Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education

Teachers Like Me

Marcelle M. Haddix

NCTE-Routledge Research Series

CULTIVATING RACIAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY IN LITERACY TEACHER EDUCATION

"The author makes a profound and clearly true claim that most teacher education programs structure experiences and indeed total teacher education programs around issues of diversity without considering the perceptions and experiences of preservice candidates of color. This is an important text that is much needed for future teacher education faculty, policymakers, and program developers to consider, if a broader view of how the knowledge bases and field experiences of future teachers can be changed to be more inclusive. The rationale is strong and the book is theoretically sound."

Sandra Winn Tutwiler, Washburn University, USA

"The issues of whiteness in teacher education and the experiences of preservice teachers of color are significant and addressed with both clarity and conviction. Marcelle Haddix is persuasive about why the research is significant and timely."

Cynthia Lewis, University of Minnesota, USA

Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me examines how English and literacy teacher education—a space dominated by White, English-monolingual, middle-class perspectives—shapes the experiences of preservice teachers of color and their construction of a teacher identity. Significant and timely, this book focuses attention on the unique needs and perspectives of racially and linguistically diverse preservice teachers in the field of literacy and English education and offers ways to improve teacher training to better meet the needs of preservice teachers from all racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. These changes have the potential to diversify the teacher force and cultivate teachers who bring rich racial, cultural, and linguistic histories to the field of teaching.

Marcelle M. Haddix is Dean's Associate Professor and Chair of the Reading and Language Arts department at Syracuse University, USA.

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FOREWORD

On June 22, 1937, when Joe Louis beat James Braddock by a knockout in round 8 of 15 for the heavyweight championship, gathered around the radio in living rooms, kitchens, and on porches across America were Negros rooting him on. For they saw Joe Louis as one of them and, thus, had a sense of pride and connection to the *one* like themselves.

In the 1950's and early 1960's watching television as a Black child, I remember the delight of me and my sisters when we saw a Negro, a Colored child or adult, on that big black-and-white TV screen that sat in our den. We'd excitedly call each other and our mother, saying, "Come quick, Pearl Bailey is on television," calling the name of the person if we knew it. If we didn't know who it was, "Somebody Colored is on television," we'd say. Although infrequent, how special were those moments for us. We felt a deep attachment and connection as well as a sense of pride to the named and unnamed Negros who not only visited us in our home, but were going into people's homes all over the county.

As a junior at Bennett College in Greensboro, North Carolina, I remember fondly walking over to A&T State University one evening with friends to see a dance performance of a company called *Alvin Ailey*—"A Black dance troop," we were told, although I had never seen or heard of them. In 1969, what I saw on that stage powerfully etched a memory in my mind that, until this day, I can still see. When Judith Jamison, a tall Black woman with chocolate brown skin and short nappy hair, in her signature dance in *Revelations*, sashayed out holding that opened umbrella above her head, elegant, graceful, poised, and beautiful, swaying and dipping as she moved on that stage—no doubt, I had never seen a Black woman who looked like that in a role of principal dancer. Although she did not know I was in that audience, her presence on that stage caused me to connect deeply to her. She was someone who *looked like me*. Seeing her there in her performance role was absolutely affirming for me as a young Black female college student.

A picture I keep on my desk is one of a little five-year-old Black boy touching the head of President Barack Obama, taken in 2012 in the Oval Office of the White House. As the president bends his head down, the child, eyes keenly focused, with his outstretched arm and five tiny fingers, touched the president's hair. The *New York Times*[1] accounts this event as this five-year-old who wanted to ask the president a question, and when told to do so, he said, "I want to know if my hair is just like yours." The president's response was, "Why don't you touch it and see for yourself? Touch it, dude!" Then the president asked, "So, what do you think?" To which the child responded, "Yes, it does feel the same."

Throughout the decades for more than a half century, seeing "another" as a critical affirming act of seeing one's self has mattered, particularly in communities of those whose voices have been marginalized in and by society. Given that these moments matter, then what do they have to do with this book? As I think of these moments of connecting positively to those in whom you can see yourself, I am struck by the value of these moments to the stories that unfold in the pages that follow in *Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me*. The unspoken affirming benefit of being able to look around one's space and see one's self reflected in those you see speaks volumes and can make a difference in how you see yourself in the present as well as the possibilities of who you too, can see yourself becoming, many years later. A five-year-old Black child, who *sees* himself in and has something in common with the president of the United States, may just believe that he, too, can *become* the president of the United States. Au contraire, if you have never seen a lake, imagining an ocean, though not impossible, may be harder to do. When those affirming images are not there, too often, one is left to defend, deny, deflect, disown, discount, or even destroy because their own identities and experiences within the spaces they find themselves are often muted and invisible.

A place that all children in America will find themselves is the place called school. While all children may enter this place, the experiences they bring to it and how they experience it will greatly differ. Equally true, for those being prepared to teach, to work with those entering the schoolhouse doors, their experiences prior to and in their teacher preparation programs can vary greatly. *Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me* addresses how students of color and linguistically diverse students in a teacher education program see themselves in a context that is often void of having teachers like themselves.

In 1986 in the United States, 91% of K-12 teachers were White. Although that number dropped to 84% in 20ll,[2] the current field of teaching and teacher education remains dominated by the preparation of a mostly White, monolingual teacher force. For students of color and linguistically different students who seek to become English and literacy teachers, what then becomes their journey to becoming a teacher in settings where they are clearly in the minority? Why do they choose the profession? What is life like for them in their preservice English teacher education programs? What challenges do they face? In what ways are the programs in which they study reflective of and responsive to their needs and interests?

In schools of education department meetings, when the discussion turns to the topic of the scarcity of students of color and linguistically diverse students in teacher education programs, the familiar refrains often heard are, "It is very difficult to find *them*," or "*They* don't quite have the GPA we require for admission," or "It's hard for *them* to commit to their full-time studies as they have childcare issues and other family obligations," or "*They* can't afford the tuition," or, for native English speakers who are students of color as well as for those students whose first language may not be English, "*Their* oral and written skills are poor. *They'll* need to go to the Writing Center." While all these issues may be part of the narrative that students of color and linguistically diverse students bring to their preservice programs, how do the programs interpret these concerns, and in what ways do they respond? What would be evidence of the ways in which these programs leverage the strengths that the students bring to their preservice experiences, and how do they build on those strengths?

In the voices of the linguistically diverse students and preservice teachers of color, *Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me* tells the stories of these students' experiences and challenges teacher education programs to first understand the students' plight. Then, it beckons teacher education programs to use that understanding to not just *fix* the students; rather, to *question*, how might those understandings inform and affect program revisions that are responsive to the needs and concerns of these students?

Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me explores the opportunities in English education programs for their preservice students of color and linguistically diverse students to see themselves and to know that who they were before entering the program is valued once they are in the program. Thus, it offers the perspective of being seen, not just from what they lack, but acknowledged and recognized by the strengths they bring to the program that can be built upon and further developed. The book questions how English education programs hold students of color and linguistically diverse students accountable while scaffolding with them their funds of knowledge in the development of their full potential as learners and prospective teachers.

Ultimately, *Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me* recognizes the importance of having students of color and those who are linguistically diverse see others like themselves within and beyond their preservice English education programs. To that end, it challenges programs to do a better job of addressing this concern and offers strategies to assist in this effort.

When preservice and inservice teachers seek to study in teacher education programs, the complexity of their needs may require more than a simple pedagogical response. Such is the case with students of color and linguistically diverse students. To affect change in addressing their needs may require a deeper level of commitment from the programs in which they are enrolled. What that commitment looks like may vary. But, surely, it has something to do with making meaningful connections to and relationships with those who enter our programs.

In my early days as a professor on the campus of a city university, after about four weeks at the beginning of the semester in teaching a graduate course, Karen,[3]

a Black woman enrolled in my class, asked to meet with me. Karen, who at that time was just a few years younger than I, came to my office. When I said, "What can I do for you?" she eagerly responded, "Can I ask you some questions?" "Sure," I said. What began to happen was something that I had not expected. Karen started to pepper me with questions. It was not the questioning; it was the nature of questions she asked that stood out for me. Having observed what I had worn to class for each of the four sessions, she began with a statement that went something like this: "The first day of class you wore a (color) dress. Then next class you had on a ____ dress. For the third class, you were wearing a ____ suit. And this week you wore a skirt and blouse. Do you ever wear pants?" After her first question, she continued. "What kind of music do you like?" "What foods do you like to eat?" "When did you know you wanted to be a teacher?" "How long have you been a teacher?"

As I took her questions seriously and interspersed responses that were thoughtful and honest, I also tried to probe her thinking a bit. "Since we are not really talking about *the course*, I am curious about the kind of questions that you are asking. So what's motivating your questions?" I asked. I remember her clearly stating, "I have never had a Black teacher from my early grades right through college. Seeing you here as the professor, a Black woman, who's really *like* Black, like a real Black person. You know, who thinks and acts like a Black person, and you are also a professor, I have never had that before." She then said, "I'd like to see you with White people." To which I responded, "What is it you think you would see?" She went on to say, "You know, like you their equal. You can handle yourself, and you are Black." Even when the course ended, Karen, a preschool teacher at a day care center, would periodically swing by my office to check in and say hello.

While this conversation happened early in my career as a professor, Karen's words have lingered with me long after she spoke them. Surely there can be many interpretations of the 45-minute conversation that happened in my office that day. While much can be debated about who she was, what she said, her motivation for coming to talk with me, and how I responded, the one thing this moment sheds light on is that having "teachers like me" matters. It certainly did to Karen.

Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me will matter to those who read it and learn from it the things they can do differently in their teacher education programs that can matter in the lives of students of color and linguistically diverse students who seek to become English and literacy teachers.

Suzanne C. Carothers, PhD
New York University

Notes

1. Jackie Calmes, "When a boy found a familiar feel in a pat of the head of state," *New York Times*, May 23, 2012.
2. C. Emily Feistritzer, "Profile of teachers in the U.S.," 2011, National Center for Education Information, Washington, DC, p 15.
3. Pseudonym.

PREFACE

> *I feel like I can relate to them. They look like me. Teachers that look like the students—they don't see Black or Latino professionals.*
>
> —Latoya

Latoya, one of the preservice teachers you will meet in the following pages, captures directly the message of this book: the importance for a child to have a teacher who looks "like me" in the classroom. The message is not as simple as saying Black children need Black teachers or that somehow having shared racial and linguistic backgrounds guarantees optimal educative experiences for students. However, why discourage or undermine the significance of a diverse teacher force, one that more fully represents the racial and linguistic diversity existent in our local and broader communities? The current field of teaching and teacher education is dominated by the preparation of a mostly White, monolingual teacher force. There remains a need to encourage more students of color to pursue teaching as a career choice. To do so, it is important to step back and consider the reasons why students of color enter teacher preparation programs and how teacher education programs sustain and support their processes of becoming teachers. I wonder how my own schooling experiences might have been different had I had more teachers of color, who lived in my community and who my shared cultural traditions. I explore these ponderings and more in *Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me*.

This book is about the experiences of students of color in literacy and English teacher education. In it, I emphasize the impact of being a student of color with a marginalized racial and/or linguistic background on one's construction of a teacher identity and perceptions of what a teacher should be. In *Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me*, I examine how English and literacy teacher education—a discursive space dominated by White, English-monolingual, middle-class perspectives—shapes the experiences

of preservice teachers of color who understand the world through multiple cultural and linguistic realities. This book amplifies their voices and sheds light on the experiences of students of color in English and literacy teacher education programs who negotiate teacher identities within contexts where their experiences are often muted and invisible. I aim to unpack how assumptions of Whiteness and monolingualism are operationalized in the development and implementation of English and literacy teacher education practice and how non-White, multilingual learners are positioned within and outside this practice.

This book is primarily for literacy and English teacher educators concerned with increasing the racial and linguistic diversity in their teacher training programs and in the field of P-12 teaching. The preparation of literacy and English teachers should not be based solely on the needs and concerns of White preservice teachers. In these pages, I want to encourage teacher educators to listen intently to the voices of preservice teachers of color to better understand their experiences in teaching and teacher education. With this heightened awareness, I offer specific ways to improve curricular and instructional experiences for these students so that teacher education faculty can better meet the needs of preservice teachers from all racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds.

Additionally, this book is for language and literacy researchers. An immediate concern for preservice teacher education research and practice should be how to prepare the current homogeneous teaching force for teaching a culturally and linguistically diverse student population. However, this does not mean that efforts to understand why the racial and linguistic diversity of the teaching force continually decreases should be excluded or sidetracked. To increase recruitment and retention of students from diverse racial and linguistic groups, the literacy research community must continue to consult preservice teachers of color as a major source of guidance—we must better understand their reasons for entering and/or leaving the profession. Their perspectives are at the forefront of this research agenda.

Finally, with this book, I seek to both affirm and "touch and agree" with the experiences of preservice teachers of color in teacher education programs. In the rhetorical tradition of the Black church, to "touch and agree" means to lay hands on a fellow worshipper as an act of solidarity and as a witness to his or her testimony. Oftentimes, the racial micro-aggressions people of color experience in predominantly White spaces will make them question their legitimacy and may cause them to minimize and/or dismiss those experiences. In *Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me*, I aim to represent and support the myriad racial and linguistic stories of preservice teachers of color so that readers might "see" themselves and know that "no, I'm not crazy," "yes, this is how I felt," and "no, I'm not alone."

Overview and Description of the Book

This book examines some of the reasons students of color choose to major in, stay in, or leave literacy and English teacher education. The chapters focus on

the impact students' racial and/or linguistic identities have on the construction and perceptions of an English/literacy teacher identity and the ways literacy and English teacher education—a discursive space largely dominated by White, English-monolingual, middle-class perspectives—shapes the experiences of preservice teachers of color. Examining the current context of teaching and teacher education and the discourse around it is important for understanding how preservice teachers of color construct teacher identities and how this construction is mediated by the context. *What does it mean to become a teacher today? What does it mean for students of color to become teachers within contexts largely created for preparing White, English-monolingual teachers for working in urban communities? How are these identities constructed given teacher certification practices and national and state teaching standards? How are these identities constructed within a climate of Teach for America (TFA) and other alternative routes to teaching? When, why, and how do preservice teachers of color draw on their racial, cultural, and linguistic knowledges and discourses in the process of becoming teachers and beginning to teach?* These are questions considered and examined in the chapters that follow.

In considering the aforementioned questions, I reconceptualize English language arts pedagogy in ways that attend to the diverse racial and linguistic identities of students and teachers. There is no question that there are positive consequences for non-White, multilingual students and teachers to maintain their dominant languages and literacies in educational settings. The stories of preservice teachers can serve as the backdrop to understanding the multiple experiences of people of color in White, English-monolingual contexts. Therefore, I also turn the gaze on my own experiences as a Black female educator who is persisting against the Whiteness of teaching, teacher education, and the schooling experiences of many children, including my own. It is my hope that collectively these chapters will encourage us to rethink the nature of teacher education programs in the United States in ways that decenter Whiteness and recognize and center racial, cultural, and linguistic diversities. By doing so, we might create teacher education environments welcoming and supportive of students of color who want to become teachers and, by extension, a teacher force representative of the racial, cultural, and linguistic diversity of our P-12 student population.

Chapter 1 introduces readers to three preservice teachers—Angela, Latoya, and Natasha—and their stories of "becoming teachers." Discussing their stories alongside my own experiences as a Black female preservice teacher in a predominantly White English teacher preparation program allows me to advocate for a teacher education committed to diversity and racial and linguistic equity. It also allows me to work at making visible the racial, linguistic, and academic experiences of Black preservice teachers to preservice and inservice teacher educators. This discussion leads me to present a representative literature review that focuses on the need for all teachers to be trained to effectively work with linguistically, racially, and culturally diverse populations.

In chapter 2, I share my own personal and professional experiences and challenges, providing deeper contextual information from my own life to lay the

groundwork for understanding the connections I make with Latoya's, Angela's, and Natasha's experiences. Specifically, I enter the conversation with my personal history as a young Black woman and speaker of African American Language learning to teach in a predominantly White English teacher education program. Then I discuss the challenges faced as a Black female teacher educator educating a majority population of White women teachers. This eminent concern is exacerbated by the challenges of preparing a mostly White, middle-class, female teaching force for the realities of working with and effectively teaching a student population that is viewed as "other people's children" (Delpit, 1995). Employing autoethnographic methods allows me to examine how my identity as a mother who homeschooled her son informs and is informed by my work as a teacher educator. This chapter prefaces the remaining chapters in ways that allow me to connect my own experiences with those of preservice teachers of color in multicultural teacher education. Each subsequent chapter relates back to my experiences as a homeschooling parent because my decision to homeschool my son is a concrete example of what can happen when issues of difference and diversity are not centered in teaching and teacher education. My personal and professional experiences provide a way to illustrate the complex realities faced by parent communities of color who are navigating school systems that do not demonstrate a deliberate commitment to teacher diversity and, by extension, diverse teaching experiences for racially and linguistically diverse P-12 student populations.

In chapter 3, I lay out a theoretical framework for understanding and unpacking the discourse of social justice teaching within the context of teacher education programs that emphasize multicultural and urban teaching, particularly when Whiteness and White privilege are unchecked. I define key constructs such as social justice, Whiteness, and White privilege and discuss the outcomes of a multicultural teacher education that does not enact antiracist pedagogy. Incorporating theoretical perspectives on teacher identity, teacher discourse, social justice teaching, and urban teacher education throughout this chapter sets the stage for an examination into how teaching for social justice and other progressive teaching ideologies are reframed from the perspectives of Black and Latina preservice teachers.

Chapter 4 returns to Latoya, Natasha, and Angela to present case studies of each preservice teacher and their experiences learning to teach in a program with articulated aims of preparing new teachers for teaching toward diversity and social justice. Extending the theoretical framework on multicultural teacher education, urban teacher education, and social justice teaching from chapter 2, I examine how teaching for social justice and other progressive teaching ideologies are reframed from the perspectives of Black and Latina preservice teachers. In this examination, the goals and purposes of multicultural teacher education get reconceptualized to include the experiences and perspectives of Black and Latina preservice teachers. Defining their identities as racially and linguistically minoritized individuals, Latoya, Natasha, and Angela each were students in a traditional teacher education

program that focused on meeting the needs, goals, and expectations of a majority White population. This chapter presents prevalent themes from ethnographic data collected within the context of their teacher education experiences in order to examine what their various negotiations of multicultural, urban, and social justice discourses imply for teacher education and for the needs of today's ethnically and linguistically diverse classrooms.

Chapter 5 focuses on the discursive ways that Latoya, Natasha, and Angela reconciled tensions between their racial and linguistic identities and the construction of teacher identities in the context of preservice teacher education in the United States. Through the study of language as representative of teacher identities, I present a critical discourse analysis of the language and literacy practices of two preservice teachers—both women of color and nonstandard language and dialect speakers—across diverse contexts within and beyond academic contexts. Examination of their literacy and language practices elucidates a move beyond marginalization and inferiority toward agency and linguistic hybridity.

Chapter 6 builds from data presented in chapter 4 to present a discourse analysis of the social and personal engagements of preservice teachers of color to understand their perspectives on racial identity in relation to how they are positioned inside and outside traditional teacher education programs in the United States. The use of discourse analytic methods revealed that preservice teachers of color sometimes chose deliberate silence and employed counterlanguages in their social and personal engagements. These choices positioned them as insiders within and beyond the dominant context of teacher education.

In the final chapter, implications are offered to highlight the importance of sustaining conversations with teachers and teacher candidates of color as teacher educators and literacy scholars work to improve literacy and English education for an increasingly diverse student population. I discuss specific ways to recruit and retain teachers of color in literacy and English education. This chapter emphasizes my purpose in writing this book—to demonstrate the importance of bringing richer perspectives to bear in the training of new teachers and, subsequently, the teaching of P-12 children and youth. Overall, I offer insights into how English teacher education programs might better serve and ensure educational attainment for diverse P-12 student populations by privileging the cultural and linguistic resources of all preservice teachers across curricular, pedagogical, and practicum-based teacher education experiences.

This book is a testament to the experiences of preservice teachers of color, as well as speakers of non-dominant languages and dialects, learning to teach English and literacy in teacher education contexts that often position their identities and literacies on the periphery. What role do racial and/or linguistic identities have on the construction and perceptions of an English and/or literacy teacher identity for students of color? In what ways does English and literacy teacher education—a discursive space largely dominated by White, English-monolingual, middle-class perspectives—shape the experiences of preservice teachers of color?

Addressing these questions is paramount if the goal of teacher education and preparation is to create a teacher force representative of the culturally and linguistically diverse communities we—teachers, teacher educators, and literacy researchers alike—purport to serve and cultivate.

I neither claim to have all the answers nor pretend there are simple solutions to increasing diverse participation in teacher education or to altering the experiences of students of color in teaching and teacher education. Instead, I invite readers to join me in critically thinking about how we can more intently listen to the experiences of students of color in our teacher education programs and engage more fully in a process of disrupting the barriers that hinder their processes of becoming teachers. In my mind, literacy and English teachers and teacher educators are in a prime position to lead an educational priority toward valuing and including racially and linguistically diverse perspectives, histories, and voices in our classroom and school spaces.

Reference

Delpit, L. (1995). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. New York: New Press.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

As James Baldwin urged us, teaching is a revolutionary act. To teach is to change a life and transform the world. It requires courage, faith, love, and endurance, all qualities and actions that I must practice on a continual basis. I didn't always know that I would become a teacher and I especially did not know that I would one day become an educator of teachers. It was not a path that I imagined for my life. But, today, I am grateful for the many people who encouraged and inspired me to take up the charge to teach, to be a change agent, and to work toward an equitable and socially just world for all children. I am especially grateful for the opportunity to write about my own journey of becoming a literacy teacher and now witnessing the journeys of many teachers of color who have a strong desire to give back to their communities and to be the revolutionaries that our schools and communities need.

This project affirmed for me the importance of seeing, listening to, and supporting *teachers like me*. It is no coincidence that the heart of this book is the stories of three young women of color "becoming teacher." My lil' sistas taught me a great deal from the critical perspectives that they shared, and I continually come back to their insights, questions, and recommendations for how to improve teacher education for students of color. This project began with the initial inquiry that informed my dissertation study at Boston College with mentoring and support from language and literacy scholars Lisa (Leigh) Patel, Maria Brisk, Margaret Thomas, and Curt Dudley-Marling. They modeled for me the importance of being present, accessible, and generous when working with the next generation of teachers and scholars. Ten years later, I consider it an honor and privilege to continue to listen to and learn with preservice teachers of color as they travel through teacher preparation programs. I am grateful for funding support from the National Council of Teachers of English and the Conference

on English Education to extend my scholarship on teacher diversity in literacy and English education and I am appreciative to doctoral students Reba Hodge, Nyaboke Nduati, and Kimberly Williams who have worked alongside me on ongoing projects.

There were many times over the past few years when I stepped back from this book and contemplated not completing it. But several individuals who believed in this book manuscript from the beginning, especially NCTE/Routledge Research Series editors, Valerie Kinloch, and Susi Long, pulled me out of the rabbit hole on numerous occasions. They each provided close and critical reading of the manuscript. And when they saw my flame dimming, they reignited my fire and passion for doing this work and completing this project. I am grateful that they saw promise in my work when I could not. I also want to thank Kurt Austin from the NCTE Books Program for his confidence in the project and Naomi Silverman from Routledge for her guidance from proposal to production. Naomi's enthusiasm for this project was contagious, and I count it a blessing to have had the opportunity to learn from and work with her on my first book length publication. I am appreciative of the entire Routledge editorial and production team, especially editorial assistant Brianna Pennella, for their diligence in seeing this manuscript through the publishing process.

I would be remiss not to shout out to my many colleagues and friends in the School of Education at Syracuse University. The field of teaching and teacher education is in trying times, and as a school, we are in constant dialogue about what we must do and be in order to work against educational policies and practices that are hurting children, families, and communities. My identity as a teacher educator and scholar is greatly informed by the traditions of inclusive urban education, community engagement, and scholarship in action that are pillars of our School of Education. I am fortunate to have colleagues like Kelly Chandler-Olcott, George Theoharis, Kathleen Hinchman, Jeffery Mangram, Zaline Roy-Campbell and many others who are committed to rolling up their sleeves and doing the necessary work in teaching and teacher education. I am also appreciative of the leadership of my School of Education Deans, Douglas Biklen and Joanna Masingila, for creating the infrastructures that prioritize increased student diversity in teacher education.

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Gholnecsar Muhammad, LaToya Sawyer, Delicia Greene, and Darrell Hucks. Thank you for the love, the encouragement, and the laughter. You each are a reflection of my heart.

I am who I am because of my first teachers—my grandmother Bessie Gray and my ma and pops, Wanda and Floyd Montgomery. Throughout my academic and professional journey, my family always keeps me grounded and they remind me of the weight of my accomplishments. I represent the Grays, the Haddixes, the Montgomerys, the Tillmans, and the Watts. We are one.

I can because of the love of two special men—the Phils. Phillip Jr. is the reason that I remain hopeful in a world that will one day see children of color for all of their greatness. Phil Sr.'s positive energy centers me. I cannot say enough about his unconditional love and support throughout the years. You are my everything.

I dedicate this book in memory of Aunt Boosey, Aunt Rosie, Grandma Jenkins, Jeannette, Nancy and Lora Gay—all powerful women who didn't take no mess and who did the work that needed to be done. True revolutionaries.

1

BEING THE "ONLY ONE"

The Importance of Teacher Diversity for Literacy and English Education

"How can I teach reading when I can't even pronounce the words right?" It was Angela's question that illuminated my interest in exploring this issue—the experiences of racially and linguistically marginalized students in teacher preparation programs. Angela was a student in an undergraduate literacy methods class I instructed, and she expressed this concern to me after a session on phonics instruction. She identified strongly and proudly as a bilingual Spanish and English speaker of Costa Rican and Guatemalan heritage. Yet she was embarrassed to ask her question in front of her classmates, who were predominantly White, English-monolingual females. She was worried about whether she could teach reading when she was not fully confident in her own use and pronunciation of the English language. She shared that she felt that her accent might serve as an obstacle in her ability to effectively foster the literacy development of her future students. In asking her question, she articulated for me many of the insecurities that I too had felt and experienced as a preservice teacher in a predominantly White, English-monolingual teacher education program. As a speaker of African American Language[1] (see Green, 2002; Smitherman, 1977, 1999, 2006), I questioned my ability to teach English language arts to students when I was "non-native" to its standard. My family members would often tease me whenever they heard a "What she BE talkin' 'bout?" or "I ain't got no money" coming out of my mouth, and they would question, "How you gon' teach English talkin' like that?" Becoming a teacher, I internalized the understanding that I was to make deliberate language choices and decisions based on specific time-place constructs. In other words, African American Language (AAL) was relegated to my home and social contexts, and an academic English, or what was deemed a more "standard" form of English, was required in my role as a secondary English teacher. In order to be an effective educator, I thought I needed to mark clear lines between these

different worlds. I internalized a belief that speaking African American Language somehow diminished my intellectual and teaching ability as well as my authority as an English teacher.

Angela and I both experienced tensions between our racial and linguistic identities and our understandings of what it meant to become, represent, and interact as teachers as a result of our participation in a mainstream teacher education context. Our shared experiences suggested that other Black and Latina preservice teachers might also feel such tensions. Consequently, I wondered about other Black and Latina students in this predominantly female, White, English-monolingual literacy methods classes as they prepared to become teachers. In particular, I began to critically consider the impact of one's racial and linguistic background on one's construction of a teacher identity and visions of what constitutes a teacher.

Stories like mine and like Angela's were not in isolation. That same year, I met Natasha and Latoya; both identified as Black women who were also speakers of AAL. Both were women of color pursuing teacher education in a predominantly White institution. Natasha was also a student in that undergraduate literacy methods course with Angela. From my earliest impressions, Natasha exhibited a strong sense of self. She exuded a high level of confidence, and she made it clear to me, and others, that her life was driven by purpose. Natasha was very involved in student organizations on campus and worked as a resident assistant. Natasha was from a middle-class African American family. Both of her parents were college-educated, working professionals. Her mother worked as an elementary school teacher, and her father was the director of a non-profit youth organization. Natasha often talked about the importance of education in her family and in her community. I stayed in touch with Natasha throughout her college experience, maintaining communication with her even while she completed a semester "abroad" at a historically Black college in the southern region of the United States. Natasha decided to participate in this academic exchange because she wanted to have a different experience from the one she was having at her home institution. Natasha was a human development major. She completed her student teaching semester in a second grade classroom and planned to teach at the elementary level.

Natasha introduced me to Latoya. They were both resident assistants at the university. Both of Latoya's parents were alumni of the university and now university employees, providing her with a tuition remission benefit. Latoya began her undergraduate career undecided on a major. Her mother told her to pursue a major that she would really enjoy. She shared that she liked working with kids and also wanted to do some type of community and social activism. She eventually decided on education. Latoya was a secondary education and history major. She completed her student teaching semester in both a 9th grade history class and in a 10th grade sheltered English immersion classroom. She planned to teach at the high school level. Both Natasha and Latoya demonstrated and articulated to me a critical consciousness of what it meant to be Black women who had proud

affiliations to African American Language in a space where they were often the "only one." Like Natasha, Latoya, and Angela, I too navigated the terrains of a predominantly White, traditional teacher education program where I was constantly questioning the weight of my own experiences in comparison to the majority of students around me. And as a Black woman who proudly speaks African American Language, I was able to engage with these women in particular ways because of our shared cultural and linguistic heritages.

Our stories anchor the content of this book. It is through these individual yet collective stories that I examine and question how students of color experience teacher education and "becoming teachers" when their racial and linguistic identities are marginalized, undermined, and silenced in the process. On the deepest level, this resolve stems from my own experiences as a student of color learning mainstream American English while simultaneously maintaining strong affiliations to my home and familial language. I do not have memories of teachers correcting my use of African American Language because somehow I knew how to protect it from their red pens. In school, I learned mainstream American English, and I excelled in all of my English language arts lessons, earning high marks on sentence diagramming exercises and perfect scores on spelling and vocabulary tests. But I also went to school to play hand games and jump rope with my friends on the playground, where we'd sing, "Li'l Sally Walker was walkin' down the street. She didn't know what to do soooo she jumped in fron' of me. She say gon girl, gon girl, shake yo' thang to me!" I could (and knew how to) negotiate use of my linguistic repertoire within and immediately outside the walls of school; both AAL and mainstream American English had a valid, legitimized place in my life.

My awareness of these linguistic negotiations did not happen until I was a teacher education student in a predominantly White, English-monolingual English teacher preparation program. Becoming a teacher of English meant that I would be responsible for ensuring my students were fluent in written and oral forms of mainstream American English. How could I teach English when I was non-native to mainstream American English? Mainstream American English, or academic English, is not my home language. I learned to be proficient in "standard" language varieties, but now, could I teach them successfully and effectively? Moreover, did I have a right to? I entered into the teaching profession constantly worrying that somehow I would be "found out" and discovered to be a fake—someone who did not possess an outward ease with her ability to communicate using mainstream American English in writing and in oral forms. Now I would be responsible for the English language learning of others.

Fast-forward several years to my work as an English and literacy teacher educator of color in a similar predominantly White, English-monolingual teacher education context. Each year, I make the following announcement to students in my English methods class during our first session together: "I am my language. I am a speaker of African American Language. I am a proud speaker of African American Language." As an African American female teacher educator who identifies as a

speaker of a language variety viewed as inferior to mainstream American English, or academic English,[2] I let my predominantly White, English-monolingual preservice teachers know, immediately, that I take a stance toward linguistic diversity and for representation of multiple voices and languages inside and outside the English language arts classroom. I explain that a "standard" English is arbitrarily determined by societal norms, prejudices, attitudes, and expectations and often decided upon by the social group(s) in power. I say that it is our job to value and validate the home languages our students bring into school, while adding to their linguistic repertoires. I declare that I am not in the business of "fixing" or "correcting" students' languages but that I support them in learning to translate across languages and contexts and that it is my hope that by the end of our time together, they too will see how misguided and detrimental a monolingual, monocultural approach to English language learning can be for all students.

As a teacher educator who works with both preservice and inservice teachers, I consider it my responsibility to address the tacit ideologies that persist around linguistic and cultural differences teachers bring to the classroom experience and to help them to be confident, effective teachers for all students. Teaching is more than just methods and strategies; it is also very much about the mind-set one brings to the profession. It is about the preconceived ideas an individual holds about his or her students, their families, and their communities. I consider it my duty to remind teachers that our task must be to support the academic achievement of all students while simultaneously capitalizing on and validating their cultural and linguistic identities. No longer can we—teachers and teacher educators, specifically—devalue or ignore students' multiple identities. In fact, we have already lost too many students to cultural and linguistic terrorism (Anzaldúa, 1987/1999), where our words and practices have insisted that students repudiate who they are in order to become successful in schools and in other mainstream, or dominant, contexts. In the process, we not only devalue the language of much of the population, but we reinforce the notion that the language of the dominant few sits at the top of the hierarchy of what counts as linguistically relevant.

Here in this space, I remain concerned with the numerous encounters with students of color who, like me, retreat from pursuing literacy or English teaching because they feel their racial and/or linguistic background makes them inadequate to be effective teachers. Fears of inadequacy and insufficiency are significant to critique in larger narratives about the preparation and ambivalences of many teachers of color. The limited presence of teachers of color is well documented, and many education scholars have examined reasons why fewer students of color enter into or retreat from teaching and teacher education (see Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010; Dillard, 1994; Guyton, Saxton, & Wesche, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 2005; Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004). On a more local level, I regularly see evidence of the dominance of White teachers in school districts that surround me. For example, I received an email announcement celebrating 31 teachers, one for each day of the month for our city school district. When I looked at the calendar

of profiled faces, I did not see a single teacher of color. I did not see the same racial and ethnic diversities represented in these teacher profiles as I generally do in the district's media representations of their student population—representations that highlight, predominantly, students of color. This not only saddens me, but it is deeply problematic. In addition, the academic expectations for students, particularly students of color, in districts such as these are notoriously low. I am the mother of a school-age African American boy who should attend this school district, but instead, I chose alternative options for him, including homeschooling, because of the systemic academic failure that has persisted in this district for years without any signs of deliberate actions toward real change. My commitment as an English and literacy teacher educator is to work toward preparing teachers who can be a part of that change. Yet I am preparing mostly White, monolingual teachers. I firmly believe that part of the change has to include diversifying the teacher force and cultivating teachers who bring rich racial, cultural, and linguistic histories to the field of teaching.

Teaching for Diversity in Literacy and English Education

The majority of teachers in classrooms today are White, middle class, female, and English monolingual. The majority of students in teacher preparation programs are White, middle class, female, and English monolingual. This is not breaking news. While racial and linguistic differences between teachers and students are not newly reported phenomena, the effects of these differences on the educational outcomes for today's P–12 student population are of grave concern. As Sleeter and Milner (2011) argue, "who teachers are in terms of their cultural, gendered, racial, ethnic, socioeconomic, and linguistic background is an important issue because research suggests that an overwhelming white teaching force cannot meet the needs of increasingly diverse P-12 students" (p. 81). One of the most serious implications of the racial and linguistic divide among prospective teachers and today's P–12 student population is that many White, middle-class preservice teachers understand linguistic diversity as a deficit (Gutierrez & Orellana, 2006) and view racial and linguistic differences as other people's issues. Research studies that examine the attitudes of White preservice teachers toward these differences report that many prospective teachers view children who come from racial and linguistic backgrounds different than their own as "other people's children" (Delpit, 1995) and subsequently less capable in their motivation and ability to learn (Gomez, Black, & Allen, 2007). Though attitudes toward linguistic diversity are socially constructed, and notions of language superiority are arbitrarily determined (Gutierrez & Orellana, 2006; Wolfram & Christian, 1989), prejudice against and limited understandings about the value of linguistic pluralism pervade the schooling process and impact learning outcomes for students. Further, the language of schooling serves as a means for evaluating and differentiating students (Schleppegrell, 2004). It is a means for separating the haves from the have-nots,

the "pulled-out" from the included, the sheltered from the general education, the advanced placement from the remedial, the college-admit from the high school dropout. Because educational research on student achievement and closing the achievement gap categorizes data on the basis of race and language, White, English-monolingual students are positioned as normative indicators of school performance (Hilliard III, 2003). In this way, any racial or linguistic difference that deviates from this assumed norm is viewed as "deficient" and treated as a viable explanation for the academic failure of students of color and students who speak languages and dialects other than mainstream American English. In other words, being different than White, English-monolingual students is an indicator for and an explanation of academic failure.

Historically, students of color and speakers of nonstandard forms of English and other languages are framed and conceptualized in dominant paradigms of inferiority, cultural deprivation, and diversity (Haddix, 2009). In educational research and practice, there remains an underlying ideology that all students need to assimilate to become fluent and frequent speakers of a standard form of English in order to succeed in society. Such ideology suggests that assimilation happens at the expense of the student's home language and culture being devalued, erased, and eradicated. Further, the current context of standardized and standards-based educational reform presents a dissonant relationship with pluralist views of language use and linguistically rich classrooms (see Genishi & Dyson, 2009). The more school reform moves in a direction toward greater standardization, the less room there is to value the cultural and linguistic plurality that millions of children bring to their schooling experiences on a daily basis.

It is also important to note that the interplay of these ideologies is most often at play in the context of urban schools where the cultural and linguistic gap between teachers and administrators and the students and families they serve is steadily widening. Educational researchers continue to question how to best address the educational needs of an increasingly linguistic and culturally diverse student population (Godley, Sweetland, Wheeler, Minnici, & Carpenter, 2006). This concern is magnified by the growing majority of culturally and linguistically diverse students who are placed at risk of educational failure. It is further magnified by the dominant view that languages and dialects other than mainstream American English are the main obstacles of educational achievement. Linguists, educationists, and researchers across academic disciplines have worked to explain the disproportionate failure among linguistic minorities in schools, arguing against a conclusion that students' home language is the culprit (see Perry & Delpit, 1998; Zentella, 2005).

Deficit treatment of differences in students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the classroom shows that negative, uninformed attitudes toward these differences by teachers can be counterproductive and can even harm student performance (Baker-Bell, 2013; Schleppegrell, 2004; Wynne, 2002). Teachers' attitudes and ambivalence toward different languages and dialects can impact curricular initiatives and school policies that have proven to support these students (see Brisk,

Burgos, & Hamerla, 2004). Their attitudes can either support or block marginalized students' access to literacy. In a review of scholarship on preparing teachers for teaching in racially and linguistically diverse classrooms, Godley et al. (2006) offer multiple reasons why educational researchers and teacher educators should prioritize preparing teachers to develop more appropriate responses to linguistic diversity. One of the reasons highlighted by Godley et al. includes the notion that dominant pedagogical responses to nonstandard dialects and languages are damaging and counterproductive. When teachers view languages other than mainstream American English as having lower status, this view underscores the legitimacy of a range of languages and the idea that languages are defined politically, not scientifically, and that standard languages are "dialects with an army and a navy."[3] This is why it is imperative that transformation of teachers' attitudes about language diversity is central to preservice teacher education. Classroom talk between teachers and students is the major medium of instruction, and the power of these interactions is in the hands of teachers. More time, effort, and attention must be given to raising teachers' awareness about their assumptions and worldviews of language diversity. Reconceptualizing the goals of teacher learning in ways that are parallel with critical multicultural teacher education can yield positive results for students whose linguistic and ethnic identities hold lesser status in our society. But, again, a critical multicultural teacher education framework has as its priority the educational needs and interests of mostly White, English-monolingual, middle-class preservice teachers. Undoubtedly, there remains an important need to emphasize the roles played by critical multicultural teacher educators, especially in teacher education programs and, for our purposes here, for literacy teacher preparation programs. Such an emphasis can reveal how Whiteness and its ideologies are pervasive in the training of literacy and English teachers. It can also reveal the need for increased literacy research and practices that are grounded in preservice teachers' negotiations of multicultural and social justice discourses as they relate to the literacy needs of racially and linguistically diverse classrooms.

When the Teacher Is Like Me

Two different perspectives on how to address the cultural and linguistic gap between teachers and students dominate educational research. The first suggests that the gap can be remedied by developing the attitudes and multicultural knowledge of predominantly White, female preservice teachers. The majority of literature on preservice teacher education in the context of the United States focuses on the need to prepare an increasingly White, female, middle-class, and English-monolingual teaching force to effectively teach a growing culturally and linguistically diverse student population (Godley et al., 2006; Godley & Escher, 2012; Gomez, 1993, 1996; Haddix, 2008; Zumwalt & Craig, 2005). This is particularly important in lieu of current conversations about how to best prepare highly qualified teachers (Gere & Berebitsky, 2009). In an article about teacher

quality in English teacher education, Gere and Berebitsky cite culturally relevant and culturally responsive pedagogical practices (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nieto, 2000) as an area of research that deserves further attention and exploration to enrich understandings of teacher quality and its relationship to student achievement. This perspective posits:

> Teachers with culturally responsive dispositions maintain high expectations for academic achievement for all students; foster cultural competence among their students and themselves; and facilitate the development of a sociopolitical consciousness among students by using educational practices that are validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, and emancipatory. (Gere & Berebitsky, 2009, p. 253)

Many possibilities can result from an emphasis on valuing the multiplicity of cultural, racial, and linguistic perspectives that all teachers bring to the teaching and learning experience. However, because what is currently understood about the preparation of teachers for diversity is based on the needs and concerns of White preservice teachers, this perspective reinscribes the notion that a particular type of teacher identity leads the agenda for multicultural teacher education. Furthermore, this argument insinuates that what may or may not work for White, monolingual, female preservice teachers is universal (Montecinos, 2004). The overwhelming presence of Whiteness within teacher education programs can be silencing for non-White preservice teachers (Sleeter, 2001).

The second, less prominent perspective on how to address the gap between teachers and students includes recruiting teachers from racially, linguistically, and culturally diverse communities into the teaching profession. The focus on bridging the cultural mismatch inversely negates the fact that some preservice teachers share linguistic and cultural norms with culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Another kind of mismatch occurs once preservice teachers from non-dominant linguistic and cultural groups find themselves in the midst of teacher education programs that position them, and members of their primary discourse groups, as "other." This is an important issue to consider in lieu of research studies that document the positive educational outcomes that are produced in classrooms taught by teachers whose cultural and linguistic background is similar to that of their students (see, for example, Bohn, 2003; Dyson & Smitherman, 2009; Grace, 2004; Henry, 1996; Lee, 1993; Martínez, 2010; Rymes & Anderson, 2004). While current discussions in educational research literature are replete with examples that highlight a widening distance between the cultural and linguistic experiences of incoming teachers and that of their students and the harmful consequences of this distance, there is little emphasis on the low minority student participation in teacher education, those preservice teachers who often share linguistic and cultural norms with today's students and who bring multiple cultural and linguistic identities to bear on the processes of teaching and learning to teach

in traditional teacher education programs. There have been studies reporting that assignment to an own-race or same-race teacher significantly increases math and literacy achievement for Black and White students (Dee, 2004; Johnson, Nyamekye, Chazan, & Rosenthal, 2013). It has been argued that reasons to aggressively recruit students of color into teaching are based on hypothesized role-model effects as well as the assumed racial bias of nonteachers of color and the impact on the educational experiences of students. In their study of one Black male math teacher's use of "speeches" in his algebra classroom, Johnson, Nyamekye, Chazan, and Rosenthal (2013) found that while the teacher was working in the context of high stakes accountability demands, he drew on Black rhetorical traditions of "giving speeches" to offer advice to his students based on their behavior and his ability to relate to them as a young Black person who had similar experiences. His speeches were less about the algebraic content assessed on the end-of-course exam and more about supporting students' development of positive life skills. The authors conclude that the case of this one teacher illustrates a different knowledge base from which the teacher operates that allows him to be effective with students in an urban setting because he draws on cultural and familial experiences to address students' behaviors that might be detrimental to their academic success in mathematics. Studies that examine classrooms taught by teachers whose cultural and language background is similar to that of their students describe how when teachers have an insider's understanding of cultural meanings, they do not have to figure out the verbal and nonverbal messages their students may be sending (Nieto, 2000). More specifically, shared cultural background or shared norms about how to use language can positively influence classroom interactions between teachers and students (see Bohn, 2003; Grace, 2004; Rymes & Anderson, 2004). Nieto (1999) posits that "students and teachers from the same background are often on the same wave-length simply because they have an insider's understanding of cultural meanings and therefore they do not have to figure out the verbal and nonverbal messages they are sending" (p. 145).

Diminishing Presence of Teachers of Color

The diminishing presence of racially and linguistically diverse student identities and participation in teacher education programs remains an important issue (see Ladson-Billings, 2005). Within the larger context of studies on preservice teacher education, there exists a significant body of research that looks at the experiences of preservice teachers of color, including research on Black preservice teachers (e.g., Cook, 2013; Kornfeld, 1999; McGee, 2014; Meacham, 2000; Petchauer, 2014; Zitlow & DeCoker, 1994), Latina/o preservice teachers (e.g., Arce, 2004; Burant, 1999; Clark & Flores, 2001; Galindo, 1996; Guerrero, 2003; Irizarry & Donaldson, 2012; Jones, Young, & Rodríguez, 1999; Rodríguez & Reis, 2012; Tellez, 1999), and Asian preservice teachers (e.g., Nguyen, 2008; Pailliotet, 1997; Sheets & Chew, 2002). A prevailing theme is that preservice teachers of color

are faced with dueling opposites—university culture versus home culture—and encounter marginalization from the ruling center (e.g., teacher education university classes, practicum school placement) and the established margin (e.g., home culture, social peers). They are neither in the center nor on the margins, and at all times, they are asked to show their "identity papers" (Minh-ha, 2006). Overemphasis on the sameness of the majority teacher population in studies on preservice teacher education disallows possibilities that can occur when teachers confront opposites, or dichotomous constructions of divided selves, to develop hybrid identities and performances.

In a recent report commissioned by the National Education Association, Dilworth and Coleman (2014) observe that a conversation about the need to diversify the teacher force is barely audible among educational stakeholders, and they call for a reignited focus on creating a teacher workforce that is both reflective of and responsive to our nation's racial, ethnic, and linguistically diverse student learning needs. Several educational researchers (see Guyton, Saxton, & Wesche, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 2005; King, 1993; Shaw, 1996; Su, 1997) explore reasons why fewer people of color choose to teach, including increased opportunities and accessibility to more lucrative professions or the stringent licensure and certification requirements for teaching. In a study of minority teachers' attitudes toward their teacher preparation experiences, Delpit (1995) reports that teachers of color point to many challenges faced by being marginalized learners in teacher education programs. Few studies, Ladson-Billings (2005) points out, address the fact that the low K–12 academic performance of students of color limits their post-secondary education opportunities. Ladson-Billings writes, "If high school completion continues to be a barrier for students of color, it is unlikely that we should expect to see more students of color in college or university preparing for teacher certification" (p. 230). Further, "schools, departments, and colleges of education lack a diverse group of teacher education students because they are located on campuses that have to contend with a small number of students of color because of the pipeline issue" (p. 230).

Though research suggests that preservice teachers of color tend to bring richer experiences and perspectives to teaching in culturally diverse contexts, the overwhelming presence of Whiteness within teacher education programs can be silencing for culturally and linguistically diverse preservice teachers (Sleeter, 2001). Chinese American participants in Sheets and Chew's (2002) study reported that, in their experiences in teacher education program, White students dominated the courses, and that any reference to the cultural knowledge they embodied was suggested for implementation in bilingual classes, but not the mainstream classes (Sheets & Chew, 2002). As a result, Chinese American teachers internalized expectations to teach in linguistically segregated classrooms as a part of their construction of teacher identity despite feelings that they possessed neither a deep knowledge of Chinese culture or Cantonese language "nor a conceptualization of Chinese American pedagogical cultural knowledge" (Sheets & Chew, 2002, p. 139).

In response to the predominance of White students in teacher education, Sleeter (2001) points out that a number of institutions have created alternative programs, such as cohort groups for students of color to receive academic and emotional support they lack in mainstream programs (see Root, Rudawski, Taylor, & Rochon, 2003; Waldschmidt, 2002). In the report of the American Educational Research Association (AERA) panel on research and teacher education, Hollins and Guzman (2005) conclude from their synthesis of the research on the experiences of preservice teachers of color that experiences and retention of candidates of color can be increased by placement in cohorts or programs where they might feel that their cultural and experiential knowledge is valued. However, this type of solution is viewed as preparing preservice teachers of color "on the side" and is problematic for programs that purport to prepare teachers to work with all students (Montecinos, 2004). For example, in a study of attrition of Hmong students in teacher education programs, Root, Rudawski, Taylor, and Rochon (2003) describe two Title VII Bilingual Education Career Ladder Programs, funded by the U.S. Department of Education, for Hmong paraprofessionals and traditional-age college students working toward teacher certification in Wisconsin. One of the major barriers they note for students in these programs, which impacts attrition efforts, is "language and cultural comfort factors" (p. 147). Since Hmong children represent a sizable percentage of the school-age population in central Wisconsin, the initiative of this alternative, cohort program is to increase the number of Hmong teachers, teachers who may share cultural and linguistic norms with the student population and understand their experiences. However, the cohort or alternative program model positions students of color on the periphery of majority preservice teacher education efforts.

Integral to teacher education reform efforts is that a more racial, linguistic, cultural, and ethnic diversity is needed and that the presence of such diversity has positive effects on the school performance of both mainstream students and students of color (Gay, 2005). In Au and Blake's (2003) collective case study of Japanese American and Hawaiian preservice teachers, they aimed to address the underrepresentation of teachers of diverse backgrounds and the importance of recruitment efforts of these teachers as a means for improving the achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students by considering the influence of cultural identity—including ethnicity, social class, and community membership—on the perspectives and learning of preservice teachers. They purposively selected participants from diverse backgrounds because they "believe[d] that research should be directed at understanding the perspectives and experiences of teacher candidates of diverse backgrounds, as a basis for designing teacher education programs" (p. 54).

Though the recruitment and retention of individuals of color should be important to reform in teacher education, current initiatives are having opposite effects, specifically reform measures that equate quality in teacher preparation and proficiency with standardized test scores (Gay, 2005). Ladson-Billings (2005)

argues that the solution to providing optimal teaching and learning opportunities for today's teachers and students is not simply about a "culture match." Instead, she contends that the point of creating a more diverse teaching force and a more diverse set of teacher educators should be to ensure that all students, including White students, experience a more accurate picture of what it means to live and work in a multicultural and democratic society.

The diminishing presence of students of color in teacher education programs remains an important issue. Delpit (1995) argues that in seeking viable solutions, the educational research community must consult teachers of color as a major source of guidance. There is a pressing need to illuminate the experiences of preservice teachers of color, focusing specifically on how they "become" teachers while battling socially imposed and self-internalized conceptions of being marginalized learners. The problem for preservice teacher education research and practice, then, is how to counter the reasons why the cultural and linguistic diversity of the teaching force continually decreases versus narrowly focusing on how to prepare a homogeneous teaching force for teaching a culturally and linguistic diverse student population.

Researching New Perspectives on Teacher Education for Literacy Educators

In 2012, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) updated their policy to promote diversity and inclusion within the Council. The policy states that the organization will:

- include people of color on all appointed commissions, boards, committees, task forces, and other official groups;
- include people of color among the leadership of the above groups;
- include people of color among the nominees presented by each nominating committee;
- include in NCTE conventions and workshops sessions dealing with interests of people of color and using as leaders or consultants practicing teachers of color from the levels of instruction concerned;
- include people of color in verbal and visual materials intended to represent or describe NCTE;
- include people of color as targeted groups in any recruiting efforts;
- ensure the regular election of persons of color to the NCTE Vice Presidency, the NCTE Nominating Committee is strongly recommended to run at least four slates of all persons of color in each twelve-year cycle.

Such policies are good wherein there exists a community of people of color from which to draw. The organization has many resolutions that promote diversity within the profession, specifically as it relates to how we work with diverse learners. However, little if anything is mentioned about a resolve to increase teacher

diversity within literacy and English education. This makes it difficult to have diverse representation within the Council when diverse representation does not exist among English and literacy educators. While increasing teacher diversity is a part of a national conversation across the field of education, broadly, I argue that it is of particular importance to the field of literacy and English education because English teachers are the gatekeepers of language, and language transcends all content areas. Understanding the hybrid literate identities and practices of preservice teachers of color is critical if teacher educators and scholars want to better understand ways to improve literacy teaching and learning for P–12 students.

Ball (2006) describes an approach to teacher education designed to create "carriers of the torch"—teachers who have a sense of efficacy and the attitudes, dispositions, and skills necessary to teach students from diverse racial, ethnic, and linguistic backgrounds. In her examination of teacher change and teacher education in two countries—the United States and South Africa—she proposes ways to prepare teachers for a rapidly changing global society. An aspect of her research that informs my own work is her focus on restructuring teacher education programs to cultivate teachers who are committed to teaching socially and economically disenfranchised students and who understand literacy as a tool of empowerment. By drawing from research with over 100 U.S. and South African teachers, Ball stresses the importance of teachers as change agents in diverse classrooms. Similarly, Irvine (2003) addresses how culture, race, ethnicity, and social class influence teaching and learning. Providing an analysis of conditions and reforms in education, Irvine offers suggestions for improving educational outcomes for all children by focusing on the importance of diversifying the teacher force.

Few research studies exist in the field of literacy and English education that explicitly examine the experiences of teachers of color as it relates to their teacher identity development and taking on of teacher discourses. Milner (2003) conducted a case study of a Black female high school English teacher over a five-month period. His goal was to examine what sources, such as race and gender, impact her comprehensive knowledge and self-reflective planning. He found that her experience as a Black woman significantly impacted her role as a teacher and was central in her daily planning and decision making. Milner acknowledges his role as an observer and not as a participant in the research study, critiquing his ability to fully articulate the cultural comprehensive knowledge of the teacher through his documentation of interviews and observation. This study, however, was not focused on the teacher's identity as an English teacher, specifically, but on her identity as a teacher, generally, with implications for a broader education audience. Some literacy scholars of color have written about their own work with students of color. For example, Camangian (2010) taught autoethnography as a strategic pedagogical tool to support students' examination of the ways that they experience, exist within, and explain their racial, cultural, and gendered identities and the intersections these identities pose. Within the field of literacy, however, a call for increased teacher diversity is silent and barely heard.

Reflecting on the research literature on race and literacy preservice teacher education, where researchers often conclude that such programs need reconceptualization, Willis (2003) draws attention to the "excessive publication of, and overindulgence in, helping European American students understand their whiteness." This attention, by "many well-intentioned folks," according to Willis, almost always leads to:

> the marginalization of the needs of the students of color, and a superficial attention to the intersection of race, class, gender, and power in pedagogy and content. In the future, it is advised that narratives written by scholars and teachers of color, as authentic voices of our experiences, be included. (pp. 68–69)

Over the years, the literacy research community in the United States continues to move toward more nuanced and complex treatments of racial, cultural, and linguistic differences. Adding another dimension to discussions about teacher quality (see Gere & Berebitsky, 2009) and about who can or should become teachers, I wrote *Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy Teacher Education: Teachers Like Me* to engage with others in the literacy community in necessary and continued conversations about increasing the presence of teachers from diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds in English and literacy education.

The Promise of Cultivating Racial and Linguistic Diversity in Literacy and English Teacher Education

While an immediate concern for preservice teacher education research and practice has to be how to prepare the current predominantly White, monolingual teaching force for teaching culturally and linguistically diverse student populations (Haddix, 2008), this concern does not have to undermine efforts to increase teacher diversity. Addressing this concern should not mean that the experiences and perspectives of those preservice teachers who fall outside the dominant teacher demographic profile are less important (Torres, Santos, Peck, & Cortes, 2004). An underlying premise of this book is that teachers of color are invaluable when it comes to improving teaching and learning experiences and outcomes for increasingly diverse P–12 students. Yes, increasing the number of teachers of color can equate to student success in the classroom, especially if teachers of color serve as role models who have a deeper understanding of students' cultural and linguistic identities. Understanding their students' cultural and linguistic identities, or knowledge, can serve as the foundation for the curricular and pedagogical goals of teachers of color. It is important for students of color to see and interact with teachers of color to undermine a larger dominant narrative that only White, English-monolingual women are qualified to teach. Further, it is just as important that White students see and interact with teachers of color to disrupt that same

understanding about who holds the monopoly on who has the ability to teach or serve as educational role models. A homogeneous teacher force can mean that homogeneous worldviews are drawn upon to assess and analyze students' needs (Sleeter & Milner, 2011).

As current trends in teacher education research highlight the cultural and linguistic mismatch between today's teachers and students, another kind of mismatch is often neglected: the cultural and linguistic gaps that exist among some preservice teachers and the context of traditional teacher education. The overemphasis on the preparation of an assumed homogeneous teaching force potentially constructs teachers as monolithic entities, negating the complexities of teachers' identities. This overemphasis minimizes the complexities of the intersections of race, gender, language, class, and sexuality on teacher identity performance. As the literacy scholarly community considers future directions in English and literacy research, inclusion of the experiences of preservice teachers from underrepresented racial and linguistic groups can result in a greater awareness of the kinds of experiences that all P–12 students have as they participate in new discourse communities and, by extension, transform English and literacy education. Cultivating diverse teachers for English and literacy classrooms holds great potential for bringing richer perspectives to literacy and language teaching in P–12 classrooms.

Notes

1. I use the term "African American Language" to name the linguistic variety spoken by generations of African Americans. Linguists have used several labels to refer to this variety, including African American English, Black English Vernacular, and Ebonics (see Green, 2002 for more discussion of the naming and origins of African American Language).
2. Mainstream American English is the language of schooling (Schleppegrell, 2004). I refer to it interchangeably with academic English and "standard" English because it is the "standard" for curriculum and pedagogy in school classrooms and in society at large.
3. This concept is long part of *oral tradition* among sociolinguists. However, Yiddish linguist Max Weinreich is often credited with its origination (Wardhaugh, 2002).

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2

TEACHER EDUCATOR BY DAY, HOMESCHOOLING PARENT BY NIGHT

Examining Paradoxes in Being a Black Female Teacher Educator

Monday mornings are always tough in my household, as they are for many families. It is often a mad dash out the door, hoping that my son has packed everything he needs and racing to get him to school on time. On one particular Monday, as we traveled our normal route and filed in line with all the other cars packed with families and students on their way to my son's independent school, I was stunned by the sudden sounds of sirens and the image of flashing lights through my rearview mirror. A police officer was signaling me to pull over to the side of the road. On this Monday morning, my son and I were interrogated about where we were going and where we were coming from right in front of his school as we watched other families continue on with their normal morning routines. We experienced this at a time when the issue of profiling and policing Black and Brown people has heightened presence in our social awareness and cultural consciousness, especially in the wake of a young unarmed Black man being gunned down by a police officer in Ferguson, Missouri. Sadly, I raised my hands up, both physically and symbolically: I was sick and tired of being sick and tired, as civically engaged activist Fannie Lou Hammer once said. I did nothing wrong. I did what every other family was doing at 7:50 a.m. that Monday morning—I was taking my kid to school. There is a lot more to this moment than what I can convey here, but it is layered with complexities. One, my partner and I had recently made the choice to move our son, who had been homeschooled for three years and who then attended an urban charter school, to this private independent school in an affluent neighborhood. Our son is now the only Black male student in his seventh grade class. Second, some people, upon hearing about our Monday troubles, asked whether I told the police officer that I was a tenured professor at Syracuse University, as if my academic and professional capital would exempt me from this situation. This assertion suggests that somehow my son and I are "the exceptions" or

"the good ones." That when we think about social injustices, whether predicated on race, class, gender, sexuality, religion, and/or the intersections of these identity markers, we're not the ones who experience such things—we're presumed safe and untouchable.

I begin this chapter with this moment because, for me, it underscores the dissonance I've experienced and continue to experience in the multiple roles I embody. One of the biggest challenges I've encountered over the past seven years, both personally and professionally, is navigating educational experiences for my son. There are fewer times in my lifetime than those dealing with my son's schooling that I have blatantly and overtly experienced and understood what it means to be Black in America. For my son, in his 13 years, has had to confront firsthand a narrative around his Blackness and maleness that is prescribed to him. Dialogues around race and racism are frequent and commonplace at our kitchen table, and I often question whether the same is true for my White colleagues and their families or for my predominantly White teacher education students. Without question, I know that my praxis as a Black woman teacher educator is deeply informed by my experiences as a mother of a Black boy. I also know that my own educational history, from attending an inner city Catholic school in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to eventually being bussed to a high school in the suburbs and then attending a historically White university, also shapes my ways of knowing and thinking around racial and linguistic diversity in teacher education.

In this chapter, I explore the intersections of the multiple identities I occupy and have occupied—as a Black female student in mostly Black and in predominantly White school contexts; as the only Black female teacher education student in a predominantly White teacher education program; as the homeschooling parent of a Black male student; and as a Black woman teacher educator in a predominantly White teacher education context. I examine how my identity as a mother who homeschooled her son informs and is informed by my work as a teacher educator in this context. I also share examples from a qualitative study of other Black homeschooling parents to provide a broader context for how my individual experiences and insights voiced in concert with other Black homeschooling parents shape a framework for teacher education inclusive of diverse identities and perspectives. The intersections of race, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality are at the center of my thinking about my own life and my work in teaching and teacher education. As Dill and Zambrana (2009) write, "intersectionality is a product of seeking to have our voices heard and lives acknowledged" (p. 3). Privileging these intersecting identities is important to understand both why I conceptualized the research inquiries highlighted in this book and how my insights about teaching and teacher education, specifically in literacy and English education, are informed. To discuss these intersections, I will share "moments" in my history that center each respective role and that directly relate to the book's primary premise: to understand the need for cultivating racial and linguistic diversity in literacy teacher education. Starting with my self is paramount, and to

do so, I draw on both autoethnographic tools and Black feminist and womanist theories. Autoethnography, as an autobiographical genre of writing, allows for a display of the multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural (Ellis & Bochner, 2000). I rely on autoethnography in an attempt to theorize my personal experiences in these intersecting roles and identities, simultaneously working to challenge and disrupt the dominance of Whiteness and monolingual, monolithic ideologies within the teaching and teacher education context. Through an autoethnographic lens, I share racial and linguistic stories that weave through my life as a student, a teacher, a teacher educator, and a school-age parent.

Black feminist and womanist theories and histories (see Collins, 1986, 2000) largely influence the ways in which I understand my own history and lived experiences. They also provide a framework for privileging and positioning Black women as knowledge producers—in essence, our words and our stories matter and are deemed sources of legitimate knowledge. My own trajectory as a Black female educator and community engaged activist is inspired by the legacy set forth by my grandmother, Bessie Gray, a Black childcare pioneer and family advocate in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, from the 1960s into the 21st century. A mother of nine children, she pursued a career in childcare, specifically targeting the need for quality care by Black working-class families, because she herself needed childcare. At a time when Black mothers were being stereotyped in the media as "welfare mothers" who drained the economy and as a burden to society, my grandmother opened Gray's Child Development Center as a quality educational facility for Black and working-class families. Her leadership and teaching philosophy were predicated on the idea that all people have "the will to do" and on culturally responsive and family- and student-centered education. Gray's was one of the first schools I attended, and in all of my educational experience, it is the only time I had a Black teacher, and in this case, a Black male teacher. The teaching staff was racially and culturally diverse, and I had teachers who looked like me. I fondly remember Gordon Gowdy, a Black male teacher, who loved to sing and dance and who let us listen to Roosevelt Franklin from *Sesame Street*. However, from kindergarten through the rest of my formal education, I never had another teacher of color. My grandmother's lived experience and actualized philosophy of education ground my own prerogative in teaching and served as the initial framework for my understanding of what culturally relevant, community engaged, and inclusive education can be. She stands along with other Black female educators and activists, from Harriet Tubman to Anna Julia Cooper to Fannie Lou Hammer to Marva Collins. My Black feminist standpoint is informed by knowledge produced via the experiences of Black female educators and activists. Moreover, my own identity development as a Black female teacher, and now teacher educator and researcher, is foundational to my scholarly inquiries into the experiences of preservice teachers of color, particularly of the women of color whose stories are the foundation for the chapters ahead.

The Danger of a Single Story: From Student to Teacher

In her TEDtalk, "The Danger of a Single Story," Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2009) talks about how vulnerable and impressionable we are in the face of a story, particularly as children. She says:

> Because all I had read were books in which characters were foreign, I had become convinced that books by their very nature had to have foreigners in them and had to be about things with which I could not personally identify. Things changed when I discovered African books. There weren't many of them available, and they weren't quite as easy to find as the foreign books. But because of writers like Chinua Achebe and Camara Laye I went through a mental shift in my perception of literature. I realized that people like me, girls with skin the color of chocolate, whose kinky hair could not form ponytails, could also exist in literature. I started to write about things I recognized. Now, I loved those American and British books I read. They stirred my imagination. They opened up new worlds for me. But the unintended consequence was that I did not know that people like me could exist in literature. So what the discovery of African writers did for me was this: It saved me from having a single story of what books are.

Her talk resonates with me as I look back on my childhood imagination and the limits of that imagination in the face of larger societal representations and realizations, whether it be media, television, and film or from the curriculum and educational contexts that I was exposed to in my K–12 schooling. To be sure, there is a single story of being and becoming a teacher that exists within the United States, and if I had bought into that single story, I would not be the English educator I am today. Preservice teachers of color face the dangers of that single story and have to work to discover where and how their stories fit with and within the larger dominant narrative of teaching and teacher education. My own self-reflection and examination are also critical in setting the stage for understanding the dangers of a single story of who can become a teacher.

I come from a family of early Black child educators. My first teachers were my own Black mother and then the teachers at Gray's Child Development Center. After attending preschool at my grandmother's childcare center, I attended a half-day kindergarten program in the Milwaukee Public School System, and then my parents enrolled me in an inner city Catholic school where the student population was majority Black, Latino, and Italian, all from working-class backgrounds (see Figure 2.1). Most of my classes were taught by White nuns who treated their work with us poor Black and Brown children as part of their missionary work, a form of constant atonement with God. I got into a lot of "trouble" in elementary school, often receiving demerits for misbehaviors and small infractions (i.e., talking, moving fast, moving slow). Besides recess and socializing with my friends, I did not particularly like school, often looking for ways to avoid

FIGURE 2.1 My second grade class photo

it. I avoided going to school on Mondays by pretending like I was sick so that I could stay home watching daytime television shows like *The Carol Burnett Show*, *The Gong Show*, *The Price Is Right*, and ABC soap operas. Daytime television was my classroom, and actors like Carol Burnett and characters like Angie and Jessie on *General Hospital* were my teachers. There was a period in my childhood, from fifth through seventh grade, where I was very isolated and disinterested in school. The curriculum and teaching did not reflect who I was or who I was becoming. So I decided to supplement my own education. In addition to watching daytime television, I lost myself in books, meeting characters like Miss Celie in *The Color*

Purple and Ponyboy Curtis from *The Outsiders*. I spent a great deal of time reading books, expanding my world, and meeting characters whose lives I could relate to. But, early on, I experienced a huge disconnect between the kind of learner I was and the kind of educational experiences offered in my Catholic school setting. My learning took place largely beyond the walls of school—on my television, in my local library, in my regular church meetings, and through rich family traditions.

By eighth grade, my parents decided to participate in the Chapter 220 lottery, a program to bus inner city children from Milwaukee to more affluent and resourced neighboring suburban public schools. Each morning, I traveled an hour on the bus with other inner city kids, mostly African American students, to be in a segregated school environment. The city kids were tracked into lower level classes while the majority White students from the suburbs were enrolled in honors and advanced placement courses. I tested into the higher tracked courses and often was the only Black student in my classes. Over the course of four years, I never had a teacher of color. My English courses were taught by teachers who worshipped the literary canon and whose ideas of American literature did not include many of the authors who looked like me or who had common histories. Instead, I found ways to relate to and appreciate Hemingway, Chaucer, Steinbeck, Sinclair, and Williams. These courses not only neglected racial diversity, but the authors and perspectives represented were mostly White, male, and English speaking. Throughout my high school years, I thought I would go to college to pursue becoming a lawyer. In my senior year, however, I had a young White female preservice teacher who changed my mind. She taught an English literature course with a new energy and enthusiasm I had not encountered with previous teachers. She disrupted the mostly White, male, and English-speaking canon that was privileged in this high school curriculum and introduced multicultural literature and critical literary theories, which, at the time, was an innovative teaching method. Often disengaged from school-sanctioned curriculum, I found myself engaged in this English class. In my senior year, I decided that I, too, wanted to become an English teacher.

I attended college at a predominantly White institution in Iowa, and by extension, I was the only Black female student in the English teacher education program. Like most beginning teachers, I wanted to become an English teacher because I loved to read and loved to write. As I often hear from my own preservice teachers, I wanted to ignite that same love of reading and writing in my students. But my relationship with English teaching was colored by my developing awareness of what it meant to be a speaker of a non-dominant language. Before then, I did not have a language to describe the way I spoke when I was at home with family or with my mostly Black friends. I became hyperaware of my ability to code-switch from one context to another and with different people, and I was hyper-vigilant about displaying the "correct" knowledge and use of the English language when demonstrating my teacher proficiencies both in the university classroom and in my student teaching placements. I had to work hard to not be found out as a "foreigner" to the English language. Now, not just my racial background, but my

linguistic background, further distanced me from what perceivably makes one capable of being an effective English educator. In essence, a particular English was privileged over other Englishes, and I did not have ready access to the dominant discourse.

Upon successfully completing the teacher education program, I decided I was not ready to teach. Not because my teacher educators, student teaching supervisors, or mentor teachers expressed any doubt in my ability to become a "good" teacher, but because I did not see myself reflected in the role of teacher. In the schools where I student taught, whether urban or suburban contexts, I was the "only one," often isolated or sensationalized in department meetings and in the teacher's lounge. Similar to my university classrooms, the spotlight was often on me, and there was no real community where I felt "at home." Couple that with my own internalized insecurities about my command of "standard" English, I backed away from the profession before I even began.

Now as a teacher educator, I share these experiences with my secondary English preservice teachers, and at the beginning of the English method course, I ask them, too, to reflect on why they are deciding to pursue a career in English education. I ask them to look back on their earliest educational experiences; to reflect on the teachers who both inspired and discouraged their decisions to pursue teaching; and to consider the role television and media play in their constructions of who can be a teacher and what a teacher should be. We use a critical media literacy framework to deconstruct and analyze the "usual suspects" that are mentioned when I ask them to brainstorm exemplars of teachers they've been inspired by in television and film, including Robin Williams as John Keating in *Dead Poet's Society*; Hilary Swank as Erin Gruwell in *Freedom Writers*; and Michelle Pfieffer as former US Marine LouAnne Johnson in *Dangerous Minds*, all White teachers. The stories represent the narrative of the White male English teacher, who wears tweed jackets and loves to teach the classics to predominantly White, middle-class students, or the one where the White female teacher comes to the inner city to help a group of troubled urban youth of color from low-income communities. Few students mention teachers of color in the brainstorm, which isn't surprising. Growing up, I recall the teacher in *Welcome Back, Kotter* and the coach from *The White Shadow*, both White male teachers. But I also remember African American actress Debbie Allen starring as the dance teacher in the 1980s television drama *Fame*. Seeing her each week challenged the single story and allowed me to see myself represented, even though she was teaching the arts.

To disrupt the fixed representations that are brainstormed, I bring in other teacher exemplars through film, documentary, and literature. We read excerpts from *PUSH* by Sapphire that tell the story of a queer Black woman teacher, Miz Rain, working with Precious, a young, illiterate Black adolescent girl who is the victim of physical and sexual abuse, homeless, and pregnant with her second child. Layered by watching scenes from the film adaptation of the book, we analyze the role that Miz Rain plays in Precious's literacy development, and we deconstruct

the many teaching strategies and methods that she employs. The book is in many ways the story of literacy development, and in this story, a teacher of color is integral to this student's learning. We also watch scenes from the 2011 documentary *Precious Knowledge* that centers on the banning of the Mexican American Studies Program in the Tucson Unified School District (TUSD) of Arizona. My preservice teachers meet Mr. Curtis Acosta, an English literature teacher featured in the documentary who anchored his curriculum and pedagogy with the cultural histories and experiences of his students. After the Mexican American Studies Program was voted illegal and banned from the school curriculum, Mr. Acosta had to make the tough decision to abandon teaching practices that he found effective with his students. In a letter to friends and supporters that was published on Rethinking Schools website, he wrote:

> What I can tell you is that TUSD has decreed that anything taught from a Mexican American Studies perspective is illegal and must be eliminated immediately. Of course, they have yet to define what that means, but here's an example of what happened to an essay prompt that I had distributed prior to January 10th.
>
> **{~~Chicano playwright Luis Valdez once stated that his art was meant to, "…inspire the audience to social action. Illuminate specific points about social problems. Satirize the opposition. Show or hint at a solution. Express what people are feeling." The novel *So Far From God* presents many moments of social and political commentary.~~} Select an issue that you believe Ana Castillo was attempting to illuminate for her audience and write a literary analysis of how that theme is explored in the novel. Remember to use direct citations from the novel to support your ideas and theories.**
>
> **{~~Culture can play a significant role within a work of fiction. For generations in this country, the literature studied in English or literature classes rarely represented the lives and history of Mexican-Americans.~~} In a formal literary analysis, discuss what makes *So Far From God* a Chican@ novel and how this might influence the experience of the reader. Remember to use direct citations from the novel to support your ideas and theories.**
>
> The brackets indicate what I had to edit since the statements were found to be too leading toward a Mexican American Studies perspective. In plainer terms, they are illegal and out of compliance. A quote from a great literary figure, Luis Valdez, is now illegal, and a fact about education in our nation's history is also illegal.
>
> You can imagine how we are feeling, especially without any clear guidance to what is now legal and what is not, and what makes matters worse is that TUSD expects us to move forward and redesign our entire curriculum and pedagogy to be in compliance. (Acosta, 2012)

Sadly, Mr. Acosta was challenged with realities that many teachers face today in the wake of moves to further standardize school curricula, to mandate scripted teaching, and to racially and linguistically sanitize literacy teaching and learning. What is accomplished by bringing stories like those of Miz Rain and Curtis Acosta into the teacher education classroom is the disruption of the perpetuation of the White teacher/students of color narrative. While the majority of the students in my methods classes are White female teachers, they cannot leave our time together thinking that teaching is a White profession. For some, I am the first educator of color they have encountered in their entire schooling experiences, especially in the area of English language arts. As a teacher educator of color, it is critical that I assemble a collective of diverse teachers, both real and fictive, to counter the public assumptions of what teaching should be and what a teacher looks like.

Homeschooling Parent by Day, Teacher Educator by Night

Despite the systemic challenges that my parents faced as they navigated my P–12 education at each turn, I was academically successful, and I secured promising post-secondary opportunities. However, I was hyper-aware of being a Black girl who spoke a nonstandard dialect within educational settings. I understood that I needed to embody particular identities and engage particular discourses to become a legitimate member of the predominantly White, affluent suburban high school and the predominantly White university I attended. And I did so successfully. My own struggle with these issues begins with my history as a racially and marginalized student. In my English methods classes, I always pause when the majority of my preservice students reflect on what it means, often in urban settings, for them to have different racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds from the students they teach. I pause because in my entire P–12 education, and even my post-secondary experiences, I never had a teacher who looked like me. I never had a teacher who lived in my community or who related to African American culture and language. I experienced culturally relevant pedagogy in my home, church, and community, but not in school. As a mother to an African American boy in a 21st-century educational context, it has been my conscious exercise to ensure that he does not have to engage in such language and literacy performances. Instead, I have worked to identify spaces that are inviting and validating of his many identities and discourses and that seek to equip him with the necessary tools to excel academically. Because of my unrelenting hope, I, like my own parents, have made tough choices regarding my son's academic journey.

Homeschooling Parent by Day

For three years, my partner and I homeschooled our son. Now 13, he has attended public school, Catholic school, charter school, homeschool, and now an independent private school. As a strong public school advocate and as a teacher educator

preparing preservice teachers to work in urban public school settings, I often encounter students who are curious about how I can prepare them to teach in public school settings when my choices for my own child have represented alternatives. At one time, I was a homeschooling parent by day and a teacher educator by night. I am an educational researcher committed to identifying viable solutions to improve the educational experiences for marginalized youth, particularly African American children in urban school settings. Yet as a school tax–paying member of a small urban community, I chose to pull my son out of the very public school system I purport to serve. This was a difficult decision for me because my convictions question how one can advocate for children and families in schools and not send one's child to those very schools. What does it mean for me to prepare teachers to teach in the public school system, and encourage them to be strong advocates for public education, while homeschooling my child? Am I promoting the message that my child is better than other children or that he deserves (or is entitled to) a better opportunity because his mother is a university professor? This is a complex question with a complex set of answers, and it is one that I revisit constantly. This ongoing process of critical reflection, however, informs my work as a teacher educator and educational researcher.

When my family first moved to Syracuse, New York, in 2008, it was important for us to live in the city limits and be in close proximity with the students and families I hoped my research would serve. Prior to the move to Syracuse, my son attended a neighborhood public elementary school in Boston where, with both advantages and disadvantages, we were a part of a school community committed to ensuring educational opportunities for children. I was not always 100% satisfied with my son's educational experiences in Boston; however, I was a part of a community that welcomed my voice whenever I had concerns. I had lived by the philosophy that if I was working to transform public schools, I could only do so by working from within (Collins, 1986). This meant that my son needed to attend a public school and that my partner and I needed to be active parents in that school community. Once we moved to Syracuse, we settled on a house in the city and enrolled our son, Phillip, who was entering first grade at the time, in the neighborhood elementary school. Excited to learn about our son's new school, we scheduled a visit with the school administrator. We wanted to tour the school, see our son's first grade classroom, and potentially meet his new teacher.

During the first meeting with the principal, which occurred after school hours and inside her office, she proceeded to deliver a sales pitch–like presentation about her wonderful school. While the principal presented a positive picture of the school, we wanted to talk with teachers, see teachers and students working together in classrooms, and hear from parents about their experiences in the school. The principal was hesitant to fulfill this request, letting us know that our talking with teachers might be seen as disruptive. She stated that our request to talk with the teachers was odd given that other prospective families did not ask to do so. The school had three first grade classrooms, and we were told that the

principal would assign our son to one of those three classes. The rationale for those assignments was not clearly articulated; at best, we were told already enrolled parents made requests about which classroom they wanted for their children. At the time of our enrollment, those requests had already been made and fulfilled. We asked the principal to explain the difference in those three classes and the styles of those three teachers. Uprooting our son from one school system to another was stressful enough; we wanted to make his transition as smooth as possible. We were hoping the principal might take into consideration the learning needs of our son and place him in the classroom environment that would be most conducive to a smooth transition, both academically and socially.

When I received notification of our son's classroom placement, I immediately called the school and asked to schedule a time to meet his new teacher. On the phone, I spoke briefly with his new teacher, and she asked me a few questions about my son. I shared with her how much he loved school and that he loved learning. I told her that he was reading and that he had strong verbal communication skills. He was very excited about his new school. The teacher expressed that she was somewhat surprised he was assigned to her classroom because historically (she had been teaching in the school for over 20 years) she worked with children who entered first grade with low literacy skills and who needed support with language development. She characterized her class as "remedial." She feared that, based on what I had shared about my son, if he remained in her class, he would be instantly bored and she would need to supplement each lesson for him. I, too, was concerned given the positive conversation I had had with the principal. One of the reasons we were excited about our son attending this school was because of the large percentage of English language learners and students from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. However, it appeared that students were potentially segregated and tracked into different classrooms. I asked the teacher if there was tracking by ability level in the school. She paused and did not answer directly, but she did say, "Mother to mother . . . advocate for your son. I'm also the mother of an African American boy, and this happens way too often. You have to do what's best for your child."

My partner and I scheduled another meeting with the principal, a White woman who had been the principal at the school for 16 years, to discuss our son's placement. We also wanted to meet his potential first grade teacher, a Black woman who had taught in the district for 30 years. Even though she was honest with us in stating that she did not feel her classroom was the right placement for our son, she did say she would do everything she could, as his teacher, to make sure he got what he needed as a learner. It was not a surprise for us to learn that the majority of the children in his classroom were Black children and that many of the children received special education services. Sadly, it was also not surprising how easily our son, an African American boy, was placed in a "remedial" track.

In the end, we pulled our son out of the district and sought other schooling options. My introduction to the city's public school district was as a parent, not

as a teacher educator, researcher, professional developer, or educational consultant. I entered into this context first from my location as a parent who was concerned with securing the best educational opportunity for her son, an African American boy. Many education scholars have looked at the disproportionate placement of African American children in special education (Hale, 1994; Harry & Anderson, 1994; Russo & Talbert-Johnson, 1997) and at how tracking disadvantages certain groups, particularly African American students from low-income communities (Oakes, 1985). Yes, I was concerned that my son was placed in a remedial class given that his formal academic and development records pointed to his being "on track." I was also horrified by the thought that other students were assigned this class because their parents did not have the social, cultural, and/or linguistic capital to advocate for them. Why was I any different? Why was my son any different from "other people's children"? It remains critical that I trouble my subjectivities as I explore questions about literacy education for African American and other historically marginalized children.

In February 2009, I participated in a community forum on the state of education in the city of Syracuse. My involvement was first as a parent who had a troubling experience with the school district, but also as a literacy scholar and English educator from Syracuse University. As I listened to the stories from other community members, I heard parents expressing frustration that "Black boys don't even go to school" and "our African American boys don't know how to write." One parent said, "You are your child's first teacher. The schools don't teach the children anything about history. They need to know their history." Parents and other community members discussed the importance of the Black community taking back the education of our children. We talked about the need for mentors and the importance of nurturing parent involvement in schools. Some in attendance were unaware of the failure of the local schools to educate all children. Few were aware of the local school data that reported a barely 50% graduation rate for all students and 25% graduation rate for African American male students.

As my work in the community evolved, my interest in the importance of community engagement in improving academic achievement for African American youth, particularly African American adolescent males, in urban communities took shape. My involvement in the community forum was initially as a concerned parent and as a literacy researcher and university professor with resources and "capital" to serve the needs of my community. In time, I began to identify as an emerging community activist desiring real change in our schools and in the lives of the children and families who lived in the community. One of the solutions that emerged during the community forum was to initiate a parent movement to "Take Back Our Children's Education." Many parents, fed up with what some called the "persistent miseducation and failure of African American youth," discussed the possibility of forming their own schools and the vitality of African American homeschooling. During those community meetings, I met several

families who had removed their children from the public school system and had taken on homeschooling as an immediate solution. I had never considered homeschooling to be a real possibility or an option, mainly because I held certain misguided assumptions about homeschooling. I learned from the other parents in my community about homeschooling, and I made the decision to join an African American Homeschoolers Network.

Deciding to pull my own child out of the school system and educate him "at home" was a scary decision, even for a literacy scholar and teacher educator. How would I homeschool my son and work full-time as a literacy scholar and teacher educator? At the time, I was a non-tenured assistant professor at a research institution that signifies certain scholarly and professional expectations if I wanted to earn promotion and tenure. I was preparing the new generation of teachers to teach other people's children, yet at the same time, I felt I was neglecting the quality of the teaching and learning experience I wanted for my own child. My decision to homeschool was possible because it involved an equal partnership between my partner and I, and we cultivated a support community through the African American Homeschoolers Network. Being realistic about the multiple identities that I occupy, I had to determine a way to find balance between being a researcher, a teacher educator, a community activist, and now a homeschooling parent.

When we initially decided to pull Phillip from the public school system, we felt our only option was to enroll him in a private school. For two years, he attended a private Catholic school where he was one of few students of color in the entire school. While he did fine academically, his academic experiences were dominated by the completion of worksheets and learning the rules. We witnessed his sense of creativity and originality dissipate slowly while he fought hard to "fit in." This was a challenge, given his racial background in a student population of mostly White, middle-class, Catholic children (we also were not Catholic). We had two experiences where our child came home in tears, retelling experiences that he was bullied, teased, and ostracized because he was Black. In one incident, fellow students told him that he could not play with them because he was Black. The principal's reaction to this incident was "boys will be boys." As parents, we knew that over time these kinds of experiences would chip at our child's self-esteem and that, without significant safeguarding and intervention, he would begin to resent all that he is.

After much reflection and deliberation, my partner and I decided to pull Phillip from the school system and begin homeschooling. We had a lot to learn about homeschooling despite both coming from families with strong ties to education. To my advantage, I also have three education degrees, and, at one time, I worked as a teacher with both 7–12 English and K–12 reading certifications. Coupled with my partner's experience as a youth program director, one might expect that we would be well qualified to homeschool our child. Yet this was one of the most difficult decisions we have experienced in our parenting journey. We are huge proponents of public school education and community engagement, so

homeschooling our only child felt like we were instantly isolating ourselves and our son. I was most concerned about the lack of social experiences he would have by not attending school. This concern was instantly calmed when another homeschooling parent in the African American Homeschoolers Network asked me if I was satisfied with the kinds of social interactions my son was having when he did attend school, especially given his young experiences with racial micro- and macro-aggressions. Homeschooling our only child meant we would have to be more purposeful about creating opportunities for social interactions and community engagement.

Counterstories of African American Homeschooling Parents

While homeschooling Phillip, I decided to document my own experiences as a homeschooling parent and those of parents within our homeschooling collective. We, along with other parents in the collective, grappled with many of the same tensions that teachers in our schools today face—how to reconcile the demands of standards-based curriculum with the need to differentiate curriculum and instruction for an increasingly culturally and linguistically diverse student population. The consequences of not dealing with these tensions are detrimental and life altering for marginalized youth, especially for Black boys. The dominant narrative in teacher education emphasizes the preparation of White, middle-class, female teachers to work with a racially and linguistically diverse student population (Sleeter, 2001) and, more specifically, for educating Black boys (Kunjufu, 1982). This inadvertently suggests that one way to mitigate the educational failure of Black children is via the White female, which subsequently ignores the role of Black educators and the importance of recruiting and sustaining diverse teachers. In a special issue of the *Journal of Negro Education* on "Preparing Teachers to Teach Black Students: Preparing Black Students to Become Teachers" (2011), contributors make direct links between the vanishing of Black teachers to the achievement of Black children and point to the real consequences of having a majority White, female teaching force educate an increasingly racially and linguistically diverse student population. So much emphasis has been on the preparation of White female teachers to prepare racially and linguistically diverse students that little attention has been given to alternatives to educating Black children in the current school system, such as African American homeschooling.

There exists a growing number of Black parents who are deciding to remove their children from the public and private school systems and to educate their children at home (Llewellyn, 1996; Penn-Nabrit, 2003). Several reasons underlie such decisions, but a prominent one is to disrupt the histories of failures for their youth. Empirical investigations of the purposes and outcomes of African American homeschooling are needed to further build on scholarship that highlights effective curricular and pedagogical practice for African American children. I conducted life history and interview research of African American homeschoolers to examine

the role of African American home educators as education and community activists. A goal of this research was to make visible the kinds of literacy teaching and learning that extend from within the African American homeschooling community and, in particular, the practices that support the academic and social achievement of African American boys. I examined these questions: What are African American parents' experiences with the US schooling of their African American boys? What are the reasons underlying African American parents' decision to homeschool African American boys? What do these parents feel are the benefits and challenges of homeschooling African American boys? Across socioeconomic, educational, and religious backgrounds, I learned that African American families were choosing to homeschool for a variety of reasons.

The dominant discourse surrounding the academic and social experiences of African American boys is that they are failing. This discourse disregards how African American boys are being failed by the larger institutional structures that are in place. Given this reality, I (Haddix, 2009) argue,

> An overemphasis and perpetual spotlighting of the "African American male crisis" does not identify effective practices either. So, does framing the problem of educating African American males in the dominant discourse of failure and the achievement gap provide us—literacy researchers, policymakers, educators, and school leaders—with a guaranteed hustle? Does the achievement gap and discourse of failure work because there is universal buy-in that African American masculinity is analogous to intellectual prowess? How do we do the work of correcting the educative experiences of African American [adolescent] males without furthering the stereotypes and misrepresentations of African American masculinity? (p. 342)

It is not just a question of why young Black males are failing, but why they are succeeding. Educators, researchers, and policy makers truly concerned with creating positive academic and social outcomes for Black boys must move beyond negative statistics and dominant representations and insist on systemic investigations of the kinds of practices that sustain both in and out of school literacies of African American males.

While the research points to the crisis state of Black males in the United States, fewer studies have reported on the kinds of solutions that are necessary to lessen the persistent achievement gap between African American males and their peers. Further, fewer empirical studies look beyond how Black adolescent males perform on school-based tasks, as determined by standardized test scores, and take into account other measures of effective learning and engagement, including those that occur outside schools. Willis (1995) wrote about her son's experiences with literacy in school and in home contexts, shedding light on a concern that many African American homeschoolers contemplate—what can parents do when they witness their child disengaging from learning in school?

Historically, homeschooling has been a central tradition in African American communities. Documented history of African American education demonstrates the ways in which home, school, church, and community were intertwined during segregated schooling (Fields-Smith, 2005; Fields-Smith & Williams, 2009). Fields-Smith (2005) writes, "This connectedness supported parent and community desires to secure education for their children in a context similar to that suggested by the West African proverb 'It takes a village to raise a child'" (p. 132). Fields-Smith reports that African American parents' role in schools included attending conferences and school programs as well as working on committees that influence curriculum and policy. This parental role also included conducting learning activities at home or asking someone else in the community to assist their children with schoolwork when a parent was not able to do so (Fields-Smith, 2005). Such studies point to the integral role of parental involvement in the academic achievement of African American children.

Nationally, homeschooling is on the rise in the Black community (CNN.com, 2010). Many families cite their dissatisfaction and distrust of the public school system to educate their children as a reason for homeschooling. Llewellyn (1996), a homeschooling parent, writes in *Freedom Challenge: African American Homeschoolers* about the reasons some people homeschool:

> They see that racial integration in the schools has not always worked for their benefit. Among other things, they feel that it has disrupted community life and thrust children into hate-filled classrooms where few people encourage or home for their success. Some homeschool because they see that schools perpetuate institutionalized racism. Some homeschool because they are tired of curriculums emphasizing Europe and excluding Africa . . . Some homeschool because they want to continue the Civil Rights struggle for equal educational rights, and they feel that they can best do so by reclaiming their right to help their own children develop fully—rather than by working to get them equal access to conventional schooling. (p. 15)

Llewellyn also shares the stories of African American parents who are not satisfied with "mainstream" home schooling networks that often exclude them. She recounts the experience of one mother, who said,

> In the homeschooling world, I have noticed that white families have supports that are non-existent for Black families. Our history, needs, and desires are different. No matter how much equality society thinks we enjoy, we are still far from equal in opportunity. In order to improve our lives as homeschoolers, we must again pave our own path. (p. 72)

As this mother points out, the reasons that African American parents decide to homeschool are related to their histories, needs, and desires. In this way, African

American homeschooling cannot be understood through a mainstream, White American lens and must be centrally located within the shared experiences of African American homeschooling parents and their children.

At the time of my study of African American homeschooling parents, LaSonia was in her first year homeschooling her two sons. The mother of four school-age children, her youngest and oldest daughter both attended school while LaSonia homeschooled her two middle boys, first and fourth grade. Based on the challenging schooling experiences her sons had in a charter school the year prior, LaSonia questioned, if she did not pull her boys out of their public school, "Will the boys fall behind? Will they slip through the cracks? Will they end up losing their enthusiasm to learn?" She was "not willing to sacrifice her children to the system," and she did not want to see her Black boys fall through the cracks like so many other young men who are uneducated, unemployed, incarcerated, or dead. Rita was an African American mother who homeschooled both her son and daughter. She first began homeschooling her son because "his whole demeanor and energy started to change when he started school." For Rita, homeschooling was a way to counter the deficit treatment of African American boys in schools and to prevent her son from internalizing the negative Black male identity that he witnessed in school.

My partner and I also participated in the study. At the time of the study, our son was in the third grade. Because of my role as a full-time university professor, the primary responsibility of homeschooling our son often belonged to my partner. He provided an important perspective on the role and impact of Black fathers in the academic lives of their Black sons—a perspective that offered a counternarrative to the prevailing misconceptions of Black men as absent from their children's lives.

Through the observations and interviews with homeschooling parents, I learned that homeschooling was seen as a last resort to "save our boys." I learned that families were tired of witnessing their children being labeled, underserved, and ignored in school. Parents in this study discussed the importance of their sons' formative years. Each mentioned how vital a strong early educational experience is in shaping the future success of their sons, and each could note a negative experience connected to race that made them hesitant with keeping their sons enrolled in the public education system. Parents witnessed their children performing poorly in school because the instruction was described as lacking cultural relevance, inclusive methods, and student-centered focus.

For LaSonia, homeschooling became an option because she was "not willing to sacrifice her children to the system" or have them fall through the cracks. Through homeschooling, LaSonia believed her children were more invested and in control of their education. While the boys were in the charter school, she found that she often had to supplement and re-educate at home because Kendell, her oldest son, did not fully understand his teacher's lessons. She described the boys' experiences in the classroom as disconnected and felt that the teachers were

"behind the curve" in their instruction. This disconnection resulted from large class sizes, distractions, and what was taught versus what was learned ("teaching for the test"). Thus, she relied on homeschooling as a viable option to provide her boys with a strong educational foundation. According to LaSonia, "If they don't have this grounding right now . . . there's some people that never make that up." For example, when she learned about the current New York State graduation rates for Black males, she said, "You can either look at it like there is something pathologically wrong with Black boys where they cannot graduate from high school at a decent rate or there is something irretrievably wrong with the current public school educational system." She opted to go with the latter, stating, "The current educational system doesn't fit the needs of its students." LaSonia also felt a strong need to teach her children about their heritage, culture, and the counterhistories. On Columbus Day, for instance, she did not want them to just recite a rhyme about Columbus discovering America but to learn the truth about how Christopher Columbus and other Europeans destroyed and stole the land of the indigenous people who inhabited America. She wanted them to have more Afro-centered curriculum through experiences and field trips. This represented her desire to offer a critical examination into history and to center Afro-based curriculum in her boys' educational experiences.

Similar to LaSonia, Rita—another homeschooling parent I interviewed—sought ways to ensure that her sons would receive quality educational experiences. Rita decided to homeschool her son for two specific reasons: she noted that the public school was more focused on disciplining over education, and she was invested in her son's growing perception and self-awareness of his racial identity. When her son asked in first grade, "Mom, why do all the kids that kind of look like me . . . why are they always getting in trouble?" she saw her son beginning to form a negative perception to his identity as a Black male. As he began to look to her for answers about whether he was inherently "a bad kid," she chose to pull him out of school mid-year rather than have that negative perception grow. She said, "I was going to have to do something different." When Rita was asked why she decided to homeschool her son, she said,

> I felt school was more toward discipline and not educating. I noticed that my son his whole demeanor and energy started to change when he started going to school. So already it is starting to form some kind of negative, and he wanted to know if he was a bad kid . . . One reason we continue to homeschool is because of the [national and state graduation] statistics.

Rita also discussed the value of creating an independent learner who will speak up and challenge stereotypes, assumptions, and misinformation when he needs to.

Knowing the reported statistics about academic and social outcomes for Black males, both Rita and LaSonia saw homeschooling as a way to prevent their sons from not making it. They felt that simply allowing their sons to be subjected to

subtle and overt racism in the classroom was not acceptable. Witnessing their children's diminishing spark to learn encouraged them to take back their children's education, which was their way to disrupt the current status quo and deficit constructions of their children. Both LaSonia and Rita described homeschooling as the best alternative to building a strong, solid foundation for their sons' education and for their social, cognitive, and gender development. As Rita expressed,

> When your child goes out, you do not allow other people to frame your child in a way that does not bring back a person that is an asset to your household and to your community. Right now, we have a lot of African American boys who end up being criminalized, put into special education, . . . [or] encounters with the law . . . you are setting that child up to not be an asset to their household. They will then become another burden . . . So you've got to match with people [in your close network] who really get that we are at a war for our kids' minds right now. Especially the minds of the boys.

For these parents who were not willing to take any chances with their sons' education, homeschooling became the best option because they were in control and could offer the necessary support and mentors for their child.

These stories presented by African American homeschooling parents challenge the danger of the single story that only a certain kind of teacher is capable of educating diverse student populations. It also disrupts the dominant narrative that some parents are somehow disinterested, disengaged, and uninvolved in their children's academic lives. Drawing from some of the pedagogical and curricular choices of the African American homeschooling collective, strategies and methods that are student centered, culturally relevant, and critical teaching, my own teacher educator "toolbox" grows with exemplars of teaching practices that do not align with the White teacher/student of color narrative. These stories exemplify the idea of "teachers like me" by highlighting the plight of Black parents taking back their children's education.

Teacher Educator by Night: Preparing Teachers for Other People's Children

As a Black female scholar, and more importantly, as a Black mother who is not simply interested in but vigilant about the urgent need to change the current educational system for Black children and adolescent youth, my passion and activism often supersede a goal of advancing knowledge for the field of literacy research. Instead, my priorities include working to transgress (hooks, 1994) the boundaries and limits of the current educational system for families and eradicating the detrimental effects of the lack of freedom many families feel in providing educational opportunities for their children. My experiences both as a homeschooling

parent of a Black boy and my participation in the African American Homeschoolers Network informed and shifted my role and impacted my work as a teacher educator. The knowledge gained from these experiences has great potential to contribute to our knowledge about effective curricular and pedagogical practices and interventions for African American boys, and it continues to inform the work I do in preparing teachers to work in diverse educational settings. Dominant narratives in teaching and teacher education position African American parents, like other parents and families from marginalized groups (e.g., immigrant parents, working-class parents), as absent, uninvolved, unengaged, and/or not caring about their children's educative experiences. This inadvertently suggests that one way to mitigate the educational failure of African American children is via the White female and ignores the role of African American parents.

This master narrative surfaces often in my work with preservice teachers. On several occasions, students in my class have voiced assumptions about the lack of parental involvement in urban school settings. There is a displacement (and in some instances, a complete disregard) for students' families and communities. Preservice teachers omit the role of parents in the education of their children and fail to view parents as resources for effectively working with children in schools. As a teacher educator who works with both preservice and inservice teachers, I consider it my responsibility to address the tacit ideologies and attitudes that persist around racial and linguistic differences that teachers bring to the classroom. In doing so, I hope to push them to be confident, effective teachers for *all* children. Teaching is more than just methods and strategies; it is also very much about the mind-set one brings to the profession. It is about the preconceived ideas that an individual holds about his or her students, their families, and their communities. I consider it my duty to remind teachers that our task must be to support the academic achievement of all students while at the same time capitalizing on their cultural and linguistic identities in ways that not devalue or erase them.

When preservice teachers in my classes are in urban field placements, the prevalent classroom talk is about behavior, classroom management, and control, instead of on effective, transformative pedagogies in the literacy classroom. I share with my preservice teachers the stories shared by African American homeschooling parents or from African American male middle school students whom I work with in the Writing Our Lives writing project, a program for middle and high school students in the Syracuse community. In one of my writing workshops, one high school student wrote about an incident in his school where he was falsely accused during a routine school "lockdown" and "hallsweep," an example of how educational institutions borrow from prison language and culture to describe and enact systems of power and control (Ferguson, 2000). Instead of figuring out how to best educate African American males, the greater emphasis is on how to control them and socialize them for the educational system to the prison system pipeline, what Hale (1994) termed "incarceration education." The dominant discourse of failure persists even within the teacher education classroom, and much of my

work as a teacher educator is on moving students away from the positioning of African American males and other marginalized youths as scapegoats for failed academic efforts.

I see African American homeschooling as an example of a contemporary social movement that not only presents viable solutions to the miseducation (Woodson, 1933/1990) of African American males, but it offers insights toward a new model for transformative teacher education. In my classes, I always start with myself—I let students know that ways in which I approach literacy and English education are foreground by the multiple identities I occupy, including being a homeschooling parent. I often share with them my experiences with literacy teaching in the context of our homeschooling curriculum. On the first day of the semester, I let students know that one way I assess their dispositions for certain teacher qualities is by whether or not I would want my son to be a student in their classroom. Certainly, I cannot figure this assessment into their final course grade formally; however, I tell them that I aim to teach them to effectively work with other people's children, including my own.

As a teacher educator and community-engaged scholar, I strongly believe achieving equity and equality in education for all is a twenty-first-century civil rights issue. I now occupy multiple social identities—an educational researcher, a teacher educator, a community activist, a homeschooling parent, and a parent of a child who has attended many educational school settings—that position me to tackle the issues facing marginalized children and families from inside and outside schools. I also reach back to the intersections of my own educational trajectory—as a Black female student in both mostly Black and predominantly White school contexts; as the only Black female teacher education student in a predominantly White teacher education program; and as a Black female teacher educator in a predominantly White teacher education context. This imperative begins with advocating for my own child, and homeschooling was, for me, a form of resistance and way to act loudly. Since our homeschooling years, my son has attended a charter school and now an independent private school, and we face a whole new set of challenges and issues. How do I advocate for my child in ways that do not further marginalize the other students? How can my actions work to improve conditions for all members of the school community? I know that my son is, in many ways, "protected" because of social capital we hold as parents and the knowledge we have gained from our many experiences navigating his educational journey. We know that we have the right to question and confront what we perceive as injustices within schools, and we have taught my son to question and critically examine such instances as well. But, my son is one of many Black boys in this school setting. He cannot be the exception.

Working within the system is a constant struggle, and it is my resolve to do so in ways that inform all I do as a teacher educator and educational researcher. Engaging in social justice and equity work is critical for me because I have to remain vigilant for those parents still searching for their village. Part of this vigilance is my commitment as a literacy scholar and teacher educator to helping

future teachers to unpack the assumptions about students and communities of color and to avoid falling into the trap of a single story. This work begins by starting with the self and locating our many selves within the broader global teaching community.

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3

SO-CALLED SOCIAL JUSTICE TEACHING AND MULTICULTURAL TEACHER EDUCATION

Rhetoric and Realities

Every year, I receive two to three requests from undergraduate students of color asking if I will write a letter of recommendation for them for Teach for America (TFA), "a national teacher corps of recent college graduates who commit two years to teach and to effect change in under-resourced urban and rural public schools" (www.teachforamerica.org). These are not teacher education students. But they are students of color who want to do civically engaged, social justice–oriented work by teaching in underserved and under-resourced schools like those they came from, but they want to do so by circumventing schools of education. I use their recommendation requests as an opportunity to try to encourage them to pursue their teacher certification in our masters level teacher preparation programs or to apply to the five-year program: "I think if you want experience working in schools, we can provide you with that experience and with theoretical and practical training in becoming teachers." But then again, they would have majored in teacher education if this was their original intent. Instead, these students pursue undergraduate careers in public service, political science, policy studies, and disciplines within arts and sciences. TFA appeals to these students because it provides an opportunity for them to give back to their communities and gain teaching experience as they move toward other professional aspirations. These instances leave me questioning what it is about our schools of education and teacher preparation programs that deter students. Why don't we recruit the same students into our programs? What do programs like TFA have that we, in schools of education, don't? Why can White organizations like TFA recruit students of color and yet predominantly White schools of education cannot? Andre Perry, founding dean of urban education at Davenport University in Grand Rapids, Michigan, wrote,

> While exceptions certainly exist, the sons and daughters of Dubois, Washington, Hammer, Chavez and Kochiyama, certainly understand how to

> place education in a social justice framework even within white organizations. Moreover, it's the openness of TFA to learn from black, Latino and Asian American leadership that is promising. (Perry, 2014)

He argues that not only is TFA stronger by becoming more diverse, but that the teacher organization has the foundation to become more equitable and inclusive. He argues that TFA has learned lessons on diversity—not just to add numerical diversity, but to bring people of color to the table in terms of leadership and education reform. Perry also states that schools of education should be worried. When I visit the TFA website, I see images of teachers of color working in communities of color. A featured YouTube video on the website highlights the story of a young male teacher of color who shares that TFA gave him the opportunity to *give back to his community*. Whether one supports or abhors programs like TFA, the programs do appeal, even if only rhetorically, to students' predisposed ethos of social justice and community engagement. The Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation reports that current trends indicate that by the year 2020, the percentage of teachers of color will fall to an all-time low of 5% of the total teacher force, while the percentage of students of color in the K–12 system will likely near 50% (http://woodrow.org/fellowships/ww-rbf-fellowships/). I do not intend to take up the debate between traditional teacher preparation programs and alternative programs like TFA. However, given the current and future trends facing our urban schools, in particular, it is worthwhile to interrogate the promise of social justice teaching in urban contexts presented by such alternative teacher preparation programs and, paradoxically, the assumptions of Whiteness oftentimes associated with schools of education. The theme that remains consistent in my work with preservice teachers of color is that they see teaching as a tool toward social justice—education is the great equalizer. They entered teacher education because they too wanted to give back to their communities. Or, they had teachers who made a difference in their lives, and they want to do the same for the next generation. However, there are moments of dissonance and disconnect that they encounter during their journey to become teachers, and many times these moments occur because of their racial, linguistic, gendered, or classed identities and the unraveling of the myth of meritocratic values. These moments also occur when they find themselves in a space dominated by discourses that define teaching as an apolitical, technocratic skill uncoupled from community and social activism.

It is essential to unpack what is meant by constructs like "teaching for social justice" and Whiteness and to consider how they are actualized in practice in teacher education spaces, particularly those emphasizing a multicultural or urban teaching framework. Thus, in addition to this chapter, I explore theoretical perspectives on social justice teaching, teacher identity, teacher discourse, and urban teacher education. By providing a conceptual framework supported by the voices of preservice teachers of color, I aim to talk back to the dominant discourse on preparing White, English-monolingual teachers for working in these contexts and

make a deliberate shift toward a focus on the necessary dispositions for effective teaching in these contexts that should be cultivated in all teacher candidates. I examine how teaching for social justice and other progressive teaching ideologies are reframed from the perspectives of preservice teachers of color. Preservice teachers Angela, Latoya, and Natasha were students in a traditional teacher education program where they were learning how to become teachers in contexts where, whether intentional or not, the goals of the teacher education program catered to the needs of White students. As such, the meaning and understanding of "teaching for social justice" permeated through their experiences through a lens of Whiteness as a normative indicator for both teaching and school performance. An overwhelming centering of Whiteness was the "language of schooling" within this teacher education context. Given that, I consider what these preservice teachers' various negotiations of multicultural and social justice discourses imply for urban teacher education and for the needs of today's ethnically and linguistically diverse classrooms.

Social Justice and Urban Teacher Education from a White Savior Mentality

"Teacher candidate demonstrates a clear and consistent commitment to teaching for social justice" was one of the proposed proficiencies presented at a meeting of university faculty charged with revising our student teaching standards, a move instigated by the onset of the nation's Common Core standards and new standards for teacher preparation and certification. After I read this desired proficiency for students in our teacher preparation programs, I thought: What do we mean when we say "teaching for social justice"? What does "teaching for social justice" look like, and how is this evidenced in the performances of the students in teacher preparations programs? What do we assume about the predispositions our preservice teachers bring to our programs, and what do we expect as they graduate from them?

I wonder about the rationale for the aforementioned desired proficiency given the racial and linguistic makeup of the majority of students in teacher education programs in the United States. At my university most of the teacher candidates are White, monolingual females from middle-class backgrounds who have little to no experience working in diverse educational contexts. My university is not unlike other teacher education programs across the country. It is not uncommon for students in my English methods course to reveal to me that 1) they have never had a teacher of color and 2) they would prefer not to teach in an urban or diverse school environment. In other words, many of them assume their career plans will not require them to be grounded in inclusive and culturally relevant pedagogies or to be prepared to work with students from cultural and linguistic backgrounds different from their own. Instead, the idea of "teaching for social justice" is viewed as another bullet to check off on one's way to teacher certification; it is not largely

viewed as a practice to embody and put into action. "Social justice" has become an overused term in teaching and teacher education. The idea is that it is the role of teachers and educational institutions to promote a just society by challenging injustices and valuing diversity through policy and practice. Much of the social justice rhetoric in teacher preparation programs, however, targets a mostly White, monolingual, female, and heterosexual population. How are we preparing these teachers to "teach for social justice"? What are the ideologies that undergird such goals? Social justice teaching becomes a slippery slope when promoted in a White teacher/non-White student context. It can easily become "missionary work" if the intended goals and motivations are not interrogated. Social justice easily becomes a tool to help or "save" populations that are perceived as less than or inferior to one's own. In a blogpost, "The Problem with Little White Girls (And Boys): Why I Stopped Being a Voluntourist," the author, Pippa Biddle, a 22-year-old White girl from New York City, writes,

> I am not a teacher, a doctor, a carpenter, a scientist, an engineer, or any other professional that could provide concrete support and long-term solutions to communities in developing countries. I am a 5'4" white girl who can carry bags of moderately heavy stuff, horse around with kids, attempt to teach a class, tell the story of how I found myself (with accompanying powerpoint) to a few thousand people and not much else. Some might say that that's enough. That as long as I go to X country with an open mind and a good heart I'll leave at least one child so uplifted and emboldened by my short stay that they will, for years, think of me every morning.

In this post, the author admits to her own raised consciousness about how she harmfully positioned the communities in deficit ways when she volunteered during service learning trips. She goes on to say,

> Taking part in international aid where you aren't particularly helpful is not benign. It's detrimental. It slows down positive growth and perpetuates the "white savior" complex that, for hundreds of years, has haunted both the countries we are trying to "save" and our (more recently) own psyches.

She challenges her own prior notion that she alone is the solution to long-term issues in developing countries. This thinking is parallel to the ways of thinking that many White preservice teachers take up when they are in teacher education contexts that constantly reinforce the idea that they must be equipped to work in urban, low-income communities. Such messages, both intentionally and unintentionally, exclude the roles, power, and agency of parents, community members, and students to transform their own communities. Aboriginal activist Lila Watson wrote, "If you have come to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together."

Thus, social justice work is not an exercise in helping or saving communities that others view as less than, lacking, or deficient. When viewed in these ways within teaching and teacher education, social justice—an intended progressive, activist-oriented idea—is taken up as a deficit framework.

Well-intended White preservice teachers and teacher educators are just as harmful to the educative experiences of their students when they knowingly or unknowingly enact deficit practices. The concept of social justice takes on a different meaning when leveraging the ways preservice teachers of color understand their work with students, in schools, and in communities. I define social justice as *an act toward dismantling power structures and institutional inequities in order to resist deficit ideologies*. The goal of social justice is to redistribute power, not to provide marginalized and disenfranchised people with material resources so that they can maintain the structures that keep those in power intact.

Villegas (2007) writes about teaching that is inspired by principles of social justice—including culturally responsive teaching, culturally relevant teaching, teaching against the grain, teaching to change the world, teaching for diversity, and multicultural education. She describes social justice teaching as "a broad approach to education that aims to have all students reach high levels of learning and to prepare them all for active and full participation in a democracy" (p. 372). To accomplish this, according to Villegas, teachers need:

- "a comprehensive grasp of content knowledge, including a deep understanding of the concepts in their academic disciplines"
- "to understand how children and youth learn and develop in different cultural contexts"
- "sophisticated pedagogical expertise, including skills for creating learning experiences that build on students' individual and cultural strengths while engaging them in meaningful and purposeful activities"
- "to understand existing barriers to learning that children and youth from low-income and racial/ethnic backgrounds consistently encounter in school." (p. 372)

Beyond knowledge and skills, Villegas argues that teachers need the disposition to teach all learners equitably. What is missing from this discussion is a focus on the relationship that teachers must have with and within communities, relationships that include but move beyond working with students in schools.

Also important in this discussion is teacher education research that examines ways to prepare new teachers for working in urban schools and communities. What counts as "urban" is steadily shifting and changing, especially with the increase and ever presence of gentrified urban centers (Kinloch, 2010; Thomas, 2011). Yet in teaching and teacher education, "urban" is often code word for low-income children and communities of color. In accordance, teaching from social justice then becomes necessary for effective teaching in urban spaces, those spaces that some

people view from a deficit lens. The idea of "teaching for social justice" takes on a particular meaning, though, when preservice teachers do not see themselves as members of urban communities but as voyeuristic travelers journeying in and out of urban schools to work with the people who inhabit these spaces.

Essentially, the meaning of social justice for some is not the same for others. A vision for social justice teaching must account for the social locations that teachers embody and the cultural histories and traditions that they represent. For preservice teachers of color, an intentional focus and acknowledgment of families, communities, and cultural traditions are central to the practice of social justice. Social justice work cannot be achieved when individuals distance themselves from the communities they purport to serve. For instance, it is interesting when teachers are adamant that they come from or live in communities different from the school communities where they work. The racial, linguistic, and cultural divides are further pronounced, yet so much of the research literature (Godley et al., 2006; Gomez, Black, & Allen, 2007) stresses bridging the differences that persist between the lived experiences of teachers and students.

The Unfulfilled Promise of Multicultural Teacher Education

The Ongoing Normalization of Whiteness

In a review of literature on multicultural teacher education, Cochran-Smith, Davis, and Fries (2003) observe,

> There are local pockets of change and a number of individual teacher educators strongly committed to interrogating their own practice and preparing teachers for a diverse society. But the new multicultural teacher education paradigm envisioned by the theorists and conceptual works is not in place. (p. 964)

Instead, while many teacher education programs have added courses and fieldwork experiences that focus on teaching diverse students—English language learners, non-White students, and urban children (Cochran-Smith et al., 2003; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Zeichner, 1996), this approach only leads to moderate advances in preparing teachers for racially and linguistically diverse classrooms. This argument is highlighted in Cross's (2005) insistence that "program rhetoric about diversity and multiculturalism is often couched in how we are alike or how White teacher educators and students can explore others as cultural exotics, the racial other, or the object of study for their academic and professional benefit" (p. 265). Further, this approach to multicultural teacher education may produce a teaching force that is unaware of how they can use their work to dismantle power, Whiteness, and racism. As a result, even real moves toward a mission and vision of "teaching for social justice" are jeopardized and only then implemented on a superficial level. The goals of multicultural teacher education have long privileged the needs

of White preservice teachers, though the rhetoric has included an emphasis on diversifying the field of teaching. Sleeter's (2001) review of research on preservice teacher education for preparing teachers for schools that serve historically underserved populations determines that very little of it examines strategies that are utilized to prepare effective teachers. Instead, most of the research focuses on addressing the attitudes and lack of knowledge of White preservice teachers. Sleeter also points out that teacher educators do their own work in maintaining the overwhelming presence of Whiteness, a norm that goes unchallenged by their teacher education programs. While understanding race, culture, and the interplay of other identity markers and their role in education are central to multicultural teacher education, given that the majority teachers today are and will continue to be White, monolingual, and female, such goals are at the same time overburdened by the persistence of Whiteness and White privilege.

Ladson-Billings (2005) points out how multicultural teacher education literature does not take to task the cultural homogeneity of the teacher education faculty. While the rhetoric of teacher education promulgates diversity as a "value-added factor," Ladson-Billings (2005) compares this rhetoric to the cultural deficit discourse of the 1960's and 1970's. She makes an important assertion that, while prospective teachers are required to demonstrate their ability to successfully work with diverse populations of students, many teacher educators do not model such success in their own professional lives. Ladson-Billings writes that teacher educators, "for the most part, are teaching students whose backgrounds are similar to our own, and we work with colleagues who also have similar backgrounds" (p. 231). Cross (2005) reinforces this idea, pointing out how White preservice teachers accept the power handed to them by their White professors and instructors to place people of color (who are "othered" based on race, culture, and language) under their untrained surveillance for the preservice teacher's own learning. The common cultural and linguistic norms shared by White preservice teachers and teacher educators undermine the incorporation of opportunities for dissonance and explicit interrogation of how these individuals are implicated by their own Whiteness and White privilege. When teacher educators ineffectively attend to issues of diversity and fail to demonstrate how they successfully work with diverse populations of students, it is more likely that their predominantly White preservice teachers' positions of power will remain unchecked, and the circulating cultural deficit discourse on people of color is reinforced.

Interrogating Whiteness and White Privilege

Within efforts to implement multicultural teacher education, Cross (2005) writes that there may be an unintended Whiteness ideology in which "the language of [teacher education] programs includes social justice and multiculturalism and diversity while the ideology, values, and practices are assuredly reinscribing White privilege, power, and racism" (p. 266). Cross terms this paradox a "new racism" ideology that "locks teacher education into maintaining the same ole' oppression

that objectifies, dehumanizes, and marginalizes others while ignoring whiteness, power, privilege, and racism" (p. 266). Lensmire et al. (2013) write,

> The primary answer proposed by white teacher educators to questions of how to combat institutional racism, how to eliminate educational disparities, and how to educate white teachers to work effectively in diverse classrooms is to have future and practicing teachers read Peggy McIntosh's 1988 essay on white privilege and the "invisible knapsack." (p. 411)

They describe this kind of narrow "diversity work" in teacher education as discounting the complexities of antiracist curriculum and "white privilege pedagogy" that is needed if the true goal is to move teachers and educators toward understanding and action.

The persistence of Whiteness and White privilege within the context of preservice teacher education is compelling in light of the demographic statistics that suggest that the teaching force is and will continue to be White, monolingual, and female. Whiteness is rarely viewed as a racial category; instead, it is normalized within dominant institutions like schools of education. This normalization is significant in that preservice teachers may view categories such as race, ethnicity, culture, and language as "foreign." This way of viewing these categories reinforces the positionings of preservice teachers as cultural tourists (Lewis & Ketter, 2004). To disrupt this normalization, Whiteness and White privilege must be points for discussion and interrogation in the teacher education context. Teacher educators must be willing to take on questions of race, White supremacy, and antiracism in ways that do not further isolate or "spotlight" preservice teachers of color and in ways that do not allow for complacent responses by White preservice teachers of color who have been protected under the invisibility of their Whiteness (Haddix, 2008).

In order to understand one's ideologies about multiculturalism and multilingualism, and initiate an interrogation of Whiteness and White privilege, one must first reflect on his or her own cultural and social background to include linguistic and cultural location. Nieto (2000) writes:

> One reason for insisting on the significance of culture is that some people, primarily those from dominated and disenfranchised groups within society, have been taught that they have no culture . . . Although everyone has a culture, many times members of the culturally dominant group of a society may not even think of themselves as cultural beings. For them, culture is something that other people have, especially people who differ from the mainstream in race or ethnicity. (p. 140)

However, members of the dominant language and racial group often view diversity and cultural and linguistic difference as "other people's" phenomena, or other people's "problem." In multicultural teacher education, learning about other racial,

linguistic, and cultural groups becomes an item to check off on a list of requirements for becoming a teacher. Historically, Americans have claimed one dominant, relatively homogeneous language and national identity. As a result, issues of multiculturalism or multilingualism get identified as belonging to immigrant and/or racially and linguistically minoritized populations.

Several studies on teacher education illustrate how teacher educators are often met with silence by majority students when incorporating activities that challenge White privilege, racism, and the notion that diversity issues are located outside the majority students' realm of experience (see Ladson-Billings, 1996; McIntosh, 1989; Sealey-Ruiz, 2011, 2012; Tatum, 1992). Acknowledging majority preservice teachers' resistances to challenging their beliefs and values does not address the problem of teacher education programs that are grounded in traditionally oppressive assumptions and ideologies (Cross, 2005). Further, it does not interrogate White preservice teachers' status of optional ethnicities—their decision to claim or not claim ethnic affiliation at their convenience. Waters (1996) argues that "the option of being able to not claim any ethnic identity exists for Whites of European background in the United States because they are the majority group" (p. 643), specifically in terms of holding political and social power. In other words, White Americans do not have to admit to being ethnic unless they choose to. Waters defines the status of "optional ethnicities" as a symbolic ethnicity, that is, "ethnicity that is individualistic in nature and without real social cost for the individual" (p. 643). An example of this is when an Irish American identifies as Irish on special occasions or holidays, such as St. Patrick's Day. Water asserts that there is a difference between an individualistic, symbolic ethnicity and a socially enforced and imposed racial identity. Individuals who are racially and linguistically "marked"—physically and linguistically—by identities ascribed lower status within the larger society do not have the "option" to reveal or not reveal such identities.

When asked, "What is your culture?" several studies document that White preservice teachers respond that they do not have a culture (see Allen & Hermann-Wilmarth 2004; Haddix, 2008; Willis, 2003). In many multicultural teacher education classes, teacher educators aim to help these students first see their culture through activities and exercises that ask them to write a cultural memoir or an autobiographical assignment to "bring front and center" their cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Such activities occur in what Allen and Hermann-Wilmarth (2004) call a "cultural construction zone." In my study of preservice teachers' evolving understandings of issues surrounding language and ethnicity in America, and their ideas about how this understanding might impact their teaching and the learning of future students, I found that the White, monolingual preservice teachers who participated did not "see" their own language and ethnicity (Haddix, 2008). In a course on language and ethnicity, students were encouraged to engage in the interrogation of their own language and ethnic identities and how these affect their relationship to those who may be culturally or linguistically different.

Two of the research participants were White females, who identified as monolingual, native English speakers from suburban middle-class backgrounds. When asked to offer defining characteristics of their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, analysis and interpretation of their respective responses suggested that they were implicated by being members of the dominant language and ethnicity group, where the status of optional ethnicities and assumptions of Whiteness prevailed and the idea that the dominant social group has *no culture* was perpetuated. One preservice teacher described herself as having no identifying culture, stating that she was "a mutt."

In a similar study, Willis (2003), a teacher educator, examined students' narrative and autobiographical writings on culture, race, and ethnicity in her preservice teacher education class on teaching multicultural literature. At the start of each course, she introduced an assignment that asked students to respond in writing to the question: "How does your cultural perspective affect the students you teach?" (p. 54). Willis described her students as majority White, female, upper to middle class, monolingual English speakers. Their lives and school experiences reflected their homogeneous home and school lives; their belief in meritocracy—that they have worked hard for everything they had achieved—was reflected in their resistance to engaging in discussions about how White privilege has shaped their thinking. From past semesters, Willis observed that students' responses to the question were typical. Most of the White students did not identify themselves by using cultural, ethnic, or linguistic terms and located themselves and issues of diversity outside their realm of experience. In contrast to the experiences of the White students in her teacher education class, Willis noted that students of color responded to the question by identifying as members of cultural and linguistic groups. They articulated how their cultural and linguistic identities were likely to affect their teaching. Willis highlighted the narrative of a Latino student, Samuel, who began his autobiography with a description of his Puerto Rican heritage: "My Spanish is of the street, my skin is pale, which transforms my features into what many believe to be that of a Caucasian, and I have lived in the United States all of my life" (p. 55). Samuel asserted that his Latino background might be a source of comfort to his future Latino students.

As Lensmire et al. (2013) argue, it is past time that teacher educators move toward a more complex treatment of questions of race, White privilege, and White supremacy. The lives of all children, particularly children of color, depend on it. All teachers must understand their role in maintaining or disrupting the racist, White supremacist practices that impact the lives of so many children, both within and outside schools. When we live in a society where it is seemingly acceptable to murder an unarmed Black boy, interrogating the fear of Blackness, and in this case Black masculinity (Haddix, 2009), and unveiling the protection of White invisibility are life altering and can be transformative for literacy educators (Groenke, Haddix, Glenn, Kirkland, Price-Dennis, & King, 2015; Haddix & Price-Dennis, 2013).

Language Ideologies and Whiteness

The educational research community's lack of attention to teacher racial and linguistic diversity reflects a "technocratic, instrumental-rational view" (Montecinos, 2004, p. 174) of teacher preparation. In other words, the lack of attention to racial and linguistic diversities might result from the logic of teacher education to standardize teachers' practices to the point that one's racial and linguistic identities do not influence practice. The paradoxical nature of multicultural teacher education allows White, monolingual preservice teachers to claim an ethnic-less, race-less, culture-less, and language-less identity while working, in part, through dominant language ideologies to oppositionally position racially and linguistically diverse preservice teachers.

Another purported goal of multicultural teacher education is to uncover the tacit ideologies about language and language status within society and to address how preservice teachers' preconceived notions about language status affect teaching and learning. A language ideology is defined as a subconscious, deeply rooted set of beliefs about the way language is and is supposed to be (Lippi-Green, 2004). Ideologies of language have the power not only to shape the way people talk and interact generally, but also to naturalize relations of power and privilege. In critical language studies, linguists refer to "standard language ideology" as the notion that languages and dialects deemed nonstandard, defined by arbitrary notions of language superiority, hold lesser social status to "standard" English (Lippi-Green, 2004). Accordingly to Lippi-Green (2004), this standard language ideology represents a bias toward an abstracted, idealized, non-varying spoken language that is imposed and maintained by dominant institutions. This ideology rejects the notion that everyone speaks a dialect and suggests that a uniform language is a possibility. Lippi-Green (2004) asserts:

> People use false assumptions about language to justify judgments that have more to do with race, national origin, regional affiliation, ethnicity, and religion than with human language and communication. In public situations it has become unacceptable to reject individuals on the basis of the color of their skin, but some can and do reject individuals because of the variety of English they speak or the accent they speak with . . . many have come to believe that some types of English are "more English" than others; that there is one perfect and appropriate kind of English everyone should speak; that failure to speak it is an indication of stupidity, willfulness, or misguided social allegiance. (p. 293)

Although attitudes toward language diversity are socially constructed and notions of language superiority are arbitrarily determined (Wolfram & Christian, 1989), language prejudice pervades the schooling process and impacts

learning outcomes for school-age children. Deficit thinking about language variety was evident in the work of educational psychologists in the 1960's who posited that African American students experienced difficulty in becoming literate as a result of cognitive and linguistic deficits (see Bereiter & Engelmann, 1966) and other research inquiries that view the role of schooling as a means of assimilation for non-native speakers (Nieto, 1999, 2000). An extreme view of linguistic research influenced by deficit theories was that children who used African American languages and dialects were "culturally deprived" (see Bereiter & Engelmann, 1966). Deficit theorists' claim of African American Language (AAL) as evidence of cultural deprivation served as an agitation for scholarly debate in the educational research community, with scholars positioning themselves in favor of or against the claim. Unfortunately, this claim continued to justify decisions made about K–12 curriculum and instruction, as in the 1979 King "Black English" case and the 1990s Ebonics debate (see Labov, 1972; Smitherman & Baugh, 2002).

In debates about bilingualism in schools, Cummins (1998) asserts that curriculum initiatives are still bound by standard language ideologies that "bilingualism shuts doors" and "monolingual education opens doors to the wider world" (p. 447). Educational theories and pedagogies within bilingual education are tied to an American history of xenophobia and anti-bilingualism. There is a deeply internalized belief that to be "American" means using one language and accepting the dominant culture's norms and values. English only. Still today, "education = assimilation" research, policy, and practice define the schooling process as a medium for enculturation of a homogeneous American identity. In current curriculum reforms and initiatives, there exists an underlying ideology that all students need to appropriate the norms of an American identity in order to succeed in this society (Nieto, 1999).

Deficit treatment of differences in students' language backgrounds in the classroom show that negative and uninformed attitudes toward differences by teachers can be counterproductive and harmful to student performance (Schleppegrell, 2004). Social attitudes toward language difference can blockade marginalized students' access to literacy, and teachers are the "gatekeepers" to this access. One of the most serious implications of the cultural and linguistic divide among prospective teachers and today's K–12 student population is that many White, middle-class preservice teachers understand diversity as a deficit and view cultural and linguistic differences as other people's issue. There is a body of research that adopts the underlying premise that preservice teachers' societal attitudes toward different languages and dialects can impact curricular initiatives and school policies that have proven to support these students (Gomez, 1993; Hollins & Guzman, 2005; Zeichner, 1996). Thus, an aim of multicultural teacher education is to encourage preservice teachers' interrogation of attitudes and beliefs about language variability in the United States, specifically issues that affect how to provide optimal learning opportunities for English language

learners and children who are speakers of nonstandard dialects of English (see Godley et al., 2006).

In a study of preservice teachers' opinions about Ebonics and "standard" English, Wynne (2002) found that preservice teachers' responses to questions such as "How would you describe 'Standard English'?" or "How would you describe 'Ebonics'?" revealed their unconscious expression of one of the basic tenets of linguistics: "that languages are defined politically, not scientifically—and that a 'language is a dialect with an army and a navy'" (Wynne, 2002, p. 211). Wynne (2002) found that preservice teachers neglected to address the political nature of language when defining academic excellence in urban education; participants seemed to agree that all students needed to know "proper" or "correct" English. One student in the study responded, "Ebonics should not be allowed in the classroom. Our education system should not cater to lower standards of language" (as quoted in Wynne, 2002, p. 211). In this study, Wynne (2002) argued that these negative attitudes and perceptions toward language diversity permeate classroom practice and affect student learning outcomes.

I found that once given the linguistic knowledge tools, preservice teachers were able to debunk socially arbitrated decisions about language status (Haddix, 2008). The study focused on preservice teachers taking an undergraduate course on Language and Ethnicity, a course that examines how people within different cultures and different social groups define their identities through use of language and how people use language to regulate power relations. In this course, students underwent a process of confronting social attitudes and prejudices toward language varieties and dialects. The course provided them with linguistic knowledge, and a basic ability to analyze linguistic data, which revealed their preconceptions about language dialects such as African American Language and Ozark-Appalachian English (OAE). By gaining the ability to articulate a formal linguistic definition of language, students in this course were better able to interrogate socially imposed dichotomies of good language use versus bad language usage or standard versus nonstandard.

Studies that only focus on the attitudes and perceptions of White, female, monolingual preservice teachers about teaching urban children, minority children, bilingual children—versus explicitly addressing the necessary strategies needed to tackle these issues—potentially position preservice teachers opposite the children they teach. Such studies provide a framework for considering the effects of teacher attitudes and perceptions about language and ethnicity on teaching and student learning by looking at preservice teacher learning and aim to explore how one becomes a culturally competent teacher, aware of cultural ways of student learning. Such studies also consider what role teacher education programs play in the cultural knowledge development of preservice teachers. Again, the preservice teacher central to such educational aims is the White, female, monolingual teacher.

So what then are the implications of the large body of educational research aimed at preparing the predominantly White, female teaching force on how to

become culturally responsive teachers in a classroom of "other people's children" (Delpit, 1995)? By facing the research mirror on the experiences of the predominantly White, female, monolingual class of preservice teachers, preservice teachers positioned oppositionally to this norm as "other" are not in view. White, monolingual female preservice teachers are positioned as the normative indicators of what a teacher should be. As a result, homogeneous notions of race, language, and culture are maintained and reproduced. Montecinos (2004) writes, "By excluding, silencing and ignoring the presence of preservice teachers of color, multicultural teacher education is, paradoxically, securing the norm of whiteness in teacher preparation and undermining the principles of multicultural teacher education" (p. 168). An unintended consequence of multicultural teacher education, then, is that non-White, racially, and linguistically minoritized students are silenced while otherwise progressive, and even radical, ideologies and practices become normalized in ways that maintain the status quo. Progressive ideals like multicultural teacher education and cultural responsive and culturally relevant pedagogy can fail to uncover issues of racism, power, and Whiteness, particularly when diverse teacher identities are unseen and unheard.

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4

BECOMING "URBAN" TEACHERS

Teaching for Social Justice, Behavior "Management," and Methodological Overload

How do preservice teachers of color become teachers in contexts that do not readily support their teacher identity development? University teacher education programs, historically, have sought to provide novice teachers with knowledge of learning theories, pedagogical approaches, and curricular frameworks. However, little attention has been given to new teacher identity development (Alsup, 2006; Hall, Johnson, Juzwik, Wortham, & Mosley, 2010), and even less attention has been paid to the experiences of preservice teachers of color. Alsup believes teacher educators should be concerned with "the aspects of teacher identity development that involve the integration of the personal self with the professional self, and the 'taking on' of a culturally scripted, often narrowly defined professional role while maintaining individuality" (p. 4). One premise underlying this "taking on" often assumes that when one becomes a teacher, she or he assumes a consistent, stable, unified identity. It also suggests that one becomes a teacher instead of constantly "becoming" a teacher, where learning to teach is an ontological process.

The study of teacher identity development has been theorized in multiple ways (e.g., Britzman, 2003; Gomez, Black, & Allen, 2007; Johnson, 2009; Zembylas, 2003). From a poststructuralist perspective, the process of becoming a teacher is theorized as performances that are enabled and limited through what it means to be a "teacher" in this society (Zembylas, 2003). In her case study of the identity development of a National Board certified teacher, Johnson (2009) writes, "The identity of 'teacher' is a performance that is choreographed—in the sense that it is preplanned and scripted—by sociocultural expectations of teacher conduct" (p. 158). In recent years, most discussions on identity take into consideration the concept of "performing identity" (Williams, 2006), which, for Williams "emphasizes that, rather than having a single stable identity that

I present to the rest of the world, my sense of identity is external and socially contingent." She continues,

> Depending on the social context I find myself in and the social script I believe I should follow, I negotiate and adjust my identity. Sometimes these constructions of identity are conscious and calculated, other times they are so deeply learned that they seem spontaneous and natural. (p. 5)

Williams explains that tensions arise when we do not make meaning of socio-cultural contexts or construct an identity that fits others' expectations. This is significant because oftentimes dominant narratives about identities influence our decisions on identity constructions. Williams' position on performing identity is useful for examining decisions preservice teachers of color make as they take on a new teacher identity in a context of teaching and teacher education that overwhelmingly emphasizes identities and performances of Whiteness (Sleeter, 2001).

From a cultural studies perspective, teacher identity formation is articulated through the renderings of personal narrative, talk, social interaction, and self-presentation. Hall (1994) defines identities as "the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (p. 394). Moving away from the notion of identity as a stable, internal state, identities are fluid, shifting, and in process. I draw from poststructuralist theories and cultural studies to redefine teacher identity as *teacher identities*, recognizing the pluralistic discursive spaces constructed and influenced by the cultures, ideologies, and contexts teachers embody. Teacher identities are the different social positions teachers perform in particular contexts, in and out of school settings, and they represent one's racial, cultural, linguistic, and gendered ways of knowing.

In teacher education, teacher identity formation is further complicated by the circulating nature of dominant discourses in theory, research, and practice. According to Gee (1989), a Discourse is "a sort of 'identity kit' which comes complete with the appropriate costume and instructions on how to act, talk, and often write" (p. 526). Gee defines Discourses as "ways of being in the world" (p. 526). He ascribes a capital *D* to emphasize that language choice is motivated by our need to play the right social role and convey the right values, beliefs, and attitudes in particular contexts. In this way, preservice teacher education can be viewed as an apprenticeship into a "mainstream" teacher culture, understanding that the process of becoming a teacher involves an acculturation into particular linguistic and cultural norms. Narratives of the dominant culture are the ones most often reproduced and deemed relevant, legitimate, and appropriate (Fairclough, 1995; Williams, 2006). To become a teacher, one must demonstrate a set of expected proficiencies determined to be characteristic of what it means to "be" a teacher. These proficiencies are historically, socially, and politically constructed, and with the current emphasis on the preparation of a predominantly White,

English-monolingual female teaching force, those "othered" teachers are potentially positioned opposite dominant discourses.

Considering the experiences of preservice teachers of color specifically, there exist tensions between the primary discourses of preservice teachers of color and the dominant institutional discourses of teacher education. From ethnographic fieldwork, I learned that there existed dominant discourses around themes of teaching for social justice, teaching in urban versus suburban settings, "one size fits all" teaching methods, and classroom and behavior management. With this understanding, I analyzed the data with the following questions in mind: What constitutes the discourse of teacher education? How do preservice teachers of color interact with this discourse? Do they adapt, adjust, or simply resist social practices ascribed by this discourse, and what are the consequences of their decisions? What do these preservice teachers' various negotiations imply for teacher education and the needs of today's ethnically and linguistically diverse classrooms? Angela, Latoya, and Natasha each articulated differences between their own primary discourses about teacher education and those that persisted in the teacher education program. Through critical discourse analysis (more discussion in chapter 5), I looked at the discursive ways they each created hybrid literate identities while becoming teachers, neither fully accepting nor completely rejecting the dominant discourses in teacher education. In doing so, I challenge the idea that there is "one way" to become or be a teacher and to take up these discourses (for a note on methodology, see appendix A).

All language users draw upon multiple linguistic codes depending on context, audience, and purposes because we have membership in multiple discourse communities. I focused directly on how the context of teacher education as a dominant discourse affected the kinds of linguistic decisions these preservice teachers made. Given the diminishing presence of students of color in teacher education (see discussion in chapter 1), the theoretical connection between discourse and context was crucial to this qualitative inquiry to better understand why Black and Latina preservice teachers are drawn to, stay within, and/or leave teacher education programs (and by extension, the field of teaching). A focus on teacher identity development and teacher discourse is also important when considering the lack of scholarship on inservice and preservice teachers of color in the field of literacy and English education. Most studies that include non-White teachers focus on their curriculum, pedagogy, and work with diverse student populations and not on how their racial and linguistic identities and discourses influence practice.

In this chapter, I present four themes that emerged from the Angela, Latoya, and Natasha's experiences in the teacher education discourse community: 1) teaching in an urban setting, 2) teaching for social justice, 3) classroom and behavior management, and 4) the overload of methods and strategies. To become a legitimate member of this community, one would have to be clear about how each of these elements defines what it means to be a "good" teacher and what this means within the context of teaching for social justice and in urban settings

when the underlying priorities center Whiteness. I present four exemplars of how these themes in teacher education were prominent in the experiences of Natasha, Latoya, and Angela and how they are understood and reframed from their perspectives as preservice teachers of color.

The Urban Student Teaching Placement

> *They only want to be in an urban setting for pre-pracs. They ain't tryin' to be in an urban school for a full semester.*
>
> —*Natasha*

Teacher education literature reports that the majority of prospective teachers are different from the K–12 student population in significant ways, specifically on the basis of race and ethnicity, language, and socioeconomic background (Zumwalt & Craig, 2005). In the United States, the increasingly more culturally and linguistically diverse student population is being taught primarily by White, monolingual females, and this mismatch has serious educational implications. One of the ways teacher education programs combat this demographic mismatch is by encouraging and, in some instances, requiring that preservice teachers complete a practicum in an urban setting. This is important since, as Gomez (1996) points out, the typical teacher "prefers to teach in a community like the one she grew up in" (p. 460). This preference is no different for students of color. Natasha, Latoya, and Angela each expressed wanting to teach in school environments similar to those from their own, typically White-dominated schooling experiences.

One of the articulated expectations of the Practicum and Field Placement Office in the School of Education was that all students would complete at least one practicum experience in an urban setting. Students in this program commonly referred to their placements as being either "suburban" or "urban." From discussions with Natasha and Latoya, I learned that these terms carried with them stereotypes about the students and communities, with "suburban" being treated as more the norm and "urban" as somehow aberrant or deficient. "Urban" suggested poor communities of color living in unsafe environments while "suburban" denoted affluent White families in safe neighborhoods. Natasha and Latoya felt that their mostly White peers saw the suburban placements as more like their own homes and communities whereas the "urban" placements where treated as different and "less than."

Natasha, Latoya, and Angela each requested to have their full practicum placement in an urban setting for parallel reasons: to give back to their communities and to teach students whose experiences they could relate to. Angela returned to the elementary school she had attended to complete her full practicum. Nearly 14 years prior, she had been a student in the second grade classroom where she completed her student teaching practicum. Her younger sister was also a student in this second grade class, where the majority of the students were Black and Latino/a. Angela had a history and legacy at this school, and she was very proud to now be a part of the teaching staff. On several occasions, Angela expressed a

desire to secure a full-time teaching position at this school. For Angela, the appeal of this school was not about teaching in an "urban" setting. Angela and her sister had walked to and from school each day because they lived less than a few blocks away. This was their community. Angela's desire to teach in an urban setting was quite different than the dominant discourse on teaching in an urban setting in the teacher education program.

Latoya's full practicum placement was in a large urban high school where the student demographic was predominantly Black and Latino/a with a significant immigrant population. Her placement was split between a ninth grade history class and a mixed grade Sheltered English Immersion humanities class. Prior to her full-time practicum, Latoya's placements were mostly in predominantly White settings where she felt she stood out because of her race. In these settings, she expressed having difficulties with teachers and students. Because of her race, according to Latoya, students identified her as "something like a student teacher" and accordingly undermined her role as an authority figure. With the exception of her cooperating teachers in her full-practicum, Latoya did not feel as if she had many supportive cooperating teachers or supervisors. She reflected on an experience when one cooperating teacher, a White male, talked down to her and failed to acknowledge her in the classroom. She interpreted this disregard and lack of acknowledgment as related to their racial and gender differences. She also recalled a supervisor who, despite stating that she did a good job, disagreed with her teaching style, a style Latoya described as "culturally responsive." The teacher felt her style was not adaptable for multiple settings and, specifically, that Latoya's style did not relate to a predominantly White suburban population. Latoya's experiences and the feedback she received in these settings served to perpetuate the notion of "urban" and the students and teachers associated with it as somehow different than and less acceptable than the norm, which was defined by suburban, predominantly White student and teacher populations.

Natasha and Latoya talked about how difficult it was to get an urban placement or to get assigned in a classroom with a Black female cooperating teacher. One of their peers encountered roadblocks from the Practicum and Field Placement Office when she pressed for a placement with a Black teacher. This student, like Natasha and Latoya, really wanted to work with a Black female cooperating teacher, but the Office claimed that there were not any suitable placements available:

Natasha: I don't understand why this is such a big deal if we want to teach in urban schools and with Black teachers for our full pracs when all White students aren't requesting urban placements for the full prac—

Latoya: —they only want to be in an urban setting for pre-pracs. They ain't tryin' to be in an urban school for a full semester.

Natasha and Latoya did not understand the lack of responsiveness from the Practicum Office when, ultimately, they located Black teachers with whom to work. However, they had to identify these teachers on their own. Natasha worked in a

second grade classroom with a Cape Verdean female teacher, and Latoya worked with a Cape Verdean male teacher and a Latina bilingual teacher. Their desire to work in urban settings with teachers of color represented their underlying beliefs that culturally responsive and relevant teaching (Gay 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995) and Afrocentric and African-centered pedagogies (Asante, 1987; Murrell, 2002) do exist and that there are exemplars of such pedagogies in practice in urban schools. These were curriculum theories that they did not feel the teacher education program fully covered. This was magnified by their dissatisfaction with the teacher education program's attempt at providing opportunities for them to work with teachers of color and teachers who effectively work with diverse student populations. Diversifying field placements so that such pedagogies and curriculum theories were prominent in the experiences of preservice teachers was not an articulated goal of the mission of the teacher education program. In this way, the idea of teaching as a White, monocultural, and monolingual discourse was promulgated within this teacher education program.

"This So-Called Social Justice"

> *How can we teach our children about equality and social justice if there are still many schools that don't embrace it?*
>
> —*Angela*

Social justice teacher education focuses on preparing teachers to address social injustices that persist in schools. Social justice teacher education means preparing teachers who will be committed to creating more just and equitable teaching and learning experiences that close access, opportunity, and achievement gaps (Theoharis, 2009). The theme of "teaching for social justice" was a deeply ingrained principle in our teacher education program. It was an idea that was talked about and incorporated into each course in the curriculum. In the mission statement for the teacher education program, the theme of "promoting social justice" defined teaching as a political act and established the role of the teacher as one with the responsibility of challenging social inequities. It would be nearly impossible for a student to graduate from this teacher education program without having some thoughts about this idea. For example, each semester, the School of Education's Practicum and Supervision Office published a newsletter about various events in the program. In one edition, the authors published student quotes from student teacher reflection portfolios about "What Teaching for Social Justice Means to Me." Some students wrote that the theory of social justice was present in every course and that they put this theory into practice in their practicum experiences. One student wrote:

> Teaching for Social Justice requires great patience, flexibility, and the ability to change at a moment's notice. It requires conscious decision-making

> when it comes to creating lesson objectives, choosing culturally relevant materials, creating assessments, and setting the tone for the classroom environment. Most of all, it requires holding each student to the same high standards for academic success.

Other students related social justice to issues of diversity and the need to recognize differences among their students, while others connected social justice to the role of teachers as social activists working toward equity in schools.

However, while students in this teacher education program were able to articulate what "teaching for social justice" means and to write about it in course papers and in journal reflections, these articulations were often contradicted in practice. Latoya and Natasha were often frustrated by the ways their White peers would reference this term "social justice" in one utterance and say something overtly racist and classist in the next. They felt that, in practice, "social justice" for their White peers was seen as "community service" or "missionary work." Latoya was taking an elective course on social justice, and part of the course requirement was to complete a service learning practicum. Latoya described to me and Natasha the kinds of dialogues that took place in her classes between herself and her White peers:

Latoya: I was like, "Excuse me, you're white, you're white . . . Your view point is very different from the people who actually live it. It's easy for you . . . it's easy for you to say that these things are happening, all these great things are happening, because it doesn't . . . it doesn't impact your life." This is something . . . this is something that me, as a person of color, lives every day. So how can you say that things are great here? You need to be in the people's shoes that you're talking about.

Natasha: You go for a couple hours once a week and then you bounce back to your prissy little life—

Latoya: —and that's what I'm sayin. That's when I was like, "You know, I'm very happy that you do all these things . . . I'm glad, I'm glad for you. I'm glad that you feel like you're doing a lot for the community" . . .

Natasha: And when you leave [here], are you gonna continue to do any of these things? Are you going to go back into your little bubble?

Latoya: And that's the other thing the class is about . . . once you go on these little service trips, what's the aftermath of it? What happens afterwards, are you still helping that community?

In these kinds of exchanges, Latoya felt that her peers viewed service as another bullet to add to their resumes. The discourse of social justice in the teacher education program was, according to Latoya and Natasha, merely a theory disconnected from practice and only served to further perpetuate the notion of Whiteness as dominant and superior to non-White discourses.

Angela, Latoya, and Natasha each commented on the visible nature of Whiteness in the program. They were keenly aware that the majority of students in their program were White females, and they wondered about this reality in the context of urban education. They also questioned this reality in terms of the school's mission for social justice. Angela mentioned that she was not sure what the issue was, but something bothered her about the overwhelming presence of White women in the program and in P–12 schools. One of the questions I asked each of the preservice teachers was: How does your cultural and linguistic identity affect how you teach? More specifically, does being a Latina or an African American woman impact how you teach and the ways your students respond to you and your teaching? When I asked Angela this question, she started to talk about the myth of "this so-called social justice" in the teacher education program.

> I can't pinpoint it, but I just get an ill feeling in certain . . . contexts. This morning I was thinking about the fact that there are so many White women teaching at this school . . . Teachers don't know what these kids go through at home. They think the fact that a kid gets free lunch means something. I got free lunch because my mother worked the system. Parents don't read to their kids but that doesn't make them any less prepared or less literate or less intelligent . . . All of the documentation that [the university] requires doesn't really represent my teaching. They don't really see what actually goes on when I teach. Like one day, one of my kids was crying when we were lining up for recess. I asked him what was wrong and he was crying because he was hungry because his dad forgot to bring his lunch. So, I pulled him out of line and went and got him a lunch.

Angela questioned whether her White peers would do the same thing. While other preservice teachers in the teacher education cite "patience, flexibility, and the ability to change at a moment's notice" as characteristics of teaching for social justice, Angela did not feel that her White peers would have the intuitive ability to observe and act on the needs of all students. From her experiences in practica, the White teachers did not engage with the students in the same way. Just as Latoya described her teaching style as "culturally responsive," Angela too felt that being Latina and a Spanish and English bilingual speaker allowed her to relate to the school and home experiences of her students in ways that her White female peers could not and did not. Being able to speak in the home language of many of her students created a connection among Angela, her students, and her students' parents. She described her approach as being comfortable, which helped students to feel at ease with her. Social justice was more than a visit to an urban site one to two times a week for a semester. Angela's interactions with her students transcended beyond the school setting into the neighborhood. It was not uncommon for Angela to see students in the grocery store or at church on weekends. For her, these interactions and activities were the everyday materializations of social justice.

For Angela, Latoya, and Natasha, social justice was more than just an idea or a principle in a mission statement. Social justice was not a choice or an option. To say "teaching for social justice" suggests that there is another way to teach. The experiences of Natasha, Latoya, and Angela point to the urgent need for teacher education programs to move away from social justice as an "add-on" commodity, similar to the tendency for teacher education programs to unintentionally present notions of multiculturalism and diversity as prepackaged curricula and strategies (Haddix, 2015; King, 1991; Sleeter & Grant, 1987). These preservice teachers expressed the idea that effective teaching grounded in teachers' own commitments to and histories of community engagement is social justice. In other words, teaching that continually acknowledges the academic, social, and political dimensions of the classroom is social justice.

Focus on Classroom and Behavior Management

Part of the curriculum requirements for the teacher education major was the completion of several classes in behavior management and classroom management. There was a huge focus on classroom and behavior management in teacher education, and this focus is exemplified in the school setting. Historically, the culture of school values a classroom that looks orderly and on task. For many educators, the image of students sitting quietly and neatly at their desks represents order. In many P–12 schools in the United States, we have a "silent" cultural tradition, one where silence and order are superior (Lortie, 1975). "Time on Task" is reflected by students silently sitting at their desks and working on assignments. Angela and I often talked about how she felt her classroom management and style of discipline differed from that of her cooperating teacher. Yet as a preservice teacher being observed and evaluated, Angela was in a situation where she had to adapt to the systems that were in place by her cooperating teacher and the culture for classroom and behavior management historically and socially situated throughout the entire school.

While Angela admired her cooperating teacher's high level of organization and consistency, she felt at times that her approach to classroom and behavior management was disconnected from the needs of the students. For example, the cooperating teacher implemented a "green light, yellow light, red light" system of behavior management. The second grade students all began their day in the "green light" category. Any small infraction, such as talking out of turn, not paying attention, or appearing restless, could result in the student's name being placed in the "yellow light" zone. This signified a warning. Students with additional infractions moved to the "red light" zone and suffered various consequences, such as "no recess" or "time out." The system gave the students opportunities to make mistakes, and the students understood that different actions were perceived with varying degrees of seriousness. The cooperating teacher constantly reprimanded students and threatened that their names would be moved toward the "red light." Classroom and

behavior management were at the core of her cooperating teacher's approach. This was no surprise to Angela since her cooperating teacher was also a graduate of this teacher education program where Angela felt there was a significant emphasis on classroom management and discipline throughout their curriculum. The cooperating teacher's system for behavior management was well organized. Yet covertly, it conveyed a message to the students that they had several instances and opportunities to "mess up" or make mistakes.

Angela's practicum supervisor observed that when Angela was in charge of the class, the students were remarkably quiet and engaged. Angela did not feel the need to constantly reprimand or yell at the students to get them to settle down as she noticed her cooperating teacher needing to do. For Angela and Natasha, both teaching in second grade classrooms in urban school settings, classroom and behavior management was not a big issue. They each seemed to naturally transition into their role as teachers, maintaining high levels of student engagement. They each exhibited discipline styles that were nurturing yet firm, mirroring the kinds of discipline the students might encounter at home. For example, Natasha often gave students "the look" if they appeared to be getting out of line. During one of my observations, Natasha was giving instructions to the students, and I witnessed her delivery of "the look":

Natasha: You may line up to get it. Do not bumrush my basket, please. You can take one—
(She pauses, giving students who moved prematurely "the look.")
Natasha: Did I tell anyone to move yet? (She shakes her head as she asks the question.)
Students: (mumbling quietly to themselves): No.

"The look" consisted of Natasha pausing in mid-sentence, placing a hand on her hip, and giving the students a direct and firm stare. This look communicated "stop what you are doing right now because you do not want to know what will happen if you don't." This linguistic behavior is one common in African American female discourse (Foster, 1995; Lanehart, 2002; Richardson, 2003) and represents the kinds of "othermothering" (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 2002; Case, 1997; Foster, 1993) that Black female teachers, like Natasha, provide for their students. This form of discipline and behavior management is akin to the kinds of discipline experienced by many students of color at home. Natasha did not need to give students multiple warnings; in one instance, "the look" brought an end to any further movement. This was an example of how Natasha found space, within the practicum setting, to enact an approach that differed from both the teacher education discourse and that of the elementary school.

Latoya had a different experience with classroom and behavior management, partly because she was teaching at the secondary level. Latoya's classroom exhibited the contrast—a "noisy" cultural tradition. During the first 15 minutes of

each class session, Latoya yelled at students to sit down and be quiet so that she could get the lesson started. Before she could teach, she felt order needed to be in place. Latoya was bothered by the systems of discipline set up in urban schools that "coddled" students when she knew their parents would not stand for some of the behaviors she witnessed students get away with at school. Latoya felt that social justice was about making sure your kids get a quality education; it was about enforcing classroom management and discipline that did not undermine the rules and norms that were a part of "urban" kids' home settings.

On one of my school visits to observe Latoya teaching in the Sheltered English Immersion classroom, Latoya was invited to be a guest speaker for a secondary curriculum and instruction class, a teacher education course that met in Latoya's practicum high school. This class of pre-practicum students participated in a dialogue with Latoya about teaching in an urban school. The most frequently asked questions were about challenges with setting boundaries and discipline:

Student: Did you have any challenges with boundaries and discipline?

Latoya: I feel like being firm. If you ever see my class, I'm a very firm teacher and I believe in, um, being . . . being a little bit hard core at first and then easing your way in because if you're too nice at first they won't take you seriously, especially the males. I feel like I was firm at first. It was like, "Ms. Jenkins, no, unh unh, that's not gonna happen." So . . .

Student: And, what about whole class management?

Latoya: Umm, I know that's like a stigma against urban settings, like the classes are so wild. But, I feel like, you have to, when you come to these schools, just like . . . it's different . . . you might come from a different culture so there's different traditions, rules . . . they're also different, uhh . . . what's the word I'm looking for . . . the way people act. So there are certain things that you might do in your culture that other people don't. So I feel like a lot of teachers come into schools like this and they don't understand that there is a cultural difference. These kids aren't just acting bad. That's just the way they are. For example, a lot of the Latino students, especially from the Caribbean, are very loud and active, and that's just the way it is in their countries. That's the way it is. That's the culture. Very loud. Exciting. It's not that they're being disrespectful or bad. It's just, that's the way they are. So, I think that's something that you need to think of if you consider teaching in an urban setting. You can't just say, "Oh, these kids are bad." It's just a cultural difference.

In this exchange, Latoya wanted to diffuse the stereotypes about urban schools and the students who attend them, specifically the perceptions that these students are "wild" and misbehaved. She made direct connections between the students' social behaviors and their cultural and linguistic heritages, where, for example, the characteristic of

being "loud" (see Fordham, 1993) might not be viewed as negative behavior. She also stressed the importance of predominantly White teacher education students gaining a critical awareness about cultural and linguistic differences (Alim, 2005; Godley et al., 2006) and its impact on their experiences with urban students. Latoya's discourse for classroom and behavior management, in this instance, offered different explanations than the dominant discourse within teacher education.

One of the assessment outcomes for the practicum experience was the development of an inquiry-based project. The preservice teachers had to develop a research question to explore while in their practicum and provide an evidence-based analysis of a relevant issue in teaching. For her practicum inquiry project, Latoya did not want to explore the same question that her White peers often did when teaching in an urban setting—the question of classroom management with urban kids. She felt that such questions perpetuated the idea that urban kids somehow needed to be controlled in and outside school settings. She felt that students in suburban placements did not take up the same kinds of questions about classroom and behavior management nearly as much, furthering the dichotomous treatment of "urban" and "suburban" in teacher education discourse. The focus on discipline for students of color in urban contexts also connects with longstanding research that shows that students who are traditionally marginalized in school settings receive steady diets of behavior and discipline that circumvents their engagement with rigorous intellectual activity (Oakes, 1985).

Teaching the Right Method or Strategy

I don't know what strategy it is . . . it's what I did with my students.

—Latoya

Another prominent discourse in this teacher education program was the use and naming of particular teaching methods, strategies, and pedagogy. Students in this teacher education program were well equipped in naming methods and strategies and completing various teacher education processes. For example, each preservice teacher talked about all the "busy work" they had to do in the teacher education program and the constant paperwork. They each noted that the teacher education program consisted of a lot of routine and process such as daily reflecting and journaling, activities they disdained. When I asked Natasha if she would share some of her practicum journal reflections with me, she initially said she did not think I would find them useful because she felt these reflections did not truthfully represent her thoughts and ideas. Instead, she completed them regularly to meet the expectations of the practicum supervisor. She told me, "I just write what they want to read."

Natasha, Latoya, and Angela each learned to use the "lexicon" of the dominant discourses in teacher education—buzzwords and phrases that signified one's legitimate participation in this community. Latoya described an incident in one

of her teacher education classes where she was describing to the class an activity she engaged her students in during a lesson. Another student in the class said, "Oh, that's the think/pair/share strategy." Latoya later told me, "I don't know what strategy it is . . . it's what I did with my students." She was annoyed that her peers threw around terms and labels to demonstrate a certain kind of competency and knowledge. Many of the strategies and activities she used with her students were not learned in teacher education classes; they were drawn from the experiential knowledge Latoya brought to the classroom, knowledge not validated by the teacher education program (Connelly & Clandinin, 1995; Grimmet & MacKinnon, 1992). Latoya was a keen observer of students and therefore was able to incorporate activities based on the needs of the students on any given day, at any given moment. For example, I observed a lesson with her students where she wanted them to review some political terms like "foreign policy," "isolationism," and "neutrality," but instead of a formal review of definitions or a question-and-answer-style lesson, she transitioned the class into a debate-style discussion about whether or not students agreed with the United States' war on Iraq. When Latoya posed the question, "Foreign policy in the US, do you believe we're isolated or neutral, or are they similar?" to her ninth grade history class, none of the students answered. Knowing that the students had some insights on this topic, she adjusted the format of the class:

Latoya: Everybody get up out of your seat and to the back!
(She had the students rearrange the class with desks on either side of the classroom to facilitate an "agree or disagree" activity.)

Latoya: The war in Iraq is justified. We should be there. Agree or disagree?
(Students began to offer their opinions along with evidence to support their ideas. The class was engaged in a discussion about the causes and reasons for the war in Iraq.)

Student: We're the Martha Stewart of America!

Latoya: Who knows the real reason we went to war?

Student: We didn't attack them cuz we need their oil; George Bush is friends with the president of Saudi Arabia.

Student: George Bush, he be cheatin' them out their money.

Latoya: Is it just economy based that we have problems. Or is it something else?

Student: Bush, he wanna be a little battle hero or whateva.

Latoya: Put out there, does anyone think the war is religion based? Do you think Americans have any biases or wrong ideas about other people's religions?

Student: America does not care about anybody else.

Student: Everybody that's Haitian or Hindu has to be a taxi driver. Or Spanish people has to own a Laundromat.

Latoya: Let me ask another question about foreign policy.

Student: Make it be good.

By changing the format of the class discussion, Latoya was able to engage the students in meaningful, critical analysis of a current and relevant event. The "agree or disagree" format enlivened motivation and eagerness in the students. Latoya talked about the need for teachers to be flexible and to be able to adjust their lesson when they see that something is not working. This "agree or disagree" format was not a strategy Latoya had listed on her lesson plan for the day. In that moment, she believed that format would be most accommodating of the academic needs of the students.

Natasha ran her second grade classroom like a well-oiled machine. The students seemed to move seamlessly from one activity to the next. There was a strict routine and schedule, already implemented by Natasha's cooperating teacher, so Natasha did her best to ensure that the systems of structure and classroom control remained in place. As Natasha attempted to acculturate the dominant discourse around methods and strategies in this practicum classroom, she experienced some trepidation. I observed her several times as she instructed and worked with students during their writing workshop. She did so with confidence, despite her expressed uncertainty about the effectiveness of her approach.

> I find that I feel very unsure of myself during conferencing with the students . . . during Writer's Workshop. I am never sure if I am asking pertinent questions, assessing students' responses properly, or even gathering relevant information. For instance, this week during Writer's Workshop I met with a group to go over their writing. I spoke with them about the positive aspects of their writing as well as some things to work on in their writing. However, how will one meeting with the student benefit him or her? Will they really internalize my suggestions? Besides mini-lessons, what should my next step be to make sure that the student is indeed progressing?

In the writing workshop, Natasha focused on teaching students how to employ effective grammar and mechanics. Her unit objectives were formed around the state frameworks for English language arts. In the writing workshop, Natasha's teaching objectives were to meet the English language arts standards, to help students become better writers, and to maintain a well-managed classroom. While trying to effectively teach writing, Natasha was also trying to maintain a level of classroom and behavior management. This constant negotiation often resulted in her voicing contradictory messages to the students about the nature of writing and composition.

Natasha facilitated the writing workshop in her practicum classroom two to three times a week. During one particular writing workshop, Natasha was focusing on helping the students write a story about an important person, place, or event. To help the students brainstorm story ideas, Natasha delivered a brief mini-lesson with clearly articulated expectations for their writing process:

> What we're going to be doing now is today we're going to start a new list the same way that we always do it. If you would like to use the organizer

> that Ms. A uses, that's fine. If you would like to just go ahead and write it in your journal the way we do it, that's also fine. So what you're gonna do, the same way that we always do it. You're gonna pick a different special person or special place that you have not done yet, ok? So a friend, a cousin, if you want to talk about the grocery store . . . any place that is a special place or a special person to you. If you decide to do it in your journal, you'll put your date on the paper. You'll put either the special place or the special person. And then you'll give me four or five things that either happened at that place or happened with that person. And then you'll circle the one you want to talk about and draw your picture. The same way we always do it, ok? If you would like to use the organizer you'll do the same thing. In the box, you'll fill in the special person or the place. You'll fill in four either special things you've done with that person or special things that have happened at that place. You'll circle one and then you'll draw a picture in your journal. There, we're not doing anything different than we always do, ok? Does anyone have any questions about what you're gonna do with your list?

Natasha introduced the traditional writing process to the students to help move their writings toward publication—brainstorming ideas and recording them in seeds journals, drafting a story in prose, and then drawing a picture illustration. To get the students going in the writing workshop, Natasha gave the students very clear and direct instructions about what their stories must include. Natasha did not explain the writing process to the students; she directed them in the writing process. She was very explicit and direct about what the students needed to do in order to write an effective story. She also gave the students ideas about "what a good writer does":

Natasha: Boys and girls, can I have your eyes up here . . . What does a good writer do? What's something a good writer does?

Student: They write good sentences.

Natasha: Go head, mama! And good sentences should be in order. Good sentences have capital letters at the beginning of the sentences. Good sentences have a period, a question mark, or an ex-cla-ma-tion mark at the end of our good sentences. Ok? So if everyone's is good . . . Go back and reread your writing. When I come around to read your paper, I want to be able to say, "Oh my God, I know you took your time and I can tell you put a lot of energy and pride into your work." I want to see people reading their work and checking to make sure everything is perfect, ok? When I come around, I should not see a paper that doesn't have a capital letter or an end mark. I should not see stories that don't have a beginning or an end. Ok? When I check your paper, you'll have everything I asked for. So everyone go back to your story and make sure you have those things.

After she gave students directions, Natasha worked with students one on one, reading and commenting on their stories. I observed her working with a female student who did not think she had a story to write. Natasha encouraged the student by telling her, "I want you to write the story just like you told it to me. Don't worry about the beginning, middle, and end." Natasha assessed that the student was having difficulty writing her story because she was trying to fit her story into the format that Natasha provided the students during the mini-lesson.

As she conferenced with students, there were low murmurs among students as they worked on their writing. Natasha attempted to keep students on task with direct expectations: "I shouldn't be hearing any talking." Natasha was attempting to teach about writing yet manage her classroom at the same time. Her approach was just as much about classroom management as it was about writing instruction. Natasha asked the students:

> Do good writers write and talk at the same time? If you're moving your lips, you're not thinking about your writing. We have seven more minutes to work, so we need to close our mouths and get to working.

Natasha's message to the students was contradicting. Unintentionally, Natasha told the students that being quiet demonstrated that they were diligently working on their writing. Yet when she went around to each student one on one, she noticed that several students were having difficulties getting their ideas down on paper. So, to encourage their writing process, she would tell the students to "tell me your story." So, in essence, she encouraged talk so that they could write. In this case, talking meant that students were not writing. But, to move them along, she encouraged their talk in teacher-student conferences.

In an interview, I asked Natasha to articulate her beliefs about writing instruction. Natasha expressed wanting a writing workshop environment where students worked together and talked about their writing, suggesting the idea that writing is socially mediated or influenced by others through social interaction (Vygotsky, 1986). However, because of the technocratic and logistical demands of teaching, particularly the expectation that her classroom be well managed and behaved, Natasha did not have time to accommodate the multi-voiced nature of writing processes and model peer collaboration as an effective means for the craft of writing. In one-on-one conferences with each student, Natasha encouraged students to simply tell their story. However, her broader message to the entire class was that "Good writers don't talk." In our conversations, Natasha and I talked about how she might structure writing workshops to encourage young children to talk with one another about their writing, not just with her, the teacher. We also talked about being ok with the murmurs and "noise" in the classroom, as Dyson (2005) suggests. Dyson aims to open up for reconsideration a central issue in language arts education: "how we as educators think about the relationship between oral and written language and why that matters for what, how, and who we teach"

(pp. 149–150). Moving away from preceding views on the relationship between oral and written language, she proposes that "speech, or more accurately, situated voices are rich resources for composing and performing" (p. 153). In this new perspective, Dyson urges that there is a need for more "sharing time" in the literacy curriculum, pointing out that "it is listening to and responding to situated voices that seems central to child play, to children's entry into composing, and to the spoken word poetry of their (metaphoric) big brothers and sisters" (p. 161). Silence negates the notion of writing as "performance"—as sociocultural practice.

Natasha was so focused on meeting the expectations of the writing workshop process while simultaneously managing classroom and student behaviors that her desire to encourage student voice and interaction was challenged. When Natasha asked the students, "What do good writers do?" she was covertly asking them, "What does a good student do?" Natasha was inadvertently teaching the students how to perform being good students in the official school context. This was an unintended consequence of Natasha's applying the methods, strategies, and pedagogies learned in the teacher education program. While she received stellar evaluations in the classroom and field experiences, her appropriation of the dominant discourse on teaching, in this instance, contradicted her own primary discourse about ways of becoming and being in the writing classroom. As Bartolome (1994) points out, "Although it is important to identify useful and promising instructional . . . strategies, it is erroneous to assume blind replication of instructional programs or teacher mastery of particular teaching methods, in and of themselves, will guarantee successful student learning" (p. 174). She notes that this emphasis on "methods as solutions" suggests that, especially when working with culturally and linguistically diverse students, finding the right teaching methods, strategies, and prepackaged curricula implies that student achievement is "a technical issue" (p. 174). In other words, "one size fits all" instructional recipes reduce pedagogy and curriculum to a "bag of tricks" and negate the role of teacher attitudes, motivations, and self-efficacy (Bartolome, 1994). These examples from Natasha's and Latoya's student teaching also point to what is at stake as teachers are more and more narrowly evaluated by standardized measures of accountability. There is a greater risk for teachers like Natasha to improvise or be more flexible in their teaching strategies and to attune their methods to the present needs of their students.

Toward Critical Multicultural Teacher Education

> *I feel like I can relate to them. They look like me. Teachers that look like the students—they don't see Black or Latino professionals.*
>
> *—Latoya*

Much of the research literature on teacher education focuses on the cultural and linguistic mismatch between teachers and their students, situating the needs and

experiences of Black and Latina teachers peripherally to mainstream efforts in teacher education. The focus on bridging the cultural mismatch inversely negates the fact that some preservice teachers share linguistic and cultural norms with culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. However, another kind of mismatch exists when preservice teachers from non-dominant linguistic and cultural groups, like Natasha, Latoya, and Angela, find themselves in the midst of teacher education programs that position them, and members of their primary discourse groups, as "other." While current discussions in educational research literature are replete with examples that highlight a widening distance between the cultural and linguistic experiences of incoming teachers and that of their students and the harmful consequences of this distance, there is little emphasis on the diminishing presence of students of color in teacher education, those preservice teachers who often share linguistic and cultural norms with today's students. It cannot be assumed that teachers of color are culturally affiliated with their students. Additionally, teachers sharing cultural and linguistic knowledge with their students do not necessarily know how to translate this knowledge into culturally relevant pedagogy. Without solutions lying in simple demographic changes, teacher education has a responsibility to not just engage an assumed White teacher professionate, but complicate how teachers and students interact within racialized, gendered, and classed identities. Integral to teacher education reform efforts is that a more racial, linguistic, cultural, and ethnic diversity is needed and that the presence of such diversity has positive effects on the school performance of *all* students.

How can teacher educators move closer to actualizing the intended goals of progressive frameworks like multicultural education and "teaching for social justice"? How can making visible the diverse histories, backgrounds, and experiences that preservice teachers bring with them as they enter teacher education programs transform our practice? How can we move beyond the idea that "teaching for social justice" is a mere check-off point and toward the belief that it has real potential to transform new teacher practice? The exemplars presented in this chapter disrupt the everyday dialogue and discourse on the notion of "teaching for social justice." The experiences and perspectives of preservice teachers like Natasha, Latoya, and Angela cause us, teacher educators, to pause when we say we are preparing all teachers to teach an increasingly culturally, racially, and linguistically diverse student population. We overemphasize the White, female, suburban monolingual teacher and the "urban" student dichotomy in research so much so that it neglects the pluralistic perspectives that many new teachers bring to teacher education programs. While many teacher education programs foreground multicultural teacher education, teaching for social justice, culturally relevant pedagogy, among other liberatory curricular and pedagogical aims, this often occurs without complicating the racial, cultural, and linguistic perspectives that preservice teachers bring to their learning to teach processes or without troubling our own positionalities. Even when considering the majority White, monolingual female teacher force, not every White female student is the same. They have a range of

experiences and perspectives as well. There is not just one kind of "urban" kid or one kind of "urban" school. In short, there is not a "one size fits all" formula for teaching for social justice. The teacher education community must challenge efforts to commodify multicultural teacher education and social justice by refusing to package it up for easy consumption. A critical multicultural education that addresses issues of diversity and social justice at the systemic level is essential to transformative practice in teacher training.

This is particularly crucial given the P–12 student population that we serve. Many students enter my classes with the expectation that I will give them pre-packaged, ready-made solutions to add to their teacher bags. They want strategies, strategies, and more strategies. They want to know what works, and at the same time, they fail to realize that what works for one student will not work for all. Many also do not realize that a paradigm that attempts to be everything to everyone consequently becomes nothing for anyone, allowing the status quo to prevail. When new and beginning teachers believe that multicultural teaching, teaching for social justice, or culturally relevant pedagogy, among other so-called progressive pedagogies, are methods that can be packaged up and ready to go, whose educational experiences are under siege and at risk? When preservice teachers feel that "diversity" is a goal to achieve, check off their list, and put into their teaching portfolio, the intended goals of multicultural education and other critical pedagogies are undone. If these "one size fits all" pedagogies do not work, the blame can easily be placed on students and can both reify and perpetuate deficit rhetoric that positions students of color as "failing" failures.

However, my goal is not to prove that bringing in more teachers of color will promote positive learning outcomes for racially and linguistically minoritized children or that that is the finite solution to lessening the growing achievement gap among White children and children of color. While the examination of Black and Latina preservice teachers' development of teacher identities offers valuable insights about learning to teach, I am not suggesting that Natasha, Latoya, and Angela are more effective as teachers than their White counterparts merely because of their cultural and linguistic insights. Instead, creating a more diverse teaching force and set of teacher educators should emphasize that *all* students experience a more accurate picture of what it means to live and work in a multicultural and democratic society.

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5

HYBRID TEACHER IDENTITIES

Sustaining Our Racial and Linguistic Selves in the Classroom[1]

English is often put above other languages. It puts students like me in a very difficult place. They want me to know and use English but they are not taking into consideration that not only English informs my identity as a student.

I am not just a student . . . I am a student of color with additional tasks and responsibilities.

Sometimes I just want to be a student in a classroom.

I can't just show up. I can't just leave. I carry things with me as I leave placement sites.

The prior quotes from preservice teachers of color whom I've worked with over my career as a teacher educator reflect many of the themes prevalent in the research literature on the experiences of students of color in teacher education programs. Culture and language influence their teacher identity formations; preservice teachers of color experience being racially spotlighting in classroom spaces as the "native informant"; and the shifting between discourse communities is not seamless or without consequences.

In the last quote, the student expresses that she carries things with her as she travels from context to context—she can't just go into student teaching placements, work with students who look like her and share similar backgrounds, observe the inner workings and politics of urban schooling, and then pick up her bags, catch the campus shuttle, and move on with her life. This notion of "carrying things" resonates with me deeply as I understand this action to be one main reason that deterred me away from teaching early on in my career. I experienced a kind of cognitive dissonance when I worked in school spaces. On one hand, I absolutely loved working with mostly Black students in an urban environment and feeling like I was able to connect with them through our explorations of critical multicultural texts and our multi-genre and multi-modal compositions

(see Vasudevan & DeJaynes, 2013). But, at the same time, I was working in school spaces where I was the only teacher of color or one of the only ones, with constant negotiations of racial micro- and macro-aggressions from colleagues to the larger sociopolitical structures at play within and around the school context. I saw and felt my effectiveness as a teacher with the students, yet I felt disempowered from actualizing any real systematic changes within the broader school context because of my social location based on my racial and linguistic identity as well as my age and tenure. But I carried with me the stories and experiences of my students—they affected me in ways that I know were distinctly different from some of my colleagues who could more smoothly transition from their school day, leaving "these kids" behind as they traveled to their suburban homes to care for their own children.

To sustain myself within school contexts, I needed to cultivate hybrid spaces that allowed for a disruption of this dissonance and that instead nurtured my desire to both work in the culturally responsive ways that proved most effective with my students and simultaneously stand confidently in my own racial and linguistic identity as I articulated being a teacher within a school context that attempted to marginalize and silence me. This is just one example of the discursive ways that Black and Latina preservice teachers create *hybrid* literate identities within a context where the teacher identity "toolkit" is tailor-made for the needs and interests of a predominantly White, English-monolingual, middle-class, female teacher population.

In this chapter, I take a close look at the discursive ways that Black and Latina preservice teachers reconcile tensions between their racial and linguistic identities and the construction of teacher identities in the current context of preservice teacher education in the United States. To better understand the role Black and Latina preservice teachers' experience as linguistically, racialized "others" and how this informs their constructions of teacher identities and their visions of what a teacher should be, I examine how such constructions are revealed through the study of language as representative of teacher identities. I present a critical discourse analysis of the language and literacy practices of preservice teachers of color who are nonstandard language and dialect speakers across diverse contexts within and beyond the university and school setting. Examination of their literacy and language practices elucidates a move beyond marginalization and inferiority toward agency and linguistic hybridity. Diversity in teacher education is one way to ensure this necessary move.

In what follows, I explore ways of framing teacher identities to address how my work extends conversations about teacher identity in literacy and English teacher education. Particularly, I discuss how theories of hybridity have been used to further understandings of identity and power in literacy research. Doing so allows me to explain how I use such theories to frame the current study of teacher identities as "dialogic" (Bakhtin, 1981), a constant dynamic interplay between one's home culture and a university/school culture. In this chapter, I focus more closely

on the language and literacy practices of Angela and Natasha, who demonstrate contextualized, deliberate uses of language to enact hybrid literate identities. In doing so, I offer ways to extend conversations about possibilities that can result from purposeful engagement of hybrid discourses of teachers from diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds in literacy education.

Hybrid Discourses

There is a growing body of research that looks at teacher identity development through the theoretical lens of hybridity (e.g., Alsup, 2006; Britzman, 2003). Alsup (2006), for example, draws on theories of hybridity to refer to the engagement in discourses that embrace contraries as "borderland discourse," or what she terms "narratives of tension." From her study of the borderland narratives of six preservice teachers, all White women, Alsup (2006) found that central to the new teachers beginning the development of a professional identity was a constant engagement with narratives of tension between their personal histories and their acquiring of new teacher identities. These narratives of tensions were viewed as a transformative discourse.

This transformative discourse is evidenced in theoretical work from educators and researchers of color who describe how individuals forge new languages to embrace multiple cultural and linguistic identities within dominant spaces (hooks, 1994). hooks writes that acculturating an academic discourse threatened her identification with African American Language and required a movement toward a borderland, or hybrid, discourse:

> To heal the splitting of mind and body, we marginalized and oppressed people attempt to recover ourselves and our experiences in language. We seek to make a place for intimacy. Unable to find such a place in standard English, we create the ruptured, broken, unruly speech of the vernacular. (p. 175)

She continues:

> When I need to say words that do more than simply mirror or address dominant reality, I speak Black vernacular. There, in that location, we make English do what we want it to do. We take the oppressor's language and turn it against itself. We make our words a counter-hegemonic speech, liberating ourselves in language. (p. 175)

Beyond acquiring secondary discourses, "hybrid" discourses can reconfigure power relations and create new linguistic and social spaces.

Several literacy scholars in education draw on theories of hybridity by using the concept of "third space" (e.g., see Gutierrez, Baquedano-Löpez, & Turner, 1997;

Hull & Schultz, 2001; Moje et al., 2004) to discuss transformative teaching practices that integrate home and community knowledges and Discourses of historically marginalized groups into formalized educational institutions. These scholars have employed the construct "third space" (see Soja, 1996) to conceptualize new cultural forms, practices, spaces, and identities created from a synthesis of diverse elements in formal institutions. Third space symbolizes a move beyond stagnant binaries, such as dominant/inferior, Black/White, student/teacher, standard/nonstandard, and Spanish/English, toward a hybrid whole. Similarly, my analysis of the discursive practices of Black and Latina preservice teachers moved beyond notions of dividedness and marginality and toward a third space—multiple languages and identities merging together.

Here, I adopt the definition of hybridity as the confluence of multiple discourses—a *constant* "crossing over" of boundaries that results in richer, and not inferior, beings. Hybrid discourses are not simply code-switching or the alternation between two linguistic codes, but systematic, strategic, affiliative, and sense-making processes. Drawing on Anzaldúa (1987/1999) and Bakhtin (1981), I find a hybridity framework useful in reimagining Black and Latina preservice teachers no longer on the margins, but forging new territories. In *Borderlands/La Frontera: The New Mestiza*, Anzaldúa (1987/1999) discusses the merging of two worlds that form a third country, what she calls a "border culture," where

> borders are set up to define the places that are safe and unsafe, to distinguish *us* from *them* . . . A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural boundary. It is in a constant state of transition. (p. 25)

Bakhtin (1981) defines this constructing of new worlds as the encounter between "two different linguistic consciousnesses" (p. 358) and states that hybrid utterances bring together and promote dialogue between diverse worldviews. Both Bakhtin and Anzaldúa inform my use of hybridity as a theoretical framework in that this lens illuminates my understanding of the experiences of Angela and other preservice teachers who are attempting to make sense of how their bilingual and bicultural identities conflict with their newly acquired teacher identities. In contrast to "linguistic terrorism" (Anzaldúa, 1987/1999)—the suppression or denial of one's cultural and linguistic heritage—theories of hybridity foreground the ways Black and Latina preservice teachers "fashion their own gods," "chisel their own faces," and claim space, "making a new culture—una cultura mestiza—with [their] own lumber, [their] own bricks and mortar" (Anzaldúa, 1987/1999, p. 81). In this way, I draw on theories of hybridity to challenge essentialist treatment of teacher identity development, and I turn to the study of language and literacy practices of Black and Latina preservice teachers to illuminate how constant engagement with multiple worlds allows for transformative teacher discourses.

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Hybrid Teacher Discourses

I focus now on two of the preservice teacher participants—Natasha, who identified as a Black woman who is also a speaker of African American Language (AAL), and Angela, a Costa Rican woman who is a bilingual Spanish and English speaker. In my earlier discussions of them, I examine how they understand the dominant Discourses in their teacher education program and how they are positioned within and outside of these discourses. Here, I turn the gaze on how they articulated an awareness of differences in their language use across multiple contexts. They both not only articulated an awareness of differences in their language use across multiple contexts, but expressed tensions between their multiple linguistic worlds. These assertions prompted me to focus closely on the language and literacy practices of these two preservice teachers to answer the question of how Black and Latina preservice teachers mediate tensions between their racial and linguistic identities and the construction of teacher identities in the current context of preservice teacher education in the United States.

Using critical discourse analysis (CDA) (see Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Rogers, 2004) as an analytic tool, I examined transcripts of Natasha and Angela's discursive practices evidenced through videotaped and audiotaped observations, interviews and ongoing conversations, and archival data. The combination of ethnographic and sociolinguistic fieldwork with CDA provided a framework for macro- and micro-analysis of discursive practices across multiple contexts and for a move toward situated understanding of their hybrid literate identities. Further, it allowed for analytic movement between observations, interviews, and archival data to explain patterns that were made visible with CDA. In this way, different from other forms of discourse analysis, I moved beyond a sentence-level analysis of literacy and language practices of these preservice teachers and toward situated understanding of the hybrid discursive practices.

My analysis of hybrid discursive practices was twofold. First, I recursively read and re-read data sources to select excerpts of linguistic data for critical discourse analysis. I focused primarily on collected data that highlighted their literacy and language practices in two primary contexts: 1) their written and oral autobiographies (as told via interviews and conversations) about early language and literacy experiences, and 2) observations of student teaching in the second grade classroom. My decisions for selecting the excerpts were guided by the following criteria: 1) the language use was representative of the typicality of the preservice teacher's language and literacy practices across the three contexts, 2) the language use was particularly insightful to the research question, and 3) the language use differed from other typical instances, or exhibits what Rogers (2003) refers to as "tensions" within the data. I looked for instances that marked narratives of tension—salient examples of language and literacy practices that represented multiple ways of interacting, representing, and being exhibited by preservice teachers across multiple contexts. These were instances that coalesced their own reflections

on early educative experiences in the K–12 context, their articulated beliefs about the role of cultural and linguistic diversity in education, and enactments of these beliefs in their practice of becoming teachers.

In the second phase of data analysis, I adapted Rogers (2003) heuristic for analyzing orders of discourse, based on Fairclough's (2004) framework, in the identified instances of narratives of tension. Orders of discourse are the socially ordered set of genres, Discourses, and styles. Theories of hybridity suggest that, at times, there will be an overlapping and co-existing of multiple, sometimes competing discourses as well as conflicts within the ordering of genre, Discourse, and style, as illustrated by the double-sided arrows in the heuristic (see Rogers, 2004). To trace the orders of discourse—G for genre (ways of interacting), D for Discourse (ways of representing), and S for style (ways of being) (see Lewis & Ketter, 2004; Rogers, 2003)—I looked for moments in the linguistic data where multiple discourses coexisted—where genre, Discourse, and style intersected. To adequately analyze how hybrid identities were enacted by the women, I looked across linguistic, phonetic, intonation, and gestural properties of language, allowing for a more discursive, embodied, and spatial representation of their socially situated identities. Where relevant, I transcribed language use from observation and interview data phonetically and/or orthographically, coding phonetic variations, changes in tone, pitch, and stress, and the use of facial expressions and body movements. I augmented Fairclough's framework for tracing orders of discourse, which does not explicitly take into account physical properties of languages (see Fairclough, 2004). To do this, I employed additional sociolinguistic analytic tools (Tannen, 1984/2005) to illustrate my tracing of the orders of discourses for these two preservice teachers.

In the following sections, I present findings from the critical discourse analysis of the language and literacy practices of Natasha and Angela to illustrate the meshing and co-mingling of their cultural and linguistic identities with their conceptualizations of what a teacher should be—the forging of hybrid literate identities.

Natasha: "This Is Me and This Is How I Speak"

Natasha defined herself largely by her racial and linguistic background. When I asked her how she identified ethnically and linguistically, she made strong declarations about who she is and who she is becoming. Natasha proudly proclaimed her identity as a Black woman. She asserted in an interview: "I'm Black, I'm Black. There's no *African American* . . . I'm Black. I have no problems sayin it." I asked her why she did not relate to the term *African American*, and she felt that while she knows her origins are in Africa, she cannot personally trace her roots. For Natasha, "Black is kinda like all encompassin' of all of us. It's like a shared culture, shared language, shared music . . . it's kinda what brings us all together."

When I asked Natasha how she identified linguistically, she said if asked about her language, she would answer, "I speak English." She viewed terms like

ethnolinguistic minority as merely technical or scholarly. Her articulation of her understanding of her own racial and linguistic identity is represented in the following conversation between Natasha and me:

1	Why should I have to be a *ethnolinguistic minority*?	Question (G/S)/Minority (D)/ Pronoun (S)
2	I understand if you say like . . . African American vernacular language or Black American English	AAL (D)
3	You˅ know^	Affirmation (G)
4	Like, that's what draws us together	Bonding/Pronoun (S/S)
5	You˅ know^	Affirmation (G)
6	WHETHER YOU'RE FROM NEW YORK, CALI, MIDWEST	Rate of Speech (S)/Abbreviated (S)
7	It's something still there	
8	You˅ know^	Affirmation (G)
9	That we all have in common	Pronoun (S)
10	Whether I'm in my . . . little RA meeting	
11	Whether I'm meeting with the RD	
12	This is me	Declaration (G)/Black Woman/ AAL (D)/Strong Statement (S)
13	And this is how I speak	Strong Statement (S)
14	And I don't feel the need to turn it on and off	Strong Statement (S)/Code-switching (G)

In line 1, Natasha used the rhetorical strategy of questioning to assert that she was not an ethnolinguistic minority. She did not feel that being a speaker of African American Language or being a Black woman made her inferior to other cultural and linguistic groups. In this example, Natasha employed strong statements (lines 12–14) to declare her allegiance to AAL and her identity as a Black woman. She also challenged the notion that she needed to change in order to fit into different situations (lines 10–11). For Natasha, being Black or speaking AAL was not something that should be "turned on and off" (line 14). Regardless of the situation or the audience, Natasha declared, "This is me." From this declaration, I became particularly interested in the ways that Natasha asserted her identity as a Black woman and speaker of AAL in the context of the teacher education program. Despite her pride in her Blackness and her language, Natasha did acknowledge that she was able to use the "appropriate" language in any given context. For example, when needed, she shared, "I can still write a paper and it will be beautiful and use all that flowery language and blah, blah, blah." By "flowery language," Natasha was referring to the use of standard forms of English in academic writing. This signaled to me that she clearly understood that her use

of AAL was viewed differently in various contexts and with different audiences and participants (Ball & Lardner, 2005; Kinloch, 2005). This also suggested that she might experience some tensions between her primary discourse and the new teacher discourse.

From interviews with Natasha about her use of AAL, I learned that her use of AAL in certain contexts was deliberate and not necessarily stemming from her family and upbringing. Growing up, Natasha attended several different school settings because her family moved a lot during her childhood. Natasha began elementary school in Maryland, where the students and teachers were predominantly Black. In this school, the teachers integrated Black culture and identity in the school to encourage a strong sense of cultural pride among the children. In the middle of her second grade year, Natasha's family moved to Chicago, where she attended an elementary school where she was the only Black student in the school. After a year, her family returned to Maryland, and she returned to her first elementary school. During her middle school years, Natasha's family lived in Atlanta. Her school in Atlanta was more racially mixed than her elementary school experiences. Although all of her friends were Black, she interacted with the White students the most during the day because she was in all advanced-level classes.

The same was also true in high school. Despite constant transitioning between school settings, Natasha was a high-achieving student, always being placed in the "high" reading groups and scoring high on standardized tests. From middle school, she began to struggle with being labeled as "talking White" or being an "Oreo" (Natasha defined this label as meaning "Black on the outside, White on the inside") because of the way she spoke and the fact that she was always placed in the advanced classes. In high school, Natasha attempted to dispel such labels by being involved with the minority student group organizations as well as having social peers who were predominantly Black and Latino/a. However, her academic interactions were mainly with White students, those students who were also in the advanced classes. When she was in high school, she recalled using "that White girl voice" with teachers and peers. For Natasha, "talking Black" was a way for her to maintain membership in her social community (Kinloch, 2010). In order to be a legitimate participant in the Black student population, she developed allegiance to AAL.

This was a tall feat since, growing up, her mother constantly corrected her use of double negatives or words like *ain't* in her home context. Natasha was from a middle-class African American family. Both of her parents were college-educated, working professionals. Her mother worked as an elementary school teacher, and her father was the director of a non-profit youth organization. Natasha often talked about the importance of education in her family and in her community. Natasha developed a strong affiliation with AAL despite her mother's expectation that she speak "standard" English. She resisted against this expectation and developed her own consciousness around the use of AAL: "Even with my mother,

she will always correct me and be like and I'm like, NO! This is how I talk now. I don't feel the need to be conscientious of why I'm using double negatives. Who cares!" While Natasha's use of AAL was not necessarily nurtured by her home context, she viewed AAL as a connection to her peer group and as a signification of her racial pride and identity.

Yet Natasha understood that speaking AAL, depending on the context, had both positive and negative consequences. While Natasha gained certain membership status from her use of AAL, she also alluded to the idea that the consequences of speaking AAL were heavily linked to the larger societal domain.

15	ˇthis standard form of English . . .	Standardization (D)
16	JUST BECAUSE WHITE PEOPLE SPEAK IT DOESN'T MAKE IT RIGHT^!	Whiteness (D)/Strong Statement (S)

Natasha made strong assertions that challenged the dominant Discourse of Whiteness (line 16) and its role in societal attitudes about standard English. Throughout history, there have been major misconceptions about African American Language, from its origin to its linguistic merit, and these misconceptions were often fueled by media attention as well as major events in educational history, from the 1977 "Black English" case to the Oakland Ebonics debates in the mid-1990's (Ball & Lardner, 1997; Rickford & Rickford, 2000). The acceptance of a standard language accompanied by negative attitudes toward other language varieties is an unavoidable product of the interaction of language and society; thus, there is no reason to assume that using a particular dialect can be associated with being deficit or advantaged (Lippi-Green, 2004). Natasha assumed this ideological stance, challenging the notion of linguistic superiority or inferiority.

For Natasha, her racial and linguistic identity was enacted and performed differently yet the same as she assumed multiple roles in various contexts. As Natasha stressed, she felt she was the same in each context. She was always a Black woman and as she indicated, "This is how I talk." In the student teaching context, I observed Natasha "doing her"—ways of interacting, representing, and being that privileged her Blackness and allegiance to AAL. It was not uncommon for Natasha to rely on AAL rhetorical strategies and phrasings to connect with her second graders in the practicum classroom. The following example illustrates how she often facilitated mini-lessons with her students:

17	N: Boys and girls, can I have your eyes up here . . . What does a good writer do? What's something a good writer does?	Questioning (G)
18	ST: They write good sentences.	
19	N: Go 'head, mama!	AAL (S)/Affirmation (G)

In line 19, Natasha's use of AAL—the abbreviated phrase of "go 'head" instead of "go ahead" and the slang term "mama"—worked to affirm the student's answer in a way that strengthened the bond between Natasha and the student. The use of AAL blurred the lines between home and school for both Natasha and the student.

Natasha also used AAL as she developed her own classroom management style. She would often remind students:

20 I shouldn't BE hearing any talking	Authority (D)/ Reprimand (G)/ AAL (S)

Here, her use of habitual BE served to remind the students that they should not "be talking"—not only in that moment but at all times that required students to actively listen. In both of these instances in the second grade classroom, Natasha forged a hybrid discourse that coalesced her use of AAL, her emergent knowledge around teaching and classroom management, and her acknowledgment of the shared cultural and linguistic norms between her and her students.

This instance of her enactment of a hybrid discourse happened within an urban school where Natasha assumed cultural and linguistic sharedness between herself and the students. Natasha did make a distinction between what she felt she was able to do and represent, culturally and linguistically, in an urban school setting versus in a suburban setting. When referring to prior experiences in a practicum in a predominantly White, suburban school, she observed:

21 I didn't talk the same way.	Code-switching (G)/Standardization (D)/ Strong Statement (S)
22 But I felt like sometimes I had t' . . . not check it but tone it down a lil' bit	Personal Story (G)
23 I feel like those kids woulda been scared	Modality (S)
24 Like some of the things I say to my kids	Pronoun (S)/Bonding (S)
25 They woulda BIN like, *Mommy she said blah, blah, blah . . .*	Modality (S)/ Marking (G)
26 You know what I mean	Affirmation (G)
27 Whereas my students, they're like	Pronoun/Bonding (S)
28 Even when I talk to their parents, I can be like	AAL (S)
29 *Look. This is what's goin on*	Marking (G)
30 And so . . . I don't know	Hedging (G)
31 It's just a comfort	Affect (S)
32 Like I feel right at home with them	Affect (S)

33 I feel like I can just be myself	Affect (S)/Strong Statement (S)
34 Talk the way I talk	Pronoun (S)
35 Do things the way I do	Pronoun (S)

Natasha's ability to enact a hybrid literate identity was constantly shifting and adjusting based on the context. From her description of her experiences in previous practicum settings, Natasha did not feel that the predominantly White and suburban context supported her hybrid literate identity, and she reflected on her decision to code-switch (line 21). In contrast, in the urban setting, she felt she could just be herself (lines 33–35). Through the AAL rhetorical strategy of marking (Smitherman, 2006), she provided personal examples about ways of interacting with parents in the two different settings (lines 25, 29). She felt that White students would not respond positively to her direct teaching style, that her teaching style would not be as effective in a different environment. With her students (line 27), she felt a sense of comfort and belongingness that she did not feel in a White, suburban setting. In an interview, I asked Natasha if she would teach in that kind of setting in the future, and she responded: "No, not at all. Never, ever. If I end up there . . . uhhhh, I must be desperate for some money. I'd be miserable if I had to teach in a school like that. Miserable."

I found that Natasha's move toward a hybrid discourse—a space where she could take on the new identity of being a teacher and assert her affiliation to African American Language—was dependent on the context. In the urban teaching context, Natasha challenged dominant Discourses around teaching and what it means to be a teacher. Her declaration to "talk the way I talk" and "do things the way I do" represented her decision to transcend essentialist notions of teaching that were perpetuated within and beyond the teacher education context. She asserted that "this is me" and that she was not going to turn her identity on and off. Natasha did not articulate the need to accept an "either/or" position but instead asserted a "both/and" positionality (Collins, 2000), that is, she could embrace her Black womanhood and her affiliation to AAL and at the same time demonstrate teaching proficiencies. But, for Natasha, this decision was supported within the urban education context. Knowingly, she felt confident to forge a hybrid identity within the urban school context. These excerpts illustrate how Natasha was engaged in a constant dialogic around being an authentically Black woman and being a highly competent and effective teacher, fully aware of the potential consequences of her choices.

Angela: "I mix Spanish, English, Whatever . . . All in the Same Sentence"

Angela, a bilingual Spanish and English speaker of Costa Rican and Guatemalan heritage, was proud of her ethnolinguistic background, but she felt a

burden to be a positive representation of what it means to be Latina, both in the context of teacher education and the university and for her family and community. She felt that she owed it to her culture to work harder and to excel in the academic and professional world. When defining her own racial and linguistic background, Angela wrote in a language autobiography for one of her classes, "My cultural background has become my identity." Angela's perceptions of herself as a bilingual speaker were evolving as she took on this new teacher identity.

When we began this research project, I reminded Angela of the question she asked when she was a student in my literacy methods course: *"How can I teach reading when I can't even pronounce the words right?"* When I first met Angela, she expressed concern that her accent would interfere with her ability to effectively develop her students' literacy skills. Of the 30 students in that literacy methods class, the majority of them White monolingual female students, Angela was the only bilingual Spanish and English speaker, and she was the only student to express this concern. I asked Angela if she remembered what she felt when she posed that question, and I wondered how her metalinguistic awareness—her thinking about her linguistic abilities—in an educational context had evolved in the two years since that class. She said that she still felt uncomfortable in her practicum when she had to do phonics instruction, and she attributed this to her accent. She shared an example of teaching the long /a/ sound with the students. She said that the students were able to come up with several word examples with the long /a/ sound, but she had difficulty thinking of words. Her student teaching supervisor would usually audiotape her observations of Angela teaching lessons. When they listened to the tapes, Angela shared how she noticed how strong her accent was when she was taught. Angela was still grappling with the notion that one's accent could interfere with one's ability for reading fluency and comprehension. This was further evidenced in her selection of a topic for her senior practicum inquiry project. Angela's research question was: How does explicit, direct fluency instruction impact reading comprehension? Her aim was to better understand how one's ability to pronounce words and read with fluency, and in this case, confidence, impacts one's ability to read for comprehension.

From many conversations, I learned that Angela's ideas about "speaking correctly" carried a steep history. Angela was first generation born in the United States. While she was born and attended K–12 schools in the United States where mainstream American English was the primary language of instruction, Spanish was the primary language of her home and community. Still, the idea that there is a "correct" way to speak a language stemmed from her early language and literacy experiences growing up in a bilingual home. Angela reflected on these experiences in a language and culture autobiography she wrote for her language and

ethnicity class, a sociolinguistics class that examined language and ethnic diversity in the United States. In her autobiography, she wrote:

1	My mother made sure that we learned the "correct" way to say things	Standard Language Ideology (D)/Personal Story (G)
2	according to her Spanish.	Pronoun (S)
3	My mother was very exclusive with what she accepted as appropriate language	Standard Language Ideology (D)
4	and my tone of voice, pitch and pace were also trained.	
5	If I ever slipped into "the Guatemalan accent"	Pronunciation (S)
6	I was reprimanded	Direct (G)
7	and told "not to speak like that!"	Quote (G)
8	Although I know that there is no "correct" way of speaking Spanish	Standard Language Ideology (D)/ Cognition (S)

Angela's awareness of standard language ideologies developed from her earliest interactions with her mother as she acquired her mother tongue. She also carried a negative connotation toward Guatemalan Spanish, her father tongue. So much so that when I asked her to name her cultural and linguistic identity, Angela did not self-identify as Costa Rican and Guatemalan. She only claimed her mother's ethnicity. Even though her earliest memories of speaking Spanish emphasized language as being "correct" and "appropriate" (lines 1–3) in certain contexts, she still asserted an epistemological stance that challenged these notions (line 8). In her autobiography, Angela shared examples of how her mother stressed particular forms and pronunciations of Spanish, including when to use the "usted" form of verbs to when to "soften" her /r/. Certain forms and uses of the Spanish language were considered legitimate and appropriate, and these considerations were mediated by the social expectations of the context. Analysis of Angela's autobiography illuminates the strong connections that she made between "speaking correctly" and identity. Her feelings about pronouncing English phonemes correctly paralleled her experiences with speaking Spanish. Like the distinction she made between speaking particular forms of Spanish in particular contexts, speaking English correctly meant speaking English in a way that one's accent was not evident, heard, or detected.

Angela's concerns about speaking with an accented English were also linked to her experiences growing up ashamed of her mother's spoken English. As a child, she recalled that her mother rarely read books written in English to her and her sister at home as a result of her own low English proficiency skills. While her mother valued print literacy in the home, Angela remembered not wanting her mother to read to her because she would often

mispronounce the words with her accented English. From early on, Angela understood the social capital placed on certain forms and pronunciations of the English language. Dominant institutions, like schools, promote the notion of an overarching, homogeneous standard language (Lippi-Green, 2004). Lippi-Green writes:

> The educational system may not be the beginning, but it is the heart of the standardization process. Asking children who speak non-mainstream languages to come to schools in order to find validation for themselves, in order to be able to speak their own stories in their own voices, is an unlikely scenario. (p. 294)

When children internalize negative conceptions of self and accept ideological claims that their cultural and linguistic identity is wrong, there are consequences. Anzaldúa (1987/1999) uses the image of "linguistic terrorism" to describe what can happen when speakers of nonstandard languages and dialects internalize negative conceptions of their native tongue. She writes, "because we speak with tongues of fire we are culturally crucified . . . we internalize how our language has been used against us by the dominant culture [and] use language differences against each other" (Anzaldúa, 1987/1999, p. 80). One response to dominant Discourses may be to suppress or deny one's affiliation to primary discourses or nonstandard varieties of language. Speakers of nonstandard languages and dialects may view their speech as "illegitimate" or may view their language as "a bastard language" (Anzaldúa, 1987/1999, p. 80). From my early interactions with Angela, analysis of her language practices illustrated an internalized view of her mother tongue as inferior to standard forms and, in this case, pronunciations of the English language. This suggested that she might continue to experience some tensions between her cultural and linguistic identity at home and her taking on a new teacher identity.

While one of Angela's earlier concerns was about her ability to pronounce words correctly, I began to witness Angela's move toward a transformative hybrid discourse as she grappled with internalized standard language ideologies. During one observation, Angela was administering a spelling test to her second grade classroom. In this instance, she paid close attention to her enunciation and articulation of phonemes as she presented each spelling word. After the students completed the test, she went over words with students that they felt were difficult on the test.

9	Give me a word that you didn't know how t' spell	
10	Jo:ry which was one of yours?	
11	/Bin/	Enunciation (S)

12	Have you /bin/ there before?	Question (G)
13	/Bin/	Enunciation (S)
14	EE usually says eeeee	Enunciation (S)
15	But we pronounce this (uuuuu)	Pronoun (S)
16	/Bin/, /Bin/, /ba::n/	Code-switching (D/S)
17	It just depends on the way you talk I guess	Standard Language Ideology (D)/ Hedging (G)

During the review of the spelling items, Angela attempted to offer the students multiple pronunciations for each word and to isolate particular phonemes in doing so (lines 14–15). While she hedges on this observation (line 17), Angela's acknowledgment that one's pronunciation depends on the individual and "the way you talk" represented a move away from one homogeneous pronunciation. While at the beginning of the research project, Angela articulated that the "correct" pronunciation and enunciation were necessary to ensure their academic success, this excerpt demonstrates her movement toward challenging standard language ideologies about "correctness."

The challenge for Angela remained how to reconcile speaking an accented English with the norms and expectations for being an effective teacher. Her focus on correct grammar and pronunciation was not only directed toward herself but also toward her students. During one observation, Angela's students returned from the school's book fair, excited about their purchases of new books. An African American student showed his book to Angela and explained that he did not pay for it. Angela was confused, wondering if they were giving out free books at the book fair or if this student just forgot to pay. Angela and the student inspected the book, looking for a price tag, and the student asked, "How much it cost?" Angela corrected the student, "How much does it cost?" While she understood what the student was communicating, and while the objective in that moment was to determine whether the student needed to return to the book fair to pay for the book, Angela made a point to correct his use of African American Language and the use of an "incorrect" verb form. From our interviews, I began to understand that this was one way that she aimed to foster her students' awareness of "the language of wider communication" (Smitherman, 2006) while not devaluing their identifications with nonstandard language varieties.

Angela viewed her experiences grappling with speaking with an accented English in spaces that privilege mainstream American English use as a way to connect with and help her mostly bilingual, bicultural students to learn to navigate multiple worlds too. Angela felt that being a bilingual speaker of both Spanish and English gave her an edge with many of her students. Angela and I discussed the role her "Latina-ness" played in her taking on the teacher identity. She asserted her identity as a Spanish and English bilingual woman who lives in the community with the student population she serves. As I observed Angela in her practicum setting, she began to view her affiliation to the Spanish language in this context as

linguistic "capital" (Yosso, 2005) rather than a linguistic "deficit," positioning the shared linguistic and cultural communicative experiences between her and her students as a resource in the classroom.

18	Yes, I think it's more relaxed	Cognition (S)/Teacher Identity (D)
19	More comfortable.	Teacher Identity (D)
20	And I just feel like I know where they come from	Indirectness (G)/Pronoun (S)/Latina (D)
21	Do you know what I mean	Affirmation (G)
22	Like their socioeconomic class	Class and Status (D)
23	I'm still in that class with them	Strong Statement (S)/Bonding (S)
24	I feel like almost like a favoritism	Affect (S)
25	I feel like if I ever needed to	Affect (S)
26	I would understand them better	Modality (S)/Latina (D)
27	I mean, just saying one or two words in Spanish	Code-switching (G)
28	Do you know what I mean	Affirmation (G)

In line 20, Angela moved toward a hybrid teacher discourse—one that embraced her Latina-ness and ability to relate to her students. While her interaction here is not direct, she describes knowing more about where her students are coming from, culturally, linguistically, and based on class (lines 22–23). She viewed her ability to understand them in both worlds (line 27) as a "favoritism" (line 24). She valued the cultural and linguistic funds of knowledge that her students brought to the classroom (Martínez-Roldán & Fránquiz, 2009).

By the end of her student teaching, Angela took on an emergent hybrid discourse. Her metalinguistic awareness about her identity as a bilingual speaker was evolving from a marginalized stance toward a hybrid whole. She exhibited linguistic reflexivity—"an awareness about language which is self-consciously applied in interventions to change social life (including one's own identity)" (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999, p. 83). She felt that the concept of code-switching was inadequate for describing her relationship to both English and Spanish, as she wrote in her language autobiography assignment for a sociolinguistics course: "I speak both English and Spanish fluently. Merely stating the languages that I speak is insufficient in order to understand me and my relationship with language." She told me in conversation: "I mix Spanish, English, whatever . . . all in the same sentence." As she took up a new teacher identity, she was consciously aware of the multiple discourses that were at play—her challenges with speaking English with a Spanish accent, her shared cultural and language with her students, and her desire to make sure her students had every opportunity to attain academic success. Because Angela was raised to make clear delineations between her use of Spanish and English—she associated her use of Spanish with home and family and English was reserved for academic functions—she was aware of the possible consequences of

language choices in different situations. Like Natasha, Angela's decision to "mix" her languages was strongly dependent upon the context, and in this instance, she was forging this hybrid discourse in a classroom where she felt she shared cultural and linguistic experiences with her students.

Sustaining Racially and Linguistically Diverse Teacher Identities

The role of the preservice teacher is a hybrid one in that it forms a relationship between both teacher and student identities (Alsup, 2006). This is a complex role in that preservice teachers must forge a professional identity, one that exhibits competence, proficiency, and authority, while at the same time remaining and acknowledging being a novice and learning from the practicum experience. Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) point out, "Hybridity is inherent in all social uses of language" (p. 13), but it manifests itself based on the individual, her experiences, her history, and the context. We all possess multiple, varied linguistic repertoires, and our decisions about language use are dependent upon context as well as race, class, gender, and linguistic background. The individual experiences of Black and Latina preservice teachers are no exception; there exist many complexities and intricacies as a result of each individual's understanding and articulations of who she is and who she is becoming. Natasha and Angela were like any other preservice teacher in that they both entered into the teacher education program with expectations for the kinds of knowledge and skills they would gain in preparation for being teachers. However, they acquired new teacher identities in contexts already defined and shaped, both linguistically and culturally, by the larger meta-narratives produced by the social world. In this chapter, I looked at how Natasha and Angela each developed, understood, and even leveraged their cultural and linguistic identities in the performance of new teacher identities, and I learned that their hybrid performances were neither static nor the same, but ever shifting based on the many diverse contexts that each teacher occupied on any given day.

Their language and literacy practices also pointed to the many possibilities that can result from an emphasis on valuing the cultural, racial, and linguistic perspectives that *all* teachers bring to the teaching and learning experience. While questioning criterion for determining teacher quality, and by extension, identifying desirable proficiencies for teacher training and development, is eminent, continued conversations in the field of literacy research must explicitly address the intersections of race, culture, and language alongside these questions. The overemphasis on the preparation of an assumed homogeneous teaching force suggests that the goals and needs of teacher education are universal for all teachers regardless of their race, class, gender, and/or linguistic affiliation. It potentially positions and constructs teachers as monolithic entities, negating the complexities of teachers' identities. And it does not fully take into account the complexities of the intersections of one's race, gender, language, class, and sexuality on teacher identity

performance. I have learned over the years, as a student, as a secondary English language arts teacher, and now as a teacher educator, that one cannot simply shed oneself of one's primary culture and language upon stepping foot into the classroom. Doing so would suggest that becoming and being a teacher is antithetical to Blackness, to bilingualism, to Latino/a-ness, to being working class, or to other markers of identity.

This became particularly important when I considered that both Natasha's and Angela's taking on hybrid teacher discourses happened in urban school contexts, or in spaces where they felt they shared cultural and linguistic experiences and identities with their students. At the conclusion of this study, I grappled with the fact that this hybrid discourse was not viewed as useful or appropriate in other settings (e.g., suburban school contexts). What I learned from this study of language and literacy practices of Natasha and Angela was that they were constantly experiencing dominant discourses in the teacher education program; there was no singular moment when they reconciled tensions between their racial and linguistic identities and the construction of teacher identities. They were at all times reflecting on their own histories as racial, cultural, and linguistic beings and how these histories interacted with their taking on of new teacher identities. Doing this kind of identity work on a regular basis encouraged them to uphold an appreciation for the nonstandard language varieties and multicultural experiences that will exist in their future classrooms. I imagine these hybrid discourses as having the great potential to transform current teacher education and practice. These hybrid discourses can reconfigure power relations and push doors open so that preservice teachers who embody "othered" identities on the basis of race, language, class, sexuality, and so on feel a sense of belongingness as well as the right to be whole selves in multiple contexts.

In chapter 1, I introduced the purpose of this book by sharing Angela's story. As a bilingual Spanish and English speaker, her experiences with marginalization were deeply rooted in her everyday life. Angela faced a "crossroads" of how to appropriate a teacher identity, one that was valued and legitimized within the dominant context of teacher education while at the same time maintaining allegiance to her cultural and linguistic heritage. She was still challenging her own internalization of standard language ideologies and societal attitudes that positioned her cultural and linguistic identity as a deficit (Lippi-Green, 2004). Yet she articulated a new teacher identity that bridged her own cultural and linguistic resources with those of her students, fashioning "[her] own gods" (Anzaldúa, 1987/1999) and pedagogical third spaces (Gutierrez, Baquedano-Löpez, & Turner, 1997). As we consider future directions in literacy research, we would be remiss not to listen to the voices of Black and Latina preservice teachers, those agents of change who are in constant dialogue between multiple worlds (Bakhtin, 1981), creating hybrid discourses that challenge an "either/or" or marginalized stance. The transformative power of hybrid discourses is silenced when the needs and insights of Black and Latina preservice teachers are positioned peripherally to dominant research

agendas. Encouraging hybrid discursive practices, and the grappling of narratives of tensions, among all preservice teachers can result in a greater awareness of the kinds of experiences K–12 students have as they participate in new discourse communities and, by extension, transform literacy education.

Note

1. This chapter draws on data and discussions from a previously published manuscript, Haddix, M. (2010). No longer on the margins: Researching the hybrid literate identities of Black and Latina preservice teachers. *Research in the Teaching of English, 45*(2), 97–123.

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6

THE COUNTERLANGUAGES AND DELIBERATE SILENCES OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS OF COLOR[1]

The bridge I must be
Is the bridge to my own power
I must translate
My own fears
Mediate
My own weaknesses

I must be the bridge to nowhere
But my true self
And then
I will be useful
—from "The Bridge Poem,"
Donna Kate Rushin
(1981/1983)

Latoya: I was like, *"Excuse me, you're White, you're White . . . your viewpoint is very different from the people who actually live it. It's easy for you . . . it's easy for you to say that these things are happening, all these great things are happening, because it doesn't . . . it doesn't impact your life."* This is something . . . this is something that me, as a person of color, lives every day. *So how can you say that things are great here? You need to be in the people's shoes that you're talking about.*

Natasha: *You go for a couple hours once a week and then you bounce back to your prissy little life—*

Latoya: —and that's what I'm sayin. That's when I was like, *"You know, I'm very happy that you do all these things . . . I'm glad, I'm glad for you. I'm glad that you feel like you're doing a lot for the community"* . . .

Natasha: *And when you leave [here], are you gonna continue to do any of these things? Are you going to go back into your little bubble?*

Latoya: And that's the other thing the class is about . . . once you go on these little service trips, what's the aftermath of it? What happens afterwards, *are you still helping that community?*

Also in chapter 3, I revisit the prior conversation, which took place one evening in my kitchen. Natasha and I met her sophomore year when she was a student in my teaching reading methods course. Beyond the class, we stayed in touch and developed a "big sista/lil' sista" relationship. As one of the few Black female faculty instructors in the School of Education, Natasha often sought my advice on various academic and personal issues. Natasha and Latoya were friends who traveled in the same social circles; they were also both resident assistants in the university residence halls. I met Latoya through Natasha. In my kitchen, in restaurants, at the nail salon, and in the mall, our relationship as "sistas" emerged. Conversations and exchanges like the aforementioned were not uncommon. Within our sistahood grew a space for dialogue around issues related to both our shared and varied experiences as Black women participating in multiple discourse communities. But, as these kinds of exchanges would occur in various social settings, they did not take place within the context of their university classes or with their White peers. This was purposeful.

In this chapter, I focus specifically on the co-constructed speech events of Natasha and Latoya, both Black women who identified as speakers of African American Language (AAL). Much of the research on racially and linguistically "non-dominant" students in teacher education emphasizes themes of being marginalized, silenced, ignored, and invisible (e.g., see Kornfeld, 1999; Meacham, 2000; Pailliotet, 1997). In contrast and in more complicated and nuanced ways, Natasha and Latoya used a counterlanguage (Morgan, 1991), a system of communication that allowed for multiple levels of meaning, only some of which were available to outsiders. Their use of AAL was not one singular, cohesive use but rather the use of multiple linguistic codes that emphasized the hybrid nature of their racial and linguistic identities between the discursive spaces of their "sistahood" and the context of teacher education. I draw on critical race theories to examine their perspectives on race, identity, and education through sociolinguistic analyses of their conversations. Critical race theories proved useful for revealing the deliberate decisions that these preservice teachers made about social and personal engagement and how these choices positioned them and each other as insiders within and beyond the dominant context of teacher education.

Research on Black Female Teachers

The study of the experiences of Black female preservice teachers is particularly important because of both the historical (Lortie, 1975; Perkins, 1983) and current

contexts of what it means to be a teacher. Black female preservice teachers are positioned in "both/and," "outside/within," "on the border," and "in the margins" locations in schools, universities, and the educational research community. For example, in Meacham's (2000) ethnographic study of the experiences of two African American female preservice teachers, he observed that they were in a "cultural limbo," constantly questioning how to (or whether to) bridge their identification with AAL and their academic identity. This suggested that Black female preservice teachers contend with internalized notions of marginalization and linguistic inferiority within a context that positions them as racially and linguistically "other." Further, they face a crossroads, a decision about whether to demonstrate their cultural knowledge or to suppress characteristics of their ethnic identities in efforts to become acculturated into the mainstream teacher culture.

In a personal narrative, Graham-Bailey (2008) reflected on how, as a novice teacher, she had questions about how her use of AAL would affect her students, in a school context where the African American students were the majority, and about how to enact a behavior management style that was akin to her experiences as a Black woman who grew up and was raised in a Black community. She also wrote about not knowing how to deal with helping her students of color deal with racial incidents that they might experience:

> As I settled in, an increasing number of Black students reported racial incidents to me. The number was so dramatic that I wondered whether some were fabricated. Was it simply an expression of comfort level and willingness to reveal hurtful incidents? Or did it have to do with my inability to set limits for attention-seeking students? How was I to make it clear that, yes, I was a Black teacher in support of their emerging identities; yet I would not allow racial slurs, nor would I stand for students making a mockery of an issue as serious as racism? Did other Black teachers reflect on these same questions? I could pull from my childhood experiences being confronted with racist and insensitive comments, but the question remained: Who would teach me how to teach my students of color to come to the same understanding I eventually did? (Graham-Bailey, 2008)

Natasha and Latoya experienced similar "crossroads" during their journeys to "become" teachers within the teacher education context. Understanding their negotiations and the negotiations of preservice teachers of color cannot ignore the ways race, racism, and Whiteness operate within these teacher education spaces.

Critical Race Theory and the Study of African American Language

Much of my work exploring the experiences of preservice teachers of color in teacher education is largely informed by critical race theories in education (see

Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995) because, yes, *race still matters*. Racism and White supremacy are alive and well. Starting from this place, I can more explicitly point out how Whiteness is implicitly and sometimes neatly and politely positioned within teacher education and, by extension, attempts to marginalize and/or silence preservice teachers of color. This work cannot just be about the identity politics of Black women or preservice teachers of color. In drawing on critical race theories, I want to emphasize the requirement that the focus be on context, both the local as well as the broader society, and that challenges the positioning of race and racism as an individual issue.

The use of critical race theories and other race-based theories and methodologies has gained significant presence in the field of education, but not without criticism or questioning. Two critiques that I want to address are: 1) critical race theories' failure to provide evidence of a distinctive voice of color and 2) critical race theories' reliance on storytelling as a valid form of making truth claims (Duncan, 2005). I define language as the discursive practices that we use to make meaning of self and others. It is not just what you say, but it is what you perform, what you represent, what you interpret, what you *be*. In time and space, we make decisions about who we want to be and what we want to do. In reference to speakers of African American Language, hooks (1994) writes,

> [we] make English do what we want it to do. We take the oppressor's language and turn it against itself. We make our words a counter-hegemonic speech, liberating ourselves in language. (p. 175)

A criticism of critical race theories has been that there exists no distinct voice of people of color or, by extension, women of color. However, for decades now, sociolinguistics and discourse analysts have studied and documented both the structural and discursive dimensions of AAL (Labov, 1972; Rickford, 1999; Smitherman, 1977; Wolfram & Schilling-Estes, 2006). AAL is not simply a language variety, but it represents the historical, political, and social experiences of African Americans. I attempt to address this critique via my use of discourse analytic tools (Chouliaraki & Fairclough, 1999; Fairclough, 1989/2001; Tannen, 1984/2005) to examine the African American discourse practices of Black female preservice teachers.

Second, Black women are knowledge producers. I advocate strongly that the educational research community as an extension of the larger society acknowledge and "see" Black women as knowers and doers who have important and necessary contributions to make to education and school reform. Voice scholarship in the field of education asserts and acknowledges the importance of the personal and community experiences of people of color as sources of knowledge (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Tate, 1994). I value the personal and community experiences of Black women as forms of knowledge production. This knowledge production is realized through language and, in particular, the stories that are told, retold, and, as will be discussed, not told. In response to the second critique of

critical race theories, by privileging the stories of these Black women, I do not do so to suggest that this is the experience of *all* Black female preservice teachers, in essence perpetuating a monolithic representation of Black women voices and essentializing race. But storytelling has been studied as part of the African American rhetorical tradition (Smitherman, 2006) just as deliberate silence has been identified as a rhetorical strategy in African American female discourse (Fordham, 1993; Richardson, 2003).

As speakers of AAL, Natasha and Latoya relied on African American rhetorical traditions and strategies as ways of representing. Further, as young Black women, they exhibited an African American female discourse. There has been theoretical and empirical research on African American female language practices (Fordham, 1993; Gilmore, 1991; Lanehart, 2002; Richardson, 2003). Richardson (2003) defines the concept of African American female literacies as "ways of knowing and acting and the development of skills, vernacular expressive arts and crafts that help females to advance and protect themselves and their loved ones in society" (p. 77). These African American literacies then are communicated through an African American female discourse, ways of representing a Black female identity through the genres of storytellin, steppin/rhymin, singin, dancin, preachin, and stylin (Smitherman, 2006). Topics of conversation, from men to hair to popular culture, are all understood from their social location as Black women. Genres, ways of interacting, of this African American female discourse also include performative silence (conscious manipulation of silence and speech), strategic use of polite and assertive language, and indirection among other verbal and non-verbal practices. Styles of African American female language practices include code and/or style shifting, the use of African American Language, affect, and givin' "attitude" with neck rollin, hand gesturin, and talkin loud (Richardson, 2003; Smitherman, 2006). African American females' language practices "reflect their socialization in a racialized, genderized, sexualized, and classed world in which they employ their language [and literacy] practices to advance and protect themselves" (Richardson, 2003, p. 77).

During many get-togethers, Natasha, Latoya, and I made language do what we wanted and needed it to do. As Black women, we styled our stories, and we had fun with it. As Toni Morrison wrote,

> The language, only the language . . . It's the thing that Black people love so much—the saying of words, holding them on the tongue, experimenting with them, playing with them. It's a love, a passion. Its function is like a preacher's: to make you stand up out of your seat, make you lose yourself and hear yourself. The worst possible things that could happen would be to lose that language. There are certain things I cannot say without recourse to my language. (quoted in Smitherman, 2006, p. 64)

As Black women, we *performed* language (Spears, 2007). Smitherman (2006) writes, "Black folks are masters of linguistic improvisation and manipulators of the Word"

(p. 64). Further, "AAL is a vehicle for achieving recognition and affirmation. Black folks applaud skillful linguistic inventiveness and verbal creativity. We likes folk who can play with and on the Word, who can talk and testify, preach and prophesy, lie and signify" (p. 65). In African American verbal arts and rhetorical traditions, there is as much meaning communicated in the way the story is told than in the actually content of the story. Relying on a critical race framework, I examine storytelling and the rhetorical strategy of silence as a discursive feature of African American female language to instead represent a collective "voice" that privileges multiple, varied, and complex perspectives.

It is understood that we all possess multiple, varied linguistic repertoires and that our decisions about language use are dependent upon context as well as our racial, class, gender, or linguistic backgrounds. It is also understood that there is complexity and variance across the individual experiences of Black female preservice teachers. As Chouliaraki and Fairclough (1999) point out, "hybridity is inherent in all social uses of language" (p. 13), but it manifests itself based on the individual, her experiences, her history, and the context. Focusing more intently on *context*, what kinds of language practices are invited, encouraged, and welcomed in dominant contexts such as teacher education? What are the kinds that are left out? And, more importantly, what are the reasons behind such linguistic inclusion and/or exclusion?

In my time getting to know Natasha and Latoya, the social aspects of their relationships strengthened. In the moments that we got together, I had the opportunity to document their language practices with one another, just through our casual conversations, and to consider these questions: What do they talk about when they are among other Black women? How do they position themselves in conversation among friends, among sistas? How are these discursive practices delimited and different from those that might occur in other spaces, like in the context of teaching and teacher education?

Conversation Analysis

In conversation analysis, context is defined in terms of the immediate physical location of the participants. An understanding of the immediate location of the conversation is critical to the reconstruction of utterances. However, traditionally in conversation analysis, little attention is paid to larger sociocultural constructs. The larger social and political contexts in which everyday conversations take place are generally ignored. However, with a critical race framework, I am encouraging an explicit marrying of discourse analytic tools with critical theories of race, language, and identity. I use conversation analysis tools from Tannen (1984/2005) (see appendix B for transcription codes) to highlight the linguistic devices and narrative strategies that Natasha and Latoya employ when in social conversations.

A conversation "unfolds through joint action of all participants as they make (or attempt to make) their own and each other's actions socially determinate" (Davies & Harré, 1990, p. 45). Davies and Harré write, "An individual emerges

through the process of social interaction, not as a relatively fixed end product but as one who is constituted and reconstituted through the various discursive practices in which they participate" (p. 46). Davies and Harré (1990) pointed out:

> Positions are identified in part by extracting the autobiographical aspects of a conversation in which it becomes possible to find out how each conversant conceives of themselves and of the other participants by seeing what position they take up and in what story, and how they are positioned. (p. 48)

Within a conversation, its participants play multiple roles at any given time, roles they term "animator," "author," and "principal." The animator speaks, the author reads or interprets what is being said, and the principal is defined or positioned by what is being said. At any point in a conversation, all three roles can be identified in one person. In their conversations, Natasha and Latoya each defined themselves, taking on myriad roles, and at some point in the conversation, they were each in what I called "the hot seat."

Davies and Harré (1990) argue, however, that positioning in conversation is not necessarily intentional. Contrary to what Davies and Harré observe, positioning is often intentional for these women. These women made decisions about how to position themselves according to the other participants in the situation or conversation and dependent upon the context. To be "believed" by others and to represent an authentic self in any given context, they decided whether or not to acculturate the "appropriate" codes, language, and behavior. More aptly, they resisted the notion of "appropriateness" and manipulated multiple codes. Natasha and Latoya were constantly interrogating how their discursive practices were implicated by and within different contexts and with various interlocutors—with their peers, their students, their professors, and each other. What I focus on in this paper is how these intentional moves played out in the context "among sistas" and what these intentions suggest about their positioning within the context of teacher education. The following findings sections show examples of Natasha and Latoya deciding to use deliberate silences and counterlanguages within teacher education spaces versus their linguistic decisions within sista discursive spaces. In the process, they presented multiple selves depending on the context, the purpose, the moment, and the day. The findings point to the impact of the overwhelming presence of Whiteness and White privilege in teacher education on these decisions.

Deliberate Silences

From my analysis of transcripts and memos about our conversations, it was evident that Natasha and Latoya were deliberate about what they talked about, when, and with whom. Their conversations with me circled around several topics. At times, we talked about school, teaching, and graduation. At other times, we talked about our social lives, shopping, "club hopping," and dating. We even talked about tattoos and body adornment. I was shocked to learn that Natasha had three tattoos

partly because of my own preconceived notions and assumptions about the 20-something generation, but also because I had constructed her to be a certain kind of person. And "certain kinds of persons" do not have tattoos.

Marcelle: So where is your heart one at?
Natasha: My heart one is the one that's kinda like on my hip. Like right here ((pointing to hip))
Marcelle: Ok, and then you have the one in the back . . . that's an ankh, right?
Natasha: mmhm, yep.
Natasha: the butterfly is my lower back . . . Cuz the other thing with me, I want to be able to hide it when I want to and show it when I want to.

This all surfaced while we were at a nail salon, getting $25 manicures and pedicures. I asked her when she got the tattoos, where each tattoo was located, and whether or not her parents knew about them. This kind of back and forth was common in my conversations with Natasha. In this exchange, Natasha's identity as a symbolically and physically marked individual was defined and positioned by our questions and by her responses just as my apprehension toward and curiosity about tattoos were represented and positioned in conversation with Natasha.

Natasha's explanation of her selection and placement of tattoos serves as a metaphor for my understanding of the ways that these women decided on whether or not to fully engage in discussions inside the teacher education context. I learned that their participation and engagement in dominant contexts varied from silence to superficial engagement to one that was more authentic. Revealing one's whole self was full of risk while remaining silent allowed them to safeguard their most personal beliefs and ideologies. Being silent also allowed for their cultural and linguistic selves to emerge from this dominant context unharmed and unscathed. Whatever their choice, like Natasha and her tattoos, they exercised control over when to fully engage and when not to.

Outside of the teacher education context, Natasha and Latoya often shared with me their thoughts on topics ranging from race relations on campus to affirmative action and institutional racism. During a restaurant outing with Natasha and Latoya, we talked about the racially charged incidents of violence that had been happening on campus that academic year. Natasha and Latoya were outraged about a campus newspaper headline that "a Black male student was assaulted on campus," questioning why the student's race had to be identified. They felt that if the victim had been White, race would not have been mentioned. They observed that by naming the victim's race, an association of violence with Blackness was further perpetuated and maintained.

There were many topics that the women would not fully engage in the university context or with their academic peers, especially those politically charged. On another occasion, during a car ride to campus, Natasha shared with me her experiences in one of her classes where the professor presented a definition of racism that linked individual prejudice to larger societal constructs of power and

privilege. According to the professor, under this definition, people of color cannot be racist. Natasha lamented about the level of resistance from White students in the class who denied this conceptualization of racism. One female student, she shared, was upset and asserted that she did not feel that she needed to pay reparations for the legacy of American slavery because she did not feel responsible for her ancestors' actions. In these kinds of situations, Natasha did not want to be responsible for taking on the prevailing attitudes among her university peers.

> I think it's also just the environment that I'm in. I feel like our views on life are just so different. So I feel like, like the way I frame things . . . I have to make sure it comes out right. Cuz, it's the same way. They'll attack every lil' thing that you say too.

While she disagreed with the viewpoints being expressed in the class on racism, Natasha tired of being the only student to represent a different viewpoint, which often resulted in her deliberate silence. During Natasha's junior year, she completed a semester away at a historically Black college, where she noted differences in the kinds of interactions she had with students who she felt shared cultural and linguistic norms with her.

> I feel that way sometimes, when I have to like, explain myself. I think that was one of the things that I liked about Julia Cooper College. I didn't have to explain. It was just understood. But then being here . . . it's constantly questioned. And I feel like . . . I don't know how to vocalize. I be like, "It just is." Like, why do I like to be called Black? Because I'm Black! I don't know. It's like when I have to put it into words, it's very difficult for me. And I hate havin' to do that. You know.

In this conversation, Natasha alluded to a common language that existed among her and her peers at the historically Black college. There existed an understanding—a shared knowledge and experience—in what was left unsaid.

Natasha was tired of having to explain herself in her predominantly White classes. She was tired of always being "the only one" or "the minority" or "the diversity" perspective. As Rushin (1981/1983) expressed in "The Bridge Poem" at the beginning of this chapter, these women were "sick of filling in your gaps" and demanded that their predominantly White, monolingual peers and professors "find another connection to the rest of the world" (p. xxi). In their conversations with one another, they forged spaces that allowed for the enactment of identities that were not at the expense of a discourse of Whiteness. In the opening exchange with Latoya and Natasha at the beginning of this chapter, Latoya shared with me and Natasha examples of the kinds of dialogues that took place in this class between her and White students about social justice teaching. Latoya was taking an elective course on social justice, and part of the course requirement was to complete a service learning practicum. As described in chapter 3, a prominent

theme in their teacher education program was the preparation of teachers to "teach for social justice." It was an idea that was talked about and incorporated into each course in the curriculum. They felt that while some students related social justice to issues of diversity and the need to recognize differences among their students and others connected social justice to the role of teachers as social activists working toward equity in schools, the concept was more an abstract theory or rhetoric than realized practice or disposition.

However, while students in this teacher education program were able to articulate what "teaching for social justice" meant and to write about it in course papers and in journal reflections, Latoya expressed how these articulations were often contradicted in practice. In the context of their sistahood, Latoya was able to openly share and co-construct with Natasha her perspectives on "teaching for social justice":

1 Latoya: I was like, *"Excuse me, you're White, you're White . . .*
2 *your viewpoint is very different from the people who actually live it.*
3 *It's easy for you . . .*
4 *it's easy for you to say that these things are happening,*
5 *all these great things are happening, because it doesn't. . .*
6 *it doesn't impact your life."*
7 This is something . . .
8 this is something that me,
9 as a person of color,
10 lives every day.
11 *So how can you say that things are great here.*
12 *You need to be in the people's shoes that you're talking about.*
13 Natasha: *You go for a couple hours once a week*
14 *and then you bounce back to your prissy little life—*
15 Latoya: —and that's what I'm sayin.
16 That's when I was like,
17 *"You know, I'm very happy that you do all these things. . .*
18 *I'm glad, I'm glad for you.*
19 *I'm glad that you feel like you're doing a lot for the community". . .*
20 Natasha: *And when you leave [here],*
21 *are you gonna continue to do any of these things?*
22 *Are you going to go back into your little bubble?*
23 Latoya: And that's the other thing the class is about . . .
24 once you go on these little service trips,
25 what's the aftermath of it?
26 What happens afterwards,
27 *are you still helping that community?*

In line 1, Latoya begins to retell what she said in class to her White peers, deciding in a particular moment to speak out against the equating of service learning to teaching for social justice. She tells her classmate that it is easy for her to

observe all of "these great things are happening" (line 5) because her perspective is different from individuals who actually live this life (line 2). In her classroom exchange, Latoya puts herself out there to go against the grain and challenge the dominant discourse around social justice and service learning. She takes a risk and, in some ways, isolates herself. In the context of their sistahood, Natasha cosigned on Latoya's perspective and affirmed her retelling (lines 13–14). Latoya's assertion, "and that's what I'm sayin'" (line 15), confirmed that this was her truth, and in this particular context, she found affirmation and understanding. She did not have to explain or defend her truth.

In these kinds of exchanges, Latoya felt her peers viewed service as just another bullet to place on their résumé. Latoya and Natasha were often frustrated by the ways their White peers would reference this term "social justice" in one utterance and say something overtly racist and classist in the next. Further, they felt that, in practice, "social justice" for her White peers was seen as "community service" or "missionary work" (see also Haddix, 2015). The idea of "teaching for social justice" in the teacher education program was, according to Latoya and Natasha, merely a theory disconnected from practice and only served to further perpetuate the notion of Whiteness as dominant and superior to non-White discourses.

From the conversations between Natasha and Latoya, I learned that when race-related topics and other politically charged issues where raised in their teacher education classes, they expressed being tired of having to explain themselves to their White peers, which often times would result in their deliberate silence in classes. I found that their deliberate silence was not indicative of their lack of power or agency, as often represented in the research literature on preservice teachers of color. On the contrary, their performative silence, a conscious manipulation of silence and speech, was a protective shield. Their participation and engagement, or lack of, in various contexts signified their agency as language users. At times, it was a result of their decision that they no longer wanted to represent the minority voice or perspective or be responsible for the consciousness or humanness of their fellow White peers and professors. It was evident that Natasha and Latoya were deliberate about what they talked about, when, and with whom. Their voices in the context of her university classes, for example, might be construed as their concession to the majority's need to make sense of race and racism via the minority "expert" in the room. They decided when their engagement and participation was worth the risk of being that "bridge" for their peers. They were tired of being "the only one." Their lack of full engagement was a means of protecting and safeguarding their interests as individuals with rich cultural and linguistic capital.

"You Nameen": The Use of Counterlanguages

Another aspect of critical race theories present in my analysis of these conversations included the telling of stories and counterstories and the use of a counterlanguage. Critical race theorists advocate the use of stories to help authorize a discourse of

knowing, experiences, understandings, and social values not permitted otherwise (Delgado, 1989; Willis, 2003). Morgan (1991) defines counterlanguage as a system of communication that allows for multiple levels of meaning, only some of which are available to outsiders. Morgan writes that this counterlanguage, which finds parallel in African American discourse, emerged from African Americans' need to communicate with one another in hostile, White-dominated environments from the time of slavery onward (Bucholtz, 2004). Affirmation of ideas and the presence of shared knowledge, understanding, and cultural and linguistic norms were evidenced in the many conversations I observed and often participated in with Natasha and Latoya. On one occasion, I captured a conversation between Natasha and Latoya where they were going back and forth about their experiences in their respective teacher education classes. While the message in their conversation is significant, their usage of AAL rhetorical strategies signified their shared understandings and affirmation of one another's realities. In the following example, Natasha shared with Latoya a story about her experiences in one of her classes.

28 Natasha: In a class on race, that's one of the things we talk about a lot
29 It's like
30 All this information that yall learnt
31 The White students
32 That you're learnin here
33 Are you takin this back to your friends?
34 Are you talkin about this?
35 Or is just somethin that happened in this class?
36 (Oh my gosh, wow, I didn't know this) [mocking]
37 And then you go about yo peachy White life
38 And so
39 We're, we read this article by Tim Wise, W-E-I-S (spelling)
40 /Ways/ /Wise/ sum'in ((hand gesturing))
41 And he was talkin bout the whole
42 Oh (we can't judge them basing them on our time) [mocking]
43 So we'se talkin bout, now, um
44 Abraham Lincoln and um Thomas Jefferson
45 And basing them off of, you know, our morals of today
46 And his argument was that, no,
47 Killin was wrong back then
48 Killin BIN wrong since God came down to Moses and said
49 Thou shall not kill
50 It's wrong to, umm, steal, kill
51 He was like
52 The people who was victims of this knew it was wrong
53 It was other White people who knew this was wrong
54 So how can we say, it's, we're basing it by today's morals?

In this text, Natasha lamented about what she perceived to be her White peers' ambivalence towards issues of race and racism in the United States today. She felt that her peers were not personally invested in issues of race, questioning whether they applied their learning from the class to their everyday lives (lines 30–35). Natasha opened by mocking the White students in her class, and while in conversation with Latoya, she posed comments and questions to her White peers. She also imitated the ways she thought her peers might answer her questions (line 36). She exaggerated what she would say to the White students. In this example, what Natasha did not say in the context of the class, she was able to express in the context of her conversation with Latoya. She defined the lives of her White peers as "peachy White," an honest perspective she was able to express in this context, crafting her counterstory.

Natasha also talked to me about having to be careful about the way she presented her ideas in class. In our final interview together, she reflected on her oral participation in classes in the beginning of her undergraduate study:

> I can remember, like, being in the classroom and like, thinking through everything I was going to say before I said it. I can remember doing things like that and just making sure like, Did I use the word correctly? Am I, you know, nervous to say anything. But I would still say it if I felt like it.

In conversation with Latoya, this kind of hesitancy did not persist. For example, in lines 39–40, Natasha referred to Tim Wise, an antiracist writer, educator, and activist in the United States, but she was not sure about the pronunciation of his last name. In this instance, she offered multiple pronunciations and manipulations of his last name and alternatively spelled it out. Here, Natasha offers a counterstory to the narrative of internalized fear and anxiety around "correctness"; she didn't care about the pronunciation of his name. The pronunciation of Wise's name was not the important part of her narrative, in this instance, nor did she allow her lack of *the* "definitive" pronunciation of his name to interrupt her flow of ideas. However, in the context of teacher education, where she felt being able to name, identify, and "accurately" pronounce certain people and ideas carried great capital, her peers might have focused in on her pronunciation of Wise's name, missing the depth of her point.

Natasha used AAL, emotional language, and hand gesturing to remark on the lack of understanding about institutional racism in her class. She referred to a class reading where she agreed with the author's argument while the majority of her classmates felt that racism was a "thing of the past" (line 42). In the prior example, Natasha referred to the reading of Tim Wise's work on antiracism, which challenges modern-day conceptions of slavery and racism as issues of the past. She laid out Wise's argument, which points out that the moral beliefs about enslavement and killing transverse historical time and location. Natasha stressed, "killin BIN wrong" (line 48). She agreed with Wise's point that the fundamental principles

and ideologies that made slavery permissible in the United States are applicable to modern times. These ideologies, in Natasha's estimation, underscore institutional racism.

With Latoya, Natasha was able to express her agreement with the text. However, she did so using a counterlanguage. Natasha and Latoya's conversation allowed for the dominant presence of their perspectives on institutional racism, their counterstory. This conversation would be altered by participation or presence from others who might be considered outsiders. The counterlanguage is also marked by the frequent use of pragmatic markers that make frequent appeals to "sympathetic circularity" (Wardhaugh, 2002), for example, *you know what I mean*, or, in this case, *you nameen*. In the next example, Latoya latched on to Natasha's story round[2] by sharing her similar points about experiences in her classes.

55 Latoya: =but, you know what, that's what they teach in our classes.
56 Like in my history methods class, um, with, um, what's his name?
57 Which is sumthin' I kind of disagreed with—
58 Marcelle:—Oh, you had him?
59 Latoya: Yea, I kinda disagreed with . . .
60 But, he was talkin' bout presenta, presentation . . .
61 Not presentation, but sumthin' that had to do with,
62 Like what you said,
63 Teaching history, like when you teach history to your students,
64 Teach it as it happened in the past,
65 But don't teach it as it's still happening
66 ((hand gesturing)) YOU NAMEEN
67 Like, if you're teachin' slavery,
68 Teach it as in, dese where things that were goin' on in the past
69 But they're not
70 I don't know if I'm articulating it right
71 But the way you said
72 And I'm just like
73 How can you, how can you justify that slavery was wrong in the past
74 And make it seem like it was a past issue,
75 But if slavery was t' happen today, it's like=
76 Natasha: =But it's still impacts from slavery today!

Natasha and Latoya were tired of having to explain themselves to their White peers, which oftentimes would result in their deliberate silence in classes. The cohesiveness of their story rounds was demonstrated by their sharing of similar points and ideas. The shared understanding in these exchanges was marked by the lack of explanation about institutional racism. Latoya and Natasha exhibited a shared understanding about this topic, and as a result, they did not have to use an elaborated code. When Latoya said "You nameen" (line 66), she was not asking

Natasha a question. Further, her use of this pragmatic marker was not what some sociolinguists might define as a "filler" in conversation or a form of hedging. Here, she affirmed her shared understanding of these situations with Natasha. "You nameen" communicated the disagreement with the professor's presentation of a theoretical stance on how to teach about slavery in the United States. Her use of the phrase "you nameen" also represented morphological processes of word formation to form a slang term (Reyes, 2005). "You nameen" is not the same as "you know what I mean" here. While "you nameen" like "you know what I mean" is viewed as a discourse marker that signifies agreement and shared understanding, it is also a slang term that emerges out of the AAL experience (see Reyes, 2005).

In line 70, Latoya questioned whether she was articulating her point accurately, but she continued to bond with Natasha's position by linking to what Natasha previously said. Natasha affirmed their common understanding by completing Latoya's thought in line 76, expounding on the ways that the legacy of slavery still impacts society today. Natasha and Latoya were talkin and testifyin (Smitherman, 1977) about their experiences in their classes. While much was left unsaid in the context of their conversation with one another (because it did not *have* to be said), much was understood and affirmed.

A "Linguistic Turn" in the Stories Told by Black Female Preservice Teachers

When we complete each other's thoughts and utterances, *you nameen*. When I do not have to explain myself and use an elaborated code, *you nameen*. In the aforementioned examples, Natasha and Latoya co-constructed utterances, at times, moving beyond heteroglossia (Bakhtin, 1981). In the heteroglossic text, multiple voices co-exist. Natasha and Latoya created one voice. One unit of understanding was communicated in their conversation as a result of their collective engagement. The ability to achieve a singular voice was possible because of their shared experiences, common histories, and understood background knowledge. Narratives on race, racism, and identity were told in unison, together. In the prior conversation analyses, the co-construction of their voices, the high involvement rhetorical strategies, such as overlapping and latching, and the use of *you nameen* as a pragmatic marker of affirmation and belonging, all worked to create a markedly different context than the teacher education context among others. Further, their use of affirmative language and the telling of personal stories positioned themselves and each other as "insiders," members of the group. In conversation among friends, in the company of sisters, Natasha and Latoya created a context that allowed for the revealing of many authentic performances of themselves.

Though "being silenced" is a prevalent theme in the research literature on students of color in teacher education, Natasha and Latoya's purposeful decision to be silent at times constitutes a "linguistic turn" (Canning, 1999) in how we traditionally represent the concept of voice in educational research, particularly in

studies where we the researchers aim to privilege the voices of those perceived as being silenced. Now, who was I to claim to give voice to those who are underrepresented or marginalized in dominant contexts? Within the context of teacher education, Natasha and Latoya each relied on linguistic devices and rhetorical strategies, such as deliberate silence, to protect their voices and identities. There is a distinct difference in "being silenced" and choosing to "be silent." Silence was not a state imposed upon them by the dominant culture; at least, they resisted and subverted such power and dominance. In fact, not intimately engaging in conversations about race, for example, in a classroom full of their White peers was a deliberate choice.

The analysis of their conversations is not intended to reveal one grand absolute truth but rather to examine Black women's perspectives in multiple contexts. As Rushin (1981/1983) ends in the Bridge poem, these Black women must be a "bridge to nowhere but [their] true [selves]." They enact multiple selves given the context, the purpose, the moment, the day—and all of these enactments are their true selves. The context of teacher education oftentimes privileges these kinds of multiple enactments from White students and demands that racially and linguistically non-dominant students must be more deliberate and purposeful about their decisions to speak out or to be silent.

When we have students in our teacher education classes who are silent, we must still listen. Natasha and Latoya remind us that there exist multiple experiences and perspectives in our teacher education programs and that this multiplicity lends itself to diverse forms of effective teaching and practice. This work cannot be about placing preservice teachers of color like Natasha and Latoya underneath a microscope. But it must place teacher education as a discourse community under that microscope. Teacher education programs have historically replicated an ethos of linguistic and cultural exclusion (Meacham, 2001). However, if indeed teacher educators and researchers want to address the social realities facing our schools, this will require that teacher educators and researchers interrupt the normative center of the White, monolingual teacher in research and practice. To really "be about" a culture of inclusion, teacher education programs must "become" the kinds of culturally and linguistically diverse communities for which they claim to be preparing *all* preservice teachers.

Notes

1. This chapter draws on data and discussions from a previously published manuscript, Haddix, M. (2012). Talkin in the company of sistas: The counterlanguages and deliberate silences of Black female students in teacher education. *Linguistics and Education, 23*(2), 169–181.
2. A story round is a particular kind of story cluster in which speakers exchange stories of personal experiences that share similar points. They require little or no orientation, such as: "Did I tell you what happened . . ." The very juxtaposition of the stories provides the thematic cohesion (Tannen, 1984/2005).

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7

NEW VOICES, NEW IDENTITIES

Diversifying the Literacy and English Teacher Force

In an article that investigates teacher education research that informs policy, Sleeter (2014) argues:

> Given the increasing racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity in classrooms not only in the United States but in countries around the world, I was surprised to see the student teaching research give so little attention to complexities in learning to teach diverse students well. The almost complete absence of attention to student diversity in this sample of research studies provides an example of mini-silos in teacher education research in which, for example, some research communities work on diversity, others on subject matter pedagogy, and yet others on student teaching . . . Teachers do not just teach reading, or fifth graders, or social justice, or English learners, or standards; they do all of these things simultaneously. (p. 151)

This affirms the feelings expressed by the preservice teachers of color featured in this book—at any given moment, they are asked to leverage one identity marker over another or to value one aspect of teaching over another. Instead, there is power and agency in the hybrid spaces that honor simultaneously their histories, identities, capacities, and competencies. They cannot become teachers absent of their racial and linguistic identities or their commitments to social justice teaching and to urban communities of color. And, they shouldn't have to. That is the point: If our imperative is to recruit and retain a more racially and linguistically diverse teacher force *and* to support them in meeting the needs of all students, we have to disrupt and dismantle the silos that we create within teacher education programs where some discourses and identities are directed to be left at the door before one can even enter.

In this final chapter, I offer implications for the importance of sustaining conversations with teachers and teacher education candidates of color as teacher educators and literacy scholars work to improve literacy and English education for an increasingly diverse student population. I also discuss specific ways to recruit and retain teachers of color in literacy and English education. This chapter will support the argument that cultivating diverse teachers for English and literacy classrooms holds great potential for bringing richer experiences and perspectives to teaching P–12 children and student populations by validating and privileging the cultural and linguistic resources of all preservice teachers across curricular, pedagogical, and practical teacher education experiences.

Who Sits at the Table: Inviting Students of Color In

This book is about putting the interests of students of color at the front in teacher preparation. Real change is not realized as long as predominantly White, monolingual people are sitting around a table talking about what needs to happen to increase diversity. No one wants to give up his or her seat. Instead, we need to envision a room where many people, with diverse histories and perspectives, are at that table and where White teacher educators and administrators in schools of education listen to, validate, and act on the concerns, experiences, and realities expressed by students and educators of color. Until then, preservice teachers of color will continue to experience marginalization, exclusion, and a detrimental mismatch between their own culture and that of academic institutions. We reinforce a "cultural limbo" that preservice teachers experience when faced with how to embrace their own cultural and linguistic heritage and at the same time appropriate the expectations of their teacher education programs. They are constantly questioning whether or how to bridge multiple worlds, multiple identities, and, presumably, at a cost to their cohesive senses of selves. They contend with internalized notions of marginalization and linguistic inferiority, especially within a context that positions them as culturally and linguistically "other" to the predominant White, monolingual student. Much of this research speaks to what Dubois (1903/2003) referred to as double consciousness within the African American experience—having to be fully aware and have an understanding of two worlds at all times. Preservice teachers of color exist within a metaphorical borderlands (Anzaldúa, 1987/1999), stuck between the academic culture and the culture of their families and communities. However, both Dubois (1903/2003) and Anzaldúa (1987/1999) advocated for the joining of opposites, a transition toward a higher level of consciousness.

Natasha, Latoya, and Angela are exemplars of preservice teachers of color who move beyond marginalization and linguistic inferiority toward agency and linguistic hybridity. For example, Natasha exuded pride and strength in being a Black woman and in being a speaker of African American Language. From her interactions with students in her practicum classroom to her assertiveness in the

university classes, Natasha viewed her identification as a strong Black woman to her affiliation to African American Language as an asset. With her students, she viewed it as a signification of bonding, comfort, and community. In my observations of Natasha, specifically in the writing workshop, I noted moments where there seemed to be "tension" between Natasha's primary discourse and the dominant Discourse on teaching. As she negotiated these competing discourses, she progressed toward a hybrid teacher identity, one that took into account her rich cultural and linguistic resources yet acknowledged the additional skills and tools necessary for being an effective teacher. In the end, Natasha was satisfied with being Natasha. She asserted loudly, "this is how I talk," "this is me."

Latoya also relied on her affiliation to African American Language (AAL) to enact an effective teacher identity. Due to her legitimated use of AAL, she was able to, in part, strengthen her bond with her students and, at the same time, establish an authoritative identity. Latoya had to figure out how to be an effective teacher in her own body, with her own language, and with her own history. She could not be the predominantly White female teacher who identified as a "standard" English speaker, nor could she be Mr. Fernandes, a Cape Verdean man. Latoya illuminated the ways in which preservice teachers of color enact authentic, hybrid identities within and beyond the context of teacher education. No longer on the margins, no longer needing to see both sides of things, Latoya carved and sketched a teacher identity that worked for Latoya, one that brought to the forefront her unique, individual cultural and linguistic history.

Like Natasha and Latoya, Angela too drew strength from her identification with Latino culture and language. She felt that she better understood the students in her practicum because she knew what it was like to be in a school environment that was starkly different from your home environment. As a bilingual Spanish and English speaker, Angela lived in two worlds. Her experiences with marginalization were deeply rooted in her everyday life. Angela clearly articulated demarcations between her use of Spanish and her use of English. She also articulated an understanding of language "appropriateness" in context, and she held deeply ingrained notions about what it meant to speak English with an accent. As the research literature on preservice teachers of color suggested, Angela faced a "crossroads" of how to appropriate a teacher identity, one that was valued and legitimized within the dominant context of teacher education while at the same time maintaining allegiance to her cultural and linguistic heritage. She also was still challenging her own internalization of standard language ideologies and societal attitudes that positioned her cultural and linguistic identity as a deficit. This was Angela's struggle. However, I observed Angela's move toward agency and linguistic hybridity in her evolution as a teacher. In essence, as all three of these women became more confident in using their multiple discourses, they experienced a progression and transformation of their cultural and linguistic knowledge and understanding.

Natasha, Latoya, and Angela each made deliberate linguistic decisions at all times. However, it was important to draw out the distinctions among their individual experiences. While they each forged hybrid language practices, this

hybridization occurred differently across and within each of their experiences. The intricacies and complexities within their individual experiences were mediated by context and their unique histories. There were variations in their language practices—some were more agentive and interruptive of the dominant Discourses than others. The complexities of these hybrid discourses were contingent upon the participants, their identities, and the contexts. Their linguistic choices were deliberate performances of identity, and as such, these performances varied with their alignment and interaction with other participants, the context, and the purpose of the task at hand.

Their participation and engagement, or lack of, in various contexts signified their agency as language users. Silence was not a result of them being silenced, as often represented in the research literature on preservice teachers of color. At times, it was a result of their decision that they no longer wanted to represent the minority voice or perspective. They were tired of being "the only one." They no longer wanted to be responsible for the consciousness or humanness of their fellow White peers and professors. Their decisions to represent authentic identities were at times when they wanted to connect or bond with particular individuals or groups in particular settings. And, on the other hand, lack of full, authentic engagement was a means of protecting and safeguarding their interests as individuals with rich cultural and linguistic capital.

Much of the research on racial and linguistic "non-dominant" students in teacher education emphasizes themes of being silenced, ignored, and invisible, that preservice teachers of color feel silenced and overlooked in teacher education programs where curriculum and practice are designed and shaped to meet the needs of a majority White, monolingual, middle-class, and female teacher population. How we "frame the problem" for preservice teachers of color—and how we examine the concerns and issues they face—is of great importance. One, by placing preservice teachers of color in the center of analyses, one runs the risk of perpetuating a homogeneous representation of this population, furthering ideologies of "one kind" of bilingualism or "one kind" of Blackness and negating the multidimensionally faceted experiences of Blacks and Latinos. Second, there is a danger in framing, representing, and describing the experiences of preservice teachers of color as counter to that of their White, monolingual counterparts. By reinforcing a narrative of difference, opportunities to view the experiences of preservice teachers of color in a deficit way abound. Significantly, the "challenge" for mainstream teachers is not their own cultural backgrounds but rather those of the "diverse" students in their classrooms (Gutierrez & Orellana, 2006).

At all times, however, Natasha, Angela, and Latoya challenged deficit notions of what it means to be bilingual or a dialect speaker and what it means to be a racial minority in a dominant White, monolingual context. By constantly experiencing and seeing Discourses of Whiteness in the teacher education program, these preservice teachers became clearer about who they are not and, more importantly, *who they are*. The situated nature of their identity formation, in this instance, is best described as their ability to define themselves within a context that, in some ways,

denies their existence. Further, they exhibited an ability to reflect on their own histories as racial, cultural, and linguistic beings. Their cultural, racial, and linguistic histories were "front and center" in their everyday realities.

Teachers Like Me: Teaching and Teacher Education for Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

black like me
and suddenly everyone would see
how black i am.
black like collard greens & salted meat simmering on a stove.
black like hot water cornbread & iron skillets, like juke joints & fish frys
black like soul train lines & the electric slide at weddings and birthdays
black like vaseline on ashy knees, like beads decorating braids
black like cotton fields & soul-cried spirituals.
my skin is black
like red kool-aid, red soda, the red blood
of the lynched and assassinated and the african man
those skinheads killed with a baseball bat when i was in the fifth grade.
i am as black as he was.
my science teacher knows this. she sees
my black and is blind to my brilliance.
can't believe i passed the test with an a
when all the white kids failed.
and when she says to the white students,
"you ought to be ashamed of yourselves . . ."
what she really wants to say is, "i can't believe this black girl is as smart as you."
all the white kids look at me
and this is when we learn that the color of our shells
come with expectations.
i stop being good
at science and math.
my english teacher gives me books and journals
and i read and write the world
as it is, as i want it to be.
i read past my black blues, discover that i am black
like benjamin banneker and george washington carver
black like margaret walker and fannie lou hamer
i am not just slave and despair.
i am struggle and triumph. i learn
to live my life in the searching, in the quest:
can i be black and brilliant?
can i be jazz and gospel, hip hop and classical?
can i be christian and accepting?
can i be big and beautiful?
can i be black like me?
can anyone see me?

—Renée Watson

I include this poem by Renée Watson (2014) from an article she wrote for *Rethinking Schools* about her experiences of feeling invisible and unseen by her teachers when she was one of a few Black students who were bused to Southeast Portland to integrate the schools. She describes being the only Black girl in a classroom space where, because of her marginality and invisibility, her culture and heritage were ignored and devalued and her teacher exhibited little to no expectation for her and her academic aspirations. She pointedly asks the readers the question, "What if she really saw me?" In the same way, I ask, *What if we really see preservice teachers of color? What does it mean to really see someone? How does that "seeing" then inform teacher education ideologies and practices?* Watson ends her poem with the questions: *can i be black like me? can anyone see me?* The idea of having "teachers like me" is in many ways about a hope to prepare a teacher force where the distance between the cultural and linguistic backgrounds of teachers and students is lessened. It is about a resolve to prepare teachers who are capable of truly seeing their students in all of their cultural and linguistic individualities. It is also about cultivating teacher education spaces where we really see the diverse cultural and linguistic knowledges and identities that preservice teachers of color bring to the field of teaching.

This book began with my story, a story of a young Black girl and speaker of African American Language who wanted to become a teacher. My own history as a student did not include many teachers like me. Being bused to the suburbs for high school and then attending a historically White institution and teacher preparation program, I was often the only student of color. I did not have teachers like me—who lived where I lived, who ate the foods I ate, who celebrated the same cultural traditions. Our differences were not necessarily a bad thing or a determent for me to achieve academically. However, we never benefited from our differences—instead the focus was always on my difference as a deficit. I was marked as the student who did not belong and who had to work hard to prove that I legitimately deserved to be in those spaces.

Like me, Natasha, Latoya, and Angela worked to prove that they belonged in teaching and teacher education spaces. At the same time, the systems governing those spaces, while professing social justice orientations, did little to change an unjust status quo. Instead, we had to make sense of how to become teachers within university and K–12 contexts that emphasize the development of predominantly White, monolingual, middle-class female students who are learning to teach according to White, monolingual, middle-class cultural traditions. As students of color learning to teach, we had to do much of the heavy lifting in terms of challenging racist and White supremacist values that permeated throughout our university courses into our student teaching placements. While we did the antiracist work, our teacher education programs maintained a focus on preparing their mostly White, monolingual female preservice teachers develop awareness and skills effective for teaching in culturally diverse schools. While doing so, schools of education inadvertently affirm the message that teaching is not for students of

color—it is not a space where they belong—which, in turn, has serious consequences for the students who will be taught by the graduates of our programs.

I understand that an immediate concern for preservice teacher education research and practice should be how to prepare the current homogeneous teaching force for teaching a culturally and linguistically diverse student population. As Boyd et al. (2006) write,

> While recruiting teacher candidates of diverse backgrounds might seem like a viable solution to closing gaps of diversity between teachers and their students, along with recruitment comes the responsibility of preparing all teacher candidates to be effective teachers of all students. (p. 334)

However, this does not mean that efforts to unpack the reasons why students of color do not enter or leave the field of teaching and teacher education should be set aside. To ensure educational attainment and opportunity for underrepresented racial and linguistic groups in teacher education, the educational research community must continue to consult preservice teachers of color as a major source of guidance. Ultimately, my goal is to encourage the educational research community to begin to "see with the third eye" (Irvine, 2003). By looking through a third eye, we can begin to see a different picture and examine alternative explanations for student achievement offered by preservice teachers of color. Angela, Natasha, and Latoya remind us that there exist multiple experiences and perspectives in our teacher education programs and that this multiplicity lends itself to diverse forms of effective teaching and practice.

This multi-voiced account of the language and teaching practices of Angela, Natasha, Latoya represents their varied practices—oral, written, and performed—alongside my own discursive participation. I began this book in dialogue with Natasha, Latoya, and Angela to include autoethnographic reflexivity about my own experiences as a nonstandard dialect speaker navigating inside and outside the academic community. I too am continually engaged in a process of understanding what it means to maintain membership in my racial and linguistic culture while gaining membership into more mainstream culture. Natasha, Latoya, and Angela, as they completed their undergraduate education, were each realizing new teacher identities and, at the same time, coming into their own as cultural and linguistic beings. Together, we garnered greater appreciation for our unique and varied yet similar experiences navigating within and beyond dominant institutions. Through language, we are able to perform multiple identities, exhibiting a highly complex and agentive hybridization of multiple codes.

If indeed teacher educators and researchers want to address the social realities facing our schools, it is imperative that we trouble the dominant rhetoric of "teaching for social justice" and "teaching for diversity." This will require that teacher educators and researchers interrupt the normative center of the White, monolingual teacher in research and practice. To really "be about" a culture of

inclusion, teacher education programs must "become" the kinds of racially and linguistically diverse communities for which they claim to be preparing *all* pre-service teachers.

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APPENDIX A

A Note on Methodology

I want to briefly address the methodological approaches I use to answer questions about racial and linguistic diversity in literacy teacher education. In this book, I draw on findings and discussions from a year-long ethnographic and sociolinguistic study of the literacy and language experiences of three preservice teachers of color, Angela, Latoya, and Natasha. I think deeply about their experiences, alongside my own journey as a Black female teacher, teacher educator, and mother. This ethnographic inquiry is significant in that I understand their linguistic practices and their taking on of teacher identities both within and outside a traditional, nationally accredited teacher education program at a northeastern research institution in the United States with a predominantly White, monolingual, middle-class student population. The teacher education program had an articulated mission of "teaching for social justice" and goals for multicultural teacher education (as discussed in chapter 3).

Through a networking process of recruitment (via email, face-to-face interactions, faculty and peer nominations), I formed a small participant pool of preservice teachers who self-identified as students of color on the basis of their racial, cultural, and linguistic heritages—Natasha and Latoya, two Black women who are speakers of African American Language (AAL), and Angela, a Costa Rican woman who is a bilingual Spanish and English speaker. At the time of the study, all three women were completing their senior year as teacher education majors. Natasha and Angela were both student teaching in second grade classrooms in an urban school district. Latoya was student teaching in an English humanities and social studies high school classroom in an urban school district.

The setting for this study of my own experiences and the language and literacy practices of these three preservice teachers was conducted in and around a traditional, nationally accredited teacher education program at a northeastern research

institution with a predominantly White student population in the United States. The three contexts of study, or sites for data collection, included a teacher education methods course (the university classroom), a P–12 classroom in local area schools (the practicum classroom), and settings outside the university or practicum school context (e.g., attending family gatherings, eating at restaurants, shopping at the mall, etc.). I conducted preliminary, informal meetings with each preservice teacher to learn more about how he or she self-identified as a language and literacy user—their level of metalinguistic awareness, or ability to consciously think about their language and how it is used. These meetings took place in coffee houses, in the campus library, and, when face-to-face meetings were not a viable option, via email or phone calls. I asked the preservice teachers to define their racial and linguistic identity (e.g., did they identify as bilingual or as a speaker of a non-standard dialect) and to describe their language use when they were among family or close friends and to then think about their language and literacy practices in academic and/or professional settings. It was critical that each preservice teacher who participated in this study exhibit a metalinguistic awareness about using multiple linguistic codes in multiple settings.

Like many other educational researchers (see Heath, 1983; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Lewis, 2001; Rogers, 2003), I relied on the tradition of ethnography because I was interested the experiences of Black and Latina preservice teachers in a multicultural teacher education program and how these experiences were mediated by their participation in various contexts. I relied on ethnographic and sociolinguistic data collection methods because I wanted to examine how and why preservice teachers of color "talk the way that they do" and "act the way that they do" in various contexts. I wanted to understand what language and literacy practices of preservice teachers of color say about the ways in which they are becoming teachers within the current context of teaching and teacher education. I observed and interviewed Natasha, Latoya, and Angela as they completed their student teaching practicums, as they completed course requirements, and as they continued to maintain social lives outside an academic environment.

Each week, I had informal conversations with them about their university classes and student teaching experiences. Our weekly informal conversations were audiotaped and collected as interview data. These informal conversations encompassed many instances of their own understandings of the literacy and language practices deemed most salient to their teacher identity development. In addition to the regular, ongoing conversations, both in person and online, I conducted and videotaped a one- to two-hour semi-structured interview with each of participant at the end of the academic year. From regular weekly conversations, we determined one literacy and language "event" (Ball, 2000) per week for me to observe in their university classes, in their student teaching placements, or in social settings. Examples of such events included participating in a group discussion in a literacy methods class, conducting a mini-lesson when student teaching, or attending religious services with family. These weekly observations varied from two to four

hours. I took field notes during each observation, and I audiotaped each observation session in an effort to fill in gaps in my field notes. With each participant, we also decided on one event in each of the three primary contexts to videotape. The decision to videotape these events was based on the understanding of language practices as not only inclusive of what is being said, but also inclusive of physical properties including body movements, spatial proximity, and facial expressions. During the year-long period of data collection, I accumulated field notes and transcripts for more than 30 hours of observation and 20 hours of interview data per participant. These were the hours that were formally documented but by no means reflect all the time that was spent building and developing repertoire and trust. After each conversation, interview, and observation, I wrote summaries of my field experiences, and via email, I shared these summaries with the preservice teachers to gain feedback and as a tool to mediate further discussion. These email interactions became a part of the archival data. Archival data also included their weekly journal reflections as assigned by their practicum supervisors and selected assignments from teacher education and other related courses.

By taking field notes, audiotaping and videotaping, and engaging in ongoing conversations, my aim was to capture representations of their discursive practices and to engage with them about their understandings of these practices in multiple settings. In her use of jazz as a metaphor to understand qualitative research methodologies, Dixson (2005) describes the kinds of ethnographic methods that were dominant in my own study:

> Traditional interview methods would have the researcher follow a predetermined list of questions that allow for some conversational spontaneity but primarily limit the type of "call and response" and the nonlinear manner that is sometimes found in the narrative and speech styles of African Americans (Etter-Lewis, 1993; Smitherman, 2000). Hence, in the jazz interview, transcripts are quite often lengthy and colloquial because both the researcher and the participant may engage in storytelling and testifyin' sessions during the course of the interview. Thus, the jazz methodology is an interactive, synergistic process. It is much like that of musicians on the bandstand who create and recreate music using the ideas and energy of not only the other members of the band (the researcher and the participant) but also the audience. Moreover, relationship and trust building are essential elements within a jazz methodology. (pp. 132–133)

In accordance with Dixson's claims, as the researcher, I had to be careful that my comments and *mmhmm*'s, among other gesticulations, did not become the focal point of the conversations. I intently listened for their stories. I also had to be worthy of receiving their stories, and this depended greatly on taking the time to establish trust and relationships. Being able to do so was directly related to the ways that our relationships developed. The interview process did not mirror traditional

qualitative research methods where the researcher asks questions from a structured interview protocol, places the recorder on the table, and consumes the responses of their participants. Throughout the research study, I reflected greatly on how my own positionality allowed me to enter into this inquiry and the ways in which it facilitated the development of our relationships and the building of trust.

This research inquiry was deeply informed by my experiences as a Black female teacher educator who works with fewer and fewer students of color each year. It was also heavily informed by my experiences as a mother and as a Black female student in a predominantly White teacher preparation program. There are important autoethnographic elements that informed the development of this text. However, it is important for me to acknowledge that my experience is uniquely mine, and it remains essential that I constantly "check" the ways my story affects each stage of any research project—from why I ask particular questions to the ways I conduct interviews to the lens through which I interpret the data. Who I am—and the intersecting identities I occupy—influences the process of inquiry and exploration.

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APPENDIX B

Transcription Coding System

(adapted from Tannen, 1984/2005)

Italics	Emphasis
. . .	Pause for seconds
CAPITAL LETTERS	Loud Volume; Yelling
((double parentheses))	Gestures (e.g., nods, smiles, laughs, points, claps, etc.)
(parentheses)	Different pronunciation
↑	Rising Pitch
↓	Falling Pitch
SMALL CAPS	Rapid Rate of Speech
[brackets]	Overlapped Speech
—	Interruption
"quotations"	Quoting; Marking
= =	Latching
:::	Lengthened sound
/ /	Phonetic spelling (IPA)

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