

Reproducing and Interrupting Subtractive Schooling in Teacher Education

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But I teach Math. It is not my job to teach English as a second language.

These are the words of one preservice teacher voicing his frustration over the fact that he has been required to take a course focusing on teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse contexts. We can feel his pain because we are two professors who teach such courses and we consistently hear similar complaints from our teacher education students who substitute the word “math” with any number of other content areas which reflect their specialization. Our job is to convince these well-intentioned and idealistic students that it will be *their* job to teach *all* of their students and in the reality of today’s schools they *will* have students who are English language learners (ELLs).

Perhaps it is not surprising that we have encountered such resistance from preservice teachers given the fact that our students, like the majority of preservice teachers in other universities, are White and come from middle-class and monolingual English speaking backgrounds (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Cochran-Smith, Davis, and Fries (2004) address this issue:

The strikingly different racial, cultural, and linguistic profiles of the nation’s student and teaching populations, coupled with continuing disparities among racial and cultural groups in school achievement and completion rates, poverty levels, and opportunities to learn from qualified teachers, have been highlighted for some time now as pressing—if not the most pressing—issue for teacher preparation research, practice, and policy. (p. 931)

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How can we, professors of education, effectively address the needs and the disparities identified by Cochran-Smith, Davis, and Fries in the above quote? In this article, we will describe qualitative research conducted in the large and diverse states of California and Texas that examine the beliefs and experiences of preservice teachers in relation to issues of cultural and linguistic diversity and education.

Although like others before us who found no easy answers, we have identified spaces of opportunity where students engage in thoughts and actions that counter reproduction of the inequitable status quo based in monocultural hegemony. These spaces are merely moments and do not necessarily reflect major transformations typically called for in research on critical multicultural teacher education. Therefore, we refer to these moments as “interruptions.” Though brief, they are filled with potential energy and offer opportunity for teacher educators to tap.

Review of Literature

Demographic studies confirm that while the number of school-aged children from diverse backgrounds is increasing, the majority of teachers and those in teacher education programs continue to be predominantly White, middle class, and English monolingual speakers (Cho & DeCastro-Ambrosetti, 2005; Gay 2005; Grant & Gillette, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2005). This is true in the classes that we have taught for preservice teachers. Although there has been a great deal of discussion about the need to diversify the body of teachers serving ELLs, we are still struggling with this reality.

Research points out that Whiteness and racism influence the beliefs of White, monolingual English speaking pre-service teachers about the way they teach ELLs. A study conducted by Marx in 2004 revealed the association of color with deficit think-

ing mentality. The preservice teachers that participated in Marx’s study viewed their Mexican students as having deficits in culture, language, families, intelligence and esteem. What Marx reports in her study is very likely to happen when preservice teachers have not had exposure to other cultures and languages. This is why we feel compelled to provide these preservice teachers with experiences and learning opportunities to examine their belief system about teaching in general and specifically about teaching ELLs.

Some research studies have attempted to measure and/or demonstrate the type of psychological transformation that should occur in teacher candidates so that they will become more aware of social inequity based on race, class, and gender (Cochran-Smith, Davis, & Fries, 2004; Hollins & Guzman, 2005). This attitudinal transformation then should lead to new ways of addressing curriculum and pedagogy that are more just and inclusive of all students. We are interested in the potential for curriculum and pedagogy in teacher education programs for producing such transformations.

Grant and Gillette (2006) define teacher effectiveness through the punctual description of issues such as culturally responsive teaching, self-knowledge (understanding, acceptance, and willingness to change), a well constructed philosophy of education, pedagogical content knowledge, educational psychology, multicultural knowledge, and making connections to the world outside of the school. When teachers lack preparation to address specific needs of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) populations, these students can become curriculum casualties (Mathes & Torgesen, 2000). Thus, it is important to analyze how pre-service teachers construct their understanding of learning and teaching this population of students.

One point that is overlooked in many of the studies in this important area of re-

search is the idea that psychological transformation, what could also be termed “true learning,” is a process that may take more than one semester (Hill-Jackson, Sewell, & Waters, 2007). This points to a major critique of the superficial way diversity is commonly treated in schools of education.

Villegas and Lucas (2002) highlight the fact that teacher preparation programs often relegate all issues surrounding race, ethnicity, class, and gender to one required “diversity” class. The message that is sent by such a structure is that issues of diversity are secondary in terms of importance and that they are not really connected to content instruction. This framework leads to a ghettoization of multicultural education that allows professors of education to dismiss these issues and most preservice teachers to ignore them. The diversity class is often seen as an uncomfortable obstacle that must be passed in order to move on with the degree plan (Ladson-Billings, 2005).

Villegas and Lucas (2002) call for more coherence around issues of diversity in schooling that would be woven as a central theme into the fabric of all courses. This notion of ideological clarity that centers issues of sociopolitical and economic realities that affect schooling is precisely what Cochran-Smith et al. (2004) are calling for in their quote mentioned earlier in this article. These are not isolated recommendations; in fact many other scholars have made similar calls for wide-scale transformations of teacher preparation programs (Ladson-Billings, 2001; Nieto, 2000; Sleeter & Montecinos, 1999; Smith, Moallem, & Sherrill, 1997).

Apart from *the* required course on diversity that is present in most schools of education, field-based experiences are often highlighted as potentially fertile grounds for preservice teachers to learn about diversity in the context of real schools with actual students. This makes sense given that the public schools where the predominantly White teacher candidates do internships are becoming increasingly diverse in terms of student body.

Smith et al. (1997) suggest that teacher educators go beyond the use of autobiography as a self-reflecting tool. These researchers recommend teacher educators to create spaces for engagement in travel education, personal experiences with discrimination, and exposure to individuals of diverse cultural backgrounds. Through these direct experiences with the reality outside the university classroom, preservice teachers will have opportunity to restructure their

way of thinking and they will be given time to reflect on these experiences.

Addressing Disconnections

Ladson-Billings (2005) suggests “the real problems facing teacher education are the disconnections between and among the students, families, and community and teachers and teacher educators. These disconnections emanate from differences in race, cultural background, and socioeconomic status” (p. 229). What we need to do is to examine these issues from within. In other words, we need to examine the way our teacher preparation programs are structured. We also need to explore possibilities for the school, the community, and teacher preparation programs to work together in partnerships. Although many teacher preparation programs make claims of commitment to diversity, many teacher educators expect others to shoulder the responsibility of acting on these commitments (Ladson-Billings, 2005).

Schooling has historically been subtractive of the cultures and languages of children of color. Valenzuela (1999) situates wide-scale achievement problems of minority youth in the U.S. in “school-based relationships and organizational structures and policies designed to erase students’ culture” (p. 10). In her ethnographic study of Mexican immigrant and Mexican American high school students’ school experiences, she shows how assimilation forces in schooling are subtractive of the cultures of Mexican-origin youth and contribute to student disillusionment, alienation, and failure. Since Valenzuela’s classic study, others have documented some of the ways schooling works to subtract resources from culturally and linguistically diverse students (see for example Garza & Crawford, 2005; Worthy, Rodríguez-Galindo, Assaf, Martínez, & Cuero, 2003).

Subtractive assimilation is due in large part to unconscious discursive practices of primarily White teachers, albeit usually with good intentions. When hegemonic assumptions about the nature of knowledge and learning go unquestioned, schools normalize “Whiteness,” thus privileging affluent and middle-class White students. This manifests in prevalent models of education that center around “expert” teachers and transmission styles of instruction. Such models tend to treat school content as politically neutral and ignore real life disparities found in today’s schooling and society. Schooling that leaves these forces

of assimilation unchecked can contribute to alienation and disillusionment in schooling for children of color.

Schools of education that do little or nothing to help teacher candidates identify and deconstruct the existing socio-cultural and political realities relating to schooling, are by default complicit in reproducing the cycle of subtractive schooling (Valenzuela, 2002). However, even within mainstream education programs spaces exist for critical thinking and unpacking of hegemonic discourse. As teacher educators working within colleges of education in large institutions, we are interested in identifying and tapping such spaces in the hopes of disrupting the forces that lead to wide-scale reproduction of social inequities in schooling.

What we are calling “interruptions” represent small spaces we have identified where there is potential to disrupt the status quo. In this article we provide examples of what we consider interruptions of subtractive schooling that we have found in our work with preservice teachers. Alone, these interruptions are at best just bumps in the road towards more status quo schooling.

However, when identified and analyzed, perhaps these small instances offer promise for transformative learning experiences that teacher candidates will carry with them into classroom teaching. As these interruptions expand, eventually the traditional structure of mainstream subtractive schooling could give way, leading to the possibility of a more equitable system that values the diverse knowledges and experiences students bring to school.

Method

This teacher research (Kincheloe, 2003; Loughran, 2000) has emerged from dialogue between two teacher researchers who examine their own practice working with preservice teachers. The data from this article come from universities in California and Texas, two states with large populations of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Both universities in this study have reputations for the quality of their teacher preparation programs.

Setting and Participants

Like many universities across the United States, the two universities connected to this study share certain similarities. First, the students enrolled in the teacher education programs are overwhelmingly White, monolingual

speakers of English, and from middle class backgrounds. This is a demographic that is also shared by the majority of the professors these students will encounter during the course of their degree program. In addition, both universities' teacher education programs have recognized a need for coursework to focus on culturally and linguistically diverse students. Both have responded to this need by creating one or two stand-alone courses designed specifically to address educational issues relating to diversity. Finally, both universities put a great deal of import on practical, hands-on, experiences and therefore tie a portion of required coursework to field-based practicum experiences.

The First Setting

The first author, Jesse S. Gainer, teaches field-based literacy classes for students in the Early Childhood-4th grade certification program in a public university in Central Texas. As part of their course requirements, students enroll in a semester long internship where they spend two days a week in elementary classrooms while taking nine hours of credits that include reading and curriculum courses. In addition to teaching the reading methods courses, which are taught in a classroom in the elementary school, Jesse supervises the interns while they are in their field placements.

The elementary school that houses the interns is located in a rural area with a predominantly Latino population. A large percentage of the children in the school are Latino, mostly of Mexican origin, and approximately 30% of the students are from homes where Spanish is the primary language. In addition to monolingual English classrooms and transitional bilingual classrooms, the school has a dual language program that serves students in Kindergarten through fifth grade.

The vast majority of the preservice teachers who enroll in Jesse's field-based courses are White and monolingual speakers of English. For many, the internship will be their first experience in a context where they interact daily with people from cultural and linguistic backgrounds that differ from their own. Since there are a limited number of classrooms available for placements, each semester some interns are placed in bilingual and dual language classrooms even if they are not bilingual.

The Second Setting

The second author, Clarena Larrotta, taught the two required classes on bilin-

gual/multicultural issues to 154 post-baccalaureate students working toward their credential program in a public university in Northern California. The courses are taught in two back-to-back semesters and are given in the setting of a university classroom. The courses are intended to provide teacher education students with necessary frameworks and approaches for successful teaching in linguistically and culturally diverse contexts.

In the first semester, students enrolled in Clarena's course are introduced to issues related to culture and language in schooling. Students engage in readings, class discussion, and projects that build background knowledge about first and second language development, socio-cultural and historical approaches to teaching, culturally responsive pedagogy, and issues of equity and inequity in schooling. In the second semester, students in Clarena's class continue to explore issues related to bilingual and multicultural education. In addition, while in the second semester students participate in a field-based practicum in their certification area. Clarena has students draw on their experiences in the field while dealing with multicultural/bilingual course content.

As is the case in Jesse's classes, students enrolled in Clarena's courses are overwhelmingly White, monolingual English speakers, and from middle-class backgrounds. Also similar to Jesse's students, most students in Clarena's courses have had very limited experiences with people from CLD backgrounds. For many, it is the second semester field experience that represents their first significant encounter with classroom diversity.

Data Sources

The authors collected data from their own teaching contexts. Data included observations, field notes, reflections written by students, interviews, and course evaluations. Different data sources were used in order to inform the different aspects of the study and provide a description of the phenomenon as complete as possible. Methodological triangulation of data collection methods provided a means of enhancing trustworthiness of study findings (Patton, 2002). To analyze the information gathered through the various data sources, we followed the systematic process of analyzing textual data suggested by Tesch (1990).

The results of our analysis indicated that our practices in teacher preparation programs functioned to reproduce subtrac-

tive schooling but also contained events that seemed to interrupt the reproduction of school inequities based on assimilation models. Although hundreds of students were observed in the two locations, our synthesis focuses on four illustrative examples that capture the main themes of reproducing and interrupting subtractive schooling in teacher education. These examples provide a strong ethnographic lens for demonstrating how teacher education programs can reproduce and interrupt the cycle of subtractive schooling for minoritized students.

Results and Discussion

Presented here are four narrative examples to illustrate the complex ways in which White monolingual education students interacted with the diversity issues that arose during their teacher preparation programs. The first two examples (Katie and Sarah, pseudonyms) focus on students in the Texas institution, and the following two (Brian and Melissa, pseudonyms) are from the institution in California. Rather than a complete rejection of tenets of multicultural education on one hand, or a total transformative experience leading to the embracing of multiculturalism on the other, we found students largely fell somewhere in the middle.

Although the structures of the teacher education programs and the mindsets of most students seemed to downplay the importance of diversity pedagogy, evidence showed small ways in which teacher candidates seemed to accommodate multicultural frameworks into their everyday practice. We share some examples to highlight what we mean by "interruptions." We contend that such interruptions of the reproduction of status quo school inequities and subtractive schooling offer potentially powerful springboards for teacher educators working with populations of largely White, monolingual, middle-class preservice teachers.

Narrative One: Elevating Language Status in a "Morning Message" Activity

When Katie started her internship in Ms. Rivera's dual language kindergarten she remembered only a few words from her high school Spanish class. She was pretty sure this would not get her too far with the 5-year-old students who were just beginning to learn English. Though Katie had lived her entire life before college in a suburb of Houston, Texas, she had never

had significant personal contact with native Spanish speakers. Based on information she had gleaned from TV, education courses, and church, she did have a rough idea about what to expect. From these sources she learned that the children would likely come to school unprepared and their parents would not be much help when it comes to their education.

When Katie had opportunities to get in front of the class in her dual language placement, she readily obliged. She was there to learn to be a teacher and was eager to get all the experience she could. One day, Ms. Rivera asked Katie if she would like to do *Morning Message*. *Morning Message* is an activity that is done daily by many teachers of young children. It is a way for the teachers to model writing for the authentic purpose of communication while also teaching early literacy skills such as directionality, phonological awareness, and concepts about print.

The teacher writes a brief message on a dry erase board and the class reads the message together. She might write something like: *Good morning. Today is Thursday February 14, 2009. After lunch we are going to Art. In math we are studying patterns. It is going to be a great day!* This was a moment Katie had been waiting for. She had been rehearsing for this moment in her head each morning while observing the cooperating teacher write her morning message. The activity was already a part of the class' routine so behavior management should not be much of an issue. Then she remembered something: The language of the day was Spanish.

With forty-two little eyes directed at her, Katie walked up to the dry erase board, picked up the blue marker, and addressed the class. "*No sé bien hablar español. Necesito your help to escribir the message del dia.*" In a mixture of Spanish and English Katie showed that she had picked up a few words since arriving on the scene only a month ago. More importantly she showed herself to be a learner who valued Spanish and desired to speak better.

The cross-legged children could barely contain themselves from their positions on the carpet. They wiggled and squealed, a sea of little hands waving in the air hoping to be the one who gets to help the teacher with her Spanish. Katie was wise beyond her experience and she knew to call on as many students as possible in this moment. Together, with children sharing the role of "expert" Katie and her students scribed a beautiful morning message in Spanish. When they finished Katie re-read the mes-

sage to the class as was the custom then she diverged from the "normal" teacher role and she thanked the students for their help.

Perhaps Katie was just being herself, a caring and open person, but what she communicated with her actions as she led the morning activity was a political act and constituted a culturally responsive style of teaching. By relinquishing the role of expert she not only allowed children to construct understanding of print by helping her write the message, she opened space for them to draw on their funds of knowledge to actually teach the teacher (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Vygotsky, 1978). This interrupts the traditional transmission model of instruction (banking model).

In addition, by insisting on abiding with the language of the day even though she could not speak Spanish well, Katie elevated the status of Spanish to one of central importance. This counters the mainstream hegemony of English in U.S. society. She utilized the linguistic resources of the children in this language arts lesson as vehicles for learning (Franquiz & Reyes, 1998). This act of inclusion communicated to students that in class biliteracy is valued and the language of the students was affirmed. This is summed up nicely by Villegas and Lucas (2002, p. 98) who state:

To ignore or denigrate a student's language is to ignore or denigrate the student him/herself. Culturally responsive teachers use their knowledge of sociolinguistics and language development along with what they learn about their students' uses of language...to draw on language as a resource for learning rather than seeing backgrounds in languages other than English or in varieties other than standard school English as impediments to learning.

Though Katie never explicitly acknowledged that it was her intention to draw on sociolinguistics and purposely create an assets based lesson, this was the consequence of her actions as teacher in that moment.

**Narrative Two:
Using "Direct Teach" to Subvert
Traditional Teacher-Centered Instruction**

Sarah grew up in a suburban neighborhood of Austin, Texas. Although she did not speak Spanish proficiently, she recognized that it might be a skill that would be handy in her future career as an elementary teacher. She requested a bilingual classroom and seemed to embrace the opportunity to learn some Spanish while completing her internship.

Sarah chose to teach the skill of note taking for the mandatory direct teach lesson she designed for the fourth grade bilingual classroom where she was placed. Explicit instruction, also known as the Madeline Hunter lesson, is teacher-centered by design. The format of the lesson plan, which is sometimes explained as: "I do, we do, you do," positions the teacher as the expert, the holder of knowledge to be disseminated to the students. Sarah turned this very traditional and teacher-centered lesson format upside down with a creative design that highlighted her expertise in the focus skill of note taking while centering the students' prior knowledge through content.

For the anticipatory set Sarah led a discussion about *My Diary From Here to There* (Pérez, 2002), a book that the class recently read. The book, which deals with a child's experience of moving from Mexico to the U.S., resonated with the experiences of many of the children in the class. After activating students' background knowledge on the topic, she introduced her objective and proceeded to the portion of the lesson where she modeled note taking. At this time Sarah asked her cooperating teacher, Mr. Martinez, to tell about his experiences moving from Mexico to the U.S. as a young child. Sarah took notes on the overhead demonstrating for the students who were spellbound listening to their teacher's history.

For the guided practice that followed, Sarah played an audiotape of her roommate who had moved to this country from Colombia when she was in high school. Students worked in small groups to imitate the note taking strategies they had learned from watching Sarah work on the overhead minutes earlier. The final portion of this lesson, independent practice, allows students to demonstrate their learning of the skill in question. For this portion of the lesson Sarah had invited Mrs. Cantu, the mother of a boy in the class, to come and tell about her experiences moving here from Mexico. Mrs. Cantu spoke very candidly about her reasons for coming, the emotions she felt about leaving family and friends, and the difficulties she has faced as a result of her limited ability to speak English. The children were deeply engaged in note taking while she spoke. When she finished practically every student in the room shot up his/her hand to ask questions.

In this example, Sarah managed to make the most traditional and teacher-centered lesson design a culturally responsive lesson that was based in students' prior knowledge and cultural capital. Sarah

noticed the power of tapping into students' funds of knowledge. In a reflection essay she commented:

[Students] were very engaged throughout the lesson, raising their hands frequently to provide responses or to ask good questions. They really enjoyed listening to different people's experiences and taking notes on them. Many of them wanted to hear their parents' story and even my own so that they could take notes on them.

As the final sentence in her reflection indicates, the students saw the learned skill of note taking as meaningful and wished to continue with it at home and with her. What Sarah did by inviting the cooperating teacher and a parent to share their stories of immigration was to send the potent message to students that the experiences of their families are valued in this class setting and they are integral for school learning. Through lesson design and a humanizing pedagogy (Bartolome, 1994), Sarah interrupted the cycle of subtractive schooling. Rather than ignoring students' backgrounds, or attempting to erase them, Sarah centered her students' experiences in an additive literacy lesson.

Narrative Three: I WILL Teach Mathematics and ELLs

Brian is from a small town in Northern California close to Oregon. He had never been out of his town and his plan was to find a job close by in the San Francisco Bay area. During the first semester, when classes started, Brian was one of the quiet students in the group. As he explained later, he was not timid; he was just not sure about needing instruction on multicultural and bilingual education issues. He had graduated from the Mathematics Department and was getting his credential in that single subject. The following is what Brian wrote in his first class reflection:

I feel uncomfortable. I don't know what to write about. This is a hard assignment because in Math we never have to write "reflections" and I do not know what to say. I have to turn in this assignment tomorrow and I'm following your advice writing about my thoughts. These topics we discuss in class are not relevant for my teaching, I need to learn how to teach Math...

Brian, like others, believed that his main goal in public education was to teach mathematics and learning about language issues and cultural diversity was not part of his role as a future teacher. Later in the semester, on his second essay, he still

resisted the idea of needing to reflect on the student population he was going to be serving in the classroom and the possible challenges he could face in the field when he started his student-teaching portion of the credential program. This is what he noted in his reflection:

I don't like this class... we talk about lots of touchy-feely topics. That is why I like Math! Numbers are easy.

However, during the second semester when he started his teaching practice his class reflections started to change. When Brian started his practice in the field he realized that not all the students in the math class were monolingual English native speakers, or European-American like him. During class discussion he said that:

I have seven ELLs in my math class and... I don't know what to do to help them with their problem solving skills because their English is so poor. I never thought I was going to be in this situation.

During the second semester, compelled by the need to reach all students in the classroom, Brian realized that it was important to develop strategies that help him accommodating instruction for the ELLs in his classes. In his last reflection he wrote:

Teachers should be required to receive pre-service training to be prepared to meet the needs of linguistic minorities. We need to understand about other cultures and be aware that we will have English learners in our classes. Regular classroom teachers should be required to receive pre-service training to be prepared to meet the needs of linguistic minorities and students that come from other cultures.

These thoughts suggest a shift of attitude from his part toward the importance of receiving multicultural instruction and discussing topics related to teaching ELLs. For most of the students, the second semester doing their teaching practice at the local schools provided them with experiences that made them realize that the readings and discussions we had started in the previous semester made sense.

We consider this an interruption of the cycle of subtractive schooling because through praxis, connecting theory to practice, Brian realized he would need to reach all students, including ELLs, if he hopes to be a successful mathematics teacher. We cannot say Brian is a transformed individual, we have no way of knowing how deeply he has internalized these views, but we can say that he has begun to ask important questions about his own teaching practice in relation to CLD students.

Narrative Four: A Wake Up Call in the Teachers' Lounge

Melissa graduated with a bachelor's degree in Science with a specialization in Biology. Her goal was to obtain a teacher credential and work at the local high school. Similar to Brian, she was also from Northern California and her attitude toward our class and teaching ELLs was similar as well. In her first class reflections she would write comments such as:

Multicultural education is not my field, I am going to teach biology. I am not going to teach language and I don't know why this class is required for graduation.

However, during the second semester in the credential program, and as a result of her practicum, Melissa realized that the reality outside the university where she dreamed about teaching just biology looked different than what she had pictured. During the third week in her site Melissa overheard a conversation in the teacher's lounge. She reported the following in class:

There were two teachers talking about the three Latino students they share in their classes. They seemed disappointed and were saying, "*These children are not learning any thing. They are not very intelligent and they are lazy...*" I couldn't believe they were saying these things in front of me. They are supposed to be experienced teachers and I should be learning from them. To be honest I don't know what to do about their attitude. I don't agree but I don't know what to do. There are only five non-English speakers at the school. why can't we provide for their needs and accommodate instruction to include them? I am very disappointed at these teachers and the school.

Melissa did not understand why school personnel were not making efforts to help these five students progress in their learning. In her monthly reflections, she wrote about school episodes in which she witnessed mistreatment and discrimination against ELLs and students that belonged to other cultures. She also reported her desire to receive further instruction and practice in the content area to teach ELLs. For example:

The class was very productive this semester. I feel I learned so much... but I still need to learn more about teaching ELLs. Class was painful sometimes. These issues were hard to discuss and I feel we never finished. There was not enough time to discuss and come up with good answers. Theory and application have been invaluable towards educating me on

how to address the many needs of ELLs in my classroom. However I feel incomplete. I am insecure of my ability to do this

Listening to these teachers and reflecting about the meaning of that conversation was Melissa's wake up call to realize how much these inequities affected her. She could become one of those teachers in the future if she didn't figure out how to reach the ELL students in her Biology class. Melissa's words about feeling incomplete and insecure constitute an interruption of her confidence in her content area knowledge being enough to make her a good teacher. This interruption is not enough to transform her into the Biology teacher she needs to be, but Melissa knows that she has a lot to learn in order to become an effective teacher for all students.

Conclusions and Implications

This study examined the ways in which students in two teacher education programs experienced diversity pedagogy and how they enacted their roles as future teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students. As education professors, we are interested in helping our students gain competence and confidence in their abilities to teach all of their future students. We are also interested in providing opportunities for our students to be able to examine the beliefs they bring to the teacher preparation program because we know that unexamined beliefs can impede new learning. Unfortunately, we are also aware of the fact that our institutions, like many mainstream teacher preparation programs, have not done a good job attracting diverse teacher candidates, nor have we sufficiently structured education programs to help our largely White and monolingual student populations embrace critical multicultural education (Ladson-Billings, 2005).

In fact, the structure of most teacher education programs, ours included, make very little effort to center issues of diversity in the curriculum. By relegating all multiculturalism to one or two stand-alone courses, education programs communicate the message that the issues are separate and of lesser importance than "true" content area knowledge (such as reading and math) and discipline knowledge (such as classroom management). Even when the courses with multicultural content are very good, and we feel sure this is the case in the majority of institutions, one or two semesters is not enough to transform deficit thinking (Ambe, 2006; Cho & DeCastro-Ambrosetti, 2005; Hill-Jackson, et al., 2007).

There is potential for powerful learning when students embark on field-based experiences. Given that teacher education students often report having had little prior experience with diversity, field experiences in diverse contexts seem like a reasonable way to help preservice teachers gain new knowledge in this area. However, just putting students into diverse settings without offering tools for them to critically analyze what they are observing, likely will do nothing but reinforce deficit thinking.

If schools tend to reproduce social inequalities (Apple, 1979), then schools of education function to continue the cycle. Although this probably occurs inadvertently, through the structure of programs failing to challenge inequity, the results are damaging for our society in general, and specifically for many school children experiencing subtractive schooling. As professors of education in mainstream institutions, we recognize our roles in this vicious cycle. Through our participation, we are complicit in the perpetuation of subtractive schooling because we fail to reach significant numbers of our students.

In this research, we have found that even within programs such as ours, which are designed to reproduce the status quo, there are small spaces that can interrupt the mainstream. We have highlighted four examples from our practice that we believe illustrate some potential for change within mainstream teacher preparation programs. However, these interruptions are meaningless if they are not coupled with critical analysis. In order for such interruptions to move beyond isolated and "cute" examples of White teachers voluntarily, or inadvertently, defusing language-power dynamics, teacher candidates must develop clear ideologies based in social justice and critical multiculturalism (Nieto, 1999).

The problem is complex and has many variables. While we resist the urge to reduce findings to "easy answers," we do have hope for change. Change in this case, leading to more equitable schooling for linguistically and culturally marginalized populations, will be a long struggle in need of continuous research and activism. We, as researchers and teachers, must look for many ways to address the problems from within and outside of the mainstream institutions.

A complete restructuring of our programs would likely be the best place to start. A restructuring would place greater emphasis on centering issues of diversity in every aspect of the program to create an ideological and cohesive thread (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). In addition, such a restructur-

ing would make serious efforts to diversify the professoriate and the student populations in colleges of education. In the meantime, those of us who work within teacher preparation programs must examine our practice and look for spaces to implement change, places to create "interruptions."

We contend that "interruptions" exist and offer powerful spaces for teachable moments. If we look for such moments, we can help our students, future teachers, see how their actions are situated in cultural and historical contexts. They can see how their actions can reproduce wide-scale social inequalities and/or represent counter narratives that go against the grain. Expanding the interruptions to significant teaching events will not result in a silver bullet to end racism or subtractive schooling. However, we do believe the interruptions can become little bumps on the status quo superhighway. As the little bumps add up, perhaps the path of subtractive schooling will eventually take a major turn.

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