

○ PLURILINGUAL TEACHERS AND THEIR EXPERIENCES NAVIGATING THE ACADEMY: LESSONS AND STRATEGIES FOR EQUITY

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Drawing on qualitative data collected from plurilingual teachers in the context of three research studies conducted at the University of Toronto between 2004 and 2015, this paper critically examines, through a dialogue between the three researchers, the experiences of plurilingual teacher candidates and graduate students in Education as they navigate the academy. A trioethnographic methodology is used, unpacking the underlying tensions of roles and positions held by each of the researchers in the Student Success Centre (SSC) which offers a range of support services and provides a space where plurilingual teacher learners can interact with plurilingual tutors during their academic journey which may include practica and internships. We relate our findings focussed on the SSC to the literature on diverse teachers in universities as well as writing centre research calling for significant changes in how to support plurilingual students in the academy in order to highlight lessons and strategies for equity.

KEY WORDS: immigrant teacher candidates, academic support, equity, trioethnography

PROLOGUE

ANTOINETTE

As a professor at the University of Toronto since 1989, I have witnessed dramatic changes in the landscape. By far, the biggest change has been the diversity of students across the university and, in particular, in Education programs. Working toward meeting the needs of the increasingly diverse students who are either preparing to be teachers or studying Education at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), has sometimes been frustrating while at others exhilarating. The feelings of exhilaration stemmed in part from being a member of the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Admissions Committee on and off for more than 20 years. The ITE leadership was committed to recruiting diverse teacher candidates and worked intensively to refine the applicant profile as well as the profile evaluation process. The positive energy that I witnessed was a catalyst for my own work and research with plurilingual teachers in ITE as well as graduate programs. From 2003 to 2008, the provincial and federal policies and

programs were also aligned with the recruitment, admissions and support programs aimed at a more diverse student population in the field of Education.

CARRIE

Indeed, the efforts to diversify the student population at OISE was also improved in 2005, when OISE made what I consider to be the most significant revision to its application process and removed the requirement for applicants to provide evidence of at least 300 hours of teaching-related activity, which was historically done by volunteering in schools. The OISE application process review committee recognised that this requirement was unfairly prohibitive to people who could not afford to volunteer, or who did not have access to volunteer opportunities. Removing this requirement had a tangible impact on the pool of teacher candidates, and leadership at OISE agreed that new supports needed to be developed and provided, especially for teacher candidates who are immigrant English language learners.

MEGAN

I saw the outcomes of your efforts, Antoinette and Carrie, when I came to OISE in 2010. I was given the opportunity to work as a student advisor in the SSC where I work one-on-one with students to support them as they navigate the academy, the demands of their degree programs and their eventual entry into the workforce. Indeed, one of things that struck me upon taking on the role was the diversity of students with whom I had the opportunity to work and the thoughtful and comprehensive supports OISE had developed to support diverse students' success. The landscape I encountered speaks to the success of the diversification initiatives upon which you both worked. However, beginning in 2012, funding constraints became more pressing and while the enrolments of diverse, plurilingual students have not decreased, the supports available for them certainly have. These reductions corresponded in time with my taking on a more administrative and coordination focused role in the Student Success Centre (SSC). As more programs have been scaled back, the SSC has become a key mechanism that supports plurilingual students as the erosion of programs outside of the Centre continues. In order to provide the necessary and appropriate supports the Centre has continued to evolve to deliver services that go beyond that of a typical 'writing centre'. This evolution of the writing centre role with its possibilities and challenges was the catalyst for my research.

CARRIE

It's interesting to hear your perspective, Megan. On the one hand, I feel considerable satisfaction to recall the point in time when you entered the OISE community. I believe that you joined our Student Services team at the peak of its capacity to provide robust and innovative support for teacher candidates and graduate students with nearly twenty-five graduate students providing high-quality peer-to-peer support in the SSC. We were able to provide a level of service that demonstrated our commitment to equity, diversity, and student

success. The circumstances that have resulted in the service erosion that you have described are of significant concern.

The opening dialogue highlights OISE’s response to the changing demographics in the Greater Toronto Area and in Canada in general from the 90s and onward. In 1997, Harper described the beginning of what would be a continuing trend leading to the need for educational institutions to respond to the new “superdiversity”:

Ontario’s school population has never been more diverse than at present, nor has the demand to accommodate difference ever been more insistent...schools are expected to meet the needs of a population that is racially, culturally, and linguistically diverse, to confront gender, racial, and economic disparity and discrimination, to create classrooms in which there is mutual respect and social harmony, and at the same time to establish some sense of a cohesive Canadian identity. (p. 192)

Our prologue is followed by an explanation of the research questions guiding our respective studies conducted over a period of 11 years. We then describe duo/trioethnography, our social justice lenses, our findings and finally cross-cutting issues, tensions and successes.

OUR INTERSECTING RESEARCH STUDIES

This paper analyses our collaborative intersecting journey to explore the experiences of plurilingual teachers as they navigate the academy. We were guided by different but overlapping questions and conceptual lenses.

Table 1. Our Intersecting Research Questions and Conceptual Lenses

Antoinette	2004-2006	Carrie	2004-2010	Megan	2014-2015
	What are the multiple perspectives of teacher candidates (TCs), teacher educators, host teachers, school principals, as well as district supervisors or superintendents regarding plurilingual immigrant teacher candidates and the provisions to support them with their university programs?		What are the perspectives of teacher candidates, teacher educators, and Student Services support staff and how do they inform a better understanding of the responses to difference experienced by racial and linguistic minority immigrant teacher candidates?		How do student advisors, plurilingual students and those in leadership roles in Student Services understand the role of the Student Success Centre in supporting plurilingual students in an environment where plurilingualism is increasingly the norm?
	Knowledge bases for teaching Identity theory Intersectionality				

OUR METHODOLOGY – DUO/TRIOETHNOGRAPHY

As we are three researchers we use the term trioethnography rather than duoethnography which refers to two researchers.

According to the SAGE Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods,

Duoethnography is a relatively new research genre that has its genealogy embedded in two narrative research traditions: storytelling and William Pinar's concept of "currere." Its approach is to study how two or more individuals give similar and different meanings to a common phenomenon as it was experienced throughout their lives. Created by Rick Sawyer and Joe Norris, duoethnography avoids the hegemonic style of the meta-narrative found in autoethnography by critically juxtaposing the stories of two or more disparate individuals who experience a similar phenomenon. Like currere, which conceptualizes one's history as a composite of learning experiences and thus makes it an informal curriculum, duoethnography examines how individuals have acquired beliefs that influence their actions and the meanings they give them. (Norris, 2008, p. 3)

In examining how we have acquired the beliefs that influenced our actions in working with and researching the experiences of plurilingual teachers in ITE and graduate programs at OISE, it is relevant to consider aspects of the life history of the three researchers:

Table 2. A Snapshot of Antoinette, Carrie and Megan in 2015

	Antoinette 2004-2006	Carrie 2004-2010	Megan 2014-2015
Languages	English, French and Spanish	English	English
Education	Concurrent B.Ed. M.Ed. in Second Language Education Ph.D in Curriculum	B.A.(Hons) Psychology B.Ed. M.Ed. (Education Administration, Theory and Policy) Ph.D. (Education Administration, Theory and Policy) Certificate in International Development	B.A.(Hons) Political Science M.A. Political Science Ph.D. Curriculum, Teaching and Learning (in progress)
Current position	Professor and Supervisor	Executive Director, Student Affairs	Graduate Student, Academic Advisor/Centre coordinator

	Antoinette 2004-2006	Carrie 2004-2010	Megan 2014-2015
Past positions in education	K-12 teacher, ESL adult educator, Director of Concurrent Teacher Education Program, Academic Advisor the SSC	K-12 teacher, K-8 School Administrator, Initial Teacher Education Instructor Supervisor/Director, Student Affairs (Faculty of Education) Director, School- University Partnerships Office (Faculty of Education)	ESL teacher in France & Korea (K-Adult), Peer Advisor (3 different higher education environments), Student Success Centre Coordinator, TESOL certification course, Instructor, Co-Curricular/ Event Coordinator (Faculty of Education)
Teaching experience	38 years	23 years	8 years
Pedagogical and scholarly orientation	Liberal, Critical Humanistic	Critical Humanistic Liberal	Critical, Constructivist, Liberal, Post- structuralist

This paper uses trioethnography because its theoretical foundations of social justice and challenging the status quo align with our priorities as researchers and educators; it gives voice to multiple research perspectives and examines overlapping concerns; and its procedures and methodological hybridity are suited to analysing our different locations and motivations as we work with plurilingual teachers and explore their experiences at OISE (Schmidt & Gagné, 2014). Trioethnography allows us to critically analyse our own experiences as researchers and educators who seek to increase our understanding of the experiences of plurilingual teachers both individually and collaboratively.

We have attempted to implement trioethnography's flexible design components, by including multiple dialogues, examining counter-narratives, engaging in critical collaboration, searching for synergy of data collection and analysis, and recognising the many perspectives of readers as they engage with our writing (Sawyer & Norris, 2013). We do not have a separate literature review section but integrate appropriate scholarly references throughout the article. In preparing this article, recursive analysis took place through collaborative writing and dialogue sessions. Dialogues about our mutual history and collaboration experiences were recorded and appropriate excerpts interwoven in the article to delineate our voices as researchers. In the next sections we present the findings of our respective studies,

explore cross-cutting issues, tensions and successes, describe our equity/social justices lenses and conclude with our vision of equity in action.

OUR EQUITY/SOCIAL JUSTICE LENSES

ANTOINETTE

Using intersectionality as my lens, I have a new perspective on my research and advocacy work for and with plurilingual teachers at OISE. I have considered other theoretical and conceptual lenses but the dynamics I have seen at play are best illustrated by a figure from a book entitled “Intersectionality 101”. This framework has helped me to understand language, culture and immigration status as just three aspects of the complex identity of my diverse OISE students. Intersectionality also highlights how problematic it is to reduce any person’s identity to a few characteristics that we believe best define them.



Figure 1. Intersectionality Lens. Adapted from the Canadian Research Institute for the Advancement of Women (2009, p. 5).

CARRIE

To help me understand the responses to difference that the minoritised plurilingual immigrant teacher candidates in my study experienced as they attempted to become members of the teaching profession, I found it useful to develop an integrative conceptual framework that emphasised the intersectionalities of ideology (e.g. Ball, 1998; Tierney, 1991), discourse (e.g. Foucault, 1980; Ng, 2003), and situational power (e.g. Cummins, 2003; Dei, James, James-Wilson & Zine, 2000; Gramsci, 1971) constructed and enacted by agents empowered as regimes of competence (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). The intersectionalities expressed and experienced as responses to difference are depicted in the Venn diagram below:

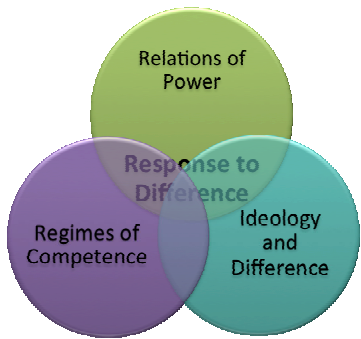


Figure 2. Integrative conceptual framework. Adapted from Chassels (2011)

MEGAN

I have also relied on a number of lenses to understand the pedagogical approaches characteristic of interactions in the SSC with plurilingual students as well as to understand the broader, institutional and societal influences on these interactions. Carrie, I also drew on the work of Cummins (2003) to unpack situational power at the micro and macro levels. In addition, I have drawn on multiliteracies frameworks, which, as Balester et al. (2012) suggests, require discussions ‘about access, about difference, about learning how texts of all kinds function in systems of power that both enable and constrain our choices’ (p. 5). The broader field of critical literacies has also provided two complementary frameworks through which to view pedagogical approaches, and I have adopted academic literacies (Lea & Street, 1998) and transformative multiliteracies pedagogy (Cummins, 2009) to examine the nested, overlapping and differentially effective pedagogical approaches to literacy that may be taken with plurilingual students in SSC interactions.

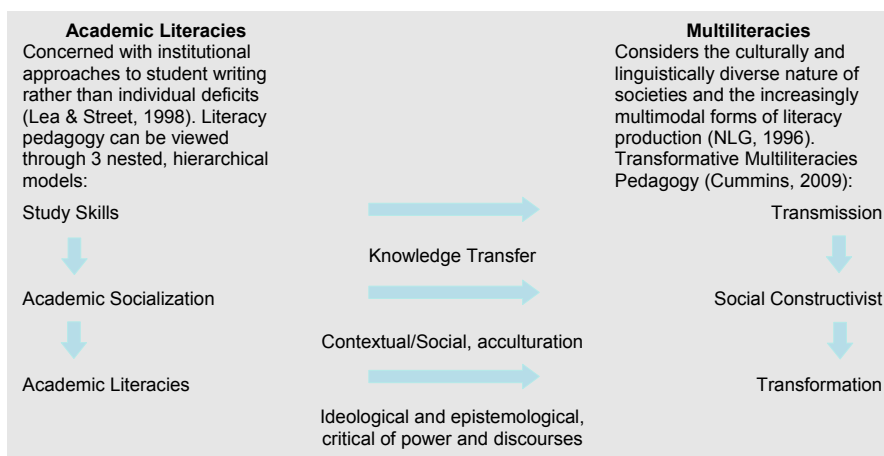


Figure 3. Integrative Conceptual Framework – Academic Literacies and Multiliteracies

THE FINDINGS OF OUR RESPECTIVE STUDIES

ANTOINETTE

There was great variability among the plurilingual immigrant teacher candidates (TCs) as to their confidence regarding their own English proficiency and the level of satisfaction they voiced of the program. This variability among TCs helps to illustrate current theories in language and identity research (see for example Norton, 2000; Pavlenko & Blackledge, 2004). The plurilingual teacher candidates also varied in the kind and amount of support they sought to improve their proficiency skills and their acculturation in the new society. As such, it became clear that we needed to consider the knowledge base for teachers (Burns & Richards, 2009) and how it may be operationalised differently within programs to recognise the diverse needs of teacher candidates for whom English is an additional language and who may be immigrants to the country where they hope to eventually teach.

MEGAN

My findings suggest that the passage of time has not necessarily significantly altered the way plurilingual students experience their program and practice teaching at the university. Echoing your findings, Antoinette, I find that advisors in the SSC report that plurilingual students are not a unified group and that they seek a broad range of supports in order to feel confident and ultimately be successful in their programs. Furthermore, there is no single support mechanism or approach that could address the diversity of needs and the levels at which they are expressed.

ANTOINETTE

Megan, it is true that the stakeholders' experiences and perspectives touched on various aspects of the teacher knowledge base and helped to illustrate the importance of not overgeneralising about any group of teacher candidates. However, the issue of proficiency emerged as one of the many concerns raised by stakeholders regarding plurilingual immigrant teachers. Although the need to improve programming in the teacher preparation programs to ensure increased proficiency in English was highlighted, other issues such as the need to implement strategies to combat the systemic discrimination of immigrant teachers also emerged. The need to move beyond a deficit discourse regarding non-native English speaking teachers was underlined. As such it is important that changes to initial teacher education occur in a context-appropriate manner taking into account education policies and practices at the national level as well as those in professional teachers' associations and school districts.

CARRIE

Similar to your findings, Antoinette, the responses to difference experienced by the plurilingual immigrant teacher candidates in my study varied greatly, and depended on the legitimacy they were afforded as prospective members of the teaching profession. Most profoundly, I found that the experiences of immigrant teacher candidates were influenced by their perceived "Canadian-ness" and reminded me of Bannerji's (2000) personal experience with this social phenomenon:

...since upon landing six years later and being labelled an "immigrant," a "visible minority woman," I have remained in limbo...Regardless of my official status as a Canadian citizen, I, like many others, remained an "immigrant." The category "Canadian" clearly applied to people who had two things in common: their white skin and their European North American (not Mexican) background. (p. 64)

The experiences of the plurilingual teacher candidates suggested that their legitimacy as prospective certified teachers was measured against a standard of 'real teachers' and 'real Canadians' as predominantly Euro-white native-English speakers. This stance enacted by mentor teachers and teacher educators reflected an underlying assimilationist ideology at play in the public education system. Criticising and correcting teacher candidates' pronunciation of English in front of students, commenting that English language learners should not be teachers in Canada, withholding teaching resources, and failing to facilitate the inclusion of teacher candidates as legitimate prospective colleagues in the broader school-based community of practice are examples of discouraging and confidence-eroding responses to difference that prompted the teacher candidates to question their own legitimacy as teachers in Canada.

MEGAN

I am also finding that my data from all of the interlocutors reflects that an assimilationist ideology continues to characterise the broader university (and placement) environment in which teacher candidates study and learn. This assimilationist ideology makes students apologetic about their language skills and their linguistic capital is often overlooked as a valuable resource as their linguistic abilities are measured against a monolingual, native English speaking standard. Many students express feelings of inferiority and compare themselves to the native English speaker norm and identify ‘language problems’ as their deficiency.

CARRIE

These deficiency perspectives towards plurilingual students enacted by instructors, peers, and practicum mentor teachers did, however, find validation and restorative support through programs offered by Student Services and the SSC. The faculty and staff delivering these programs demonstrated understanding of the unique challenges faced by minoritised immigrant teacher candidates, and their encouragement instilled optimism that their cultural and linguistic strengths are valued by some members of the teaching profession. Although most of the plurilingual teacher candidates endured times when they questioned their decision to study teaching, they all persisted to graduate, earned their Ontario teaching certification, and attributed a large measure of their resiliency and success to the opportunity to participate in the interventions offered by Student Services and the SSC.

MEGAN

Carrie, I too find that there are spaces and voices of encouragement coming from within the SSC that provide students with support, confidence and encouragement to develop their own agency to advocate for themselves as they progress in the program. I have found the insights from multiliteracies (NLG, 1996) helpful in describing how advisors provide such encouragement and attempt to recognise the linguistic capital of plurilingual students. Indeed, many advisors share perspectives that reflect attention to issues of epistemology, power and identity in the work they do with plurilingual students. Advisors acknowledge power differentials at institutional levels and work hard to understand where diverse students are coming from and enact pedagogies that take advantage of students’ diverse languages, cultures and backgrounds. Some tutors share accounts of integrating home languages into tutorials, being aware of students’ identities and their desire to see those identities represented in the work students do. Advisors see the plurality of languages students bring to the academy as positive and as assets from which new frameworks of knowledge may be generated in the academy, yet such activities remain constrained institutionally (Lea, 2004). It is these voices of students and tutors who describe such innovative pedagogies, thoughtful discussions and critical perspectives on the academic environment in which they work and study that lends support to the increasingly important calls for refuting the expectation that

writing centres are merely sites of remediation for plurilingual students (Bailey, 2012; Robinson, 2009; Thonus, 2014). Thus, I am discovering that the peer support plurilingual students receive in the SSC is one of the mechanisms that addresses the gap in equity policies and realities at OISE, but my findings continue to point to the slow and uneven application of equity frameworks at the institutional and societal level that lead to marginalisation of plurilingual students on many levels.

ANTOINETTE

Megan and Carrie, your findings continue to support the implications and recommendations that came out of my study. It seems evident that greater emphasis on the positive cross-cultural contributions of plurilingual immigrant teacher candidates can make to the teacher education program. The strategies that I thought would help to achieve this goal included:

- Increasing all teacher candidates' awareness of the experiences of their plurilingual immigrant peers in the program, while providing strategies on how to best support and learn from them;
- Better informing host teachers about how plurilingual immigrant teachers' induction into K-12 schools could be facilitated by the principal and by the host teacher;
- Providing explicit instruction in teacher education regarding professional conventions related to school language and culture;
- Increasing the number of faculty who reflect the diversity of teacher candidate and K-12 populations;
- Including longer and more frequent practicum placements or orientation to the Canadian educational system prior to teacher candidates; entrance to the program; and
- Implementing entrance requirements and language proficiency assessments that more accurately evaluate teacher candidates' oral and written skills, emphasising the ability to function effectively in the classroom.

CARRIE

Antoinette, my study prompted the following recommendations, which echo many of those you mentioned including:

- Continuation of programs offered through Student Services (e.g. unevaluated formative practice teaching during the first practicum block; culture of teaching workshops for immigrant teacher candidates; opportunities for plurilingual teacher candidates to share their experiences and support each other; and, one-to-one advising through the SSC to further develop their written and verbal communication skills);
- A more robust educative implementation of the faculty's equity policy to promote greater consistency in its influence;
- Application of inclusive pedagogy;

- Greater curricular emphasis on social power and constructions of difference;
- Recognition of immigrant teachers' linguistic capital;
- Development of a collaborative method to evaluate teacher candidates in practice teaching contexts; and
- Continued effort to advance a more profound and consistent influence of multiculturalist ideology in Canadian schools.

Additionally, drawing on your findings, Megan, the Student Services staff in my study also described themselves as advocates for teacher candidates. Their perspectives validated the recommendations that emerged from the narratives of the teacher candidates. The Student Services staff described relations of power in the teacher education program that infantilised immigrant teacher candidates by imposing a deficit perspective of difference, by undervaluing the prior knowledge and experience of immigrants, and by minimising opportunities for shared learning through engaged dialogue. Indeed, I found a tendency for some instructors and mentor teachers to expect teacher candidates to play a passive and subordinate role in the teacher education program. With eroded self-confidence, the plurilingual teacher candidates appeared ill-equipped to respond to the imbalanced power relations they encountered. Student Services staff suggested that the teacher education program should include opportunities for teacher candidates to develop their agency so they can be better prepared to navigate power relations within academic and professional contexts.

CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES, TENSIONS AND SUCCESSES

ANTOINETTE

Budget constraints are often cited when I approach the administration to expand the support services provided to plurilingual teachers studying at OISE across programs. I have tried to be creative in order to find ways to work within the system. This has included the development of a credit course focussing on language and culture in the classroom with spaces reserved for plurilingual immigrant teacher candidates, as well as an internship option with placements in 3 different schools with students of various ages. I also introduced a practicum deferral program embedded in the SSC and organized professional development for colleagues which focussed on the parallels between the challenges faced by immigrant students in K-12 classrooms and those experienced by immigrant teachers.

There have been competing discourses at OISE where, on the one hand there exists quite a robust equity and diversity policy while on the other hand, "fiscal responsibility" has been a strong force in cutting back services and supports for plurilingual immigrant teachers. I have also experienced internal tension in my work with plurilingual teachers caused by what I have witnessed in my own school aged children in terms of their emotions and sometimes even distress at not being able to fully understand their teachers' particular variety of French

or English as well as their curricular expectations for them. For example, when my son was in Grade 4, his homeroom teacher was a highly educated immigrant from Africa who spoke a variety of French very different from Canadian French. My son struggled to the point of nearly failing. Not only did he not understand the French spoken by his teacher but he was also very stressed by the almost exclusive focus on grammar in the French language arts program. This was very different from his previous teachers who adopted a more holistic approach to literacy instruction.

MEGAN

My data echoes the enormous tensions that “resource shortages” cause in relation to support for diverse, plurilingual students that you have discussed, Antoinette. The issue of resource shortages and insufficient supports for plurilingual students is expressed continually by advisors and students. Advisors sometimes feel ill-equipped to support the level of needs some students come to the centre with. One advisor suggested that some students come in with ‘a flood’ of needs and ‘we have a napkin to try to stop it’ within the purview of a 35-minute appointment. Similarly, students express frustration and feel limited by the lack of support and the ever decreasing availability of advisors/hours in the SSC and broader institution. Those in the most senior leadership roles also question whether it is within the mandate of the centre to support the depth and diversity of needs characteristic of some students. Yet, without alternatives the SSC remains an essential, although under-resourced, source of support.

CARRIE

Megan and Antoinette, you have both pointed to fiscal constraints as having a negative impact on services for students. I argue that the tendency to focus on financial constraints has become a conveniently intentional or unintentional strategy to deflect attention from what I believe is at the very core of the issues we are discussing: leadership. Antoinette, you have shared the ways in which you have used your institutional power and privilege to develop and deliver initiatives that support the success of students and build institutional capacity to engage in an authentic enactment of an equity policy. You were empowered to assert your leadership to great effect during the five years leading up to Megan’s arrival at OISE in 2010. The supportive and robustly resourced initiatives that Megan found in the SSC and the teacher education program were in large part the result of your leadership. Ryan (2006) argues that creating inclusion requires the work of leaders who are committed to raising ‘the consciousness of people so that they can recognize widespread and harmful exclusive practices like racism and sexism and do something about them’ (p. 59). An institutional emphasis on financial constraints can create a culture where core values become collateral damage.

Foucault’s (1980) regimes of truth concept helps me understand the ways that people can be manipulated to accept the discourse of financial necessity as a prime directive to erode

resources that are addressing the needs of minority groups. When people accept a dominant discourse of financial necessity as a trump card that ties the hands of leaders to assert their own judgment in decision making, they are under the influence of a regime of truth that has legitimised the logic that expenditures allocated to minority needs must be sacrificed to preserve the interests of the majority.

I also think that it's important to consider the power of discourse when we are examining concerns for the language proficiency and teaching competency of plurilingual teachers. Building on the communities of practice work of Lave and Wenger (1991), Wenger (1998) puts Foucault's regimes of truth concept into a professional context by describing ways that communities of practice serve as local regimes of competence to legitimise a colleague, or in the case of teacher candidates, a prospective colleague, as a 'competent participant, an outsider, or somewhere in between' (p. 137). By invoking a regime of competence, established members of the profession are absolved of any accusations that racism or prejudice might be motivating their assessment of an individual as unsuitable for teaching Canada's children.

MEGAN

Carrie, this discourse is used in relation to the expectations and assumptions around the role of the SSC. As the broader discourse suggests that students who are admitted to the program should simply be able succeed, those who struggle are shuffled off to the SSC for remediation. Thus, the notion of the centre as a 'fix it shop' (North, 1984) endures although the SSC's work is far broader and more complex than remediation of linguistic deficits. Furthermore, such perspectives mean the interactions in the SSC must navigate deficit discourses, which often turns into attempts to undo damage where students have been marginalised or deemed incompetent within the program. Despite the fact that important and even transformative work is being realised in some sessions in the centre, such interactions can only go so far in challenging oppressive power structures that position plurilingual students as deficient and much more needs to be done related to equity and diversity at an institutional level. As one advisor suggests,

[the SSC] has to carry that responsibility of supporting students, that culture of support should be everywhere, every wall should breathe it, every faculty member should breathe it, every person should breathe it, and I don't think that's the reality.

CARRIE

This tension that you describe as a failure of policy implementation echoes the passionate pleas of the Student Services participants in my study, Megan. When I gathered my data in 2004, the Student Services staff were excited by the faculty's recent work to develop an

equity policy. The tone of frustration expressed by the Advisors in your study contrasts sharply with the euphoria shared by Student Services staff almost a decade ago:

I feel very good about working in a place where the equity policy recently passed says that (the university) is committed to equity, diversity, and social justice in everything it does. This means that (pause) I think we're a long way from really living and breathing that in everything we do but I think that's a guiding principle that's a very important one.

I have a feeling that this maps to a time of euphoria for Antoinette as well.

ANTOINETTE

It does indeed, Carrie! However, as mentioned earlier, I was also torn at times because of the experiences of my own children as they navigated from grade to grade and subject to subject with very diverse teachers at the helm. Your description of the concept of “regimes of truth” has caused me to re-examine these feelings and wonder if I fell under the influence of a regime of competence about immigrant teachers.

EPILOGUE: MOVING FORWARD

ANTOINETTE

As diversity among our students has become the norm and not the exception, it is imperative that we become advocates for programs and services that recognise the multiple identities and complex needs of our Education students in ITE and graduate programs. I feel the need to push for equity and not equality and help administration and colleagues to truly understand the difference between these concepts and how to operationalise equity in initial teacher education and graduate programs in Education.

CARRIE

I couldn't agree more, Antoinette. It seems that a momentum toward equitable services for minoritised and marginalised plurilingual teacher candidates and graduate students has been stalled. If student success and a positive student experience are identified as institutional priorities, inclusive leaders are going to need to re-assert their power as agents of transformative change. The existing equity policy should be reviewed and revised to reflect the current needs of the diverse student body and it should be enacted in a strategic manner that situates concerns for equity and inclusion at the centre of all initiatives. This leadership within the academy needs to extend to the broader community where conceptions of 'legitimate' teachers continue to be formed in relation to assimilationist notions of Canadian-ness. Beyond emancipatory and empowering institutional leadership, all members of the academy need to make a concerted effort to advance an authentic multiculturalist ideology in Canadian schools.

MEGAN

I certainly agree with both of you that it is necessary to revisit equity mandates and work for more robust implementation of these policies. It may also be necessary for a broader and more critical discussion of multiculturalism to be pursued in Canadian schools and postsecondary environments in order to recognise and value the contributions of diverse, plurilingual students to Canadian society.

By discussing how our research has impacted on our actions in working with plurilingual students in education, we have attempted to disrupt dominant discourses by acknowledging that maintaining the status quo in terms of the programs and services provided is not acceptable and that equity must prevail while the “equality” discourse still heard is questioned.

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