural exchange and enabled participants to momentarily experience being a language learner.

Critical Service Learning

During the course, the participants and instructors engaged in critical service learning work in partnership with a PreK-12 School and Rehabilitation Center (SRC). The School Rehabilitation Center provides services and support for students with a wide range of physical, emotional, and developmental abilities in San Juan, Puerto Rico. The WMU students were expected to actively participate in a five-day, civic engagement community learning experience in alignment with the WMU Civic Learning and Democratic Engagement mission. Each student submitted a short statement in advance that indicated their university major, as well as their interests and preferences for placement. We submitted this information to our partner liaison at SRC and participants

were matched with classroom teachers, service professionals, and the marketing office. We did not find out until the first day at SRC what each student would be doing. While we wanted students to be connected to the area of interest, we also wanted to underscore that this was a civic engagement course, and one of the goals was to develop the understanding that a critical service learning approach meant we would be open to what the school needed.

Cultural Excursions

During the travel study course, participants and instructors engaged in historical, cultural, and environmental excursions, to learn about and develop a deeper understanding of Puerto Rican history, culture, and the ecology of the island. These excursions included a walking self-guided tour of Old San Juan, a guided tour of Fort San Cristobal, attendance at a Flamenco dance performance, and participation in a salsa dance class in Old San Juan. We also experienced a guided tour and hike in El Yunque National Forest and a visit to Loíza, an Afro-Caribbean community in the northeast region of Puerto Rico, where we participated in a Bomba dance group lesson. We visited the town of Juana Diaz where we attended a Three Kings Day celebration parade and sampled traditional Puerto Rican cuisine. We also spent two nights in La Parguera on the southwestern coast of Puerto Rico. While in La Parguera we took a boat ride on the bioluminescent bay and viewed the bioluminescent fish through the glass bottom of the boat. We also traveled to Guilligan Island, the Biosphere Reserve of Guanica, and spent a day at the beach. Finally, we traveled to Casa Pueblo in Adjuntas, a sustainable community that focuses on the protection and management of Puerto Rico's ecosystem. In addition to giving historical and cultural context, these excursions facilitated

opportunities for participants to engage with Puerto Ricans on the island and practice speaking and experiencing being Spanish language learners. For many of the participants the challenge of being an English speaker in a Spanish-speaking environment provided an opportunity to reflect on what it feels and looks like to be a language learner and develop a new understanding and empathy for what English language learners are experiencing in the classroom.

Participant Recruitment

My co-instructor Luna and I spent time reflecting on lessons learned from the pilot course in 2015. After the following year, when the January 2016 course was cancelled due to low enrollment, we focused on early recruitment strategies for the January 2017 course. This meant we began marketing our course the spring semester of 2016 and continued in the fall of 2016. We sent flyers to targeted departments and two specific WMU programs, Urban Education and TRIO. Both of these programs support students from ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse communities. One of our goals was to make this an affordable and accessible travel course for students who might not otherwise have the opportunity to participate in longer travel study programs. We were successful with our requests to the International Office to begin our enrollment process earlier and to reduce the required deposit from \$500.00 to \$100.00 dollars, as we had learned through talking with students that the \$500.00 deposit was a financial hardship. We worked with TRIO and the Urban Education office on campus to disperse the course and financial scholarship information directly into the hands of students in their programs. Additionally, we received support from the Education Department office administrator who emailed all sophomore, junior and senior Education students an

informational flyer announcing the course. Luna and I also emailed and hand-delivered flyers to a number of departments across campus and posted flyers in academic building hallways, residential halls, the WMU student center, and other public areas. This resulted in 15 undergraduates who successfully completed their application process and paid the \$100.00 deposit which confirmed the course would run in January 2017.

The 15 confirmed course participants were each sent email invitations (located in Appendix A) that introduced the study as well as invited the undergraduates to be participants in the study. All 15 undergraduates agreed to participate. The first layer of communication consisted of personalized invitational emails as an introduction and a first connection (Dillman, Smyth & Christian, 2014). Sending emails not only allowed me to introduce the study, but it also served as a vehicle to include a consent form along with a research description that provided students with an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the context of the study and to make an informed decision in choosing whether or not to participate (Dillman, Smyth & Christian, 2014). Since the group self-selected to enroll in the course, they possessed background course information prior to the email invite. Additionally, students were given a hard copy of the research project description and consent form. Because of my dual role of instructor and researcher, I was conscious that students might feel pressured to be in the study to please their professor. To address this conflict, I was intentional about reminding students verbally at our first face-to face pre-departure seminar that they should feel free to make their own decision about participating in the study. This reminder was also highlighted in the consent form, which was provided both electronically and in a hard copy. I also conveyed both in person and electronically that their individual decisions of whether or not to participate in

the study would have no bearing on their grade or in any way affect their course experiences in Puerto Rico. I also reflected on and discussed this with my co-instructor Luna as another checkpoint to ensure students felt comfortable and free to make the decision whether or not to participate in the study. This is discussed in further detail within the sections below titled *Confidentiality* and *Reflexivity and Positionality*.

Participant Demographics

Participants in the Puerto Rico travel study course in 2017 consisted of 15 undergraduate students from WMU. Of the 15 students, six were majoring in Teacher Education with different focus areas: two Early Childhood, three Elementary, and one Special Education. Of the non-Education students, there were three Psychology majors (one with a specific focus on autism through an internship), one Communications major, one Political Science/Spanish double major, one Criminal Justice/Spanish double major, one Criminal Justice/Psychology double major, one Music/Psychology double major, and one Social Work/Spanish double major. Three of the students were studying Spanish and the remaining 12 had little to no Spanish language background. The age range was 19-22, and they were in either their sophomore, junior, or senior year at the time of the study, and all identified as female. The racial breakdown consisted of one student who identified as Native American/White, two Black students, one with Haitian ethnicity, one with Ghanaian ethnicity, and 12 students who identified as White. All 15 agreed to participate in the study.

When we returned to campus, I invited all of six Education majors and the one Psychology major who had interned in an autism classroom to participate in a focus group. Three participants accepted my invitation to continue in the study and agreed to be

interviewed individually and participate in focus group conversations. Two of the focal participants, Angie and Rikki, were teacher education majors. Although the third participant, Noel, was not a teacher education major, she was engaged in a semester-long internship at a local school working with students with disabilities in a classroom setting, and she previously had worked at a school with students with autism. At the time of the study, Angie was an Elementary Education major and a second-semester junior, Rikki was an Early Childhood Education major and a second semester junior, and Noel was a Psychology major and a second semester senior. During her final semester, Noel applied to and was accepted into the master's in special education program at a university in eastern Massachusetts. Additional participant information is located in the Participant Summary Chart in Table 1.

Human Subjects and Ethical Considerations

Confidentiality

Protecting vulnerable participants is a multi-layered and complex endeavor. As a participant observer and co-instructor of the course trying to capture the worldview of the participants, I was ethically bound to ensure complete privacy and confidentiality for all participants (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). My steps to maintain confidentiality began with submitting a proposal to the WMU Institutional Review Board (IRB) that followed the criteria to conduct research on human subjects. WMU approved the IRB and the University of Massachusetts approved the IRB through the University of Massachusetts Institutional Review Board (IRB) Independent Ethics Committee (IEC) Authorization Agreement, located in Appendix E.

In order to protect and take care of the emotional wellbeing of participants, I established an informed consent protocol (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). The consent protocol (located in Appendix B) introduced the study and provided a description of the research to help potential participants to determine whether they wanted to be a part of the research study. Rossman & Rallis (2012) highlight the importance of “protecting their identities” when transcribing data and writing up analysis with an emphasis to “mask specific identities” in order to prevent a confidentiality breach (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 73). Towards this end, I created pseudonyms for the university, the three focal participants, the co-instructor, and other WMU participants mentioned within the findings section. I also created pseudonyms for the Spanish language school (SLS), teachers at the language school, the school and rehabilitation center (SRC), and staff and teachers mentioned in the findings from SRC. I refer to the local school community as Cambria and the community partner in Cambria that co-facilitated one of the pre-departure seminars as Violeta.

To further outline the criticality of making sure participation in the study was free and of the participants’ choosing, I included a statement in the consent form and in the IRB proposal to indicate that participation was voluntary and would not have any effect on their academic grade. Additionally, I designed my interview questions to collect only necessary data relevant to my research (Rossman & Rallis 2012, p.80). My intention throughout this study has been to practice emotional sensitivity and be respectful to each participant’s personal wellbeing.

Reflexivity and Positionality

In their text *Humanizing Research: Decolonizing Qualitative Inquiry with Youth and Communities*, Paris & Win (2014), one of the contributors, Mollie V. Blackburn, reminds us that, “One has agency to resist and rebut dehumanizing forces, to reassert one’s humanity, and to play a part in work that humanizes others” (p. 43). Blackburn (2014) articulates the complex nature of the rights and responsibilities researchers have as fellow human beings. Blackburn also provides a framework or humanizing guideline for researchers to explore, examine, and hopefully cultivate humanizing research practices as they collaborate with individuals and community members.

The personal biography of the researcher and the roles she takes influence the research, both the sense she makes of the setting and how people she is learning from make sense of her (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p.46).

As an instructor/researcher for this travel study course, I am aware of the responsibilities to ensure an ethical and trustworthy research project. It is important for me as a researcher to discuss my own attitudes, beliefs, and biases, and to critically reflect on my sociocultural identities. At the time of the study, January 2017, I was in my seventh year at WMU as the Field Coordinator for pre-practicum fieldwork and an instructor of two courses: *Children’s Literature* and *Community Engaged Learning for Educators*. My sociocultural identity includes that of being a White, 55-year old woman of European descent. I grew up in an urban setting, in a poor, working class family with a single mom in eastern Massachusetts. I am a first-generation college student and a Spanish language learner at the beginner skill level. At this moment in my life, I consider myself middle class.

My French-Canadian grandparents were immigrants and learned English as adults when they moved from Canada to Lowell, Massachusetts as teenagers in the 1920s to

work in the Lowell Mills. They met and married soon after. My father was their first-born and a few years later his sister was born. My father and my aunt were what language scholars refer to as emergent bilinguals. They grew up speaking their heritage French Canadian language at home as well as in their close-knit French-Canadian community and Catholic church. They learned to speak English as they began their public schooling in Lowell. My Mémère and Pépère (my grandparents) were both emergent bilinguals as well. My Mémère was often embarrassed about speaking English. I recall when I was in my teens that I became conscious of her not wanting to speak in front of people whom she did not know well. I noticed this occurred whether it was her native Canadian French or her emergent English. When I asked her about it, I remember her telling me: “I don’t talk so good”. This memory of her believing that her native French-Canadian language and her emergent English were something to be embarrassed about is always with me and is a personal connection I make to the emotional difficulties that emergent bilingual students and their families are constantly forced to navigate.

As a researcher participant, I have made it a priority to reflect on my own sociocultural and linguistic identities. During this research process, I often wondered whether I was an insider or outsider. Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (2011) cite Ahmad (2000) who articulates the constant movement and evolution of our identities:

Finally, race, class and gender are not static, self-evident attributes whose influence on interaction can be known beforehand (Ahmad, 2000). Rather, they are qualities and attributes that are mutually constructed and negotiated. (pp. 163-164)

My understanding of how identities evolve has shifted through the collaborative experiences I shared with others while in Puerto Rico. I am aware that I do not share the linguistic and cultural identities of Puerto Ricans on the island or in Cambria, and I am

conscious of the differences that exist between me and the participants and between me and my co-instructor Luna who is Puerto Rican. However, I believe that our shared experiences in Puerto Rico and in the post-travel discussions have created common connections among us. Despite these places of connections, I remain conscious that my biases have directly influenced the research area I am pursuing within the Language, Literacy and Culture (LLC), Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies (TECS) doctoral program in the College of Education at UMass Amherst. My work with pre-service teachers at WMU, with Education faculty members at WMU, with students and faculty at the University of Massachusetts, and the collaborative work with school and community partners have all shaped my research agenda and left lasting impressions that contribute to my subjective lens.

To explicitly identify subjectivity within my research, I created a list of biases, assumptions, and opinions that I hold in connection to my research area. The subjective areas include my experiences with and prior knowledge about PSTs' fieldwork experiences through WMU, my Education Department course instruction at WMU and UMASS, as well as my partnership work connected to fieldwork and committee work in the Cambria Public Schools. Revisiting this list gave me a visual reminder to recognize when biases and assumptions were filtering in. My research journal was an additional tool I utilized to highlight when I interpreted behavior or communications of participants in a subjective manner. I created and implemented a systematic protocol and technique for the semi-structured interviews and how I recorded field notes. This protocol paid consistent attention to power dynamics to help ensure a healthy data collection that would contribute to a discussion in the scientific community in the field of teacher education

(Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Reflexivity is key to doing qualitative research to maintain a trustworthy and valid data collection process and analysis. Rossman and Rallis highlight this when they state:

Reflexivity is an interactive and cyclical phenomenon, not a linear one. Both “seeing is believing” and “believing is seeing” are true. The qualitative researcher is open to the interplay of what is considered fact and opinion. He asks, “What sense do I make of what is going on or of this person’s actions? This is the etic perspective. At the same time, the researcher asks, “What sense do the participants make of what they are doing? What is the individual’s sense of his or her own actions?” These questions see the emic perspective. (p. 48)

As a co-instructor of the travel course and therefore one of the evaluators of students participating in the travel study course, I was conscious of my position of power. To rectify the conflict of interest, I addressed the power dynamics through reflective discussions, collaborative instruction, and evaluations with Luna, the co-instructor of the course. The attention to power dynamics and the critical reflective discussions with my co-instructor worked to ensure an ethical study and to avoid influencing emerging data. All of these practices contributed to a healthy data collection (Rossman & Rallis, 2012).

Data Sources and Collection

The research study was launched in December 2016 with two pre-travel seminars. My research continued in January 2017 while in Puerto Rico and was completed on the WMU campus during the spring semester 2017. All data collection was completed by May 2017. Data sources included field notes from observations, transcripts of seminars, individual interviews, focus group conversations, participants’ final reflection papers, and relevant artifacts collected during pre-seminars and through participant data.

I organized the data into the following categories: seminar discussions, field observations, semi-structured interviews, focus group conversations, participant final reflection papers, artifacts, as well as reflections drawn from my field note journal. I

transcribed all data verbatim with the goal of examining the content of the seminar discussions, individual and focus group interviews and final reflections. All transcripts and field notes were housed in electronic and hard copy folders in a secure location.

Seminars

The pre-departure seminars held in the fall semester consisted of two sessions. The first session provided an overview of the course, including a review of the syllabus, assigned readings, reflective journal assignments, the logistics of the course, and the university safety and professional protocol presented by the WMU International Office. The second session served as a conversation with a Puerto Rican community advocate from Cambria to help frame the context of the course and draw connections between some of the experiences of local Puerto Ricans and those living on the island. The co-instructor Luna and I critically reflected on what went well and lessons learned from the 2015 course and we made changes to the pre-departure seminars for the 2017 course based on those outcomes.

We chose to move the location of the community partner pre-departure seminar from the WMU campus to a local Puerto Rican community organization in Cambria. The goal of this shift was to facilitate deeper connections within the local Puerto Rican community and to spark more engagement from participants. The Cambria organization's director, Violeta, facilitated this seminar. Violeta began with an historic overview of the Puerto Rican diaspora and illustrated the timeline of Puerto Ricans moving to Cambria using oral storytelling and photographic and print artifacts. The significance of this change was twofold. First, Violeta was more explicit with participants about the social, political, and economic history of Puerto Ricans moving to the mainland than the

advocate who led the seminar in 2015. Second, her presentation created a physical and real-time connection to the local Puerto Rican community. Changing the format of this seminar led to more engaged small and large group discussions. This new format set the stage for how we would lead seminars while on the island.

While in Puerto Rico, seminars were held nightly to encourage the participants to practice critical thinking and to participate in critical conversations through analysis of assigned readings and the media text *Mi Puerto Rico* (Ortiz & Eddy, 1996), a documentary that explores the social, cultural and political history of Puerto Rico. The second goal of the nightly seminars was to explore and discuss insights about one's own sociocultural identity and biases in order to promote critical thinking about the world and our place in it. We also used these seminars to process and synthesize the differences between critical service learning and volunteer work, and to engage in discussions about White privilege, racism, and race consciousness through critical self-reflection.

Fieldnotes

In a small notebook, I hand-wrote field notes throughout the travel study course by writing jottings of initial impressions of the observations. Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw (2011) define "jottings" as, "Jottings translate to-be-remembered observations into writing on paper as quickly rendered scribbles about actions and dialogue" (p. 29). I first began recording these jottings during the pre-departure seminars held on campus and in Cambria at the community organization site. I continued on the plane on route to Puerto Rico and throughout the duration of the travel study course. In Puerto Rico I was often able to record jottings in real time while at the language school, the service site, and on long bus rides to excursions. At other times I recorded jottings both before and after

seminars or dinners as well as at night before bed. I chose to use a hand-written journal to be less intrusive, as keeping a reflection journal was a course requirement for participants, and they were writing in their journals during these times as well. Whenever possible I recorded in the open and in real time. At other times when it did not make sense or if it was logistically impossible, I recorded fieldnotes after the fact from jottings I recorded. These jottings served to remind me of the observations and allowed me at a later time to fill in details that would more effectively render the emotional descriptions of the event (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw 2011). To create clear snapshots of observations in my notes, I identified the participants, the location, the actions, short quotes of their language communications, and any sensory details like facial expressions, body language, or emotional feelings that would help me reconstruct the observation at a later point. I made concerted efforts to omit any judgments or opinions or labeling about participants' actions and language use (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw 2011). Jottings also served to support mental notes for possible significant observations that I later transcribed into full fieldnotes (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw 2011).

I inserted mental notes within my fieldnote journal next to my observations to keep track of when I was being subjective or had questions to follow up with to clarify participant meaning of their language communications I was recording. One example of a mental note I made occurred during a pair presentation by participants Rikki and Kaitlin on an article by Anne Green (2003), "Difficult Stories: Service-Learning, Race, Class, and Whiteness". The co-presenters posed a question to the group: "How did the article affect you?" My mental note was in response to the group discussion: "I noticed one of the main takeaways participants were expressing was that they, the participants, would

also get something from service-learning. I wondered if participants were unclear about the “mutual” benefit philosophy.” Responses from the participants gave me the impression that they were more focused on themselves than on the communities they were partnering with. I made a mental note to, “refer to audio transcript #4.” In this mental note, I reminded myself to revisit the audio to clarify and expand on what I had noted. I also wanted to know if assumptions I was making about students’ expressions of their understanding of service learning were accurate, or if my subjectivity was filtering into my observations.

I made audio-recordings of the seminars, interviews, and focus group conversations and later typed up transcripts from the recordings. During these three data collection events, I kept jottings while recording in order to note any actions, facial expressions, body language or emotions that might not be captured within the audio recording. As I wrote up my full fieldnotes, I reconstructed observations to tell a story of each event step by step to give a complete description of the language communication with remembered details triggered by the jottings (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw 2011). The participants’ final reflection papers were used to triangulate with other data sets located within observations, seminars, interviews, and focus group conversations.

Individual Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews are often used in ethnographic research and are designed to be “flexible, but with focused, specific questions and approach, looking for specific data.” However, they are also, “structured to help make more sense of something already explored” and a semi-structured designed interview usually, “features a set of

ordered questions” (Gallman, 2007, p. 71). I chose to use a guided interview approach that Rossman and Rallis (2012) note is often used in qualitative research.

The researcher identifies a few broad topics (perhaps framed as questions) to help uncover the participant’s meaning or perspective but otherwise respects how the participant frames and structures responses. The balance of talk, then, is in favor of the participant. (p. 177)

The individual semi-structured interviews were held in the spring semester 2017 at WMU, after the travel study in Puerto Rico. I conducted semi-structured interviews with Angie, Rikki, and Noel in my office on the WMU campus in the Education Department. These interviews were all held within a two-week period of each other. I interviewed Rikki first, and her interview lasted 32 minutes. I transcribed her interview verbatim with a total of 19 pages. The following week I interviewed Angie for twenty-five minutes and transcribed the interview verbatim with a total of 12 pages. The third interview with Noel lasted 20 minutes and consisted of 12 pages, transcribed verbatim. The interviews were audio-recorded, and I jotted notes throughout the interview. Conducting semi-structured individual interviews allowed for confidential experiences in a one-to-one setting.

I employed a systematic protocol and technique for the semi-structured interviews that included making audio recordings of the interviews (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). The three participants were given identical questions and were provided with an opportunity to contribute additional information they thought might have been left out in the context of my interview questions (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). To gain participant validation on emerging findings, I later conducted member checks to co-construct data to ensure an accurate interpretation of interview data and representation of field observations (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). This process was undertaken to add further insights that

would expand and validate my interpretations. The practice of conducting member checks or ensuring participant validation is a qualitative method to receive feedback from the participant that contributes to the validity of the study (Rossman & Rallis, 2012):

You take emerging findings back to the participants for them to elaborate, correct, extend, or argue about. This can be done with interview transcripts as a method for eliciting further information and with emerging analyses. (p. 65)

The member checks occurred during individual follow-up meetings and emails with participants to review their semi-structured interview transcripts, seminar transcripts, and final reflection paper transcripts. For example, I scheduled a follow-up meeting with Angie to address a statement she made about two students of color that also participated in the travel study course. Angie used the term “colored girls” and during member checking, I explained that the term has historical racist and oppressive meanings. Angie let me know she had no idea that it was racist. By member checking it gave me the opportunity to disrupt the deficit language, and it gave Angie an opportunity to critically reflect on her new understanding about the offensive term she used, that she had previously been unaware of. The member-checking meeting is discussed in further detail in the Findings chapter.

Focus Group Conversation

Holding a focus group conversation promoted collaborative dialogues where participants had the opportunity to build on both their individual experiences and their collective experiences in Puerto Rico, as well as to explore ideas and issues that arose.

Rossmann & Rallis (2012) state:

The goal here is for the group to generate new understandings or explanations as individuals react and respond to what others say. This technique assumes that an individual’s attitudes and beliefs do not form in a vacuum. People often need to listen to others’ opinions and understandings to clarify their own. (p. 189)

The focus group conversation was held off campus to accommodate the wishes of all three focal participants. We met at a coffee shop of their choosing. In advance I created semi-structured interview questions, and each participant took turns responding to the questions posed. During the conversation there were times when participants would naturally respond to something another participant had said. This back and forth pattern continued throughout the focus group conversation and worked to layer and deepen the conversations into more engaging dialogues.

Throughout the focus group I pushed students to go deeper. For example, I asked, “Can any of you tell me about a time when you were aware of your race/language/gender?” All three participants responded minimally and did not specifically address their own awareness of race, language, or gender. I then followed up by responding, “Let me push back a little bit. Thinking back into the seminars, we had a lot of discussions about race that brought up a lot of stuff for people. Was that a place where you began to think about your own race?” This method of follow-up helped participants to be more critically reflective in further responses. Also, leading participants back to seminar discussions held while in Puerto Rico about race consciousness prompted participants to reach back into those moments of shared lived experiences when we were discussing race, racism, White privilege, and institutional inequities that oppress people of color on a daily basis. One example of this is when I mentioned the audio transcripts that I had been repeatedly listening to as I analyzed the data:

listening to the transcripts, I was reminded of Haniah talking about when a lot of her Black friends got annoyed with her because she was hanging out with her White friends and Luna said, “what a burden that was.” I am wondering, do you remember that conversation? I am wondering when we think about ourselves as White women...so, the four of us are White women. Luna is Puerto Rican. When we think about what our own responsibilities are as we are moving away from this

course and back in our worlds here, I am wondering how that resonates with you... that whole conversation...the idea of Black women or Latina women. What was your thought when Luna said, “that is such a burden to carry that around with you and get up and do that every day”? (Robin, focus interview, 4/5/17)

Revisiting our seminar discussions resulted in more self-reflective and critical responses about racial consciousness and existing racism. We were also able to reflect on how being White allows many of us to forget about race and racial inequities, while people of color cannot forget, because they do not walk around daily with the privileges afforded by being White.

Final Reflection Paper

All participants were assigned a final reflection paper based on their travel study experience. The paper assignment was to address the following three areas: *Part 1: Setting up the context of their course experience in Puerto Rico.* For this section participants were asked to describe the volunteer site SRC in detail, the site’s mission, and to share whether they thought the site achieved their mission. Additionally, participants were asked to describe their volunteer work at the site and identify what their role was. *Part 2: The Experience:* Participants were asked to share what they learned about SRC in context to the area they were engaged in the most, what their greatest reward was in working collaboratively with people at the site, and if they had more time at the site, what would they have done additionally to contribute to the work at SRC. *Part 3: Making Connections to Sociocultural Identity, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, and Asset versus Deficit Perspectives:* We asked the participants to respond to, how they thought understanding their own sociocultural identity would affect how they thought about and engaged with individuals in their future practice/work? We asked participants to define in their own words what it means to be culturally responsive. Additionally, we

asked participants, in what way did their understanding of CRP impact or not impact the work they engaged in at SRC? We prompted the participants to identify and discuss any preconceived beliefs about Puerto Rican culture they may have had prior to the course and to indicate whether these preconceived beliefs were from an asset or deficit perspective. Finally, we asked participants to explain in what way(s) their experiences throughout this course may or may not have shifted any preconceived beliefs they held prior to the course and to give specific examples. The participants' final reflection papers were used to triangulate with other data across the data corpus. Students drew from their reflection journals, course readings, media texts, seminars, and remembered experiences to complete this assignment.

Course Artifacts

Data artifacts included the course booklet that consisted of the following: description of the Spanish Language School (SLA) the WMU course syllabus; assigned readings; media links to: *Mi Puerto Rico* (Ortiz & Eddy, 1995); Sonia Nieto's short videos: "Multilingualism as an Asset not a Deficit", and "Debunking Deficit Views"; course assignments; the "Kinds of Citizens" table; the "Social Identity Wheel" activity; the travel journal protocol; and reflection prompts used for seminar discussions, journal reflections and small group work (Nieto, 2014).

Pre-departure artifacts from our Cambria community partner, Violeta, included: a description of the organization, Violeta's bio, an agenda of our seminar, and the timeline titled, "*Leading United States - Puerto Rico Economic Policies, 1815-2016*" taken from, The Center for Puerto Rican Studies (2016). Violet provided an overview of the Migration of Puerto Ricans to Cambria, beginning 1950-present, as well as the annual

travel to the Pioneer Valley. Violeta shared a handout on, Puerto Rican celebrations and local struggles, the National Puerto Rican Agenda, and what is happening at the local level in Cambria. Violeta provided a map of Puerto Rico and a folder with handouts for each participant.

Data Analysis

Through the data analysis processes, I shaped the case study of the participants stories interpreted from seminar, interview and focus group audio transcripts, participant final reflection papers, and observational field notes taken throughout the course (Barkhuizen, Benson, & Chik, 2014). Since the semi-structured interviews, focus group conversation, and final reflection papers were designed to draw out the participants' language and learning experiences, the outcome data culminates in the creation of their individual and collective stories.

Theoretical Framework

Utilizing a grounded theory methodology (Strauss & Corbin, 1990), I endeavored to the best of my ability to enter the study with minimal preconceived beliefs about the participants. According to Emerson, Fretz, Shaw (2011):

Grounded theorists give priority to deriving “analytic categories directly from the data, not from preconceived concepts or hypotheses” (Charmaz 2001:336-337). They maintain that if the researcher minimizes commitment to received and preconceived theory, he is more likely to develop new analytic categories and original theories from his data. (p. 172)

Grounded theory methodology allowed for the main themes, ideas, and issues to surface as I read and examined data sets repeatedly and synthesized the understanding of what was happening with emerging themes, insights, and ideas (Emerson, Fretz, Shaw 2011). The data from the reflection papers, seminars, interviews, and focus group conversations offered a unique perspective into the participants' experiential learning

while in Puerto Rico as they were asked to use their reflection journals to inform their responses. Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik (2014) state:

Benson, (2004), points out that an important characteristic of learner diaries as narrative data is that they are written concurrently with the learning (written daily, for example, after classroom learning experiences, and in this respect they are retrospective). This means that diary studies are useful for researchers who aim to explore and understand affective factors, learning strategies, and the learners own perceptions of their language learning through information that is recorded while learners are actually engaged in the process of learning. Diary studies make accessible data unobservable by other methods (Faerch and Kasper, 1987) providing a rich, full picture of learning, particularly the social and cognitive dimensions of learners from their particular point of view (Bailey, 1990). (p. 35)

Participants used the content of their daily reflection journals to inform their responses during seminars, in their final reflection papers, during their interviews, and the focus group conversations. This process allowed me to view their social worlds, and having access to their inner reflections, allowed me to conduct a deeper analysis, which would otherwise be difficult to observe (Faerch & Kasper, 1987).

It is important to note that the emergence of data does not happen in a vacuum, but that it occurs through a great deal of diligence and intensive work by the researcher through careful interpretation of data (Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik, 2014). A grounded theory approach included a thematic analysis throughout the entire data set that was collected. This process included the use of open and focused coding to identify themes emerging within data. Emerson, Fretz & Shaw (2011) describe open coding when they state:

In *open coding*, the ethnographer reads fieldnotes line-by-line to identify and formulate any and all ideas, themes, or issues they suggest, no matter how varied and disparate. In *focused coding*, the fieldworker subjects fieldnotes to fine-grained, line-by-line analysis on the basic topics that have been identified as being of particular interest (p. 172).

The first phase of analysis occurred through open coding (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011). Using open coding enabled me to identify specific evidence within my data corpus and organize it into categories or themes connected to the research questions about the participants' experiential learning in Puerto Rico. The data collected about the participants' experiences was connected to and interwoven within the following concepts: racial, cultural, and linguistic beliefs, as well as empathy, caring, and sociocultural identity (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Through open coding I identified evidence within the transcripts that represented specific themes and categories that frequently emerged (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). The central themes that were initially coded for and used to organize my data included: language diversity, race consciousness, sociocultural identity, attitudes/beliefs, civic engagement, and culturally responsive pedagogy.

Open coding was facilitated through a repeated reading of the fieldnotes and transcriptions of audio-recorded individual interviews, focus group conversations, seminars, and the participants' final reflection papers. Open coding was executed in a line-by-line process to pull out ideas, themes or issues that emerged from the data (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw 2011). This process was repeated throughout the data corpus. As I moved through the data, one of my goals was to see whether there were instances of participants synthesizing the culturally responsive designed pedagogy we threaded throughout our course, and whether it was emerging in language events with participants. The research questions I designed created a guiding framework to code for these instances.

For the second phase, I employed focused coding and revisited the fieldnotes and transcripts to analyze the data line-by-line to identify broad categories connected to topics

and areas that were repeatedly surfacing (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011). This second phase was conducted through the process of categorizing and classifying specific language or participant communications to larger concepts (Barkhuizen, Benson & Chik, 2014). I re-coded the data in search of connections or comparisons and contrasts between participants' excerpts in order to understand why participant data were similar or different, as well as to examine whether the context of their language communications may have contributed to the content of the language itself (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). These additional sub-codes in the data allowed me to notice new themes and connections that were emerging across the data corpus (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011). The new expanded themes included: language diversity; language learning experiences/Spanish language use; Spanish and other non-English dominant languages as an asset/deficit; deficit/asset perspective in same sentence or conversation; race consciousness; raciolinguistics; sociocultural identity; attitudes/beliefs about ethnic/linguistic diverse student populations; experiential learning/critical service learning benefits; transformational experiences; and culturally responsive practices related to caring, empathy and relationship building.

Recording thematic memos in the margins of the transcripts helped me to explore what was happening across the data corpus within the audio transcriptions of individual interviews and focus group conversations, as well as through the field notes, reflection papers, and seminar audio transcriptions. I examined the data to notice what themes were emerging in order to identify if there was evidence within the data, to search through other data to expand the theme, and to determine whether a particular theme was salient (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011). Thematic memos supported the process that allowed me

to link analytic themes across the data (Emerson, Fretz & Shaw, 2011). Continual re-examination of the data increased the effectiveness of identifying themes, ideas, and connections that traversed the data. This process enabled me to make sense of what was happening in the field and answer my research questions. One example of this occurred when I compared individual interview transcripts between Angie and Rikki within the following data set where they discussed a shared experience at the Día de los Reyes/Three Kings Day celebration:

We couldn't find it, we looked at all the signs and it was Spanish, and we were so confused. So, we ordered something from some place and they only spoke Spanish and we spoke English and we don't even know what we ordered or what we were trying to say. So that was something difficult but funny... also positive because it was just a good memory. (Angie, interview, 3/9/17)

Like we went to some great places, they could not speak English, not even attempting it and I don't know if they had no English or not. We were in line, so we were prepping, we need to ask cheese, queso, to know what everything is called like chicken... so that was kind of cool. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

The theme of language diversity and the ways participants verbally expressed how they were experiencing language diversity emerges in both participants' excerpts (García & Wei, 2014). Angie and Rikki perceive their experience as a positive experience. The excerpts from their interviews reveal that they view Spanish as a challenge to address and a resource to draw from (Ruiz, 1984). Both participants indicate in their recollection of this event that they were struggling to come up with a few Spanish words, while experiencing what it feels like to be a language learner. I perceive an asset perspective of language diversity present as they brainstorm together and practice the Spanish words they know while waiting in line to order their food.

There were six major categories that emerged to shape a narrative of the participants' experiences: sociocultural and linguistic identities and attitudes, beliefs, and biases; connections to culturally responsive pedagogy; racial and cultural consciousness; language ideologies and Spanish language learning; caring, empathy, and relationship building; and course design and cultural insider instruction. These six themes are represented in the two findings chapters under the headings: Sociocultural, Linguistic Identity: Attitudes, Beliefs, and Biases, and Benefits of Experiential Cultural, and Language, Critical Service Learning.

To further validate my claims, I wrote theoretical memos in the margins of the transcripts. This allowed me to make connections to existing discussions in the field by noticing how a theme in my findings is connected to a particular theory, and whether it expands on an existing concept, or whether it challenges or provides new ideas to existing theoretical beliefs (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). For example, within the same data set above, I made theoretical connections to the existing discussion about how language can be seen as a resource. My contribution to expand this discussion within the field of teacher preparation is to interject the complexity of how participants who may initially come in with preconceived deficit perspectives can shift these attitudes through the spaces provided in a cultural and language immersion, and critical service learning experiential course. This shifting is supported through guided instruction and critical reflection about their sociocultural and linguistic identities that shape their beliefs, biases, and actions. This is further elaborated in my *Findings* chapter.

Trustworthiness

It is imperative for research to be trustworthy as scholarly work may be used or viewed by a diverse set of stakeholders. Often these stakeholders include researchers, policymakers, practitioners, and the study's participants (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Because of the wide-range of possible viewers or users of this research data, the demands of trustworthiness are heightened. Rossman and Rallis stress what makes a study trustworthy when they state: "For a study to be trustworthy, it must be more than reliable and valid. It must be ethically conducted with sensitivity to power dynamics" (Rossman & Rallis, 2012, p. 60).

To ensure trustworthiness I addressed the intentionality and transparency of my research through detailed documentation of all participant data. The vigilance of conducting a trustworthy study included employing generalizability. Generalizability in qualitative research is challenging, as it is often case specific. Following the guidelines to ensure a trustworthy study allows stakeholders to dig into the research with a broad perspective in mind and pull out pockets of learning that might be used for further study. In order for this to occur, there must be an underlying credibility of the research being presented (Rossman & Rallis, 2012).

Credibility translates into having confidence about the truth of the findings that is based on authentic engagement with participants, the data, and evidence of findings confirmed through the study's methodology, such as member checking and triangulation of data (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). Transferability is arrived at through thick descriptions that are intended to evoke authentic emotions. These thick descriptions give depth to the story being told through the detailed accounts of methods and experiences in the field

(Rossman & Rallis, 2012). To ensure my representation of the data was trustworthy, I analyzed the data and confirmed the findings, with the ultimate goal of presenting a study that was shaped by the participants as opposed to being influenced by my own participant/researcher bias that may have entered into the data collection or analysis. Further, I triangulated various data sources collected at different points in time to establish a detailed and thorough account of methodology, decision-making, and findings that supported and strengthened the credibility of this case study (Rossman & Rallis, 2012). My role as a participant/researcher was challenged by the need to find a balance with my role as a co-instructor of the course. As Moyer (2009) expressed, the role of the researcher includes being self-reflective throughout the data collection process. I found myself often immersed in the experiences and had to remind myself to remember to take field notes, record seminars, collect data artifacts and make reflective mental notes.

CHAPTER 4

SOCIOCULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC IDENTITIES: ATTITUDES, BELIEFS, AND BIASES

The findings of this case study delve into the possibilities of how a cultural and language immersion, critical service learning experience can guide course participants to examine their sociocultural and linguistic identities as a precursor to learning about others' sociocultural identities. The data collected gives evidence that all three focal participants began to develop awareness about their own and others' sociocultural identities during and after the travel study course. The findings showed that participants' new consciousness occurred as they critically reflected on their preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases. This process of reflexivity opened spaces for participants to examine their own and others' sociocultural identities. The reflective work occurred in tandem with the experiential cultural and language immersion, critical service learning, and culturally responsive designed course in Puerto Rico.

My Eyes Were Opened

Findings revealed how the three focal participants, Angie, Noel, and Rikki, expressed their attitudes, beliefs, and biases while developing awareness about themselves and then others who differ from them racially, ethnically, and linguistically. The findings indicate how the participants' attitudes, beliefs, and biases emerged alongside their new understandings gained during the Puerto Rico travel study experience.

During one of the nightly seminars, a seminal moment occurred that is later reflected on by all three focal participants when they shared how they were affected by

others' personal stories about race. Haniah, a Black participant and another participant Sadie, who is White, co-facilitated a discussion on a section of the course assigned article, "Difficult Stories: Race, Class and Whiteness" (Green, 2003). As a response to the article, the two participants read aloud a poem they co-authored, titled "Politics of Location". Their collaborative poem sparked a new consciousness among the participants about others' racial and sociocultural identities:

Politics of Location

A sick woman asked the bus driver to stop
Yet he does not
Another woman asks, and he pulls to the curb
Because he observes
That this woman is White
And the first one who asked was Black
Let's add the fact
That this is Rural Pennsylvania
This very example is called Politics of location
Without a pretext you don't understand the story's dramatization
We deny the existence of black brown and white
To make ourselves feel comfortable
It's impolite, it's not right, let's not let the issue ignite.

Race and Class

Race is denied but class is claimed
And that's okay we say
But the truth is race and class relate
For that reason some people debate

See what happens is
Minorities are in lower socioeconomic statuses
And it's hard to change that
Because history has always told them to scat
As we all know, slavery occurred
And after it was abolished
No money or land was given to minorities nor acknowledged
So class and race have always been related
By that I'm not astonished
And until the proper resources are given to minorities
Our socioeconomic system will never be flawless

White Racism

White racism is the force that is visible and divisive to those in its course
And yet, as white people we can easily ignore the day to day chore
That others may feel
We can forget race, and in most cases
Blame class or differences of faith
But we need to embrace race, elevate our awareness, and the hate shall be erased.
(Haniah & Sadie, 1/17)

Haniah and Sadie's poem was an effective and poignant prompt that led the group to discuss race and White privilege. The poem elicited stories from both Haniah and Maria, the only two Black participants in the course. Haniah and Maria shared stories about their individual experiences of being Black women and university students navigating racism and fear in their everyday lives. The following excerpt from Haniah, who is of Ghanaian heritage, occurred during the same seminar. Haniah revealed some of her reflections about race, racism, and White people.

Honestly, whenever I see a Caucasian person, the first thing I say is, are they racist? I do feel scared to approach someone who's literally judging me by my race. But I think also not you guys, but like Caucasians need to understand that there is a system started within our own community. That if I am hanging out with a lot of White people I am judged. I feel excluded from my WMU Black community because they see me hanging out with a lot of Caucasian students and they don't understand that I like hanging out with people who are afraid of my color, to explain to them I am not going to kill you, I am not scary... (Haniah, seminar, 1/9/17)

Immediately following Haniah's story, Maria, who is of Haitian heritage shared some of her experiences and made connections to how the recent 2017 presidential election of Donald Trump created a heightened environment of fear and racism:

Sometimes I leave [my work study job on campus] at 11pm or 12am. She [Mom] will send me a text "be careful, because you know the White people are trying to kill Black people". There are always a lot of people leaving the park, and drunk, and I am always scared just walking [across campus] and I am always terrified. Especially at school, especially after the election, I feel like there was a lot of awkward sensation in classes and it shouldn't be like that. It really gets to me sometimes because I love everyone, and I talk to everyone and I end up feeling

some type of feeling towards people I don't know. It worries me as an only child that my Mom is two hours away from me and she is worried about me while working a seven to eleven shift. She is worried thinking I am going to be attacked because our school is predominantly White. I feel like the media really needs to take a step back in the way they tell these stories. Tell the whole story.

Both women tell stories about the balancing act they each perform daily to preserve their sociocultural identities, their relationships, and their physical and emotional well-being, as they voluntarily and involuntarily navigate through or around the racism, fear, and tensions they face on a daily basis. The sociohistorical moment of the 2016 presidential campaign that Maria refers to, is significant as it marks a shift in how the Obama presidency helped to improve race relations, while the Trump presidency has led to increasingly destructive race relations in the United States (Pew Research Center, 2017). In telling her story, Maria unpeels the critical layers of how the complex intersections of being a Black woman, a student, and a daughter of a single mom affect her daily life. Maria's telling reveals her frustration as she perceives the media portraying a skewed view in how they do not "tell the whole story". Maria does not see her lived experiences reflected in the media's representations of what is happening in the daily lives of Black people like her and her Mom, in America.

Noel, a focal participant, reflected back on the same nightly seminar when Haniah and Maria told their stories. During her individual interview Noel responded to the interview question, "Can you describe any new understandings you have about your own and others' sociocultural and language identities, based on the lens we used for the course through the assigned readings/media, seminars, and conversations?" Noel shared:

The seminars come to mind as soon as I think about language identities and sociocultural identities. Just because that was the time where I think people really shared about their own culture and backgrounds. I hadn't really thought about some of the things we talked about um, we talked about White privilege a lot and

I feel like I never really thought about that before and I think hearing from people of different backgrounds, as far as what they struggle with... at home and on a daily basis. So, I think that part of the seminars and the readings definitely opened my eyes to things that are happening in the world that I definitely didn't think about before the trip. (Noel, interview, 3/9/17)

Noel provides an example of her evolving awareness about her own and others' sociocultural identities. Noel links her new awareness directly to the course pedagogy and resulting discussions embedded in the nightly seminars. Noel's response to the interview question captures her critical reflection of this experience, and as well refers to Haniah's and Maria's stories shared above. Noel connects her evolving consciousness to the course pedagogy and seminar discussions about sociocultural identities, race, and White privilege. Noel acknowledges that their stories "opened my eyes" to how others experience struggles, which she shares in response to hearing the difficult stories shared by Haniah and Maria as they tell about race and racism in their daily lives. Noel exhibits a critically reflective practice as she recognizes her new awareness about others' challenging experiences. Noel points to the nightly seminars as a critical part of the travel study course that has influenced her new understandings about others'. Noel links the course curriculum to scaffolding her new awareness about others. Noel also connects to what Villegas & Lucas (2002) and Gay & Kirkland (2003) posit when they discuss the opportunities experiential learning provides for PSTs to critically reflect on their own and others' sociocultural identities as the first step to engaging in culturally responsive practices.

An example of understanding about one's self first as a gateway to move forward, and to learn about and interact with others effectively is evident in Noel's final reflection

paper. Noel illustrated her views on why it is important to know about one's own identity in order to connect with other cultures. Noel shared:

I think that knowing more about your identity and what makes you “you” is very important in your ability to help others and be able to interact with other cultures. (Noel, final reflection paper, 1/20/17)

Noel's critical self-reflection on her own and others' sociocultural identity is an example of how she is beginning to synthesize the culturally responsive curriculum that is threaded throughout the course. Noel ties the critical reflective practice of learning about self as central to being prepared to work and interact more effectively with others from different cultural, racial, and linguistic backgrounds.

During her individual interview, Rikki replied to a follow up question I posed, “Do you remember how we talked about understanding our own sociocultural identities and the role that reflective work plays in how we are able to move forward to understand others?” Rikki's response evoked an awareness of her own sociocultural identity when she shared:

I guess coming from...I was born in Ireland, I moved here when I was like very, very young. I grew up near Worcester, [in] a predominantly White town. That is all I know except when I go back home to Ireland. I think coming out to Western Mass...I live right next to Worcester, which is very diverse, but I would definitely like the opportunity to teach in Worcester. But going to school like I went to a Catholic school until 7th grade and for my Schools in American Culture class (at WMU) I went back and did it (field observation) there. And it was kind of very simple, not a lot of issues, not a lot of students with disabilities, I was like this is so nice, I am going to be a teacher, this is going to be easy. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

Rikki displays an emerging sociocultural consciousness about her own identity when she reflects on being an Irish immigrant (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Rikki's awareness that White immigrants are able to assimilate is evident when she states, “That is all I know,” in reference to growing up in an all-White community. In other words, she

has not experienced living or going to school in a community that is ethnically, racially, economically or linguistically diverse. Rikki also reveals an awareness that her prior schooling experiences and her first field observations back at the Catholic school she attended may have skewed her understanding about teaching and student populations in public schools. Rikki's awareness is similar to Villegas & Lucas (2002) discussion of developing a consciousness of social position and the intersection of schools and society that is often evident in how some students are privileged and others are marginalized.

Noel reflected back on her preconceived ideas about Puerto Rico in relation to what her thinking was prior to traveling to Puerto Rico when she responded to the following interview question, "Can you identify and discuss any preconceived notions about Puerto Rican culture you may have had prior to the course?" Noel identified that it was the experiential learning that made the shift possible. Noel explained:

So, I guess the only experience I had with Puerto Rican culture... before the course was in high school classes, and it, kind of made it seem like Puerto Rico was like this big party city, like there was always a celebration going on. We only learned about, like the holidays and exciting things going on. We didn't really learn about the history. So, I think actually going there as well as learning about the things we did in the seminars and stuff really helped with the history and the more serious side of it. (Noel, interview, 3/9/17)

Noel shares how the experiential learning in Puerto Rico or "going there" helped her to recognize the stereotypes she held about Puerto Rico. Noel names two aspects of the course, the nightly seminars and the physical location of the course and the experiential nature of being in Puerto Rico, as two elements that enabled her to learn about Puerto Rico's history and, as she says, the "serious side". Noel describes a shift in how she thinks about Puerto Rico and indicates her awareness about the preconceived biases she held about Puerto Rican culture prior to the travel course. Noel compares the

surface learning about holidays and celebrations she experienced in her high school classes, against the substantive sociocultural and sociohistorical learning that occurred in the travel study seminars that focused on the cultural, linguistic, and political history of Puerto Rico. Noel's response connects to Sleeter's (2011) text that warns against trivializing a culture by focusing on the cultural celebrations instead of addressing the sociopolitical inequities.

Angie like Noel held a pre-conceived idea of what Puerto Rico was like, which is revealed in her response to the same question asked of Noel above, during her individual interview:

I guess I was thinking very like Latin America kind of like dancing, Spanish speaking, beaches, um maybe more of a Spanish Culture than I actually saw. The food differences, I was thinking like spicy food, this and that. And there was just kind of more similar besides the rice and beans to our food. So, it was more Americanized that I might have thought before the trip. (Angie, interview, 3/9/17)

Angie's awareness level is different than her classmate Noel's. Angie recognizes the stereotypes she held prior to the travel study experience, and as a result can now identify similarities between Puerto Rico and the U.S. mainland. Angie also realizes that equating Puerto Rico to dancing, food, and beaches reduces Puerto Rico to a vacation stereotype. However, Angie does not yet make the leap to the sociopolitical focus that Noel identifies in Sleeter's (2011) warning about trivializing cultures.

Noel discussed her new awareness about others and why she thinks it is important to learn more about Puerto Rican families and their culture during her individual interview when she responded to the interview question, "How would you describe your attitudes and feelings toward ethnically and linguistically diverse students after participating in the travel study course to Puerto Rico?" Noel shared:

I definitely think I am more open-minded to like the different, I guess family structures and the culture the family has, cause now I know the different culture in Puerto Rico. And I think when it is brought back to the United States, these kids are in a Puerto Rican household and then they come to school, it is easier to connect with them and understand their culture at home. (Noel, interview, 3/9/17)

Noel describes herself as being “more open-minded” which is a realization on her part that she previously had a narrower view of other cultures. Noel’s new cultural consciousness provides evidence of how a short-term experiential learning course can influence a shift in cultural responsiveness. In the excerpt above, Noel realizes being open minded is critical to learning about her students’ culture and family, in order to understand more about who her students are. Noel’s response implies she is aware that students will experience culture and language shock when they move to the mainland of the United States and enter into English only schools and classrooms. Although Noel provides no evidence as to why she might understand about “family structures,” her new awareness allows her to identify the significance of being able to connect with these new students if she understands more about their home language and culture.

Similar to Noel, Rikki identifies the importance of understanding students’ sociocultural and linguistic identities in order to build community in the classroom. During her interview, I asked Rikki, “How would you describe your attitudes and feelings toward ethnically and linguistically diverse students after participating in the travel study course to Puerto Rico?” Rikki replied:

I’ve been talking a lot about that in my Education courses, how important it is to have family interaction. And I know parents don’t participate as much as you would like them to. I have had some of my pre-prac teachers say, “We try to reach out to their families, but they don’t answer.” So that is another struggle, so I think learning about all your students’ cultures is important and teaching all your students about other cultures is important. Especially students from here [Puerto Rico] are so used to everything around here. So, learning about other places and

people [who] come from other places. So, I think that is a huge part of like community in a classroom, for sure. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

Rikki illustrates her awareness that it is important to learn about “other places and people.” However, she falls into a stereotype about parents’ lack of involvement when she makes the blanket statement: “I know parents don’t participate as much as you would like them to” but then Rikki expresses cultural responsiveness when she recognizes and highlights the value of family interaction as a resource (Nieto, 2013). Rikki’s cultural responsiveness ties into Irizarry & Antrop-González’ (2007) expanded culturally responsive pedagogy. Irizarry & Antrop-González claim that authentic culturally responsive pedagogy occurs when teachers make personal and sociocultural connections with individual students and families in connection to their identities to support academic success.

I Never Really Thought About It

Connections to Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

The study’s findings show how the three focal participants, Angie, Rikki, and Noel, made sense of their experiential learning in Puerto Rico. Across the data, participants exhibited an awareness in process about their sociocultural and linguistic attitudes, beliefs, and biases, and how they link to culturally responsive pedagogy.

In her final reflection paper, when Noel wrote about the learning and empathetic aspects of being culturally responsive, she evidenced her evolving understanding about others’ sociocultural identities when she shared:

To me, being culturally responsive means being able to understand, being eager to learn about, and [to be] accepting [of] other cultures. I think that learning about the Puerto Rican culture and Spanish language in general helped to bring together the whole experience. Working with the children and staff at SRC was much easier once we knew about the language. Also, we learned that many Puerto

Ricans refuse to speak English, because they feel that they are being Americanized. We witnessed this first hand with the social worker at SRC. I think that learning about this culture beforehand helped me understand why she did that. (Noel, final reflection paper, 1/20/17)

Noel defines culturally responsive pedagogy similarly to Ladson-Billings (1994), who describes it as learning about others' culture, race, and language to effectively support academic learning. In her reflection paper, Noel highlights the significance of her experiential learning while in Puerto Rico. Noel places herself in the position of being a learner and considers this perspective as central to the work of learning and understanding about other cultures and languages. Noel's heightened awareness is evident when she identifies the School Rehabilitation Center (SRC) social worker Yaniris's intentional choice to primarily speak Spanish to our group as a form of political agency to highlight the significance of the cultural and language identity of being Puerto Rican and as a protest to English language dominance.

Rikki, like Noel, continued this thread in her final reflection paper when she indicated a deeper sense of how understanding one's own sociocultural identity is interwoven with being culturally responsive. Rikki pointed out:

Understanding your own sociocultural identity is important in order to engage with individuals of similar and different identities. Being culturally responsive means to know and understand the culture of yourself and others that you are working with. Being a teacher, I will be working with students from many different backgrounds and I will make it my duty to understand these backgrounds. SRC was such an amazing experience that really highlighted the culturally responsive pedagogy. Culturally responsive pedagogy is defined as "a student-centered approach to teaching in which the students' unique cultural strengths are identified and nurtured to promote student achievement and a sense of well-being about the student's cultural place in the world." I will be sure to incorporate this pedagogy into my future classrooms to better the learning of all my students. (Rikki, final reflection paper, 1/24/17)

Rikki makes critical connections to her sociocultural identity and culturally responsive teaching practices. This is evident when she describes her future self as working “with students from many different backgrounds” and her commitment to learn about her students’ cultural identities. Rikki further solidifies this connection in the excerpt above, when she refers to and quotes from readings about culturally responsive pedagogy (Howard, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 1994). The readings highlight student-centered teaching and views students’ cultural identities as resources and includes cultivating a positive attitude in relation to culturally and linguistically diverse students.

In her final reflection paper Angie discussed culturally responsive pedagogy in relation to students with different sociocultural backgrounds. In this excerpt Angie revealed a new awareness about herself as a White person and discussed her prior preconceived belief that racism was not prevalent today. Angie wrote:

My experience of feeling like a minority also helped me to totally understand the importance of culturally responsive teaching. Before this trip, I would have defined culturally responsive as using literature and children books to open “windows” (a new perspective) and “mirrors” (a connection) for students with different cultural backgrounds. I also would have said racism is not still a major problem in the U.S today. (Angie, final reflection paper, 1/23/17)

Prior to the travel course Angie described culturally responsive teaching in connection to understanding one’s own sociocultural identity through the lens of multicultural literature texts. Angie’s realization about the narrow scope of multicultural children’s literature connects to Escamilla & Nathenson- Mejía (2003) findings in their study that they noticed with teacher candidates (TCs). Escamilla & Nathenson- Mejía state:

Simply reading ethnic literature will not create the knowledge base, compassion, or call to action that we desire in our TCs. More dialogue and discussion about all of the issues needs to be included in our seminars, and we need to help teacher

candidates learn to look closely at their negative reactions to some of the content in the books, explore these reactions, and find ways to overcome them in order to be more culturally responsive to their students. (p. 246)

Angie's new awareness helps her to recognize that the use of multicultural children's literature is but one of many pedagogical approaches in culturally responsive teaching. Angie's awareness points to the concern that Bennett (2013) and Sleeter (2011) have raised about the deficit that exists within teacher education programs. Bennett and Sleeter claim that culturally responsive teaching practices are not consistently threaded through the teacher education coursework. To be clear, this is not to detract from the effective culturally responsive teaching happening in one particular course or another at WMU or in other teacher education programs, but more to express that it should be happening in multiple facets throughout all coursework, so that pre-service teachers like Angie can build on their growing sociocultural and linguistic critical consciousness.

When I asked Noel during her interview, "Can you describe your understanding of what it means to be culturally responsive?", Noel's response like Rikki's focused on being culturally responsive through learning about others' cultures:

To be culturally responsive, I think, means understanding other cultures and being open minded and being open to the idea of just learning everything you can about other cultures and trying to be able to relate to them. Because I think you can talk about someone's culture, but I think going into it and like truly accepting it and doing what you can to be truly part of it, I think is being the most responsive that you can be. And trying to adhere to their needs and their culture and being respectful, I guess. (Noel, interview, 3/9/17)

I kind of learned from the trip like what it means to be responsive. I feel like I have been working more towards doing that in everyday life, like in school and trying to do everything I can, to understand other people. (Noel interview, 3/9/17)

Noel connects being open to and embracing others' cultures and languages as a pathway to being culturally responsive. Noel highlights being aware of the needs of

others as well as being respectful. The expectation that Noel puts forth is about the responsibility one has as a teacher to learn about and be open to others.

In her interview Angie also responded to the same question about what it means to be culturally responsive when she stated:

I am thinking the more knowledge a teacher has, the more they can teach a kid and the more they can be prepared if a kid comes up with a random question out of the blue. And how they can control it and not be offended and not feel like, I don't really know the word I am looking for, almost belittled by the students or something. (Angie, interview, 3/9/17)

Me, like I am here to help you because you have so many issues. They're different from me, and I might have saw [difference] as issues before and now [I] see them as cultural differences. (Angie, interview, 3/9/17)

Angie positions herself as the knowledge dispenser, a pedagogy that Freire and other scholars advocate against, that of seeing students as empty vessels to be the receivers of knowledge bestowed by the teacher. In the second excerpt above, Angie makes a shift, and begins to articulate her awareness of the preconceived ideas she has about teaching and learning and how she may have seen differences in students as “issues” in the past, but now sees them as “cultural differences”. These two responses show evidence that Angie is still in the process of synthesizing the course readings and discussions, and that she continues to evolve in how she thinks, understands, and speaks about people different from herself.

Difficult Stories Were Shared

Racial and Cultural Consciousness

The study found that the three focal participants each experienced a new awareness about their own and others' racial and cultural identities through a combination of course design and hearing about other course participants' stories.

The critical self-reflection Angie engages in during the experiential learning course in Puerto Rico helps her to drill deeper and reflect on her evolving racial and cultural consciousness about herself and others. The critical self-reflection she reveals in the previous excerpt from her reflection paper when she states: “I also would have said racism is not still a major problem in the U.S today” points to how Angie takes a risk and steps out of her social world when she explicitly communicates about her prior lack of awareness about the existence of societal racism.

Noel like Angie addressed her evolving racial and cultural consciousness in her final reflection paper when she identified herself as different from Puerto Ricans. In particular, she compared her own race and her monolingualism to Puerto Ricans “with a darker color skin” who are bilingual. Noel shared:

I am a Caucasian that knows how to speak only English, and the students, teachers, and a majority of the people from Puerto Rico that I met on the trip were Latin Americans with a darker color skin than me and fluently spoke English and Spanish. (Noel, final reflection paper, 1/20/17)

In this reflection, Noel indicates that she is able to use a critically reflective and sociocultural conscious lens in relation to her asset perspective of language diversity (García & Wei, 2014). Noel shows an evolving awareness when she frames Puerto Ricans on the island as bilingual and expresses her view of language diversity from an asset perspective when she writes that they “fluently spoke English and Spanish” while she herself “speaks only English”. However, Noel also expresses a stereotype about Puerto Ricans, when she refers to all the “...Latin Americans with darker color skin than me.” This excerpt illustrates her assumption that all Puerto Ricans have “dark skin” as compared to herself, and is a stereotype, as Puerto Rican skin tones vary from white to brown, to black and all the tones in between.

I noticed all three participants' evolving racial, cultural and linguistic consciousness emerged at different points during our focus group conversations when I posed the question: "Can any of you tell me about a time when you were aware of your race, language, gender?" (Robin, focus group, 4/5/17). Noel responded, "I think that we caused some attention when the group of us were walking around. Definitely, because we were speaking English and we weren't the same race for the most part. I think you could tell it was a group of people from somewhere else." Rikki followed with, "We probably stood out as being tourists. I feel like I could point out other groups that were tourists when I was in Puerto Rico and I was a tourist." To push them further and evoke more critical responses, I followed up with the question, "How did that feel?" Noel responded, "I don't think it was a bad thing. You noticed it... you could see the people noticed it as well." Rikki added, "It didn't make me feel a certain way, but you are aware of it. You are aware that people know you're not from here (Puerto Rico)." I observed an increased racial and cultural consciousness when Angie joined in and said:

I think that being within the group it was less intimidating, because we were with everyone. Everyone knew us as outsiders together. Maybe if I was like walking to Walgreens by myself, or something like that, where I am trying to fit in alone, it would probably be a different feeling, more intimidating or more conscious of people staring at you. Like she doesn't speak Spanish she probably doesn't look the same as us. But within the group it was just [a] fun feeling. But you could definitely tell like, [by the] looks or something, yeah. (Angie, focus group, 4/5/17)

In the above excerpts, the participants evolving racial, cultural, and linguistic consciousness emerges in the way they discuss their Whiteness and identify themselves as outsiders with different skin color and language. In Angie's case, she describes her experience and recognizes the significance of moving around as a group, "it was less intimidating" being in a group. Angie notices that being in a group gave her a sense of

comfort. This sense of comfort perhaps contributes to her being more open to developing and talking about a new consciousness she has about herself and others.

Rikki shared that she had become more aware of racial issues through watching the course media text, *Mi Puerto Rico* (Ortiz & Eddy, 1995), as well as from hearing about others' stories during the nightly seminars:

Definitely I felt like I have always been aware of the racial problems in our world and everywhere, especially people that I knew sharing stories. I don't know, I think my awareness was brought up. We obviously heard a lot of difficult stories, which was hard, but I think was necessary. I think it made all of us a lot more aware of what is going on. I think the video was helpful too. Just the discussions in general kind of helped like everyone's eyes open. (Rikki, focus group, 4/5/17)

Angie responded after Rikki and revealed that prior to the course she was unaware of racial issues:

Perfectly said, I wasn't as aware of the racial issues because I thought happy world. So, when some of the difficult stories were shared it was just like heart shattering awful...very surprising to me. I wasn't really as aware [of] what other people were going through, as opposed to myself. After hearing those stories like you said, it had a deeper impact and changed my thinking, and made me think more deeply about racial issues. (Angie, focus group, 4/5/17)

I interpret Angie's "happy world" comment in that she senses her Whiteness has afforded her the privilege to see the world through that lens (Green, 2002). Angie illustrates that her awareness has shifted when she articulates she has a new perception about racial issues connected to "those stories" being shared in our seminars by others who are different from her both racially and ethnically. "Those stories" she refers to are stories told by the two Black participants, Haniah and Maria, about their experiences dealing with racism and racial inequities in their everyday lives. The excerpt above from the focus group provides evidence of a moment when Angie begins to critically think

about the emerging sociocultural consciousness that she is developing in relation to herself and others.

Noel in turn, responded to both Rikki and Angie and identified a deeper understanding of racial issues that she has been made aware of from friends who are both racially and ethnically different from herself:

I think it is different when you know the people talking about it, like you can read about it, like in a textbook. But when you have one of your friends sit in front of you and cry, and be emotional, and be upset, and clearly be emotional about something that has to do with the issues [about] their race, and [what they are] going through. So, I think it opened my eyes to the issues. (Noel, focus group, 4/4/17)

Rikki extended and deepened the discussion above and drew a connection to “White talk” and her own previous position of being unaware of how racism occurs when she shared:

I think it was the conversation about White talk. When a White person doesn’t realize they are being racist. I can’t remember but I never thought about that before the trip, because I don’t have to worry about certain things that a Black person might have to worry about or a different race or anything. So, I think that whole conversation just stuck with me because I never really thought about it before, because I never had to worry about [what] a Black person has to worry about. But now when I see certain things, I think about it, and am more aware of everything that is going on. (Rikki, focus group, 4/5/17)

This focus group conversation is tied to one of our nightly seminars in Puerto Rico. During this particular seminar Luna, the co-instructor of the course, who is Puerto Rican, reminds us that language diversity can be used as a form of agency, and then relates our group discussion to a prior WMU campus workshop she and I both attended. The WMU workshop was focused on cultural, linguistic, and racial microaggressions and was led by an Education faculty member at WMU. The agency that Luna reminds us of is what Sleeter (2011) and Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) claim as central to authentic

culturally responsive pedagogy. In other words, being culturally responsive includes addressing the inequities and institutionalized racism connected to current schooling that marginalizes ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse students and their families. During this seminar discussion, Luna, who is a cultural insider, challenges participants to understand what it feels like to be the other.

In the following excerpt, Luna referred to the presentation at the School Rehabilitation Center (SRC) by Yaniris, who is a social worker and administrator, and facilitated the SRC orientation for our group. Yaniris spoke in Spanish for 99% of the presentation. Luna pointed out:

If you think about today and about that presentation, how this woman explained why she didn't talk to you in English, I say, my hero, go girlfriend. How did it feel when you did not understand? When you felt excluded from that discourse? So even if you can capture that moment, of being an "other", you were not included, how left out you felt, I don't get it, and you go inside, [and think] I don't care what she says. So just take one of those examples. That is just a micro example. You may not feel segregated as a woman, but today, I could feel how many people felt left out. I want you to remember the feeling, because some people are feeling that feeling all day twenty-four/seven. (Luna, seminar, 1/9/17)

Luna's excerpt from the seminar is an example of how the course was designed with culturally responsive pedagogy to explicitly disrupt deficit language ideologies, assumptions, and preconceived ideas about Puerto Rican culture and Spanish language. Further, this excerpt highlights one of the goals for this experiential learning course, which is to create spaces for students to examine their racial, linguistic and cultural consciousness through the lens of critical self-reflection.

Flores & Rosa (2015) also focus on the resistance to the "white listening subject" (Andaldúa, 1987). This resistance speaks to the experience Luna refers to in the excerpt above. Yaniris, our host at SRC welcomed our group on the first day and provided an

overview of the preK-12 School Rehabilitation Center that included the history, mission, practices, and structural makeup of the organization/school. While Yaniris spoke in Spanish 99% of the time, Luna translated intermittently for our group. Three out of the 15 participants had more advanced Spanish language skills, both receptive as well as speaking; however, the remaining 12 participants had little to no Spanish language receptive or speaking skills. When Yaniris was half way through the presentation, she stopped speaking Spanish for a few moments and in English asked our group if we knew why she was speaking only Spanish. Yaniris continued in Spanish and communicated that it wasn't because she could not speak English, as she was quite capable of doing so. Luna translated this to the group and this prompted further discussion of her intentional choice to speak Spanish as a form of resistance to push back against the power structure that often positions English as the dominant language. Yaniris's performative agency relates to the resistance that Flores & Rosa (2015) frame, as they push back against positioning the advocacy of academic English as the only pathway to achieve academic success. These sociolinguistic tensions are ever present within educational advocacy that promotes linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and racial diversity as resources, and not problems (Ruiz, 1984).

The following excerpt from Angie's interview provided further evidence of how the nightly seminar conversations in Puerto Rico contributed to her evolving awareness about White privilege and her increased racial consciousness. However, this same interview conversation also showed evidence of Angie's conflicted racial consciousness when she used the racially offensive term "colored girls" to describe two Black WMU participants in the course. This excerpt points to how deeply racial and sociocultural

identity factors into one's racial consciousness and the role guided culturally responsive instruction and discussions can play:

So definitely that one, we had a very deep seminar talking about White talk and White privileges and two of the *colored girls* on the trip got to share their experiences and their kind of view from something I never got to see. So, I guess it changed my thinking where I have always been open to anyone, whoever they are. I have always treated them equally, that is how I was raised, that's how I have been, but I never have thought about how other people might treat different people. So that kind of like raised my awareness of that and has made me more consc...cautious...I don't know. And also, definitely much more actively engaged in conversations or like extra meetings, I guess, or events. I have been to a lot more events than I have ever have before because of our conversations in Puerto Rico. (Angie, interview, 3/9/17)

I held a follow up meeting with Angie to member check her interview responses and to clarify her meanings and address the "colored girls" comment, as I had not done so in the moment it occurred during the interview. When we met, we greeted each other, and settled in. Sitting side by side, I shared with Angie that I wanted to follow up with her on her use of the term "colored girls". I placed the audio transcribed document on the table between us and walked her through the transcription of her interview and referred back to the jottings and notes I wrote during the original interview. I asked her why she used the term "colored girls" and whether she was aware that it was a racially offensive term. I noticed that when I asked her about this, she turned very red and replied, "I didn't mean to be racist." Angie then hesitated and asked, "Which word is politically correct?" Angie was visibly upset and expressed her desire to correct this. We then discussed the term "person of color" and in this specific case I suggested that using the term "women of color" would be one respectful option. This led to a conversation about individual identities, in other words, who people are ethnically, racially, and linguistically. Although Angie's use of "colored girls" was offensive, it was her lack of awareness and then the

response “I didn’t mean to be racist” that reveals her new racial and cultural awakening. This evolving awareness is expressed through the fear that she was being racist, which can be interpreted as her desire to continue becoming more racially and culturally conscious about herself and others.

Angie’s excerpt above and the subsequent conversation is an example of how part her underlying attitudes, beliefs, and biases embedded in her sociocultural identities contribute to her “linguaging race” which is a process of constructing or deconstructing race through language (Alim, Rickford & Ball, 2016). The follow-up conversation with Angie also affirms the need for instructors to continue to engage in critically reflective practices about race, language, and culture in order to be prepared to respond “in the moment” to offensive or deficit language. This exchange within the excerpt is a prime example of how a course instructor engages with a participant and is evidence of the culturally responsive practices utilized to address learned language that marginalizes others as well as to unpack those difficult stories and language ideologies that reveal preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases (Alim, Rickford & Ball, 2016).

In the following two excerpts in her reflection paper, Angie discussed what it felt like to be a minority while volunteering at SRC in a 6th grade classroom. The first excerpt below is an example of how Angie’s development of sociocultural awareness is complicated by the tension that exists for her in relation to White privilege:

I enjoyed being the minority because it was an experience I have never had before. One example when I felt like a minority was when I was trying to communicate with a group of 6th grade students that were gardening at the school with me. (Angie, final reflection paper, 1/23/17)

Angie continued:

After traveling to Puerto Rico ... I have a different definition of culturally responsive, and I know that racism is still a huge problem in the United States. Seminars and the article *Difficult Stories* taught me what “White privilege” and “White talk” is, along with how and why that is a problem in today’s culture. I am extremely grateful that this community that was built on our journey in Puerto Rico was open to different perspectives and actively worked on making the world a more accepting place. (Angie, final reflection paper, 1/23/17)

Angie displays racial and cultural consciousness and an awareness of language diversity when she describes what it feels like to be a minority and struggles with understanding the 6th grade Spanish speaking students. As a Spanish language learner, Angie is able to walk in the shoes of an English language learner for a moment and shows empathy for what this feels like. In the second excerpt, Angie further reflects on culturally responsive beliefs in connection to her experience in Puerto Rico and her new awareness that “racism is still a huge problem” in the United States. Angie reveals that the seminar discussions about White talk and privilege, the participants’ stories shared in the seminars, and the course assigned reading, (Green, 2003) have collectively guided and contributed to her new awareness about racism. Angie identifies her own evolving racial and cultural consciousness by talking about the existence of racism, a consciousness she admits to not having prior to this experiential learning course.

Rikki, like Angie, displayed a new understanding about racial consciousness during a seminar in Puerto Rico. In the following excerpt during a seminar, Rikki responded to a reading about service learning and White privilege (MacIntosh, 1988) within a critically reflective think/ink exercise that asked participants to answer: “What could be a new way of understanding, what could be my new “aha”, new learning from the issue they both addressed. What is another point of view, another perspective? What question do you still have?” Rikki shared:

I wrote how I think subconsciously people take their privileges for granted depending on their race. You might not be meaning to, but [you] subconsciously do. So that kind of stood out to me, but I don't even know. (Rikki, seminar, 1/2/17)

When Rikki shares her reflection about privilege connected to race with the whole group, she acknowledges the complex layers of becoming racially conscious as she recognizes her own White privilege (MacIntosh, 1988). Rikki's excerpt makes it evident that she has begun to question these institutionalized practices that marginalize some social groups while privileging others (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

During another seminar conversation about White silence, Luna and I stepped in to reaffirm the criticality of overcoming silence through praxis and to underscore the oppressive reality of being the "other" in every moment. The following is an example of how guided course instruction worked to disrupt White silence. Both instructors responded, first Robin pointed out:

This is really about the whole silence thing, the White silence that happens because it is uncomfortable, and you don't want to say anything. So, the not being silent part is probably the hardest thing, and that is the action part. That is when you can really show your agency, by not being silent. (Robin, seminar, 1/9/17)

Luna, as a cultural insider, shared:

We wake up in the morning every day and we know that our voices sound differently. Our skin is different. Whatever it is we are in the otherness, 24 hours a day. (Luna, seminar, 1/9/17)

This excerpt is telling of how the White course instructor/researcher explicitly models agency through speaking up to address racism, and Luna, the Puerto Rican instructor and cultural insider shares about what it feels like to be the other. In the excerpt above, the instructor/researcher points out that as a White woman and instructor it is important to articulate that White silence is a component of institutionalized racism and

that speaking up is one way to be an agent of change. In Luna's excerpt she is explicit about what it feels like to always be in the skin of the "other". This excerpt also highlights the significance of having a Puerto Rican, cultural insider as one of the co-instructors. After this seminar the instructors debriefed and re-confirmed the criticalness of speaking from the two different places of sociocultural identity in order to model what it looks like for the White female instructor to engage in social justice pedagogical practices and simultaneously for participants to hear from a Puerto Rican bi-lingual woman, who is an accomplished university professor, share how oppressive it feels to be the "other", linguistically, racially, and culturally "24 hours a day".

CHAPTER 5

BENEFITS OF EXPERIENTIAL, CULTURAL AND LANGUAGE IMMERSION, CRITICAL SERVICE LEARNING

The findings in this study suggest that a short-term travel study course can provide an additional and effective pathway for teacher education programs to strengthen and expand culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogical practices. These findings confirm that critical reflexive work within a cultural and language immersion, critical service and experiential learning course can deepen participants' understanding of their own and others' sociocultural, racial, socioeconomic, and linguistic identities.

They Taught Me So Much

Experiential cultural and language immersion, critical service learning is a complex process for participants and instructors to navigate as they engage in the work of critically examining and unpacking their own and others sociocultural identities and shifting their attitudes, beliefs, and biases. In the following excerpts the three focal participants reflect on and make sense of their experiences at School Rehabilitation Center (SRC) and the Spanish Language School (SLS). In these reflective responses Noel, Rikki, and Angie each share about the connections they make to critical service learning (CSL).

In her final reflection paper Noel wrote about the collaborative teaching and learning she observed at the School Rehabilitation Center (SRC), viewed through the lens of critical service learning, embedded in the course readings and discussions (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Pompa, 2002). Noel reflected:

The idea of “working with someone and not for them” really made sense to me once I worked at the school. I was able to help them, and they taught me so much

about the school in general, Puerto Rico, and Autism itself. Being able to help children is something that is universal, and this trip proved that. (Noel, final reflection paper, 1/20/17)

Noel describes the critical service learning (CSL) perspective as “working with” and shares her experience with the SRC students who were teaching her. This excerpt is a telling example of how Noel focuses on the children, both in respect to how she helps the students and learns from the students. Noel’s critical self-reflection indicates that she understands and is putting into action the collaborative nature of CSL practices (Ginwright & Cammarota, 2002; Pompa, 2002).

Similar to Noel, Rikki in her reflection paper wrote about how she shifted her thinking about Puerto Rican schools as she describes her shift from deficit to asset thinking. Rikki shared:

I went in with some preconceived notions with more of a deficit perspective when thinking about the schools and what we would be doing in Puerto Rico. However, as my mind shifted from deficit thinking to asset thinking, I discovered something amazing. We were not just “helping out” this school and all the students and staff in it, we were helping ourselves, and learning so much about the amazing Puerto Rican culture. (Rikki, final reflection paper, 1/24/17)

Rikki expresses a consciousness of her preconceived beliefs about Puerto Rico when she realizes she came to Puerto Rico with a deficit perspective of others. This new awareness indicates a movement toward being culturally responsive as she recognizes the value of learning about Puerto Rican culture. Rikki’s excerpt shows that she understands that CSL is about collaborative teaching, learning, and partnership work. Her understanding indicates the connection she makes to the CSL approach that Ginwright & Cammarota (2002) present in their text, an approach that is mutually beneficial, engaging, and at the same time calls for the examination of and action against existing institutional power systems that exist (Pompa, 2002).

Angie talks about the critical service learning philosophy at the end of her interview in response to the question I posed, “Is there something I didn’t include or ask you that still stands out for you? I am wondering if there is anything I missed?” Angie shared about the difference between going to volunteer, and feeling good about herself, as opposed to having a mutually beneficial experience:

I can volunteer, help out someone, and I can feel good about it. But the working with and not for perspective is: I am going to go in and not just going to help them and feel good about it. I am going to make sure they feel good too. Because they are doing something for me and I am going to let them know that almost. Not saying, [I] don’t have to say it, but body language or whatever. Just hoping that both people leave with such a good feeling, not like: “Oh this girl came in and brought me food and now I just feel needy.” I don’t want that to be a thing, I want it to be like this is great, I got to communicate with them I got to get to know them. (Angie, interview, 3/9/17)

It is evident in the way Angie frames her response that her goal is to be successful in this service learning experience. While Angie focuses on the “feeling good” aspect, she continues to show a consciousness that service learning can be harmful when participants come in with a savior attitude that reinforces unequal power dynamics (Green, 2003). Angie indicates this when she says, “I got to communicate” and “I got to get to know them.” This excerpt ties into our seminar discussions about White privilege, a focus of the course pedagogy that Angie begins to grasp (Green, 2003). Angie shows she is taking steps towards understanding the underpinnings of the CSL philosophy and toward having healthy communications and relationships that take her out of the center of the teaching and learning exchange.

From Her I Learned

Language Ideologies and Spanish Language Learning

The study gives evidence that participants consistently demonstrated an increased awareness of others linguistic and cultural identities as they engaged in and made sense of their Spanish language learning experiences. Findings affirm that the Spanish language learning immersion experience created spaces for participants to begin to understand and empathize with English language learner students because of their Spanish language learner experiences during this experiential learning course. Findings show how experiential Spanish language learning classes can support PSTs viewing language as a resource.

Prior to the language classes and the service learning work, our group traveled to Juana Díaz, a town located near the southern coast of the island, to attend a festival and parade on Día de los Reyes Magos, the Three Kings Day celebration. When we arrived in Juana Díaz the public square was lined with local people getting ready to watch the parade. There were 18 of us, and we broke off into small groups to watch the parade that featured locals participating in the spiritual, cultural, and artistic representations of the Magi and the birth of Christ. After the parade the WMU participants gathered into small groups and wandered around the square exploring the multitude of vendors selling crafts and cultural dishes and observing various musical and artistic performances. The WMU participants had not begun their language immersion classes at SLS yet, and so the majority of the participants had little to no Spanish receptive or speaking skills. However, some of the participants were able to draw on prior language learning experiences from

high school Spanish classes, while a few were able to converse in more advanced Spanish language.

Below is a reflective memory Angie shared in response to the interview question, “Can you describe any particularly challenging and/or positive experiences related to Spanish language learning experience while in Puerto Rico?” Angie responded with what she identified as both a positive and difficult language experience she had while trying to locate a particular dish she had noticed someone eating while at the Día de los Reyes celebration:

We couldn't find it, we looked at all the signs and it was Spanish, and we were so confused. So, we ordered something from someplace and they only spoke Spanish and we spoke English and we don't even know what we ordered or what we were trying to say. So that was something difficult but funny, also positive because it was just a good memory. (Angie, interview, 3/9/17)

Angie's response shows how she navigates being a monolingual English speaker trying to communicate with Spanish speaking vendors, by primarily using English. Angie identifies this as a positive and difficult experience with Spanish language, but also frames Spanish language as a problem (Ruiz, 1984) when she says, “they only spoke Spanish and we spoke English.” The belief that others are lacking something if they cannot communicate in English comes through in her telling. However, Angie also places the onus on herself and her co-participant Rikki, as she shares about their limited Spanish and being confused. For Angie it was a “good memory,” a memory that reminds her of a difficult but positive experience navigating as a Spanish language learner.

Rikki also expressed the “Spanish as a problem” (Ruiz, 1984) perspective during her interview when she responded to the same question as Angie above, and reflected on this same moment at Día de los Reyes Magos, Three Kings Day Festival. Rikki shared:

Like we went to some great places, they could not speak English, not even attempting it and I don't know if they had no English or not. We were in line, so we were prepping, we need to ask cheese, queso, to know what everything is called like chicken so that was kind of cool. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

Rikki's portrayal of the Puerto Rican vendors as, "not even attempting" to speak English, positions English as a preferred language over Spanish when she says, "I don't know if they had no English or not" (García & Wei, 2014). However, in contrast, this excerpt also shows an asset language perspective, in how Rikki and her co-participant Angie both work to practice Spanish words to order food using what little Spanish vocabulary they have, for example, "queso", to order their dish with cheese. In this moment, Rikki taps into translanguaging practices when she interjects Spanish into English sentences and engages in additive language practices (Valenzuela, 1999; García & Wei, 2014). Rikki also expresses that the navigation of Spanish as "kind of cool" in this very brief moment of time in a low risk group situation, is what gave her the space to practice. With more of these layered experiences of needing and wanting to communicate as Spanish language learners, these PSTs might retain how it feels to walk these few steps in the shoes of a language learner and then transfer these empathetic experiences into a culturally responsive pedagogical practice in their future classrooms.

During her individual interview, I asked Noel, "How would you describe your attitudes and feelings toward ethnically and linguistically diverse students after participating in the travel study course to Puerto Rico?" Noel revealed that the Spanish classes she attended at the Spanish Language School (SLS) while in Puerto Rico was what made it possible for her to communicate with students at the School Rehabilitation Center (SRC):

I feel like as far as the language it definitely helps to have had the classes and to have like a refresher course on their language, because I don't think I would be as involved with them as I am if I couldn't speak Spanish. It definitely is helping me because a lot of them only speak Spanish, they don't speak English. (Noel, interview, 3/9/17)

Noel identifies that the ability to speak Spanish is a resource for her (Ruiz, 1984), and learning Spanish in the morning made it possible for her to immediately put into practice what she had learned and then engage with students at SRC whose first language is Spanish. This “refresher course gave Noel the confidence to engage directly with students and allowed her to be more “involved”.

In her final reflection paper Rikki wrote about an observation that took place in Fernanda's classroom. Fernanda is a teacher at the School Rehabilitation Center (SRC). During this observation, Rikki engaged in a sharing activity that helped her learn more about the students in Fernanda's classroom. The following excerpt is an example of how the Spanish language classes facilitated an asset perspective of language learning:

Luckily for SLS [Spanish Language School] I was able to converse in Spanish with many of the students to get to know them. While I primarily just observed Fernanda's students, I also took part in a sharing activity and got to know a lot about all of the students. (Rikki, final reflection paper, 1/24/17)

When Rikki states, “Luckily for SLS I was able to converse in Spanish with many of the students to get to know them”, she feels lucky because she was able to take Spanish at the Spanish Language School in the mornings, before going to the School Rehabilitation Center (SRC). The Spanish language learning experience gave her the basic skills, ability, and confidence to communicate with and get to know the students in the classroom. Rikki confirms this when I member-checked with her during a follow up meeting to co-construct the data in order to ensure the data was trustworthy (Rossman &

Rallis, 2012). Rikki again expresses this asset perspective of Spanish language learning, when she refers to being "...able to converse in Spanish with many of the students."

Angie discussed language diversity (García & Wei, 2014) in her final reflection paper when she described how Luisa an SRC classroom teacher used multilingual resources to communicate:

Luisa is the special education teacher in the classroom; she speaks Spanish and very little English. From her, I learned how helpful visual aids are when trying to communicate with someone who speaks a different language than you. (Angie, final reflection paper, 1/23/17)

In her reflection, Angie demonstrates an asset perspective by engaging in an additive language diversity practice with Luisa the classroom teacher (Valenzuela, 1999; García & Wei, 2014). Angie signifies the use of multilingualism, an inclusive communication practice, as positive. She shows this asset perspective in the way she describes how Luisa models using body language and artifacts to communicate with Angie and another WMU participant (García & Wei, 2014). In their text, García & Wei from (Khubchandani, 1997; Norris, 2004) define multilingualism as: "Successful multilingual interactions have always been aided by multimodalities - gestures, objects, visual cues, touch, tone, sounds and other modes of communication besides words" (p.28). Angie described how Luisa, the classroom teacher who predominantly speaks Spanish, practiced multilingualism:

"Luisa showed another WMU pre-service teacher and I a map of Puerto Rico so she could better explain the area, and we were able to use the map to tell her about the excursions we experienced the week before" (Angie, reflection paper, 1/23/17).

Angie demonstrates that she understands the significance of Spanish language learning within this experiential learning course. The WMU participants and Luisa

communicate with each other by tapping into multilingual resources to support learning through language diversity (García & Wei, 2014). This finding shows how the unique combination of Spanish language learning and critical service learning can scaffold an increased awareness about sociocultural and linguistic identities. Additionally, this excerpt reveals how the combination of critical service learning and Spanish language immersion opened spaces for participants to both practice and experience what it feels like to be a language learner, and also see how Puerto Rican teachers effectively model culturally responsive teaching and learning with bilingual learners.

Angie showed her evolving perspective of language diversity in her reflection paper, when she wrote about her monolingual language ability in Sofia's 5th grade classroom:

Those students could not speak English, so they were looking at me like I had ten heads when I was attempting Spanish, and I got a bit embarrassed that I did not know their language. This inspired me to practice my Spanish more often. And a strategy that Sofia taught me that I would like to try, is watching TV shows in Spanish. Sofia the 5th grade teacher said that is how her and her son learned English and I think it would be a helpful strategy for me. (Angie, final reflection paper, 1/23/17)

In this excerpt, Angie conveys an understanding that Spanish language learning is an asset. Additionally, Angie indicates what García & Wei (2014) discuss as *additive bilingualism* when she shares about her desire to practice Spanish more often in order to improve her Spanish language skills. Angie also recognizes that she is at a disadvantage when she shares that students were looking at her “like I had ten heads when I was attempting Spanish.” In other words, she is the different person, the other, the White person within a group of Puerto Rican students and the Puerto Rican classroom teacher. The self-reflection that Angie engages in reveals she is developing an increasing

awareness as she negotiates each new experience as a Spanish language learner while in Puerto Rico.

Noel's response to the interview question, "Can you describe any particularly challenging and/or positive experiences related to your Spanish language learning experience while in Puerto Rico?", indicated Spanish language learning was a critical element in the experiential language and critical service course for her:

I think the positive experiences like, there was way more of those, because I feel like learning Spanish in a Spanish speaking area was like much more interesting and fun than learning it in a high school. So, I think that was positive and like I said before, just being able to listen to people and talk to people in the community and especially like once we went to SRC I think it definitely helped as well because a lot of the teachers don't speak English or chose not to speak English. So, I think that definitely helped us connect to them as well, and the students, because a lot of the students didn't speak any English either, so it definitely helped in the school. (Noel, interview, 3/9/17)

Noel identifies learning Spanish as an asset as well as a positive experience for herself. Noel acknowledges that communicating in Spanish, because it is the native language of the students in this classroom in Puerto Rico, is necessary in order to make connections with the students. This excerpt provides evidence that Noel discerns the criticalness of teachers viewing students' home language as a resource, as well as a culturally responsive practice that is essential to becoming an effective teacher (Ruiz, 1984; Delpit, 2005).

Noel further responded to a question about making connections between learning Spanish as an asset to personal growth and making connections to students and their families. In her response to the interview question: "Are you interested in continuing to improve your Spanish language skills? Explain why or why not, and your motivation for this interest?" Noel shared:

I would say yes because now I kind of like have a new interest in it I guess, and I think I realize it would help a lot like in my career, like as a teacher to know a different language. I think it would open more doors for different jobs and you could help more people when you are bilingual, and you can go into different communities. That would be good to keep improving that. (Noel, interview, 3/9/17)

Noel demonstrates the intrinsic value she places on Spanish language learning. In other words, Noel views learning Spanish as a way to gain personal economic and career opportunities while she also sees it as a resource to bridge the classroom to the communities of her students. This excerpt confirms that Noel identifies language diversity as a resource (Ruiz, 1984) when she imagines working with her future students and their families. Noel affirms that she values learning her student's language as both important to her career and a pathway into making connections with her students' larger home community.

During her interview I asked Angie, "Can you describe your experiences with your language learning while at the Spanish Language School (SLS) and throughout your time in Puerto Rico?" Angie, like Noel, expressed an asset perspective of Spanish language learning when she pinpoints her own "best learning" through the exchanges she had with the teacher and students in the School Rehabilitation Center (SRC) classroom who were teaching her Spanish:

The best learning was at SRC for me because one of the teachers, the first teacher we met, she was I guess a paraprofessional in the classroom and she didn't speak any English really. So, she was communicating with Kathy a WMU participant, and I, with visuals or hands-on stuff and we were trying to speak some Spanish to her and she was trying to speak some English to us. And with the students they all kind of spoke very good English as well as Spanish but they taught us some Spanish, which I just thought was incredible because for once the students got to teach us something. (Angie, interview, 3/9/17)

In this excerpt Angie positions the students as teachers, which indicates she is developing a culturally responsive understanding about teaching and learning. This is evident when she states, “for once the students got to teach us something”. Angie also recognizes that more often than not, students are only positioned as learners. I interpret Angie’s response as evidence that she values the cultural and linguistic capital that students bring into the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Valenzuela, 1999; Yosso, 2005). When Angie views the students as teachers, she flips the historical power structure that positions students as empty containers to be filled with knowledge by the teacher (Freire, 1970). By centering the students as teachers, Angie also signifies the importance of a back and forth teaching and learning relationship, a critical element of culturally responsive teaching (Delpit, 1995).

Rikki, during her interview when asked, “Can you describe your experiences and new learning(s) about the culture and history of Puerto Rico including the pre-departure seminars and while on the Island?”, Rikki, who is a beginner Spanish language learner, talked about the value of Spanish language learning and her experience with her SLS language instructor, Lara:

We had Lara; I was in the beginner class and she knew none of us were strong Spanish speakers, and she knew we would get frustrated with that. She was so understanding, so helpful and I think just that week alone, like the fifteen hours helped build on the knowledge I had from high school and everything. And being able to use it around Puerto Rico was really cool. I felt like one with the island you know what I mean? I think it was very helpful. I still remember most of it. Angie and I are trying to talk to each other in Spanish a little bit. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

Rikki values the care and support that she and her classmates experienced through Lara’s modeling of culturally responsive teaching practices and the empathy modeled by the Spanish language teacher. Additionally, this excerpt indicates that Rikki views

Spanish language learning as an asset and a resource, as she shares how she engaged in Spanish language speaking while in Puerto Rico (Ruiz, 1984). This excerpt also establishes that Spanish language learning is a valuable resource for Rikki and other participants to continue to draw from in this unique language and service learning experience. These very small moments of what it feels like to walk ever so briefly in the shoes as a student learning a new language, to feel the frustration, and then to experience the kind of care and support necessary to practice language in order to reach those successful moments, is an intentional pedagogical element of this experiential learning course.

Rikki further noticed the criticalness of Spanish language immersion within this experiential learning course in Puerto Rico. This asset perspective of Spanish language learning is described in the following excerpt from her interview when she responded to a follow up question to discuss “What it was like to go from the Spanish Language School to other places, like restaurants and the School Rehabilitation Center?” Rikki replied:

I think without SLS the experience at SRC would have been completely different, to not understand... that we pretty much only speak English. Some of the (WMU) students, me and Monica were in the Montessori classroom... Some of them (SRC students) were really good with English. Our teacher was amazing with English. There was one student who said I don't speak English. He said it in Spanish. We could understand what he was saying. So, we were able to ask him his name, ask him how old he was, how his day was going? So, without SLS we wouldn't be able to do that probably. Like I could say “what's your name” but that's it. So that is really cool to be able to do that. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

Rikki identifies Spanish language learning as critical in order to connect one-to-one with SRC students while in Puerto Rico. Rikki attributes the SLS language classes as a key factor to making the time in SRC classrooms more successful for her and the students. Rikki and Monica, another WMU participant, were able to communicate with a

student at SRC using some of the beginning Spanish that they had learned during the morning language classes. While Rikki describes some of the students as being “really good with English”, she juxtaposes this with her own limited use of Spanish and positions the Puerto Rican students as the knowers or the ones who hold the resources (Nieto, 2014; Freire, 1970).

All three focal participants expressed that the opportunity to learn Spanish through SLS was critical to feeling more comfortable at SRC and while navigating the island. Rikki paints a picture of this experience when she says:

having that little Spanish exposure before going to SRC... I kind of felt more comfortable you know what I mean, like if I went into SRC without any refresher, I would have been like, ah... I don't know what is going on, I don't know what anyone is saying, I am so confused, so you know... (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17).

For Rikki, attending beginning Spanish language classes at SLS, helped to ease the anxiety about her fear that the classroom teacher at the service learning site SRC would not speak English. This excerpt provides evidence that Rikki recognizes the significance of feeling comfortable versus not, in relation to being a language learner in a new environment (Noddings, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999). These Spanish language-learning moments for Rikki initially evoked anxiety and fear and was then met with a teaching practice that communicated caring and support. The hope is that Rikki will transfer how she felt in these moments to effectively teach and support her future students as they navigate English and learning.

The following excerpt from Angie's reflection paper showed that Angie experienced Spanish language as a resource:

For example, on the first day I met these bright students as a group. We had a quick Spanish class and a quick English class. Most of the students spoke great English and Spanish, so they taught Kathy (WMU participant) and I the basics of

Spanish. Then, I learned one specific student did not know much English, so I was able to teach her some words in English while practicing my Spanish speaking skills through communicating with her. (Angie, reflection paper, 3/9/17)

Angie and the students in the SRC classroom are practicing what many language scholars consider emergent bilingual language learning in the way the students use their native Spanish language to support new language learning (García & Wei, 2014). Angie demonstrates that she and the students are learning from each other as they exchange English and Spanish language learning. In this moment they are engaging in the back and forth collaborative teaching and learning that Freire (1970) promotes.

During her interview, in response to the question, “Can you describe any particularly challenging and/or positive experiences related to your Spanish language learning experience while in Puerto Rico?”, Rikki shared her goal of learning more Spanish:

My teacher was fluent, [in English] but the teacher aide, she barely spoke English. I was nervous when I walked in, but she asked me: “English or Spanish”? English, but I am trying Spanish. She was really helpful. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

When Rikki states, “she barely spoke English” referring to the teacher aide, she shows an English dominant perspective as well as her own fears about not being able to communicate in English (Alim, Rickford & Ball, 2016). While Rikki reveals her language ideologies that value English over Spanish, she also evidences her growing awareness of what it feels like to be a language learner and her desire to learn Spanish when she says, “I am trying Spanish” (García & Wei, 2014).

After Rikki shared about a prior experience connected to Russian speaking students in a former field placement, I asked her, “If you hadn’t had classes at SLS before, you said something like you would feel so confused.” Rikki replied, “I think

going to SRC would have been a lot more anxiety, especially like not knowing if the teacher spoke English..." I followed up with, "Is that something that is going to stay in your head and in your heart, a connection to about your own future students and their experiences?" Rikki responded:

It is not like that is impossible to do, but prepare for the students coming in, and knowing their capabilities, and knowing how much English do they know? Cause some of the Russian students they were fluent in English but had thick accents and some were like iffy (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17).

Rikki shows her awareness that it will be important to be prepared for all students and evidences a culturally responsive attitude. However, her use of "thick accents" and "iffy" denotes a perspective of Russian language as a "problem" (Ruiz, 1984).

I posed the follow up question, "I am wondering about for yourself...you remember how we talked a lot about understanding our own sociocultural identity and the role that plays in how we are able to move forward and then understand others?" Rikki shared about how she will face the challenge of cultural and language differences with her future students:

I have been so lucky with all of the students I have had, but I know it is not always going to be like that. I think having exposure to other cultures and languages like kind of highlights that because I am going to have difficulty communicating with some of my students. You just never know, you just have to take it day by day and like be prepared to learn a few words in a different language if you have to. Be able to find a translator if you have the resources or you might not be able to, depending on where you work. So, coming out to WMU and having the more exposure and going to Puerto Rico. All of that kind of tying together, reinforced, like it didn't scare me away from teaching. But it definitely made me think more about it and it's definitely not gonna always be perfect, so you have to be always ready for whatever hits you. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

Rikki identifies going to Puerto Rico and having the language and cultural immersion experiences or "exposure" as a reinforcement to why it is essential to be prepared for anything, meaning being prepared to teach students who have different

cultural backgrounds and speak languages different than English. As Rikki critically reflects on and learns about other cultures and languages, she reveals how her attitudes, beliefs, and biases have shifted during this course. Rikki displays a culturally responsive teaching perspective when she discusses the need to be prepared to teach all learners.

See the Strength in Each Student

Caring, Empathy, and Relationship Building

Findings affirm that participants observed and then identified caring, empathy, and relationship building as key elements of culturally responsive pedagogy. Participants identified teachers who modeled these best practices in their classrooms at SRC and SLC. Additionally, participants recognized the value of knowing who your students are and caring about their comfort to support their learning.

One example of a participant noticing how care is expressed by a teacher while in Puerto Rico, was when Noel described in her reflection paper her own limited ability to speak Spanish and then shared about her experience at SRC with the classroom teacher, Elena. This reflection is an example of Noel viewing language and culture as an asset or resource and highlights the passion and care Elena demonstrates in this classroom:

I had Elena as my teacher, and she was amazing. She is so passionate about helping the kids and treats them like her own children. She was so kind and really wanted to help them grow as students. I talked with her about the English language and how that compared to Spanish. She spoke English well, which definitely helped me within the classroom. I was able to ask questions and have full conversations. (Noel, final reflection paper, 1/20/17)

Noel recognizes language diversity (García & Wei, 2014) as she actively learns about Puerto Rican culture and is immersed in Spanish language learning. Noel, a monolingual English language speaker, expresses an asset perspective of Puerto Rican

pedagogical practices in her description of the kindness, passion, and caring Elena models in the autism classroom (Noddings, 2005).

In her reflection paper Noel shared that she viewed caring by teachers as a culturally responsive pedagogical practice that she saw modeled at SRC. She reflected about the Puerto Rican teachers and social workers she observed at SRC practicing care in their teaching:

From the time that we spent at the school, you could see clearly how passionate those teachers and social workers are about their jobs. They truly care about the well-being and advancement of the children. (Noel, final reflection paper, 1/20/17)

I learned so much while being at this site. I think it is amazing that they have able-bodied, or “typical” students mixed in classrooms with those who have a disability. I feel like at schools that I have worked at in the Massachusetts, kids with disabilities are segregated from the school as a whole. The atmosphere at SRC was so welcoming to all students. (Noel, final reflection paper, 1/20/17)

Noel identifies “care” as a central theme within the school and points to SRC as a school with more effective culturally responsive teaching pedagogy than the Massachusetts’ schools she has observed and worked in. Noel highlights the significance of seeing students as whole human beings when she shares her observation that SRC is “welcoming to all students”. Noel points out the diverse population of students at SRC who have varying physical, intellectual, and emotional abilities. In comparing this school to schools in Massachusetts that she has done fieldwork in, she notices students who are often considered “typical”, meaning students without disabilities are the ones mainstreamed into these classrooms. Noel juxtaposes the open and affirming environment at SRC to the Massachusetts schools she views as segregating students with perceived disabilities.

Rikki, like Noel, discussed the SRC mission and success of valuing individual students and the resources they bring. In her reflection paper, Rikki wrote:

The staff members at SRC see the strength in each student and self-esteem is embedded into the classrooms and curriculum to promote confidence and independence. (Rikki, final reflection paper, 1/24/17)

In the excerpt above, Rikki notices the student-centered approach that SRC teachers practice with their students and how they view their students as individuals with unique strengths. In this excerpt Rikki discusses the asset perspective of SRC teaching practices and she highlights the expanded culturally responsive pedagogy that Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) and Valenzuela (1999) discuss in their studies.

Further into the interview, Rikki stressed that knowing about available resources, being prepared for anything, and understanding who your students are individually are all critical to successful teaching, when she stated: “But I think you have to have in the back of your head a plan, like for each of your students.”

In response to the interview question, “Can you describe what connections you make or do not make to culturally responsive pedagogy and teaching practices in relation to either your current field placement or your future teaching practices?”, Rikki shared:

Exactly, not only knowing your students as a whole, as a community, but on an individual level with them, because that will make them feel more comfortable in the classroom, especially the younger ages and like they want to feel safe, and you never know what is going on at home. You want school to be a safe outlet for them and be able to understand what they are going through, if they are going through something. So, I think that is important. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

Rikki points to the salience of viewing students from a holistic point of view that includes learning about their home community. This excerpt exhibits her evolving cultural awareness of her students and their families, as she shares that she wants them to “feel more comfortable”. However, the excerpt also reveals how Rikki is wrestling with

the single story that students who have sociocultural diverse identities may come from unsafe home environments.

In her interview, when I asked Angie, “Are you interested in continuing to improve your Spanish language skills? Explain why or why not, and your motivation for this interest.”, Angie expressed a viewpoint of language as a resource (Ruiz, 1984) and connected this ideology with making her students comfortable:

It never hurts, and it would be awesome to be able to connect with students on a different level almost like you know, I can connect with some students in some of their personal home experiences or their interests or whatever, but not necessarily languages. So, if I could communicate with them in their native language, I would feel, they would feel more comfortable in their class and I could communicate with them. It’s just to try to make them feel more comfortable. (Angie, interview, 3/9/17)

Angie describes the desire to make her students “feel more comfortable” by being able to communicate with them in their native language. Angie’s discussion of caring about the comfort of students relates to how Noddings (2005), Valenzuela (1999), and Irizarry & Antrop-González (2007) define authentic caring, empathy, and relationship building. Additionally, the authors promote viewing individual students as human beings with unique identities, as key to relationship building and achieving academic success.

In these final two excerpts from the end of her interview, Rikki reflected back on her experience in Puerto Rico and about her past experiences within WMU field placements. Both of these excerpts show Rikki wrestling with her emerging understandings about others who are different from herself, along with some of her attitudes, beliefs, and biases:

Even going to Puerto Rico and seeing, I think ok, it is not all rainbows and butterflies, teaching is hard and like and I think that helped me realize it is not always going to be like, you are not always going to have a perfect group of students. I have been so lucky with all of the students I have had, but I know it is

not always going to be like that. I think having exposure to other cultures and languages like kind of highlights that because I am going to have difficulty communicating with some of my students. That could be an issue I have, or I face. You just never know, you just have to take it day by day and like be prepared to learn a few words in a different language if you have to. Be able to find a translator if you have the resources or you might not be able to, depending on where you work. So, coming out to WMU and having the more exposure and going to Puerto Rico. All of that kind of tying together reinforced, like it didn't scare me away from teaching. But it definitely made me think more about it and it's definitely not gonna always be perfect, so you have to be always ready for whatever hits you. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

Rikki continued:

So here it is like everyone speaks English. It's like, oh you speak in a different language... your different, but no, you [meaning the teacher] just need to adjust and make your students feel comfortable. I think that is very important. That is what I talk about in literally all my Education classes. Which like is good, that helped me realize even before I went to Puerto Rico that language and culture is huge, you have to keep that in mind. It is not just about the curriculum, teaching them this and that, it is like building a community, making sure your students feel like they are not outcasts, you know what I mean, like not the norm of the classroom. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

These excerpts illustrate how Rikki synthesizes and applies new understandings about herself and others into her existing attitudes, beliefs, and biases. In the first excerpt, Rikki is clear that she wants and needs to be prepared to teach all learners and relates this to learning about her student's language. Conversely, Rikki openly expresses she is no longer scared about teaching in diverse communities when she says, "like it didn't scare me away from teaching," showing her awareness and admitting to the trepidations she previously had about teaching students who are linguistically and ethnically different from her. In the second excerpt, Rikki expresses a culturally responsive perspective when she reflects on the realization that "language and culture is huge..." and "teaching them...is like building a community." Both of these comments indicate that Rikki considers language and culture as resources (Yosso, 2005; Nieto, 2013). Rikki completes

her response with the following sentiment of, “making sure your students feel like they are not outcasts...like not the norm of the classroom.” Because of the language she uses, I view this as evidence that Rikki is aware of the institutional inequity and racism that exists in public school classrooms (Shabazz & Cooks, (2014).

How Did I Not Think About This Before

Course Design, Critical Reflection, and Cultural Insider Instruction

Findings established that the instructor-led seminar discussions and the course readings facilitated participants’ critical reflection about their own and others’ sociocultural and linguistic identities. Findings also affirmed that the course instructors modeled culturally responsive pedagogical practices in their instructional interactions within participant discussions. The instructor’s interruptions and disruptions of participants’ responses were intentionally framed around critically reflective and culturally responsive pedagogical practices.

Findings additionally point to the success and effectiveness of both the design and instruction of this experiential learning course was linked to having a Puerto Rican, cultural insider, Luna, who was born and raised and educated in Puerto Rico, as a co-instructor to the course. Findings also claim that the unique design of a language and cultural immersion course layered onto critical service experiential learning, opened spaces for participants to practice being a language learner while also having the experience of observing culturally responsive teaching pedagogy that modeled best practices in bilingual teaching.

The following excerpt is Rikki's response to the interview question, "Can you describe your experiences and new learning(s) about the culture and history of Puerto Rico including the pre-departure seminars and while on the Island?" Rikki shared:

I felt like going to Puerto Rico and even the seminars before, like going to Cambria that was kind of eye opening. I didn't know there were all these issues. How could I have been so blind to it? I kind of felt like I took it for granted almost cause, I never knew. Definitely the meeting before and that first week, the seminars and hearing what everyone had to say and hearing about other cultures and what other people struggled with. And I thought oh my god, how did I not think about this before, it felt like and it was just an eye-opening experience for sure. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

Rikki's response points to how an experiential, cultural and language immersion, critical service learning travel course can create spaces for transformational shifts in how participants see others. Rikki shares how the travel study course in Puerto Rico opened her eyes to political issues and racial inequities that she was previously unaware of. Rikki reveals that prior to the course she was not conscious of the existing issues related to others with different sociocultural identities. Rikki identifies that the pre-departure seminar in Cambria opened a new window for her as she learned about other people's cultures, personal struggles, and experiences. Rikki is incredulous with how she was "blind to it" wondering why she had never thought about it before. This incredulousness points to her critical reflectiveness, that in turn informs how she is reflecting on the way she thinks about others.

An example of how the course instructed and guided students is demonstrated during a nightly seminar and occurred immediately after Haniah and Sadie presented their response poem from the reading "Difficult Stories: Service-Learning, Race, Class, and Whiteness" (Green, 2003). In response to their presentation, to provide guidance and

facilitate a deeper discussion Luna asked, “What is the issue here? What issue did you represent in the poem?” Haniah replied:

On my solo piece, I talked about my race and class and economic status has always gone hand in hand. Even though people debate about that the socioeconomic side has nothing to do with race it always has since our own history. Like I said since slavery has been abolished, no land nothing was given to minorities, so they literally started from the ground, and they are still working from the ground. Whereas people who are Caucasian were the big landowners so always started off rich or a lot richer than many minorities. (Haniah, seminar, 1/9/17)

Sadie followed with:

So, my section, the author was a professor and she had a service-learning group a lot like our group. In her service learning experience, she asked the students what forces could have come into play. Basically, all the students were White and basically all the people they were servicing were Black. She acknowledged that being White was an issue. She discussed White invisibility privilege.

Luna and Robin replied with a pre-scripted response to further deepen the discussion:

What could be a new way of understanding, what could be my new “aha” [or] new learning from the issue they both addressed? What is another point of view another perspective? What questions do you still have?

The students were then instructed to think/ink, pair/share, and then discuss the salient points with the whole group. This instructional practice of giving prompts, arranging pairing or small group work to think/ink pair/share, and then discuss with the whole class was utilized throughout the course during each of the seminars. The instructional practice worked to help students to expand their thinking, by reflecting, writing, listening, and discussing their own and others’ perspectives first with their partner(s), and then further within the larger group discussions. The initial pairing and small group work created space for participants to formulate their thoughts through

critical thinking and writing processes in more intimate exchanges. This process then led participants to being more open to listen to others and expand their learning experiences.

The following is an example of the think/ink pair/share process. Sandra, a course participant, responded to a discussion about Black Lives Matter and systematic racism.

Sandra's excerpt below is in response to another student Anna's comments:

I brought up the Black Lives Matter movement, so Whites try to say All Lives Matter. The fact about that movement is we are trying to make it known that Black lives are getting pushed down and shoved out of the way. For what reason? 'Cause their race, and it is not fair, so we have to make it known. Race matters. (Anna, seminar, 1/9/17)

Sandra's response:

My first point going back to Anna and Black lives matter and All Lives Matter. If you aren't Black, you do not see the issue. That is why it is important to say Black Lives Matter. Of course, all lives matter, but you have to bring up to surface, the Black community is being targeted again and again. It can be translated into oppression. Once the source of one way of oppression is eliminated, immediately another way of oppression emerges. There is no way to stop it because it is what people internalize and there is no way to break the cycle. You can only get better at trying to suppress it, but it will never go away. When we got rid of slavery, we had Jim Crow Laws, and when we got rid of that, we had segregation. And subconscious segregation, it keeps going. (Sandra, seminar, 1/9/17)

Luna interjected:

It is [through] the design of society that [this] has been done. It has been happening all along.

Sandra continued:

I feel... if you are not part of the oppressed community you don't see that it's an issue. We don't talk about that. I didn't even talk about it until I got to college and I think that is part of the problem, because we didn't learn about it. So how do we know it exists? (Sandra, seminar, 1/9/17)

This seminar discussion points to how the course design worked to elicit and guide individual and group discussions to critically reflect, discuss, and write about the underlying institutionalized inequities individuals and groups experience in their daily

lives. Further, the excerpt highlights the spaces created by the course design, and instruction, for participants to express how they experience and are making sense of the underlying silence about oppression and racism, shown when Sandra states, “We don’t talk about that” and “that is part of the problem, we didn’t learn about it.” The overall findings suggest that a short-term cultural and language immersion, critical service learning travel course that is guided by culturally responsive designed curriculum and facilitated instruction, with a cultural insider instructor, can create critically reflective spaces for participants to examine how they think, write, and talk about their own and others’ sociocultural identities.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS FOR MOVING FORWARD

Findings, analyzed through data excerpts, point to participants' attitudes, beliefs, and biases about others being rooted in their own sociocultural, racial, and linguistic identities, and language ideologies. These claims are evidenced within the data collected through seminar discussions, reflection papers, individual interviews, and focus group conversations. Data revealed how participants engaged with the readings, seminar discussions, and experiential learning as they synthesized and made sense of their new and evolving understandings about their own and others' sociocultural, racial, and linguistic identities.

In the following excerpt, Rikki responds to the interview questions, "Can you describe your understanding of what it means to be culturally responsive?" and "Where do you see yourself on the spectrum of developing CRP?" Rikki critically reflects on how she sees herself evolving as a culturally responsive teacher and moving forward pedagogically:

It Will Make More Sense

I feel like moving forward... my first year [of] teaching, my second year [of] teaching, it will be kind of more implemented and it will make more sense. I think it is like a practice makes perfect, like you have to just like adjust to every new year and get used to being a new teacher and being culturally responsive to all your students. (Rikki, interview, 3/2/17)

When Rikki states, "it" will be implemented, she is referring to culturally responsive pedagogy and the necessity of adapting one's teaching to who your students are culturally, racially, and linguistically each year. Rikki additionally points to the reality that she will be evolving as a new teacher and able to

implement culturally responsive pedagogy more effectively with each additional year of teaching. Further, Rikki affirms that culturally responsive teaching will make more sense, meaning as she develops as a teacher, she will learn how to be “culturally responsive” to all her students as she intentionally adjusts her teaching each year to who her students are in her classroom community.

Summary

This study examines how pre-service teachers describe their experiences while immersed in a cultural and language immersion, critical service learning travel study course in Puerto Rico. The findings suggest that participants gained an increased awareness of their preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases about Spanish language and Puerto Rican culture, which in turn resulted in a more asset-based perspective of others. The study linked their preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases to their sociocultural identities. The study found participants’ new awareness about self and others was connected to the culturally responsive designed curriculum, seminar discussions, in tandem with the course’s cultural and language immersion, critical service learning experiences, and the fact that one of the instructors was a Puerto Rican cultural insider. These findings align with Cai & Sankarans’ (2015) claims that posit cultural immersion short-term experiences can guide students to reflect on their own and others’ sociocultural identities, which further enhances the development of their critical thinking skills and their ability to connect to “real life” issues (p. 47).

This case study affirmed that critical thinking and reflection led participants to discuss and address their preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases about others

who have different racial, cultural, and linguistic identities from their own.

Participants were able at times to identify their White privilege position in society and express an evolving racial consciousness. However, the study also found that the evolving racial, cultural, and linguistic awareness among participants was not consistently exhibited. This intermittent awareness was evidenced in the data that showed Angie, Noel, and Rikki moving between their new racial, cultural, and linguistic consciousness, and then at times back into preconceived attitudes, belief, and biases.

This case study affirmed that a cultural and language immersion, critical service-learning course contributes in multiple ways to the development of authentic caring in pedagogical contexts (Noddings, 2005; Valenzuela, 1999). The Spanish language learning classes at the Spanish Language School (SLC) and the critical service learning experiences at the School/ Rehabilitation Center (SRC) played a key role in participants observing and identifying authentic caring and empathy as critical elements of culturally responsive teaching. These two settings allowed participants to witness Puerto Rican teachers engaging in culturally responsive teaching practices with Puerto Rican students. The Puerto Rican teachers at SLC also demonstrated these practices with the WSU participants, which gave the participants the experience of receiving the benefits of culturally responsive teaching directly as Spanish language learners. As a result of this experiential learning, the participants identified culturally responsive pedagogy as a practice that places value on the individual cultural and linguistic resources of students (García & Wei, 2014). This study claims that this type of short-term course

can be an effective pathway to incorporate an expanded culturally responsive and sustaining pedagogy into teacher education, civic engagement, and service learning programs (Irizarry & Antrop-González, 2007; Paris, 2012; Ladson-Billings, 2014).

Conclusion

To more effectively prepare pre-service teachers through the practice of continuous critical reflection about their own and others' sociocultural, racial, and linguistic identities, this dissertation expands on the current theoretical discussions on culturally responsive pedagogy embedded in teacher education programs. This study addresses the preconceived perspectives that many pre-service teachers bring with them, which often include a mindset that devalues the cultural and linguistic resources of their students (Sleeter, 2011; Delpit, 2006). Many scholars believe these deficit perspectives permeate public schools across the United States (Valenzuela, 1999; Nieto, 2006; Sleeter, 2011; Delpit, 2006; Bennett, 2013; Gay, 2010). This dissertation premises that an experiential cultural and language immersion, critical service learning travel course could directly address the pressing need for pre-service teachers to be better prepared to teach all learners.

This case study suggests that a two-week cultural and language immersion, critical service learning travel course can guide participants towards expanded culturally responsive and sustained pedagogy practices that focus on caring and valuing the cultural and linguistic resources of their students (Irizarry & Antrop-González, 2007). Further, the study finds that the course's culturally responsive designed curriculum, guided instruction, and the presence of an instructor who is a cultural insider contributed to the course's effectiveness. Additionally, an

unexpected finding emerged through the perspectives revealed within the stories told by the two participants, Haniah and Maria. Their difficult stories sparked discussions which opened spaces for White participants to begin to critically reflect on their own and others' cultural and racial identities and become more racially and culturally conscious.

The travel study course to Puerto Rico was designed to create spaces for participants to begin the work of reflecting on their preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases while participating in critical discussions about culture, race, and language identities. The interwoven critical reflection work that the participants engaged in led to their ability to discuss and address preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases they held about others who are racially, culturally, and linguistically different from them. The study found that the critically reflective work layered throughout the travel course proved to be an integral process for PSTs to engage in as they became introspective about their own, and then actively learned about others', sociocultural identities. The study concludes that engaging in cultural and language immersion, critical service learning through an experiential setting can effectively create spaces for PSTs to critically reflect on their own and others' sociocultural and linguistic identities (Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Cai & Sankaran, 2015).

The results of this study have implications for various stakeholders. First, this study points to the necessity for teacher education programs to better prepare pre-service teachers to more empathetically respond to an increasingly diverse student population across the United States. The current imbalance between the

predominantly White teacher population and the growing number of Latino/a and English language learner students in the United States is creating a culture and language “mismatch” (Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejía, 2003). Current demographics show that across the United States, 80% of public school teachers are White, which is in sharp contrast to the increasing number of Hispanic students in public schools. Between 2013 and 2025, the percentage of Hispanic students as a share of the U.S. public school student population is expected to rise from 25 to 29% (DOE National Center for Educational Statistics, 2017). Further, statistics from NCES show that the number of Hispanic students who are English language learners are on the rise:

In fall 2015, there were about 3.8 million Hispanic ELL students, which constituted over three-quarters (77.7 percent) of ELL student enrollment overall. (DOE National Center for Educational Statistics, 2017)

These current demographics and the literature and research from leading scholars in teacher education, along with the findings from this study, present a compelling motivation for teacher education programs to institute program-wide culturally responsive, sustaining pedagogy. The study affirms there is a pressing need to intertwine culturally responsive pedagogy with fieldwork that includes culturally and linguistically diverse experiences, in order to effectively guide PSTs as they examine the preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases they bring into the university and their fieldwork placements in the community.

Secondly, the findings reveal implications related to the significance of researcher/instructor reflexivity that pushed the researcher to examine biases, beliefs, and blind spots during both the collection and analysis of participant data within case study observations, interviews, focus group conversations, and

reflection papers. During the first stage of the analysis of data excerpts from the three focal participants, I initially formed a deficit interpretation of participants' language use. For example, when all three focal participants were responding to their evolving understanding of critical service learning (CSL), they each shared about the importance of engaging in a mutually beneficial manner with the individuals at SRS by "helping" each other. My first analysis of their "helping" language was drawn from a deficit perspective which I perceived as not being indicative of the philosophy of CSL. For instance, Noel wrote about critical service learning in her reflection paper:

The idea of "working with someone and not for them" really made sense to me once I worked at the school. I was able to help them, and they taught me so much about the school in general, Puerto Rico, and autism itself. Being able to help children is something that is universal, and this trip proved that. (Noel, final reflection paper, 1/20/17)

During my initial analysis in response to the above quote, I wrote the following analytical note:

While Noel begins to articulate a CSL perspective in "working with" she ends by reverting back to the "helping" mentality, which places her back at the center of this teaching/learning experience she is describing. This excerpt by Noel is evidence that she continues to move back and forth along deficit/asset spectrum as she participates in learning, teaching and critically reflecting on being culturally responsive.

However, after critically reflecting on the course objectives, reading assignments, and engaging in discussions with both the co-instructor of the course and my dissertation advisor, I realized I was making observations of the participants through a deficit lens that made assumptions about their responses. As a result of my reflexive discussions with colleagues, I shifted my perceived deficit perspective of the participants and re-interpreted what they were saying. I was able to widen

my lens to consider the evolving processes that were occurring with the participants as they experienced, reflected, and engaged in the experiential learning in Puerto Rico.

Further implications suggest the significance of continual reflexivity among the co-instructors, supported the pedagogical practice of noticing and examining what was effective within the coursework. The co-instructors reflected on what was going well and what was problematic in different aspects of the coursework, including the experiential components, and the needs of the community partner. Reflexivity and praxis occurred as the co-instructors made shifts within the coursework and the experiential components, both in the moment as warranted, and later within long-term planning in order to incorporate changes for future travel study coursework. Additional reflexivity among the co-instructors included other aspects of curriculum and instruction. For example, given the course focus on sociocultural and linguistic identity, the instructors realized the curriculum needed to be modified. This change meant that reading assignments would be adjusted to include articles on language diversity and language ideologies. These shifts were designed in order to spark new consciousness and dialogue among participants, as well as to facilitate critical thinking for participants as they delved into exploring their own and others sociocultural and linguistic identities. The reflexive work among the instructors affirmed the imperativeness of refining our recruitment efforts to ensure an increased culturally, racially, economically, and linguistically diverse group of participants. The implication for teacher preparation programs is that there is a need to focus on diversifying the student body of PST's in their

programs, which are currently predominantly White, and to develop effective methods to explicitly recruit students who are ethnically, culturally, racially, linguistically, and economically diverse.

Further, the findings affirmed the necessity of instructors engaging in explicit discussions with participants that disrupt, challenge, and pose questions in order to open spaces for dialogues on race, racism, culture, language diversity, and socioeconomics. These instructor-guided discussions helped lead participants through the process of thinking and understanding about their own identity, which is a first step to then begin the work of learning and understanding about others' identities. The reflexive praxis the instructors engaged in, individually, with each other, and then with their students, has significant implications for teacher education programs, instructors, administrators, students, staff, and faculty within university civic engagement programs.

Finally, findings from this study present significant implications for civic engagement and critical service learning programs, practitioners, scholars and administrators to consider the study's course design as an effective model for short-term travel study. The design of the course weaves together the theoretical underpinnings of critical service learning, culturally responsive pedagogy, and cultural and language immersion, through the model of experiential learning. The language immersion and the critical service learning experience provide spaces for participants to experience what it is like to be a second language learner as they practice communicating in Spanish, working with individuals whose primary

language is not English, and observing Puerto Rican teachers and practitioners engaging in culturally responsive teaching practices.

The varied course components provide multiple access points to implement intentional instructional guidance and spaces for participants to explore, reflect, and discuss insights about their own identity that promotes critical thinking about the world and how they experience it. The study's implications suggest this type of course provides an opportunity for participants' to actively engage in the authentic setting of another culture, with the overarching understanding that it is essential for individuals to fully understand how one's sociocultural, racial, and linguistic identity impacts their own teaching and learning.

Limitations

The study was conducted with 15 undergraduate participants, 12 White, 2 Black (1- Haitian and 1- Ghanaian), and one participant who identified as Native American/White. The 15 participants came from a variety of majors. All 15 agreed to participate in the study during the January 2017 course in Puerto Rico. However, the case study focused on pre-service teachers (PSTs), and this focus subsequently created limitations as only six pre-service teacher participants enrolled in the course and all six were White. Further limits developed within the study when only three of the PSTs were available to participate in the focus group that occurred post-travel between March and May 2017. An additional limitation emerged relating to gender. All 15 participants were female, resulting in a study that had no male identified student participants.

Recommendations for Moving Forward

This dissertation suggests that an experiential cultural and language immersion, critical service learning (CSL) travel study course is an effective pathway to incorporate culturally responsive, sustaining pedagogy in teacher education programs. Moving forward, it is important to consider how to increase classroom and fieldwork praxis opportunities for PSTs, and to continue to explore and identify why having multiple learning modalities is necessary and valuable.

This study recommends that teacher education programs should consider offering short-term experiential learning courses as vehicles for PSTs to examine their preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases while immersed in a culture and language different from their own. The study suggests that an intensive cultural and language immersion, critical service learning experience can open spaces for critical reflective practices for PSTs to unpack, examine, and make sense of the language ideologies they express.

Additionally, the study recommends teacher educators and scholars consider the key role Spanish language learning played in the experiences of the participants. This dissertation premises that participating in an experiential cultural and language immersion, critical service learning travel course creates authentic experiences that allow PSTs to understand and empathize with English language learner students through their lived experience of being a Spanish language learner. Teacher education programs may want to consider the value of PSTs stepping into the role of a language learner by experiencing language immersion as an integral element of culturally responsive curriculum and experiential fieldwork.

Finally, the researcher recommends that a longitudinal study would forge a wider understanding of how an experiential travel study course can lend itself to addressing preconceived attitudes, beliefs, and biases that PSTs often hold about others. Further research is suggested to track data over several sets of participants in order to develop an increased set of trustworthy findings.

APPENDIX A

PARTICIPANT RECRUITMENT EVITE

Dear Participant,

I am inviting you to participate in a *Language Learning and Culturally Responsive Practices* individual interview and a focus group during spring 2017. The interview will last from 30 min. The focus group will include other WSU Education students who participated in the 2017 Jan-term course to Puerto Rico.

Time Frame of interviews and focus group:

- Interviews will be held late February and continue through March 2017, scheduled at your convenience. Interviews will last no more than 30 minutes.
- The Focus group conversation will be held early April (Date TBD). The Focus Group conversation will last no more than 1 hour.
- You may be asked to have a follow-up meeting to “member check” or help to confirm that I have captured your meanings accurately.

The purpose of the individual interview and focus group is to examine how a language immersion and civic engagement experience can inform how you work with ethnically, linguistically and economically diverse communities. The data will be included as part of a research dissertation project. This project will examine how pre-service teachers develop language learning, civic engagement, and cultural responsiveness within a January short-term course to Puerto Rico.

The interview and focus group will include questions about your Spanish language skill level, use and experiences. Additionally, the interview and focus group will ask questions about culturally responsive practices and beliefs that include how you understand your own and

others' sociocultural and language identities. Although you may not benefit directly from this research, I hope that your participation in the study may contribute to both the field of teacher education preparation, language diversity and community engagement work. This research is connected to my dissertation research within the UMass Amherst College of Education, Language, Literacy and Culture program.

If you have further questions about this project you may contact the researcher, *Robin Marion* at rmarion@westfield.ma.edu or 413-204-6126. If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject, you may contact the University of Massachusetts Amherst Human Research Protection Office (HRPO) at (413) 545-3428 or humansubjects@ora.umass.edu.

I truly appreciate your time and help with the *Language Learning and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Practices and Experiences* study.

Sincerely,

Robin Marion
Doctoral Candidate
Language, Literacy & Culture Program
College of Education, UMass Amherst

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT LETTER

Principal Investigator: **Robin Marion**

Research Title: Cultural Responsiveness: Pre-Service Teachers Negotiate being Cultural Outsiders & Insiders Through, Spanish Language Practice, Relationship Building and Civic Engaged Scholarship

This research project will examine how you as a WSU pre-service teacher negotiate Spanish language learning, civic engagement work, and culturally responsiveness within a January short-term course to Puerto Rico. My proposed study will examine how a language immersion and civic engagement course might help you to examine your sociocultural and linguistic identities and dispositions, as a process of developing culturally responsive pedagogical practices.

I will begin data collection mid-semester fall 2016 and conclude at the end of the spring semester, May 2017. I will collect data through pre and post surveys, audiotaped semi-structured interviews, relevant artifacts, and field notes from observations and videos during the January short-term course in Puerto Rico. This research project will be conducted as part of my dissertation research within the UMASS Amherst's Education Department's Language Literacy and Culture doctoral program.

- I have read and discussed the Research description with the researcher. I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the purposes and procedures regarding this study.
- My participation in research is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw from participation at any time without jeopardy to future medical care, employment, student status or other entitlements.

- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at his/her professional discretion.
- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue to participate, the investigator will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research project that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- If at any time I have any questions regarding the research or my participation, I can contact the investigator, who will answer my questions. The investigator's phone number is 413.572.8968
- If at any time I have comments, or concerns regarding the conduct of the research or questions about my rights as a research subject, I should contact Education Department Doctoral Advisor, Dr. Denise K. Ives 413-545-0660 and/or the University of Massachusetts Amherst Education Department Chair: Dr. Laura Valdiviezo: 413-545-7043/545-0246 and. I should receive a copy of the Research Description and this Participant's Rights document.
- If audio taping is part of this research, I () consent to be audio taped. () do NOT consent to being audio taped. If videotaping is part of this research, I () consent to be videotaped. () do NOT consent to being audio taped.
- For the purposes of research scholarship and/or education pedagogy, written and/or video/audio taped materials () may be viewed or listened to in an educational setting outside the research site (such as at research conferences or in

university courses). () may NOT be viewed or listened to in an educational setting outside the research site (such as at research conferences or in university courses).

My signature means that I agree to participate in this study.

Participant's Name: _____



Participant's signature: _____ Date: ____/____/____

Date: ____/____/____

Investigator's Verification of Explanation

I certify that I have carefully explained the purpose and nature of this research to _____ (participant's name) in age-appropriate language. He/She has had the opportunity to discuss it with me in detail. I have answered all his/her questions and he/she provided the affirmative agreement (i.e. assent) to participate in this research.

Investigator's Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Protocol: Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your most successful and most challenging experiences while on the January 2017 short-term civic engagement and language immersion course in Puerto Rico, and describe how you believe these experiences will contribute to your future teaching?
2. Can you tell me why you decided to become a teacher? Can you describe where and who you see yourself teaching?
3. Can you describe a typical class session at SLA, the language school you attended in Puerto Rico?
4. What kinds of tasks or lessons were challenging/rewarding for you at the language school?
5. Can you explain how you experienced engaging with local people while you were in Puerto Rico, taking public transportation, at SLA, at SLC, on excursions? How is this similar or different from your experiences and interactions with people in your community?
6. Could you tell me about your observations at the school/rehabilitation center SLC, and share one of your experiences that either challenged you or was rewarding to you?
7. Can you describe what culturally responsive pedagogical practices are? Do you think this course has helped you develop CRP practices? If so, can you tell me how?
8. Tell me about your sociocultural and linguistic heritage?
9. Can you describe something you learned about yourself or others during this travel study course in Puerto Rico?

APPENDIX D

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe your language ability(s), use? Are you bilingual, Spanish dominant, English dominant, multilingual?

Follow-up: How would you describe your own language and sociocultural identities?
2. In what ways did this experiential learning travel course to Puerto Rico contribute to new learning and/or understandings/beliefs about race and language identities about yourself and others? Consider the following in your responses: Seminars pre-travel and on the Island, readings: Difficult Stories, civic engagement/service learning, culturally responsive pedagogy and the course media text: Mi Puerto Rico.
3. How would you describe your attitudes and feelings and beliefs toward ethnically and linguistically diverse student populations?

APPENDIX E

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB)/INDEPENDENT ETHICS

COMMITTEE (IEC) AUTHORIZATION AGREEMENT

Name of Institution or Organization Providing IRB Review (Institution/Organization A):

Westfield State University

IRB Registration #: 15/16-046 Federalwide Assurance (FWA) #, if any: 00018740^[T]_[SEP]

Name of Institution Relying on the Designated IRB (Institution B):

University of Massachusetts at Amherst

FWA #: 00003909

The Officials signing below agree that University of Massachusetts Amherst may rely on the designated IRB for review and continuing oversight of its human subject's research described below: (*check one*)

This agreement applies to all human subject's research covered by Institution B's FWA.

This agreement is limited to the following specific protocol(s):

Name of Research Project: "Cultural Responsiveness: Pre-Service Teachers Negotiate being Cultural Outsiders & Insiders Through, Spanish Language Practice, Relationship Building and Civic Engaged Scholarship"


Name of Principal Investigator: Robin Marion

Sponsor or Funding Agency: _____ - _____ Award Number, if any:

Other
(*describe*): _____

The review performed by the designated IRB will meet the human subject protection requirements of Institution B's OHRP-approved FWA. The IRB at Institution/Organization A will follow written procedures for reporting its findings and actions to appropriate officials at Institution B. Relevant minutes of IRB meetings will be made available to Institution B upon request. Institution B remains responsible for ensuring compliance with the IRB's determinations and with the Terms of its OHRP-approved FWA. This document must be kept on file by both parties and provided to OHRP upon request.

Signature of Signatory Official (Institution/Organization A):

 _____ Date:
10/31/16

Print Full Name: Robert C. Kersting, PhD Institutional Title: Chair IRB, Professor of Social Work

Signature of Signatory Official (Institution B):

_____ Date: _____

Print Full Name: Jennifer A. Donais Institutional Title: Assistant Vice Chancellor for Research and Engagement, Compliance and Research Support Services

APPENDIX F

PARTICIPANT'S DIFFICULT STORIES POEM

Politics of Location

A sick woman asked the bus driver to stop
Yet he does not
Another woman asks, and he pulls to the curb
Because he observes
That this woman is White
And the first one who asked was Black
Let's add the fact
That this is Rural Pennsylvania
This very example is called Politics of location
Without a pretext you don't understand the story's dramatization
We deny the existence of black brown and white
To make ourselves feel comfortable
It's impolite, it's not right, let's not let the issue ignite.

Race and Class

Race is denied but class is claimed
And that's okay we say
But the truth is race and class relate
For that reason, some people debate

See what happens is
Minorities are in lower socioeconomic statuses
And it's hard to change that
Because history has always told them to scat
As we all know, slavery occurred
And after it was abolished
No money or land was given to minorities nor acknowledged
So, class and race have always been related
By that I'm not astonished
And until the proper resources are given to minorities
Our socioeconomic system will never be flawless

White Racism

White racism is the force that is visible and divisive to those in its course
And yet, as white people we can easily ignore the day to day chore
That others may feel
We can forget race, and in most cases
Blame class or differences of faith
But we need to embrace race, elevate our awareness, and the hate shall be erased.

THE TABLES

Table 1. Participant Summary Chart

Name	Major	Year	Race/Class	Spanish Lang Level
*Angie	Education: Elementary with a concentration in History	Junior	White/Middle Class	Beginner
*Rikki	Education: Early Childhood with a concentration in Art	Junior	White/Middle Class born in Ireland moved to U.S. as toddler	Beginner
*Noel	Psychology: focus on Special Education via internship in autism classroom.	Senior	White/Middle Class	Beginner
Sandra	Communications	Junior	White/Middle Class	Intermediate
Margaret	Criminal Justice/Psychology	Junior	White/Middle Class	Beginner
Haniah	Criminal Justice and Spanish double major	Senior	Black from Ghanaian descent, born in Brazil moved to U.S. as toddler/Middle Class	Advanced
Sadie	Music Education/ Psychology	Junior	White/Middle Class	Intermediate
Maria	Social Work and Spanish minor	Junior	Black/Haitian descent-Working Class	Intermediate
Margo	Political Science and Spanish double major	Senior	White/Middle Class	Intermediate
Jennifer	Psychology major	Senior	White/Native American Descent/Middle Class	Beginner
Rose	Psychology major	Junior	White/Middle Class	Beginner
Shelby	Education: Early Childhood with concentration in Psychology	Junior	White/Middle Class	Beginner

Leah	Education: Elementary with concentration in English	Senior	White/Middle Class	Beginner
Kaitlin	Education: Elementary with concentration in Math	Junior	White/Middle Class	Beginner
Anna	Special Education with concentration in Psychology	Junior	White/Middle Class	Beginner
**Luna	Course Instructor	4 years at WMU	Puerto Rican	Native Speaker
Robin	Researcher/Participant Course Instructor	7 years at WMU	White/Middle Class	Speaking: Beginner Receptive/reading: Intermediate

*The three focal participants are listed at top of chart.

**Luna was a course instructor but a not a research participant.

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