

THE ATTITUDES OF INLAND NORTHWEST PRE-SERVICE FOREIGN LANGUAGE  
TEACHERS: GOT PRIVILEGE?

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## Abstract

School systems in the U.S. are based on dominant culture views which privilege some students over others. However, recent research shows few teacher education programs delve into the social issues surrounding dominant culture into their programs. In order to develop a multicultural perspective within teaching, teacher education programs must include in their instruction information pertaining to the unearned privileges some students receive in the current U.S. school system. Yet, little research has been done regarding pre-service teachers' attitudes regarding privilege and oppression. This study examines the ways in which a set of direct instructional activities regarding privilege and oppression impacted pre-service foreign language teachers.

A mixed-methods approach was used to determine the manner in which pre-service foreign language teachers' attitudes about privilege and oppression changed after participating in a variety of instructional activities focusing on white privilege in the U.S. Qualitative data supported the quantitative findings indicating a change in attitude after participating in the instructional activities. A paired sample *t*-test examining the pre- and post-test results of The Privilege and Oppression Inventory along with anecdotal evidence are reported to support the claims made regarding the ways in which pre-service foreign language teachers' attitudes changed. Both, quantitative and qualitative, data show an increase in awareness of the impacts of privilege and oppression for all pre-service teachers. In addition, study participants acknowledge the ways in which their new understandings impact their futures as teachers, as well as their future students. Also present are limitations of the study as well as ways it could be generalized.

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## Chapter 1

### Prologue

*Growing up, I did not realize I was white until I was eight years old. My family had just moved to Houston, Texas, and my new best friend was black. I realized the parts of her body I could see (such as her face and arms) were darker than mine and, in fact, looked similar to my Uncle Ron's skin, but I was unaware what that meant or any way that made a difference. To me, Uncle Ron was simply that. It did not matter that his skin was darker than the rest of my family. However, I learned that we were different the first time my friend and I had a sleep-over.*

*We were changing into our pajamas when I noticed her belly and back were also darker than my skin. I asked, "Are you that color all over?" When she replied in the affirmative, I asked if it came off. She said it did not and that she was black. I remember being confused and asking what I was. "You're white," she said. I nodded as if I understood what that meant, but I did not.*

*We did not talk about race or skin color any more that evening as we had more important things to discuss, such as the newest Barbie doll and what we would do all summer. I was lucky to have her as my best friend until my family moved away nine months later. However, it was that year when I started to notice the ways in which the color of a person's skin made a difference to others and could influence how they were treated.*

*Years later, I began a teaching career in the public schools around Austin, Texas. I was naïve and fell into the current trend of being "color blind". Being color blind means one does not see race or use race as a determinant for discipline or treatment; at one time it was considered the best way to treat all the students the same (see Blaisdell, 2005; Pennington,*

2007; Schofield, 1997). Unfortunately, I started to realize the pitfalls of this approach when my fellow teachers discussed problems they had with some of their students and how inadequate parenting or family background was to blame for student failure. The teachers also blamed the students themselves. They felt students were lazy, unmotivated, and didn't care about getting an education. In the teacher's lounge, the focus would be on the shortcomings of the students. I soon noticed the majority of the "problem" students were students of color. I also recognized the shortcomings; the deficits attributed to the students, were generalized, and expected from students from certain racial or ethnic groups. I wondered why the "problem" white students never seemed to have any deficits.

Later in my career, I learned a term for what my previous colleagues had been enacting; *The Deficit Model*. During the upswing of Multicultural Education, white teachers asserted, and scholars concurred, that a lack of ability in the student was due to the person, their culture, and/or their family background; this led to a deficit in their ability to succeed (Irizzarry, 1997; Pearl, 1997; Valencia & Solórzano, 1997). Although the term itself was seldom used in schools, most teachers understood and perpetuated the idea that students of color were at a disadvantage over white students; they had a deficit.

### **Rationale**

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "[t]he U.S. is projected to become a majority-minority nation for the first time in 2043" (Public Information Office, 2012). This statement creates a concern for me about the abilities of pre-service teachers to teach to an increasingly diverse student population. As the diversity in the U.S. continues to increase, the teaching profession remains a white, female dominated field (National Center of Education Statistics,

2007). This means the majority of teachers in the U.S. come from the dominant culture. They are likely neither aware of the consequences of the dominant culture on their attitudes and abilities to teach, nor do they understand its impact on the school in which they will teach. This is in part due to the notion that most teacher education programs do not explicitly explore how privilege and oppression shape education (e.g. Marx, 2004; Pennington, 2007; Picower, 2009). Yet as the diversity of the U.S. grows, it is imperative to have teachers who can teach in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms and the onus is on teacher education programs to prepare culturally proficient teachers (Rodriguez & Sjostrom, 1995).

In addition, teacher preparation programs need to examine and address the negative influence whiteness has in regard to how teachers understand their students (Picower, 2009), especially considering the changing demographics of the population. However, media and social contexts are used to perpetuate the message that our social systems are fair, open, and democratic, and these messages make it more difficult for white pre-service teachers to understand their own whiteness (Porfilio & Malott, 2011), particularly as it relates to their teaching. Therefore, I felt a direct approach to teaching about white privilege was best.

I began by engaging my students in activities that examined their attitudes and knowledge about privilege and oppression. These activities began with a direct lecture on the definition and impact of white privilege in the U.S. school system. In addition, the students participated in the privilege walk activity and discussion, and viewed clips from a documentary highlighting interviews from men of color. By using a direct approach, I intended for my students to identify their own perceptions of diversity and how it related to their future careers. In doing so, I hoped to bring about a change in their awareness and in

their abilities as teachers. As Picower (2009) notes, helping teachers develop “cultural competence and socio-political consciousness” (p. 199) will make them better educators, and teacher education programs have a major responsibility to alter the negative effects whiteness can have for how teachers understand their students. One possible way to do this is to help pre-service teachers identify their conception of privilege and oppression and how it relates to teaching, the focus of this study.

### **Statement of the Problem**

American society is founded on the ideology that whites are inherently superior to people of color (Jensen, 2012), and whiteness is the norm whereas everything else is different (Rothenberg, 2012). The realization of those ideas was easily embraced by the school system after desegregation. These dominant beliefs of white superiority perpetuated white privilege and an oppressive environment for students of color ensued. Color blindness and deficit thinking were pervasive and were used to maintain the subordination of people of color in all levels of education (Higginbotham, 1996; Rothenberg, 2002; Wander, Martin, & Nakayama, 2012).

Recently, I have found myself teaching at a university in a small town in northern Idaho. I observed the lack of diversity among my students and learned that 90% of the students enrolled in the undergraduate teacher education program are white (University of Idaho National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Institutional report, 2012). This concerned me considering these students hope to become public school teachers in a growing global and diverse society. These pre-service teachers will be joining a teaching force in America that is already 83.1% white yet, throughout their teaching career, the U.S.

population will see a decrease in non-Hispanic Whites (National Center of Education Statistics, 2007) and therefore an increase in the diversity among school-aged children.

These two issues and my own experiences led me to wonder in what ways pre-service teachers can understand white privilege, its impact on life in the U.S., and more specifically in the public school system. As a former foreign language teacher, I have the opportunity to work closely with pre-service foreign language teachers while they engage in a 45-hour practicum in local schools and participate in the foreign language methods course I teach. Based on the combination of all these factors, I wanted to explore the impact of focused instructional activities and an in-depth discussion about white privilege within a foreign language methods course on the pre-service foreign language teachers' beliefs about privilege and oppression in American society.

### **Research Question**

What are the affordances and challenges of focused instructional activities and an in-depth discussion about white privilege on the attitudes of pre-service foreign language teachers regarding privilege and oppression in the public education system in the United States?

### **Impetus**

I believe my experiences as a Spanish teacher and while living abroad in Spain and Mexico helped me to become more culturally aware and proficient, both professionally and personally. I stopped viewing other cultures as weird or different from mine and began to accept them as they were. I also started to observe the advantages afforded to whites in America, especially when traveling to areas where whites were not privileged or afforded

particular favors. It was due to these experiences that I learned more about myself as a white woman and came to understand the privileges and oppression that exist in American society and within the school system.

The pre-service foreign language teachers in the teacher education program, within their declared language major, are required to spend a minimum of one semester studying abroad. I realized this requirement might have a similar impact on these teachers as my experiences abroad did for me. Therefore, I wondered if other pre-service foreign language teachers gained knowledge of the dominant culture in America while studying abroad as I had. I also call attention to Standard 4.2 of the National Standards for Foreign Language Education, which states: “Students demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparisons of the cultures studied and their own” (American Council for the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 1996). This standard requires foreign language teachers to not only be knowledgeable about the culture of the language they are teaching, but also to understand the dominant culture in America in order to make those comparisons. In order to do so, pre-service teachers need an awareness of the dominant culture behaviors as they are exhibited if they are to observe other cultural behaviors without judgment (Mantle-Bromley, 1992).

### **Research Procedure**

My research question stems from this need for self-awareness. To begin, I wondered if my pre-service foreign language teachers knew the concept of white privilege.

I also wanted them to understand the impact white privilege has in their lives and on their futures as teachers. Finally, I was interested to find out if an increased self-awareness of their



own racial identity would influence how they viewed teaching another language and their future plans.

I wanted to begin by finding out what attitudes my pre-service foreign language teachers had about privilege and oppression in American society. Because privilege is simply a part of a white person's world and the expected way of how the world in the U. S. exists, a person may not even be able to identify the privilege (Wildman & Davis, 2012). Therefore, I was curious to note what and how much they knew about white privilege.

After the initial assessment, I wanted to help them understand white privilege and how it involved them personally. Then I wanted to explore if they could transfer those ideas to their future teaching. In other words, would they be less inclined to teach about a foreign culture from an American dominant society point of view? I hoped the activities planned around learning about and exploring their own privilege would aid in this endeavor.

The initial assessment included a research based pre- and post-test instrument (Hays, Chang, & Decker, 2007) to explore the attitudes of pre-service teachers regarding privilege and oppression in the U.S. In between taking the pre- and post-tests, pre-service teachers engaged in activities that enabled them to explore their knowledge of white privilege, examine their own personal level of privilege as it related to factors such as race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and socio-economic status, and participate in an in-depth discussion of those activities. The research methods and procedures are discussed in more depth in chapter three.

## Overview

The preceding chapters of this dissertation explore how I incorporated my interest in understanding my students' attitudes about privilege and oppression into a research study. I began this endeavor by reviewing the pertinent literature and finding support and challenges to my research question. This review of the literature is compiled in chapter two and outlines the seminal works related to white privilege, the history of privilege and oppression in the U.S., and how white privilege manifests within the school system. Specifically, chapter two examines the history of oppression and how it led to the ideas of whiteness and race. It then discusses the history and background of whiteness along with white privilege. These ideas lead into the exploration of culture and ethnicity in the U.S. and how people became white. Critical Race Theory (CRT) and Multicultural Education stem from desegregation and follow the discussion on culture and ethnicity with an emphasis on how privilege and oppression manifest in the school system. Finally, there is an in depth look at deficit thinking and its roles in education, teacher education and cultural awareness.

Chapter three examines the methodology chosen for this project. It begins by exploring my theoretical framework as well as the ontology and epistemology that directed my research. I also discuss using CRT as the lens that guided my work. Next, the methods themselves are reviewed including the reasoning behind the mixed-methods approach utilized. The sampling procedures are outlined along with research protocols. Finally, an in depth analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative methods are given.

Chapter four offers the results of the study. The quantitative results were recently published in the *Journal of Education and Training Studies* (McGowan & Kern, 2014) and

appear verbatim from the published work. These data found a significant change in the attitudes of the participants regarding privilege and oppression and are supported by the qualitative data. Six themes emerged from data gathered during the focused activities and discussion of the participants and chapter four inspects each one in detail. Additionally, chapter four offers a brief summary of the results and how they work together to form a conclusion.

The final chapter pulls all the research and data together and offers a conclusion for this work. In chapter five, I discuss the reasons and ways in which my research is needed. I begin by considering my work as it relates to the participants in the study and their personal identities and then appraise its relevance to the teacher education practice. Then, I analyze the necessity for this type of work as it relates to the changing demographics within the U.S. and our educational system as well as the shift in global dynamics. Finally, the limitations, next steps, and long term goals of my work are revealed in order to encourage a continuation of this type of research into the future and within other teacher specializations.

## Chapter 2

### Literature Review

*“It is imperative that the excluded be included and that the undiscussed be discussed.”*  
-Pearl, 1997

#### Introduction

In order to examine privilege and oppression, the historical context from which it came must first be explored. Although an account of colonization and oppression is offered in this chapter, it is important to note that this history is based on a post-colonial perspective. Therefore, this introduction will include a succinct summary of the transition from a colonial to a post-colonial perspective as well as a brief and non-extensive list of influential theorists in the post-colonial movement. Additionally, by utilizing a post-colonial perspective and a Critical Race Theory (CRT) framework, an explanation of this historical account from a viewpoint of deconstructing privilege and oppression is offered.

Although Europe has used the concept of the “other” for centuries (also considered “barbarian”), the idea of “inferior others” became more prevalent during the European expansion and colonization (Abbattista, 2011). By gaining access to areas around the world never before seen by Europeans, new groups of people such as historians, philosophers, and other scientists were able to examine these new places from their European perspectives (Abbattista, 2011). These examinations led to a set of beliefs known as Orientalism. Orientalists maintained a belief in European superiority and propagated the idea of the “other” as alien and inferior (Said, as cited by Sered, 1996). It was not until 1978 when Edward Said wrote an evaluation and critique that the assumptions of Orientalist thinking were challenged, which gave momentum to the post-colonial movement.

Post-colonial theory studies the power systems involved in colonization and the ways in which European nations have interacted and controlled the places they colonized (Bahri, 1996). This theory became strengthened in the academy with the emergence of the book *The Empire Writes Back: Theory and Practice in Post-Colonial Literatures* by Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin in 1989 (Bahri, 1996). Post-colonial critics examine issues of “power, economics, politics, religion, and culture and how these elements work in relation to colonial hegemony” (Brizee & Tompkins, 2010). This critique of the formation of empires and the impact of colonization on colonized societies has maintained a strong hold for post-colonial analysis and its theorists within a variety of contexts (Bahri, 1996). Some topics of post-colonial analysis include the impact of colonization on post-colonial history, capitalism and the market, and feminism and post-colonialism. The number of post-colonial theorists is vast, and therefore; only a brief summary of some of the influential theorists is outlined in table 1. Moreover, this table is in no way extensive.

Table 1

Brief outline of influential theorists in the post-colonial movement.

Theorist	Contribution to post-colonial theory	References
Frantz Fanon	Seminal work: <i>Black Skins/White Masks</i> . Gave theoretical grounding to post-colonial movement.	Polous, 1996
Michel Foucault	"Production of knowledge is wedded to productive power". Introduced the relationship between knowledge (language) and power within societal institutions.	Gutting, 2013
Jacques Derrida	Founder of Deconstruction. Introduced the idea of deconstructing ("blowing up") binary oppositions to reveal their hidden meanings.	Lawlor, 2011
Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak	Introduced the idea of "subaltern" voice: marginalized people cannot be heard by the oppressors. May have helped lead to/support the idea of counter-narratives within CRT.	Kilburn, 1996

As mentioned prior, the analysis that follows stems from a post-colonial perspective in which power systems are analyzed and deconstructed. This point of view blends nicely with the theoretical framework used in this work. The theoretical framework discussed later in this chapter involves CRT within a multicultural education setting. By using CRT this way, a connection between the post-colonial perspective and the power structures of the U.S. school system could be analyzed.

### **Colonization and the History of Oppression**

Freire (1970/1993) notes colonization as an act of violence initiated by oppressors through oppression which he defines as exploiting and ignoring others as people, and “prevents people from being more fully human...[f]or the oppressors, ‘human beings’ refers only to themselves; other people are things” (p. 57). Colonialism, according to Kohn (2012), is domination through subjugation of a group of people by a more powerful group, in which the powerful take control of the land and become permanent settlers. The definitions offered by both scholars outline the foundation of the dominant culture in the United States.

During colonization, white Europeans felt a moral obligation to civilize the people who lived in the places they conquered, and that it was their right to take and utilize whatever resources were available (Kendall, 2013). Therefore, the United States, as well as other examples such as Australia; Canada; and South Africa, is a settler state on stolen property which began with the extermination and displacement of aboriginal people and brought under the rule of at least one European power (Mills, 2012).

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, 90% of the world was controlled by whites who had global and local domination within and among the settler states (Mills, 2012). This domination

afforded white people many advantages including the capability to create a two-tiered moral and legal code for whites and people of color, the power to justify slavery and oppression, and the capacity to use racial terms to create a global perspective (Mills, 2012). Mills (2012) asserts “[i]t was precisely *because* of alleged white superiority to other races that whites saw themselves as entitled to rule over them” (emphasis in original, p. 96).

In the United States, the subjugation and colonization began with the Native Americans, who were seen by whites as inferior by nature to the white people, and continued with the oppression of African Americans in order to justify slavery (Lipsitz, 2012). Slavery was the response to the need for laborers to work the land whites had stolen from the Native Americans (Menchaca, 1997). Colonial economic interests were paramount to the belief in biological and cultural superiority of whites, which permitted those in power to justify oppression as common sense and good for the economy. This belief led to a system that denied people of color the basic rights white people had, including the enactment of laws regarding the prohibition of obtaining money or power for people of color while granting whites control over the land and resources (Menchaca, 1997; Mills, 2012; Wander et al., 2012). Therefore, every single immigrant into the United States since colonial times has come into a racialized society (Lipsitz, 2012).

The dominant culture of whiteness, which was socially constructed and therefore flexible, had an interesting impact on immigration and how immigrants were viewed by dominant society (Rothenberg, 2012). For example, even though many Mexican Americans living in the United States after the Mexican-American war were legally given white status (socially, politically, and economically), they were never treated like whites (Foley, 2012).

However, when Jim Crow segregation, restricted housing laws, employment difficulty, and social stigma were thrust upon the African Americans, many Mexican Americans demanded white status and began to support black segregation (Foley, 2012). This behavior was due to the long term interactions and exposure to whiteness that Mexican people had with the Spanish, African, and European people, which gave them a deeper understanding of the importance of being white in America (Foley, 2012).

However, Mexican Americans were not the only people vying for white status. According to Brodtkin (2012), “by the 1920s, scientific racism sanctified the notion that real Americans were white and real whites came from northwest Europe”(p. 48). Therefore, immigrants from Eastern Europe had to convince dominant society they were white. One of the most successful groups of people to do so were the Jewish immigrants. Brodtkin (2012) notes that “...economic prosperity played a very powerful role in the whitening process” (p. 51), he argues that Jewish mobility became its own Horatio Alger story. Due to the economic success of Jews, America opened up more for eastern Europeans to become middle class (Brodtkin, 2012). However, it is still unknown for sure if economic class gave Eastern Europeans the status of being white, or if being considered white offered them more opportunities to make money which led to an increase in an Eastern European middle class (Brodtkin, 2012).

Nevertheless, regardless of one’s status, it appeared evident to immigrants that being considered white in the U.S. led to more opportunities and advantages. This was made clear when immigrants in 1940 had the opportunity to give their children white status on the census (Brodtkin, 2012). The census changed the category of “white” by no longer separating out the



native whites of native parentage and the native whites of immigrant parentage, permitting immigrant children more opportunities (Brodkin, 2012). Additionally, the 1940 census was also when the race options did not include Mexican, thereby presenting Mexican Americans the option to identify as white (Brodkin, 2012). Being able to identify oneself as white led to an association with whiteness and white privilege that offered advantages that were previously accessible to whites only.

### **Whiteness and Race**

Picower (2009) defines whiteness as “the ideology and way of being in the world that is used to maintain white supremacy (p. 198) while Wander et al. (2012) contend that whiteness is “*a historical systemic structural race-based superiority*” (emphasis in original, p. 34). This idea is continued by adding that the white mission throughout history had been to bring civilization and Christianity to all. It is through these acts of globalization that whiteness has become an inherent part of society, ergo the norm, meaning racism is normalized and whites are not forced to think about race or to look at themselves as racial beings (Picower, 2009; Rothenberg, 2012; Wise, 2012).

According to Rothenberg (2012) race, for white people, is about everyone else and, as Dyer (2012) notes, for white people, the mere definition of people implies whiteness. Gillespie, Ashbaugh, and DeFiore (2002) define race as a meaningless category used to “maintain present hierarchical unjust power relations” (p. 238) and, as stated above, according to white people race is about everyone else.

Lucal (1996) asserts that whites view race as something that “pertains to people of color” (p. 245) and, therefore; impacts everyone except them (whites). Dyer (2012) continues

this idea by saying that white people equate being white with being human and do not examine race because the main race that is represented everywhere is white, for example mainstream television, magazines, advertisements, etcetera. Therefore, whiteness is simply the human race and placed as the norm or standard human condition (Dyer, 2012). When whites come from this perspective, they cannot or will not think of themselves in racial terms (Dalton, 2012), and as hooks (2012) points out, this absence of recognition of white as a race makes it easier to create the other; non-white. Lipsitz (2012) notes that “[w]hiteness is everywhere in the U.S. culture, but it is very hard to see” (p. 71). In addition, the social construct of race has sanctioned the denial of basic rights in the United States and has permeated school systems, political systems, employment, and housing (Schofield, 1997). It is through the ideologies of inherent superiority of Euro-whites over non-whites that current American society was founded (Jensen, 2012).

### **History/Background of Whiteness**

As colonialism spread across the globe in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries, and Euro-whites set out with their mission to civilize and Christianize the world, a system of racial classification based on skin color and used to rank people arose that supported this expansion (Wander et al., 2012) and eventually led to what Mills (2012) claimed was a world ruled by Europeans. Christianity supported this classification system by propagating a belief that people of color were “intellectually dull, naturally lazy and unable to attain the level of civilization of whites” (Menchaca, 1997, p. 24), which helped lead the scientific community to perpetuate these beliefs through research supporting polygenist theories.

The basic argument of polygenism in the early 1800s was that people of color were a different species with different origins than whites, and this belief was supported by scientific research that showed differences in skull size and physical characteristics (American Anthropological Association, 2007). The book, *Types of Mankind*, published in 1854 illustrated these beliefs in such a way to popularize the polygenist theory which gave the general public scientific “proof” to support and justify slavery and the inferiority of people of color (American Anthropological Association, 2007).

Additionally, three epistemological developments were key to the belief of social stratification (Valencia, 1997). Valencia (1997) summarized these beliefs as follows: (a) Social Darwinism was used to explain social stratification by suggesting that better genetics led to a more fit/better man who’s “inherited intelligence *caused* one’s social status” (p. 45), (b) Galtonian Eugenics enforced stratification by its belief in the improvement of the human race through selective breeding, and (c) Mendelian Genetics, which was based on Mendel’s work with genes, perpetuated stratification by discouraging mixed relations. These epistemologies helped sustain credence in white superiority.

Menchaca (1997) agrees the white racial ideologies formed during this time perpetuated white superiority and continued to justify the oppression and subordination of people of color within economic, social, and political realms. In addition, the colonization and politically dominant, formal rule of the Euro-whites established a global economy that was controlled by the colonial powers and European financial institutions (e.g., Brodtkin, 2012; Mills, 2012; Wander et al., 2012).

Mills (2012) points out that the modern world was “expressly created as a racially hierarchical polity, globally dominated by Europeans” and “white supremacy is the unmanned political system that has made the modern world what it is today” (p. 95-97). It was through this superiority of other races that whites justified their entitlement to rule and set the precedent for racism to become the norm (e.g., Brodtkin, 2012; Mills, 2012; Wander et al., 2012).

Within the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in the United States, the idiom “pull yourself up by your bootstraps”, meaning to proceed without external help, (Wikipedia, 2013) became popular as Horatio Alger stories of poor, young immigrants succeeding despite their backgrounds gave hope to the vast number of ethnic groups immigrating to America (Brodtkin, 2012). These ideas were based in the belief that money meant power and fed into the myth that everyone in America had access to power depending on their own individual efforts and resourcefulness (Wildman & Davis, 2012).

In addition, a system of power emerged which perpetuated control for rich whites over the land, resources, and other people. This racism permitted whites to minimize the threat that poor European immigrants and ex-slaves posed (loss of jobs, property, etc.), by creating an environment of competition among the immigrants and ex-slaves, and offering the status and privileges associated with being white to the immigrants, which in turn widened the racial gap (Brodtkin, 2012). For these poor immigrants, the status of being white afforded them privileges, and these privileges made life’s challenges easier (Wise, 2012). This idea is known as white privilege.

## White Privilege

The classic work done by McIntosh (1988) examined white privilege and defined it as “an invisible, weightless knapsack of special provisions, assurances, tools, maps, guides, codebooks, passports, visas, clothes, compass, emergency gear, and blank checks” (p. 2-3). She adds that as a self-identified white woman, she is able to cash in on any of these assets daily yet is also meant to remain unaware of the advantages they afford her (McIntosh, 1988). It is through this ignorance that she acknowledges white privilege as being not only systemic, but offering “*unearned advantage and conferred dominance*” (emphasis in original, p. 124) equaling a level of entitlement for whites (McIntosh, 1988; 2012). According to Rothenberg (2012), “white privilege is the other side of racism” (p. 1) and it is a system of “values that reinforces the power and privilege of those who are white” (p. 3).

However, white privilege is somewhat of a misnomer in the sense that it does not afford the same privileges to all people with skin that looks white, for example, a white and wealthy male will have different privileges than a white, poor, woman (Rothenberg, 2012). In fact, according to Higginbotham (1996), “white, middle-class men who are heterosexual and the normative age” probably receive the most privileges (p. 208). Wildman and Davis (2012) echo this idea by defining white privilege as the privileged group who defines the norm in society (currently, white, heterosexual, middle-class male) and the benefits those who belong to that group may enjoy, for example the ability for the privileged group to not experience oppression.

Johnson (2012) agrees by saying that the privileged group can assume acceptance, inclusion, and respect with a presumption of superiority and social permission to act without

challenges. He continues this idea by noting that “for every social category that is privileged, one or more other categories are oppressed in relation to it (Johnson, 2012, p. 118).

One wonders, then, how this superiority and oppression manifest themselves in society and who benefits the most (Rothenberg, 2012). Wildman and Davis (2012) state that when a person of the privileged group is successful, it is due to his or her individual effort and has nothing to do with her or his membership in the group, whereas members outside the group have some sort of lack or deficiency when they are unsuccessful. In this way, many scholars posit that privilege becomes invisible. They argue that to whites, privilege is simply a basic human right that everyone enjoys and by ignoring whiteness as a race, “whites do not look at the world through a filter of racial awareness” (Wildman & Davis, 2012, p. 112). This ignorance maintains the perpetuation and re-creation of white privilege regardless of a particular white person’s attitude (e.g., hooks, 2012; Lucal, 1996; McIntosh, 2012; Wildman & Davis, 2012).

Many scholars have agreed on some basic tenets of white privilege. One of which is white privilege is systemic, inherent, and a normalized part of society. It is unearned and entitles only members of the dominant group to societal advantages, which in turn oppresses all other people. Whiteness is an ideology and way of being in the world based on colonial rule. It allows for white people to equate being human with being white and assumes that whiteness is the basic human condition, the way things are. In this way, whiteness is the center or the norm and everything else is different. All other races are viewed in relation to how they are unlike whites (Dyer, 2012; Kendall, 2013; McIntosh, 2012; Picower, 1996; Rothenberg, 2012; Wander et al., 2012; Wildman & Davis, 2012).

Another basic tenet of white privilege is that it is invisible. Due to its invisibility, members of the dominant group are able to ignore race, racial issues, and power structures. Whites have the ability to ignore race which then maintains the power structure of the dominant group. Refusing to see whiteness as a race gives way to passive racism through continual unawareness of its existence. This ignorance also creates a false belief that whiteness is the standard human condition and “the other” has a lack or deficiency due to skin color or non-membership in the dominant group. In addition, white privilege is seldom discussed during race discussions, which permits whites to maintain that race does not pertain to them. As Kendall (2013) notes, “[w]hite privilege allows us not to see race in ourselves and to be angry at those who do” (p. 67). (Dalton, 2012; Dyer, 2012; Higginbotham, 2012; hooks, 2012; Lucal, 1996; Marx, 2004; Picower, 2009; Wildman & Davis, 2012; Wise, 2012).

White privilege is also understood to grant membership into a dominant group based on perceived skin color and normative values. In this way, skin color, as well as social class, become assets which offer certain privileges. Members of the dominant group who most closely resemble middle-class, heterosexual, white males obtain the most privileges while all other people do not. This membership into the dominant group perpetuates the passive racism that is rampant in America by enabling the belief that racism is an individual act of meanness by a member of one group on another and not a systemic advantaged hierarchy based on skin color. Additionally, the theory that hard work will create success is maintained by this membership, for example, the networking benefits of a golfing outing for a wealthy white teenager’s summer job. Membership into the dominant group permits its members to assume acceptance and respect within the larger society while ignoring the oppression of other groups

(Higginbotham, 1996; Jensen, 2012; Johnson, 2012; McIntosh, 2012; Rothenberg, 2012; Wildman & Davis, 2012).

A final tenet many scholars agree upon regarding white privilege is that it often manifests itself in the school system through a belief in “color-blindness” and the deficit model which can be learned through teacher education programs (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Gillespie, Ashbaugh, & DeFiore, 2002; Leonardo, 2007; Marx, 2004; Pennington, 2007; Schofield, 1997). Our current school system is due to historical influences and political pressures which continue to impact decisions at every level (Valencia, 2010). These decisions determine who is included and excluded, and the roles students, teachers, and administrations play in the school system (Valencia, 2010). Therefore, it is imperative to understand the history of power and how it manifests within the schools (Valencia, 2010). Moreover, it is crucial for future teachers to understand the impact culture and ethnicity play within the schools and teacher education.

### **Culture and Ethnicity**

According to Gay (1994), human growth and development is largely influenced by culture and ethnicity. However, our current school systems are still based on antiquated ideals of culture. Matthew Arnold (as quoted by West, 1993) held that a cultural ideal is “an interlocking affiliation among the emerging middle classes, a homogenizing of cultural discourse in the educational and university networks” (p. 13). West (1993) maintains that this idea still informs current beliefs within academia today. Ng (1993) agrees with this idea by concluding that formal education is an assimilation tool which is designed by dominant



groups in a society with the goal to impose cultural conformity upon “subordinated groups by eliminating the latter’s cultural heritage” (p. 54).

Ng (1993) defends this definition by asserting that race, ethnicity, and gender are ideological and social constructions that are based on the relations that people have with themselves and their community. Therefore, she states, race, gender, and class are “fluid, constantly changing, interactive and dialectical” (p. 57). She continues on by paraphrasing Marx (1967, as cited by Ng) and Engels (1970, as cited by Ng) noting that class is more of a process than a thing or category and it deals more with how people construct and alter the ways they relate to society and its productive aspects (Ng, 1993). Apple (1993) agrees with this notion and adds that the daily lives of people are pre-structured based on their position within the class system. If one knows the social class of another, that person’s political, cultural, and economic beliefs are clearly outlined when weighed against dominant society’s beliefs (Apple, 1993).

However, due in part to the development of Critical Race Theories, dominant society beliefs are no longer accepted as the norm. Yet, to date, the public school system has had more of a social Darwinism approach to education by tolerating competition and consumerism to permeate the system and allow it to be run like a business (Apple, 1993). In this way, Apple (1993) says schools are like capitalist marketplaces and not strongholds of equality, yet a change is occurring wherein an analysis of our unequal system within the context of education could create an emergence of equity and equality. This analysis is more important than ever as the integration of schools continues; race and ethnicity will be at the forefront (Zirkel & Cantor, 2004).

## **Critical Race Theory**

Critical race theory (CRT) allows for the emergence of equity and equality. According to Delgado and Stefancic (2001), CRT studies and transforms “the relationship among race, racism, and power” (p. 2) and acknowledges the inclusion of race, gender, class and the host of differences that comprise multicultural education. CRT can be used to analyze racial dynamics and how racism is maintained and created based on the norms rooted in whiteness (Blaisdell, 2005). According to Blaisdell (2005), it is imperative that we analyze how the systems in place in U.S. schools perpetuate racism (through curricula, materials, tools, doctrines, guidelines, policies, etc.) and use CRT to help eradicate that racism. Through this analysis, popular canons that permeate U.S. schools, such as colorblindness and deficit thinking, can be broken down and changed (Blaisdell, 2005).

Many articles have been written discussing the general themes of CRT. The first theme includes the idea that race and racism are endemic in that they are an ordinary, everyday reality. As part of the everyday reality, their existence is not overt in nature and therefore difficult to ascertain and resolve (e.g., Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano, 1997). The second theme offered by many scholars suggests there is a dominant ideology that creates a system of superiority between people who identify as white and those who do not. This ideology impacts both the physical realm as well as the psyche and maintains sustained power systems (e.g., Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano, 1997).

Additionally, as a third theme, race is based on a social construction which permeates the thoughts and interactions of all people and can lead to social injustice (Delgado &

Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano, 1997). And a final theme includes the belief that a person who identifies as non-white has the ability, authority, and competence to speak about racism and its effects upon daily life. This is often called “voice-of-color” (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Solórzano, 1997).

In addition to these themes, the largest group of critical race theorist who identify as “realists” view racism as a way for society to allocate power, privilege and status and perpetuate a racial hierarchy that grants the top echelon the ability to reap benefits not available to lower levels (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001).

To help offset these privileges, CRT uses counter-stories, parables, and autobiographies to build on the stories of everyday life, offer differing perspectives of oppressed people, and giving a voice to minorities that otherwise would not be heard (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Delgado and Stefancic (2001) define counter-stories as “writing that aims to cast doubt on the validity of accepted premises or myths, especially ones held by the majority” (p. 144). It is through these counter-stories that CRT can best influence future teachers, by offering them alternative beliefs and experiences that can initiate an understanding of how dominant beliefs and values impact students who do not identify with the dominant culture.

As noted in the document produced by Feistritzer, Griffin, and Linnajarvi (2011) through the National Center for Education Information, the U.S. teaching force in 2011 was 84% white and female. Therefore, the counter-stories that come from using a critical race perspective can offer a new voice. Currently, dominant values and beliefs permeate the institutions of schooling, yet many teachers and administrators are unaware to what extent

these beliefs penetrate the student body. Counter-stories can create an opportunity for an overt examination of the privilege within schools.

However, teachers need to be cautious when trying to incorporate counter-stories. If they focus on counter stories by using existing diversity models, they can easily maintain the prevailing hierarchy of worthiness and continue to see students of color as lacking or different than the norm (Swartz, 2009). Swartz (2009) continues this idea by stating that diversity within education is akin to marginalizing in the sense that it tolerates a focus on merely the highlights of non-dominant cultures (e.g., holidays, folklores, monuments, etc.) instead of the lives and achievements of all people. This follows the additive approach to diversity which perpetuates the dominance and control of the system and is patronizing to all students (Swartz, 2009). Instead, a multicultural perspective should be used in order to avoid reinforcing racial stereotypes (Chapman, 2004) and, therefore; offering the incorporation of worldviews, beliefs, values, and practices of all people (Swartz, 2009).

### **Multicultural Education**

According to the U.S. census board, only 63.4% of all people living in the United States identified themselves as “White persons not Hispanic” (2013). As mentioned above, Feistritz et al. (2011) noted that 84% of our teaching force is white. The disparity between teachers’ race and the diversity among the student population illustrates the gap between teachers and students that Sleeter (2001) acknowledges and Picower (2009) reiterates by adding that this disparity has an enormous impact for the part teachers will have in “creating patterns of racial achievement and opportunity” that come from their own whiteness (p. 198).

Beginning with the civil rights movement and growing in popularity during the 1970's and 1980's a new trend in education emerged known as multicultural education. According to Grant and Sleeter (2011) the civil rights era, which included such landmark events as *Brown v Board of Education*, the Montgomery Bus boycott, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964, led to a variety of racial movements. From these racial movements, such as the Chicano movement, American Indian movement, and women's activism, a new demand for non-discriminatory practices permeated American institutions, seeped into the public schools and were the impetus for developing multicultural and bilingual education (Grant & Sleeter, 2011). Zirkel and Cantor (2004) indicate that these racial movements helped to initiate "one of the greatest national and international sea [sic] changes in attitudes, beliefs, and behavior in modern life" (p. 11).

The demand for a more equitable education gave rise to the concept of multicultural education. Almost every educator defines multicultural education in their own unique way (e.g., Banks, 1998; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Gay, 1994; Grant & Sleeter, 2011), but is summed up by Cumming-McCann (2003) when she notes that multicultural education "challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society" (p. 9) by having as its main goal the education and achievement of all students, including those who have traditionally been underserved or dismissed by the educational system. In addition, multicultural education promotes equality through acceptance and support of all differences among students, including race, ethnicity, language, sexual orientation, social class, and religion (Nieto, 1999). The range of student differences that are supported by multicultural education defies the myth that multicultural education is just about race or ethnicity and

instead broadens the scope of inclusion based on such things as gender, socioeconomic status, and culture (Aldridge, Calhoun, & Aman, 2000). The incorporation of multicultural education into curriculum compels public schools to examine their policies regarding culture and presents a more culturally responsive teaching model.

### **Color Blindness**

Leonardo (2007) defines color blindness in education as not dealing with the reality of race and perpetuates the belief that racism is individualized, is declining, and the exception not the rule. He claims that it tries to forget history by “downplay[ing] institutional relations or the racialized system” (p. 267), and that the new influx of multicultural education is proof that we have whiteness in our school system (Leonardo, 2007).

Another definition of the concept of color blindness in education is ignoring race when determining treatment of students, and by not using bilingual or multicultural education in an attempt to deemphasize identity and student differences in order to have an equal community (Schofield, 1997). Pennington (2007) confirms this by adding that most teacher education programs teach that “race is not an issue” (p. 94) and that all students are the same. However, teachers who say they treat students exactly the same way regardless of race are limiting their ability to act on the racial differences they see (Blaisdell, 2005). In addition, by trying to treat all students equally, teachers can miss the whiteness that exists in the curriculum, interactions, and pedagogy within schools (Blaisdell, 2005). Cochran-Smith (1995) would agree by suggesting that color blindness does not result in educational equity. Yet, Gillespie et al. (2002) argue that by criticizing the color blind perspective, the argument about white privilege becomes anti-white.

Many scholars argue that these changes need to come from within the teacher education programs (Higginbotham, 1996; Marx, 2004; Pennington, 2007; Picower, 2009). In a new trend, there is a belief that curriculum needs to include an examination of power and privilege and we need to move beyond “victim-oppressor explanations” (Higginbotham, 1996, p. 205) when dealing with race. By not examining that we operate from a position of power, white woman (the majority of the teaching force) may have “pre-scripted roles in dealing with cultures of color” and that many privileged people never look at their function within the institution and how that is a mirror to the roles learned from the larger society (Pennington, 2007, p. 98).

In fact, Pennington (2007) continues, many teachers say they are saving the children of color yet doing so without ever examining their own racial position. This idea of teachers examining their own race is supported by Cochran-Smith (1995) who adds that teachers must also look at the rules related to race, class, and gender that teachers have and to acknowledge that all teaching takes place in a social and historical context. Therefore teachers cannot ignore the established structures of the classroom, nor the history and the norms of teaching in relation to the dominant society. Additionally, teachers have had life-long support in their beliefs that non-dominant culture groups are dangerous and at fault for their challenges within education (Picower, 2009).

Scholars agree that we cannot continue teaching our pre-service teachers as we have been doing and that the language practices such as stereotypes, myths, and deficiencies that perpetuate the current power structures need to change while ensuring that we are careful not to privilege the white perspective (e.g., Cochran-Smith, 1995; Gillespie et al., 2002; Johnson,

2002). Pennington (2007) supports the idea that teacher preparation content courses do not look at “white culture as a factor” (p. 109) and continue to teach that cultures other than white have a deficiency and need a different type of pedagogy and expertise. The concept of the “other” having a deficiency is the basis for the deficit model found in schools today which is based on historical deficit thinking.

### **Deficit Model/Deficit Thinking**

According to Irizarry (n.d.) deficit thinking “stems from the negative beliefs and assumptions regarding the ability, aspirations, and work ethic of systematically marginalized peoples” (p. 1). It is a “basis for exclusion” (Pearl, 1997, p. 227) that stems from beliefs that people of color were biologically or culturally inferior to white people (Menchaca, 1997). Pearl (1997) notes that deficit thinking is “deeply embedded in every aspect of modern American life” (p. 211) and therefore is difficult to identify and recognize. He says that deficit thinking is ubiquitous, everywhere and a part of everyday life and that it is a way to ration out rights by assigning deficits to some people and not to others. Pearl (1997) notes that deficit thinking “is justification for the denial of what those without deficits receive” (p. 214) and it “results in a justified *uneven* playing field” (emphasis in original, p. 214).

In this way, deficit thinking gives privileges to people who mostly closely resemble the dominant culture and denies those privileges to people who are deemed lacking. The deficit perspective “blames the victim of institutional oppression for their own victimization by referring to negative stereotypes and assumptions” (Irizarry, n.d., p. 1). Within the deficit model, institutional barriers, school practices, and sociopolitical factors are not examined. The idea behind blaming the victim comes from the concept of a culture of poverty, which means



people who are not living up to dominant society values or beliefs are considered a lower class and thought to be in a self-sustaining culture which is of their own doing (Valencia & Solórzano, 1997). Supporters of the deficit model argue the poor behave the way they do as a result of their value system and not as a result of the structural inequalities that exist. Deficit thinkers refuse to acknowledge the history of oppression and discrimination that helped create the systems that uphold institutional racism (Valencia & Solórzano, 1997).

### **History of Deficit Thinking**

Historically, deficit thinking began during colonization to grant people the ability to justify the enslavement and oppression of colonized people. It was based on white racial ideologies and genetics, supported by science, that claimed people of color were not only “intellectually dull, naturally lazy and unable to attain the level of civilization of whites” (Menchaca, 1997, p. 24), but that they were a different species altogether.

This racist discourse was used to justify slavery, colonization, the oppression and subordination of people, and perpetuated the myth that people of color were physically, cognitively, or culturally inferior and therefore did not deserve any rights (Menchaca, 1997). Menchaca (1997) notes this type of deficit thinking permeated every aspect of life, including the political, economic, and social realms. Valencia (1997) continues this idea by noting that a small number of powerful white men supported the idea that people of color were inferior due to their genetic code and the work done by these white men became part of teacher training. The belief that nature, or genetics, determined white superiority was grounded in three epistemological developments, Social Darwinism, Galtonian eugenics, and Mendelian genetics (Valencia, 1997). These three concepts were used to explain, enforce, and perpetuate

social stratification and supported the “mulatto hypothesis” (Valencia, 1997, p. 50) that claimed the level of intelligence was equal to the amount of white blood in the family line.

A new trend in deficit thinking emerged after the desegregation of schools which brought about a realization of the differences in school achievement between white students and students of color (Pearl, 1997). These differences could not be attributed to genetics and the people in power did not want to acknowledge that they could have been a result of the “persistent unequal treatment” of people of color, so they looked for other possible deficiencies (Pearl, 1997, p. 133). Using the culture of poverty theory put forth by Oscar Lewis, educators began to support the idea that cultural deprivation and an inadequate family unit and home life created lesser intellect in students of color (Pearl, 1997). Research and studies related to the poor helped perpetuate this version of the deficit model by comparing people of color to the white middle class (Foley, 1997). He states that “public policymakers, seeking to indict the poor, fused culture of poverty and cultural deficit theories into a general, interdisciplinary discourse on poverty and the poor” (Foley, 1997, p. 117). Children who came from these poor home environments were quickly labeled with negative personality traits such as having low self-esteem, mistrusting, and having poor impulse control (Pearl, 1997).

Deficit thinking was not only supported by the culture of poverty theory, but perpetuated by the use of IQ tests in schools to show that people of color were intellectually inferior. These tests helped administrations create different curriculum, tracking systems, and stratification along racial, ethnic, and socio-economic status lines for students of color (Valencia, 1997).

## **Deficit Thinking in Schools**

The longest running explanation for why students of color perform below grade level, especially on standardized tests, drop out of school, and do not attend college is called the deficit model (Valencia, 1997). The deficit model within the school system claims that student failure is due to their own internal deficiencies which include low intelligence, limited linguistic ability, lack of motivation, and immoral behavior. Valencia (1997) continues his reasoning by adding that educators claim that these deficits are due to culture, class, genetics, and family. This way of thinking ignores how the system might be at fault, how “schools are organized to prevent learning”, and at the “inequalities in the political economy of education, and oppressive macropolicies [sic] and practices” (Valencia, 1997, p.2).

Therefore, the school system is permitted to localize the problem at the individual or community level, ignore the institutional barriers that impact student achievement, and perpetuate oppressive behaviors (Irizarry, n.d.). In this way, schools do not need to take responsibility for not educating all students equally and instead can offer more advantages to students with cultural capital and blame the students and the community for failures (Irizarry, n.d.).

Research done by Ford, Harris III, Tyson, and Frazier Trotman (2002) showed an agreement with this idea when they found the educators in their research accepted these practices and continued to blame the victim for not achieving higher scores on standardized tests. By blaming the victim, educators were unable to recognize the gifts students of color had and overlooked those students for gifted and talented programs.

The study done by Ford et al. (2002) found that while standardized tests were the basis for placement in gifted and talented classes, many African American students were unfamiliar with the customs, values, norms, etc. that are considered standard and appear on those tests. In addition, the educators showed a distinct belief in the deficit model. Ford et al. (2002) noted that since “perceptions have a powerful influence on our behaviors and decisions” (p. 55), few of the educators ever discussed advanced programs with the African American students or their families. In this way, the lack of cultural capital, and a belief in the deficit model kept many African American students out of gifted and talented programs.

Additionally, it is possible that many of the African American students in this study suffered an “internalization of the opinion of the oppressors...[that] they are good for nothing, know nothing, and are incapable of learning anything” (p. 63) which, according to Freire (1970/1993), could convince them of their own inability to be successful. This is only one example of the many ways deficit thinking can impact education and limit equal opportunities for all students.

Pearl (1997) posits that there were three theories that helped shape deficit thinking into a model that is used in schools today. The first theory states a cultural deficit theory claims the culture of poverty is not compatible with the culture of school and uses Bourdieu’s idea of cultural capital. Pearl (1997) summarizes Bourdieu’s cultural capital as “knowledge and style that serve to maintain social inequality...[including] credentials, verbal facility, general cultural awareness and a working knowledge of the education and well as the connected systems” (p. 140). This theory permits schools to avoid taking responsibility and

accountability for decisions that negatively impact students, for example, tracking, discipline, grading, and etcetera.

The second theory for how the deficit model manifests in education focuses on inadequate socialization (Pearl, 1997). Inadequate socialization theory states that a stable and supportive family is essential to a child's healthy growth and the home environment of people of color is inadequate (e.g., chaotic, single parent, etc.). This inadequate home life impedes the growth of a healthy ego, creates an inability to delay gratification, and will lead to disruptive behavior. Although educators tried to rehabilitate these students they quickly gave up and instead focused on an early judgment of who might pose a problem. With early identification, educators could isolate those students through expulsion from classes and/or school and increase the police presence in attempts to minimize the potential problems. This theory took all responsibility and attention away from the schools and instead blamed the family for a student's failures.

Finally, the third theory offered by Pearl (1997) proposes an accumulated environment deficit thesis. This thesis asserted that the culture of the lower class meant a life without intellectual stimulation and adequate books, which led to lower language levels. This theory focused on language skills and was perceived as the easiest problem to fix. Since these deficiencies in language accumulated over the years, the answer was early compensatory education that would repair the damage done at home. Programs such as Head Start and Follow Through were examples of enrichment programs based on deficit thinking.

All three of these theories perpetuated the idea that family, culture, and the students themselves were responsible for student failure and thus requiring students to adapt while

sanctioning the practice of schools to remain unchallenged. However, Valencia (2010) states that critics of the deficit model suggest systemic and structural components are what impact failure and not student shortcomings.

Valencia (2010) explains that structural inequalities, such as school boards, or legislatures are a major force for deficit thinking in education by excluding students of color from optimal educational opportunities due to unequal conditions. These conditions can include forced or natural segregation, gifted and talented offerings, unequal numbers of students of color in special education, curriculum differentiation, teacher-student interactions, language and cultural exclusion, teacher certification, and school financing (Valencia, 2010).

He continues by adding the financial structuring of schools has an immediate impact on students of color. Students attending a school in a higher socio-economic area are more likely to have better access to resources and materials and have better educational experiences, such as paid field trips, lower student to teacher ratio, and higher salaried teachers (Valencia, 2010).

Unfortunately, the people in power have analyzed the social problems that exist in schools from a deficit perspective (Valencia, 2010). This means administrators and people in power analyze issues in this way: (a) Identify the problem through studying how advantages and disadvantages are different, (b) Identify the differences found and define them “as the *causes* of social problems” (Valencia, 2010, emphasis in original, p. 8) and, (c) Use their power to intervene and correct the differences/deficiencies through special programs. In this way, Ryan (1971, as cited by Valencia) says, “*The formula for action becomes extraordinarily simple: change the victim*” (emphasis in original, p. 8).

## **Deficit Thinking and Teacher Education**

At the beginning of this chapter, I discussed the historical and current bases for multicultural education as a lead into the current practices guiding my research. This idea comes full circle in this discussion about how the deficit model in schools directed curricula into a multicultural track. As mentioned before, Leonardo (2007) notes how multiculturalism is proof that whiteness permeates the school system. And, within teacher education, there is a belief that by helping white teachers develop a “cultural competence and soci-political consciousness”, they can become better educators (Picower, 2009, p. 199). Yet there is little evidence to support the idea that teacher education programs are teaching how the deficit model impacts schools and students. Marx (2004) notes that blatant instruction about whiteness does not occur in teacher education programs.

Instead, the omission or limited discussion of the deficit model preserves an individualistic and meritocratic view of education within teacher education (Solomon, Portelli, Daniel, & Campbell, 2005). By not confronting deficit model beliefs, educators in teacher education programs maintain a passive racism and the inability to recognize the power schools and teachers have (Pennington, 2007). According to research done by Solomon et al. (2005) teacher candidates continue to argue that failure is due to a lack of individual effort. For many teacher candidates in that study, racial issues were minimized by continuing the idea of color blindness and therefore ignoring privilege. The study by Solomon et al. (2005) found that “[s]ignificant numbers of white candidates are locked into the individualistic and meritocratic view of education” (p. 160), and stated a belief that if students work hard enough

they will overcome their myriad of obstacles. This research shows how pre-service teachers are perpetuating a belief that success and failure are due to individual effort.

Keeping with this idea, Ford et al. (2002) acknowledge that students who are seen to have cultural differences from white culture are considered culturally deprived or disadvantaged. This type of belief can lead teacher candidates to believe that they are saving the children of color (Pennington, 2007).

Pennington (2007) states that when teachers believe they are saving their students, what that really means is that they are saving them “from their own lives”, lives that are lacking essential qualities and need to be fixed. Teacher education programs do not help negate this belief but instead focus on the differences of students based on a white norm. Ford et al. (2002) state that the curriculum within teacher education is monocultural and ethnocentric, and doesn’t prepare the candidates for diverse classroom experiences. This limited viewpoint can cause misunderstandings about cultural differences that may then be viewed as deficits and behavioral issues (Ford et al., 2002).

Therefore, teacher education needs to examine and address the negative impact that whiteness can have for how teachers understand their students (Picower, 2009). If teacher education does not challenge deficit ways of teaching, then it condones dominant society and offers even the “most loving teachers” to continue to be racist (Marx, 2004, p. 40). Johnson (2002) found that programs with racial diversity components not only help diversify the future teaching force but are “critical to the education of white pre-service teachers” (p. 163) and that even dialogue can increase awareness.



Teacher education needs to help teacher candidates become more culturally compatible by creating an environment of critical self-examination regarding pre-service teachers' attitudes and perspectives about cultural diversity (Ford et al., 2002). Solomon et al. (2005) agree by saying that it is "increasingly important to have teacher candidates explore personal attitudes and understandings of the way in which their racial ascription and social positioning inform their actual practices and interactions with students" (p. 149). By not explicitly teaching about whiteness, white privilege, and the deficit model in schools, teacher education is enabling teacher candidates to remove themselves from the process while allowing "white privilege and dominance to remain unchecked and unchallenged" (Solomon et al., 2005, p. 159). Therefore, it is imperative that teacher candidates explore their own racial and ethnic background and how white privilege and the deficit model permeate the school system and impact student success.

### **Teacher Education**

**Pre-service teachers' resistance to multicultural education.** McIntosh (1988) first noticed the resistance to male privilege in her classic work on white privilege and admitted her own resistance to facing white privilege and its existence in her life. She noted it was even more difficult for her to examine the disadvantages her white privilege caused people of color (McIntosh, 1988).

In examining 140 white pre-service teachers enrolled in diversity and white privilege programs, Solomon et al. (2005) found that the majority of the participants struggled to understand and accept the ideas brought forward regarding white privilege and diversity. They found that most white pre-service teachers in the study had difficulty acknowledging that their

ideologies were socially constructed. The pre-service teachers resisted agreeing with the ideas of domination and oppression by their ancestors that helped create an unequal society. The participants also challenged any suggestions of racism by claiming ignorance and lack of knowledge regarding diverse cultures as a way to avoid multicultural teaching. This research found the following:

In our work with teacher candidates, we have observed on multiple occasions that level of discomfort that is experienced on the part of the candidates when discussions of oppression, marginalization, colonization, racism, etc., are initiated. This discomfort is similarly evidenced in many university spaces when students, particularly white students, are asked to consider the possibility of alternative interpretations of history, society, or social relations. (p. 54)

Pennington (2007) supports these findings by acknowledging white women, who are the majority of the teaching force may “have pre-scripted roles in dealing with cultures of color” (p. 98) that can manifest within the teacher education program. In addition to these scripts, many pre-service teachers show reluctance to discuss how they benefit from white privilege even after they have openly accepted its existence (Johnson, 2002). By denying the benefits whites receive through white privilege, pre-service teachers are able to remove themselves from any of the discourse that would bring about change, which enables them to perpetuate and maintain white dominance in their teaching (Solomon et al., 2005). In addition, it may be difficult for pre-service teachers to not believe the messages sent via media, social contexts, etc., that say our social systems are fair, open and democratic (Porfilio & Malott,

2011). This belief in the equality of our society can impact the level of acceptance pre-service teachers have towards white privilege beliefs.

Further resistance for pre-service teachers may come from not knowing how to handle the array of emotions that an examination of white privilege may elicit (McGowan & Kern, 2014). Solomon et al. (2005) found it is unknown exactly which emotions or feelings pre-service teachers may have as they explore the concept of white privilege and their place within the dominant system. This range of emotions could include “anger, guilt, and paralysis” (Solomon et al., 2005, p. 164). This suggests these emotions can lead pre-service teachers to disengage in the anti-racism work, which could subsequently perpetuate their privilege.

Some overt ways whites tend to avoid or resist racial discussions can include diverting the attention from racism with justifications or evaluations of why people behave the way they do, shift the focus of the discussion to gender or socio-economic status, refuse to participate in the discussion, undermine the importance of the discussion by offering exceptions or demonstrating strong guilt reactions, and by arguing that race is no longer an issue in the U.S. and siding with the ideals of reverse racism (Gay & Howard, 2000, Gay & Kirkland, 2003, Kendall, 2013). In addition, many pre-service teachers claim a fear of teaching students of color and avoid dealing with the issue by denying racism exists within the schools, claiming they will not need to worry about racism since they teach something more generic such as mathematics, admitting to a fear of saying the wrong thing or offending someone, and claiming to have enough of a basic understanding of multicultural education to teach it in general (Gay & Howard, 2000).

Along with the overt resistance to discussions on racism and white privilege, Kendall (2013) suggests some whites will blatantly refuse to identify themselves as benefiting from white privilege due to the negative associations related to white supremacy. As suggested by Freire (1970/1993), the oppressors would “become desperate at the slightest threat to its source” (p. 44) and “discovering himself to be an oppressor may cause considerable anguish” (p. 49) for whites, which implies whites will do whatever is necessary to avoid dealing with privilege and dominance. In addition, he notes that “the oppressors do not perceive their monopoly on *having more* as a privilege which dehumanizes others and themselves” (emphasis in original, p. 59). However, regardless of the resistance from pre-service teachers to examine white privilege and oppression, Cochran-Smith (1995) notes pre-service teachers need to understand what is going on in the schools, especially related to dominant society beliefs and behaviors, and they need to avoid making judgments or assumptions based on their own experiences.

### **Cultural awareness in teacher education.**

*Demand for cultural awareness.* All teaching takes place within a social and historical context and pre-service teachers cannot ignore the structures, both social and academic, within the classroom, the history, and norms of teaching based on dominant society, and the community involvement with teachers (Cochran-Smith, 1995). Mantle-Bromley (1992) found pre-service teachers need to have self-awareness of their behaviors based on their culture in order to avoid judging the behaviors they see in others. Therefore, it is imperative to have explicit and mandatory teaching of both theory and practice of multicultural education within teacher education programs throughout the curricula and as a

normal part of the program (e.g., Barry & Lechner, 1995, Gay & Howard, 2000, Rodriguez & Sjostrom, 1995).

Gay (2010) reiterates this idea by noting the changing demographics of the U.S. have a significant importance in schools and require specific changes in teaching programs to include an examination of the value assumptions many pre-service teachers may have regarding whiteness. She notes the Eurocentric orientations are neither appropriate nor valid for teaching diverse students, yet many teacher education programs continue to be dominated by whites, which leads to the perpetuation of those beliefs.

Nieto (2000) points out the classroom of the future will be racially and ethnically diverse, as well as multilingual, yet most pre-service teachers are “monolithic, monocultural, and monolingual” (p. 181). Therefore, pre-service teachers must have a critical education regarding whiteness and white privilege, regardless in which type of school system they assume they will or have a desire to work (Nieto, 2000). Gay (2010) echoes this belief by stating the diverse population of our schools has become more demanding regarding a diverse education and is no longer willing to conform to the dominant society’s point of view.

Unfortunately, most teacher education programs continue to mimic and support the 19<sup>th</sup> Century industrial factory model of teaching which perpetuates mainstream cultural beliefs (Ooka Pang & Park, 2011). In addition to the antiquated practices within the teacher education programs, many pre-service teachers claim little or no experience with diverse groups of people (Nieto, 2000), begin teaching without any knowledge of themselves as social and racial beings (Hayes & Juarez, 2012), and maintain beliefs about stereotypes and meritocracy (Castro, 2010), all of which will contribute to widening the achievement gap. As

Hayes and Juarez (2012) point out, the systemic privileging of whites (e.g., interests, accomplishments, values, beliefs, etc.) continues to happen as if it is the norm.

Pre-service teachers must be informed critical thinkers regarding social issues about race, racism, gender, bias, disabilities, religion, language, and culture (Ooka Pang & Park, 2011). Therefore, the onus is on teacher education programs to prepare pre-service teachers to be culturally competent in a variety of settings so they can teach in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms (Rodriguez & Sjoström, 1995).

*Current trends related to cultural awareness.* White teachers have difficulty understanding or conceptualizing their own race and the race of others as well as how their views impact what they do in the classroom (Johnson & Lauri, 2002). In addition, many pre-service teachers posit knowledge is neutral and universal which can be linked back to the white perspective that the world is an extension of self and the normative knowledge is based on dominant culture (Hollins, 2011). This may be in part due to the fact that current teacher education programs do not effectively teach multiculturalism to pre-service teachers (Grant & Gibson, 2011).

Gollnick (1995, as cited by Nieto, 2000) did extensive reviews of teacher education programs over the last few decades and found that although multicultural education was endorsed and emphasized beginning in the early 1970s, very few changes related to diversity within programs has occurred. Nieto (2000) reveals that multiculturalism within the schools was superficial at best and propagating stereotypes and negative assumptions at worst.

Castro (2010) examined the history of multicultural education within teacher education programs and found that in the early beginnings of the movement, there was a lack

of understanding the issues that omitted exploring the systems of inequalities, white privilege, and diverse contexts within teaching. Instead, deficit thinking arose and led to the still current trend of blaming the victim for his/her failures. Many studies from the 1980s showed white pre-service teachers having deep misconceptions and stereotypes regarding different cultural groups (Castro, 2010). This led to the reinforcement of racial superiority and intolerance of differences that permeated the school systems at that time (Castro, 2010).

In the late 1990s, pre-service teachers began to adopt individualistic approaches to diversity yet continued to ignore institutional and systemic inequalities (Castro, 2010). Instead, diversity within teacher education programs was touted as individual differences that supported the meritocratic beliefs of dominant white culture (Castro, 2010). These teachings preserved the stereotypes and prejudices many pre-service teachers had about students of color and blinded the pre-service teachers to their own whiteness and white privilege (Castro, 2010).

Castro (2010) found that the beginning of the new century had little impact on the negative beliefs of pre-service teachers. They continued to subscribe to beliefs of individualism, meritocracy, stereotypes, and deficit thinking even to the point of using their beliefs to justify a refusal to teach students of color (Castro, 2010). Pre-service teachers were still unable to see the structural and institutional barriers that plagued students of color and were unable to understand the ways these barriers maintained racism and oppression (Castro, 2010).

By not challenging the current ways pre-service teachers view diversity teacher education programs are instead condoning them (Marx, 2004). Solórzano and Yosso (2001)

suggest teacher education programs need to examine, discuss, analyze, and explore the racial experiences people of color have as well as the overt and covert racial stereotypes, attitudes, and behaviors of pre-service teachers.

*Insufficiencies related to cultural awareness.* There is a limitation on the amount of research completed regarding what is being done with respect to multicultural education and its incorporation into teacher education programs (Gay, 2010; Grant & Gibson, 2011; Sleeter, 2001). However, one study by Johnson (2002) found participants who completed programs that focused on diversity experienced changes related to their views of race. It is the responsibility of teacher education programs to help pre-service teachers learn and understand race, ethnicity, and culture so they can push against the hegemonic mis-education of the system (Grant & Gibson, 2011). Therefore, it is essential pre-service teachers genuinely understand what constitutes culture and how it differs from race in order minimize the ever-widening gap of cultural difference that is currently happening in schools (e.g., Grant & Gibson, 2011; Sleeter, 2001).

Castro (2010) adds that pre-service teachers need to “take into account their behavior, their view of the world, and their ethics” (Freire, 1999, p. 37, as cited by Castro) so that they can begin to have a critical consciousness about teaching. Without this critical consciousness, many pre-service teachers who argue they understand how to incorporate multicultural education into their teaching end up with superficial diversity activities that serve only to preserve known stereotypes (Castro, 2010).

Chapman (2011) cautions that multicultural education assumes every teacher knows and understands the concepts of race and culture and how they manifest in the schools, which



leads to the assumption that pre-service teachers will not enable deficit thinking.

Unfortunately, most pre-service teachers claim color blind ideologies that preserve racism and racist thoughts. To minimize these ideologies, Solórzano and Yosso (2001) propose “the discussion of race, racism, and racial stereotypes must be a continuing part of our teacher education discourse” (p. 7). One way to fight against and eliminate the stereotypes is through CRT and offering pre-service teachers the tools necessary to understand and challenge racial stereotypes (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). Chapman (2011) agrees that whiteness and white privilege need to be challenged in teacher education programs.

Unfortunately, as mentioned above, many pre-service teachers tout a culturally responsive perspective yet still subscribe to a deficit way of thinking, accept a color-blind approach, lack a sense of themselves as cultural beings, and fail to recognize the racial inequalities that exist (Castro, 2010). Castro (2010) continues by adding these characteristics lead to lower expectations for students of color, a denial of the importance of race in teaching, and a belief in the normativity of their cultural lens. Hollins (2011) confirms this idea by adding the social ideology, which supports identity in pre-service teachers stems from a belief that their way of being in the world is the norm and all other ways are undesirable.

Grant and Gibson (2011) assert teacher education programs need to help bridge the cultural gap between the worlds of pre-service teachers and their future students. This bridge can be attained by teaching pre-service teachers how to reject deficit thinking and see the social and racial hierarchies and constructions of race that pervade our schools (Grant & Gibson, 2011). This point is supported by the knowledge that pre-service teachers have little or no contact or training in cross-cultural issues (Nieto, 2000) and the cultures and

experiences of new teachers are completely dissimilar to students from low-income and underachieving schools (Ooka Pang & Park, 2011). Gay (2010) reiterates this point by adding many teachers and students do not live in the same communities, seldom, if ever, interact outside of school, and have no idea what the lives of the other entails. In this regard, cultural understandings are only available through mass media and random interactions that enable the continuation of stereotypes and distorted attitudes (Gay, 2010).

Nieto (2000) suggests pre-service teachers may hold onto negative assumptions about students of color due to their teacher education experiences. She notes many programs with white pre-service teachers focus on serving white students, advocate an assimilationist ideology, offer limited practical experience with students of color, and retain professors who also subscribe to deficit and color-blind beliefs. Therefore, it is vital for teacher education programs to help pre-service teachers examine their own beliefs and attitudes about students of color. As Gay and Kirkland (2003) note, “being more self-conscious, critical, and analytical of one’s own teaching beliefs and behaviors” (p. 181) leads to more teacher accountability and culturally responsive teaching.

### **Significance to my research**

Self-reflection, critical analysis, monitoring personal beliefs, and instructional behaviors related to cultural diversity are fundamental for pre-service teachers to understand themselves as teachers and the systems under which they will teach (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). Pre-service teachers must unpack “their own ethnicity and understand[ing] themselves as racial and cultural beings” (p. 8) and accept racism is a part of our current school system and society (Gay & Howard, 2000). Yet, according to Gay (2010), the attitudes and beliefs of pre-

service teachers related to diversity are not fully researched. She continues by adding pre-service teachers need to speak their thoughts about race and diversity in order to transform them because when “distorted attitudes and beliefs are present in the classroom (as they invariably are), they interfere with rather than facilitate teaching and learning” (p. 144).

Freire (1970/1993) cautions that whites who simply have an understanding of whiteness and oppression may still have their biases yet feel a need to “help” the oppressed. This is a continuation of deficit thinking. Therefore, white privilege and oppression must be examined objectively and overtly challenged in order to create a new situation (Freire, 1970/1993).

The majority of pre-service teachers in the U.S. are white (e.g., Feistritz et al., 2011; Sleeter & Milner IV, 2011) yet many of them are unaware they have a race, culture and ethnicity (Gay, 2010). One reason for this is whites are not often asked what it means to be white in the U.S., or given ideas on how to work effectively in diverse environments (Kendall, 2013). Hollins (2011) adds “learning to teach people different from ourselves requires moving beyond a view of the world as an extension of self to an openness to diverse perspectives and to views of knowledge as socially constructed and evolving” (p. 117).

Kendall (2013) adds it is imperative white pre-service teachers “identify with being white, [and] acknowledge the importance that whiteness has in their lives” (p. 135) in order to avoid teaching about “others” with whiteness as the norm. Therefore, pre-service teachers need a “conscious and continuous effort” (Marx, 2004, p. 41) to question and challenge their own biases and values as well as to examine the standard practices in schools based on dominant society (Nieto, 2000). Pre-service teachers must be informed critical thinkers

regarding social issues about race, racism, gender bias, disabilities, religion, language, and culture (Ooka Pang & Park, 2011). Gay (2010) observes problems with the school systems and whiteness cannot be corrected until they are examined, confronted, understood, and analyzed for the next steps.

Due to the majority of white teachers, whites will be at the forefront of multicultural education, and therefore must have cultural and ethical self-awareness and self-reflection (Gay & Howard, 2000). Gay and Howard (2000) continue by saying multicultural education can only be effective when pre-service teachers have an open mind, awareness, and humility that comes from understanding how culture and ethnicity impact their own lives and themselves. Only then, they add, will pre-service teachers be receptive to the validity of diverse points of view and knowledge which will lead to reciprocity of rights (Gay & Howard, 2000).

Nieto (2000) suggests some ways in which to teach pre-service teachers about diversity. The first way she offers is through social justice and diversity. In this way, pre-service teachers learn how to promote the learning of all students and avoid assimilation theories by understanding whiteness and its impact within the schools (Nieto, 2000). In addition, she proposes pre-service teachers “face and accept their own identities” (p. 184) in order to reflect on their own privileges before they even begin to teach others (Nieto, 2000).

Finally, she advocates social justice in teacher education (Nieto, 2000). Teacher education programs must look critically at how and why the system is unfair for some students and not others (Nieto, 2000). Teacher education programs need to help pre-service teachers learn how to analyze the materials, practices, curricula, etc. from a multicultural

standpoint (Nieto, 2000). She also points out that the methods courses are the best place to include content related to diversity. Pre-service teachers need to have experiences that challenge deficit thinking and the “demeaning conditions and inequitable learning opportunities their students face in the schools” (Nieto & McDonough, 2011, p. 367).

However, we must offer scaffolding and support because pre-service teachers cannot be expected to perform this intense type of analysis on their own (Nieto & McDonough, 2011). When pre-service teachers challenge their beliefs, they need support and guidance as well as peer dialogues (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). As Higginbotham (1996) points out, dialogue increases awareness. By questioning not only themselves but others’ beliefs, pre-service teachers better understand their positions and assumptions regarding whiteness, diversity, and white privilege (Nieto & McDonough, 2011).

Pre-service teachers need help to examine the reasons behind their beliefs and attitudes and feel safe to articulate those ideas (Gay, 2010). Gay (2010) continues by adding pre-service teachers need guided practice for new ideas, critical analysis of attitudes and beliefs in general and in schools so they may let go of deficit thinking and blaming the victim ideologies. Additionally, pre-service teachers need scaffolding in order to look at themselves and the active roles their own ethnic, racial, cultural, sexual, and socioeconomic experiences have in how they perceive and teach students of color (Olsen, 2011). Then, with help, they must critically interrogate and change their perceptions and conceptions of race, culture, ethnicity, and power in order to construct ongoing understandings of themselves in relation to diversity (Olsen, 2011). This careful analysis is mandatory in order to avoid unintentionally propagating racism (Nieto & McDonough, 2011).

As evidenced throughout this review of the literature, a mindful and critical analysis of self (as a white person); whiteness in general; and the advantages offered to whites is critical within teacher education programs for the success of all future students. As Hollins (2011) noted, multicultural education is dependent upon this type of conscious inquiry of the dominant society. Therefore, my research into how foreign language pre-service teachers view themselves within the dominant society and how they view social issues revolving around white privilege is essential to the betterment of not only these future teachers, but to every student they ever teach.

## Chapter 3

### Methodology

#### Research Design

This chapter examines the overall research design and theoretical framework involved in this study. I begin with a discussion on the theoretical framework used as well as the ontological and epistemological reasoning behind it. This framework is based on a Critical Race Theory (CRT) perspective and a review of CRT as it relates to this study is offered next. A mixed methods design was used and this chapter offers the purpose, affordances, and challenges related to choosing that design. Following that discussion, the study sample, measurements, and protocols are given. This leads into an examination of both types of methods used.

The quantitative methods and design section explores the instrument used to determine significance as well as the validity and reliability of the instrument. Subsequently, an analysis section for the quantitative results follows. Next, the qualitative methods and design section discusses the qualitative activities done in the study and explores the analysis method. The analysis method section includes a definition and an examination of the theories used to analyze the qualitative data as well as the purpose and validity of those theories.

**Theoretical framework.** This study utilizes a mixed methods approach for the collection, interpretation and reporting of data. The theoretical framework guiding this study is emphasized by a qualitative approach. A qualitative perspective was chosen because this study attempts to examine attitudes regarding social issues such as racism, sexism,

heterosexism, and Christian privilege. In addition, the qualitative data gathered is to support the quantitative data and give voice to the participant's survey responses. To this end, a theoretical framework involving CRT as it relates to Multicultural Education and Deficit Thinking (e.g., Nieto, 1999; Valencia, 1997; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001) in schools is applied as it aligns most strongly with the social issues being examined.

***Ontological and epistemological stance.*** Ontology is defined as “a particular theory about the nature of being or the kinds of things that have existence” (Merriam Webster's online dictionary, n.d.). In other words, it is a knowledge base, the manner in which each person sees reality, and therefore; can include a variety of perspectives based on each person's point of view (e.g., Guarino, 1995; Kovach, 2009; Wilson, 2008). When employing a CRT perspective, reality is based on the physical and psychological power systems created by the dominant society (e.g., Blaisdell, 2005; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson- Billings & Tate, 1995). From this perspective, people view reality differently depending on the level of oppression or power they have in any given situation. This level of power or oppression is determined by a variety of factors including race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation and disability (e.g., Blaisdell, 2005; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Olsen, 2011).

The way in which a people view reality (ontology) influences how they view what is true. This truth is known as the epistemological assumption. Epistemology is “the study of the nature, origin, and limits of human knowledge” and determines how reality is viewed (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d.). A person's epistemology will determine how the world is known and represented (e.g., Guarino, 1995; Wilson, 2008). In addition, each person's epistemology or knowledge of what is real is individually based (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). For



example, as a white woman one aspect of my ontology is based on the gender bias I have experienced in life. In every situation I encounter, my worldview includes a supposition of gender bias. Therefore, if I am passed over for a job in which I am highly qualified, I may employ an epistemology that my gender played a role in that decision. However, a black woman may employ an epistemology that the same situation is due to her race. In this study, participants' attitudes regarding privilege and oppression are identified and discussed using the tenets from CRT. Ultimately, these attitudes are a reflection of each participant's epistemological view of reality.

**Critical Race Theory.** As a methodology, CRT was used to understand the nature of racism in order to change how it impacts people by analyzing how racism is maintained and created through norms based on whiteness (Blaisdell, 2005). By understanding privilege and oppression through a CRT lens, the participants in this study had an opportunity to evaluate and alter their views about social issues (such as racism, sexism, heterosexism, etc.) and the ways in which the U. S. school system perpetuates racism through curricula, materials offered, guidelines and policies, etcetera (Blaisdell, 2005).

By using CRT as a theoretical framework in this study, social issues related to privilege and oppression; such as white privilege, heterosexism, sexism and Christian privilege, were made overt to the participants, which created an opportunity for them to acknowledge their part in the dominant culture. The intent of this acknowledgment was to begin to change participants' attitudes about these social issues. Teacher education programs often employ the use of CRT to help pre-service teachers understand these types of social issues as they relate to education (Solórzano & Yosso, 2001). In addition, Solórzano and

Yosso (2001) note that when CRT is used as a framework in teacher education it helps pre-service teachers “identify, analyze, and transform subtle and overt forms of racism in education in order to transform society” (p. 4).

According to Solórzano and Yosso (2001) most teacher education programs try to minimize issues related to privilege and oppression by teaching pre-service teachers how to acculturate students of color into the dominant culture and in doing so perpetuate stereotypes by downplaying others’ values and beliefs. However, by employing a CRT framework in this study, the participants (pre-service teachers) were challenged to reflect on their personal beliefs and even racism in order to consider eliminating those stereotypic beliefs. Thus, through education and learning, they could challenge their attitudes regarding privilege and oppression. After examining their own attitudes, pre-service teachers can then begin to explore the social and historical context that led to and perpetuates these stereotypes. Many scholars agree that it is imperative to explore these issues within teacher education programs in order to begin to make any changes to the current system (e.g., Higginbotham, 1996; Pennington, 2007; Picower, 2009).

**Mixed methods.** This study utilized a mixed methods design in which both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and analyzed. The quantitative portion included pre- and post-test questionnaires that were analyzed using a paired sample *t* test. The qualitative data were analyzed using a grounded theory approach. Each analysis technique is discussed in more detail below.

**Purpose.** A mixed methods design was used in this study to ensure a complete telling of the story. Mixed method designs are often utilized because one data source may not be

sufficient since each approach offers its own perspective of the data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). For example, in this study a second method was necessary to explain and enhance the quantitative findings and to give life to the numeric data. In this way, the quantitative data showed there was a change in the attitudes of the pre-service foreign language teachers but did not offer an explanation as to why those attitudes changed. Therefore, the qualitative data were necessary to explain the changes in the quantitative surveys by offering a perspective into how and in what ways those attitudes changed.

***Affordances of a Mixed Methods approach.*** One of the major advantages of using a mixed methods approach is the ability for each approach to support the weakness of the other (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). For example, within the quantitative method, there is minimal exploration of the context within which the research took place, and the voices of the participants are often minimized or excluded. In addition, there is no acknowledgment of possible researcher bias within quantitative work (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). However, qualitative research includes all those aspects yet is weak in the ability to generalize and provide an objective analysis, which are prominent in quantitative work (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). By applying both quantitative and qualitative approaches to research, I am able to employ all possible methods in order to enhance this study and therefore offer more inclusive results (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

***Challenges of a Mixed Methods approach.*** Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) note two major challenges to using a mixed methods approach. The first one involves the skills necessary to complete both types of research. The researcher must have knowledge and experience using both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell & Plano Clark,

2011). Fortunately, due to the rigorous expectations of the core course work required for my advanced degree, I have studied both approaches in depth and have the background and knowledge base to conduct each type of research (University of Idaho, College of Education, Doctoral Degree and Graduate Guide, 2013).

Another challenge Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) note is the ability to have both the time and resources necessary to conduct both approaches. They suggest considering the time it would take to conduct the study including gaining access to the participants and to complete the data collection. Fortunately, as the professor for the Secondary Foreign Language Methods course at the University of Idaho, I had the opportunity and means in both time and resources necessary to conduct a mixed methods approach. My course curriculum had already included a lesson on privilege within the school system thus; I was able to collect both qualitative and quantitative data in my class. Additionally, all the pre-service teachers in my course volunteered to be a part of the study, which minimized the need for additional time and resources. Therefore, based on the circumstances afforded to me, I was able to address the challenges suggested by Creswell and Plano Clark (2011) that are associated with the mixed methods design. In this way, I was successfully able to complete my research using this approach.

### **Quantitative Research Design**

(The section on the study sample was taken verbatim from a previously published article by McGowan, S., & Kern, A., in the *Journal of Education and Training Studies* Vol. 2, No. 1; January 2014. doi:10.11114/jets.v2i1.188)

**Study sample.** The study sample, participants, were students enrolled in a Secondary Foreign Language Methods course in a teacher preparation program at a small, rural university in the inland Northwest. All students in the course volunteered to participate in the study which took place during the fall 2012 semester. The 19 participants ranged from their early twenties to late-thirties, and Table 2 provides a breakdown of their stated gender and race.

Table 2 Participant Demographics			
Race		Gender	
White students	74%	Female	84%
Students of color	26%	Male	16%
Total	100%		100%

The 2012-2013 online General Catalog for this university describes the Teacher Education Program as:

The preparation of teachers is a cooperative enterprise between the College of Education and other colleges. Coordination is achieved through the Teacher Education Coordinating Committee. The screening of all applicants for admission to Teacher Education Programs is the responsibility of the College of Education, and the dean of the College of Education is the recommending authority for certification. (General Catalog, University of Idaho, 2012-2013)

Students enrolled in the Teacher Education Program must complete the following courses before enrolling in a methods course: *Contexts of Education; Learning, Development, and Assessment; and Teaching Culturally Diverse Learners*. In each course, diversity and multicultural education are addressed through discussions, readings, and/or real-life case studies. The *Contexts of Education* course introduces pre-service teachers to the public school system and requires a twenty (20) hour service learning component, where they engage in a hands-on experience within the school system helping and observing mentor teachers. The *Learning, Development, and Assessment* course focuses on the classroom application of educational psychology and educational theory. This course also examines real-life case studies related to multicultural education and diversity issues. The *Teaching Culturally Diverse Students* course focuses on application of classroom management skills, lesson planning, and student motivation skills. This course includes a requisite forty-five (45) hour practicum in the public school system. Additional courses may be taken prior to the Foreign Language Methods course, and are dependent on the pre-service teacher's degree plan and major.

**Measures.** (The section on the measures was taken verbatim from a previously published article by McGowan, S., & Kern, A., in the *Journal of Education and Training Studies* Vol. 2, No. 1; January 2014. doi:10.11114/jets.v2i1.188)

Participants were given a researcher adapted 39-item Likert-scale questionnaire, The Privilege and Oppression Inventory (POI) created by Hays, Chang, and Decker (appendix A), inquiring about the participants perceptions of privilege and oppression in American society. The original scale and scoring guide, created by Hays, Chang, and Decker (2007) along with

permission for reproduction and use in this study, was granted by first author Hays. The response scale consisted of six options ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6) and the questionnaire consisted of four content subsets: white privilege awareness, Heterosexism awareness, Christian Privilege awareness, and Sexism. The subsets were listed in a random order on the questionnaire and subset associations were not released to the respondents. The content subsets were aligned with the questionnaire number on the scoring guide and available to only to researchers (Appendix B). The questionnaire was adapted in the following ways: 1) Blank lines were added to each question, and 2) in four of the original questions with the phrases “I am aware that..., I believe that..., I think..., I am aware than... [sic]” were removed accordingly.

Between the pre- and post-test, focused instructional activities occurred during one three-hour class meeting. The activities included participant involvement in the Privilege Walk, viewing of short clips from the documentary, *The Color of Fear*, and a round-robin type discussion based on open-ended questions.

**Protocol.** (The section on the quantitative results was taken verbatim from a previously published article by McGowan, S., & Kern, A., in the *Journal of Education and Training Studies* Vol. 2, No. 1; January 2014. doi:10.11114/jets.v2i1.188)

Each participant was given the opportunity to create his/her own identifier or pseudonym before commencement of the study. At no point during the study did the researchers attempt to match the student-created identifiers with the participant. Each participant was then given the adapted POI before any intervention was offered. One week after taking the adapted POI the participants engaged in a three-hour class focused on

instruction about and activities to explore white privilege and oppression. The class consisted of the following segments:

1. Active participation in an adapted version of the statements from the “The Privilege Walk” (appendix C). The Privilege Walk is an interactive experience in which participants respond to questions that deal with white privilege and oppression by stepping forward or backward from a starting line based on their experiences of that question (e.g. Please take one step forward if you are a white, male.)
2. A face-to-face question and answer session in which participants were asked follow-up questions adapted from another example of “The Privilege Walk” followed the exercise (Appendix D). Participants were asked open-ended questions, such as “What are your general reactions to this exercise?” and were given no time limit to respond. In addition, each participant was given the option to respond or pass on each question.
3. Excerpts from *The Color of Fear* (1994) were shown regarding white privilege examples and definitions. The Internet Movie Database (IMDb) summarizes *The Color of Fear* as follows:

Eight North American men, two African American, two Latinos, two Asian American and two Caucasian were gathered by director Lee Mun Wah, for a dialog about the state of race relations in America as seen through their eyes. The exchanges are sometimes dramatic, and put in plain light the pain caused by racism in North America. Written by Fabrice Guerin (n.d.).



One week after completion of the activities and discussion listed above, participants once again completed the POI as a post-test to the instruction. Only participant chosen user names were used on both the pre-test and post-test.

**Instrument.** (The section on the instrument was taken verbatim from a previously published article by McGowan, S., & Kern, A., in the *Journal of Education and Training Studies* Vol. 2, No. 1; January 2014. doi:10.11114/jets.v2i1.188)

Participants were given a researcher adapted 39-item Likert-scale questionnaire, The Privilege and Oppression Inventory (POI) created by Hays, Chang, and Decker, inquiring about the participants' perceptions of privilege and oppression in American society. The original scale and scoring guide, created by Hays, Chang, and Decker (2007) along with permission for reproduction and use in this study, was granted by first author Hays. The response scale consisted of six options ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (6) and the questionnaire consisted of four content subsets: white privilege awareness, Heterosexism awareness, Christian Privilege awareness, and Sexism. The subsets were listed in a random order on the questionnaire and subset associations were not released to the respondents. The content subsets were aligned with the questionnaire number on the scoring guide and available to only to researchers. The questionnaire was adapted in the following ways: 1) Blank lines were added to each question, and 2) in four of the original questions with the phrases "I am aware that..., I believe that..., I think..., I am aware than... [sic]" were removed accordingly.

**Validity and reliability.** The POI published an “Initial development and psychometric data for the Privilege and Oppression Inventory” which explained validity and reliability for the instrument (appendix E). Table 3 shows the reliability for each subset in the survey.

Subset	Cronbach's alpha	test-retest coefficients
White Privilege Awareness	0.92	$r = .89$
Heterosexism Awareness	0.81	$r = .86$
Christian Privilege Awareness	0.86	$r = .84$
Sexism Awareness	0.79	$r = .79$

### Analysis method

To assess the effectiveness of the instructional activities on the pre-service foreign language teachers' attitudes regarding privilege and oppression, a paired sample *t*-test was utilized. Trochim and Donnelly (2008) note a *t*-test is used to determine “whether the means of two groups are *statistically* different from each other” (emphasis in original, p. 302). Therefore, the means from the group of data scored from the pre-test and the group of data scored from the post-test were compared in order to see if there had been a statistically significant change. A significant change in scores would indicate a change in participants' attitudes regarding the social issues addressed in the questionnaire.

### Qualitative Methods and Design

For the qualitative portion of this research, the focus for the data collection was to explore to impact of the instructional activities and discussion on how pre-service teachers

relate privilege and oppression to their own lives and futures as teachers. Therefore, the pre-service teachers' responses to instructional activities, the privilege walk, and documentary movie clips were analyzed for themes related to the impact of these activities on the lives of the pre-service teachers and their futures as teachers.

**Activities.** The activities that were used to promote reflection and understanding privilege and oppressions in this study were based on suggestions made to me by College of Education colleagues while discussing my research interest.

*The privilege walk.* While researching the privilege walk activity, an immediate search online offered hundreds of versions of the activity. I explored many of the options and found the purpose for each variation I examined was similar and revolved around the recognition of white privilege. From the options given, I chose one example (appendix C) that states the activity “is to learn to recognize how power and privilege can affect [sic] our lives even when we are not aware it is happening...to have an opportunity to identify both obstacles and benefits experienced in our life” (Module 5: Privilege walk activity, n.d.). The chosen version supported my goal to help pre-service foreign language teachers learn about white privilege and the ways in which it manifests in dominant society. As McIntosh (1988) notes, many white people are unaware of the unearned privileges they receive on a daily basis, therefore; this activity was intended to aid in the discovery of those privileges. In this way, this version aligned with the intention of this study, to gauge pre-service foreign language teachers' attitudes and awareness of privilege and oppression.

The activity began with all the pre-service foreign language teachers (participants) standing in a straight line at a designated starting point. The purpose of this starting point was

to offer a visual representation of everyone beginning at the same place. After they were lined up, I read statements related to certain social issues such as race, socio-economic status, and gender. I have listed examples of some of the statements below and a full list and copy of the activity can be found in appendix C. The statements explored privileges afforded people based on race, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation and cultural background (Module 5: Privilege walk activity, n.d.). After I read each statement, the participants determined whether the statement applied to him or her specifically. If it did, they followed the command of moving one-step forward or one-step backward. If the statement included an identity that would receive privilege based on dominant society then it asked participants to move one step forward, an example included “If you are a white male, take one step forward” (Module 5: Privilege walk activity, n.d.). On the other hand, if the statement implied an identity that did not receive privilege, participants were instructed to take one step back, for example, “If you took out student loans for your education, take one step back” (Module 5: Privilege walk activity, n.d.). If however, the participant did not identify with the statement, they were instructed not to move at all until the next statement was read. Additional examples of the statements included (Module 5: Privilege walk activity, n.d.):

1. If you have ever felt unsafe walking alone at night take one step backward.
2. If you feel good about how your identified culture is portrayed by the media take one step forward.
3. If English is your first language take one step forward.
4. If you have visible or invisible disabilities take one step backward.

5. If your work holidays coincide with religious holidays that you celebrate take one step forward.

(A copy of all the statements read can be found in appendix C.)

Participants were told to consider and deeply reflect on the statements and were asked to be completely silent while doing the activity. After all the statements were read, the participants were instructed to look around them and note their placement from the starting line in comparison to the other students near and far from them. It was explained the farther forward one was from the starting line, the more advantages (or privilege) that person had. Conversely, those farther behind the starting line had fewer advantages. The participants of this activity were asked to note each other's placement as a way to help each of them become aware of the privilege they had and to observe how much they resembled the people closest to them. This recognition was an attempt to encourage each student to understand the different ways people are afforded more depending on their race, gender, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, and cultural background.

***The discussion circle.*** After the completion of the privilege walk, the participants returned to the classroom to engage in an open-ended question and discussion about their perceived privilege and bias. The participants sat in a semi-circle and agreed to be videotaped and recorded during the discussion. They were informed that participation in the discussion, like all other activities in the study, was voluntary and they had the option whether to respond.

The discussion focused on each individual's personal reflective thoughts regarding the privilege walk activity. Every version of the privilege walk that I examined noted the need for time to process the feelings and thoughts that occur during this exercise and all recommended

some type of discussion while most versions offered suggested questions to pose to the participants. I chose questions that would not only require reflective thought regarding their personal reactions, but that also related to the teaching field. The following questions were adapted from an online handout I found and asked of each participant (Huie, n.d.).

1. What are your general reactions to the exercise? How did you feel?
2. What do you think about where you ended up in relation to where others were at the end of the exercise?
3. Were there certain "statements of privilege" that triggered certain emotions?
4. How does this information relate to you as a teacher?
5. How does this information affect [sic] you and your students?

***The Color of Fear video clips.*** The final piece of the activity session included the showing of brief video clips from the documentary *The Color of Fear*, directed by Lee Mun Wah in 1994. The Internet Movie Database (IMDb) summarizes *The Color of Fear* as follows:

Eight North American men, two African American, two Latinos, two Asian American and two Caucasian were gathered by director Lee Mun Wah, for a dialog about the state of race relations in America as seen through their eyes. The exchanges are sometimes dramatic, and put in plain light the pain caused by racism in North America. Written by Fabrice Guerin (n.d.).

The clips were intended to give the participants a glimpse into the attitudes and beliefs of people of color when discussing white privilege. Each clip contained either dialogue between the men or personal anecdotes given from the men on the video. The clips included

an examination of perceived reverse racism, personal accounts of racism the men of color had experienced, and an explanation of white privilege from the men of color. Due to time constraints, no discussion followed the clips however the participants were asked to internalize what they saw for possible further discussion.

### **Analysis Method**

For the qualitative data analysis, a grounded theory approach was utilized. The premise of grounded theory approach is that every participant in a study will have her/his own unique story and experience (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). It is a methodology that helps develop theories that evolved during the research and through the analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). As the data are collected and analyzed, theories are generated, examined, and modified resulting in a constant comparison of the theory to the data (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). However, during the analysis of data, similarities and themes may emerge that form a pattern or hypothesis (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). The focus on the development of theory is what makes grounded theory unique from other methodologies for qualitative work (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). Grounded theory has been extensively used within the social sciences by collecting and analyzing interview data to help explain the experiences people have (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). The traditional way of using grounded theory applies to almost any kind of social research as well as any type of data (Glaser, 1978; 2000; 2002, as cited by Bernard & Ryan, 2010).

### **Purpose for Using Grounded Theory**

By using a grounded theory approach to analyze the transcribed narratives the similar experiences of each participant were captured. Each participant began the instructional

activities with personal beliefs, ideas, and biases regarding privilege and oppression. These pre-determined beliefs influenced the outcome and allowed for each participant to have a unique voice and perspective within the study. However, it was also expected the participants would have similar experiences due to their common backgrounds. By using grounded theory, each participant's story was heard while allowing for similarities to emerge within the context of each question. These two factors allowed for the identification of themes that occurred during the process.

These identified themes were based on the qualitative data that focused on the ways in which instructional activities influenced the lives of pre-service foreign language teachers. The data from these activities, which included *The Privilege Walk* and an in-depth, open-ended question and answer discussion following *The Privilege Walk*, were analyzed using a grounded theory approach. It is important to note during this discussion, participants were given the opportunity to share what they had experienced and tell their story of that experience. As noted above, participants were also given the opportunity to pass on any or all questions and were not required to take part in any of the discussion if they so chose. Therefore, considering the narratives offered were voluntary and each had its own unique voice, those narratives can be assumed to have been genuine, meaningful, and honest perceptions of the participants' experiences. In this way, by using a grounded theory approach, the themes and similarities found during the discussion created an in-depth look at the ways in which the activities impacted the participants and the ways in which privilege and oppression were discussed. Additionally, these themes supported the quantitative data by



showing explicit examples of the changes that occurred between the quantitative pre- and post-test.

**Grounded theory definition.** Strauss and Corbin (1994) define grounded theory as “a *general methodology* for developing theory that is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed” (emphasis in original, p. 273). They continue by adding that grounded theory involves “generating theory and doing social research [as] two parts of the same process (Glaser, 1978, p. 2, as cited in Strauss & Corbin, 1994). They note, however; that a chief difference between this theory and other methodologies typically used to analyze qualitative data is the importance and stress upon the process of developing theories. Strauss and Corbin (1994) emphasize this process is done throughout a grounded theory research project and is ever evolving. Ultimately, grounded theory is considered grounded due to its relationship of generating and developing themes during all stages of the research project, and that it is “*a way of thinking about and conceptualizing data*” (emphasis in original, Strauss & Corbin, 1994, p. 275).

The process of using grounded theory aids in the production of theory by the continued reflection on the data while developing patterns and themes among the unique stories offered by each participant or data source (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). The focus is on *the process* of discovering themes and not necessarily the themes themselves (Strauss & Corbin, 1994). In order to focus on the process, Glaser (1965) suggests using constant comparative methods.

**Constant comparative method.** A key component of qualitative analysis is the use of the constant comparative method within grounded theory methodology (Glaser, 1965).

Unique to a constant comparative method is the process of constantly comparing the coding procedure and developing codes while developing theories throughout the coding process (Glaser, 1965). According to Glaser (1965), it is a “joint coding and analysis...to generate theory” (p. 437) in which the theory “is integrated, consistent, plausible, close to the data, and in a form which is clear enough to be readily, if only partially, operationalized [sic] for testing in quantitative research” (p. 437-438).

Glaser (1965) continues by adding constant comparative method looks at general phenomena and creates or suggests the properties involved and hypotheses about them. This, however; does not indicate proof of anything, simply a way to theorize the purpose(s) behind the phenomena (Glaser, 1965). There are four stages involved in the constant comparative method, however; they are not linear systematic stages but instead each step leads into the next while still involved in the process of analysis (Glaser, 1965).

**The stages of the constant comparative method.** The four stages of the constant comparative method are “(1) comparing incidents applicable to each category, (2) integrating categories and their properties, (3) delimiting the theory, and (4) writing the theory” (Glaser, 1965, p. 439). The first stage involves the comparison of each category. To do this, the researcher must code each incident or phenomena into as many categories as are possible, while always comparing it to any previous incidents (Glaser, 1965). Bernard and Ryan (2011) note that to do this, the researcher must go line by line coding along the way and identifying key phrases. By analyzing each line, the researcher can begin to see how each concept may be related to other ideas and concepts (Bernard & Ryan, 2010).

Glaser (1965) notes while doing this comparison, theories will organically emerge, yet may be in conflict to what appears to be prominent or important. Therefore, a necessary part of this stage is the idea of memoing (Bernard & Ryan 2010; Glaser, 1965). Memoing involves observations, reflections, thoughts, insights, and logic about the emerging themes (Glaser, 1965). This process of memoing is intended to capture the freshness of the ideas as they emerge while grounding it in the data (Glaser, 1965). Additionally, it is vital to memo until the ideas become clear and logical before beginning the second stage (e.g. Bernard & Ryan 2010; Glaser, 1965).

The second stage is to integrate the categories with their properties (Glaser, 1965). This stage involves taking the memoing to another level by no longer comparing incidents to other incidents, but instead beginning to compare incidents with the “properties of the category which resulted from initial comparison of incidents” (Glaser, 1965, p. 440). In this way, there is an integration happening among the diverse properties of each category (Glaser, 1965).

The third stage involves delimiting the theory (Glaser, 1965). The reason behind this stage is to help take what could be an overwhelming task and making it possible to do (Glaser, 1965). Delimiting both the theory and the original list of categories helps narrow down the possible categories and themes found by the researcher (Glaser, 1965). This narrowing down process reduces the terminology of the coding that then offers the ability to generalize the themes to other incidents (Glaser, 1965). The ability to generalize themes helps the researcher create a theory about the data that can then be used for subsequent incidents

(Glaser, 1965). The more delimiting that is done, the more clear a commitment the researcher can make towards a theory regarding the data (Glaser, 1965).

The final stage, according to Glaser (1965) is to write up the theory. At this stage, theories have been created based on the major themes found during coding. Glaser (1965) suggests using these themes as headings in the writing, and including the coding information as well in order to convey credibility. By doing so, readers are able to understand the researchers' codes and can follow the logical progression to the given themes.

Throughout the coding process, one thing researchers must keep in mind is the negative case analysis. A negative case is one that does not conform to the researcher's theme (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, as cited in Bernard & Ryan, 2010). The premise behind finding negative cases is for the researcher to verify the found themes by eliminating any themes that do not confirm the theories. In this way, the researcher generates a theme or a theory about what the data are showing and through the constant comparative method; he/she is able to determine if the theory holds up throughout all the data (Bernard & Ryan, 2010). In this way, negative cases are a vital part of the process as they lend validity to the found themes (Bernard & Ryan, 2010).

### **Credibility**

As Creswell and Miller (2000) note, the strategies that a researcher employs lend credibility to the findings. By using a CRT approach and a grounded theory methodology, I was able to discover themes that were upheld under multiple analyses and were confirmed by outside sources. Some of the methods employed in order to establish credibility included disconfirming evidence (also known as negative case analysis), triangulation, peer review,

and researcher reflexivity (e.g., Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I employed the strategy of disconfirming evidence by examining the initial themes, establishing a preliminary concept, and then challenging those themes by attempting to locate and explore negative cases to each theme. As noted in chapter four, the majority of themes had minor negative cases, yet each theme was substantially supported by the participants' responses. In this way, each theme was validated to be an important concept for the majority of the participants. Creswell and Miller (2000) note that the "search for disconfirming evidence provides further support of the account's credibility" (p. 127).

Next, a triangulation approach was utilized. Triangulation is a strategy that combines or makes use of different methods or data to show validity (Creswell, 2013; Golafshani, 2003). This strategy strengthens the data by allowing for multiple perspectives (Golafshani, 2003). By incorporating the quantitative results, the confidential blog posting regarding this activity and a peer review, I was able to triangulate my results. As described in chapter four, the quantitative results showed a statistically significant change in pre-service teachers' attitudes regarding privilege and oppression. These data were based on the pre- and post-test given before and following the instructional activities. Subsequently, the blog postings were examined for contradictory and supportive evidence of the themes found in the initial coding. I compared that data with the initial themes created and made any necessary changes. The blog postings, as noted in chapter 4, aligned with both the initial themes and the negative cases. Finally, collaborating with a colleague, I was able to confirm the themes and negative cases. In these ways, a triangulation of the concepts found was completed.

Finally, researcher reflexivity was employed. Researcher reflexivity involves a self-disclosure from the researcher so that the reader can understand the perspectives, assumptions, beliefs, and biases within the qualitative data that represent the researcher (Creswell & Miller, 2000). As a white woman conducting this research, I explored my own biases and assumptions as they related to the findings. The most significant disclosure I made was to acknowledge my lack of understanding of white privilege from a person of color's perception. This limited my ability to discover themes applicable to people of color. However, I analyzed and discussed any conflicts or ways in which those beliefs may have shaped the results. These discussions can be found in the conclusion. By engaging in these three methods of validity, I was able to verify credibility to my themes.

### **Summary**

In this chapter, the overall research design was discussed with explanations regarding the ontology and epistemology behind this study. The theoretical framework of CRT was explored and an examination of the mixed methods approach used was offered. Additionally, both the quantitative and qualitative designs were discussed as well as the activities involved in the instructional portion of the research. Subsequently, an analysis section explained the methods used for analysis including grounded theory method and constant comparative method. Finally, the ways in which credibility were assigned to the study were explored.

This chapter leads into the results section in chapter four. In the next chapter, both the quantitative and qualitative data are discussed along with the lens used for each. The quantitative data are reported using a paired samples *t*-test along with the results from that test. The significance of those results is offered along with implications. Next, the qualitative

data are discussed, with an outline of the coding process and the creation of themes. Then, each of the six themes are explored and supported by anecdotal information from the data as well as from the literature. Along with the themes, negative cases are offered and explained. Finally, the chapter ends with a summary of the results.

## Chapter 4

### Results

*“Whether we like it or not, white privilege is something that affects [sic] every one of us in some way.” (Research participant)*

#### Quantitative

(The section on the quantitative results was taken verbatim from a previously published article by McGowan, S., & Kern, A., in the *Journal of Education and Training Studies* Vol. 2, No. 1; January 2014. doi:10.11114/jets.v2i1.188)

A paired samples *t*-test was conducted to determine the significance of the intervention on the pre-service foreign language teachers’ (i.e. participants’) attitudes regarding privilege and oppression. The paired samples *t*-test,  $t(18) = 2.10$ ,  $p = 0.029$ , demonstrated a statistically significant difference between the mean scores on the pre- and post-test.

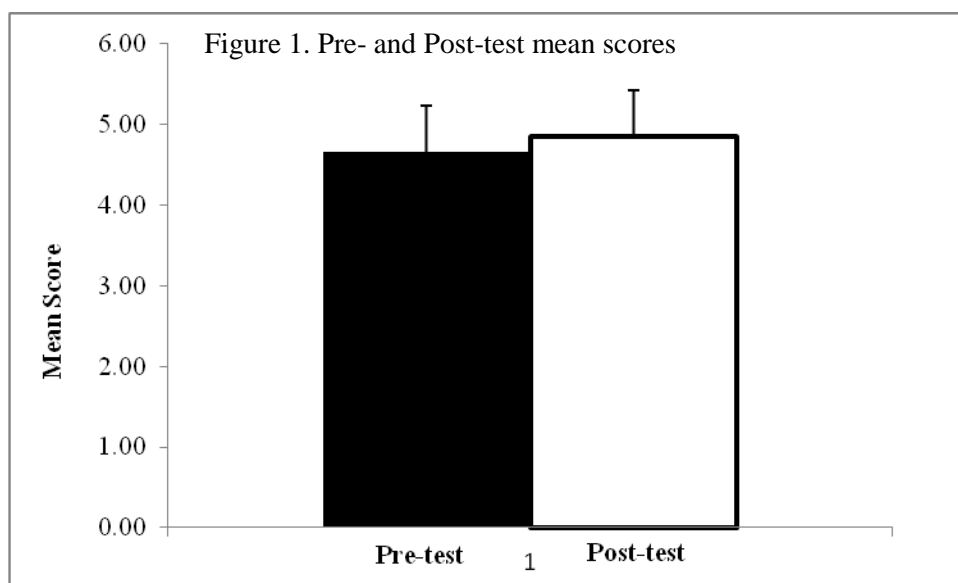




Figure 1 shows the difference in the mean scores of the pre-test ( $M = 4.66$ ,  $SD = .58$ ) and the post-test ( $M = 4.86$ ,  $SD = .56$ ). This figure indicates a clear difference in test scoring. These data suggest the intervention of white privilege and oppression had an overall effect on the attitudes of pre-service foreign language teachers regarding privilege and oppression in America.

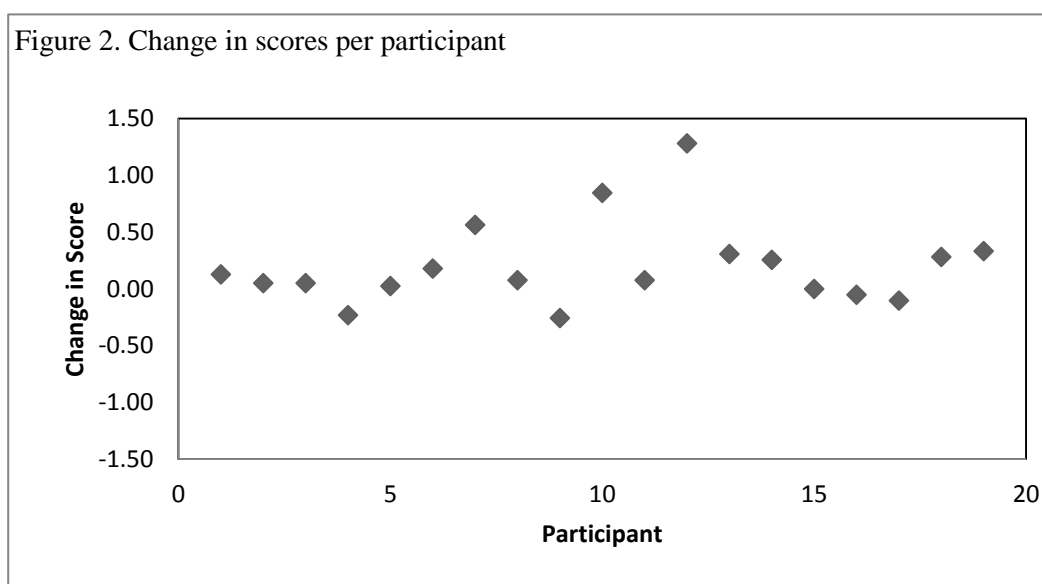


Figure 2 shows the majority of participants (14) had an increase in scores from the pre- to post-POI test (.02-.13). Four of the nineteen had a decrease in score (-.26-(-).10), and only one participant had no change in score. This indicated a change in attitude regarding the participants' understanding of privilege and oppression. This change supported the idea that intentional instruction would increase the participants' awareness of social issues related to privilege and oppression. Thirty-one of the questions were answered at a higher level of agreement from the pre-test to the post-test (.05-.57). This means the participants chose a response on the Likert scale in the direction towards "strongly agree".

There were five questions that had no change in response (#13, 15, 32, 33, and 39) from the pre-test to the post-test. These questions together represented all of the subsets and therefore do not indicate any significant meaning for any particular subset. Three questions (#5, 25, and 30) were given a lower score on the post-test than initially given on the pre-test and focused on the subsets of Sexism (2 questions) and Christian Privilege awareness. This could indicate a change in previous beliefs regarding these concepts and the idea of privilege and oppression.

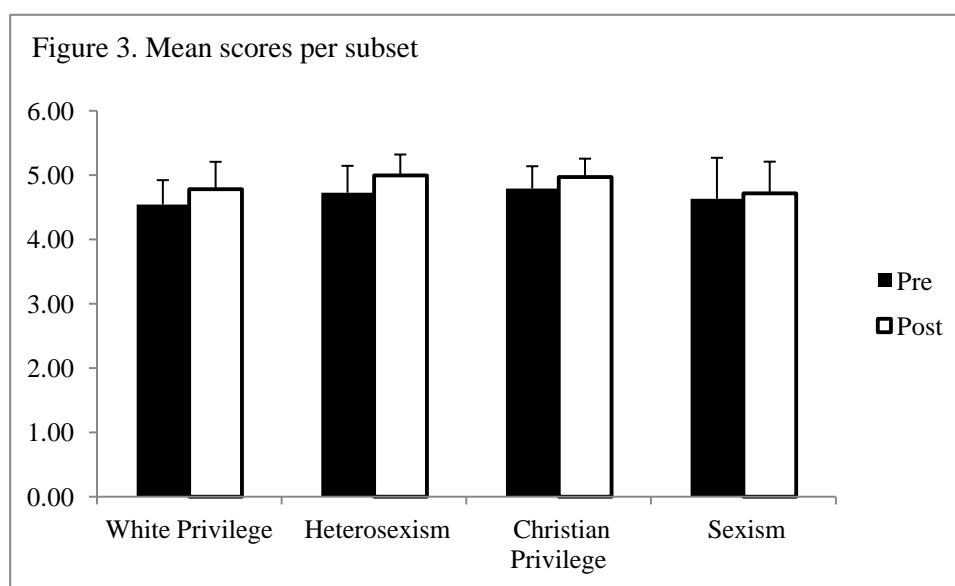


Figure 3 shows the mean scores for each subset. The mean scores for each subset showed an increase from the pre-test to the post-test (.09-.27) regardless of individual changes. A paired samples *t*-test was used to determine the significance of the intervention in each of the four subsets. Only one subset (Sexism) did not have a significant difference in the means for the pre- and post-test ( $t(7) = 2.36, p = .13$ ). Table 4 shows the remaining three subsets and their significant differences between the pre- and post-test means.

This indicates the intervention had an effect on changing the attitudes of pre-service foreign language teachers regarding these various social issues. Although the intervention was focused on providing awareness of white privilege it appeared to have significant impact on increasing awareness associated with Heterosexism and Christian Privilege, however; it did not appear to impact attitudes regarding Sexism as it relates to privilege and oppression. This would indicate teaching of white privilege in this manner may also increase awareness of the privileges afforded to heterosexuals and Christians.

Table 4: Paired sample *t*-test results

Subset	<i>t</i> value	<i>p</i> value
White privilege	$t(12) = 2.17$	$p < .001$
Heterosexism	$t(9) = 2.26$	$p = .001$
Christian privilege	$t(7) = 2.36$	$p = .04$

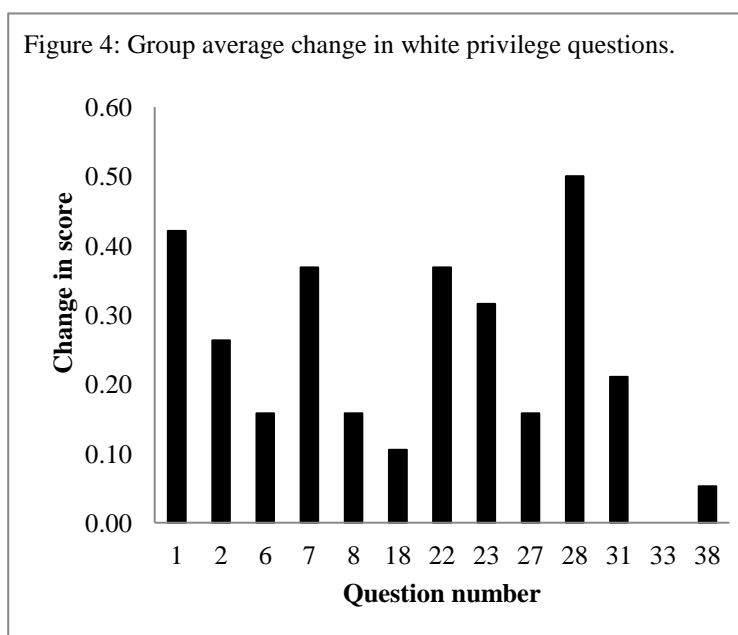


Figure 4 provides the average change, or increase in Likert score, for each question within the white privilege subset. The group average range showed that all questions regarding white privilege had an increase except for question 33. An increase in score indicates a change in attitude regarding that subset. This indicates the intervention activity had an impact on how the participant's responded to questions related to white privilege.

Question 33 states: "Most White high-level executives are promoted based on their race". It must be noted the activities during the intervention did not specifically address racial issues in the workplace. Therefore, it is possible the majority of participants did not make a connection between white privilege and promotion. In addition, it is possible that the concept of meritocracy played a part in the lack of awareness of promotion as it is related to white privilege. According to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary (2013), meritocracy is "a system in which the talented are chosen and moved ahead on the basis of their achievement; leadership selected on the basis of intellectual criteria". This belief of meritocracy is perpetuated and idealized by the dominant society in America and therefore may have influenced participants' attitudes regarding promotion (Alvarado, 2010).

On the other hand, question 28 had the highest change in the Likert scale responses with an average .50 increase in score. Question 28 states: "Government policies favor Whites". Based on this increase, the intervention activities potentially lead to an increased awareness of government policies related to white privilege. It is possible the discussion after the Privilege Walk activity and the movie clips helped bring about this awareness. Especially considering the movie, *Color of Fear*, included excerpts of personal experiences related to laws and government practices.

Finally, questions 1, 7, and 22, all related to whites having an advantage in society. These questions increased Likert scale scores by an average of .39 on the post-test (.42, .37, .37 respectively) indicating the activities had an impact on how all participants viewed the advantages of being white.

As mentioned previously, most scholars define white privilege as an advantage one has in society, therefore; the increase in post-test scores indicates a change of awareness and attitude regarding white privilege in America based on the advantages of that privilege. The intervention activities and discussion made a significant impact on the pre-service teachers' attitudes which may guide them as they continue to increase their cultural awareness and become culturally proficient educators. In this way, these skills will benefit not only the teachers themselves, but every student they will ever teach.

### **Qualitative**

The qualitative data were based on the video and audio taped whole group discussion that took place immediately following the privilege walk. I asked five general questions (see methods section) and gave each participant the option to discuss their thoughts and feelings about the question or pass on it. In addition, the participants responded to a confidential blog posting later that week that asked them two questions 1) In what ways does your awareness of white power and privilege affect your daily life, and 2) In what ways does your awareness and understanding of white power and privilege affect your life as a teacher? The blog responses were also coded and analyzed for themes in the same manner as the transcribed notes from the discussion.

**Coding process.** Throughout the coding process, I utilized a constant comparative method (Bernard & Ryan, 2010) which afforded me the opportunity to piece together all the concepts found from each discussion question. In addition, I used this method to theorize how each concept could be related to a larger theory within my research question. Using this method, six major themes emerged throughout the coding process. In addition, the data were constantly examined for any negative cases to disprove or contradict my findings. As Brodsky (2008) notes, having negative cases does not automatically eliminate a theory, it merely helps to minimize researcher bias by offering differing meanings for the data.

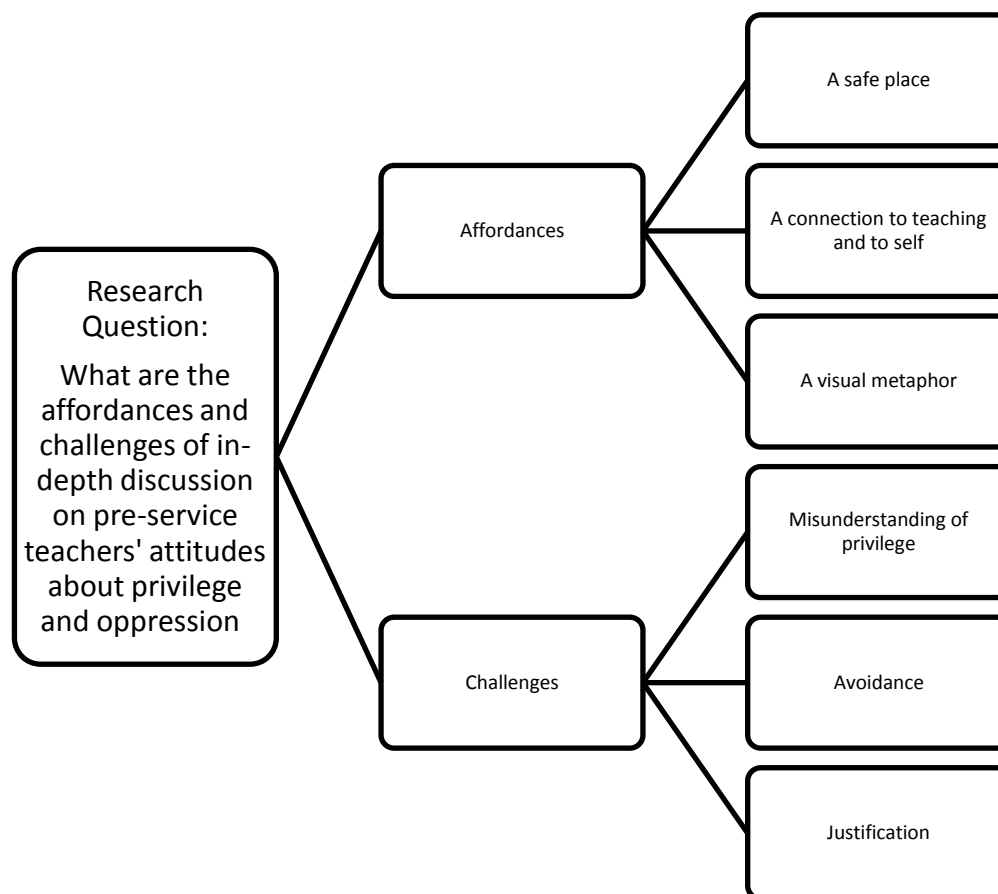
I began the coding process by using what is known as open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, as cited by Bernard & Ryan, 2010). In this step, I began by preliminarily coding each response to the five different questions. To do this, I read through each response and wrote down my first impressions (also known as initial codes), any descriptive information or summaries of portions of the response that stuck out to me, and/or any quotes that I found impactful from the participants.

At the completion of the initial coding, I wanted to confirm my first impressions by reviewing the recorded interviews. Therefore, I reviewed the videotaped discussion with the participants paying close attention to intonation, inflection, and any corrections to the written transcript. During this process, I also added any additional thoughts that derived from the review of the recording. The intent for this step in the process was to confirm/disconfirm my initial findings and to make any necessary changes. In addition, I discussed my findings with a graduate student colleague who examined my found themes and concurred with their existence.

After confirming my initial codes, I calculated the reoccurrence of major concepts for each question. These concepts led to the creation of the six main themes that apply to the entire discussion and to the research question. My research question asks what the affordances and challenges are for pre-service teachers from an in-depth discussion regarding privilege and oppression, and therefore; I categorized the themes into affordances or challenges (see figure 5).

Finally, although the discussion focused on the pre-service teachers' attitudes of the privilege walk activity, the participants also viewed clips from the movie, *The Color of Fear*. Unfortunately, time did not permit a discussion of these clips, so instead I asked each participant to answer a blog posting regarding their reactions to both the privilege walk activity and the movie clips. Although these blog postings were not a key part in the research, I wanted to examine the blogs to see if they supported the findings from the discussion. Therefore, I followed the same format as above, and coded the blog posting each participant had written. In doing so, I established that the blog posting did support three of the themes found from the discussion while at the same time adding an additional concept, *meritocracy*, to the theme, *Justification*. Figure 5 illustrates the themes found in relation to the research question.

Figure 5: Concept map showing the major themes as they related to the research question.



**Themes found.** As mentioned above, six main themes arose from the discussion regarding the privilege walk activity. Although the themes are numbered, this system is for organizational purposes only and does not reflect the importance of each theme. Each theme will be discussed, along with the major concepts that make up that theme as well as any negative cases found in relation to that theme. In addition, anecdotal evidence will be offered in support of the theme created. The first three themes relate back to the affordances offered by doing an activity such as the privilege walk on pre-service foreign language teachers' attitudes whereas the last three examine the challenges of such an activity.



**Theme 1: A safe place.** According to Holley and Steiner (2005), a “safe place” is an environment “that allows students to feel secure enough to take risks, honestly express their views, and share and explore their knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors” (p. 50). In having a safe place, students feel more at ease when discussing difficult issues while at the same time knowing that the risk of their disclosure is minimal (Holley & Steiner, 2005). Research done by Holley and Steiner (2005) showed that 97% of the participants ( $n = 117$ ) felt it was either very important or extremely important to create a safe place in the classroom. Overall, their research showed that students who were in a safe place were able to learn more about others while being challenged to build on their own viewpoints and self-awareness (Holley & Steiner, 2005).

In my research, two concepts related to the theme of a safe place emerged. The first and most common one surfaced as participants remarked upon how they felt about the current environment in which they were having the discussion. Some used the phrase “safe space” whereas others noted the freedom they felt to share personal information even though it was not part of the original discussion.

“I just want to say this was a great experience and thank you all because I feel like it’s a safe space.”

“...I’m super hesitant about talking about my religion. I admitted to a supervisor one time and was immediately out casted just because I’m a practicing Pagan...I won’t admit openly to anybody unless asked.” (Note: this participant was not asked directly to discuss religion.)

“I think I’m kind of the same way as you, when it comes to religion and sexual orientation and stuff that seems too personal, and even with people I know I don’t usually tell them... This is probably like the second time in like a class setting that I’ve come out...”

“...it’s kinda cool how people can get together like this and ya know, be comfortable enough to, uh, state certain things that are very personal to them...”

The second concept was related to how the participants, as future teachers, could make their classrooms a safe space. The research by Holley and Steiner (2005) noted 387 instructor characteristics that participants felt created a safe place. Some of these characteristics included aspects such as being respectful of others’ opinions, being encouraging, and demonstrating caring. The participants in my study acknowledged the need for similar characteristics and indicated a desire to create a safe space.

“This is a great model of what we hopefully aspire to be is to create an environment where our students can feel safe and open and able to discuss things...”

“As a teacher, I can just try my best to keep an open relationship with my students where they can feel comfortable talking to me about issues they have...”

“Um, I’m going to make a personal investment in my students...”

*Negative cases.* Although none of the participants said anything to the contrary of the environment being a safe place, some participants chose to pass on some questions. This may have been due to discomfort or an uncertainty regarding the safety of the environment, however; all participants did respond to at least one question. The most common occurrence for passing on questions came from two international students. This may have had more to do

with their limited English skills than their comfort regarding the topic. This assumption was made in part because, although they passed on the first three questions, they both participated in the last two questions while also noting how much they enjoyed the activity and listening to everyone share their experience.

***Theme 2: A connection to teaching and to self.*** This theme involved the participants' understanding about how this activity not only connected to their future careers as teachers, but also how it positively impacted them personally. Research by Marx (2004) gave evidence to support integrating whiteness issues "into curricula and initiating these kinds of conversations with practicing and future educators" (p. 41). In her research with nine white pre-service teachers who were tutoring English language learners of Mexican origin, all participants at the end of the study expressed a desire to "continue their growth toward anti-racism" (p. 41). It was due to their ability to openly discuss and examine their own racist beliefs and opinions that led to this conclusion (Marx, 2004). Milner (2006) agrees that by gaining awareness of racial issues, pre-service teachers can "build new knowledge" (p. 371). With this new knowledge pre-service teachers can begin to have "critical consciousness and personal reflection" (p. 186) in order improve themselves and change their attitudes towards racial issues (Gay & Kirkland, 2003).

Therefore, by participating in the privilege walk, the participants would have the opportunity to reflect on their personal whiteness in relation to others and to see how it could connect to their roles as future teachers. Their awareness of this connection to teaching and to themselves made an impactful impression on the majority of them. In fact, two participants noted how prior lesson plans they had made reflected a strong white privilege perspective. In

this way, it was clear the privilege walk activity had made an impact on the participants' awareness of their own racial makeup.

“When I was making my lesson plans, I was looking at some old materials I made when I was interning at the school here and, um, something that this white privilege talk has made me aware of, I was looking at some materials I've made that was for appearance – pictures of, like, women with short hair and long hair and stuff, and everyone I chose was white. And I look back on it and I was really embarrassed because it was like three or four pages of all these different people and it was just white people. And the class that I brought that to, it was mostly Chinese or Saudi Arabian and I didn't even think anything of it until now.”

“...I was thinking about my lesson plans...and on some of them, I was, what I was coming up with the comparisons with the target language and culture with their own culture and I think I was making assumptions that everybody was kind of in the same place and had the same experiences and so it actually occurred to me that on some of my lesson plans I may not be able to make those same assumptions.”

“I think this activity would be a very eye-opening activity...”

“When I thought about everything, I don't know if I could really express that right here. I could probably write a five page essay about what I learned through this...”

“I learned a lot. I'll be thinking about this for a while. A lot of new revelations.”

“I thought it was a very memorable experience to look back on in the future.”

“I agree. I learned a lot. I had no idea this was going to relate to teaching so much...I will totally use it and I got a lot out of it personally and I think it's great.”

“...if this helps us to help them learn then there ya go.”

“...this will be in my active, conscious thoughts now.”

“...I am able to better understand...my awareness and understanding will hopefully promote an awareness in others...”

“I have learned that white privilege affects [sic] both others and myself every day.”

“I now think about white privilege a lot more.”

“...that most people are in fact affected [sic] by this concept, white privilege.”

“I had never really thought about white privilege. I realize now after the activity and the video that simply because I am white, I have the privilege of never thinking about it. White privilege affects [sic] nearly every single aspect of my life...”

*Negative cases.* During the discussion, participants noted ways in which the activity, the privilege walk, related to themselves personally and as future teachers. The negative cases did not become apparent until their blog responses in which some of the participants responded that privilege had no effect on them. During the discussion, all participants appeared able to make the connection between the activity and their own privilege, however; a small few had difficulty generalizing that into how white power and privilege impacted their daily life. Out of the fifteen total responses, only four were unable to see how white power or privilege impacted them. The remaining participants either acknowledged a lack of understanding prior to the activity with a new understanding of the concepts or they were already fully aware of the effects of white privilege. In addition, the negative cases also confirmed theme #5: *Avoidance* and were used to indicate avoidance in examining white privilege in their personal lives.

“In my daily life, I usually am not aware of the effects of White Privilege, though I know they exist.”

“I don’t know how privilege effects [sic] my daily life.”

“I knew white privilege existed but I never really payed [sic] too much attention to it. I suppose. I don’t see it happening or affecting [sic] my daily life in a big way...”

“My awareness of white power and privilege never had affected [sic] my daily life. Honestly, if someone said something about it, I always would acknowledge that it existed. But until last night, I never have really put a lot of thought into it.”

***Theme 3: A visual metaphor.*** This theme focused around the participants’ discussion about the physical act of doing the privilege walk. They noted that the act of stepping forward or backward depending on one’s perceived privileges created a situation in which some people were further ahead than others. In this way, the activity created a “visual metaphor” for one’s privilege and how it related to the privilege of the other participants. In addition, the blog postings indicated this activity was an “eye-opening” experience in which some participants had not “seen” their privilege before the privilege walk but could now see how far ahead they were of others in their daily lives.

This concept is supported by research from Sassi and Thomas (2008) that showed ninth-grade students who participated in a version of the privilege walk also felt it was a visual representation of the diversity in their classroom. Having a visual representation of diversity allows students to “see” their differences in an impactful way. In the research done by Sassi and Thomas (2008), being able to see their differences led to open dialogue about race and a shift in the desegregation that had been happening in the classroom. The authors

felt the act of doing the privilege walk afforded their students a healing and transformative experience (Sassi & Thomas, 2008).

“Uh, what I found really impactful was that, uh, I was a person who stepped forward quite a bit and I couldn’t see the people behind me without kinda looking around and I thought that was a really apt visual metaphor...I know they’re back there ...all I can see is the people that have done better than me... I can’t see those people”

“...that activity showed, um, a real picture to what you might be missing...stepping outside of the box for a moment to see...what things , um that are going on around us that we might be oblivious to.”

“From the discussion after the privilege walk, and maybe especially from the clips from the video, showed me things I hadn’t seen or thought of before. I understand that that in itself is an example of white privilege in action.”

“Both activities were eye-opening and I’ve definitely though a lot more about different aspects of my life in relation to others’ that I’ve never considered before.”

*Negative cases.* The fact that this theme emerged from the first participant’s response to the first question led to a group consensus, and therefore; did not appear to have any negative cases. Not every participate acknowledged their ability to visually see the privilege due to their placement during the activity, but no one disagreed with the idea or expressed difficulty understanding what that meant. Since this theme surfaced from the participants’ responses and not based on any question asked, it appears to be more of an organic idea that made sense to the participants and helped them understand the activity better.

*Theme 4: Misunderstanding of privilege.* This theme emerged from the two ways in which the participants discussed their placement from the starting line in regards to doing the privilege walk. The first way included a focus on their individual backgrounds and upbringings as their privilege. In doing so, the participants focused on “safer” topics such as gender and socio-economic status. Gay (2010) confirms this type of behavior by noting that when confronted with racial issues, many pre-service teachers emphasize certain “aspects of diversity (such as gender, social class, and individuality) that is [sic] not as troublesome for them” (p. 146).

In addition, when contemplating their futures as teachers, many participants noted the impact the activity had made on their understanding of the differences people have. However, the emphasis was on future student differences related to their backgrounds. Few, if any, participants noted that systemic racism or privilege accounted for any of those differences and therefore, continued to view those differences from a white normalized perspective. This type of thinking is often characterized as deficit thinking (e.g., Foley, 1997; Solórzano & Yosso, 2001; Valencia & Solórzano, 1997). Deficit thinking ignores oppression by focusing on individuals and their communities. By focusing on individual differences and personal upbringings, pre-service teachers either misunderstood or used a “safe” aspect of oppression to discuss their placement from the starting line in the privilege walk activity.

*Personal background as privilege:*

“...I kind of had a lucky and pretty privileged life..”

“...I was basically where I expected to be because, I mean, my parents weren’t super rich but they weren’t poor either.”



“I was more back than I thought I’d be because I grew up in a very privileged home and both my parents had a college education and are also very privileged...”

“Um, I was in like, the front...I didn’t have a rough childhood or anything so I guess it’s not surprising”.

“...it was right where I expected to be. My family is rather stable and while we’re not the richest of the rich...it’s about where I was.”

“I knew where I was going to end up because of my childhood upbringing.”

*Related to future students:*

“...and knowing now that there’s differences in how we grew up and where we came from and, um, just to be accountable as teachers. Just to make sure that we are mindful of that and embracing all the differences in the classroom.”

“...especially as a teacher, it’s imperative that you have to be doubly accountable for realizing that people have different lives that make them act in certain ways or that they have needs that aren’t getting met...”

“...it makes me feel more sensitive, I guess, like think more about how to approach these questions because it comes from their background.”

*Negative cases.* In some cases, participants were able to discuss issues related to white privilege that indicated a better understanding of the meaning of privilege.

“...particularly conversations with my boyfriend, uh, we kinda, uh, with a joking and ya know a knowledgeable sort of perspective joke about the knocks we have against us, ya know, so he and I kind of consider ourselves on the same keel because well, I’m a woman and he was working class poor but he still jokes about the fact that, ya know,

‘yeah, I was poor but I totally won the lottery on the rest of it because I’m a white, heterosexual, male, cisgender, American.’”

“I actually thought I would be towards the back and maybe even the person in the way back because of the different parts of my identity and dealing with race, sexual orientation, and what not.”

“I wasn’t too surprised where I landed. I mean, the first question, me being the only white dude here, I kinda saw where it was going.”

**Theme 5: Avoidance.** Higginbotham (1996) noted “the social facts of structural inequality can make [people] uncomfortable” (p. 208), and this unease appeared through the participants’ avoidance of the racial issue all together. Even though they felt it a safe place, some white participants avoided dealing with the systemic racism of privilege and instead tried to showcase ways in which they had felt marginalized or oppressed, including using their race and gender. In addition, away from the view of the other participants on the confidential blog, many noted that white privilege did not impact them at all. Unfortunately, this avoidance tactic nullifies the worth of actual stories of oppression by people of color in the U.S. (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). By adopting a reverse racism perspective, white people mistakenly view their experiences as having been racist and oppressive while negating the actual experiences of people of color (Gay & Kirkland, 2003).

Additionally, white participants used feelings of guilt and shame to avoid acknowledging white privilege. This avoidance is quite common in race related content within a school setting and changes the topic completely (Daniel Tatum, 1992). It was interesting to note that the students of color attempted to placate the white participants when shame and

guilt were addressed. Although white guilt can negatively impact interracial experiences, it can also lead white people to feel sympathy for the groups of people that whites have historically oppressed, which leads whites to wish to do something about it (Iyer, Wayne Leach, & Crosby, 2003). One of the biggest challenges in dealing with racial issues is overcoming student avoidance and resistance. Although the white guilt felt by some participants indicated a potential for continued work, it was clear from this theme that pre-service teachers need more than one lesson in privilege and oppression in order to fully examine these topics and potentially advocate for change.

*Avoidance through personal stories:*

“...when I was the minority being a white female with blonde hair in Costa Rica really put a target on my back...so, there’s kind of that reverse thing too.”

“...so that’s really sad. In the community that we live in, people are not eating.”

“...if I stayed in my home town I can stay out to the morning. I don’t know why I’m very scared in the dark in the United States.” (International student from Taiwan).

“...where you talked about with food, I’ve seen that and I was on the other end of it. Um, we do Christmas baskets every year down where I’m from...we just go around and give them to the kids and families...I remember just this one house.. parents weren’t home, there were two kids, there was no furniture, cupboards were bare, everything like they had nothing...and we went back and got them more because of that.. I cried.” (Participant did not recognize this story perpetuated the “saving” of oppressed people).

“I have been intimidated before by males like at night. Like calling after you...and so those situations can happen.”

*Guilt and/or shame about their placement in the privilege walk/regarding oppression:*

“...but at the same time, I feel kind of guilty.”

“I couldn’t help but feel guilty realizing I’m ahead of so many people”

“I was pretty far forward and I felt like a jerk.”

“And I wanna speak to people that say they feel bad because I don’t think you should feel bad because they’re elements out of your control...I don’t think you should feel bad.” (Self-identified “half white, half Mexican”)

“...and you guys have said that it kind of makes you feel bad, you shouldn’t, really.”

(Self-identified Taiwanese).

*From the blog:*

“...white privilege doesn’t seem to affect [sic] my daily life much at all...For some it may be daily, and for some not at all...”

“In my daily life, I usually am not aware of the effects of White Privilege.”

“I don’t know how white privilege affects [sic] my daily life.”

“I knew white privilege existed but I never really payed [sic] too much attention to it. I don’t see it happening or affecting [sic] my daily life in a big way.”

*Negative cases.* The negative cases for this theme are identical to those from theme #4.

The participants who correctly identified and defined white privilege were also able to openly discuss those concepts by acknowledging their own whiteness.

***Theme 6: Justification/denial.*** The final theme became apparent when the majority of participants found ways to justify their privilege by focusing on their lack of control over their placement in the privilege walk, or by excusing away the privilege as something they did not earn. It appeared easier for them to accept their placement by acknowledging they had no control over it versus attributing it to the systemic privilege prevalent in our society. They noted their upbringing or their parents' choices as reasons why they were further ahead of their peers instead of recognizing the part white privilege has played in their lives. In this way, they were able to justify their placement while simultaneously denying the idea that they had gotten where they were due, in part, to white privilege. Justifying their placement and the power balance may be linked back to a need for participants to maintain a positive social identity without realizing they are enforcing modern racist thought (Branscombe, 2007). Many whites see society as an equal and level playing field, therefore; any information to the contrary may be justified away (Gay, 2010).

The notion of a just society can also be attributed to the belief in meritocracy and that individual efforts are fairly rewarded (Daniel Tatum, 1992). In this sense, one challenge to the participants' ability to fully engage in the issue was the concept of meritocracy and how they used it to explain away their privilege. By using this belief in individualism and meritocracy, the participants showed a lack of critical consciousness that is required to completely understand racial issues (Castro, 2010). On one hand, they claimed they had not earned the privilege, as it was due to their upbringing, yet on the other, they acknowledge a need for hard work and effort to get ahead.

“...I’m also a firm believer in, despite all the diversity that we’re surrounded by, whether in this particular setting, whether you were way forward or way back, those don’t define who you are and we can define our own circumstances, and I think it’s important to be again, that kind of role model for our students. If they are struggling with some of those, um, things that they don’t have to feel as those define who they are or who they can become.”

“...like someone said, we didn’t decide on our backgrounds. We didn’t have any influence on it.”

“...it was very sobering to be on the very front line, and um, it was uncomfortable because I didn’t do anything to deserve to be there.”

“...factors that were out of our control, so like, our past, I mean, none of us could control these things so, like, we all kind of had, I don’t know...I just thought it was interesting because, um, like, I didn’t do anything to be up there and yet I was.”

“...some of my movements were based on being in a reverse role so I’m not sure if they were accurate because I was part of the desegregation when I was a child, we lived in the South, so being white, um, was actually a minority...”

“Each person comes from a different living situation that plays either to their advantage in society or disadvantage and it is something that we do not necessarily always have control over....I wish to believe that we are all on the same level or maybe even that when we are not on the same level we can all work to be on the same level.”

“I do believe in a couple of systems: pay it forward, and help those who help themselves.”

*Negative cases.* Once again, students who defied this theme were able to openly discuss white privilege, its effects on their lives, and its role in education. Therefore, they did not need to justify or avoid their own whiteness. For examples of negative cases for this theme, please see the negative cases for theme #4.

### **Summary of results**

The first three themes from the qualitative data were considered affordances due to what the pre-service teachers were able to gain from this event. Overall, they had three main affordances from their experiences 1) they felt safe and protected discussing personal issues, some of which they seldom, if ever, discussed, 2) they were able to begin to understand the connection between privilege and teaching, and 3) they saw a mini-exhibit of how privilege and oppression play out in society. All three affordances gave participants insight into how privilege manifests itself as a concept as well as allowing them to recognize privilege as it relates to their future careers. This insight may allow participants to continue to be aware of privilege and oppression in society as well as its influences in teaching. As Marx (2004) found in her research with nine white pre-service teachers who examined their own whiteness, all participants were willing to participate in race discussions and eager to learn more. As she puts it, “[r]ather than an end point, this is a very promising beginning.” (Marx, 2004, p. 41).

Unfortunately, the participants also faced three challenges during this activity. These challenges were evident in their struggle to discuss and acknowledge their own privilege. The last three themes indicated the challenges and included 1) ways in which they misunderstood

privilege, 2) an avoidance of the issue, and 3) justification for their own privilege. Although they were able to recognize privilege and oppression as concepts, they resisted examining their own privilege and how it related to society as a whole. All three challenges revolved around a tendency towards resistance. Many scholars have examined this tendency among their students during race related work, and have found that the inability for pre-service teachers to fully explore their own whiteness and/or placement of privilege may lead to a perpetuation of oppression (e.g., Daniel Tatum, 1992; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; McFalls & Cobb Roberts, 2001). However, with continued work, pre-service teachers may begin to lessen their resistance and open themselves up to critically examining racial issues (Gay & Kirkland, 2003).

The quantitative data, that indicated a significant change in pre-service foreign language teachers' attitudes about privilege and oppression after their participation in the focused activities, are supported by the qualitative data. The qualitative data suggest the involvement in one privilege walk activity and an in-depth discussion regarding that activity had an impact on the pre-service teachers' attitudes. Although there were challenges that came up from this experience, all participants noted a new awareness of white privilege and how it could impact their future students. This awareness may guide them to continue to increase their knowledge of white privilege as well as aid them in challenging systemic privilege while on their journey to become culturally proficient educators. One participant summarized the experience this way:

I never really thought about [white privilege]. At least not in the same way as I do now. I was more aware of racism and blatant [sic] ignorance/judgement [sic] of people



who were not white or born in the U.S. I never really considered that the systems within the states, and our own subconscious preconceptions were constantly working against anyone that was different. I now think about white privilege a lot more. I have had quite a few discussions about it with friends. I am more alert, and more thoughtful about how I judge others.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion and Limitations

*“If you think in terms of a year, plant a seed; if in terms of ten years, plant trees; if in terms of 100 years, teach the people.”*

– Confucius

The goal of this study was to examine the ways instructional activities about white privilege and the deficit model in schools would impact pre-service foreign language teachers. I specifically wanted to explore the attitudes of pre-service foreign language teachers due to the impact of my experience as a secondary Spanish and American Sign Language teacher in a diverse area outside of Austin, Texas. In addition, the expertise and knowledge I gained living abroad has shaped my understanding of dominant U.S. culture. Thus I wondered if the required study abroad experience for all pre-service foreign language teachers in an inland Northwest teacher education program had influenced their understanding of privilege and oppression in the U.S. as well. More specifically, I noted a majority of white pre-service teachers in the teacher education program where I teach and wondered whether they had any knowledge regarding their own whiteness and its influence in education. Therefore, my research focused on activities designed to elicit strong reactions to dominant society as well as requiring the study participants to examine their own self-identity thereby impacting their attitudes about privilege and oppression. Hence, my research question:

What are the affordances and challenges of focused instructional activities and an in-depth discussion about white privilege on the attitudes of pre-service foreign language

teachers regarding privilege and oppression in the public education system in the United States?

Using both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to explore this question, the research showed both a statistically significant difference in the pre-service teachers' attitudes as well as anecdotal evidence of the ways in which those attitudes changed. The quantitative data demonstrated that pre-service foreign language teachers' attitudes about privilege and oppression were significantly changed from the pre-test to the post-test. The six themes that emerged from the qualitative data gleaned from the instructional activities and in-depth discussion indicated a change in attitudes as well. The qualitative data indicated this change was likely due to the explicit instruction on privilege, the privilege walk activity, the in-depth discussion regarding white privilege, and the video clips. In addition, both the challenges and affordances of the intervention emerged within the themes while allowing for personal accounts from the participants to support their understandings.

The data collected in this study indicates an increase in awareness, and more subsequently, a change in attitudes regarding privilege and oppression for the pre-service foreign language teachers studied. These data suggest that instructional activities combined with an in-depth discussion can impact the ways in which pre-service teachers view privilege and oppression in the U.S. school system. These findings not only have significant importance in the local teacher education program in the inland Northwest, but also on a National scale for the preparation of teachers in teacher education programs.

### **Local Significance**

The University in which I teach in the inland Northwest has a proportionally large number of white pre-service teachers, 90% to be exact (University of Idaho National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education Institutional report, 2012). This is not surprising based on the reported 98% white teaching force in Idaho (Educator Supply and Demand in Idaho, annual report, 2009). With a majority of white teachers, most pre-service white teachers in Idaho have only experienced mainly white schools and mostly white teachers in all their educational settings. This level of whiteness within the Idaho school systems has lacked a crucial challenge of the perpetuation of stereotypes, deficit thinking, or meritocracy within the K-12 setting.

In addition to the possible lack of overt teaching of racial issues, the media, social contexts, and society perpetuate the belief that the U.S. is a fair, open, and democratic system (Porfilio & Malott, 2011). Thereby leading most pre-service teachers to internalize this sense of “superiority” that aligns with being white and thus, accepting these ideas as true. Therefore, these teachers are not even aware of the need to explore their own whiteness and how doing so will make a profound impact on how they view schools and classrooms in the U.S. Instead, many pre-service teachers are taught, explicitly or not, about the concepts of color-blindness and meritocracy which are dominant in U.S. schools (Leonardo, 2007). These unchallenged ideas continue to perpetuate racism and the re-creation of privilege on a daily basis in schools through curriculum, teacher-student interactions, and student expectations (Johnson, 2012; Valencia, 2010; Wildman & Davis, 2012).

Thus, pre-service teachers in Idaho need to explicitly examine their own identities, beliefs, and attitudes regarding privilege and oppression in order to combat the implicit messages of superiority they receive throughout their lives. An exploration of these issues is vital to avoid condoning dominant society beliefs in schools (Marx, 2004; Pennington, 2007; Picower, 2009). Fortunately, this research study shows that an intentional examination of privilege and oppression can make an impact on how pre-service foreign language teachers view these concepts in relationship to themselves and their futures as teachers. By offering specific instructional activities that focus on whiteness, privilege, and oppression in the U.S., the study participants were forced to examine their own racial identities and what those identities meant in the larger picture of teaching and perhaps society as a whole. By doing so, the pre-service teachers in the local teacher education program transformed their attitudes regarding privilege and oppression and how it can manifest in the school system. Although many participants expressed a desire to teach in local schools that may not be ethnically diverse, every participant commented that learning about privilege and oppression in the ways they experienced it has impacted their lives personally, as well as them as future teachers.

### **National Significance**

Throughout history in the U.S., whiteness is the norm, an inherent part of society, and the race of superiority (e.g., Picower, 2009; Rothenberg, 2012; Wise, 2012). Therefore, whites tend to see race as something that impacts only people of color and they must adjust or attend to this (Lucal, 1996). This level of ignorance of whiteness and the privileges associated with it has permeated all social systems within the U.S., including the schools (Lipsitz, 2012; Schofield, 1997). Within these systems, unearned advantages and privileges are afforded to

whites simply due to their association with the dominant culture (McIntosh, 1988). This can be seen nationally in the continuation of color-blindness and meritocracy within the U.S. school system and teacher education programs. With an 84% National teaching force that is white, a minimal of professors of color within teacher education programs, and the omission of white privilege in the curricula, pre-service teachers are not forced to examine their own whiteness and its impact on their future students of color (e.g., Feistritzer et al., 2011; Pennington, 2007; Solomon et al., 2005). Additionally, the amount of empirical research on multicultural education within teacher education programs throughout the U.S. is limited (e.g., Gay, 2010; Grant & Gibson, 2011; Sleeter, 2001). Currently, teacher education programs continue to imply a belief in meritocracy and deficit thinking by not explicitly teaching about them as well as whiteness (e.g., Castro, 2010; Marx, 2004; Solomon et al., 2005).

Although the National teaching force is mainly white, only 63% of all people living in the U.S. marked “White persons not Hispanic” on the 2010 census (U.S. Census Board, 2013), leading to a school population made predominately of students of color. Thus, it is likely that at some point in their careers, the participants in this study will teach in a diverse classroom that differs from their own school experiences. The opportunity for pre-service teachers to encounter a level of diversity different than what they experienced in their teacher education programs may be helped by the adoption of the Common Core State Standards.

The Common Core State Standards have been adopted in 45 states and are intended to:

[P]romote equity by ensuring all students, no matter where they live, are well prepared with the skills and knowledge necessary to collaborate and compete

with their peers in the United States and abroad. Unlike previous state standards, which were unique to every state in the country, the Common Core State Standards enable collaboration between states on a range of tools and policies... (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010).

As most states historically created their own standards, it had been difficult to determine if a newly transferred student from one state met the standards in another. However, with the adoption of the Common Core standards in 45 states, it will be easier for schools to determine student achievement with transfer students, thus allowing for the potential for freer movement around the country. In this way, it is likely that due to the changes in demographics and the ability to move more freely about the country, many teachers in traditionally white areas may encounter a more diverse population.

Hence, to educate pre-service teachers from anywhere in the U.S. to be culturally proficient, teacher education programs throughout the U.S. need to examine the concepts of color-blindness and deficit thinking as they occur in U.S. schools (e.g., Higginbotham, 1996; Marx, 2004; Picower, 2009). In addition, it should be mandatory that teacher education programs, like the one in which I teach, specifically educate pre-service teachers about diversity, multicultural education, privilege, and the current school system in the U.S. in order to minimize the perpetuation of an antiquated educational system designed by whites to advantage white students (e.g. Ladson-Billings, 1999; Menchaca, 1996; Sleeter, 2001). It is critical that pre-service teachers develop a deep understanding about their own personal and professional beliefs related to privilege and oppression in order to better understand their own

racial identity and those of their potential future students (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). As evidenced by my study, instructional activities targeted at examining privilege and oppression can have an impact on how pre-service teachers view their own racial identities and those of their students. Through this type of direct instruction and discussion, pre-service teachers learn about their own whiteness but, as this research indicated, they also gain an increased awareness and change in their attitudes about the power systems that exist in our society.

### **Limitations**

During the process of this research, five limitations emerged. These limitations are not mutually exclusive as many of them could be combined during one replication of this work. The five limitations focused on the participants in the study, the location of the study, and the researcher of the study. They are as follows (a) lack of generalization to other disciplines, (b) unknown enduring understanding, (c) location of the study, (d) teacher education faculty's experience, and (e) my own whiteness. Each limitation is explained in more detail in this section.

Due to my experience and background as a foreign language teacher, I had a vested interest in the views and attitudes of pre-service foreign language teachers on privilege and oppression. Although my study showed a significant change in their attitudes regarding these social issues, it was limited to pre-service teachers who have had extensive experience with cultures, people, and social systems outside the U.S. In this way, the changes in attitudes may be directly related to the ability of pre-service foreign language teachers to accept and embrace other cultures. Part of the World Readiness Standards for Learning Languages/National Standards requires teachers of foreign languages to incorporate not only



the practices and products of a culture, but to possess the ability to make comparisons between one's native culture and the culture of the target language (American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages, 2013). Therefore, it is possible that pre-service foreign language teachers come to teacher education programs with a deeper understanding of the dominant culture in the U.S. than their colleagues in other teacher education disciplines due to their compliance with the National Standards.

In this regard, the main limitation for this study is the lack of generalization into other teacher education disciplines such as Mathematics, English, or Science. As those disciplines do not require their teacher candidates to complete a study abroad experience nor to compare cultures of any language, it is unknown if the results found in this study would generalize to other subject areas. For example, it is unknown if pre-service teachers of Mathematics consider the dominant culture in the U.S. when learning how to teach a concept such as fractions. In the same way, the curricula and expectations for an English Literature course may emphasize works done by predominantly white authors, yet the pre-service teachers may not understand the implications of the current curricula on students of color. As was noted earlier, multicultural education is seldom taught in teacher education programs which would indicate most pre-service teachers never examine the level of privilege and whiteness within their chosen field.

A second limitation involves the enduring understanding of this work (i.e. the lasting impact of the targeted experience). Although participants experienced a change in attitude through the statistical significance of the pre- and post-tests, and offered anecdotal evidence of the lessons and understandings they acquired due to the instructional activities and

discussion, it is unknown how long this learning will last. An attempt was made to involve the same pre-service teachers in a follow-up interview during the semester of their student teaching internship, however; the response rate from the pre-service teachers was zero. Therefore, it is possible that within the intense moments of the instructional lesson and in a safe environment, those pre-service teachers felt a change in attitude. Yet, when confronted with a dominant school system in which deficit thinking, oppression, and privilege prevail, they may have acquiesced to those beliefs and abandoned their new attitudes.

Another limitation of this research is the geographical location of the teacher education program. Having taught and attended a teacher education program in South Central Texas, there was a high level of diversity among pre-service teachers and future students. However, in the inland Northwest, the statistics indicate a higher level of white pre-service teachers and white future students. Ergo, in this physical location, the awareness of diverse issues regarding privilege and oppression may be more hidden from pre-service teachers' perspectives simply due to a lack of interaction with diverse people. As a result, the pre-service teachers in this area may have begun their education with less understanding of racial issues including their own whiteness whereas in a highly diverse program, these concepts may be overtly discussed. Thus a replication of this study in a more diverse area may not show the same level of change in attitudes for the pre-service teachers.

A fourth limitation may be, in part, due to the professional faculty instructing teacher education programs. In some areas, there may be more faculty of color who include their own personal experiences as teachers in the U.S. school system with their pre-service teachers thus inviting open dialogue regarding racial and social issues. Those faculty members may also be

more inclined to discuss concepts such as color-blindness and deficit thinking due to their familiarity or experience with them. White faculty may make the mistake of accepting student resistance towards issues regarding race and in doing so avoid dealing with the issues all together. In addition, white faculty may still subscribe to the ideas of color-blindness and deficit thinking and pass those beliefs on to their pre-service teachers in the program. Therefore, this limitation focuses on the racial make-up of the faculty within teacher education programs and specifically on the fact that the majority of faculty in the program where I teach identify as white.

A final limitation focuses on my own whiteness. As a white woman, I am limited in my ability to truly understand the experiences of people of color within the U.S. school system. I must rely on my comprehension of the literature and anecdotal expressions from people of color to instruct the pre-service teachers about privilege and oppression. I am continually doing my own work on my whiteness and privilege and therefore am still a novice in these issues. Therefore, it is possible that my teachings on privilege and oppression were incomplete or in some way perpetuated a belief system that maintained white superiority, regardless of my intent. Being a white woman, I am unable to completely instruct pre-service teachers on the experiences of people of color as their voices are the only ones with that expertise. Therefore, I am a limitation to this study, due to my lack of experience to truly live as a “non-white” person who has been afforded certain privileges.

Finally, as with many studies using human subjects, there is a risk of the participants experiencing the Hawthorne effect. As defined by Dictionary.com, the Hawthorne effect is “a positive change in the performance of a group of persons taking part in an experiment or

study due to their perception of being singled out for special consideration” (n.d.). As the participants in this study were aware of my interest in the topic, attitudes about privilege and oppression, my intent to increase their awareness of those issues, and their willingness to please their professor, the difference in their pre- and post-test scores may have impacted their responses, which may have skewed the significant difference. One way to minimize this limitation is to replicate the study using both a control group that will not address issues of privilege and oppression and an experimental group that will experience instructional activities targeting privilege and oppression. This may offset any changes to the score due to the Hawthorne effect. Additionally, the validity and reliability reported in both Chapter 3 and Appendix E show the POI as a credible survey which minimizes the impact of the Hawthorne effect on the participants.

### **Next steps**

While examining the limitations for this study, the next steps for this study became abundantly clear. It appears obvious that this type of study is needed in a variety of settings and with a diverse group of pre-service teachers as well as faculty. Thus, my future research goals include the following (a) replication of this study across disciplines, (b) requirement for follow up interviews with future participants, (c) replication of this study within diverse settings, and, most importantly (d) collaboration with faculty of color.

The first step towards generalization would be to replicate this study within the same teacher education program in the inland Northwest, but across disciplines. In order to ascertain if these results were due to the instructional activities or to the fact that pre-service foreign language teachers have a deeper level of cultural understanding, it is imperative to

carry out this study within the vast array of disciplines offered in the secondary education program. Additionally, if the results from those studies indicate a significant change in attitudes, this study could then be conducted on elementary pre-service teachers as well.

Another possible avenue for future research would be to replicate this study with pre-service foreign language teachers yet require them to complete follow-up interviews during their student teaching semester. This required interview would allow me to determine if the change in attitude was enduring for the pre-service teachers. Additionally, a second follow-up interview could be conducted during the first year of teaching once the pre-service teachers had graduated. Not only would this allow for a deeper perspective on the teachers' attitudes, but it may add a location component as well if some graduates accepted work outside the inland Northwest. In this required second interview two of the prior limitations could be addressed, the enduring results and geographical locations. Also, by replicating this study in a variety of teacher education programs around the nation, I could determine if these results generalize to areas with higher levels of diversity within their programs and their faculty.

A final approach to continuing this research is to collaborate with faculty of color. It is imperative that I, as a white woman, recognize my limitations regarding understanding privilege and work with faculty of color to determine the instructional activities, in-depth discussion, and lessons on privilege and oppression necessary to do this work. White faculty have encountered resistance to these issues in many ways including (a) questioning the legitimacy of the faculty to teach these issues, (b) the pre-service teachers disconnecting from the work, and (c) not opening up to learning the needed lessons (Gillespie, Ashbaugh, & DeFiore, 2002). By collaborating with faculty of color and offering their counter-stories to the

pre-service teachers, these resistances may be reduced thus allowing for more enduring learning to take place. In addition, it is arrogant and privileged for me to assume that I can do this work without people of color.

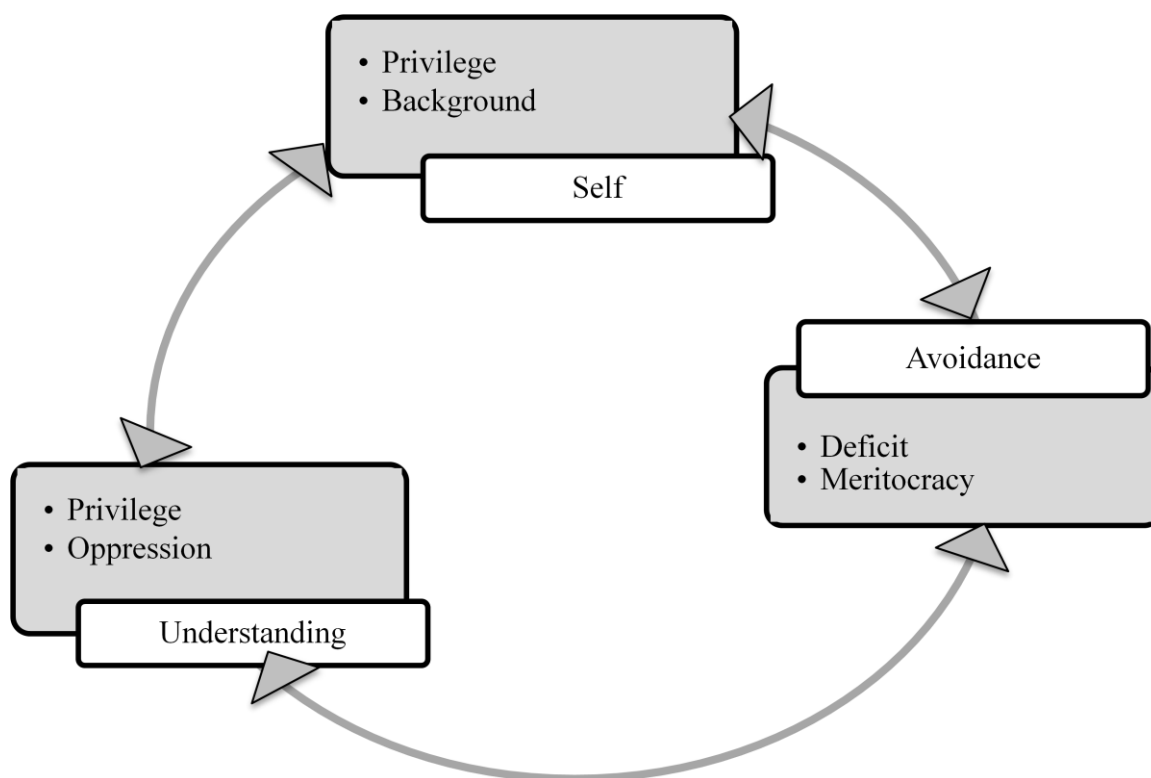
### **Implications**

Despite the numerous limitations, this study did demonstrate an impact on pre-service teachers' attitudes regarding privilege and oppression in the U.S. Many of the pre-service teachers in the study expressed gratitude and relief at being able to explore and express their own identities and sense of privilege in a safe environment while others noted how much they did not previously know about these topics. Although the instructional activities and in-depth discussions were given within a limited time in the semester, the new knowledge gleaned from the activities influenced every participant in some way. For example, some noted a change in attitude regarding privilege in their own personal lives while others expressed a new perspective related to the education system. After examining the qualitative data, it was clear that the activities made an impactful impression on every participant and explained why the participants' pre- and post-test scores changed. As one participant noted, "This will affect my teaching...this will be in my active, conscious thoughts now".

It is evident that this type of instruction can make an impact on pre-service foreign language teachers and change their attitudes regarding privilege and oppression in the U.S. From the themes found while using the grounded theory approach, a central theory emerged. Although there was resistance and avoidance, the participants' examinations of their beliefs and attitudes regarding privilege and oppression indicated a synergy between the privileges they experience and the systemic oppression in the U.S. Throughout the process, the

participants moved both forward and backward in their attitudes regarding privilege (for example: exploring the privilege walk as a metaphor yet using oppressive language such as “those people” while doing so) while at the same time constantly pushing themselves further along the line of understanding the dominant system in the U.S. Figure 6 symbolizes possible ways the participants’ understandings both improved and regressed during this experience.

Figure 6. Relationship between participant and understanding



Similar to the ways in which Deleuze and Guattari (1987) note the rhizome “connects any point to any other point, and its traits are not necessarily linked to traits of the same nature” (p. 21), the participants connected the information gleaned from the activities at multiple points along their path of awareness with links to their personal and professional

lives. Within this process, the theory that emerged indicated a need for pre-service foreign language teachers to be provided opportunities to identify their own privilege while examining the perpetuating systemic oppression within the education system. Through exploring both aspects pre-service teachers are able to deconstruct the current education system in a way that promotes self-awareness and exposes the oppression and privilege that still in exists today. As the data and findings have indicated, this type of work is not only needed in all teacher education programs, but must be a mandatory part of all teacher education programs.

In order to create a more competitive, global teaching force, teacher education programs must challenge teachers (pre-service or in-service) to examine the ways in which the current school system in the U.S. marginalizes students. As the U.S. continues to increase the diversity of its population, an antiquated system of education and teacher preparation continues to subjugate and marginalize people of color. It is only through the examination and instruction of our current system that future teachers will become aware of the privileges offered to the dominant culture. And, it is only through this awareness that it can begin to change.



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**Appendix A**

Privilege and Oppression Inventory (adapted version)



## The Privilege and Oppression Inventory

(Hays, Chang, & Decker, 2007)

*Directions:* The following instrument examines an individual's attitudes toward various social issues. Please respond to the following statements as they apply to the current United States Society. Rate each item within the range of (1) *strongly disagree* to (6) *strongly agree*. Please rate each item *honestly* so various attitudes toward social issues can be further understood.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6

- \_\_\_\_\_1. Whites have the power to exclude other groups.
- \_\_\_\_\_2. There are benefits to being White in this society.
- \_\_\_\_\_3. Christian holidays are given more prominence in society than non-Christian holidays.
- \_\_\_\_\_4. Heterosexuals have access to more resources than gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals.
- \_\_\_\_\_5. Women experience discrimination.
- \_\_\_\_\_6. The lighter your skin color, the less prejudice and discrimination you experience.
- \_\_\_\_\_7. Being White and having an advantage go hand in hand.
- \_\_\_\_\_8. White cultural characteristics are more valued than those of people of color.
- \_\_\_\_\_9. Some individuals are devalued in society because of their sexual orientation.
- \_\_\_\_\_10. Heterosexuals are treated better in society than those who are not heterosexual.
- \_\_\_\_\_11. Society is biased positively toward Christians.
- \_\_\_\_\_12. Women are not recognized in their careers as often as men.
- \_\_\_\_\_13. Christianity is valued more in this society than other religions.
- \_\_\_\_\_14. Many gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals fear for their safety.
- \_\_\_\_\_15. There are different standards and expectations for men and women in this society.
- \_\_\_\_\_16. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals experience discrimination.
- \_\_\_\_\_17. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals lack power in the legal system.
- \_\_\_\_\_18. The majority of positive role models in movies are White.
- \_\_\_\_\_19. Christianity is the norm in this society.
- \_\_\_\_\_20. Women are disadvantaged compared to men.
- \_\_\_\_\_21. Openly gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals lack power in today's society.
- \_\_\_\_\_22. Being White is an advantage in society.
- \_\_\_\_\_23. The media (e.g., television, radio) favors Whites.
- \_\_\_\_\_24. Femininity is less valued in this society.
- \_\_\_\_\_25. Christians are represented positively in history books.
- \_\_\_\_\_26. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals do not have the same advantages as heterosexuals.

- \_\_\_\_\_27. Whites generally have more resources and opportunities.
- \_\_\_\_\_28. Government policies favor Whites.
- \_\_\_\_\_29. To be Christian is to have religious advantage in this country.
- \_\_\_\_\_30. Men typically make more money than women do.
- \_\_\_\_\_31. Individuals do not receive advantages just because they are White.
- \_\_\_\_\_32. The media negatively stereotypes gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals.
- \_\_\_\_\_33. Most White high-level executives are promoted based on their race.
- \_\_\_\_\_34. Christians hold a lot of power because this country is based on their views.
- \_\_\_\_\_35. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals exaggerate their hardships.
- \_\_\_\_\_36. Women lack power in today's society compared to men.
- \_\_\_\_\_37. Christians have the opportunity of being around other Christians most of the time.
- \_\_\_\_\_38. Many movies negatively stereotype people of color.
- \_\_\_\_\_39. Advertisers set standards for how women should appear.

(Adapted by S. McGowan, September 2012)

**Appendix B**

Scoring Guide for POI

## Scoring Key

### **White privilege Awareness**

1, 2, 6, 7, 8, 18, 22, 23, 27, 28, 31\*, 33, 38

### **Heterosexism Awareness**

4, 9, 10, 14, 16, 17, 21, 26, 32, 35\*

### **Christian Privilege Awareness**

3, 11, 13, 19, 25, 29, 34, 37

### **Sexism Awareness**

5, 12, 15, 20, 24, 30, 36, 39

Compute the mean for each subscale.

\*Reverse score these items.

See the following reference for current technical data for the POI:

Hays, D. G., Chang, C. Y., & Decker, S. L. (2007). Initial development and psychometric data for the Privilege and Oppression Inventory. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 40* (2), 66-79.

**Appendix C**

Privilege Walk statements

**MODULE 5: PRIVILEGE WALK ACTIVITY\*****PURPOSE OF THE ACTIVITY:**

The purpose of the Privilege Walk Activity is to learn to recognize how power and privilege can affect [sic] our lives even when we are not aware it is happening. The purpose is not to blame anyone for having more power or privilege or for receiving more help in achieving goals, but to have an opportunity to identify both obstacles and benefits experienced in our life.

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

**SUPPLIES AND SPACE NEEDED:**

List of statements related to privilege or obstacles

Slide with instructions for the privilege walk

Space large enough for participants to form a straight line with an arm’s length between them and the person on their left; there should be space in front of the line to move forward 10 steps or behind to be able to move back 10 steps.

**DIRECTIONS FOR THE ACTIVITY:**

- 1) Have participants form a straight line across the room about an arm’s length apart, leaving space in front and behind.**
- 2) State:** Listen to the following statements, and follow the instructions given. For example, when I read “If you are a white male, take one step forward”, only white males will move and

everyone else will stand still. Each step should be an average length step. No one is going to check up on you, so if you feel you qualify to take a step then do so, if not then you may stay where you are. You are the judge of what you should do.

**3) Read the statements one at a time allowing time for participants to take a step.**

**4) When all the statements have been read process the activity using the following questions:**

What is your “gut reaction” to where you find yourself at the end of this list of privileges?

Are you surprised at where you are? How does it feel to be in front? In the middle? In back?

Did you come to any new realizations? If so, which one had the most impact?

**PRIVILEGE WALK STATEMENTS**

If you are a white male take one step forward.

If there have been times in your life when you skipped a meal because there was no food in the house take one step backward.

If you have visible or invisible disabilities take one step backward.

If you attended (grade) school with people you felt were like yourself take one step forward.

If you grew up in an urban setting take one step backward.

If your family had health insurance take one step forward.

If your work holidays coincide with religious holidays that you celebrate take one step forward.

If you feel good about how your identified culture is portrayed by the media take one step forward.

If you have been the victim of physical violence based on your gender, ethnicity, age or sexual orientation take one step backward.

If you have ever felt passed over for an employment position based on your gender, ethnicity, age or sexual orientation take one step backward.

If you were born in the United States take one step forward.

If English is your first language take one step forward.



If you have been divorced or impacted by divorce take one step backward.

If you came from a supportive family environment take one step forward.

If you have completed high school take one step forward.

If you were able to complete college take one step forward.

If you are a citizen of the United States take one step forward.

If you took out loans for your education take one step backward.

If you attended private school take one step forward.

If you have ever felt unsafe walking alone at night take one step backward.

Retrieved from:

[http://www.albany.edu/ssw/efc/pdf/Module%205\\_1\\_Privilege%20Walk%20Activity.pdf](http://www.albany.edu/ssw/efc/pdf/Module%205_1_Privilege%20Walk%20Activity.pdf)

**Appendix D**

Privilege Walk questions

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What are your general reactions to the exercise? How did you feel?
2. What do you think about where you ended up in relation to where others were at the end of the exercise?
3. Were there certain "statements of privilege" that triggered certain emotions?
4. How does this information relate to you as a teacher?
5. How does this information affect [sic] you and your students?

Compliments of Kevin M. Huie, Loyola University Chicago - Diversity Training - Amazon

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**Appendix E**

POI Validity and Reliability

<b>7.9.5 Name of the Measure</b>	Privilege and Oppression Inventory POI
<b>Primary Reference</b>	Hays, D. G., Chang, C. Y., & Decker, S. L. (2007). Initial development and psychometric data for the Privilege and Oppression Inventory. <i>Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 40</i> , 66–79.
<b>Purpose</b>	The POI is designed to measure an individual's awareness of privilege and oppression around issues of race, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, and religion.
<b>Description</b>	The POI is a 16item selfreport inventory. Each of these items is rated on a 6point Likerttype scale with the following anchors: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree. The POI is composed of 4 subscales: (1) White privilege Awareness; (2) Heterosexism Awareness; (3) Christian Privilege Awareness; and (4) Sexism Awareness. The instrument was developed through several steps. An initial pool of 107 items was created based on data from two qualitative studies, a review of research literature regarding multicultural counseling competencies, multicultural assessment, social advocacy, and privilege and oppression in counseling. Six multicultural experts reviewed the items for clarity and appropriateness of content. This resulted in an 83item instrument. Sampling adequacy was first established. Principal axis extraction with promax oblique rotation was then conducted and yielded nine factors of eigenvalues greater than 1.0. A fourfactor solution was selected as most interpretable. Items with structure coefficients loadings of .30 or greater on only one factor were retained. All other items were deleted. This resulted in a 39item POI. Confirmatory factor analysis, using AMOS (Arbuckle, 1999), was used to test for stability of the factor structure. Their data fit a fourfactor solution best.
<b>Samples</b>	A sample of 428 diverse trainees (81.5% women) attending a counseling-related program with a median age of 27 years. A second sample of 206 trainees from eight counseling programs also was used. Their mean age was 31 years. The first sample was composed of 70% White Americans, 19% African Americans, 5% Multiracial/Biracial Americans, 3% Asian Americans, 2% Latino/a Americans, and 1% Native Americans. These two samples were combined for the study of the validity and structure of the POI. Data from a subsample (not used in the EFA) of the original sample were submitted to a confirmatory factor analysis.

<b>Scoring</b>	The number of items for each of the four subscales of the POI is as follows: White privilege Awareness: 13 items Heterosexism Awareness: 10 items Christian Privilege Awareness: 8 items Sexism Awareness: 8 items Total POI: 39 items Two items require reverse scoring. Scoring the subscales consists of summing subscale items and dividing by the number of items of which it is composed. Higher scores indicate higher experience of the psychosocial costs of racism. No transformations are required.
<b>Reliability</b>	Cronbach's alpha for the subscale scores ranged from .63–.78. White privilege Awareness: Alpha = .92 Heterosexism Awareness: Alpha = .81 Christian Privilege Awareness: Alpha = .86 Sexism Awareness: Alpha = .79 Two-week test retest reliability coefficients were as follows: White privilege: $r = .89$ Heterosexism Awareness: $r = .86$ Christian Privilege Awareness: $r = .84$ Sexism Awareness: $r = .79$
<b>Validity</b>	Convergent validity of POI subscales was established through expected positive correlations with MGUDS (Fuertes et al., 2000), and the QDI (Ponterotto, Potere, & Johansen, 2002) and a negative correlation with social desirability (Crowne & Marlowe, 1960).
<b>Related References</b>	
<b>Language Versions</b>	English
<b>Contact</b>	Danica Hays Educational Leadership and Counseling 110 Education Building Old Dominion University Norfolk, VA 23529 Email: dhays@odu.edu

Validity for scale: [http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/38517\\_Chapter7.pdf](http://www.sagepub.com/upm-data/38517_Chapter7.pdf) Handbook of Multicultural Measures. *Chapter 7 Racism- and Prejudice-Related Measures* pg 251-333 . Sage Publications 2011.

POI tested: Initial development and psychometric data for the Privilege and Oppression Inventory. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 40, 66–79. Cited in the Handbook of Multicultural measures.

**Appendix F**

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**Appendix G**

Permission to use survey instrument

**From:** Hays, Danica G. <DHays@odu.edu>

**Sent:** Friday, September 7, 2012 11:17 AM

**To:** McGowan, Shannon

**Subject:** RE: POI permission request

Shannon,

You are welcome to use the POI. I have attached a scoring key as well as the items. I would appreciate your sending the basic demographic data and POI scores at the end of your study so that I may add them to a larger database for revalidation.

thanks-

dgh

**Danica G. Hays, PhD, LPC, NCC**

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**Appendix H**

Informed consent letter

Self-Efficacy in Modern Language Pre-Service Teachers

**The University of Idaho Institutional Review Board has approved this project.**

**INVESTIGATORS:** Shannon L. McGowan

**FACULTY SPONSOR:** Dr. Anne Kern

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM

8/20/2012

*Please read the following material that explains this research study. Signing this form will indicate that you have been informed about the study and that you want to participate. We want you to understand what you are being asked to do and what risks and benefits—if any—are associated with the study. This should help you decide whether or not you want to participate in the study.*

You are being asked to take part in a research project conducted by Shannon McGowan, a graduate student in the University of Idaho's Curriculum & Instruction Department within the College of Education. This project is being done under the direction of Dr. Anne Kern, a faculty member in the University of Idaho's College of Education.

**Explanation of the Study:**

This study will examine the self-reported efficacy of pre-service Foreign Language (FL) teachers related to their ability to teach using a culturally responsive and multicultural pedagogy. The purpose of this study is to determine if pre-service teachers who have a desire to learn and teach another language and its culture allows for a more culturally responsive teacher.

**Procedures:**

This mixed-methods research design utilizes both quantitative and qualitative aspects. The quantitative measurement to be used in this study is The Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSE) (Siwatu, 2007). Each participant will complete a copy of the CRTSE scale during the first week of the Foreign Language Methods course (EDCI 437) as well as during the final week of the course.

The CRTSE measures the self-efficacy among pre-service teachers. This scale will be used as both the pretest and posttest to conduct a means comparison related to self-efficacy among

pre-service foreign language teachers before and after direct instruction of CRT and Multicultural teaching techniques.

During the direct instruction, an online blog website will be created for students to anonymously journal about their experiences, thoughts, and self-efficacy related to the material being taught. These blogs will be used as the qualitative aspect of the research and analyzed for themes. These themes will be used to inform future curricula regarding Culturally Responsive Teaching and Multicultural teaching techniques for pre-service foreign language teachers.

**Potential Risks:**

There are no potential risks to participants in this study. All data will be obtained anonymously and participation is voluntary. Any student wishing not to participate will be excluded from the study without any consequence to his or her standing in the course and course grade. Students will be asked to create their own username for the online journals and counseled to create a name that cannot be traced back to them in any way by the researcher or any outside person. In addition, only the researcher will have access to the pre- and posttest scores and online journal entries. In this way, there is no social risk for what the participants disclose in their journals.

**Benefits of Participation:**

This research will benefit the participants by using their input to create curricula that meets the demands of a global society and includes culturally responsive teaching and multicultural teaching techniques. The addition of these curricula into the Secondary Foreign Methods course will help the participants to succeed in their chosen careers.

This research will also benefit the Teacher Education Program within the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education at the University of Idaho by informing the Department of necessary changes in curricula towards a more culturally proficient program. The Mission of the College of Education includes the goal of being culturally proficient and the data from this study will help create curricula that meet that mission. In addition, the research can be generalized into other methods courses within the Teacher Education Program and influence the curricula throughout the program, which will continue to meet the goal of cultural proficiency.

**Confidentiality:**

All information you provide will be kept in a locked file drawer within a lockable room. Information obtained about you for this study will be kept private to the extent allowed by law. No third party entities will be given any data collected for this study. Only this informed consent document will be identified with your name. You will create your own username for the online journal and will not be asked to disclose your identity through the journal or username. The results of this study will be published for academic purposes. These results

will include data from your pre- and posttest scores as well as the themes found within the online journals. However, your identity will not be given out.

**Withdrawal from the Study:**

During the course of this study, you may stop at any time. There will be no penalties associated with your withdrawal. All you need to say is that you no longer wish to participate.

**Questions:**

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the research, please contact the investigator or faculty sponsor. If you have any questions during the study feel free to ask an investigator at any time you feel is appropriate.

Investigator  
Shannon L. McGowan  
University of Idaho  
College of Education  
Curriculum and Instruction  
Moscow, ID 83844

Faculty Sponsor  
Dr. Anne Kern  
University of Idaho  
College of Education  
Curriculum and Instruction  
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814-3082

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, or concerns or complaints about the research, you may contact the Human Assurances Committee at [irb@uidaho.edu](mailto:irb@uidaho.edu) or (208) 310-6612.

I have reviewed this consent form and understand and agree to its contents.

Participant Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Experimenter Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Experimenter Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix I**

Institutional Review Board Approval



July 19, 2012

**University of Idaho**

**Office of Research Assurances (ORA)**

**Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

PO Box 443010

Moscow ID 83844-3010

Phone: 208-885-6162

Fax: 208-885-5752

irb@uidaho.edu

To: Kern, Anne  
Cc: McGowan, Shannon

From: IRB, University of Idaho Institutional Review Board

Subject: Exempt Certification for IRB project number 12-250

Determination: July 17, 2012  
Certified as Exempt under category 1 & 2 at 45 CFR 46.101(b)(1 & 2)  
IRB project number 12-250: Self-efficacy in Modern Language Pre-Service Teachers

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This study may be conducted according to the protocol described in the Application without further review by the IRB. As specific instruments are developed, each should be forwarded to the ORA, in order to allow the IRB to maintain current records. Every effort should be made to ensure that the project is conducted in a manner consistent with the three fundamental principles identified in the Belmont Report: respect for persons; beneficence; and justice.

It is important to note that certification of exemption is NOT approval by the IRB. Do not include the statement that the UI IRB has reviewed and approved the study for human subject participation. Remove all statements of IRB Approval and IRB contact information from study materials that will be disseminated to participants. Instead please indicate, "The University of Idaho Institutional Review Board has Certified this project as Exempt."

Certification of exemption is not to be construed as authorization to recruit participants or conduct research in schools or other institutions, including on Native Reserved lands or within Native Institutions, which have their own policies that require approvals before Human Subjects Research Projects can begin. This authorization must be obtained from the appropriate Tribal Government (or equivalent) and/or Institutional Administration. This may include independent review by a tribal or institutional IRB or equivalent. It is the investigator's responsibility to obtain all such necessary approvals and provide copies of these approvals to ORA, in order to allow the IRB to maintain current records.

This certification is valid only for the study protocol as it was submitted to the ORA. Studies certified as Exempt are not subject to continuing review (this Certification does not expire). If any changes are made to the study protocol, you must submit the changes to the ORA for determination that the study remains Exempt before implementing the changes. The IRB Modification Request Form is available online at: <http://www.uidaho.edu/ora/committees/irb/irbforms>

## University of Idaho

September 13, 2012

Office of Research Assurances  
Institutional Review BoardPO Box 443010  
Moscow ID 83844-3010Phone: 208-885-6162  
Fax: 208-885-5752  
irb@uidaho.edu

To: Kern, Anne  
Cc: McGowan, Shannon

From: Traci Craig  
Chair, University of Idaho Institutional Review Board  
University Research Office  
Moscow, ID 83844-3010

Your modification request has been approved.

Modification Requested: 09/11/12

Modification Approved: 09/13/12

Title: 'Self-efficacy in Modern Language Pre-Service Teachers'

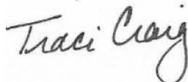
Please note that this does not change your approval period.

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On behalf of the Institutional Review Board at the University of Idaho, I am pleased to inform you that the proposed protocol modification for the above-named research project has been approved as offering no significant risk to human subjects.

A modification **does not** change your approval period. Should there be significant changes in the protocol for this project, it will be necessary for you to resubmit the protocol for review by the Committee.

Thank you for submitting your modification request.



Traci Craig

## University of Idaho

September 17, 2012

Office of Research Assurances  
Institutional Review BoardPO Box 443010  
Moscow ID 83844-3010Phone: 208-885-6162  
Fax: 208-885-5752  
irb@uidaho.edu

To: Kern, Anne  
Cc: McGowan, Shannon

From: Traci Craig  
Chair, University of Idaho Institutional Review Board  
University Research Office  
Moscow, ID 83844-3010

Your modification request has been approved.

Modification Requested: 09/14/12

Modification Approved: 09/17/12

Title: 'Self-efficacy in Modern Language Pre-Service Teachers'

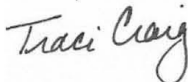
Please note that this does not change your approval period.

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Traci Craig