ANALYSIS BEYOND ASSUMPTIONS: ONE TEACHER CANDIDATE’S IDENTITY
IN RELATION TO SOCIALJUSTICE

A Dissertation in
Curriculum and Instruction
by
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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

August 2021
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ABSTRACT

This single-case, descriptive study explored one K-4 teacher candidate’s identity and attempts to teach toward social justice within and beyond a series of small group discussions in a Professional Development School context. More specifically, it studied how this teacher candidate positioned her identity through the lenses of social justice (Curry-Stevens, 2007; Kavanagh & Danielson, 2020), intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1994) and positioning theory (Davies and Harré, 1990; Bamberg, 1997a) to further our understanding of the integral role identity plays within and beyond the classroom as teacher candidates attempt to take on socially just teaching. This dissertation extends current scholarship by 1) investigating one teacher candidate’s identity as it relates to social justice and how this aligned with her practices in the classroom setting (Mills & Ballantyne, 2016; Sleeter, 2004) and 2) bringing the intersectionality of one teacher candidate’s identity into focus when analyzing her discourse and classroom practices (Pugach et al., 2019). Using Curry-Stevens’s (2007) pedagogy for the privileged, I created a series of eight small-group discussions in which Rebecca, a PDS teacher candidate participated. Additionally, this study incorporated three one-on-one interviews, observations in the practicum setting, and post-observation debriefs. The data were analyzed in two layers, 1) Bamberg’s three-level positioning analysis (1997a) and 2) thematic analysis (Bruan & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2013). The data suggests that 1) Rebecca positioned her identity at a distance from possessing privilege and perpetuating oppression, 2) Rebecca demonstrated shifts in how she restructured her understanding of the world as she moved among various environments, and 3) Rebecca’s perception of power among institutional tensions shaped her positioning in regard to taking responsibility for change. The findings of this study suggest that addressing social justice through one’s identity paired with an analysis of actions taken in the practicum setting is a vital step as preservice teacher education programs shift toward centering justice.
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Someone once said to me in passing that depression is synonymous with graduate school, to which I had no reply. I was a third year graduate student, embarking on data collection in a cloudy haze of depression. The former three years were spent with my head purposefully buried in work as I attempted to escape other aspects of my identity in which I felt heavy failure. It was during the lengthy process of composing this manuscript, that I came to realize that my perceptions of failure were actually opportunities to re-connect with individuals who had constantly stood by my side. Solomon (2001), so beautifully shares, “Listen to the people who love you. Believe that they are worth living for even when you don’t believe it. Seek out the memories depression takes away and project them into the future. Be brave; be strong… (pg. 29).

This manuscript would not have been possible without my strength, Jon Klock. You helped me step back and place us at the forefront, as imperfect as we may be. For that, I am truly grateful. Thank you for your love. And to my little love, Jonathan; your giggles and snuggles have made my heart so happy. Thank you for being you! I would also like to thank my Mom and Dad, Marie and Robert Evans. From an early age, you have supported my passion to question everything, even my high school physics teacher. Further, I am so thankful to have met and connected with a fellow inquirer, Megan Lynch. Your tough-love and listening ears were exactly what I needed. And thank you for adopting me into your writing group. Megan, Eleanor, and Nick, you mixed up the perfect blend of nonsense arguments, motivational memes, and constructive feedback. Thank you.

Along the way, I also had the pleasure of working with two strong, purposeful women. Christine McDonald and Michelle Knotts, I have learned so much from our conversations and collaborations. Thank you for sharing your passions with me. Finally, I would like to thank my committee for your support during this academic journey. Future grad students, my advice to you
moving into your committee selection, is to find members that humanize this process that can quickly become caught-up in unattainable expectations and disconnected from your whole self.

Tanner Vea, thank you for being this committee member.
Chapter 1

Introduction

Introduction

This study explored one K-4 teacher candidate’s identity and attempts to teach toward social justice within and beyond a series of small group discussions in a Professional Development School context. More specifically, I studied how this teacher candidate positioned her identity through the lenses of social justice (Curry-Stevens, 2007; Kavanagh & Danielson, 2020), intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1994) and positioning theory (Davies and Harré, 1990; Bamberg, 1997a) to further our understanding of the integral role identity plays as teacher candidates attempt teaching toward social justice. Situating this study as an extension of today’s scholarship in preservice teacher education, I consider this research one step toward recognizing that our interactions are a dynamic social force that inadvertently recognizes some identities at others’ expense.

This single-case, descriptive study provides a thick description of one teacher candidate’s identity and classroom practices through a lens of social justice. Data analysis included an analysis of interactive speech in a series of small group discussions, one-on-one interviews, and post-observation debriefs, as well as an analysis of observations in a practicum setting and documents to understand how one teacher candidate positioned her identity in relation to social justice. Additionally, this study sought to examine the teacher candidate’s positioned identity, through a lens of intersectionality, by considering constraining normativities that produce different kinds of societal inequalities and social relations (Lykke, 2010).
This chapter begins with an overview of the literature pertaining to the current state of preservice teacher education in relation to social justice and identity. I then detail how this study extends current scholarship. Subsequently, I describe the purpose of the study the problem statement. I then present the accompanying research questions. Next, I describe the conceptual and theoretical framework grounding the study. Finally, to situate the reader within the study’s bounds, key terms and definitions are provided.

**Overview of Literature**

For more than fifty years, scholars have developed foundational justice-oriented literature in education. This literature includes but is not limited to Freire’s (1970) Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Ladson-Billing’s (1995) Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, and Gay’s (2000) Culturally Responsive Teaching. Unfortunately, research has found that this literature has been applied to preservice teacher education programs as an equity add-on (Mills & Ballantyne, 2016), demonstrating that it can be easily omitted from the curriculum. This, coupled with the knowledge that teacher educators themselves have unclear understandings of social justice (Mills and Ballantyne, 2016), we are left to wonder how teacher candidates are ultimately situated in relation to teaching toward social justice.

**The Need to Expand Social Justice Scholarship**

As the commitment to social justice in teacher education continues to grow, Sleeter (2014) argues that scholarship must begin to understand the relationship between teacher education programs aimed at social justice and teacher candidate practices. To be more specific, Mills and Ballantyne (2016) recommend that researchers investigate the links between teacher candidates’ understandings of social justice and their teaching practices in the classroom, given that these can conflict. Thus, this study aimed to enrich existing scholarship by examining how one teacher candidate positioned her identity in relation to social justice and understand how this positioning aligned with practices in the practicum setting.
The Need to Recognize the Intersectionality of Identity

Scholarship suggests that teacher education programs provide teacher candidates an opportunity to construct an identity informed by their previous schooling experiences, ideas and concepts promoted by the program, and their ideal image of the teacher they hope to become (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; 2011). In relation to social justice, this concept of identity falls flat, as it does not address greater social structures at play. Further, when Pugach, Gomez-Najarro, and Matewos (2019) explored the landscape of empirical work in which researchers, oriented toward social justice, studied teacher candidate’s identity, they found similarly flat conceptual framings. Using intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1994) as a lens for analysis, Pugach et al. (2019) found that scholarship has a) addressed a unidimensional view of identity, b) addressed identity within multiple groups without understanding the complexities of this, or c) failed to address multiple identities. In response to these findings, this study aimed to extend existing scholarship by framing the analysis of one teacher candidate’s discursive identity through a lens of intersectionality.

Purpose of the Study

This study aimed to understand how one teacher candidate positioned her identity in relation to social justice and investigated how her practices in the practicum setting aligned with this positioning. Thus, this dissertation extends current scholarship by 1) investigating one teacher candidate’s understanding of social justice and how this aligned with her practices in the classroom setting (Mills & Ballantyne, 2016; Sleeter, 2014) and 2) bringing the intersectionality of one teacher candidate’s identity into focus when analyzing her discursive positioning and classroom practices (Pugach et al., 2019).

Beyond the purpose of extending current scholarship, this study is a vital step in addressing the responsibility to actualize justice in educational spaces. It is not enough to study practices in the practicum setting in relation to social justice, as practices may serve a
performative function. Instead, this study pairs analysis of one teacher candidate’s discursive identity with observed practices. Later in chapter 4, three findings will demonstrate the interwoven nature of this teacher candidate’s practices and her positioned identity across various settings.

Identity is the unit of analysis for this study because a teacher is not just defined by heritage, education, or established practices; but also in the way a teacher treats others, in the respect shown to multiple cultural forms of life, and in the way they cope with their prejudices (Jenlink, 2014). The formation of one’s identity is an open project constantly shaping interactions with students, community members, and one’s own moral and political standards (Emcke, 2000).

To explore a more authentic identity, Breen (2014) argues that teachers must explore perceived differences, which serve as a basis for continuous reflective discourse. Through this, one may begin to foster an understanding of self and others. Thus, this study argues that teacher candidates must learn how to develop a consciousness of themselves in relation to systemic, societal structures that privilege some at the expense of others.

Problem Statement

Scholars argue that this internal, reflective work must take place in teacher preparation programs to prepare teachers for the student populations’ shifting demographics. However, this work must extend beyond teacher candidates who wish to teach students identified within minority groups upon entering the teaching profession. It is an issue of responsibility, for teacher preparation programs do whatever is necessary to disrupt systemic, rooted forms of oppression through teacher candidates’ education.

Neglecting identity exploration in teacher education risks fostering future educators who are unable or subconsciously unwilling to challenge a system in need of reform. If teacher candidates enter programs that treat inequalities as natural or unproblematic, “we may have part of the explanation for the tendency among teachers to function as … preservers of the status quo”
Teacher candidates who harbor incomplete understandings of their identities related to social justice continue to perpetuate inequitable and oppressive structures that ultimately harm minoritized students.

This study provides some insights into the depth of this problem. The preliminary insights and findings address this problem through the robust analysis of one K-4 teacher candidate’s positioned identity. Further, this study punctuates how complicated the issue is and highlights what challenges lie ahead for program planners, methods instructors, and field supervisors.

**Research Questions**

This research aimed to address:

1. When participating in weekly small group discussions paired with one-on-one interviews, co-planning sessions, and observation debriefs, how did one teacher candidate position her identity in relation to social justice?
2. In what ways did this teacher candidate’s practices in the practicum setting align to this positioning?

**Frameworks**

This study’s conceptual framework is grounded in social justice (Curry-Stevens, 2007; Kavanagh & Danielson, 2020) and intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989; 1994). Below, I will briefly detail how social justice and intersectionality are situated in this work. I will then describe positioning theory (Davies and Harré, 1990; Bamberg, 1997a), the theoretical framework through which one teacher candidate’s interactive speech was linked to identity and social justice.

**Social Justice**

**Social Constructs & Structures**

In the context of the United States, oppression is embedded our daily lives as a normal practice. This “normal practice” has been shaped through structures established by White,
heterosexual, Euro-Christians. Throughout our country’s history, this dominant group has created social constructs (race, gender, ethnicity, sexuality, etc.) in which an individual’s identity is assumed, categorized, and caste. To this day, we are socialized to perceive and value these categories without questioning. Established policies, practices, traditions, norms, definitions, and discourses, function to systematically exploit social groups (marginalized groups) to benefit others (dominant groups.) Thus, social structures in the United States are rooted in systemic issues of oppression.

For more than a decade, Whiteness has been discussed in scholarship as a construct that sustains its power in the United States, through individuals’ complacency with status-quo. In greater detail, Okun (1998) argues that Whiteness in embedded in our society through damaging characteristics such as perfectionism, defensiveness, either/or thinking, and individualism. These invisible norms have shaped our society in such a way that the power-related processes of Whiteness has “stripped” members across racial categories of self-knowledge (Kincheloe, 1999). In this sense, there is a crucial distinction between Whiteness with “its power to signify and White people” (p.4). Therefore, in the context of this study, it is oversimplistic to see this teacher candidate as a monolithic, White female in education. The goal of this study was to support Rebecca in acknowledging greater social structures at play and begin critically questioning privileges she inherently possessed and oppression she (in)advertently perpetuated.

**A Pragmatic Take on Social Justice**

These oppressive social structures perpetually create and sustain inequitable educational opportunities for K-12 students in the United States system of education. Addressing the root of these issues must encompass attending to both the macro (societal) and micro (interpersonal) processes through which oppression occurs (Kavanagh & Danielson, 2020). Thus, this study undertook a pragmatic approach to social justice. First, social justice was defined as a continual pursuit toward fair access, for all individuals, to needed resources. Then, this pursuit was enacted
through teaching toward social justice; a process and product that included the “restructuring of how one understands the world and one’s place within it as well as understanding the responsibility for creating change” (Curry-Stevens, 2007).

This process of restructuring was not linear for Rebecca. Nor was it fixed. Instead, it required continued unlearning and relearning. Thus, it was a malleable and transformative process. Through this process, Rebecca’s identity remained fluid, dynamic, and complex as it was simultaneously questioned and reinforced.

**Intersectionality**

Further, this study held that gender, race, social class, ability, nationality, and sexuality are socially constructed concepts. For example, gender refers to how one is supposed to feel and act based on whether one’s body is seen (categorized) as a binary of female or male (Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012). We are socialized to perceive and value these categories in accordance with collective prejudices present in cultures at large. Thus, systemic issues of oppression are rooted in our very social structures.

With this in mind, it is oversimplistic to think of an individual through one identity group’s lens. Across various contexts, not everyone in one identity group has the same identity, nor do they encounter the same oppression when their multiple group memberships are taken into account (Crenshaw, 1994). Thus, it is pertinent to explore the intersectionality of socially constructed identities. In doing so, a more nuanced view of power-negotiated social relations can be investigated. This study was designed, and emerging themes were analyzed in relation to social justice and intersectionality. Studying one teacher candidate’s positioned identity and practices in relation to these concepts was possible through positioning theory.

**Positioning Theory**

The concept of positioning is defined by Davies and Harré (1990) as a discursive practice “whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and intersubjectively coherent
participants in jointly produced storylines” (p. 48). Bamberg (1997a) argues that it is in conversation that people position themselves and, in doing so, “produce one another (and themselves) situationally as ‘social beings’” (p. 336). An individual’s discourse within these jointly produced storylines is defined by the kinds of statements they consist of and license as knowledge, thereby determining one’s interpretation of the self, world, and others (Foucault, 1969). What makes this study unique to others in preservice teacher education, in relation to social justice, is a theoretical framework that maps how one teacher candidate positions her identity over time and across various settings. A more in-depth review of literature and discussion on positioning theory is presented later in chapter two.

**Methods for Data Analysis**

Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level positioning analysis was employed as an initial method for data analysis to understand the positioning of one teacher candidate’s identity in relation to teaching toward social justice and intersectionality. I discuss the subsequent, thematic method of analysis in chapter three. Bamberg’s (1997a) analysis focused on big stories in which the participant held the floor for a greater time (found in one-on-one interviews and post-observation debriefs) and small stories in which the participant negotiated time in discourse with additional participants (found in small group discussions). These stories integrally linked to participants’ shared (known) or unshared (unknown) knowledge as a story embraced “allusions to tellings, deferrals of tellings, and refusals to tell” (Georgakopoulou, 2006, p.123).

To examine the social and positioning work of narrators, Bamberg (1997a) delineated three levels of analysis. These include:

1. How are the characters positioned in relation to one another within the reported events (that is, how are the characters produced using linguistic devices)?

2. How does the speaker position him- or herself to the audience (in other words, how are the actions presented using linguistic devices)?
3. How do narrators position themselves to themselves (how does the speaker present the idea of “who am I”? beyond the immediate content)?

In this study, three-level positioning analysis, a potent tool in identity studies (DeFina, 2013), was employed to examine deeply how a teacher candidate positioned herself in relation to greater social injustices. A detailed description of this study’s data analysis is presented later in chapter three.

**Key Terms and Definitions**

Table 1.1 provides key terms and definitions for accessibility.

**Table 1.1**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key terms and definitions</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discursive Positioning</td>
<td>The discursive construction in which individuals in conversation and other discourses position themselves in relation to each other and broader social roles and identities (Davies and Harré, 1990).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discursive Identity/Positioned Identity</td>
<td>An individual takes on identities in given context by using langue to position themself in particular ways. These identities may be briefly occupied and abandoned as the individual responds to the contingencies of unfolding discourse that may accumulate ideological associations with both large-scale and local characteristics of identity (Bucholtz &amp; Hall, 2005; Davies and Harré, 1990).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Identity</td>
<td>The <em>professional</em> identity a teacher develops that is dichotomous to a teacher’s <em>personal</em> identity(^1). Instead of developing along a linear path, teacher identity is dynamic and shifts over time and space with the influence of both internal and external factors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>An individual’s traits, behaviors, beliefs, values, characteristics, and skills that are embedded in society and social structures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^1\) Instead of considering teacher identity in a dichotomous construct, *professional* vs. *personal*, this dissertation argues that these aspects of teacher identity are one and the same and must be studied and addressed as such.
In this study, these components of an individual’s identity are surfaced when the participant engages in co-constructed storylines. Within these storylines, the participant discursively positions herself and thus, constructs her discursive identity.

**Intersectionality**

A lens to analyze how historically specific kinds of power differentials and/or constraining normativities, based on discursively, institutionally, and/or structurally constructed socio-cultural categorizations such as gender, ethnicity, race, class, sexuality, age/generation, (dis)ability, nationality, mother tongue and so on, interact and in doing so produce different kinds of societal inequalities and social relations (Crenshaw, 1989; 1994; Lykke, 2010).

**Practicum Setting**

In the context of this study, teacher candidates spent five days per week in their student teaching setting. The semester prior to this study, teacher candidates were in this setting four days per week. This setting was an assigned classroom in which the teacher candidate observed their cooperating teacher, planned, and taught lessons.

**Small Group Discussions**

Situated in this study, small group discussions served as an opportunity in which participants may surface their identities through discursive positioning. Three self-selected participants and I met for a series of nine hour-long small group discussions. The emergent curriculum for these small group discussions was based on Curry-Steven’s (2007) pedagogy for the privileged. Each small group discussion was recorded and transcribed.

**Social Identity**

Categorical dimensions of identity such as gender, race, social class, (dis)ability, nationality, and sexuality that are socially constructed concepts and are lodged in broader societal and institutional structures (Pugach et al., 2019; Sensory & DiAngelo, 2012).

**Social Justice**

A continual pursuit toward fair access, for all individuals, to needed resources.

**Storyline**

The organization and use of elements constructing an easily recognizable story that is dynamic and open-ended rather than a monolithic retelling of personal past experiences (Andersson, 2008; Georgakopoulou, 2005).

**Teaching Toward Social Justice**

Simultaneously, a process and product that includes the “restructuring of how one understands the world and..."
Format of this Dissertation

This dissertation consists of five chapters. In chapter one, I introduce the purpose of the research and provide relevant literature in chapter two. Then, I describe the research methodology and design, context, and participant, in chapter three. Later, in chapter four, I present two rounds of findings 1) preliminary insights determined from the process of engaging with Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level data analysis, and 2) three findings revealed through in a final round of thematic analysis. Finally, in chapter five, I synthesize and interpret research questions’ findings to offer implications for practice.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided an introduction to the research which studied one teacher candidate’s identity as it related to social justice. Additionally, the chapter detailed two scholarly extensions this study provides, 1) the investigation of one teacher candidate’s understanding of social justice and how this aligned with her practices in the classroom setting (Mills & Ballantyne, 2016; Sleeter, 2004) and 2) an intersectional analysis of one teacher candidate’s identity (Pugach et al., 2019). Then, the research questions were presented and the theoretical framework was described. More specifically, this chapter defined social justice in the United States, as a continuous pursuit toward fair access, for all individuals, to needed resources. Then, a pragmatic approach to teaching toward social justice was shared, which involves the constant restructuring of how one understands the world, their place in it, and responsibility for creating change (Curry-Stevens, 2004). Finally, this chapter also provided key terms and definitions to establish a shared understanding before moving into subsequent chapters. Chapter two will provide an overview of the scholarly literature which informed this study.
Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Introduction

Chapter one provided an introduction to this research by detailing its purpose and its theoretical framework. Additionally, chapter one specifically stated the problem statement and research questions. Chapter two will review the relevant literature.

The purpose of this single-case study was to examine how one K-4 teacher candidate discursively positioned her identity in relation to social justice when participating in small group discussions, one-on-one interviews, and observation debriefs. Further, I sought to understand how this positioning aligned with the teacher candidate’s practices in the practicum setting. A critical review of related literature facilitated the development of concepts that guided data collection and data analysis methods.

This review examines empirical studies and relevant literature that addresses preservice teacher education related to social justice and identity. This literature review reveals the lack of empirical research regarding both teacher candidates’ identities through a lens of intersectionality and how these identities align with practices in the practicum setting. This review is representative of the literature, not exhaustive. It includes both empirical and theoretical works, with specific inclusion criteria for empirical literature.

The chapter begins with empirical findings on the state of preservice teacher education programs in relation to social justice. Later, I share empirical findings on preservice teacher education programs in relation to teacher candidates’ identities. Within these two sections, I describe the inclusion criteria and method along with empirical findings. After this, I detail the theoretical framework of positioning theory and provide relevant empirical findings. In
conclusion, I address teacher candidate identities, which are the core unit of analysis for this study, related to teaching toward social justice and intersectionality. More importantly, I describe significant themes from the literature review that will take shape in the data analysis presented in chapter three and findings described in chapter four.

**Empirical Findings on Preservice Teacher Education and Social Justice**

**Inclusion Criteria and Method**

The empirical literature included in this review was limited to studies published between 2005-2020. These studies present a clearer, more historical picture of how social justice has been studied in preservice teacher education. A second criterion used to limit this search was context. I searched exclusively for literature that examines social justice in the context of elementary education teacher preparation programs. Additionally, I did not consider international studies for this search because I aimed to study social justice’s specific social construction within the United States.

The purpose of this review is to examine empirical studies of the relationship between preservice teacher education programs and social justice. I started with a database search in ERIC and ProQuest using the search terms “preservice teacher education” and “social justice.” This general search led to 165 articles. After reviewing the articles with the inclusion criteria, 12 articles remained.

In addition to these articles, a separate Google Scholar search with similar terms led to a 2016 systemic review of empirical literature between 2006-2016 (Mills & Ballantyne). Using citation analysis (Smith, 1981), this review then considered empirical work published between 2016-2020 in conversation with Mills and Ballantyne (2016). Throughout this dissertation’s writing, I conducted additional searches to seek newly published works that might contribute to the context.
The Current State of Preservice Teacher Education and Social Justice

Over the past thirty years, researchers have purposefully studied social justice in relation to teacher preparation programs to improve the preparation of teacher candidates for a diversifying body of K-12 students. Programs are doing so by making structural and curricular changes.

The limited empirical work addressing social justice in preservice teacher education (Enterline, Cochran-Smith, Ludlow, & Mitescu, 2008; Mills & Ballantyne, 2016) notes that teaching about social justice occurs in the periphery of the core curriculum of programs. Sleeter (2014) has coined this approach as ‘happening within rather than across silos.’ Instead of grounding a program of study in analyzing and dismantling structural inequalities found within education, teacher candidates are experiencing a bits-and-pieces approach to teaching for social justice when transitioning from one course to another.

Further, Mills and Ballantyne (2016) claim that many studies investigating social justice in teacher education programs are based on data collected throughout a single course, where social justice issues are addressed peripherally to the core curriculum. A few studies reported on the implementation of a social justice lens, used as a tool to support teacher candidates in critically analyzing past experiences and media (Dharamshi, 2018; Gorski & Dalton, 2020; Navarro, 2018). Additionally, some programs have also added clinical experiences in settings with a diverse student population (McDonald, 2007; 2008). These strategies for addressing social justice in teacher education programs have had limited success (Enterline, et al., 2008).

Further, current scholarship suggests that teacher educators engaging in social justice work have various, unclear understandings of social justice. Mills and Ballantyne (2016) find a spectrum of perceptions, from an emphasis on individual students’ needs to a concern for the broader structural inequities. Finally, scholarship investigating the development of teacher candidate’s conceptions of social justice narrowly focuses on outcomes (Cochran-Smith, Ludlow,

The outcomes-oriented scholarship is often survey-driven and claims that teacher candidates exiting a teacher education program aimed at social justice demonstrate stronger social justice beliefs than teacher candidates first entering the program. Studies focused on describing how and why teacher candidates’ conceptions of social justice evolve throughout a program are smaller-scale. These studies discuss the potential power and limitations within teacher education programs.

Empirical Findings on Preservice Teacher Education and Teacher Candidate Identity

Inclusion Criteria and Method

The empirical literature included in this review is from studies between 2005-2020. This use of scholarship within the past fifteen years illustrates a clearer, more historical picture of how scholars have studied identity in preservice teacher education. A second criterion used to limit this search focused on the context of each study. I was searching exclusively for literature that studies identity in the context of elementary education teacher preparation programs. International articles were considered, as a great deal of the literature is in conversation with Canadian-based researchers Beauchamp and Thomas (2009; 2011). After reviewing the articles with the inclusion criteria, 15
articles remained. Throughout this dissertation’s writing, I conducted additional searches to seek newly published works that might contribute to the context.

**Teacher Candidate Identity**

Scholarship investigating identity in the field of teacher education argues that instead of developing along a linear path, identity is dynamic and shifts over time and space with the influence of both internal and external factors (Breen, 2014; Beauchamp & Thomas, 2009; Boylan & Woolsey, 2015; Flores & Day, 2006; Gee, 2001; Mockler, 2011). In the section to follow, I first review identity scholarship from the field of teacher education. Then, I expand the scope of the literature to address socio-cultural approaches to identity. Finally, I build on socio-cultural approaches by presenting an intersectional approach to studying identity in preservice teacher education programs.

**Teacher Identity**

Teacher education programs provide teacher candidates an opportunity to construct an identity informed by their previous schooling experiences, ideas and concepts promoted by the program, and their ideal image of the teacher they hope to become (Beauchamp & Thomas, 2011). While scholars agree that identity is changed in teacher education programs and beyond through “development,” “construction,” “formation,” “creation,” or “shaping,” the definition of teacher identity in relation to self is still heavily disputed. Mead (1934) recognizes the importance of exploring oneself in relation to society. A few authors have built upon this scholarship and emphasize the role of self-knowledge and self-concept as they are related to teaching practices (Borich, 1999; Hamachek, 1999). Another set of scholars suggest an approach to identity that takes on a more professional focus related to the development of a ‘teacher-self.’ This scholarship studies identity as it pertains to the professional knowledge teachers must possess and place into practice (Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000; Freese, 2006). Further, Rodgers and Scott (2008)
argue for an exploration of identity within both personal and professional dimensions taking into account external aspects (contexts and relationships) and internal aspects (stories and emotions).

In contrast to the duality of personal and professional identity in scholarship, Mockler (2011) presents a framework through which teacher identities can function as both a practical and political tool for the teaching profession. This framework positions ‘being a teacher’ within the constructs of one’s personal experiences, the professional context, and the external political environment (see Figure 1.1). Here, Mockler (2011) positions teachers as agents of change.

**Figure 1.1**

*Formation and mediation of teacher professional identity (Mockler, 2011)*

Through personal development, professional learning, and engagement in teacher activism, Mockler (2011) argues that preservice teacher programs can foster the formation and mediation of teacher identities that elicit (a) enhanced self-knowledge and capacity for reflection, (b) changes to practice, and (c) greater political engagement. Exploring identities may be helpful in “countering current orthodoxies and ‘common sense’ understandings of teacher” professional
practice” (p. 518). Similarly, Gilpin and Liston (2014) suggest that exploring the role of teacher identities in “maintaining the status quo and/or generating social change can lead to renewed opportunities for movement towards greater social justice” (p. 15). This act of continuously reflecting on one’s identity as a teacher functions as a commitment to one’s work by ultimately shaping one’s disposition, effort, professional development, and obligations one sees as intrinsic to their role (Hammerness, Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005).

The role of self-knowledge in relation to society is heavily disputed in current teacher identity literature. Additionally, tensions across the literature perpetuate a dichotomy between professional and personal identities. While a few scholars have attempted to address socio-cultural aspects and implications of identity, Pugach et al. (2019) find that the multitude of socially-constructed identities held by teachers candidates has been overlooked.

**Intersectionality**

Beyond the scholarship above, socio-cultural characteristics of identity are minimally addressed in research examining teacher identity. Pugach et al. (2019) demonstrate this gap in the literature, finding scholarship aimed at social justice in teacher education programs defines identity in singular groups and fails to address multiple identities. Further, they raise concern because only a limited number of studies acknowledge “that not everyone in one identity group has the same identity nor do they encounter the same issues when their multiple group memberships are taken into account” (p. 207).

Pugach et al. (2019) find that out of 39 studies reviewed in a systematic analysis of the literature over the past 25 years, not one study mentions that multiple identities an individual has intersect. Instead, in an attempt to explore a specific research question or context related to social justice, Pugach et al. (2019) note that authors of this body of empirical work “place a particular marginalized social identity or identities in the foreground, as the focal point of the study” (p. 209). Eighteen out of 53 studies place race as the defining identity marker, and 16 center socio-
economic status. One study places (dis)ability as the principle concern. An additional set of studies focus on a “trinity” of social markers, such as race, class, and gender. Pugach et al. (2019) argue that “given the complexity and variability of individual identity,” there is a seemingly infinite list of social identity markers that exists (p. 209). Using one identity marker to frame a study may help define the purpose and contribution of the scholarship. Still, doing so leaves unanswered critical questions about “whether… one has the luxury of allowing other social markers to “disappear” or be entirely excluded from the consideration of social justice, even temporality” (p. 213).

Crenshaw (1989, 1994) developed the term intersectionality in the context of legal issues, specifically out of the need to address the compounding effects of racial and gender discrimination. The goal of this work is to expose the multiple layers of oppression that individuals may experience. Intersectionality acknowledges that not everyone in one identity group has the same identity, nor do they encounter the same issues when their multiple group memberships are taken into account (Crenshaw, 1994). This approach to identity begins to permit examining how, given the complexity of identity interactions, individuals participate- and their identities are lodged- in broader societal and institutional structures (Pugach et al., 2019).

Positioning Theory

The concept of positioning is defined by Davies and Harré (1990) as a discursive practice “whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and intersubjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines” (p. 48). Bamberg (1997a) claims that it is in conversation that people position themselves and, in doing so, “produce one another (and themselves) situationally as ‘social beings’” (p. 336). An individual’s discourse within these jointly produced storylines is defined by the kinds of statements they consist of and license as knowledge, thereby determining one’s interpretation of the self, world, and others (Foucault, 1969).
More recent, interactional approaches to positioning stress that participants actively project and negotiate positions (Bamberg, 1997b; Bamberg & Georgakopoulu, 2008). Positions are locally occasioned and designed and are multifaceted. Further, discourse does not determine subject positions by itself. Instead, people interacting with each other co-construct positions by their actions (Depperman, 2015). These situationally flexible positions give evidence of multiple facets of personal identity. Thus, they are potentially contradictory, fleeting, and contested (Depperman, 2015).

Identity and Positioning Through Narratives

Davies and Harré (1990) are the first to have brought positioning into association with narrative studies. In doing such, they regard positioning as the discursive construction in which individuals in conversation and other discourses position themselves in relation to each other and broader social roles and identities. Bucholtz and Hall (2005) describe this phenomenon by the interactional positions that individuals briefly occupy and then abandon as they respond to the contingencies of unfolding discourse that may accumulate ideological associations with both large-scale and local characteristics of identity.

Since the publication of Davies and Harré’s (1990) seminal work on positioning, the concept has become increasingly popular in narrative studies. In the past 30 years, the second wave of narrative analysis has developed. This second wave is marked as a performance-based, pragmatic approach to narrative and narrative analysis (Bamberg, 1997a). While this branch of narrative studies is grounded in Labov and Waletzky’s (1967) foundational work, it is no longer defined by the sequential telling of past events. Further, looking at narratives without relating them to the teller’s socio-cultural processes and self-identities has become increasingly out of place. More recently, Labov (2010) has argued that narratives are rarely just about the event and include a range of evaluative comments, which are of the main interest for identity work.
This more pragmatic approach to narratives is also seen in small stories’ work (Duranti, 2005). While small stories are not dichotomous to “big stories” or grand narratives, the research aim for studying small stories is to “recognize the pluralism, heterogeneity, and productive coexistence of narratives activities, big and small, in the same events, by the same teller” (Georgakopoulou, 2015, p.256). This practice-based approach to narratives views language as performing specific actions in specific environments and being part of social practices, shaping and being shaped by them.

Bamberg (1997b) and Georgakopoulou (2011) take this pragmatic approach to narratives in their work. Georgakopoulou’s (2011) scholarship argues that narratives “encode the storytellers’ selection and interpretation of what happened, their feelings, attitudes, and emotional interest in the tale, telling, and/or audience” (p. 196). Additionally, narratives serve as an opportunity for “tellers” to assemble elements of their identity in their stories (Bamberg, 1997a). “Above its very referential and informative function,” narratives may serve as a claim as to “who I really am” (p.342).

I found it essential to explore empirical work using Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level analysis because I used this method to analyze this study’s data. This review of empirical work, including the inclusion criteria and method, are shared below. Later, in chapter three Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level analysis will be described as it relates to this study.

**Inclusion Criteria and Method**

The empirical literature included in this review is from studies between 2010-2020. The aim of using students over the past ten years was to gain a more temporary approach to discourse analysis via positioning theory. A second criterion used to limit this search focused on the data analysis of the study. I searched exclusively for literature that studies discursive identity through the lens of Bamberg’s (1997a) analysis.
The purpose of this review is to examine the method and findings of literature employing Bamberg’s (1997a) analysis. I started with a database search in ERIC and ProQuest using the search terms “Bamberg” and “identity.” This general search led to 9 articles. After reviewing the articles with the inclusion criteria, 2 articles remained.

In addition to these articles, I conducted a separate Google Scholar search within articles citing “Bamberg, 1997”. Using citation analysis (Smith, 1981), I then considered empirical work in conversation with Bamberg (1997a) and met the required inclusion criteria.

**Empirical Work**

Scholarship exploring identity through the lens of Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level data analysis aims to understand the intricacies of identities taken-up by speakers within interactive discourse in particular contexts. This review of literature includes studies that examine how an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) student (Simpson, 2011), teacher candidates (Karlsson, 2013), and English teachers (Barkhuizen, 2009; Tajeddin & Eslamdoost, 2019) position their identities in distinct contexts.

Each study completed three-levels of data analysis as outlined by Bamberg (1997a). Simpson’s (2011) analysis focused on transcripts in which the primary participant interacted discursively in an ESOL class. Karlsson’s (2013) analysis examined transcripts of casual conversations between two teacher candidates outside of the university setting. Tajeddin and Eslamdoost (2019) examined 36 Iranian English teachers’ discursive identities by analyzing a panel discussion in which the teachers participated. Finally, Barkhuizen (2009) studied the transcription of narrative interviews involving himself and an English teacher.

One theme across these studies found that examining the positioning of identities through narrative analysis led to an intricate understanding of participants’ positioned identities and unanticipated contradictions. When exploring how an adult English for ESOL student negotiated identity positions, Simpson (2011) studied the significance of creating opportunities to share
narratives in an ESOL classroom setting. As compared to identities typically offered to ESOL students through policy and institutional discourse, he found more complex and nuanced identity positionings. Based on the analysis of her interactive discourse when sharing a narrative, one ESOL student positioned herself as “a person with agency, a person who is resistant to aspects of male hegemony, someone who aligns herself with her mother’s (rather than her father’s) cultural heritage” (p. 21). Simpson (2011) argues that these identities in which this student positions herself are more extensive than those typically offered in adult migrant ESOL classes.

Additionally, Tajeddin and Eslamdoost (2019) found contradictions between quantitative and qualitative data examining how 36 Iranian English teachers perceive themselves as non-native teachers of English. Based on Likert-scale survey results, they found that teachers voted against English’s exclusive ownership by native speakers. The teachers ranked native teachers as better models for learning English. And the teachers agreed that non-native teachers’ awareness of local context and learners’ needs make them better equipped to develop language proficiency.

In contrast to these quantitative findings, Tajeddin and Eslamdoost (2019) found that the same teachers took an opposing stance on similar ideas during a panel discussion. They found that teachers believed in a native vs. non-native speaker dichotomy. In conflict with ranking native teachers as better models for learning English, most teachers disagreed with native speakers’ superiority when it comes to classroom practices during the panel discussion. Tajeddin and Eslamdoost (2019) discuss the implications of this work for the field of English education. Specifically, they argue that while surveys may capture data regarding English teachers’ perceptions of self in relation to English, this quantitative data does not capture the detailed nuances of each teacher’s individual identities.

Barkhuizen (2009) studied the discursive positioning of a graduate student born in Tonga, aiming to become an English teacher after she completes her studies. This study sought to answer the question, ‘Who am I?’ After analyzing transcripts from three narrative interviews, Barkhuizen
(2009) presented findings to the participant, Sela. In reply, she thanked Barkhuizen for “dissecting [her] identity complexity(ies) and thus, giving [her] the ability not only to understand it, but also verbalize it” (p. 295). In discussing this exchange, Barkhuizen (2009) argues that Sela’s response implies an important construct needed in teacher education.

Through making sense of her own claims about identity in the small story, in my analysis, she is now able to re-story her experiences of becoming a language teacher; and with each re-storying continue repositioning and reimagining her own identity (p. 295). Through this ongoing analysis of identities, teachers may evaluate and rethink their identities concerning theory, practice, and larger societal structures (Agee, 2006).

**Discussion**

While scholarship studying social justice in preservice teacher education programs is outcomes-oriented, the purpose of this study was to understand the journey of one teacher candidate. Instead of making a claim that Rebecca becomes more socially-just over time, the aim was to detail, in thick description, how she positioned her identity in relation to social justice throughout multiple settings and over the course of fifteen weeks. More specifically, I was interested in examining how Rebecca’s identity shifted over time and space with the influence of both internal and external factors.

The theoretical framework of positioning theory was used to show these shifts in and influences on Rebecca’s identity. Because positions are locally occasioned and designed in the discourse, they give evidence of multiple facets of personal identity. Later, I describe in chapter four that this study’s findings demonstrate the dynamic interaction of the teacher candidate’s discourse with various settings. Based on internal and external factors across multiple settings, the teacher candidate’s positioned identity is, at times, fleeting and contradictory.

Perhaps one of the strongest contradictions I found between the literature and this study is related to an identity binary. Decades of scholarship studying identity in pre-service teacher
education argues that professional identity (teacher identity) is “developed” while learning to become a teacher. Further, this professional identity is separate from one’s personal identity. As later evidenced in chapter four, the interwoven nature of the multiple facets of Rebecca’s identity blurred lines between ‘personal’ and ‘professional’. Using intersectionality as a lens, I examined the teacher candidate’s shifting identity positions across various settings. Such that individuals co-construct positions through discourse, this study aimed to examine the powerful dynamics that influenced this teacher candidate’s discourse in relation to social justice.

**Chapter Summary**

The aim of this chapter was to provide an overview of the scholarly literature which informed this study. Unlike scholarship aimed at measuring how socially-just teacher candidates become at the conclusion of one course, this study aimed to examine the intricate and detailed journey of one teacher candidate as she navigated her practicum experience. Additionally, in contrast with current scholarship that reinforces a binary between personal and professional identity, this study positions teacher candidates’ identities as simultaneously professional and personal. Finally, similar to current literature employing positioning theory as a theoretical framework, this study sought to illuminate the intricate influence of people and places upon one teacher candidate’s identity. Chapter one introduced the research, detailed the purpose of the study, specifically stated the research questions, and described the theoretical framework and the methods for data analysis. Next, chapter three will detail the methods of this study.
Chapter 3

Methodology

Introduction

The intention of this single-case study was to understand how one teacher candidate positioned her identity in relation to social justice. In addition, the study sought to examine how the teacher candidate’s classroom practices aligned with this positioning. Specifically, the study desired to address two research questions: 1) When participating in weekly small group discussions paired with one-on-one interviews, co-planning sessions, and observation debriefs, how did one teacher candidate position her identity in relation to social justice? and 2) In what ways did this teacher candidate’s practices in the practicum setting align to this positioning?

Within this chapter, I will describe 1) rationale for the research methodology, 2) researcher connection to the context, 3) context and study participant, 4) research design, 6) data collection methods, 7) data analysis procedures, 8) ethical considerations, 9) issues of trustworthiness, 10) limitations and delimitations, and finally, 11) a chapter summary.

This study examined how one teacher candidate positioned her identity, through interactive discourse, in relation to social justice. Additionally, this study sought to understand how this positioning aligned with the teacher candidate’s practices in the practicum setting. The purpose of this study was to extend current scholarship by 1) investigating one teacher candidate’s understanding of social justice and how this aligned with her practices in the classroom setting (Mills & Ballantyne, 2016; Sleeter, 2014) and 2) bringing the intersectionality of one teacher candidate’s identity into focus when analyzing her discursive positioning and classroom practices (Pugach et al., 2019). Beyond the purpose of extending current scholarship, this study is a vital step in addressing the responsibility to actualize justice in educational spaces. I described this third purpose in greater detail in chapter one.
This study’s research questions and purposes were addressed through the analysis of interactive speech in a series of small group discussions, one-on-one interviews, post-observation debriefs, and one-on-one co-planning sessions as well as an analysis of observations in a practicum setting and documents, all described in detail throughout this chapter.

**Rationale for the Research Methodology**

**Qualitative Research**

Qualitative research helps us inquire into and explain the meaning of social phenomena (Merriam, 1998). As a qualitative researcher, I am interested in understanding how people make sense of their world and the experiences they have in the world. Through asking questions and interacting with participants, it is expected that meaning is embedded in participant’s experiences and this meaning is mediated through the researcher’s own perceptions (Glesne, 2011; Merriam, 1998). Because the aim of this study was to come to descriptive findings about how one teacher candidate positioned her identity in relation to social justice and examine how this aligned with her practices, an appropriate qualitative methodology had to be selected.

**Qualitative Case Study**

I was interested in investigating and richly describing the positioning of the participant’s identity within a small group setting and detail ways in which she attempted to bring this learning into her practicum setting. To accomplish this, I adopted the qualitative case study methodology. When selecting an appropriate case study methodology, I revisited Merriam’s (1998), Stake’s (1995), and Yin’s (1994) interpretations of case study.

To begin, Yin (1994) defines case as a “contemporary phenomenon within its real life context, especially when the boundaries between a phenomenon and context are not clear and the researcher has little control over the phenomenon and context” (p. 13). This postpositivist approach to case study attends to the presence of consistency among the design components and phases of research (Yazan, 2015).
Stake (1995) defines case as a bounded system. Unlike Yin (1994), Stake approaches case study with a constructivist perspective in which “understanding phenomena requires looking at a variety of contexts, such as temporal, spatial, economic, historical, political, social, and personal” (Boblin, Ireland, Kirkpatrick, & Robertson, 2013). Further, researchers enter Stake’s approach to case study with no a priori conceptual framework.

Finally, Merriam (1998) argues that the primary interest is in a case study is to understand the meaning or knowledge constructed by people. She defines a case study in terms of its *end product*, rather than defining a case study as a research process (Yin, 1994) or method (Stake, 1995). I take the term *end product* to mean the robust, descriptive interpretation of knowledge constructed by the participant. After considering three approaches to case study, I chose Merriam (1998) as I intended on arriving at the end of this study with a thick description of how one teacher candidate positioned her identity in relation to social justice and sought to understand how the teacher candidate’s practices in the practicum setting aligned with this positioning.

Further, I chose to examine one teacher candidate’s positioned identity as an intrinsic case (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Stake (1995) describes the difference between intrinsic and instrumental case studies. “For the intrinsic case study, case is dominant; the case is of highest importance. For instrumental case study, issue is dominant; we start and end with issues dominant” (Stake, 1995, p.16). This study, from its initial stages aimed to explore the intricate nuances of how one teacher candidate positioned her identity in relation to social justice. Thus, the teacher candidate’s identity is of highest importance.

*Descriptive Case Study*

Merriam (1998) argues that a descriptive case study ends in a detailed, and thick description of the phenomenon under study. Olson (in Merriam, 1998, p. 30) offers several aspects of a descriptive case study with which this research aligns. These include 1) illustrating
the complexities of a situation - the fact that not one but many factors contribute to it, 2) having the advantage of hindsight yet can be relevant in the present, 3) showing the influence of the passage of time on the issue, 4) including vivid material, and 5) obtaining information from a wide variety of sources.

One strength of choosing descriptive case study is that it offers “a means of investigating complex social units consisting of multiple variables of potential importance in understanding the phenomenon” (Merriam, 1998, p. 41). Conversely, Guba and Lincoln (1981) warn that one danger of choosing this methodology is that readers may think case studies are accounts of the whole. Additionally, Merriam (1998) states that concerns of integrity and ethics of the investigator remain limitations to the case study methodology. Later in this chapter, I address the latter two limitations.

**Researcher Connection to the Context**

While the participant and context will be described in detail in the following section, it is important to address my personal connection to this research. The College of Education in which this research was conducted is where I studied as an undergraduate student. In 2011, I received a K-6 elementary education bachelor of science degree from this Mid-Atlantic University after completing my student teaching in the Central District Professional Development School (PDS). After graduating, I taught kindergarten and fourth grade in an elementary school tucked into an international neighborhood located in Fairfax, Virginia. During my six years in the classroom setting, I remained in contact with a few PDS instructors. I often sent emails and made phone calls in which I shared problems of practice. Over time, one theme across these problems of practice was a disconnect I felt between myself, my students, and their families.

I identify as a White, hetero-female. I am able-bodied, mono-lingual, and most of my life was spent in the middle-class socio-economic bracket. I also identify with the intersectionalities of these groups. When the opportunity to return to the setting in which I learned to become a
teacher, as a Ph.D. student, I took it without looking back. My aim in returning to this setting in 2017 was to examine the ways in which the Central District PDS addressed issues of diversity and bias.

From 2017-2019, I was served as a teacher educator with supervisory duties in the Central District PDS. During the 2017-2018 and 2018-2019 school years, I co-instructed the fall PDS course Classroom Learning Environment (CLE). In the spring semester, I co-instructed a weekly PDS seminar. Additionally, each year I supervised two teacher candidates. A detailed description of the Central District PDS will come in the next section.

Over the course of these two years, I became known in the Central District PDS setting as the ‘equity’ person. My scholarship and interests centered on issues of equity, therefore when co-planning for instruction or facilitating observation debriefs with teacher candidates, I pushed for conversations to address educational equity and social justice.

During the 2019-2020 school year, the Central District PDS minimized the number of teacher educators actively involved in the program. While my assistantship was not directly assigned to the Central District PDS during the 2019-2020 school year, I remained involved with this PDS along with another graduate student to support a shift in curriculum and learning to center equity and social justice. In addition to my active research in the setting, the curriculum and instruction within the Central District PDS was shaped by another graduate student’s dissertation in which she sought to understand how teacher candidates, in a year-long K-4 PDS, may develop into socially just teachers who commit to eradicating structural and historical inequalities in and of schooling. While I supported the shift in curriculum through co-planning and occasionally co-instructing, this study was designed as a branch off of the core curriculum.

Within the bounds of the study, I identified myself as a researcher, small group facilitator and participant, and a critical friend. Further, I believe that my relationship with various teacher educators and teacher candidates contributed positively to this study. Because the teacher
candidates knew me personally, they appeared to speak in small group discussions, interviews, co-planning sessions, and observation debriefs with authenticity. They did not seem concerned that I would speak to others about their involvement in the study or ideas that they contributed. I reassured them of confidentiality and that their participation would not be known to anyone, including other Central District PDS teacher candidates. Knowing the teacher candidates beforehand did not negatively impact the findings of this study; rather, my prior relationships helped them to be forthcoming about personal experiences, held beliefs, and perplexing questions in small group discussions, one-on-one interviews, one-on-one planning sessions, and observation debriefs.

The Context and Study Participants

Context

This study took place within a predominantly-White University, located in the mid-Atlantic region of the United States and Central School District\(^2\). More specifically, it was set in the Central District Professional Development School (PDS). To protect anonymity, the university, school district, and PDS are referenced in this study by pseudonyms. The term “professional development school” refers to a unique form of partnership between universities and K-12 schools or school districts (Lyman, Foyle, Morehead, Schwerdtfeger, & Lyman, 2017). PDSs are partnerships rooted in a reciprocal commitment to improving all affiliated partners, often with a particular emphasis on quality preparation of teacher candidates who are placed at K-12 schools within the partnership. Additionally, PDSs involve the development of professional roles that exist in a shared “third space” between the university and the school (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Clinical Practice Commission, 2018).

\(^2\) Central School District is categorized as simultaneously, a suburban and rural district. The district reports the students population categorized as: 2.4% African American, 3.49% Hispanic, 5.08% Multi-Racial, 8.02% Asian, 80.75% White, 16.5% Economically Disadvantaged, 3.43% English Language Learners, 10.5% Special Education (Central School District, 2020).
During the 2019-2020 school year, the Central District PDS was comprised of 12 teacher candidates, 12 cooperating teachers, 3 supervising teacher educators, 1 teacher educator without supervisory assignments, and 3 graduate students. Within an established partnership between the University and local school district, teacher candidates were placed with cooperating teachers in the K-4 setting for one full schoolyear. Teacher candidates abandoned the University calendar and followed the school district’s calendar.

Typically, teacher candidates begin their student teaching in late August, before the University’s academic year started and remain past their graduation until the last day of K-4 school. The 2019-2020 school year proved to be unique as it was impacted by the global pandemic, COVID-19. Following the teacher candidate’s Spring Break, much of the United States went into a state of lockdown. In the matter of a few days, the Central School District closed its doors and shifted to an online learning model. As such, teacher candidates did not return to the University or their teaching practicum settings.

In addition to time spent in their practicum setting (in-person and virtual), this cohort engaged in methods coursework together in the fall and a weekly seminar in the spring. After March 13, 2020, weekly seminar was shifted to an online platform as well. The four teacher educators and 3 graduate students (including myself) had a strong relationship with the cohort of teacher candidates as we co-taught methods courses and seminar, regularly provided feedback to teacher candidate’s lesson plans, and engaged in observation cycles in the practicum setting.

Finally, inquiry was both a signature pedagogy for the Central District PDS as well as a stance for teacher reflection and professional development. Practitioner inquiry was introduced to the teacher candidates in their Fall methods courses, and in Spring, teacher candidates started the semester by developing and refining wonderings on teaching, learning, schooling, etc. Throughout the semester, during Seminar, teacher candidates participated in workshops and activities meant to support their inquiries. Typically, the Spring semester culminates with a
Teacher Inquiry conference, in which teacher candidates present on their inquiries and write a final research paper.

Participants

Participant Selection

There were twelve teacher candidates in the 2019-2020, K-4 Central District PDS program. I planned to focus on the experiences of three to four teacher candidates. After I shared my research interest and participant commitments with the whole group of PDS teacher candidates, three teacher candidates self-selected to participate in this study (see Appendix A for the recruitment script). Participants self-selected in early January, 2020 as the cohort of teacher candidates began the second half of their student-teaching experiences in PDS. To protect anonymity, all three participants are referenced in this study by pseudonyms.

Primary Participant

Data were collected on all three participants over the course of fifteen weeks. One participant was chosen as the single case. In August, 2020, after considering the first round of data analysis, I chose to make Rebecca the case for this study. The process of selecting Rebecca as the primary participant is detailed in the following section. First, I will share a description of Rebecca, detailed through her direct quotes and images from her personal reflections.

In August, 2019, Rebecca and the cohort of teacher candidates took part in a two-day seminar called Jumpstart. During these two days, the teacher candidates were introduced to the PDS community. Simultaneously, teacher educators used this time as an opportunity to get to know the teacher candidates. During one activity, teacher candidates were asked to map their identities. As depicted in Figure 3.1, Rebecca identified herself in relation to friends, family, her athletic and traveler dispositions, and her affiliation with education.
In addition to this initial identity map, I noted in my participation during Jumpstart, that Rebecca spoke about her prior experiences with 4-H\(^3\). When co-instructing a class during Jumpstart, I documented in my field notes that Rebecca shared, “I want my class to bring ideas up with one another, individuality is important, but not everything. I like how we work together to be successful.”

**Figure 3.1**

*Rebecca’s identity map September, 2019*

Later, at the start of her second semester, Rebecca self-selected to be part of this study. During my pre-interview with Rebecca, I asked her to get us started by sharing some of the ways that she identified herself.

During our first interview, in January 2020, Rebecca identified herself in the following exchange:

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\(^3\) 4-H is a U.S.-based network of youth organizations. 4-H is “delivered by Cooperative Extension- a community of more than 100 public universities across the nation that provides experiences where young people learn by doing.” (4-H, 2021)
A few weeks after initial interviews, the participants and I engaged in the Paseo protocol (see Appendix B) in our fourth small group discussion (School Reform Initiative, 2001). We placed our names at the center of an identity web and used two colors to write descriptors with which we identify ourselves (Rebecca used deep purple) and people may use to identify us (light purple). Figure 3.2 depicts Rebecca’s identity web.

**Figure 3.2**

*Rebecca’s identity web February, 2020*

During our second interview, which took place at the end of February, 2020, Rebecca identified herself with a slightly different lens. After initially discussing her upcoming lessons and supporting her with potential lesson plans, I began the interview.

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<tr>
<th>136</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>To get us started, ah, can you share some of the ways that you identify yourself?</th>
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<tr>
<td>137</td>
<td>R</td>
<td>I really liked the activity the other day in our small group because</td>
</tr>
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it helped me visualize how I identify myself. I know that last time, I was
more like character traits, I feel like, that I mentioned. And I think like
being around Elizabeth and Elizabeth focusing on her identity really helps
me realize oh, yeah I guess I can relate to some of those things as well.
Um. Like, I guess I identify as a female. I am White. I am a Catholic. I
haven’t mentioned that before. Um. I’m brunette. I’m a sister, a daughter.
I’m a girlfriend. And I, and that was a thing that sometimes I identify
myself as and sometimes other people identify me as that, as a girlfriend. I
am a student, an intern, an educator. I’m trying to think of other ones that
I wrote. I (...) I can’t necessarily identify as an advocate just yet. I’m not
there yet. I’m working towards it.

Finally, Rebecca identified herself during our post-interview.

I identify myself as an educator. As a White female. As a family
member. As a friend. As a girlfriend. Um. (...) As a University student.
(...) As a colleague. I think that’s it.

Primary Participant Selection. To begin the process of selecting one participant for this single-case study, I decided to look across each participant’s pre-interviews. When responding to an initial question related to identifying oneself, the two other participants, Elizabeth (E) and Caroline (C), seemed to refer to identity in ways that tied to society.

So (...) and I’m White. SO there’s that too. So that is something
I am still trying to figure out what the means to me and then what that
means to other people.

Caroline shared:

Um (..) Let’s see. So I am:: a student. A teacher. I am White. I
am part-Jewish. Um:: (...) I’d also consider myself part of the Adult
Children Community for the Children of Addicts and Alcoholics. Um. I
would call myself a sibling. <I am trying to think of what else.> Um. I
was a food service employee for many years. And now I am not. Um,
<but I guess I still kind of> identify with that.

When considering the content of each participant’s response to this initial question, I noted in my analytical memos that Rebecca’s case seemed unique because “she does not clearly, or in an implied way, relate her identities to greater social roles.” Because this study included an emergent curriculum in which the participants were asked to consider themselves in relation to social justice, I felt compelled to investigate Rebecca’s positioned identity.
In addition to taking the participant’s initial interview into account, I noticed in my analytical memos that, when remote instruction began and our small group discussions moved to an online platform, Rebecca “physically and verbally seem[ed] different in our discussions.” I wondered if a “change in location” or “COVID-19 burn-out” was impacting how Rebecca was participating. Based on this reasoning, Rebecca was chosen as the primary participant.

**Research Design**

The original design for this study consisted of three distinct parts: 1) a series of nine weekly small group discussions involving three participants and myself, 2) interviews with participants before, during, and after the span of small group discussions, and 3) observations and post-observation debriefs in the practicum setting. Due to a delay in approval to observe in practicum settings and COVID-19, the design as implemented included various shifts, as depicted in Table 3.1.

The biggest shifts in the design of this study versus the implementation included a change from meeting with participants in-person versus via an online platform. Additionally, the duration of the small group discussions were shortened post-COVID, as participants expressed fatigue related to spending full days in front of their computer screens. Finally, the participants decided to shift small group discussion eight to one-on-one planning sessions. The next three sections will detail each of these components.

**Table 3.1**

*Study design as implemented*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 21-27, 2020</td>
<td>One-on-One Pre Interviews (In-Person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 28, 2020</td>
<td>Small Group Discussion 1 (In-Person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 4, 2020</td>
<td>Small Group Discussion 2 (In-Person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Event Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 11, 2020</td>
<td>Small Group Discussion 3 (In-Person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 19, 2020</td>
<td>Small Group Discussion 4 (In-Person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 22-28, 2020</td>
<td>One-on-One Mid-Term Interviews (In-Person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 27, 2020</td>
<td>Observation in Rebecca’s Practicum Setting (In-Person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observation Debrief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 3, 2020</td>
<td>Small Group Discussion 5 (In-Person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 5, 2020</td>
<td>Observation in Rebecca’s Practicum Setting (In-Person)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Observation Debrief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 9-13, 2020</td>
<td>Spring Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 13, 2020</td>
<td>COVID-19 Shut Down: University emails that students are to not return to campus. School district emails that instruction will shift to remote learning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 24, 2020</td>
<td>Small Group Discussion 6 (Online Platform)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 2, 2020</td>
<td>Small Group Discussion 7 (Online Platform)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 6, 2020</td>
<td>Individual meeting with participants in place of small group discussion 8. (Online Platform)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 8, 2020</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 14, 2020</td>
<td>Small Group Discussion 9 (Online Platform)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apr. 20-24, 2020</td>
<td>One-on-One Post Interviews (Online Platform)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Small Group Discussion**

As originally planned, nine small group discussions, involving three teacher candidates and myself, were to take place for one hour per week outside of the typical Central District PDS structure. The purpose of designing and implementing this curriculum was primarily aimed at providing an opportunity for teacher candidates to surface their identities in relation to social justice through co-constructed discourse. As detailed in a section below, COVID-19 impacted small group discussions. As such, eight small group discussions took place. One small group
discussion was replaced with one-on-one co-planning meetings between the participants and myself.

The date and location of each discussion was determined by the three teacher candidates. After COVID-19 shifted us to remote learning, the location became a pre-determined online space. Each discussion was recorded and later transcribed for data collection. The curriculum addressed during these small group meetings was based on Curry-Steven’s (2007) Pedagogy for the Privileged.

**Pedagogy for the Privileged**

Pedagogy for the Privileged emerged in research out of the need for a distinct approach to traditional social justice pedagogy, which rarely distinguishes the needs of the oppressed from those of the privileged (Curry-Stevens, 2007). Recent scholars, arguing for a shift in pedagogy towards one that seeks to transform privileged learners into allies in the struggle for social justice, have termed this work “pedagogy for the non-poor” (Evans, Evans, & Kennedy, 1995), “Whiteness studies” (Fine, Weis, Powell & Wong, 1997; Helfand & Lippin, 2002; Katz, 2003); and “education for the privileged” (Goodman, 2001). Curry-Stevens (2007) proposes one of the first pedagogical models for the transformation of privileged learners through subsequent processes of confidence-shaking and confidence-building.

Most notable across this literature is the concern and debate centered on naming privilege. Curry-Stevens (2007) discusses this issue as it pertains to focusing “on privilege without discounting other identities that are oppressed and without evoking the “race to innocence” (Fellows & Razack, 1998) that results in privileged learners discounting their privilege to be understood as oppressed” (p. 37). Privilege and oppression fluctuate from one context to another (Goodman, 2001; Curry-Stevens, 2007).

Thus, Pedagogy for the Privileged is grounded in an intersectional framework. In this framework, an individual’s multiple identities, either moderate or exacerbate privilege and
oppression. Take, for example, a White female with a physical handicap. On the dimension of race, this individual’s experiences may be moderated by her White skin. Alternately, her experiences may be exacerbated as a female with a physical handicap. Pedagogy for the Privileged involves an in-depth interrogation of an individual’s power and powerlessness. It requires the individual to look beyond their own victimhood by recognizing their positionality among socially-constructed privileges.

Using Curry-Steven’s (2007) Pedagogy of the Privileged as a pedagogical model, I planned to orient each conversation toward a progression of topics. See Table 3.2 for the small group discussion planned curriculum progression. As originally planned, this curriculum was to progressively lead small group discussions through acts of cognitively unpacking one’s identity in relation to privilege, power, oppression, and action. By this, I mean that the aim of developing and implementing this small group curriculum was to provide opportunities for teacher candidates to surface their identities in relation to social justice.

**Table 3.2**

*Small group discussion planned curriculum progression*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG1: Transformative Learning, Terms, Logistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG2: Awareness of Oppression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG3: Oppression as Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG4: Locating Oneself as Oppressed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Point Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG5: Locating Oneself as Privileged</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG6: Understanding Benefits from Privilege</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG7: Understanding Oneself as an Oppressor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG8: Building Confidence to Take Action &amp; Plan Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG9: Arrange Ongoing Support &amp; Declare Actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post- Interviews</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Curriculum as Taught**

**Overall Changes to the Curriculum as Planned.** The curriculum as taught in this study had minor revisions from the curriculum as planned. To begin, after our first small group discussion, I emailed the participants to ask if it would be okay to shift the naming of topics each week to questions.

I did some thinking about our learning together and have a wondering I want to put out there… What if we were to take the “learning progression” I shared last week and turn it into a building inquiry question? Total transparency: I wonder if it will be helpful to use language that PDS uses with inquiry (H. Klock, personal communication, February, 3, 2020)?

This idea came to mind because the Central District PDS implements inquiry pedagogies in coursework and supervision. In response, the participants were happy to make this shift. See Table 3.3 and Table 3.4 for weekly questions. In addition to this minor change, during our seventh small group discussion, the participants asked if the eighth small group discussion could instead, be one-on-one co-planning sessions with me. Details about this reasoning behind this shift will be articulated in the next section. The curriculum as taught will be described in two parts, pre and post-pandemic.

**Pre-Pandemic Curriculum as Taught.** Our first four small group discussions took place weekly from January 28, 2020 through February 19, 2020. During the week of February 22, 2020, participants and I met individually for our mid-term interviews. Our final in-person small group discussion took place on March 3, 2020.

Our meeting places included a local library’s study space, a local grocery store’s food court, and a school district conference room. While two of these locations were in public spaces, we were able to create an environment that was removed from the general public. Each small
group discussion was planned to take one hour. Occasionally, the participants decided to allow the discussion to extend beyond an hour.

**Table 3.3**

Small group discussion curriculum as taught pre-pandemic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Wonderings</th>
<th>Readings &amp; Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SG1: Learning, Terms, Logistics</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>• <em>Home Was a Horse Stall:</em> Anayze language used to identify people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Establish group norms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG2: Awareness of Oppression</td>
<td>In what ways is oppression present in society/ school?</td>
<td>• Chalk Talk Protocol: What is oppression?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>Yeah, But They’re White:</em> How does this relate to our understandings of oppression?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Open discussion of wondering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG3: Oppression as Structure</td>
<td>Where is oppression and what are its motivations? Who is motivated to maintain oppression? Why is it there? What is it doing?</td>
<td>• Consultancy Protocol: Elizabeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Open discussion of wonderings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG4: Locating Oneself as Oppressed</td>
<td>How is oppression present in my life? Why is it there?</td>
<td>• The Paseo Protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Open discussion of wondering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• What does this mean for your practice?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG5: Locating Oneself as Privileged</td>
<td>What institutional structures maintain my privilege? What is my relationship with this privilege? My relationship with these structures?</td>
<td>• Chapter 5 (Sensory &amp; DiAngelo, 2017): Text Rendering Protocol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Consultancy Protocol: Rebecca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Open discussion of wonderings</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The curriculum of these small group discussions was grounded in iterative weekly wonderings. Before most small group meetings, the participants read a recommended text and our time together was structured with a discussion protocol. These included the Paseo (School Reform Initiative, 2001), Consultancy (School Reform Initiative, 2011), Chalk Talk (National
School Reform Faculty, 2017), and Text Rendering (National School Reform Faculty, 2014) protocol. See Appendices B, C, D, and E for each protocol.

**Post-Pandemic Curriculum as Taught.** The fifth small group discussion took place on March 3, 2020. The global pandemic caused by COVID-19 sent the United States into a state of lockdown and learning shifted to online platforms. While I remained in contact with participants via individual texts and emails, I did not email the full group until March 20, 2020. Within a the exchange of a few emails, we identified a date and time to engage in our sixth small group discussion.

I selected an array of recommended texts with which the participants chose to engage for discussions six and seven. An additional shift I made in the curriculum post COVID-19, was to not use structured protocols for discussion. I made this change and provided more time for individual reflection within small group discussions to ease, what I perceived as heavy burdens the participants were carrying. I noticed in the weekly Central District PDS spring seminar, teacher candidates seemed exhausted and less-engaged in the online learning platform. Thus, to ease participants back into this study, I opted for less-structured discussions.

One final change to the curriculum as taught, was made by the participants. Each participant was engaging with their online practicum settings in drastically different ways, so they asked if small group eight could become one-on-one co-planning sessions. After this decision was made, I met during the week of April 6, 2020, with each participant individually to create a plan of action.
### Table 3.4

**Small group discussion curriculum as taught post-pandemic**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Wonderings</th>
<th>Readings &amp; Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SG6:</td>
<td><strong>Understanding Benefits from Privilege</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What am I choosing to discuss in my place of power?</td>
<td>• NPR Podcast <em>Teaching 6-Year-Olds About Privilege and Power</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What am I choosing to not discuss?</td>
<td>• Independent reflection using wonderings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What does that tell me about my privilege?</td>
<td>• Open discussion of wonderings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG7:</td>
<td><strong>Understanding Oneself as an Oppressor</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How well do I know the complexities and intersectionalities of my students’ identities?</td>
<td>• <em>Intersectionality in the Classroom: A Trans Educator’s Perspective</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>Intersectional Identities: Do Educators Empower or Oppress?</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Open discussion of wonderings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• So What? Make plans for next steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG8:</td>
<td><strong>Building Confidence to Take Action &amp; Plan Action</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>One-on-one meeting</em></td>
<td>What does it mean, to me, to be a social-justice minded teacher? (Q1)</td>
<td>• Locating confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Who am I in relation to that identity? (Q2)</td>
<td>• Fold paper in half- on first side, draw/write: Q1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What new knowledge/perspective(s) have led me to where I stand today? (Q3)</td>
<td>• On other side, draw/write: Q2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you had a magic wand, what actions would you want to take next? (Q4)</td>
<td>• In between each side, draw/write: Q3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How can we make your magic wand scenario a reality? (Q5)</td>
<td>• List it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Turn paper over, Q4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Open discussion Q5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SG9:</td>
<td><strong>Arrange Ongoing Support &amp; Declare Actions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Consider the wonderings we have address in the last 8 small group conversations.</td>
<td>• Open discussion of wonderings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Which wonderings have a lasting impact on you? How so and why?</td>
<td>• Share plans made in one-on-one planning from week 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Design collective plan for ongoing support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Observations

In addition to the small group discussions I planned to observe once per week for up to two hours in each teacher candidate’s practicum placement. Due to a delay in research approval from the school district, this aspect of the study was postponed. By the fourth small group discussion, I began observing in the practicum setting. These observations were scheduled according to each teacher candidate with input from their cooperating teacher.

I observed in Rebecca’s classroom on two occasions, February 27, 2020 and March 5, 2020. On February 27, 2020, Rebecca taught a lesson that addressed empathy in relation to Ruby Bridges. During my second observation, Rebecca taught a lesson that addressed identity and perspective. This lesson was a follow-up to the lesson taught on February 27, 2020. After each observation, Rebecca and I engaged in a post-observation debrief for about 15 minutes. During this time, I shared my observation document (see Table 3.5). This document noted Rebecca’s specific interactions with students during the lesson and bolded questions I wondered during the observation. These discussions were aimed at challenging Rebecca to engage in reflection.

Following this second observation, Rebecca returned home for Spring Break. Due to the global pandemic caused by COVID-19, the school district decided to close schools and shift learning to a remote environment. For the remainder of this study, I did not complete observations in Rebecca’s practicum placement because of restrictions implemented by the school district. As an individual without direct ties to a classroom (i.e. teacher candidate, teacher candidate’s supervisor), I was restricted from entering into the online learning environment.

4 On November 14, 1960, Ruby Bridges was one of the first African-American children to desegregate an all-White elementary school in New Orleans, Louisiana. To this day she is an American civil rights activist.
### Table 3.5

**Observation field notes excerpt taken on March 5, 2020**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rebecca’s (R) interactions</th>
<th>Student (S) interactions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| R “What comes to mind/ write down what you think when I say or when you hear the word identity?” | S: Identity theft  
S: hidden faces  
S: identity property in math & characteristics  
S: Characteristics of a person (students call out different characteristics) |
| R “An identity web helps us understand a person better.” | As more items were added to the brainstorm, after the participant said *culture*, S was overheard saying “That’s a lot of personal information!” |
| R: Creating web for Malala | The first few items on Malala identity web were related to gender, participant provided age, loved to learn, strong, brave, willpower. |
| In order to get more responses, the participant said: “What else did she love?” | **Is our identity about what we love? How so? How not?** |
| **“I might call that an activist. Does anyone know what that word means?”** | S “She appreciated speaking out”  
S made some text to text connection. Rebecca responded to that. Cooperating teacher said that “an activist goes out to seek things to work against.” |
| **“What was Malala an activist for?”** | I did not notice many student hands. |
| **“An activist for women’s… female… education for all.”** | **Why did you land on education for all and not something more aligned with women?** |
| **“We are not going to go any further into her culture because I do not want to do it wrong.”** | In response to participant sharing her identity web:  
Students saying identity web items aloud, I was only able to capture some of them:  
Softball, are you catholic?, polish, you like science fiction? |
| **How could you do it wrong? Do students need to know that? If teaching for SJ is about having the knowledge and skills to do this work- what knowledge or skills would you have like to have had here?** | **How did you feel when students were surprised by some of these things? Did you web provide students with information that students do not usually know about their teacher? Does that matter?** |
Interviews

I interviewed Rebecca three times across the semester-long data collection: once in January 2020, at the midpoint of the semester in February 2020, and at the end of the Spring semester. Each interview lasted between 45 minutes to one hour. They were audio-recorded and transcribed. These qualitative interviews had an open structure that permitted me to follow the thought of the participant while staying inside the frame of the study (Weiss, 1994). This structure allowed Rebecca to talk freely and in depth about the topic and provide concrete examples to illustrate her point.

The purpose of the first interview was to understand how Rebecca thought about her identity in relation to social justice before we engaged in the curriculum material. In this interview, I asked a series of questions:

1. In order to get us started, could you please share some of the ways that you identify yourself?
2. Have ever thought about how these social categories with which you identify yourself have worked to help you? Have they worked against you? How so?
3. In terms of who you are, how do you see yourself in relation to society?
4. How do you see your identity in relation to the teaching profession?
5. How do you see your identity in relation to power?

Then, the second and third interviews were aimed at providing space for Rebecca to reflect on her previous interviews, small group discussions, and observations. This was done by first asking Rebecca an interview question then following her discourse with an audio-clip I selected from previous interviews. At the conclusion of the audio-clip, I asked Rebecca, Tell me what you are thinking in response to that audio-clip. The purpose of re-playing these audio-clips was to support Rebecca in further developing, critiquing, and questioning her previous ideas related to her identity, society, and education. Over the course of three interviews, I also used
probing questions to dig deeper into Rebecca’s responses when necessary. These prompts included, *Can you tell me more about...?* And *Can you explain ___ in a bit more depth?*

**Data Collection Methods**

The main method of data collection for this study was small group discussions. Eight small group discussions and one co-planning session lasted about one hour each. These were audio recorded then later transcribed. Another source of data that was audio recorded and later transcribed were one-on-one interviews with the participant which took place before, in the middle, and after the nine weeks of small group discussions. An additional source of data included field notes taken during observations in the practicum setting and transcriptions from post-observation debriefs with Rebecca. As a participant observer in the practicum setting, field notes served as a mechanism to record my observations.

Written work from Rebecca was also data collected and later analyzed. These documents included: 1) written lesson plans and reflections, 2) weekly reflections typically sent to her supervisor, 3) completed coursework from Fall 2019, 4) teaching platform, 5) notes taken during small group discussions, 6) notes taken during spring 2020 seminar and 7) email correspondences (between Rebecca & myself) related to small group discussions and/or attempts to bring this learning into the classroom setting.

Finally, analytical memos served as data collection method through which I gathered and kept track of my thinking throughout the process of the study. These memos became a running reflexive history of my understandings of themes as they emerge in the research. Especially after we shifted to an online platform due to COVID-19, I documented insights and questions I had regarding Rebecca’s physical presence the online learning space. Completing reflexive analytical memos required an active “construction of interpretations of experiences in the field and a questioning of how these interpretations arise” (Bott, 2010, p. 160). I found myself engaging with
analytical memos regularly before and after small group discussions, one-on-one co-planning sessions, and the final round of interviews.

**Data Analysis**

To understand the positioning of Rebecca in relation to social justice, I adopted two layers of data analysis. The first method for data analysis was Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level positioning. This data analysis focused on transcribed data such as one-on-one interviews, small group discussions, and observation debriefs. After completing Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level analysis, I then engaged with a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2013) of the data.

To begin, I carefully transcribed the audio of three one-on-one interviews, eight small group discussions, two observation debriefs, and two one-on-one co-planning sessions. Using Georgeakopoulos’s (2006) transcription protocol, each utterance was transcribed with detail to ensure trustworthiness and reliability (Nowell, Norris, White, & Moules, 2017). Upon a few occasions, when the speech of participants or myself could not be deciphered, “inaudible” was recorded.

Each transcription was then read through a minimum of three times. The purpose of the initial read was to immerse myself in the full context of the event, be it an interview, small group discussion, observation debrief, or co-planning session. During the second read, I differentiated storylines in which Rebecca participated. Here, I focused on big stories in which the participant held the floor for a greater period of time and small-stories in which the participant negotiated time in discourse with others. While big stories were more obvious to notice, small stories were found embedded in longer stretches of conversations and presented as discursively constructed accounts of identity making (Barkhuizen, 2009).

I engaged in each level of Bamberg’s (1997a) data analysis to gain an understanding of the integral space between the performance features of Rebecca’s interactional discourse and the
construction of her sense of self (Bamberg, 1997a). This study examined the intricacies of Rebecca’s discourse through a word-by-word approach to data analysis. Bamberg’s (1997a) three levels of analysis aim to answer:

1.) “How are the characters positioned in relation to one another within the reported events?”

2.) “How does the speaker position him- or herself to the audience?” and

3.) “How do narrators position themselves to themselves? How does the speaker present the idea of ‘who am I’ beyond the immediate content?” (Bamberg, 1997a, p.337).

A description of this analysis process is found in chapter four. Because this process of analysis is iterative in nature, preliminary insights were discovered as I engaged in each level. Thus, the process and preliminary insights are featured along with this study’s findings.

After I completed Bamberg’s three-level analysis with transcribed data, I then examined the data through a thematic analysis method (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2013). Thematic analysis is described by Braun and Clark (2006) as “a flexible and useful research tool, which can potentially provide a rich and detailed, yet complex account of the data” (p. 5). When approaching the data, I adopted Creswell’s (2013) procedural spirals analysis (see Table 3.6). The stages of this process are iterative in nature and provided the required flexibility, complexity, and structure to scrutinize comprehensively and to interpret the data systematically (Peel, 2020). I engaged with the first stage of analysis through completing Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level data analysis. During this stage, I transcribed one-on-one interviews, co-planning sessions, and observation debriefs and small group discussions. Engaging with Bamberg’s (1997a) three levels of data analysis helped me organize the data and reflect on data relevant to the research questions.
**Table 3.6**

*Creswell (2013) levels of thematic analysis*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stages</th>
<th>Processes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engage with the data</td>
<td>Manage the data by transcribing, organizing the text files, and reflecting in relation to the research questions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Code the extracts form the data</td>
<td>Form a list of tentative codes that expand as the data are reviewed and re-reviewed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Generate the code categories from the codes</td>
<td>Reduce codes to categories.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conceptualize the themes from the categorized coded extracts</td>
<td>Interpret the data to abstract beyond the categories to the larger meaning of the data by linking the data with the research literature.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextualize and represent the findings</td>
<td>Present a detailed picture of the analyzed data.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After completing Bamberg’s (1997a) analysis, I returned to the identified storylines in which Rebecca interacted discursively with others. A storyline should be understood here as dynamic and open-ended discursive event rather than monolithic retelling of personal past experiences (Georgakopoulou, 2005). Within each storyline, I began curating code labels that represented the data analytically. After this, I reduced the codes to five categories through a process of categorical aggregation (Creswell, 2013). These categories included 1) perception of power, 2) seeing inequalities, 3) perception of what can(not) be discussed, 4) influence/support of peers and, 5) self-acceptance in the face of systemic inequalities.

After these categories were identified, I returned to the literature to interpret the data beyond the inductive codes. My aim was to generate themes informed by the inductive codes and the two main concepts at play in this study: 1) teaching toward social justice and 2) intersectionality. By studying the five categories above in relation to social justice and intersectionality literature, I began to notice how these categories seemed interwoven within the
definitions of each respective concept. See Table 3.7 for connections present across the literature and inductive categories.

Table 3.7

*Connections across inductive categories and literature*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition of Term</th>
<th>Relevant Inductive Categories</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Teaching toward social justice| Simultaneously, a process and product that includes the “**restructuring of how one understands the world and one's place within it** as well as **understanding the responsibility for creating change**” (Curry-Stevens, 2007). | • Seeing inequalities  
• Perception of what can(not) be discussed  
• Self-acceptance in the face of systemic inequalities |
| Intersectionality             | A lens to analyze how **historically specific kinds of power differentials and/or constraining normativities**, based on discursively, **institutionally, and/or structurally constructed socio-cultural categorizations** interact and in doing so produce different kinds of societal inequalities and social relations (Crenshaw, 1989; 1994; Lykke, 2010). | • Perception of power  
• Seeing inequalities  
• Perception of what can(not) be discussed  
• Self-acceptance in the face of systemic inequalities |

As a final step in this thematic data analysis method, I generated three themes: 1) Rebecca positioned her identity detached from possessing privilege and perpetuating oppression, 2) Rebecca’s perception of what she can and cannot talk about changes when she is in different environments, and 3) Rebecca’s perception of power impacted her (in)actions. These themes are later presented in chapter four as findings.

**Ethical Considerations**

In the bounds of this study, I assumed multiple roles when interacting with the teacher candidates over the course of this study. These roles included but were not limited to: 1) researcher, 2) facilitator, 3) participant observer, 4) observer, and 5) critical peer. I was sure to consider complexities of these roles and their possible impacts on how the participants positioned their identity in the small group discussions, interviews, and observations.
Although no serious ethical threats were posed to any of the participants, this study followed multiple safeguards to ensure the protection of the participants. Before the initial interview, participants were given the opportunity to review and sign written consent forms. The participant’s privacy remained of primary importance to me during the duration of the study which included small group discussions, interviews, and observations in the practicum setting.

Building administrators in the school district were made aware that I was entering into the building to complete observations. The names and classrooms of each participant was not revealed. All data, including audio recordings, were stored in a secure computer program that required dual authentication for access. Additionally, I was the only person that had access to this data.

**Issues of Trustworthiness**

To establish trustworthiness and limit the involvement of my own biases, I engaged in the development of credibility and transferability over the course of the study (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993). To begin, credibility was established through triangulation and member checking. I used multiple data sources including transcriptions of small group discussions, qualitative interviews, co-planning sessions, and post-observation debriefs. I also used analytical memos and observation notes in addition to Rebecca’s academic work such as lesson plans and personal reflections. Looking across this set of data during the analysis process revealed details about Rebecca’s positioned identity in various settings and how this aligned with practices in the practicum setting. Writing memos throughout the data collection and data analysis processes helped me recognize bias that was present in the study. Additionally, I met with a critical peer throughout the data analysis process to share data, my data analysis process, and my initial insights. On a few occasions, when talking with this critical peer, I was able to notice and shift bias that was impacting my perception of the data.
At the completion of data analysis, I shared the preliminary insights and findings with Rebecca. In response to sharing three findings in an online meeting, Rebecca stated, “Oh yeah. I didn’t, yeah, I didn’t realize that’s what it was, until like (.) you put a finger on it. And you actually focus on it. Wow, this makes total sense.”

Finally, I provided a thick description of the primary participant, Rebecca, using images from her personal reflections and direct quotes from the data. Using direct quotes from Rebecca, over the full duration of the study, demonstrates my effort to triangulate the data and provide a clear, thick description of her positioned identity and how her practices in the practicum setting aligned with this positioning.

**Limitations**

The limitations of this study focus specifically on the impact COVID-19. An initial limitation of this study attends to the limited number of observations I was able to conduct in-person before COVID-19 shifted learning to online platforms. Both observations I conducted in Rebecca’s practicum setting in late February and early March provided key data in this study. However, due to school district restrictions, once instruction started in an online environment, my access to practicum observations was ended.

An additional limitation of this study attempts to take into account the emotional well-being of the study participants. Within the matter of one week, the participants began spending eight to ten hours per day on their laptops. Thus, when I shifted the design of the curriculum, I attempted to give the participants reprieve from screen-time. I made our small group discussions forty-five minutes instead of one hour. I also documented in my analytical memos that I allowed for our discussions to honor time for participants to process drastic changes in their student teaching experience, their senior year of college, the cancellation of their graduation ceremony, and personal connections to family members and friends directly affected by COVID-19. I
believe the time spent discussing these emotional concerns was time well spent. And I believe the study may have looked and sounded different if we remained in-person the entire semester.

A third limitation of this study involves the concept of intersectionality. Three participants were given the opportunity to review and sign written consent forms. Thus, I collected data pertaining to the personal identity of three individuals. When analyzing the data with the lens of intersectionality, I did not want to assume the identities of individuals outside of these participants. Thus, I relied upon institutionalized power structures within preservice teacher programs paired with Rebecca’s data to examine her positioned identity through an intersectional lens.

A final limitation that I must acknowledge is the scale of this study. As a single-case study, my aim was to provide a thick description of Rebecca’s positioned identity and how this aligned with her practices in the practicum setting. Some may categorize this scale as a limitation, as the findings should not generalized to a greater population of teacher candidates. The goal of this study, though, was not to generalize but rather to present a rich descriptions of Rebecca’s experiences.

Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a detailed description of the selected methodology, a single-case descriptive study. Additionally, this chapter explained the PDS context and my connection to this preservice teacher education program as a former student and teacher educator with supervisory duties. Through direct quotes and images, the primary participant’s identity was described.

Next, this chapter described the research design. This fifteen-week study included three main components: 1) small group discussions, 2) one-on-one interviews, and 3) practicum observations. This chapter also details shifts made to the implementation of this study. The biggest shift that occurred in response to COVID-19, was a move to online learning platforms for K-4 students and the teacher candidate’s university coursework. Following this, an overview of
the data analysis process is described within two stages 1) Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level positioning analysis and 2) Creswell’s (2013) thematic analysis.

Finally, the chapter concluded with ethical considerations and limitations of the study. The following chapter explores the outcomes from data analysis through the description of preliminary insights and three findings. These findings are further synthesized and discussed in chapter five of this dissertation.
Chapter 4

Findings

Introduction

This study explored how one teacher candidate, Rebecca, positioned her identity in regard to social justice in a series of small group discussions, one-on-one interviews, co-planning sessions, and observation debriefs. Additionally, it sought to understand how Rebecca’s practices in the practicum setting aligned to this positioning. This study took place over the course of fifteen weeks.

This study provides some insights into the depth of neglecting identity exploration in preservice teacher education. Doing so risks fostering future educators who are unable or subconsciously unwilling to challenge a system in need of reform (Ginsburg & Newman, 1985). The preliminary insights and findings presented in this chapter detail this problem through the in-depth analysis of one K-4 teacher candidate’s positioned identity. Further, this study punctuates how complicated the issue is and highlights what challenges lie ahead for program planners, methods instructors, and field supervisors.

Davies and Harré (1990) define the concept of positioning as a discursive practice “whereby selves are located in conversations as observably and intersubjectively coherent participants in jointly produced storylines” (p. 48). Bamberg (1997a) argues that it is in conversation that people position themselves and, in doing so, “produce one another (and themselves) situationally as ‘social beings’” (p. 336). See chapter two for an in-depth description of positioning theory. This study employed a practice-based approach to studying the discursive
positioning of one teacher candidate, as it revealed her relationship to social justice, across one semester of her student teaching practicum.

This chapter details the findings of my interpretation of Rebecca’s identity through the analysis of her discursive positioning and teaching. More specifically, these findings will respond to the questions:

1. When participating in weekly small group discussions paired with one-on-one interviews, co-planning sessions, and observation debriefs, how did one teacher candidate position her identity in relation to social justice?

2. In what ways did this teacher candidate’s practices in the practicum setting align to this positioning?

The central data analysis method for this study, Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level data analysis, was introduced in chapter three. However, it is imperative to note that this process of data analysis cannot be detached from a presentation of findings. This intricate process of analysis has a naturally interwoven dimension with the findings of this study. By this, I mean that the preliminary insights found after completing the each level of analysis were brought into the next level of analysis and further developed. For the purposes of not confusing “findings along the way” with “this study’s findings,” the former will be referred to as preliminary insights and the latter, findings.

Thus, this chapter will begin by presenting a detailed data analysis paired with preliminary insights gained during the process of analysis. Then, I will present three findings:

1. Rebecca positioned her identity at a distance from possessing privilege and perpetuating oppression.

2. Rebecca demonstrated shifts in how she restructured her understanding of the world as she moved among numerous environments.
3. Rebecca’s perception of power among institutional tensions shaped her positioning in regard to taking responsibility for creating change.

Excerpts from transcripts are presented as evidence to support my interpretations. Examples from the data are used to illustrate the preliminary insights and findings and are not meant to be exhaustive. By way of “thick description” (Moustakas, 1994), this chapter sets out to illustrate the relationship between Rebecca’s everyday interactions and greater, dynamic social forces.

**Data Analysis and Preliminary Insights**

In this section, each level of Bamberg’s (1997a) data analysis will be described to detail the integral space between the performance features of Rebecca’s interactional discourse and the construction of her sense of self (Bamberg, 1997a). This study examined the intricacies of Rebecca’s discourse through a word-by-word approach to data analysis. This section presents preliminary insights gained from each level of data analysis that inform this study’s three findings presented in a later section.

**Data Analysis Procedures**

To understand the positioning of Rebecca in relation to social justice, Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level positioning analysis was adopted as a method for data analysis. Initial data analysis procedures (transcription protocol, data immersion, and identification of storylines) are detailed in chapter three.

The third and subsequent readings of each transcription were modeled after Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level positioning analysis. To examine the social and positioning work of narrators, Bamberg delineated three levels of analysis. The term position will be used in slightly different variations within each level of analysis. Just as Bamberg’s (1997a) three levels of analysis build on one another, so too does the analysis of Rebecca’s positioning. See Table 4.1 for a description of how the term position is used in each level of analysis. In the sections below, each level of
analysis will be described in detail and paired with data examples. This section will present preliminary insights from the data that inform the study’s three findings presented later in this chapter.

**Table 4.1**

*Use and description of the term position across three levels of data analysis*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level of Analysis</th>
<th>Use of the Term Position</th>
<th>Focused Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Level One Analysis</td>
<td>How Rebecca positioned <em>her character</em> in relation to <em>other characters</em> and the <em>content of the storyline</em>.</td>
<td>Did Rebecca position her character as a narrator, agent, anti-agent, or victim in the content of the storyline?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Two Analysis</td>
<td>How Rebecca positioned <em>her character in relation to other characters</em> to achieve a particular way she wants to be perceived by <em>her audience</em>.</td>
<td>Considering the construction type of the storyline, what was Rebecca’s discourse purpose?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level Three Analysis</td>
<td>How Rebecca positioned <em>herself in relation to ‘who I am’ beyond the immediate content</em> of the storyline.</td>
<td>Considering her positioning in level one and two, how did Rebecca position her identity across storylines and in relation to greater social roles?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Level 1 Analysis**

The initial level of analysis aims to answer the question, “How are the characters positioned in relation to one another within the reported events?” (Bamberg, 1997a, p.337). The focus of analysis at this level concerns the content of the storyline, the characters present, and how they relate to each other. This level requires a line-by-line analysis of linguistic devices and how the characters relate to one another in time and place.

The first step of engaging in level one analysis for this study entailed the creation of a list of characters present in each identified storyline (Barkhuizen, 2009). A storyline should be understood here as the organization of and use of elements, constructing an easily recognizable
story (Andersson, 2008). Georgakopoulou (2005) argues that storylines are dynamic and open-ended discursive events rather than monolithic retellings of personal past experiences.

The initial read of each storyline consisted of line-by-line analysis to identify and list real, imagined, and implied characters to whom Rebecca relates in the story. The process of generating this list paired with re-reading the transcribed storyline helped to contextualize the nature of the relationships Rebecca constructed between her character and others.

The second step of level one analysis aims to address, simultaneously the content of the storyline and how the characters within the story world are positioned (Bamberg, 1997a). As a narrator, Rebecca focalized the story world of characters and events (Toolan, 2001), and provided a description and evaluation of these events and how the characters were ordered in space and time inside the world of the story, and by so doing, positioned the characters in the story, including herself, in relation to that story world (Barkhuizen, 2009). Since this analysis aimed to understand Rebecca’s positioning of her character in each storyline, the character’s “movement” was made the locus of discussion. Within each storyline, Rebecca discursively positioned her character as 1) narrator, 2) agent, 3) anti-agent, or 4) victim (Bamberg, 1997b). Definitions for these descriptors can be found in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2

Possible positions in a storyline at level one analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Narrator</td>
<td>a moment in storytelling when Rebecca describes characters and content in relation to her character to deliver information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>a moment in storytelling when Rebecca describes characters and content in relation to her character to convey her control over taken actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-Agent</td>
<td>a moment in storytelling when Rebecca describes characters and content in relation to her character to convey her control over having not taken actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Victim</td>
<td>a moment in storytelling when Rebecca describes characters and content in relation to her character to portray herself as a person who has experienced harm</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In any given storyline, Rebecca may have positioned her character in various ways. Thus, mapping her character’s “movement” in a storyline describes shifts in the character’s positioning.

**Detailed Level 1 Analysis**

The movement of Rebecca’s positioning during an excerpt from the “Top Dog” storyline is physically represented in Table 4.3. This storyline was identified in Rebecca’s pre-interview transcript. In this storyline, Rebecca responded to my question, “…have you ever thought about how you define yourself, how that may work to your advantage or disadvantage in some ways?” Rebecca began this response by placing her character in the narrator position. She delivered information regarding at least two characters; a White person and imagined character(s).

“Depending on the situation, being a White person, you are advantaged in one way.” Here, Rebecca situated a White person as advantaged over unknown implied character(s).

Rebecca then shifted to positioning her character as a victim. There are multiple real characters present in L26-28. These characters include, 1) People of Color, 2) us, 3) people with rich culture, and 4) me. Initially, Rebecca described “People of Color” as the perpetrators because they do not see “us” as “people with rich culture.” Rebecca’s use of the pronoun *us* signals that Rebecca aligned her character with victims that are perceived to not poses rich culture. Subsequently, Rebecca placed the character “people” again in the role of perpetrator and herself as a victim because her character was “seen as a basic White girl.” Based on additional context of this initial interview with Rebecca, the term “basic White girl” has a negative connotation.
**Table 4.3**

*Level one analysis example from “Top Dog” storyline*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characters:</th>
<th>Movement of Rebecca’s positioning at level one analysis:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L24</td>
<td>Depending on the situation being a White person, you are advantaged in one way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“White person”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“you”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L26</td>
<td>People of Color don’t see as people with rich culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“People of Color”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“us”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“people with rich culture”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L28</td>
<td>People think of me as a basic White girl.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“people”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“me”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L38</td>
<td>They mention We are the majority. We are White females.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“they”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“we / majority”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“we / White females”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L42</td>
<td>I am unique (.) but I am not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“you”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“me”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L46</td>
<td>When I went to high school... I was at my prime.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L47</td>
<td>My school wasn’t very (.) diverse. It didn’t have (.) many, like, who I saw, who I competed against.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>implied Person of Color</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L48</td>
<td>I was &lt;very into sports&gt;. So I was like the top notch. I was the top dog.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L51</td>
<td>And then when I came to college it was different because it was, I was put in a group.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“I”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Rebecca then continued this story by positioning her character as a victim as she shifted to storying her character in relation to “they.” The full transcribed sentence from the interview reads:

37 R And then (.) in classes, even at University, they mentioned that
38 like we are the majority>. We are White (.) females. We are the majority
39 in education majors. An::d like you sit there, and you’re like wow, that
40 just doesn’t make me feel special...
41 R ...It’s like wow, I am unique (.) but I am not. YOU just put me in
42 a group.

Rebecca’s use of the character “we” demonstrates her alignment with other White females that are the majority in education majors. The perpetrators in this storyline are implied to be University instructors. For a moment in L41, Rebecca shifted the positioning of her character to that of a narrator, delivering information to her audience. “I am unique (.) but I am not.” Suddenly, Rebecca shifted her character back to the victim position stating, “YOU just put me in a group.”

I then asked Rebecca, “What about before University?” Rebecca responded to this question in the narrator position having stated, “When I went to high school… I was at my prime.” Rebecca continued in the narrator position and introduced additional characters in relation to her character. She shared, “My school wasn’t very (. ) diverse. It didn’t have (. ) many, like who I saw, who I competed against.” It may be implied that Rebecca was referring to a Person/People of Color. In the next sentence, Rebecca shifted her character to the agent position. In L48 she storied that because she was into sports, she was top notch, the top dog in high school.

Finally, Rebecca concluded this storyline by circling back to the victim position. The perpetrator is an unknown character that put the character Rebecca into a group upon arrival at University. Notice that Rebecca’s implied sense of her character in high school is positioned as an agent in contrast to her implied sense of self at University as a victim.
Level 2 Analysis

The second level of analysis aims to answer the question, “How does the speaker position him- or herself to the audience?” (Bamberg, 1997a, p.337). The focus of analysis at this level concerns the performance aspect of the story. This level requires a close analysis of the syntactical devices present in the storyline. Analysis of these devices uncovers the narrator’s discourse purpose (Bamberg, 1997b). Bamberg (1997b) argues that the way other and I are linguistically positioned with regard to one another at the plane of character construction cannot be viewed any longer as the linguistic re-presentation of events the way they happened. Rather, the active arrangement of content and characters in a storyline by a narrator demonstrates how the speaker positions themselves with regard to the audience (Bamberg, 1997b). Thus, “constructions of a textual reality are always co-constructed in concert with a local moral order for the purpose of ‘becoming understood’” (p. 318).

The process of engaging in level two analysis for this study entailed noting syntactical devices at play while carefully re-reading each identified storyline. Using Bamberg (1996; 1997b) as a guide, I examined Rebecca’s construction type within each storyline. Here, I examined how Rebecca linguistically constructed events following a sequence of preverbal cognitive decisions (Berman & Slobin, 1994; Levelt, 1989).

When approaching level two analysis, I acknowledged that Rebecca selected 1) a topic, 2) the loci of control and effect, 3) an event view, and 4) a degree of agency (Bamberg, 1996). First, selection of the topic pertains to who Rebecca mentioned in the subject position. Characters may have been positioned as passive or active in relation to one another. Next, Rebecca decided the locus of control or locus of effect. If, a passive character was positioned as the topic of the storyline, that meant Rebecca construed the event linguistically from the passive character’s point of view. Doing so, placed the active character as the causal agent and passive character as the undergoer (Bamberg, 1996).
After this, Rebecca decided upon an event view. Bamberg (1996) argues there are three possible ways to present an event: 1) cause-view, 2) become-view, and 3) state-view. The cause-view presents an actor who causes a change of state in an undergoer. The become-view is presents change of state with use of an activity verb. Lastly, the state-view presents characters in a state description. Finally, Rebecca selected a degree of agency for the topic of the storyline. This can range from a relatively high degree of agency, to a mid and low degree of agency.

The importance behind Rebecca’s preverbal decisions was that, through her active construction of a storyline, she demonstrated her discourse purpose. Bamberg (1997b) argues that by engaging in the analysis of construction types, it may be realized that a narrator attempts to “instruct the listener in terms of what to do in face of adversary conditions” or “engage in making excuses for his actions and in attributing blame to others” (Bamberg, 1997a, p.337). This level of analysis became important when considering Rebecca’s positioning in relation to privilege and oppression.

**Detailed Level 2 Analysis**

Analysis at level two of the “Top Dog” storyline, sheds insight into how Rebecca positioned the characters I and other with regard to her audience. See Table 4.4 for a visual depiction of this analysis. Since this storyline is an excerpt from a one-on-one interview, it was constructed by both Rebecca and myself, as the researcher. As this interview was designed to have an open structure (Weiss, 1994) in which the participant could talk freely and in depth about the topic, it is to be expected that Rebecca held the floor for much of the storyline. My role in this storyline can be described as supporter (i.e. building empathy with the participant) and prompter (i.e. digging deeper), typical of qualitative interviews with a research agenda.

I initiated this storyline by asking Rebecca to address if she has thought about how the ways in which she identifies herself may work to her advantage or disadvantage in L20. Notice that the manner in which this question was worded, Rebecca could have responded with a simple
yes or no. Instead, Rebecca opened up the storyline by centering her gender in L22. “Yes, (.) like (.) female. Some people think…” Rebecca then holds the floor for L22-38. Within Rebecca’s use of discursive devices in these lines, she narrated the storyline with females as the topic. This means that it was told from the point of view of the character “females.” In doing so, Rebecca positions other in the role of causal agent and I as the undergoer by way of making females the loci of effect. In this segment of the storyline, females are constructed with low degree of agency.

Table 4.4

**Level two analysis example from “Top Dog” storyline**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transcription Excerpt 1</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Loci of control or effect &amp; description</th>
<th>Event View</th>
<th>Degree of Agency</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>females</td>
<td>Loci of effect</td>
<td>State-view</td>
<td>Low agency</td>
<td>Elicit empathy from audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>People (other) = causal agents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Females (I) = inagentive undergoers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Transcription Excerpt 2</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Loci of control or effect &amp; description</th>
<th>Event View</th>
<th>Degree of Agency</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>us</td>
<td>Loci of effect</td>
<td>State-view</td>
<td>Low agency</td>
<td>Elicit empathy from audience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>People of Color/People of Color (other) = causal agents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Us (I) = inagentive undergoer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Again, in L34, Rebecca constructs “People of Culture, People of Color,” as causal agents that don’t see “us as people with (. ) rich culture?” This leaves Rebecca’s alignment with I to be constructed as the inagentive undergoer. Further, Rebecca positioned the character “us” with a low degree of agency. Each of these text excerpts detail the storyline within a state-view and the topic, with whom Rebecca aligns, had a low degree of agency. Taking this analysis into account, it can be said that Rebecca’s interactive discourse served the purpose of eliciting empathy and aligning the audience in a moral stance with the I against the other (Bamberg, 1997a).

Level 3 Analysis

The third level of analysis aims to answer the question, “How do narrators position themselves to themselves? How does the speaker present the idea of ‘who am I’ beyond the immediate content?” (Bamberg, 1997a, p.337). The focus of analysis at this level seeks to discern how language is employed by the narrator to make claims they hold about the world and their position in the world, to be true and relevant above and beyond the local conversational situation. Interactional analysis at the first two levels ensures that the researcher is better situated to make inferences about the ideological positions within which narrator is positioning a sense of self (Bamberg, 2006). Further, this level requires that broader normative discourses come into play, taking into account the sociopolitical contexts within and beyond the storylines (Barkhuizen, 2009).

The process of engaging in level three analysis for this study extended beyond the detailed textual analysis of level one and two. In addition to the depth of insights gained from the first two levels of analysis, level three required a breadth of data (Barkhuizen, 2009). Thus, I looked across storylines, analytical memos, Rebecca’s written reflections, email communications, practicum observations, and coursework to lay out revisions in Rebecca’s “sense-making and re-storying capabilities in much more detail and with greater effectiveness” (Bamberg, 2004, p.369).
The act of layering the data analysis across three levels, provided a strong sense the integral space between the performance features of Rebecca’s interactional discourse and her construction of “who I am” in the context of this study. In the process of completing the third level of analysis, a few preliminary insights were identified across the data set.

The first insight highlighted Rebecca’s patterned use of first and second person pronouns as she aimed to position her character as a narrator, victim, and/or (anti)agent. I noticed this insight when engaging with level two analysis, asking, *what is Rebecca’s discourse purpose?* During this process of analysis, I created tables to illustrate changes in Rebecca’s use of pronouns. Table 4.5 portrays Rebecca’s use of pronouns paired with her discursive positioning from three storylines present in her pre-interview.

As these pronouns were analyzed and composed into I composed and analyzed pronoun tables across the full set of data, this insight emerged. Rebecca engaged in a patterned use of first and second person pronouns as she aimed to be understood by her audience as a causal agent or inagentive undergoer in relation to other characters in the storyline.

Soon after noticing this patterned use of pronouns, I noticed the second and third preliminary insights when I looked across the data and asked, *how does Rebecca present the idea of ‘who am I’ beyond the immediate content?* A pattern emerged from the data in relation to the content that Rebecca addressed in her storylines when she was physically present in various environments over the course of fifteen weeks. Then, I noticed that Rebecca repeatedly positioned her character as a victim when discussing power in relation to a particular set of other characters. After documenting these preliminary insights, I then engaged in a thematic analysis to dig into a deeper meaning behind these patterns.
Table 4.5

Rebecca’s use of pronouns across positions in two pre-interview storylines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Storyline</th>
<th>Storyline 1: Present (College)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Position</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characters</strong></td>
<td><strong>&amp; Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Position</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pronoun</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Storyline</th>
<th>Storyline 2: Past &amp; Present (High School &amp; College)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 1</strong></td>
<td><strong>Position</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Characters</strong></td>
<td><strong>&amp; Text</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level 2</strong></td>
<td><strong>Analysis</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pronoun</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Thematic Analysis**

After employing Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level data analysis, I engaged in a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2013) of the data. A description of thematic analysis process can be found in chapter three. Three findings presented in the next section highlight the interwoven nature of Rebecca’s positioned identity in relation to the ongoing restructuring of how she viewed the world, her place in it, and her responsibility for creating change.
Findings

Finding 1: Rebecca positioned her identity at a distance from possessing privilege and perpetuating oppression.

An initial and prominent theme evident in the data called attention to Rebecca’s use of pronouns as she spoke in interactional spaces. This initial finding addresses the question: *When participating in weekly small group discussions paired with one-on-one interviews, co-planning sessions, and observation debriefs, how did one teacher candidate position her identity in relation to social justice?*

Evidence that informed this finding were found across the data set, during one-on-one interviews, small group discussions, and in Rebecca’s journal entries. This finding aims to describe Rebecca’s intricate use of first and second person pronouns. Harré (1997) describes this use of pronouns:

> The selfhood of autobiographical telling is expressed predominantly in the use of first and second (indexical) pronouns and in the choice of narrative conventions within which to tell the story. Pronouns are used to index what is said with the various locations of the speaker as a person among persons in several patterns of relations. The uses of ‘I’ with the tenses of verbs, together with local narrative connections, expresses the shapes of many stories we can tell about ourselves (p.99).

While use of the pronoun *I* is a key indicator of a personal moral commitment, *you* used in place of *I* “can index a distancing or detachment from personal responsibility” (Redman & Fawns, 2010, p.178). By way of Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level of analysis, this patterned use of pronouns, in relation to syntactical agency, became unmistakable across the full data set.

Rebecca’s use of I/me, you, and we/us conveyed distinct positionings as she discussed past, present, and future experiences. Rebecca’s continued iteration of these pronouns began to
illustrate how she placed her identity in relation to social justice. A description of these pronouns can be found in Table 4.6.

**Table 4.6**

*Description of Rebecca’s patterned use of pronouns*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronouns</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I/me</td>
<td>iterated when positioning herself as an agent in high school and a victim during post-high school experiences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>iterated when positioning herself as a narrator, at a distance from possessing privilege and perpetuating oppression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we/us</td>
<td>iterated when positioning herself as a narrator or victim in community with White individuals</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Within this first finding, I would like to bring attention to Rebecca’s repeated use of the pronoun *you* and her active distancing or detachment from possessing privilege and perpetuating oppression. Rebecca’s iteration of *you* as a position is a vital thread in depicting how Rebecca understood the world, identified her place in it, and interpreted her responsibility for creating change.

In addition to the syntactical devices at play within which Rebecca placed herself at a distance from privilege and oppression, the data suggested two other patterned uses of the pronoun *you*; to 1) refer to *you* as another being

If someone else feels vulnerable does that make me want to (.)
feel (.) vulnerable? If that makes any sense? Because if we are all sharing and I notice that, say, you go to therapy and I’m like oh, well if you’re going to talk about therapy then I feel comfortable talking about therapy. (Small Group 3 Discussion)

and to 2) refer to *you* as a teacher while positioning herself in greater alignment with students.

It sounds like you are kinda thinking about it in terms of a physical environment. The way people are set up just shows power in some kind of way.
Yeah. I would think so because, like, yeah, because when your desk is in the front of the room, you’re the power. You’re in the front. And I don’t know if I like that or not. And the definition of a desk. Like I’ve seen teachers who don't have a desk and it is interesting how (.) and how teachers say like the classroom is not my classroom, it is your classroom
because you take care of it, but really how is it our classroom? Half of the materials I can't use. At a student standpoint, half the cabinets, I can't open. So how is it my classroom? That's what I always said because, it is interesting how teachers say that but do they really mean that? I have always thought that was interesting. (Pre-Interview)

Beyond Rebecca’s discursive positioning in relation to a second person you (another being) and you (teacher), Rebecca repeatedly referred to a vague other person with a third use the pronoun you. In contrast to using the pronoun I, which immerses the speaker into the context, her use of you isolated Rebecca from the context (Reedman & Fawns, 2010). As such, Rebecca achieved a detached position in regard to social justice.

Rebecca’s Detachment From Possessing Privilege and Perpetuating Oppression

When designing this study, an identified aim within my roles as the researcher, small group facilitator and participant, and critical peer was to provide space in which participants were pushed toward identifying themselves as privileged and as an oppressor. Being that oppression is embedded in the very structures of our society, it was also vital to regularly foster participants’ awareness of social dynamics that privilege some at the expense of others. With this in mind, it was evident that Rebecca positioned her identity at a distance from possessing privilege and perpetuating oppression.

In her initial one-on-one interview, in January 2020, after identifying herself as a female and White, I asked Rebecca if she had thought about how these identities have worked to her advantage or disadvantage.

R ... And then (.) <depending on the situation>, being (.) a White person, you are advantaged in one way. And seen as one way. And sometimes that can be an advantage but sometimes a disadvantage because (.) People of Culture, People of Color (.), I feel like they don't see us as people with (.) rich culture? That's (.) <how I see it as>? I feel like people think, see me as a basic White girl. Like, I'm in education. (.) I'm a female. (.) I am White. (.) That is a basic, (.) that is what a lot of people see me as.
Take note of the dynamic positioning at play in this excerpt. Using Bamberg’s (1997a) analysis, it is evident that when Rebecca positioned herself as a victim in L27-L28, she used first person pronouns, *us* and *me*. She aligned herself with an implied group of White individuals that was dichotomous to People of Color and People of Culture. This use of first person pronouns is in direct contrast to Rebecca’s syntactical use of *you*, in L25. Because Rebecca identified herself as a female and White, it may be implied that in L26, she referred to advantages she possessed as a White person. However, instead of saying, ‘I am advantaged in one way’, she detached herself from possessing privilege by way of the pronoun *you*. “...And then (.) <depending on the situation>, being (.) a White person, you are advantaged in one way”.

Use of this syntactical device continued over the progression of small group discussions. On February 19, 2020 we engaged in a fourth small group discussion. A goal that I set and shared with participants was to begin locating oneself as oppressed. To begin this small group discussion, participants and I engaged in the Paseo protocol (School Reform Initiative, 2001). We placed our names at the center of an identity web and used two colors to write descriptors with which we identify ourselves and people may use to identify us. Once these identity webs were complete, each person paired with one other individual to discuss questions pertaining to our identities.

Rebecca (R) was paired with Elizabeth (E) to discuss the first question, “With which descriptors do others identify you most strongly? How do you feel about that?”

174 E And I also put like brother and sister.
175 R That’s interesting because now that you point out the family thing.
176 I put daughter. But with sister, I’m the princess. I’m the baby, I’m the princess.
177 E I put middle child.
179 R Yeah. And. My sister gets labeled, oh you’re Rebecca’s sister. And she’s older than me. So imagine how she feels. But um, I don’t know, I get labeled emotional because I let my emotions slip. That’s who I am. Um.
182 Like we both mentioned privilege. Like, now that I am really questioning it
183 I guess? I guess questioning it. Waking, awakening my thoughts>
184 E <Uh-hm.
It is evident that Rebecca wanted to be recognized by her audience, Elizabeth, as having an understanding that she is privileged. In L182, Rebecca shared with Elizabeth, “…we both mentioned privilege.” It is important to note here, that in the creation of their identity webs, Elizabeth and Rebecca aligned themselves in different ways with privilege.

The protocol directed us to use two colors; to write descriptors with which we identify ourselves and people may use to identify us. Elizabeth wrote the word privileged with a color in which she identified herself. In contrast to this, Rebecca wrote the word privileged with light purple, how she thinks people identify her. However, when Elizabeth identified herself as privileged in L149, earlier in this discussion, Rebecca physically took a dark purple marker, and wrote over the word privileged on her identity web (see Figure 4.1).

It is evident that Rebecca’s positioning with privilege is fluid and at times, uncertain. When interacting with Elizabeth, Rebecca attempted to align herself with privilege in similar ways through the act of writing over privileged with a dark purple marker and stating, “Like, we both mentioned privilege.” However, later in the same storyline, Rebecca stated L184-185, “So then now I understand that’s what people see of me.”

While this statement, taken by itself, is performed in the narrator position, it is vital to notice greater interactive forces at play. When I looked across the analysis of Rebecca’s use of pronouns in her pre-interview through small groups one, two, three, and four, it was evident that Rebecca used first person pronouns, such as I, when she positioned herself as a victim. Thus, instead of positioning herself as a narrator in L184-185 of this storyline, I take Rebecca’s positioning to be that of a victim. She understood privileged, is “what people see” of her.
Later on in this small group discussion, I was paired with Rebecca to discuss, “Describe a
time when your identity heightened your awareness of an inequality.”

418 R  Okay, so I think a time that my identity heightened my awareness
419 of an inequality was when I started identifying myself as privileged. I feel
420 like that opened up my, like my how I perceive myself. Because like, the
421 question about what part of your identity has given you the most hardships
422 or but, then I’m thinking, none of these would ever relate to anyone of
423 Color. You know? Like that’s, so then it’s hard to think, is this really a set-
back to someone else? (Crying.)
425 H  Uh-hm.
426 R  Sorry.
427 H  No, you’re good.
428 R  I don’t know. This year has really got me thinking about how it is
429 there is so much inequality and a lot of people don’t realize it. So I, I don’t
430 know if it was (.) what’s heightened my awareness is my instructors in
431 making me question everything? White Fragility. Is it the book club
432 meetings that we have? The in-depth conversations? Even in the
433 classroom like, actually reflecting on what I’m seeing? I don’t know, it’s
434 hard to pinpoint exactly when it began because it’s, as you’re younger you
435 know, you walk down the street, you’re going to cross the street to avoid
436 the Black man walking towards you. My parents did it. Like, it’s part of
437 that culture. What’s that?>
In Rebecca’s initial segment of this storyline, she used the pronoun I to position herself as privileged. Unlike Rebecca’s previous interaction with Elizabeth, in this storyline she engaged in a dialogic process with herself as she considered her own hardships in relation to People of Color. For a moment in this full data set, it does seem as though Rebecca identified herself as an individual that possessed privilege.

She continued in L429, questioning what had heightened her awareness with the use of first person pronouns. “…Is it my instructors in making me question everything? …the book club meetings that we have? …Even in the classroom, reflecting on what I’m seeing?” I take it to mean that Rebecca’s use of first person pronouns in relation to unpacking her awareness of inequalities expresses a potential shift in her personal moral commitments. However, when she later shifted the topic away from awareness of inequalities toward involvement with perpetuating oppression, Rebecca also shifted her use of pronouns.

Suddenly, in L435, Rebecca detached herself from the act of crossing a street to avoid a Black man with the use of the pronoun you. It can be inferred that Rebecca was a character involved in this moment of perpetuating oppression because other characters at play included her parents. She then struggled with a series of questions before physically walking away from the interaction. “You grow up with that and you understand that that’s not equal. But, how do you change? (…) When you’re surrounded by it? (…)”

The iteration of pronouns present in this storyline sheds insights into how Rebecca placed herself in relation to her emerging understandings of social justice. In this fourth small group discussion, she recognized her involvement with societal structures that privilege some. And for
one fleeting moment in this data set, she identified herself in possession of privilege within this unjust society. However, she simultaneously detached herself from perpetuating oppression.

Rebecca’s discursive positioning was further illustrated in a dynamic sense during the final one-on-one interview which took place in April, 2020. Notice Rebecca’s powerful shifts in positioning with her syntactical use of the pronouns I and you.

In L105, Rebecca initially positioned herself detached from the benefits of being White. “Same with being White, you can have its benefits.” Then, in the following sentence, she centered herself as a victim and an inagentive undergoer because she was given a White label that she doesn’t want. This active positioning of herself as a victim continued as Rebecca discussed society’s negative view of her Catholic faith. Finally, in L112, Rebecca distanced herself from the work of being an advocate by shifting to the pronoun you. “Some people don’t understand what it is and what you’re trying to do…”

In this final interview, it was evident that Rebecca distanced her identity from possessing privilege and being an advocate. She expressed that she felt stigmatized because she was given a label that she didn’t want. She connected the idea of being stigmatized to her identity as a Catholic and having White privilege. While she discussed how advocates may be stigmatized, it
was clear that she did not position herself with that identity. Later on in this interview, Rebecca also distanced herself from perpetuating oppression when I asked her to reflect on a comment that she had made in the first interview.

352 H What do you think, specifically the first audio, you talked about
353 how the, your school didn't have a diverse population. So, race was never
354 really talked about, what are you thinking about that?
355 R Um, it was always, it was that hush-hush conversation. You didn’t
356 really bring it up. You didn’t really talk about it. So if you ignored it, that
357 meant that you weren't talking about it, so that meant it was okay. (Okay
358 said in sing-songy voice.) It was a big (. ) part of it. Like we NEVER talked
359 about race. Never had to worry about someone with a different skin color
360 walking down the hallway. Like and if there was, everyone talked about
361 them.

Aligned with a collective we, Rebecca shared that race was not spoken of in her previous schooling experiences because “[we] never had to worry about someone with a different skin color walking down the hallway.” Here, Rebecca did not consider the implication of saying, “never had to worry” in relation to “someone with a different skin color.” Perhaps, aligned with her hometown community, Rebecca felt justified, as she often said during the duration of this study, that race was not an acceptable topic of discussion in those spaces back home. This idea of acceptable and unacceptable discourse, as Rebecca restructured her understandings of the world, will be described in the second finding.

Based on the analysis of Rebecca’s discursive positioning in interactive spaces within this study, it is clear that Rebecca repeatedly referred to a vague other person with the use the pronoun you. The use of you occurred in place of, what may syntactically be perceived as, an inferred sense of self. While use of the pronoun I is a key indicator of a personal moral commitment, you used in place of I “can index a distancing or detachment from personal responsibility” (Redman & Fawns, 2010, p.178). In contrast to using the pronoun I, which immerses the speaker into the context, her use of you isolated Rebecca from the context (Reedman & Fawns, 2010). As such,
Rebecca achieved a detached position in relation to possessing privilege and perpetuating oppression over the course of fifteen weeks.

**Finding 2:** *Rebecca demonstrated shifts in how she restructured her understanding of the world as she moved among numerous environments.*

As Jones (2004) notes in *Considering Counter-Narratives: Narrating, Resisting, Making Sense*, my analysis of Rebecca’s discourse extended beyond her sequence of talk and uncovered how she shifted her understandings of the world to weave into the fabric of various environments. If society is imagined as a piece of fabric, extracts from transcripts can be seen as a part of the fabric which has had a circle drawn on it with a pen. Drawing the circle (selecting a piece of transcript for analysis) creates a boundary and an object of study. However, if as analysts we are more interested in modes of representation than in the nature and sequence of talk, we remain interested in the threads that make up the fabric and continue either side of the circle. Thus, the necessarily arbitrary boundary becomes less important and it is possible to define participants’ orientations more widely to include the broader argumentative structure of their particular utterances. (p. 226).

This second finding provides evidence in response to the both research questions: *When participating in weekly small group discussions paired with one-on-one interviews, co-planning sessions, and observation debriefs, how did one teacher candidate position her identity in relation to social justice? and In what ways did this teacher candidate’s practices in the practicum setting align to this positioning?*

Across the 15 weeks of this study, it became evident that Rebecca’s physical movement among various environments demonstrated shifts in how she restructured her understanding of the world. More specifically, the content and positioning of her character within storylines changed as she engaged in the study from the University setting, her practicum setting, and home-town. This finding does not attempt to circle each of these environments to create boundaries in which
Rebecca’s identity will be described and compared. Instead, this finding aims to demonstrate the fluidity of Rebecca’s discursive and physical positioning as they relate to social justice.

About 4 weeks into this study, Rebecca was observing in a second grade classroom. In the Central District PDS, this classroom was known as a partner classroom. It was not her primary placement. Instead, she visited this classroom to observe and teach lessons once a week. Immediately after she left her morning observation, she sent me an email.

Hi Holly,

In my partner classroom today, we read the story [about] Ruby Bridges. My [cooperating] teacher first put on the board the famous picture of Ruby Bridges and asked the students what they think she may be feeling. Most of the students turned and talked to their partner about it, while a friend of ours who has been having some behavior issues was standing beside me. I decided to turn and talk to him and ask him what he believes the girl is feeling in the picture and he simply says "she's black". And I said "okay. But what do you think she is feeling?" and he says, "I think she feels she wants to be white". And in that moment, my [cooperating] teacher started talking and reading the book out loud to the classroom and I didn't have a chance to come back to that. I wonder, what could I have said to make that a teachable moment? What would have been more informative and encouraging to push his thinking? I then decided to record the discussions, questions, and comments from students because I found it very interesting to hear the perspectives of 8-year-olds about racism and the civil rights movement. I find these moments very important in a child's life, and I wonder how I could incorporate that into my fourth grade classroom.

Rebecca  

(Communication on February 19, 2020)

For a majority of this email, Rebecca positioned her character as a narrator, retelling components of the event that she found important. This shifted when she began asking questions using the pronoun I. “I wonder, what could I have said to make that a teachable moment? What would have been more informative and encouraging to push his thinking? …I wonder how I could incorporate that into my fourth grade classroom.” This line of questioning demonstrated a shift in Rebecca’s moral commitments related to personal responsibility (Redman & Fawns, 2010). This is the first instance, found within the data, that Rebecca positioned herself with possible agency in regard to talking about identity, more specifically race in the classroom setting. While she did not take
action in the physical classroom setting to engage further with this student, she did take time to
send this email eluding to possible future actions in her fourth grade, practicum setting.

The same evening, we engaged in our fourth small group discussion. Finding one
demonstrated that it was during this fourth small group discussion, that Rebecca positioned her
identity, for a moment in this full data set, as an individual that possessed privilege. After
completing the Paseo protocol (School Reform Initiative, 2001), Rebecca discussed her partner-
classroom observation interactively with Caroline (C), Elizabeth (E).

... And then one of our Black students walked into the room
because she had been in learning support, sat down in front of him in her
learning spot where she always sits, because he was standing beside me.
And he looked at me and he was like, I don’t want to sit by her. (Said in a
disgusted voice.) And I have never, ever seen him react in that way before.
And I don’t know, was it the fact that we were talking about race that it
brought up that negative feeling?
Was this student also Black?
The student talking?
No, no, no. I mean the girl that came and sat.
The girl that came and sat is Black.
Okay, okay.
And she is (.) the only (.) Black student (.) in class. So I don’t
know. And I don’t know, maybe it was for attention to see what my
reaction was because he is known for doing this. He has a really, he has a
really strict behavior plan right now. So I don’t. And how do you address
something like that? Because what if he genuinely didn’t want to sit by the
student? But like, there’s probably a correlation between her skin color
and what we had just talked about. A Black child.
Uh-hm. Yeah.
I mean, he was verbally and physically showing racism. And
didn’t know how to address that. Like, how, what do I say?

This experience in a second grade setting, paired with Rebecca’s discourse via email and
within the fourth small group discussion, demonstrated a restructuring of how Rebecca viewed
the world. Rebecca began addressing the need to discuss identity and more specifically race in the
classroom setting. Prior to February 19, 2020, the data suggested that Rebecca distanced herself
from addressing issues of identity in the classroom.
During Rebecca’s first interview in January, 2020, I prompted her to dig deeper into the concept of teachers discussing identity in the classroom setting:

215  So: I feel like we talked about, kind of identity in relation to society and friendships and that kinda’ stuff. Um, AND the classroom and the teaching profession. Um. I feel like I want to go a little deeper into the teaching profession aspect of it. So, does it, would it matter, in your mind if, like, you have had this opportunity with social studies to kind of bring this into your frame.

220  R  =Uh hm.=

221  H  =Does it matter if there are teachers that don’t have that opportunity? Or if teachers choose to not view: that as an opportunity?

224  R  () I think it’s their loss.

225  H  =Okay. What about the students?=

226  R  =And it’s definitely the students’. Because (..), like where I grew up, there’s no diversity. We never addressed <some of these things.> But in the teacher's defense and the old ways, why should I? There is no one in the class for them to understand that there is a difference.

In Rebecca’s response, she identified that it would be the students’ loss if a teacher did not discuss identity in the classroom. She then specified the setting in L226 of her storyline, “where I grew up,” and paired this with a description, “there’s no diversity.” In L227, Rebecca then positioned herself with use of the pronoun we. She discussed the character we as an anti-agent, “We never addressed <some of these things>.” It may be implied that Rebecca is referring to identity and larger ideas of social justice not being brought up in the classroom setting.

Then, by placing the character “teachers” as the locus of effect, Rebecca defended the absence of this curriculum and asks, “why should I?” Positioning her character as I demonstrates that Rebecca’s discourse purpose served to elicit empathy and align the audience in a moral stance with the I against the other (Bamberg, 1997a). In this case, the implied other are teachers that choose to not address identity in the classroom while having a ‘diverse’ population of students.

In addition to Rebecca rejecting the concept of discussing identity in the classroom during her initial interview, Rebecca distanced herself again in the first small group discussion. Here, Elizabeth, another participant, was sharing that she re-wrote school district-provided math
instructions. Instead of asking student volunteers to come to the front of the room and act out
gender-specific roles, she changed the terms *Mom* and *Dad* to *parents*. In response, Rebecca
positioned her character as an imagined student in Elizabeth’s class.

---

**E** …maybe someone in my classroom might have, like you said, two
**276** moms or two dads or whatever. So like, I just wonder if someone did, what
**277** would that be like for them if (...) Because I thought about it, like what if
**278** someone said they want to be like, what if when I said two parents, I
**279** picked two girls, like what would their reaction have been?
**280** **R** Wait a minute, you can’t both be...
**281** **H** Some students might not even notice it. But another student might
**282** be like hm:::
**283** **R** Yeah! I’m going to tell my Momma about this! (Said in a student
**284** voice.)

I take Rebecca’s positioning as a student in Elizabeth’s class to mean that she was
confronting how she understood the world. Rebecca held a structured view of what should and
she not be discussed in the classroom setting.

However, after February 19, 2020, Rebecca began restructuring her understanding of the
world having experienced a student “verbally and physically” showing racism in a second grade
classroom. This restructuring continued as Rebecca planned and implemented two lessons that
addressed identity in the practicum setting. The first lesson considered perspective using texts that
featured Ruby Bridges. The intricacies of this lesson and post-observation will be described later
in finding three as they relate to perceptions of power and responsibility.

Rebecca taught a second lesson on March 5, 2020. Preceding this lesson, Rebecca and I
spent some time thinking through a few lessons she hoped to teach that centered identity. During
this planning time, Rebecca considered what aspects of her identity she should and should not
discuss in the classroom setting.
roommate. And another branch out as emotional things that I connect to so like, passionate and (...) caring... I know, I have a few. And that’s the thing, like I could definitely do farm girl, brunette, do I mention Catholic?

Like, that’s where I’m starting to like (...)

H Are you imposing points of view on them? Or are you just saying that you are Catholic?

R True.

H That is completely your decision. I’m thinking about the privilege of being Catholic or a Christian. Because often, I identify as Catholic and I can hide that identity. I can leave it for Sunday and that’s it. Anybody who doesn’t see me in my church, I can decide not to talk about it.

R Yeah.

In this excerpt, Rebecca continued restructuring her understanding of the world. While physically positioned in the study setting, in a coffee-shop to be exact, Rebecca considered particular dimensions of her identity that she aimed to discuss in her lesson.

This excerpt demonstrated dimensions of Rebecca’s identity which she was most apprehensive about bringing into her lessons. In L484-485 she states, “And then I was going to leave White towards the end because I wanted them to understand like, myself.” Later, in L489 she asked, “…do I mention Catholic?” Here, I noticed a growing tension in Rebecca’s understanding of the world as she considered addressing two aspects of her identity, race and religion, in the practicum setting.

Later, when physically positioned in her practicum setting, Rebecca taught her lesson in early March, 2020 in which she created an identity web in front of her students and identified herself as female, White, and Catholic among other dimensions. Between February and March, 2020, this series of storylines and observations demonstrated how Rebecca actively restructured her understanding of the world. More specifically, she considered and acted upon discussing identity and issues related to identity in her practicum setting.

Soon after Rebecca taught this second lesson, the global pandemic caused by COVID-19 shifted learning to an online platform. Rebecca returned home, where she remained for the duration of the study. After this shift was made, I noted in my analytical memos that Rebecca,
“physically and verbally seem[ed] different in our discussions.” I wondered if a “change in location” or “COVID-19 burn-out” was impacting how Rebecca was participating.

Data analysis demonstrated yet another shift in how she structured her understanding of the world when she moved back to her hometown. I noticed this shift as Rebecca engaged in small group discussions and one-on-one co-planning sessions. In place of the eighth small group discussion, participants asked if we could meet one-on-one to support the development of individual action plans. In my first co-planning session with Rebecca, I prompted her with:

59 If you had a magic wand, what actions would you want to take
60 next? So in relation to what we've been learning and thinking, this is the magic wand. So you can literally do whatever you want to do. So I'm going to set the timer for three minutes and you can just list everything that you can think of that you would want to (. ) actions that you would want to take next.

Rebecca sent me a picture of her magic wand planning and spoke through her ideal plans (see Figure 4.2) for nearly thirty lines. This plan included having 1) a circle to talk through things, 2) one-on-one check-ins to see how students were doing, 3) and more read-alouds and questions for students to discuss.

**Figure 4.2**

*Rebecca’s magic wand illustration*
What was less-clear to me, was the topic of discussion and purpose for the read-alouds. I asked for clarification a few times:

116  H   Okay. And I have some questions for you. Um: for your open discussions
117  with students, what would your topics be?
118  R   I think they could vary. Um: I feel like (..) I haven't thought too far into
119  them. But, I guess my open discussions definitely would relate to my inquiry in a
120  sense of talking about things that may be uncomfortable about that is hard
121  (..) to, I don't know, give them something to think about. Um (...) I don’t know, I
122  want to steer away from the, well what are you grateful for? Like, I feel like those
123  questions are most commonly asked, and I don't know, I want to push their
124  thinking more. I don't know what questions I want to ask.
125  H   So open discussions. Are you thinking about that in relation to your
126  inquiry and not the work that we have done together in our small groups?
127  R   Ye::s, because then my READ ALOUDS would (..) if I did read alouds it
128  would relate more to social justice and social studies.

Rebecca’s magic wand planning demonstrated this restructuring of how she understood the world. Before the shift in Rebecca’s physical environment, she explored issues of identity and social justice in the study and practicum setting. As of our co-planning session in early April, 2020, Rebecca stated, “if I did read-alouds it would relate to more social justice and social studies.” A later analysis of her lesson plans from April through the end of May, 2020 showed that Rebecca did not plan a read aloud addressing social justice or identity.

As previously discussed, I had documented instances when I felt Rebecca’s presence in small group discussions seemed different than pre-COVID. In her final interview in late April, 2020, I asked Rebecca about what I had observed.

205  H   Since we shifted to this online environment, I’ve noted that your ()
206  engagement with our discussions has seemed different. Do you have any
207  sense of that as well?
208  R   Um, I definitely can’t talk about some of these things at home. In
209  either household. I tried convincing my mom to read White Fragility and
210  at first she was like, okay. And then she kind of was like, but it's not like a
211  story. It's not like (..) a romance. I don’t know if I'll get into it. Like (..) I
212  really thought I could convince you to read it. Like, and then when the
213  book How to Be An Antiracist came, showed up in the mail, I was like (..)
214  I was SO excited. My mom was like wow, you have really been into those
215  kinds of books, like why? (Said with a judgmental voice.) And I tried
216  explaining it to her and she's like, oh, okay. Like, no more like questions
217  are asked. No more curiosity. Um, I don't know, every time I bring it up or
something comes up involving racism, my boyfriend's brother always makes a comment and it's like okay. Great. Thanks. I’ll shut up now.

In the very first sentence of this excerpt, Rebecca identified that she couldn’t “talk about some of these things at home.” Here, Rebecca’s movement into her hometown environment shifted her interactive positioning in relation to the content of her storylines. This demonstrated a restructuring of how she understood the world.

When Rebecca moved between the study and practicum setting, it was evident that she began shifting her understanding of the role social justice and identity play in education. After seeing a student verbally and physically show racism, she began planning and implementing lessons that addressed identity in the classroom. Identity became an acceptable topic of discussion in the classroom setting. Further, she identified herself as White and Catholic in the practicum setting.

Then, once Rebecca returned to her hometown, her understanding of the world was again restructured. In this setting, identity and issues of identity were not acceptable topics of discourse, therefore Rebecca shifted her position to align with beliefs and ideologies present in her hometown. Thus, Rebecca’s movement among numerous environments demonstrated shifts in how she restructured her understanding of the world.

Finding 3: Rebecca’s perception of power among institutional and family tensions shaped her positioning in regard to taking responsibility for creating change.

During the final steps of analysis, I approached the data with a lens of intersectionality through a thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell, 2013). Taking an intersectional approach to data analysis meant that I was trying to understand how Rebecca’s achieved positioning interacted with her perceptions of power.

For scholars such as Dhamoon (2011) and Hancock (2007), intersectionality captures not only the intersection of people’s identity categories but also the intersection of individual
and institutional factors. …This approach to intersectionality begins to permit an examination of how, given these complex identity interactions, individuals participate—and their identities are lodged—in broader societal and institutional structures. 

(Pugach et al, 2019, p.207)

This second finding provides evidence in response to the both research questions: When participating in weekly small group discussions paired with one-on-one interviews, co-planning sessions, and observation debriefs, how did one teacher candidate position her identity in relation to social justice? and In what ways did this teacher candidate’s practices in the practicum setting align to this positioning?

Using intersectionality (Crenshaw 1989; 1994) as a lens, I specifically sought to understand how Rebecca positioned her (in)actions with regard to power. I focused on this aspect of Rebecca’s identity, as it relates to social justice, because I wanted to gain an understanding of the relationship between Rebecca’s perception of power and her responsibility for creating change. The following sections will present three tensions present in the data: 1.) power structures in the practicum setting, 2.) power structures in public education, and 3.) power structures in Rebecca’s family unit.

**Perception of Power Structures in the Practicum Setting**

The first tension that was evident in the data was that the role of the cooperating teacher carried more power than that of the teacher candidate. February 19, 2020 appeared in the data analysis as a key date. Finding two explored Rebecca’s experience in a classroom setting in which a student physically and verbally showed racism toward a Student of Color. That evening, finding one argued that Rebecca identified, for one moment in this full study, in alignment with possessing privilege as she engaged with the Paseo protocol (School Reform Initiative, 2001). After the protocol finished, Rebecca began a co-constructed storyline in which she told Elizabeth
and Caroline about her practicum observation. When I revisited the analysis of the storyline, I
aimed to focus on how Rebecca positioned her character in relation to her perceptions of power.

Rebecca positioned her character as a teacher candidate participating in her cooperating partner
teacher’s lesson. When Rebecca turned and talked with a student, they stated, “She’s Black... I
think she feels like she wants to be White.” In response to this, Rebecca positioned her character
in this storyline as an anti-agent sharing, “…even if I did have the opportunity because then right
after the teacher started reading the book and I didn’t want to be sitting in the back having this
conversation and speaking above her.” Rebecca excused herself from taking action in this
storyline due to her perception of institutional power. Here, Rebecca’s inactions were impacted
by an identified tension, the cooperating partner teacher carried more power than she did. From
Rebecca’s positioning, it was of greater importance for the cooperating partner teacher to read the
text uninterrupted than for Rebecca to address an issue of discrimination she observed in the
classroom setting.

This perception of power among institutional tensions appeared again in a post-
observation debrief with Rebecca. On February 27, 2020, Rebecca and I debriefed a lesson she
taught in fourth grade. She asked students to consider how they may feel if they were to enter
school in the shoes of Ruby Bridges. This lesson was modeled after the lesson Rebecca observed
in her partner classroom on February, 19, 2020. To provide context, Rebecca described how one student responded to this prompt in a future small group discussion:

R:  And I said, turn to talk to your partner and luckily I overheard, well a student then asked me, am I White or Black in this, like in this situation? I said, does that change your (.) mind? Does that change your answer? If you're White, what would you do if you were Black? What would you do to? How does that change your answer? ... So I paused. Everyone, I said, so George came up with an interesting question. What if I was Black, would it change my answer if I was Black or White in the situation? And then I asked them to turn and talk to their partner again and I overheard a student saying well, if I was Black. I would wish to be White.

During our observation debrief, Rebecca shared:

R:  I was interested (...) and I wish I knew better, how to handle乔治’s question, because he was really interested and I wanted to talk about it. It was really cool, <not cool>, but like, he was like, I would pray that I was White. I’m like well, how does that change your perspective? I think (...) the kids were really thinking about it.

Rebecca and I made a plan to bring this problem of practice to the next small group discussion. Beyond this, considering the complexity of identity interactions between a teacher candidate and cooperating teacher that are lodged in institutional structures (Pugach et al., 2019), I noticed that a tension arose during this post-observation debrief. When I asked Rebecca if she had any additional questions for me, she shared,

R:  I could probably bring this up, <I know we are doing patterns of power when we come back. And I doubt, I doubt my cooperating teacher will want to, but, <if you ask her>, she might say yes (...) to (...) then bring that conversation back and say, like, let’s talk about this conversation about how what if (...) what if you were not White? How would that change (...)?

Instead of positioning her character in this storyline as an anti-agent and dismissing the need to return to the conversation, Rebecca asked me to be the one to take action. I take this discursive positioning of her character in regard to her cooperating teacher to demonstrate that Rebecca acknowledged her power was limited when it came to allocating time for in-class discussions, especially discussions that centered race.
On the evening of March 5, 2020, we engaged in our fifth small group discussion. During this time, Rebecca brought her experience as a problem of practice during the Consultancy protocol (School Reform Initiative, 2011). She asked:

“I really want to bring this back up with my students. <And I don't know>, I guess I'm wondering, would be how do I bring back that question? And kind of relate it back to now? How People of Color are (.) just because they weren't respected then doesn't mean they are now? How do I (...) bring that all together?”

Then, Elizabeth (E) asked Rebecca a clarifying question:

And then it was done, like did you have to stop the conversation after that? You could go further with that?

No, I only had a few more minutes and I needed time to get back to my inquiry question, unfortunately.

Here, Rebecca’s perception of power prioritized her inquiry instead of diving further into a discussion, centered on identity, with her students. This idea of inquiry presented itself as another mode through which Rebecca perceived her power and influence to be less than that of her cooperating teacher’s.

As previously shared, inquiry was both a signature pedagogy for the Central District PDS as well as a stance for teacher reflection and professional development. Throughout the Spring semester, teacher candidates participated in workshops and activities meant to support their inquiries. Looking back on my field notes, I noticed that Rebecca discussed her inquiry with a sense of disappointment and uneasiness. On February 5, 2020, I noted a conversation in which Rebecca was having trouble with her inquiry wondering. She wanted to use the word self-love, but her cooperating teacher didn’t approve of this. Instead, her cooperating teacher suggested self-acceptance. Other terms her cooperating teacher suggested in the subsequent weeks included growth-mindset, perseverance, and gratitude.

Again, in mid-February I re-visited this idea of inquiry when supporting Rebecca as she thought through a series of lessons, inspired by a Ruby Bridges text. I asked,
So how does this [set of lessons] tie into your inquiry, specifically? Does it or does it not?

Hm. I don’t know, perseverance. She definitely persevered and kept going to school even though, the first day, even though she had her mom with her, she kept going without her mom. I’m trying to think of like a self-acceptance, gratitude. Like, I could definitely relate it to gratitude. How would you feel if every day people were threatening to kill you? How would that effect you, like, I could even say if you came to school every day and people shouted at you and told you that you didn’t belong here, how would that effect your academics? If all day long you thought, wow people want to hurt me, is that thought going constantly through your head, is that a helpful thought or a hurtful thought? Especially like, thinking, how do you think she focused all day long, knowing that?

Here, Rebecca did not directly or indirectly address the impact that her perceptions of power had on her inquiry development. Rather, she actively took on suggested and approved terms from her cooperating teacher without considering the social inequalities woven throughout her discourse. L221-222 are particularly impactful, “Like, I could definitely relate it to gratitude. How would you feel is every day people were threatening to kill you?”

Rebecca later noted in a personal reflection on March 4, 2020, that she was struggling to see how social justice could be included in her inquiry. I am seeing that my inquiry could go in many directions and I am unsure which direction I want to go in. I am very intrigued in social justice but I am not sure how this can be included in my inquiry. I know that [my cooperating teacher] doesn’t prioritize social justice. I think my idea behind this is for students to accept themselves and be able to love and be kind, but I also don’t know how to introduce it and what steps to follow. I want to address what we ended up talking about why the preferred color is White, but I am unsure how to tie it into my inquiry as well and into our identity webs. Unless this web is like a pre-assessment to their thinking and see if we do one towards the end of school and see what they add or take away from their identities. I don’t know. I have to talk to [my cooperating teacher].

(March 4, 2020 personal reflection)

Notice that directly after Rebecca shared that she was intrigued by social justice and unsure of how to include it in her inquiry, she stated, “I know that [my cooperating teacher] doesn’t prioritize social justice.” Additionally, after Rebecca identified actions that she may have taken that would have brought a lens of social justice into her inquiry, she stated, “I have to talk to [my cooperating teacher].” This personal reflection was prompted within coursework, so Rebecca’s
response was not directed in response to me or our small group discussions. Thus, it is powerful evidence demonstrating how Rebecca’s perception of power among institutional tensions impacted her positioning in regard to social justice.

Finally, during our one-on-one co-planning session, which replaced the eighth small group discussion, I noted in my analytical memos that Rebecca seemed very frustrated when I asked about her inquiry.

128 H  Okay. And remind me again for your inquiry, where did you land on the language that you're using?
129 R  (Rolls eyes. Exhales.)
130 H  Where are you currently placed?
131 R  Well, I really made it general. And I kind of just, because before it was, how can we as a fourth grade community practice self-acceptance?
132 R  Now I’m thinking, how can we, as a fourth grade community practice (..) I want to say like practice (..) I want to say like social emotional needs in our remote learning environment. (...) Because it’s very general. I don’t
133 R  (...) I don’t know what [my cooperating teacher] wants.
134 H  Okay. And remind me again for your inquiry, where did you land on the language that you're using?
135 R  Where are you currently placed?
136 R  Well, I really made it general. And I kind of just, because before it was, how can we as a fourth grade community practice self-acceptance?
137 R  Now I’m thinking, how can we, as a fourth grade community practice (..) I want to say like practice (..) I want to say like social emotional needs in our remote learning environment. (...) Because it’s very general. I don’t

Similar to her personal reflection above, Rebecca detailed possibilities for her inquiry in spite of shifting to an online learning model. She used cooperating teacher-approved terms and concluded with the statement, “I don’t (..) I don’t know what [my cooperating teacher] wants.” This data suggests Rebecca’s responsibility for creating change was impacted by institutional tensions. The role of the cooperating teacher carried more power than that of the teacher candidate.

**Perception of Power Structures in the Public School System**

Beyond the practicum setting, Rebecca demonstrated another tension related to her perception of power in regard to the public school system. During our first interview, Rebecca discussed her perception of power in the public school system in response to my question, “What about the role of teaching? What is the power like?”

309 R  I feel like I don't have power in the classroom because it’s not my classroom. Like, the students don't see me as a threat. I guess. Like, when I say no, you can't do that (..) they, they don't listen. They are like, well you, aren't really the teacher, so I'm not going to listen to you. So, it is
interesting to see that aspect.

This storyline illustrated Rebecca’s ideas about the structure of power within a classroom setting. In L309-301, she positioned her character as one that did not have power in a classroom, because the students did not see her “as a threat.”

Rebecca’s perception of power in the public school system was again apparent in the final interview. After sharing that race was not spoken of in her previous schooling experiences because “[we] never had to worry about someone with a different skin color walking down the hallway,” I asked Rebecca if she would choose to discuss race as a future teacher in her former school district.

What do you think, specifically the first audio, you talked about how the, your school didn't have a diverse population. So, race was never really talked about, what are you thinking about that?

Um, it was always, it was that hush-hush conversation. You didn’t really bring it up. You didn’t really talk about it. So if you ignored it, that meant that you weren't talking about it, so that meant it was okay. (It was okay said in sing-songy voice.) It was a big part of it. Like we NEVER talked about race. Never had to worry about someone with a different skin color walking down the hallway. Like and if there was, everyone talked about them.

So if you got a teaching position in your former school, are these conversations that you would have?

I would hope to. And that's the thing (. ) with the: community around, it would definitely have to be a conversation that I would have to have with the principal first. I (. ) like I can already tell, I would have to have the conversation with the principal first and then send out permission slips to parents. I could already tell that's my community, that's what's going to happen.

Rebecca demonstrated on L364, in this hypothetical setting, she would hope to address race in the classroom. Simultaneously, Rebecca’s perception of power among institutional tensions shaped her positioning in regard to taking responsibility for change. In order to talk about race in the classroom L364-367, her perception is that she would first have a conversation with the principal, send out permission slips, and consider the community response. Here, the principal and community carry more power than Rebecca’s hypothetical role as a teacher in her
hometown community. And thus, the voice of dominant groups carried the potential to perpetuate an inequitable and oppressive status-quo.

**Perception of Power Structures in Rebecca’s Family Unit**

A final tension in which Rebecca positioned her identity was her perception of power structures within her family unit. During our first interview, I asked Rebecca, “So when you think about the ways that you identified yourself, how might that relate to the environment around you?” In response, Rebecca shared:

139  R  Like what I give off? Or what I would see?
140  H  It could be both.=
141  R  =Okay.=
142  H  =And when I say society, it could be like with your family, your hometown, you could get as big as you want to get.
144  R  Um::: Well I notice that when, like the viewpoints that I have been being introduced to and I will go home and tell my boyfriend and he's like (. ) he judges me. He thinks that I’m a liberal now. And like, I'm stretching (. ) and like, it's SO irritating. [Throat clear.] But (. ) I don't know, it's the people that I'm around now is different than people that I was around closer to my hometown.

In L144, Rebecca began this storyline positioning “the viewpoints” as ideas that she had been introduced to in the context of her studies. Notice that she did not say, “my viewpoints.”

Further in L146, Rebecca identified herself as a victim, being judged by her boyfriend and labeled as a liberal. The construction of Rebecca’s interaction demonstrated that her discourse purpose was to gain empathy from her audience. Rebecca claimed agency in L146-147 as she was “stretching.” Suddenly, Rebecca again positioned herself in relation to her boyfriend, who grew up close to her hometown. The storyline demonstrated the tension Rebecca experienced between her education and her boyfriend’s reception of this.

A later storyline in the first interview demonstrated that Rebecca identified clear power structures in her family unit.

289  R  But then I don't have power because I am a female in some senses.
290  I don't know, that's (. ) a hard question because, I don't know, I feel like you have to have had power to know what power feels like. Um. (...) I
don't know [voice cracking], because like my family household- my mom and dad aren't equal. Like, my dad is the powerhouse, he is the man of the house. You know. ... And like my household, like you know, like my dad is in control like, he: like, he is the money maker.

Rebecca was emotionally impacted while co-constructing this storyline. In L290-291 she stated, “I feel like you have to have had power to know what power feels like.” In this statement, Rebecca’s use of the pronoun you distanced her character from power and what it may feel like to have power. She then moved into a detailed description of power structures within her family unit in which her mom and dad “aren’t equal.” This storyline, paired with the excerpt above begins to contextualize the struggle that Rebecca felt when expressing “the viewpoints” to her boyfriend. In relation to the gender roles Rebecca identified in the power structure of her family unit, it is evident that Rebecca purposefully positioned herself at a distance from “the viewpoints.”

These storylines provided context for Rebecca’s perception of power among family tensions. These power structures directly impacted Rebecca’s positioning in regard to taking responsibility for creating change when she returned home after COVID-19. Identified in finding two, Rebecca began restructuring her understanding of the world when she shifted to an online learning platform. By this, I mean that she shifted her positioning based her perception of what she could and could not discuss.

Like, and then when the book How to Be An Antiracist came, showed up in the mail, I was like (..) I was SO excited. My mom was like wow, you have really been into those kinds of books, like why? (Said with a judgmental voice.) And I tried explaining it to her and she's like, oh, okay. Like, no more like questions are asked. No more curiosity. Um, I don't know, every time I bring it up or something comes up involving racism, my boyfriend's brother always makes a comment and it's like okay. Great. Thanks. I'll shut up now.

When considering Rebecca’s perception of power within her family unit and the active restructuring of how she understood the world, Rebecca ultimately positioned herself as someone needing to “shut up.”
Chapter Summary

This chapter explored the outcomes from data analysis through the description of preliminary insights and three findings. Preliminary insights drawn from the process of engaging with Bamberg’s (1997a) three-level analysis demonstrated patterns related to Rebecca’s use of pronouns, the content of her storylines, and how she positioned her character when discussing power. Additionally, this chapter described three findings. First, Rebecca positioned her identity at a distance from possessing privilege and perpetuating oppression. Second, Rebecca demonstrated shifts in how she restructured her understanding of the world as she moved among numerous environments. And finally, Rebecca’s perception of power among institutional tensions shaped her positioning in regard to taking responsibility for creating change. These findings are further synthesized and discussed in chapter five of this dissertation. Chapter five will provide a summary of findings, implications, and future work.
Chapter 5

Discussion and Implications

Introduction

As discussed in chapter four, this single-case study investigated how one teacher candidate, Rebecca, positioned her identity in regard to social justice in a series of small group discussions, one-on-one interviews, co-planning sessions, and observation debriefs. Additionally, it sought to understand how Rebecca’s practices in the practicum setting aligned to this positioning. The previous chapter presented preliminary insights and three findings. I supported these findings with excerpts from data that were presented as evidence. In light of the findings gleaned from a detailed analysis of Rebecca’s positioned identity as she attempted to teach toward social justice, chapter five will explore what I have learned. This chapter will summarize the study’s findings while offering contributions to the literature. The chapter will then discuss implications for preservice teacher education programs. The chapter will conclude with a presentation of future work.

Research Questions

1. When participating in weekly small group discussions paired with one-on-one interviews, co-planning sessions, and observation debriefs, how did one teacher candidate position her identity in relation to social justice?

2. In what ways did this teacher candidate’s practices in the practicum setting align to this positioning?
Summary of Findings and Contributions to the Literature

This study examined how one teacher candidate positioned her identity through the lenses of social justice (Curry-Stevens, 2007; Kavanagh & Danielson, 2020), intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989;1994) and positioning theory (Davies and Harré, 1990; Bamberg, 1997a) to further our understanding of the role identity plays within and beyond the classroom. It extends current scholarship having 1) investigated one teacher candidate’s identity as it related to social justice and how this aligned with her practices in the classroom setting (Mills & Ballantyne, 2016; Sleeter, 2004) and 2) brought the intersectionality of one teacher candidate’s identity into focus when analyzing her discourse and classroom practices (Pugach et al., 2019). Beyond the purpose of extending current scholarship, this study is a vital step in actualizing justice for K-12 students.

This study demonstrated the integral role identity played in and beyond the classroom as one teacher candidate attempted to teach toward social justice. More specifically, using Bamberg’s (1997a) analysis, I was able to see how Rebecca’s situationally flexible positioning gave evidence of the multiple facets of her identity. This detailed lens provided a thick description of how Rebecca’s identity was, at times, contradictory, fleeting, and contested (Depperman, 2015). Additionally, although my observations in the practicum setting were limited due to COVID-19, the two observations I was able to complete in Rebecca’s practicum setting provided key insights regarding Rebecca’s practice. This study generated three findings that will be discussed in the subsequent sections.

(Mis)Alignment of Actions and Identity

Rebecca’s Identity

This study found that Rebecca began teaching toward social justice in the classroom setting (finding two) and simultaneously maintained a positioned identity that was detached from possessing privilege and perpetuating oppression (finding one). Bamberg’s (1997a) analysis
allowed us to see the intricate movement of her identity positioning across settings. The robust and detailed analysis illustrated Rebecca’s identity as it transformed among settings and even conflicted with itself across series of storylines (Depperman, 2015). Further, we find that while Rebecca began teaching toward social justice in the classroom setting, she also kept her identity at a distance from acknowledging her privilege and her role in perpetuating oppression.

When considering current literature in preservice teacher education as it relates to social justice, scholars narrowly investigate the development of teacher candidate’s conceptions of social justice based on outcomes (Cochran-Smith, Ludlow, Ell, O’Leary, & Enterline, 2012; Enterline, et al., 2008; Ludlow, Enterline, & Cochran-Smith, 2008). Data involved in these studies include reflection journals, coursework, and surveys. Further, many of these studies claim that teacher candidates exiting preservice teacher education programs do so with stronger social justice beliefs (Mills & Ballantyne, 2015).

This study contributes to the literature because it provided a thick description of Rebecca’s identity over the course of fifteen weeks. It expanded on the work of Gilpin and Liston (2014), who suggest that research explore the role of teacher identities play in maintaining status quo and/or generating social change. The intricate description of Rebecca’s identity is what demonstrated the most convincing evidence of her (mis)aligned identity and practices. While Rebecca was attempting to generate change, based on her active restructuring of the world, she maintained an identity that distanced herself from her involvement with status-quo.

**Movement to Hometown**

Rebecca restructured her understanding of the world as she moved among various settings during this semester of her student teaching (finding two). More specifically, Rebecca expressed six weeks into this study, that identity, including race and religion were acceptable topics to discuss in the public school setting. Then, once she returned to her hometown and participated in the study via an online platform, her understandings were again restructured. This
misalignment of identity and actions combined with the restructuring she experienced when returning home offer substantial contributions to the literature.

Typical preservice teacher education programs remain bound to the K-12 and institutional settings. However, due to COVID-19, Rebecca’s shift back to her hometown demonstrated a dynamic movement in her positioning in relation to teaching toward social justice. Later, in the implications, I will discuss future research needed to understand shifts that teacher candidates undergo once they leave their program settings.

It is also vital to highlight this Rebecca’s restructuring because it illustrates the importance of teaching the whole student. This study refuses to acknowledge teacher identity as strictly a professional construct. Instead, as preservice teacher education programs shift toward centering equity, teacher candidates must learn to acknowledge their past experiences that have shaped how they enter into classroom spaces. Further, this inquiry into one’s history becomes more meaningful when paired with a curriculum that addresses intersectionality, structural inequalities, and justice.

**Internalized Lens**

Rebecca engaged in a restructuring of her understanding of the world after she observed a student physically and verbally show racism in a second grade classroom on February 19, 2020 (finding two). While Rebecca’s perception of power limited the actions she took in the practicum setting (finding three), it is apparent that after she experienced this, she began taking steps toward planning and implementing instruction that directly addressed identity and more specifically race. After reviewing current scholarship and engaging in multiple personal communications with colleagues that study issues of equity and social justice in preservice teacher education, I found that the literature does not directly address the phenomenon Rebecca experienced.

In preservice teacher education literature, a “social justice lens” is referred to as a tool through which teacher candidates are prompted to reflect on personal experiences as they relate to
equity and justice (Gorski & Dalton, 2020; Navarro, 2018). Additionally, critical literacy scholarship discusses how teacher candidates are encouraged analyze media through a social justice lens (Dharamshi, 2018). In each of these examples, a lens becomes a tool. Thus, a social justice lens is merely a tool that teacher candidates may apply when reflecting back on experiences or when analyzing media.

This study contributes to the literature by describing how Rebecca began internalizing a social justice lens. By February 19, 2020, Rebecca had been learning about social justice through her methods coursework and the PDS Spring seminar. She had also participated in four small group discussions, two interviews, and multiple informal conversations with the study participants and myself. In this study, I did not ask Rebecca to take on a social justice lens when observing in the practicum setting. Instead, she approached me via email, once she left her observation to share the overt racism that she saw take place in a second grade classroom. By March 19, 2020, Rebecca began seeing the world through an internalized social justice lens.

It seems constructive that Rebecca noticed this instance of oppression in the classroom setting. In response, Rebecca began taking action in her fourth grade practicum setting to introduce and discuss issues related to identity. However, I am left to wonder if ultimately, Rebecca had to see racism to know that it exists.

This idea of seeing oppression ties to a recent push in preservice teacher education to place teacher candidates in “urban settings” (McDonald, 2007; 2008; Mills & Ballantyne, 2016). The aim of providing these urban experiences is primarily for teacher candidates to interact with diverse groups of students. More specifically, McDonald (2008) found that “diversity among students in field placements substantially shaped teacher candidate’s opportunities” to engage

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5 It is important to note here, that the term diverse, used in this context, primarily places White teacher candidates as the normed group. Literature that argues for urban or diverse placements often view identity through race, ethnicity, and socio-economic status. This is not an intersectionality view of identity.
with social justice in their assignments (p. 151). However, the findings of this study would argue that opportunities to engage in social justice are also apparent in field placements such as the Central District PDS. While the demographic breakdown of this district is different than one might expect to find in an urban setting, oppression was present in this space.

**The Curriculum**

While the planned and implemented curriculum for this study did not specify the use of a “social justice lens,” it is evident that it played a role in Rebecca’s positioning. At the very least, the curriculum this study employed provided Rebecca with language to question and discuss social structures that privilege some at the expense of others. Within the first few weeks of our small group discussions, Rebecca began using terms such as privilege, oppression, and identity regularly.

Additionally, the curriculum modeled an important construct that Rebecca enacted time and time again—restructuring. Terms were not provided within the curriculum as clearly defined, inflexible constructs. Instead, as we discussed weekly shared readings, we re-visited these social constructs through various contexts. This flexibility and responsiveness allowed Rebecca to accept and embrace a learner-stance toward social justice when present in the K-4 and University environments. Rebecca clearly demonstrated this learner-stance as she approached our fourth small group discussion with her concerns stemming from a second-grade observation. She labeled what she observed with language such as oppression and racism then asked the group for feedback and support as she navigated her reflection and inquired into next steps she may take in her fourth grade practicum setting.

One added component of this curriculum for which I see a need after data analysis, is that of dialogue structures. While Rebecca did take up social justice-centered lexicon in the K-4 and University spaces, she did not continue this when she shifted to her hometown. In addition to providing the language and sense of flexible, responsive definitions, it is also apparent that
Rebecca may have benefited from modeled dialogue structures. Such as, how do you begin talking about social justice with your family? With your friends? With your cooperating teacher?

**Power Structures Have Impact**

When considering the data through an intersectional (Crenshaw 1989; 1994) analysis, it was clear that the ways in which Rebecca positioned her identity in relation to other characters was lodged in institutional structures (Pugach et al., 2019). Rebecca positioned her identity in response to her perception of power structures present in the institution and her family unit (finding three). Further, Rebecca’s (in)actions in the practicum setting were impacted by this perception of power (finding two).

**Our Relationship**

In addition to navigating power structures in relation to her family and cooperating teacher, the relationship Rebecca and I had was also shaped by a plethora of factors. One factor that played a dynamic role our relationship is how I positioned myself in regard to “professional” structures. From the start of the school year, in 2019, I interacted with the Central PDS teacher candidates as a peer, such that we spoke about life outside of academic settings. I was not identified as an instructor or supervisor, I was a friend of the PDS.

This relationship continued as we began the study in January, 2020. In one-on-one interviews and small group discussions, I shared about my experience navigating higher education while being diagnosed with post-partum depression. We talked about mental health, seeing therapists, and our daily interactions with family members. The topic of our discussions, including our identities, was the antithesis of “professional.”

Additionally, I was also embedded within typical institutional structures. As Rebecca attempted to navigate conversations about race in her practicum setting, she asked me to talk with her cooperating teacher to schedule additional time for her lesson. Rebecca’s perception was that
I had more power than her and ultimately, her cooperating teacher held the most power. In the next section I will discuss the implications for addressing these oppressive structures.

**Implications**

The study identified a range of implications in regard to pedagogy and future research. This section will present these implications along with related literature. Table 5.1 presents implications in relation to this study’s findings.

**Pedagogy**

*Pedagogy for the Privileged*

The progression of Curry-Stephen’s (2007) pedagogy for the privileged provided a lens of clarity when planning social justice-centered small group discussions. The succession of confidence shaking and confidence building, termed by Curry-Stevens (2007), incorporated vital strands of connection from self to society. A similar progression may support preservice teacher preparation programs when organizing and implementing social justice-centered curriculum. Mills and Ballantyne (2016) find that programs are currently addressing social justice from various, unclear perspectives. Thus, grounding a program of study in pedagogy for the privileged would provide a solid framework upon which courses may be developed and enacted.

Additionally, class size must be taken into account when centering social justice within coursework. Our small group discussions were strengthened because we had three participants and myself. If class sized cannot be adjusted, then smaller groups of teacher candidates must be formed and remain consistent across the duration of the course. Finally, this curriculum may be strengthened if instructors identify within a small group and participate fully. This work is not for teacher candidates alone.

**Positioned Identities**

The thick description that this study provided may serve as a strong pedagogical tool in preservice teacher education programs. Using a similar data analysis method, Barkhuizen (2009)
presented findings to his study participant, Sela. In reply, she thanked Barkhuizen for “dissecting [her] identity complexity(ies) and thus, giving [her] the ability not only to understand it, but also verbalize it” (p. 295). Here, Barkhuizen (2009) identifies that Sela’s response implies an important construct needed in teacher education. Through this ongoing analysis of identities, teacher candidates may evaluate and rethink their identities concerning theory, practice, and larger societal structures (Agee, 2006). Ideally, this analysis may take place in a cyclical fashion and include the teacher candidate, cooperating teacher, and supervisor.

Paired with small group discussions grounded in Currey-Steve’s (2007) pedagogy for the privileged, group members may record sessions that we re-visited with positioning analysis. A short segment of five minutes may suffice, in which teacher candidates and instructors work to understand characters present in their storylines and how their character is positioned in relation to others. Additionally, a common practice found in many preservice teacher education programs today is video-recording lessons that are then analyzed. Perhaps, one layer of analysis is considering how a teacher candidate positions her identity when among K-4 students. How are students identified? How does the teacher candidate position her character in relation to students?

**Investigate Power Structures**

Rebecca’s actions in the practicum setting, her restructuring of how she understood the world, and her positioned identities were all impacted by her perception of power structures. This study demonstrates that it is necessary to directly address tensions of power in preservice teacher education programs with all members of the community, including K-12 students. Using critical inquiry as a possible pedagogy, community members, including teacher candidates may investigate policies, historical documents, and current tensions to directly address, discuss, and act on perceived power structures that may harm some at the expense of others. Remaining silent and allowing status-quo to continue in preservice teacher education programs risks perpetuating the current and possibly oppressive system.
Future Research

Positioned Identities

This study demonstrates a robust set of findings that argue for the investigation of teacher candidates’ identities. A majority of scholarship pertaining to teacher candidates’ identities conceptualizes a dichotomy between personal and professional identities (Beijaard, Verloop & Vermunt, 2000; Freese, 2006). Not only does this study reject this conceptualization, it also offers evidence that suggests teacher candidates’ identities are impacted by dimensions of power structures at the institution and within the teacher candidates’ family units. If we are aiming toward the development of programs in which teacher candidates actively work against status-quo and toward generating change, more scholarship must investigate teacher candidates’ positioned identities (Gilpin and Liston, 2014).

Critical Supervision

Another avenue of future research that is evident includes what I am calling critical supervision. Rebecca happened to be a participant in this study when she observed the oppressive acts of a second grade student. It is apparent that she felt supported to question, reflect, and act on this experience through her email communication, bringing this event to our small group discussion, and planning a series of lessons to address race in her fourth grade classroom. However, I am left to wonder how Rebecca may have responded if she did not have this support. Literature discusses the oppressive stereotypes and deficit thinking with which teacher candidates engage when not properly supported in the practicum setting (Chubbuck, 2010; Dudley-Marling, 2007). Yeigh’s (2020) recent scholarship conceptualizes how one supervisor attempts to support a teacher candidate’s “disruption” of instances where a cooperating teacher used a deficit-lens toward a student and/or their families. Additional literature that explores this dimension of supervision is needed to support the development of preservice teacher education programs that curate social change.
**Internalized Social Justice Lens**

I found, across social justice in preservice teacher education literature, that the term “social justice lens” is applied, by teacher candidates, as a tool to reflect on past experiences in critical ways (Gorski & Dalton, 2020; Navarro, 2018) or to critically analyze media (Dharamshi, 2018). As I noted in the discussion above, Rebecca’s experience on February 19, 2020 was an instance when she internalized a social justice lens. Thus, because this phenomenon is not directly addressed in the literature is beckons further investigation.

**Beyond Graduation**

Literature investigating teacher candidates beyond the practicum setting into their teaching careers is limited. Teacher educators may find that their teacher candidates leave their programs of study with a more socially-just stance then when they entered. However, I am left to wonder what happens once those teacher candidates enter the field. In Rebecca’s case, COVID-19 forced her to engage in this study and her final student teaching semester from her hometown. The shift Rebecca made in restructuring her understanding of the world when she returned to her hometown calls in to question, once teacher candidates leave the learning environment of a preservice teacher education program, how might their identity and practices change?

**Investigate Power Structures**

The institutional power structures that impacted Rebecca in this study are, to a limited extent, indicated in scholarship which examines voice and power in PDS partnerships (Breault, 2014) and preservice teacher education programs (Rubin, 2018). To begin, Breault (2014) found, through document analysis (published partnership work), “that the real power and influence in PDS partnerships are the classroom teachers” (p. 22). Here, Breault establishes the power structure that is possibly working within the Central District PDS. He further articulates that learning to teach requires teacher candidates to defer to the expertise of their cooperating teachers, who are still ‘in charge’ of the classroom. Rebecca often discussed this dimension of
power in her practicum experience. Additionally, I found that Rebecca’s decisions around inquiry placed a heavy emphasis on her cooperating teacher’s approved terms which were ultimately used in Rebecca’s final wondering. Here, Rebecca’s experiences align with Rubin’s (2014) argument that the realization by a teacher candidate “that she is not the teacher of record can feel restrictive and disempowering” (p. 962). Further research is needed to examine power structures embedded within a preservice teacher education program. More specifically, this research must center the voice and experience of teacher candidates in regard to their perceptions of power.

**Cultural Learning Pathways.** Bell, Tzou, Bricker, & Baines (2013) present *cultural learning pathways* as a theoretical framework that serves the potential to take into account how, why, and where people learn in relation to constructs of human difference as learners move among places and the value systems of these places over time. Considering Rebecca through this framework, I may take into account the various settings in which she was positioned as a learner (this study, her practicum setting, and her hometown) and further, the value systems of these places. Among each setting, Rebecca engaged in stance-taking through interactive actions and social positioning. More importantly, each context provided different scopes of possibilities, and thus, different outcomes related to developing practices.

Bell et al. argue that (2013) *cultural learning pathways* enable researchers to better understand socially-held dynamics that shape how, why, and where people learn. Using this framework, I may be better able to understand 1.) how Rebecca’s events and storylines are connected (or not) over time, 2.) her identity formation (both positive and negative), and 3.) her coordinated participation in social activity (both in service of developing interests and in taking a resistance stand to dominant power structures). Thus, further research in preservice teacher education that may investigate the major themes found across this study’s findings, can do so through the cultural learning pathways framework. Taking this approach to analysis may provide additional insights beyond this study’s findings.
Table 5.1

Alignment of findings and implications

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Findings</th>
<th>Implications</th>
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| Finding 1: Rebecca positioned her identity at a distance from possessing privilege and perpetuating oppression. | • Use of Curry-Steven’s (2007) pedagogy for the privileged as a foundation for social justice-centered curriculum  
• Use of Bamberg’s (1997a) analysis as a pedagogical tool in preservice teacher preparation programs  
• Future research on teacher candidates’ positioned identities is needed from the academic community |
| Finding 2: Rebecca demonstrated shifts in how she (re)structured her understanding of the world as she moved among numerous environments. | • Future research on teacher candidates’ beyond the program setting is needed from the academic community  
• Future research on teacher candidates’ internalized social justice lens is needed from the academic community |
| Finding 3: Rebecca’s perception of power among institutional tensions shaped her positioning in regard to taking responsibility for creating change. | • Directly addressing power structures in preservice teacher education programs with all members of the community, including K-12 students  
• Future research on teacher candidates’ perceptions of power in preservice teacher education programs is needed from the academic community |

Future Work

The findings and implications of this study leave me with many options for future work. While I have learned a great deal from this study, set in a mostly academic space, I have also come to realize that my true passion for teaching and learning occurs in K-12 spaces. More specifically, my future work aims to apply this study’s findings and implications in K-6 classrooms.

I have noticed during the duration of this study’s design, implementation, and analysis that I have changed. When I consider Rebecca’s internalization of a social justice lens, I identify...
strongly with the emotions and physical embodiment of this phenomenon. I fear that if our schools continue to treat social justice as an optional lens through which we may see the world, we have a lifetime of struggle ahead.

Thus, my future work aims to address the internalization of a social justice lens and further, identity in K-6 spaces. As recommended above, I can imagine bringing positionality into discussion and analysis with students. Doing so, in partnership with diverse literature and an analysis of historical context from multiple perspectives, we may begin to foster the development of children that actively interrogate injustice.

Chapter Summary

In light of the findings gleaned from a detailed analysis of Rebecca’s positioned identity as she attempted to teach toward social justice, this chapter summarized the study’s findings while offering contributions to the literature. A key contribution to the literature was identified when Rebecca shifted to engaging with this study from her hometown due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Prior to this shift, Rebecca was demonstrating a restructuring of her understanding of the world as she engaged with small group discussions. She began internalizing a social justice lens, which was evident as she openly reflected on an observation in which a second-grade student verbally and physically showing racism toward a student of color. However, this lens was ultimately confined as Rebecca’s perception of power limited when and how she took action to actualize justice in education.

The chapter then discussed implications for preservice teacher education programs which included considerations for pedagogy and needed future research. An important component of this study proved to be the series of small group discussions. Thus, as preservice teacher education programs consider restructuring with social justice-centered curriculum in mind, class sizes must remain small and instructors must engage in learning alongside teacher candidates. Finally, the field must explore further research investigating the role critical supervision plays in
cultivating teacher candidates, supervisors, and cooperating teachers that actively resist status-quo and work toward actualizing justice in education.
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Appendix A

Recruitment Script

1. Topic/ Purpose:
   a. Understand how teacher candidates may position themselves in a small group conversation and in classroom practices when participating in a small group discussion which investigates the intersectionality of identities within social structures.
   b. This type of work has not been done in an elementary education teacher education setting. It is an exploratory and descriptive study.

2. Questions:
   a. How do teacher candidates position their identities in a small group intervention exploring the intersectionality of identity units?
      i. In what ways do teacher candidates position themselves among a) their personal values, b) perceived values of the profession, and c) values present in the small group curriculum?
   b. What attempts do teacher candidates make at agential moves to bring small group learning into the classroom?
      i. How does the participant describe their motivation for this attempt?

3. What It Means to Participate:
   a. Looking for 3-4 teacher candidates
   b. Small group discussion to occur outside of PDS time (optional location and time): 45 minutes per week
   c. One-on-one interviews will occur three times in place of small group discussion
   d. Observations in classroom setting: field notes
   e. Share documents such as 1) teaching platform, 2) lesson plans and reflections, 3) weekly reflections shared with PDA, 4) notes you take during seminar

4. How I’ll Support You:
   a. This research addresses teaching for social justice through your identity
   b. Help you negotiate the complexities of your identity and understand societal structures that bound our identities in certain ways
   c. Help you take action and bring this learning into your classroom setting

5. How You’ll Support Me:
   a. This type of research has not been done in the field of elementary education teacher education- you will be helping to address that gap in the literature
   b. This is my passion: you will help be continue to restructure my understanding of identity and how that interacts with cultures, genders, race, etc.

6. How We Will Support Our Community:
   a. Sharing your learning with peers, mentors, etc.
   b. Modeling taking action within the work that teachers must do alongside the work of social justice education: investigating yourself
   c. Sharing our work with the bigger community (presentations, articles, etc.)
Appendix B

The Paseo Protocol or Circles of Identity


Purpose: When a group would like to examine issues of identity, diversity, beliefs, and values, and would like to begin making connections between who they are and how that shapes their decisions and behaviors, the Paseo can be a tool for initiating the dialogue. It is essentially a 2-step process, which begins with individual reflection and then moves into personal storytelling. This is a flexible process, in that the theme of the questions and prompts can be tailored to meet the objectives of the group.

Note: We have been told that The Paseo is a process that has been used in Mexico and the Southwest United States as a way of getting acquainted quickly. Traditionally, males and females of the community would line up in concentric circles, facing one another, and would make “un paseo,” or pass by one another, holding eye contact and having brief opportunities to make connections.

Process
1. Each participant makes/draws a web of circles, roughly resembling the diagram of a molecule. (The facilitator may chart one as a model, with each participant creating his own on a journal page or note pad.
2. Within this diagram, each group member should write his or her name in the center circle. Each additional circle should contain a word or phrase that captures some element of her/his identity — those terms or descriptors that have most helped shape who the person is and how she/he interacts in the world. Some groups will move right into this; others will prefer to have the facilitator model what is intended. For example, one circle might contain the word “woman,” another the word “black,” another the phrase “grew up in Deep South,” and so on. As an additional step, participants may be asked to include words or phrases that other people use to identify them. This may be done in a different color, or in pencil rather than in ink.
3. The entire group now moves to stand in a large open area, forming 2 concentric circles, in preparation for the dialogue portion of this process. Some group members will prefer to take their notepads with them. An even number of people is necessary, since the dialogue takes place in pairs. The outer circle faces inward while the inner circle faces outward.

The facilitator will now begin to ask the group to think about and respond to a series of questions. Important instructions to provide before the questioning starts are:
• Once the question has been stated, everyone will be allowed 1 minute to think about her/his own response to the question. This is intended to ensure that each person is fully listening to her/his partner during the dialogue process, without being distracted by a desire to plan a response when her/his turn to speak begins.
• At the end of the 1-minute thinking time, the facilitator will announce the beginning of the round of dialogue. Each person will take turns responding, without interruption, to the question or prompt, with 2 minutes allotted for each. If the speaker does not take 2 minutes, the full time should be allowed, being comfortable with the silence. The facilitator will call time at the 2-minute point, when the pairs should make sure the second partner gets a chance to speak for a full 2 minutes, without interruption.
• At the end of the second partner’s time, the facilitator will ask the group members to thank their current partner, and say goodbye. Either the inner or the outer circle will be asked to shift to the left or right. (Groups may want to shift 1-3 persons to the right or left, to mix the partners more quickly). Participants should take a moment to greet their new partners.
• The next round of dialogue will begin, with a new question, and with the 1 minute thinking time. The process continues through each round of questions or prompts.

4. Debrief the process. It is important not to shortchange this step. One way to begin the debrief is to ask the group to take a few minutes to do a quick-write on what they saw, heard, and felt during this process. After the quick-write, do a round robin sharing (30 seconds or less) of what each participant observed. They should provide “just the facts” without inference, interpretation, or judgment. Proceed from there to a more open debrief discussion. Possibly close the debrief with reflection time on one of the following prompts:
• What will you do differently as a result of engaging in this dialogue?
• How will you process the emotions that surfaced for you as a result of this dialogue?
• How might you adapt and use this activity?

Suggested Questions or Prompts for Step 3
Order of questions should be carefully considered. Since the prompts focus on personal experiences, the emotions initially tied to those experiences are likely to resurface. It’s generally a good idea to vary the depth of the questioning, and to never start with the deepest possible questions.
• With which descriptors do you identify most strongly? Why is that?
• With which descriptors do others identify you most strongly? How do you feel about that?
• Describe a time when one of the elements of your identity definitely worked to your advantage, either in your educational experience or in other areas of your life.
• Describe a time when one of the elements of your identity appeared to hold you back, either in your educational experience or in other areas of your life.
• Talk about a time when your perceptions of a student’s identity caused you to do something that held her/him back.
• Talk about a time when your perceptions of a student’s identity caused you to do something that moved her/him forward.
• Talk about a time your identity heightened your awareness of an inequity.
• Talk about a time your identity diminished, lessened, or obscured your awareness of an inequity.

Some Ideas to Consider:
• Before starting the questioning, decide if you want to include an instruction that people should choose to share either the most significant memory that comes to mind, or a memory that, though perhaps less significant, they feel more comfortable sharing. (Some participants have expressed a preference for hearing this instruction; others have said that they did that kind of internal editing themselves quite naturally.)
• Participants should not pass!
• Decide if you want to include any instructions regarding the demeanor of the listener. For example, whether or not clarifying questions are okay; whether or not the listener should provide affirmative sounds, body language, and other cues, or should listen as simply a mirror — devoid of reaction. Your intent, and your knowledge of the group, will guide this.
• Be very aware of the emotional and physical energy level of the group. Because each round takes about 6 minutes, most groups cannot sustain this activity for more than 6-7 questions. Some people may need a chair stationed within the circle that doesn’t move.
• Decide the amount of rotation you will use. For some purposes, you may want to have people stay with the same partner for a pair of questions. Sometimes it may make sense to move more than one person to the right, or to move both the inner and outer circle at the same time, in different direction.
Appendix C

Consultancy Protocol

Consultancy Protocol Framing Consultancy Dilemmas Developed by Faith Dunne, Paula Evans, and Gene Thompson-Grove as part of their work at the Coalition of Essential Schools and the Annenberg Institute for School Reform. Revised by Gene Thompson-Grove January 2021

Purpose The structure of the Consultancy helps presenters think more expansively about a particular, concrete dilemma. The Consultancy protocol has 2 main purposes – to develop participants’ capacity to see and describe the dilemmas that are the essential material of their work, and to help each other understand and deal with them.

Framing Consultancy Dilemmas and Consultancy Questions A dilemma is a puzzle: an issue that raises questions, an idea that seems to have conceptual gaps, or something about process or product that you just can’t figure out. All dilemmas have some sort of identifiable tension in them. Sometimes the dilemma will include samples of student or adult work that illustrate it, but often the dilemma crosses over many parts of the educational process.

1. Think About Your Dilemma
Dilemmas deal with issues with which you are struggling or that you are unsure about. Some questions for helping you select a dilemma might include:
• Is it something that is bothering you enough that your thoughts regularly return to it?
• Is it something that is not already on its way to being resolved?
• Is it something that does not depend on getting other people to change - in other words, can you affect the dilemma by changing your practice?
• Is it something that is important to you, and is it something you are willing to work on?

2. Do Some Reflective Writing About Your Dilemma
Some questions that might help are:
• Why is this a dilemma for you? Why is this dilemma important to you?
• What (or where) is the tension in your dilemma?
• If you could take a snapshot of this dilemma, what would you/we see?
• What have you done already to try to remedy or manage the dilemma?
• What have been the results of those attempts?
• Who needs to change? Who needs to take action to resolve this dilemma? If your answer is not you, you need to change your focus. You will want to present a dilemma that is about your practice, actions, behaviors, beliefs, and assumptions, and not someone else’s.
• What do you assume to be true about this dilemma, and how have these assumptions influenced your thinking about the dilemma?
• What is your focus question? A focus question summarizes your dilemma and helps focus the feedback.

3. Frame a Focus Question for Your Consultancy Group
• Try to pose a question around the dilemma that seems to you to get to the heart of the matter.
• Remember that the question you pose will guide the Consultancy group in their discussion of the dilemma.

4. **Critique Your Focus Question**
• Is this question important to my practice?
• Is this question important to student learning?
• Is this question important to others in my profession?

**Some Generic Examples of Dilemmas — with framing questions**
• My teaching team seems to love the idea of involving students in meaningful learning that connects students to real issues and an audience beyond school, but nothing seems to be happening in reality. Question: What can I do to capitalize on my team’s interest, so we can translate theory into practice?
• No matter how hard I try to be inclusive and ask for everyone’s ideas, about half of the people don’t want to do anything new — they think things were just fine before. Question: How do I work with the people who don’t want to change without alienating them?
• I am completely committed to the value of play for children’s learning in my early childhood classroom, but I am often feel pressured to spend more and more time on academic work. Question: How do I incorporate play into my 1st grade classroom, while keeping the demands of the academic curriculum in mind?

**Preparing to Present using the Consultancy Protocol**
Come to the session with a description of a dilemma related to your practice. Write your dilemma with as much contextual description as you feel you need for understanding. One page is generally sufficient; even a half page is often enough. If you prefer not to write it out, you can make notes for yourself and do an oral presentation, but please do some preparation ahead of time.

End your description with a specific question. Frame your question thoughtfully. What do you REALLY want to know? What is your real dilemma? Name the tension(s) in the framing question. This question will help your Consultancy group focus its feedback. Questions that can be answered with a “yes” or “no” generally provide less feedback for the person with the dilemma, so avoid those kinds of questions.

Dilemmas deal with issues with which you are struggling — something that is problematic or has not been as effective as you would like it to be — anything related to your work. Consultancies give presenters an opportunity to tap the expertise in a group, and if past experiences offer any indication, you will be able to rely on the people in your Consultancy group to provide respectful, thoughtful, experienced-based responses to your dilemma.

A couple of caveats — we have found that Consultancies don’t go well when people bring dilemmas that they are well on the way to figuring out themselves, or when they bring a dilemma that involves only getting other people to change. To get the most out of this experience, bring something that is puzzling you about your practice. It is riskier to do, but we guarantee that you will learn more.

*Note: Consultancy Protocol to process dilemmas can be found at schoolreforminitiative.org.*
Appendix D

Chalk Talk Protocol

Originally developed by Hilton Smith, Foxfire Fund; adapted for the NSRF by Marylyn Wentworth.

Chalk Talk is a silent way to do reflection, generate ideas, check on learning, develop projects or solve problems. It can be used productively with any group—students, faculty, workshop participants, committees. Because it is done completely in silence, it gives groups a change of pace and encourages thoughtful contemplation. It can be an unforgettable experience. Middle Level students absolutely love it—it’s the quietest they’ll ever be!

Format
Time: Varies according to need; can be from 5 minutes to an hour.
Materials: Chalk board and chalk or paper roll on the wall and markers.

Process
1. The facilitator explains VERY BRIEFLY that chalk talk is a silent activity. No one may talk at all and anyone may add to the chalk talk as they please. You can comment on other people’s ideas simply by drawing a connecting line to the comment. It can also be very effective to say nothing at all except to put finger to lips in a gesture of silence and simply begin with #2.

2. The facilitator writes a relevant question in a circle on the board. Sample questions:
   • What did you learn today?
   • So What? or Now What?
   • What do you think about social responsibility and schooling?
   • How can we involve the community in the school, and the school in community?
   • How can we keep the noise level down in this room?
   • What do you want to tell the scheduling committee?
   • What do you know about Croatia?
   • How are decimals used in the world?

3. The facilitator either hands a piece of chalk to everyone, or places many pieces of chalk at the board and hands several pieces to people at random.

4. People write as they feel moved. There are likely to be long silences—that is natural, so allow plenty of wait time before deciding it is over.

5. How the facilitator chooses to interact with the Chalk Talk influences its outcome. The facilitator can stand back and let it unfold or expand thinking by:
   • circling other interesting ideas, thereby inviting comments to broaden
• writing questions about a participant comment adding his/her own reflections or ideas
• connecting two interesting ideas/comments together with a line and adding a question mark.

Actively interacting invites participants to do the same kinds of expansions. A Chalk Talk can be an uncomplicated silent reflection or a spirited, but silent, exchange of ideas. It has been known to solve vexing problems, surprise everyone with how much is collectively known about something, get an entire project planned, or give a committee everything it needs to know without any verbal sparring.
Appendix E

Text Rendering Protocol

**Purpose**  To collaboratively construct meaning, clarify, and expand our thinking about a text or document. This protocol works especially well with shorter texts.

**Group size**  Can accommodate any size group by increasing time.

**Preparation**  Send the text or document to all participants in advance, and instruct them to mark the sentence, the phrase, and the word they think is particularly important for our work. Select a scribe for the group if you prefer not to scribe, and bring chart paper or appropriate technology for charting.

**Option**  If you have a text that is only one or two pages long, consider having the group read the text aloud. Ask for a volunteer to read the first paragraph, then go around the group, with each new person reading the next paragraph. Remind the group that everyone is free to pass if they prefer not to read. Once the text has been read, give the group a couple of minutes to mark the sentence, phrase, and word that is significant to them. Listening to a text provides a different kind of experience when extracting meaning. If you use this option, use the debrief to explore the difference between reading silently and listening to the text being read.

**Steps:**
1. Setup: Review the protocol’s purpose with the group. Give them a couple of minutes to ensure they have a sentence, a phrase, and a word to share in rounds. Remind them that for this text protocol, they don’t need any “backups.” People make connections with others who have also chosen “their” sentence, phrase, or word. (3 min.)
2. First Round, Share Sentence: Each person shares a sentence from the document that they feel is particularly significant. (5 min.)
3. Second Round, Share Phrase: Each person shares a phrase from the document that they feel is particularly significant. If desired, the scribe records each phrase on chart paper/white board/onscreen for all. (5 min.)
4. Third Round, Share Word: Each person shares a single word from the document that they feel is particularly significant. The scribe records each word on fresh chart paper/white board/onscreen for all. (5 min.)
5. Discuss: The group discusses what they heard and what it says about the document. (10 min.)
6. Debrief and reflect: Discuss the process and the product of the protocol. (5 min)
   - In what ways could you use the final list of words?
   - What ideas did not strike you as important in your private reading that feel much more important now after the text rendering protocol?
• How do you feel about using this particular protocol compared with other text protocols?
• Did some of the phrases or words seem to imply something different than the overall text or document?
• Did this protocol feel more like teaching or training (pointing you towards a specific outcome) or more like facilitation (revealing the complex thoughts of the group)?
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Selected Publications

Selected Presentations