Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy in Teacher Education

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U.S. classrooms are increasingly diverse. It is predicted that fewer than half of U.S. students will be white by 2026 (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2017); however only slightly more than 17 percent of U.S. teachers are non-white (Ingersoll & Merrill, 2017). For 20 plus years, culturally relevant pedagogy, which "empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes" (Ladson-Billings, 1992, p. 382), served as a model for the education of students of color. Although research on cultural pedagogical ideologies has flourished, teachers continue to enter the field unprepared to serve non-white students (Whipp & Geronime, 2017).

Educational researchers now agree that a culturally relevant approach to teaching is no longer sufficient and have called for culturally *sustaining* pedagogies (Ladson-Billings, 2014; Paris, 2012; Paris, & Alim, 2014), which "seek to perpetuate and foster—to sustain—linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling" (Paris, 2012, p. 95). If culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) are the new model of successful teacher practice, then we must ask, how are teacher education programs (TEP) preparing preservice teachers (PSTs) to be culturally sustaining pedagogues? In this literature review I examine the ways TEPs in the United States deliberately prepare educators to be practitioners of culturally sustaining pedagogies.

Framework

In addition to Paris' 2012 explanation of CSP, I also use the expanded definition of CSP explained in Paris and Alim's 2014 text which clarifies that the ways young people embody their plural cultural identities evolve; therefore the ways we educate them must too. Part of this evolution is the recognition that *relevance* is not sufficient in meeting language, literacy, and cultural educational goals. Rather, schools must go beyond merely giving value to students' cultures and communities, and must provide "skills, knowledges, and ways of being needed for success in the present and future," (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 89) particularly when our nation is shifting towards a more multicultural and multilingual society. By removing the dominant white gaze--the persuasive assumption that white is the default--from schools, Paris and Alim argue schools could sustain heritages, languages, and community practices.

McCarty and Lee (2014) expand on the notion of CSP by using the phrase culturally sustaining/revitalizing pedagogy (CSRP). The addition of the word revitalizing is essential in their work with Indigenous communities whose tribal sovereignty has been threatened by centuries of colonization. McCarty and Lee outline three tenets of a CSRP framework: (1) expressions of Indigenous education sovereignty; (2) a need to reclaim what colonization has disrupted and displaced; and (3) community-based accountability which includes caring, respectful, reciprocal and responsible relationships (p. 103). Though only three studies presented examine CSP or CSRP with Indigenous communities, the tenets of self-determination, decolonization, and respectful community partnerships are essential in the majority of studies presented.

Methods

I began this review with a Boolean search for peer-reviewed articles at the intersection of CSP and teacher preparation using a combination of the terms *culturally sustaining pedagogy* and *teacher preparation*/*teacher education*/*teacher preparedness*/*preservice teachers*/*teacher readiness* in EBSCOhost, ProQuest, and JSTOR search engines.

This produced limited relevant matches, so I then conducted a search using Google Scholar. I first searched for "What Are We Seeking to Sustain Through Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy? A Loving Critique Forward" (Paris & Alim, 2014) as it serves as a landmark piece of CSP. I used Google Scholar's "search within citing articles" function to find published work that references Paris and Alim (2014). This produced 522 results. Within these results I used a Boolean search for the phrase "teacher education programs" leaving 429 results.

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I then read through the abstracts of each of these pieces and removed publications beyond the scope of this review (e.g., articles focused on CSP outside of TEPs). This resulted in 27 peer-reviewed papers: 20 empirical studies and seven other. I attributed this limited number to the recency of CSP. I read across the 27 texts. I utilized descriptive coding (Saldaña, 2016) to identify patterns across the literature. In a second round of coding categories were collapsed into five key components in the preparation of culturally sustaining teachers: (1) establishing a rationale for CSP; (2) critical reflection; (3) integration of cultural knowledge; (4) purposeful cross-cultural field placement; and (5) tensions.

Establishing a Rationale for CSP

Before TEPs can begin to coach PSTs to be practitioners of CSP a clear rationale must be established. TEPs currently enacting CSP interrogate systems in which schools operate and examine institutionalized discriminatory practices in schools, businesses, real estate, laws, and the justice system while PSTs examine their own identities including their privileges and disadvantages in these systems.

One way teacher educators (TEs) establish a rationale for CSP is by providing an explicit framework aligned to the tenets of CSP (Dyches & Boyd, 2017; Kumar, 2018). In their writing on foregrounding equity, Dyches and Boyd (2017) provide a framework for social justice and equity-based TEPs. Central to their framework is establishing a rationale for equity-based teaching which includes social justice knowledge related to Discourse, critical and epistemological stance theories, and "histories which have created and contributed to the types of oppression that social justice seeks to disrupt" (p. 482). This framework lays the foundation for PSTs to build social justice content knowledge and develop an equity-based pedagogy.

Another way TEs establish a rationale for CSP is by having PSTs situate their own histories and identities within the communities they will be teaching. Vinlove (2017), in her work with PSTs in an Alaskan community with a large Indigenous population, begins her course by providing activities to facilitate students' understanding of CSP and the need to incorporate local cultural knowledge to the academic curriculum. Her work starts by having PSTs situate their own identities and family habitation and connection to the community. Here, Vinlove aims to have PSTs understand how one's connection with a place "influences the types and depth of local knowledge individuals hold" (p. 154). Next, Vinlove has PSTs consider their own habitation history in the community they are currently placed for field work as well as the habitation histories of the students they work with. After placing themselves and their students on a continuum ranging from "'new to the community' to 'established but not Indigenous' to 'Indigenous to place'" (p. 155), PSTs engage in discussions

of the roles and orientations of teachers. This discussion includes recognizing gaps in their own knowledge of community and identifying areas where they can learn from students and community members to incorporate local knowledge into their curriculum.

Finally, TEs establish a rationale for CSP through the use of readings and assignments which explore and complicate issues of race and society. Marx and Pecina (2016) found that the utilization of such readings when accompanied with reading responses and class discussions "emphasize historically significant challenges to the racialized spaces of the city [where PSTs will work] and its socioeconomic impact in the development of the metro communities" (p. 349). It is important to note that such readings occur in conjunction with other practices aimed to prepare PSTs to be culturally sustaining, which I explain in other sections.

Critical Reflection

Critical reflection, the purposeful and deliberate act of inquiry into one's own thoughts and actions, as well as classroom protocols and dilemmas (Berghoff, Blackwell, & Wisehart, 2011; Kalchman, 2015), is an important practice for all educators, but has been shown to be of particular importance in terms of preparing teachers to be practitioners of CSP. The consistent and repeated engagement of critical reflection in TEPs disrupts the hegemonic ideologies of traditional schooling. Reflections, particularly those guided by TEs, force PSTs to "observe their positionality in relation to their most challenging students and how their current planning might exclude those students from learning opportunities" (Smith, 2016, p. 142-143).

A study on critical reflection at one Midwestern University examined PSTs' beliefs about students in an urban setting before and during their placement with a collaborative teacher in urban schools (Kalchman, 2015). PSTs reported negative assumptions about students' abilities. These feelings were intensified while working with their collaborative teachers, who often spoke poorly of their students and students' families. Following their initial field placement, teacher candidates were placed in an urban after-school math program for additional fieldwork. Critical reflection was an integral part of the alternative field placement. As part of this reflection PSTs rated themselves in accordance with Liston and Zeichner's (1991) reflective teaching model. Following this alternative fieldwork model, PSTs revised their expectations of students in urban schools. They were more reflective of their own role as educators and became more adaptive in their fieldwork instruction. In the reflective setting, they saw the potential of their students' academic capabilities, whereas in the nonreflective setting their primary focus was on student behavior. Additionally, PSTs in the reflective setting reported being more confident in their abilities to teach in urban set-

settings (Kalchman, 2015).

Durden & Truscott (2013) found that while critical reflection did reveal a growing critical consciousness among PSTs, it did not in itself cause PSTs to demonstrate CSP in their practice (p. 77). Another study (Durden, Dooley, & Truscott, 2016) found that critical reflection could serve to develop TCs' racial identities, which in turn positively shaped their view of CSP.

It is necessary to note that a "sunshining process" (Thomas & Liu, 2012) of spinning experiences and observations to be more positive than they were can occur when critical reflection is executed in an inauthentic manner. When this occurs actual reflection does not. Instead, PSTs tend to over rely on buzzwords, shift blame, tone down negative events (Thomas & Liu, 2012), and provide descriptions rather than provide introspections. Thomas and Liu note that is could be due to the fact that PSTs view reflective writing as "an evaluation tool so that assignments related to [reflective writing] were just requirements for them to complete" (p. 321).

Thus, it is important for the TEP to provide PSTs with supportive communicative environments in which the role of reflection is not only made clear but modeled and practiced.

community gathering areas, areas of community controversy, and the local polling station. Once PSTs realized "local knowledge exists in abundance, the final step in cultivating culturally sustaining teachers is to help them learn how to utilize this information purposefully" (p. 163). Vinlove describes how PSTs used this local knowledge to select a topic for a social studies and English language arts (ELA) unit that they developed. Units were required to include a series of lesson plans designed to target a state ELA standard. Lesson plans integrated local and community resources, often in the form of research projects and writing prompts, and led to a culminating student product.

Neighborhood walking maps were also created by PSTs in an urban TEP in the Midwest (Marx & Pecina, 2016). PSTs went into local urban communities and created walking maps containing community information about schools, service agencies, parks, businesses, historical information, and general data. Marx and Pecina found that these walks provided PSTs with insights that ran across four themes: "shattering stereotypes through a critical pedagogical lens, facing societal realities through experiential learning, new learning through funds of knowledge, and professional implications with critically sustaining pedagogy" (p. 350). This experience gave PSTs a greater understanding of communities' assets and benefits. All PSTs planned to use their newly acquired local

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Integration of Cultural Knowledge

In the CSP classroom, teachers not only reference the cultural knowledge of students but seek to build upon and sustain this knowledge. TEs often rely on activities and assignments which require PSTs to explore the neighborhoods in which they will teach to meet this goal.

One example where PSTs visited communities where they conducted student teaching comes from Vinlove's (2017) work with PSTs in Alaska. This activity was centered around the belief that the "knowledge of students' cultural communities should be gathered, honored, and used in the classroom" (p.149). Such knowledge was accumulated through the creation of interactive and evolving community maps. PSTs used Google Maps to create and annotate maps which contain geological, ecological, cultural, historical, social, and economic information about the communities in which they were placed. Information for annotations was gathered through PSTs' visits and exploration of communities where they mined for information. Maps contained at least 25 items, including the school, significant landmarks, local animals, plants, places of historical and economic significance,

knowledge in their future classrooms in the community, and a majority, 92%, of PSTs "spoke to the value of accepting, integrating, and building on cultural strengths of students into the classroom" (p. 353).

Though Johnson and Newcomer's (2018) study did not include the creation of a neighborhood map, they did find that having PSTs engage in neighborhood walks with students provided PSTs with opportunities to better know students; aided in PSTs selecting topics/themes for instruction which were meaningful to students; and allowed students to share their own expertise with PSTs (p. 9-10). Afterwards the PSTs in this study designed literacy-based lessons for the students. The authors share the example of a pair of PSTs creating a lesson focused on symbolism in which students participated in a gallery walk where they used sticky notes to jot down responses to familiar images from their culture and community (i.e. a local park, the school mascot, etc.). Ultimately, the neighborhood walks provided PSTs with the opportunity to better know their students and their community and then meaningfully incorporate the knowledge into their teaching.

Purposeful Cross-Cultural Field Placement

The strategic placement of PSTs during their internships can provide the opportunity for exposure to urban and culturally diverse settings. If TEPs want to foster culturally sustaining teachers who "no longer assume that the White, middle-class linguistic, literate, and cultural skills and ways of being" (Paris & Alim, 2014, p. 89) are necessary for success, then placing PSTs in environments that expose them to such non-dominant cultures while they learn to disrupt the norm of the white, middle-class gaze is essential. However, the mere partnering of TEPs with schools which have diverse student bodies is not sufficient. Coursework should support PSTs in their field placement as they work towards becoming culturally sustaining teachers.

One instance of purposeful cross-cultural field placement comes from a one-year multiple-case study (Ramirez, Gonzales-Galindo, & Roy, 2017). In this study the authors investigate the influence that field placement had on six PSTs and their beliefs regarding linguistically non-dominant learners. Prior to their placement, the TE introduced PSTs to a "culturally and linguistically embedded teaching framework… analyzing factors outside the classroom that shape students' language development and academics and that foster their cultural heritage" (p.252). In this course, PSTs were assigned a research project with the objective to "better understand [the] factors influencing the trajectory of [English Learners (ELs)] with the hope that this experience could shape their emerging mindset, ideologies, and pedagogy in relation to ELs" (p. 253). PSTs were interviewed and observed several times during their placement. Before their placement PSTs held deficit-oriented beliefs about ELs and had not previously considered how language develops outside of the classroom. PSTs were also unaware of the vast multicultural resources ELs had outside of school and how such resources could be used to support students in school. Overall PSTs "demonstrated a shift in their own beliefs about ELs" (p. 264). Through the examination of their own assumptions and beliefs about ELs, PSTs worked towards being more culturally conscious. The authors report through their placement and project PSTs "were able to examine, via classroom practices, student interaction, and the complexities of second language development, their teaching praxis as well as their philosophical understandings of how effective instruction with ELs can and should take place" (p. 265).

In another example of cross-cultural field placement Jester (2017) conducted a qualitative study with 60 PSTs placed in rural Alaska Native villages in schools with enrollments ranging from 10 students to 302 and where over 90% of students in the schools were Alaska Natives. Seven of the eight districts taught, in some capacity, the local Alaska Native language. This ranged from loosely organized activities,

such as the singing of songs in the local language, or having local Elders serving as visiting teachers, to more structured language classes, some of which were taught via live streaming with other schools, and immersion and dual language programs. While in this placement, PSTs observed both examples and non-examples of CSP:

> They witnessed legacies of colonization playing out through disturbing attacks on Indigenous languages and cultures and a striking disconnect between many non-Native teachers' classrooms and the local culture. At the same time, many [PSTs] reported vibrant revitalization efforts by Alaska Native educators and Elders, and in some cases non-Native educators, that exemplified culturally sustaining/revitalizing practices. (p. 141)

PSTs' personal reactions to colonizing and assimilationist practices revealed their rejection of such practices and demonstrated their own growing awareness of the power of schools as well as communities' struggles against dominant ideology. Some PST did report the sustaining of culture and language in schools and were able to witness "concrete examples of connecting students with their cultures and language" (p. 141).

Butler, Coffey, and Young (2018) write about PSTs who completed field work in addition to their traditional field assignments. In this study PSTs enrolled in an elective Citizenship and Education course, part of which required 25 volunteer hours in an urban middle school. During these hours PSTs tutored, mentored, and planned community activities with eighth grade students. The authors found that PSTs who engaged in this work "shifted from a very deficit orientation of urban schools to a more inclusive one with heightened sensitivity to and awareness of diverse learners" (p. 16).

As was the case in Jester (2017), field placements presented problems because of the assimilationist and deficit-based structures of schools and beliefs of some cooperative teachers. Placing PSTs in these environments has the potential to perpetuate the cycle of poor instruction and culturally diminishing practices. TEPs have an obligation to support PSTs to examine these institutions and practices critically and encourage them to work in these settings as change agents. As Jester notes, these observations and reflections regarding culturally diminishing teaching have the potential to "serve as catalysts for shifts in perspective, self-awareness, and consciousness of the broader sociocultural and political contexts of schooling" (p. 143).

Tensions

Research surrounding the preparation of PSTs with a CSP framework heavily reports on the training of white PSTs, most of whom are female. While this reflects the enrollment

of TEPs, often the voices and perspectives of PSTs and teacher educators of color are left out of the discussion.

Jackson's work (2015) provides an underrepresented perspective of PSTs of color in a predominately white TEP which seeks to provide culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP). Though the TEP uses a culturally *relevant* theory, the findings suggest important implications for TEPs that wish to use a CSP framework. In Jackson's study 68% of PSTs of color reported that they did learn about CRP; however, 61% of participants felt that their TEP did not have a commitment to CRP. The PSTs viewed CRP as a superficial add-on rather than a foundation of their program. They also reported a disconnect between CRP, course diversity-related statements, and the reality of their experiences. Feelings included believ-

research focused on asset pedagogies, cultural pedagogies, and practices of social justice also frequently take place in urban settings. This may be because the word urban, as Chou and Tozer (2008) note, "is often a coded marker for conditions of cultural conflict grounded in racism and economic oppression" (p. 1), which are the very conditions social justice oriented research seeks to disrupt. The phrases "urban schools" and teachers in "urban settings" often appear in the literature reviewed. This is a reflection of the status of research in regards to CSP generally and in terms of teacher preparation. While I do not question the importance of CSP in urban schools, I want to clarify that CSP is appropriate, and needed, in all places where culturally nondominant people reside. The use of the word "urban" in this literature review reflects the use of the word in the literature.

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ing minority student presence was "only for statistics and not the well being of those students" (p. 231); that some white teacher educators, though well intended, were not connected to CRP; and that some professors were dismissive of the topic altogether. PSTs also reported a lack of alignment between the little attention CRP received in their course work and the key role diversity had on ways they were assessed. Jackson's work reveals that TEPs are not teaching PSTs of color in ways which are culturally relevant or sustaining for them. Jackson explains TEPs are "trying to prepare teachers (of color and white) to teach in culturally responsive ways (which many of them did not experience) with a professoriate that lacks racial and ethnic diversity, [and] is uncomfortable with and/or lacks knowledge of cultural diversity" (pg. 233). Smith (2016) echoes these findings. She states PSTs of color felt "marginalized" and noted the absence of professors and faculty of color in the TEP (p. 144).

Another tension in the implementation of CSP in TEP is that the majority of the literature reviewed represents work of only one faculty member. If the TE delivering CSP knowledge is a person of color, then this sets them up to be in conflict with their majority white PSTs and potentially their white hegemonic ideologies. This point is illustrated in Smith's work (2016) which shares her experiences as a teacher educator of color in the Southeast region of the United States. She reports receiving course evaluations in which students rate her as bigoted, racist, and incompetent. Additionally PSTs complained that asset pedagogies are "'biased teaching, reverse racism' and unfair to the White students in their classrooms" (143).

Another tension is that research regarding CSP is often situated in the context of urban schools. Educational

Implications & Conclusion

As student populations continue to diversify, with the teaching force remaining largely white, the need to prepare and support teachers to be culturally sustaining increases. When I began this review, I sought to understand the ways in which TEPs are preparing PSTs to be culturally sustaining pedagogues. In short, I found that many are not. Rather, individual teacher educators have taken up CSP and are working individually, or in small partnerships, to prepare PSTs to be practitioners of CSP. This is not sufficient in preparing PSTs to be enactors of a CSP. Entire programs must shift towards a CSP framework to fully prepare PSTs to be culturally sustaining pedagogues.

As Colleges of Education work to shape their teacher education programs around a culturally sustaining framework, they should consider the components described above and be cognizant of potential tensions. TEPs should work to continually establish a rationale for CSP in both theory and methods courses. This is the work of all teacher educators, and programs must be mindful not to delegate this task to a select few instructors. Tenets of CSP should be incorporated into the classroom and fieldwork in meaningful ways which support TCs' critical consciousness. PSTs should also receive frequent feedback regarding their integration of CSP into their coursework and field placements.

Critical reflection is a common practice in TEPs. However it is important that reflective work is meaningful, connected to practice, and guided by TEs who provide feedback and push PSTs to move their practice into the realm of CSP. Gay and Kirkland (2003) note the importance in TEs sharing their own critical self-reflections with PSTs. They recommend TEs demonstrate this in their own teaching by

stopping and engaging in group reflective debriefs where TEs name and discuss "personal feelings and biases; share [their] own introspective thoughts, questions, and insights provoked by the discussion; and assess the adequacy and completeness of [their] instructional delivery" (p. 185). They also identify barriers to meaningful reflection and pose some solutions. They suggest TEs make reflection the norm and demonstrate this with PSTs. This can take the form of independent writing; class and group discussions; group drafting of educational position statements; role-playing and simulations. Beneke (2020) provides a rich example of critical reflection through the use of journey mapping where PSTs "visually and verbally narrate experiences talking about race and dis/ability in educational practices" (p. 7). Reflecting on their own educational experience PSTs use markers and crayons to draw pictures, flow charts, diagrams, and other visual representations to illustrate the relationship between their identities and school experiences shaped their understanding of the experiences of marginalized students. This activity was paired with an interview in which PSTs narrate their maps and share their insights.

When placing PSTs in the field it is important for teacher educators to know the culture of the school their PSTs will be working in. The reality of the work is that not all PSTs will be placed in ideal classrooms with CSP models and asset-based cooperative teachers. It is for this reason that coursework should be tailored to support PSTs in their field placement. This may mean having PSTs evaluate and critique the schools they are placed in or rewrite deficit-based observations in a culturally sustaining manner.

To sustain culture, educators must have an understanding of student culture and integrate it into classrooms. PSTs must be taught/supported to develop relationships with their students and communities. Because culture is dynamic and evolving, this is a skill which must be used every year, and throughout each year, even if teachers stay at one school for the entirety of their careers. Instructors of methods courses are especially responsible for this component and should consider the integration of cultural knowledge in assignments where PSTs interact with or plan for interactions with students.

As CSP is taken up across education there is a need for more empirical studies which look at the ways TEPs embed CSP not just into individual courses, but into their programs as a whole. Additionally, there is a clear need for more PSTs and TEs of color. Not only do Colleges of Education need to actively recruit and support people of color into TEPs, but they also need to recruit, support, and mentor educators of color into graduate school to become teacher educators and educational researchers.

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