
DISCOVERING INQUIRY:

HOW PRE-SERVICE ENGLISH TEACHERS EXPERIENCE TEACHER INQUIRY ASSIGNMENTS

A Dissertation

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by

April S. Salerno

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation includes a linking document and a collection of three manuscripts all built around a central focus of teacher inquiry. The linking document first presents the underlying conceptual framework of teacher inquiry as a practice in which teachers investigate issues arising in their own classrooms and schools. It also explains that the three manuscripts are all derived from the same set of data, collected by following a cohort of 15 English Education pre-service teachers (PSTs) through their two years of methods coursework, practice-teaching, and related inquiry assignments. The three manuscripts then follow, each examining a different element of teacher inquiry, as experienced by the cohort. The first studies the questions PSTs asked in their inquiry assignments. The second considers how PSTs describe students in the assignments. And the third explores PSTs' descriptions of their relationships with students. Each manuscript includes its own prefacing abstract, written in adherence to the guidelines of the individual journals where manuscripts are planned to be submitted, and giving more details about the individual study.

Department of Curriculum, Instruction, and Special Education
Curry School of Education
University of Virginia
Charlottesville, Virginia

APPROVAL OF THE DISSERTATION

This dissertation, ("Discovering Inquiry: How Pre-Service English Teachers Experience Teacher Inquiry Assignments"), has been approved by the Graduate Faculty of the Curry School of Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

_____
Chair (Amanda K. Kibler)

_____
Committee Member (Nancy L. Deutsch)

_____
Committee Member (Diane M. Hoffman)

_____
Committee Member (Susan L. Mintz)

_____Date

DEDICATION

To Matt and Polina with love.

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CHAPTER 1

Linking Document: Conceptualization of Teacher Inquiry and Pre-Service Teacher Development

Introduction

A growing body of research points to the potential influence of teacher-conducted inquiry and research in shaping and improving classroom practice. Engaging in teacher inquiry can affect how teachers across content areas—and in particular teachers of language and literacy skills—view their classrooms and teaching practices. Providing beginning and experienced teachers with support in practicing inquiry has been conceptualized as a means of improving education from a grassroots level by enabling teachers to apply new pedagogical knowledge within the contexts in which it was generated (Anderson, Herr, & Nihlen, 2007). This contexts-based approach additionally has potential to position teachers as classroom-based experts, capable of examining research questions and making discoveries about how to improve pedagogy (Goswami & Rutherford, 2009).

This dissertation includes three manuscripts examining different aspects of how pre-service teachers (PSTs) experience teacher inquiry, as they first encounter practices related to teacher inquiry during their two years of preparation to become full-time teachers. The manuscripts explore the types of questions the PSTs ask in inquiry projects, how PSTs describe students who are focal cases of inquiry projects, and how PSTs

describe their relationships with these students. Findings from these three projects provide important insights into how PSTs experience initial inquiry work and how teacher educators can better prepare PSTs to ask and explore difficult questions and to develop positive views of and relationships with students.

What is Teacher Inquiry?

In these papers, "teacher inquiry" is used in a broad sense to refer to ways teachers explore and examine various research topics related both to the contexts in which they work and to their own teaching practices. These research topics largely arise from the teachers themselves, as they encounter various context-based challenges within their working environments. In keeping with what is often a very collaborative nature of teacher inquiry, however, topics might also arise through a teacher's collaboration with others within and related to the context (e.g., students, colleagues, parents, mentors, etc.).

It is important to note that "teacher inquiry" is one of several terms referring to research conducted by teachers. Other similar terms include "teacher research" (TR) and "practitioner research" (PR), a related term more inclusive of other school and university personnel, as well as of personnel working in other social science fields. In addition, scholars use the terms "teacher action research" (TAR) and "practitioner action research" or "participatory action research" (PAR) to refer to action research conducted by teachers or practitioners. The manuscripts in this dissertation are concerned with teachers, rather than other practitioners, and do not limit discussion to any particular form of research, such as action research, which sets up action or change as "central to the research enterprise" (Herr & Anderson, 2005, p. 3). For these reasons, the terms "teacher inquiry" or "teacher research" are most applicable.

I privilege the phrase "teacher inquiry" over "teacher research" because, in defining "teacher inquiry," I draw from the tradition of Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009), who wrote of "inquiry as stance," considering inquiry as a "worldview, a critical habit of mind, a dynamic and fluid way of knowing and being in the world of educational practice" (p. 120). In this sense, though many questions remain about how inquiry development occurs for pre-service teachers, Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) contend that teacher inquiry should not be regarded solely as a one-time research "project" or question, possibly assigned as an end-of-teacher-education-program assignment. Instead, they argue that inquiry as stance is broader; in essence, it becomes a way of viewing one's self and one's classroom, in which teachers consider their classrooms as environments constantly yielding possible research questions and opportunities for studying them through smaller inquiry-based projects. Given this emphasis on the ongoing nature of inquiry, it becomes important to question how PSTs in these projects are experiencing inquiry and whether the assignments they are completing are in conflict with the type of inquiry Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) advocate. It is important to note that I do not take PSTs' completion of these projects as evidence that PSTs have developed inquiry stances. PSTs in these studies certainly are not yet at the point of having fully realized identities as teacher inquirers, as they are still developing their identities as teachers. Instead, I am interested in discovering more about how PSTs experience their first introductions to inquiry work.

Why is Teacher Inquiry Important?

Among the motives for promoting teacher inquiry are two potential benefits: that inquiry positions teachers as researchers and that inquiry can serve as a means of development for teachers.

Teachers as researchers. The very nature of teacher inquiry positions teachers as researchers. Goswami and Rutherford (2009) respond to the question, why do teacher research?: "The simple answer is that teacher research is needed" (p. 2). Teachers, they contend, need to know if instructional practices are adequately serving students. Teacher inquiry provides a means of investigating this overarching question. Given that such inquiry work is often set within schools and classrooms where teachers practice, findings from inquiry are inextricably linked to classrooms contexts.

That is not to say that teachers' inquiry pursuits should be confined to their classrooms. As Lankshear and Knobel (2004) point out, inquiry should not be defined strictly in terms of teachers researching their own classrooms, given that teachers' questions can be set in varied educational contexts and cover a diversity of topics. Yet because teachers provide daily instruction to real students in real classrooms, teacher inquiry findings are necessarily derived from classroom and school contexts and students within those contexts, through an "inside/outside" perspective (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993). From their singular vantage point, teachers have the ability to examine research questions inside classrooms as questions naturally occur. As they do so, teachers become generators of knowledge, positioning which can have value both within the classroom and beyond it. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) call this "local knowledge of practice," asserting that such knowledge can be useful both locally and publicly (p. 131). As teachers become knowledge-generators, they further can help close the "knowing doing

gap" (Ball, 2012, p. 283) by directly applying new knowledge within their instructional settings and by further testing and refining new knowledge.

Development of teachers. As teachers generate and apply new knowledge through an inquiry process, the cycle can serve as a means of providing them with a constant way of improving their practices and of developing professionally. Because teachers' learning through inquiry is necessarily context-based and because teachers are poised to understand the contexts in which they work, findings from studying these immediate contexts are also based in teachers' experience realms and are thus connected to teachers' prior knowledge (Vygotsky, 1962). Also, given that teachers generally choose their own inquiry topics, findings are inherently tied not only to teachers' interests but also to the areas in which teachers most identify need for learning.

For example, through teacher inquiry, a teacher might decide to study how classroom arrangement affects participation in literature circles. The teacher might pick this topic not only out of personal interest but possibly because getting students to participate in literature circles has been a particular challenge. Research in the field of motivation has supported that learners best retain learning when it is tied to a topic for which they have interest and personal need for understanding (Collins & Amabile, 1999), but such choice for teachers as learners may or may not exist in more traditional forms of professional development. Dana, Thomas, and Boynton (2011) contend that inquiry should be a "core piece of the districtwide professional development plan puzzle" (p. xxiii). They differentiate inquiry from "top-down mandates," contending that inquiry "involves educators and students in defining questions they are passionate about exploring, collecting and analyzing data to inform their questions, and sharing what they

have learned in the process with others" (p. xxiii). Teachers' learning is thus derived from context-driven challenges tackled through a learner-centered process (American Psychological Association, 1993) recognizing that *all* individuals connected to a context can participate in new knowledge development.

What Can Inquiry Mean for Pre-Service English Teachers?

While much of teacher inquiry literature has focused on practicing teachers, a growing body of research is finding promise in training pre-service teachers (PSTs) about inquiry practices. There is good reason to believe that just as experienced teachers develop professionally through inquiry, so do novice teachers (Freese, 2006; Gitlin & Teitelbaum, 1983). Inquiry enables PSTs to develop their own practices through studying them. Yet much is still unclear about how PSTs develop teaching skills through inquiry or how they move beyond simply completing inquiry course assignments toward acquiring the type of inquiry stances that Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) advocate.

For PSTs preparing to teach English language arts specifically, inquiry offers the chance to understand better how language and literacy skills are shaped in classrooms. It is not surprising, given the importance of these skills in students' future lives, that the teacher inquiry movement has its roots in language arts classrooms. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1999) trace how paradigm shifts in the 1970s and 1980s regarding the teaching of writing led to viewing English teachers as knowers and thinkers or as "RE-searchers" (Berthoff, 1987). Writings published by the National Council of Teachers of English and researchers of English classrooms focused on ways English teachers could generate knowledge of language and literacy development (Mohr & Maclean, 1987; Myers, 1985). Today, the tradition of inquiry within English classrooms continues. Now, more than

ever, as English teachers look for ways to teach students new literacy skills (Bean & Harper, 2010), inquiry is becoming a means for teachers within English classrooms to refine how that instruction occurs (Rutherford, 2009). Yet many questions remain about how new English teachers who are just learning to teach also experience their first exposures to inquiry processes.

How Do These Studies Link Together and Fill the Gaps in Knowledge?

The three manuscripts in this dissertation all explore how a cohort of English PSTs experience teacher inquiry during their training. Topics include:

- Article 1: understanding research questions posed by PSTs (included as Chapter 2; planned journal, *Teaching and Teacher Education*)
- Article 2: understanding how PSTs describe their students in inquiry manuscripts (included as Chapter 3; planned journal, *Journal of Language, Identity, & Education*)
- Article 3: understanding how PSTs describe their own relationships to students in inquiry manuscripts and other data (included as Chapter 4; planned journal, *Journal of Teacher Education*).

These questions are of pivotal importance because finding answers to them can provide insights into how teacher educators can more effectively train English PSTs in teacher inquiry practices.

Data for all three manuscripts come from the same dataset. For two years, I followed a cohort of 15 English education students through their teacher preparation in English-teaching methods, observing PSTs in their methods-course meetings and practice-teaching lessons. During observations, I took detailed fieldnotes and audio-

recorded course discussions. I collected all the documents PSTs submitted as course assignments and their practice-teaching lesson plans and materials. I also periodically collected data directly from PSTs through interviews and questionnaires.

During data collection, PSTs completed three inquiry projects set in their practice-teaching classrooms: (1) a student-interview project in which they tried to understand their students' points of view (SPOV), (2) a teaching-inquiry (TI) presentation they completed, using a protocol for a collaborative discussion, and (3) a final case-study project they conducted of students who they found challenging to teach. All three of these projects included papers written by the PSTs, and the latter two also included oral presentations. These three projects comprise the primary data sources for the three manuscripts of this dissertation, with other observational data supporting the primary data. Each manuscript's methods section describes in more detail collection and analysis methods and exact data used for that manuscript.

Together, this data provides an opportunity for better understanding these English PSTs' experiences in learning inquiry processes. It also continues a trajectory of research I have begun related to English teacher preparation. To date, in addition to the three manuscripts included here, I have completed two additional manuscripts from this larger dataset. Salerno (in preparation) considers how the PSTs conceptualize engagement, and its findings speak to the importance of training PSTs in understanding the difference between engagement and compliance. Salerno and Kibler (under review) analyzes PSTs' experiences with inquiry by using grammatical analysis paired with observational data to understand how three of the PSTs assume stances toward their teaching-inquiry oral presentations. Additionally, Salerno and Kibler (in press) uses a different but similar

dataset to consider how PSTs from several content areas describe English language learners specifically in case-study projects.

While analysis for each of the three dissertation manuscripts is described in greater detail in each article's methods section, generally all manuscripts use qualitative methods, sometimes paired with discourse analysis. The first manuscript focuses analysis specifically on the parts of PSTs' projects which present questions posed both to and about students. The second and third manuscripts involve analysis of the sections of PSTs' projects in which they described their students. For the second manuscript, this analysis involves a discourse-analytic focus on the specific words used to describe students. For the third manuscript, analysis focused on the way PSTs describe their "figured worlds" (Gee, 2011) and their relationships to their students.

Findings from these studies reveal that PSTs develop initial inquiry practices in complicated ways. The first manuscript suggests PSTs demonstrate possible reluctance in asking difficult questions *directly to* their students, though they might pose such questions *about* students through inquiry. Additionally, PSTs appear to include within their questions pre-findings or "pre-understandings" about students (see discussion in relation to Coghlan & Brannick's, 2010, findings below), as well as questions that might be related to their own developing identities as teachers. This concept of identity becomes important in findings from the remaining two manuscripts, as well. Results from the second manuscript indicate that PSTs tended to focus student descriptions on one aspect of students' identities, rather than describing fuller, more human, multiple identities. And findings from the third manuscript reveal that in relating to their students, PSTs indicate that they bring with them figured worlds which might contrast greatly with the figured

worlds of at least some of their students, particularly those focused on in inquiry projects as challenging to teach. A commonality across these findings is that within their inquiry work, PSTs are trying to make sense of their own new identities as teachers, and how they will relate to their adolescent students, who also are at critical points in identity development (Erikson, 1968).

One way of viewing these findings is by thinking about the PSTs in this study as new participants within a community of practice—in this case, a community practicing teaching and teaching inquiry. Lave and Wenger (1991) contend that novice community of practice members need "legitimate peripheral participation," where learners, who are thought of as apprentices, at first watch from the periphery but eventually are escorted into the center of participation by more experienced practitioners. PSTs in this study could be thought of as observing their teacher educators, their supervisors (including myself, see role of researcher descriptions below), their mentor teachers, and other teachers within their school settings, and learning from them how to take up the practice of teaching and the identity of a teacher and perhaps even of a teacher inquirer.

Given this framework, it would not be surprising that PSTs appear to take up Discourses present within their schools and teacher preparation program, about students (see Article 2). In a similar sense, they might also be asking inquiry questions about students that they deem appropriate within professional Discourses, rather than as questions to be posed directly of students (see Article 1). And they might be watching other teachers and teacher educators as guides for them in deciphering how their figured worlds and "everyday person" (Gee, 2011) identities need to change in order to build stronger relationships with students (see Article 3).

Together, these findings raise important points for teacher educators working to introduce PSTs to inquiry practices. First, PSTs in such communities of practice are likely looking to teacher educators as models of how PSTs should practice teaching and inquiry. Teacher educators thus have a great responsibility to model appropriate teaching and inquiry practices for PSTs. Additionally, there is danger that in asking PSTs to practice inquiry for the purpose of improving instruction, we may push them to focus solely on challenges, limiting their views to see only the difficulties in classrooms and the problem areas for students, causing PSTs to overlook the richness of classroom environments and the many resources students bring to classrooms. This, I feel certain, would not be what Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) had in mind in advocating inquiry as stance, and would not constitute a beneficial initial introduction to inquiry practices. Instead, in teaching PSTs about inquiry work, we must recognize that PSTs are often already overwhelmed with the many challenges associated with becoming teachers, and we must help them to experience inquiry work as ongoing practice in moving through challenges while also noting and capitalizing on classrooms' and students' resources.

It is my hope that these manuscripts will help further knowledge about how PSTs experience inquiry, as well as about the types of questions PSTs have about and perceptions they have of their students. In this sense, findings can illuminate not only PSTs' process of learning about teacher inquiry but about teaching and teacher development more generally, and findings have significance for not only teacher educators wishing to improve instruction of PSTs related to inquiry but also teaching in general. Additionally, the second manuscript particularly has implications for applied linguists interested in researching how teachers generally, or PSTs more specifically,

make linguistic choices in describing students and how those linguistic choices reflect PSTs' conceptualizations of students. The third manuscript also includes important findings about how teachers have their own figured worlds, as they build relationships with students. I believe that the type of work represented in these manuscripts is essential in improving our understanding of both teacher inquiry and teacher development.

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CHAPTER 2

Study 1: Questions They Ask: Considering Teacher Inquiry Questions Posed by Pre-Service English Teachers

Abstract

This study of pre-service teachers' (PSTs) inquiry projects examines inquiry questions in understanding PSTs' concerns about teaching and how teacher educators can improve PST support. The project considers: (1) How do English PSTs pose their concerns about students in inquiry questions addressed *to* students during field-placement experiences? (2) How do they express these concerns in questions posed *about* students? and (3) What conceptualizations of students are embedded in questions? Findings reveal a possible mismatch, with PSTs asking students directly about personal interests but often formulating research questions about academic challenges.

Introduction

While teacher inquiry is increasingly viewed as a promising means of training beginning and pre-service teachers (PSTs) to become practitioners who constantly improve their classrooms, little research has been conducted on the inquiry questions PSTs ask. Yet gaining better understanding of how PSTs choose and structure questions holds twofold promise in helping teacher educators better understand: concerns novice teachers have about teaching and how PSTs understand teacher inquiry as an instructional practice. The current project seeks to provide teacher educators with insights in these areas through analysis of questions that a cohort of secondary English PSTs posed in inquiry projects during their two years of English methods training.

Teacher Inquiry

In this paper, I use teacher inquiry to refer to a systematic process teachers, or in this case PSTs, use to examine questions arising from teaching contexts. Alternatively called "teacher research" or "practitioner research," teacher inquiry puts teachers at the center of researching answers to challenging educational questions. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) contend that inquiry is a key approach in enabling teachers to construct knowledge, and its tenets include that:

> Practitioners are deliberative intellectuals who constantly theorize practice as part of practice itself and that the goal of teacher learning initiatives is the joint construction of local knowledge, the questioning of common assumptions, and thoughtful critique of the usefulness of research generated by others both inside and outside contexts of practice. (p. 2)

In this sense, inquiry promotes teachers as knowledge-generators. The current project is fittingly set within an English education cohort's training, given that teacher inquiry takes its roots in language and literacy instruction (see Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999) and that English teachers play key roles in shaping language and literacy skills necessary for students' success across content areas. Findings here are intended to shed light upon processes of teacher inquiry regardless of subject matter. For teacher trainers, preparing new teachers of various contents not only to enter classrooms but to be able to engage in practices that will consistently improve their teaching practice is essential. Ball (2009) argues for the necessity of training teachers toward "generativity," which she defines as:

> teachers' ability to continually add to their understanding by connecting their personal and professional knowledge with the knowledge that they gain from their students to produce or originate knowledge that is useful to them in pedagogical problem solving and in meeting the educational needs of their students. (p. 47)

Generative change, she contends, is "a process of self-perpetuating change" (p. 48). For researchers, involving teachers-as-researchers through such generative processes as inquiry holds promise in closing the "knowing doing gap" (Ball, 2012, p. 283). For teachers, it can mean having ability to both sustain themselves professionally without relying on "received knowledge" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 2) from others and to improve their classroom environments by addressing contextually based challenges that arise in them across long teaching careers (Goswami & Rutherford, 2009). In this sense, teacher inquiry requires a paradigm shift toward viewing the "teacher as knower" (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009, p. 91), and preparing PSTs to practice inquiry requires teaching them to view themselves as knowers and to practice generative change (see also

Franke, Carpenter, Levi, & Fennema, 2001, and Franke, Carpenter, Fennema, Ansell, & Behrend, 1998, for more on generativity).

Yet current research indicates training teachers to view themselves as legitimate knowledge-generators is not without challenges. Reis-Jorge (2007) found, for instance, that teachers conducting research for coursework expressed beliefs that their work contrasted with what they called more "formal" academic research. Findings indicated that while completion of the project might have led the teachers to become more informed research consumers, whether the teachers would continue producing research after course completion was questionable, given the many distinctions they drew between their work and that of university-based researchers. Such challenges can be even more difficult in training novice teachers, who might not yet have confidence in their teaching practices or who might resist instruction in inquiry practices (see Freese, 2006) and who are leaving teaching at alarming rates (Hughes, 2012). For teacher educators, the presence of such challenges makes it essential that inquiry training be carefully planned and research-based. To do so, it becomes essential that we understand how PSTs experience inquiry training. Examining PSTs' inquiry projects while studying their overall training and development offers opportunities to build this understanding and to consider how prepared PSTs are to continue practicing inquiry as full-time teachers.

Why Understanding Inquiry Questions is Important

A central piece of inquiry can be found in questions teachers choose to explore. These questions suggest the issues most pressing to teachers. Teachers participate in research when required to do so in training or professional development (Freese, 2006) or while independently seeking to examine and improve their practice (Rutherford, 2009).

In beginning inquiry practice, teachers often read about how to identify questions within their classrooms. Hubbard and Power (1999), for instance, instruct teachers to "mine tensions" (p. 25) for problems existing there: "Often the best research questions are located in a taut spot between two points. We sometimes walk a tightrope between who we are as teachers and learners and who we want to be" (p. 25). And Dana, Thomas, and Boynton (2011), calling these questions "wonderings" (p. 6), instruct educators:

> Teaching (and learning) are incredibly complex endeavors. Because of this complexity, it is natural and normal for many issues, tensions, problems, and dilemmas to emerge in classrooms and schools. Rather than sweeping them under the carpet and pretending they don't exist, educators embrace and celebrate these problems by naming them in the form of a question and making a commitment to doing something about them. (p. 6)

Once discovered, questions, they argue, can be cyclical in nature, with inquiry findings leading to new questions (Dana et al., 2011, p. 5, see also Anderson, Herr, & Nihlen, 2007).

That teachers' challenges are sources of inquiry questions means that studying questions can provide opportunities to understand challenges teachers face. But questions are not only reflective of teaching challenges. Lankshear and Knobel (2004) warn that though it is common to regard teachers' questions purely as practical in nature, they in fact are both existential and epistemological in that teachers' problems cause troubles that need solving through learning more about the situation (p. 42). In this sense, questions might suggest not only problems teachers are facing but also educational issues—both pedagogical and curricular—they want to know more about. Understanding questions can

be guideposts for teacher educators who want to help teachers develop in areas of most concern to teachers themselves. For PSTs specifically, questions might suggest areas of training they most need in pre-service preparation. Lankshear and Knobel (2004) argue questions can also reflect various influences on teachers: "what they read, what their theoretical preferences or interests are, what their 'hunches' or prior experiences are, their relevant knowledge about a particular pupil or the pupil's circumstances and so on" (p. 47). Questions, it follows, can illuminate these various factors influencing teachers, revealing both issues PSTs are grappling with in becoming teachers and ways they pursue inquiry through developing questions.

Current Knowledge about Questions

Although inquiry questions offer great potential for better understanding teachers' challenges and inquiry processes, little research has been conducted to study questions specifically. Some studies, however, have provided guidance in examining questions. To build knowledge that might help practitioners in writing research questions, Dana, Yendol-Hoppey, and Snow-Gerono (2006) studied questions in more than 200 research projects by prospective and practicing teachers over a six-year period in a Northeastern U.S. program for PSTs and mentors. They found questions fit into a taxonomy of six categories, derived from what they called teachers' passions:

- helping an individual child;
- desire to improve curriculum;
- desire to improve or experiment with teaching strategies and techniques;
- beliefs about management, teaching, and learning;
- the intersection of teachers' personal and professional identities;

- and focus on understanding the teaching and learning context.

Teacher educators, they argue, can use this typology to help guide teachers into focusing inquiry questions, though the researchers caution that teachers should retain ownership over questions.

Other studies of questions conducted by Dana and colleagues have focused on teachers working with technology. Dawson, Dana, Wolkenhauer, and Krell (2013) studied action research questions posed by 30 educators researching online classrooms. Questions were found in three categories: virtual course completion, virtual student academic learning, and meeting nonacademic needs of virtual school students. Though the researchers contend that these topics align with virtual schooling best practices, it is difficult to determine how instructors' questions might be different if working face-to-face with students, particularly adolescents as did PSTs in the present study. Similarly, Dawson (2012) examined how 353 teachers approached technology-related action research projects. Nearly three-quarters of the teachers had as an objective students' learning specific content, but it is unclear if this would still have been the case had the projects' focus not been designated as technology. Questions overwhelmingly focused on lower SES students and often described students as being at academically low levels, perhaps suggesting teachers might tend to focus inquiry on these student subpopulations. Additional empirical research focusing on inquiry questions is sparse, though researchers have studied teachers' and PSTs' projects in general (see for example Hulburt & Knotts, 2012, and Scherff, 2012).

Theoretical Frame

Central to this project are complementary ideas that teachers can be not only doers but also knowers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009) and that teacher inquiry can be a recursive process leading to generative change (Ball, 2009) and closing the "knowing-doing" gap (Ball, 2012). Schwartz-Shea and Yanow (2012), explain that in interpretive research:

> The germ of an idea for research may come from … scholars' everyday, human experiences—from their own histories and lives: particular gender, race-ethnic, or other perspectives, prior professions or occupations, volunteer positions, and activities that span the possibilities from religion to sports. (p. 25)

For teachers practicing inquiry, a great portion of lived experiences occur within classrooms. It follows that as scholars draw questions from their everyday lives, teachers develop questions within their classrooms, reflecting their thinking about school environments and practice. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) describe a key feature of inquiry: "the assumption that those who work in particular educational contexts and/or who live in particular social situations have significant knowledge about those situations" (p. 42). In conceptualizing inquiry as a vehicle for change, the question thus arises: What do teachers wish to change about their classrooms and practices? This article is framed by the notion that approaching inquiry as a knowledge-generating means of change can benefit all teachers. But more specifically when PSTs are introduced to inquiry as a change engine, PSTs take on dual roles as both beginning teachers and beginning inquirers. In examining the questions PSTs pose through these dual roles, an opportunity arises for understanding concerns PSTs have about teaching, just as they begin learning to teach, and for understanding the purposes they see inquiry as serving. For teacher

educators, gaining such understanding is essential in leading to instructional practice driven by learners' concerns.

Research Questions

This study considers: (1) How do English PSTs pose their concerns about students in inquiry questions addressed *to* students during field-placement experiences? (2) How do they express these concerns in questions posed *about* students? and (3) What conceptualizations of students are embedded in questions?

Methods

Collection

Setting and data. This project is set in a teacher preparation program at a large public university in a South-Atlantic state. Data were from a qualitative study of a cohort of secondary English PSTs as they experienced four semesters of preparation coursework and corresponding field placements. Analysis focused on three teacher inquiry projects completed by PSTs: a student-point-of-view (SPOV) paper, a teaching-inquiry (TI) discussion and report, and a case-study paper and presentation. In all three assignments, PSTs posed questions and explored answers in field-placement classrooms. It should be noted that contexts for these assignments varied and that PSTs did not formulate questions completely independently. Regarding contexts, Table 1 provides an overview of how assignments differed and where they occurred during PSTs' preparation. A primary difference is that projects were spread out across PSTs' field placements, with SPOV projects occurring during initial part-time placements, TIs during full-time student-teaching, and case studies after the completion of student-teaching. Regarding guidance PSTs received, for all the projects, PSTs received instructions and exemplars

from professors about how to conduct the projects (see Online Supplement for complete assignments). Assignments were generally framed as ways PSTs could learn more about students or issues that were challenging for them. Fieldnotes indicate, for example, that for the SPOV project, the professor suggested possible questions in talking about the assignment:

> There are some obvious questions that you might want to study. Where might you go next? Who are those outliers? Who are those people that you want to find out more about because they may represent issues in the class?

Additionally, professors often encouraged PSTs to discuss questions they were posing with each other. In viewing this project's findings, it is important to bear in mind that question-composing in this sense can be viewed as collaborative work, not only originating from individual PSTs studied here but also from their work as a group, receiving instruction from others.

In keeping with this project's research questions, the nature of questions asked was different in SPOV projects—where PSTs asked questions directly of students in either surveys or interviews—than in TIs and case studies, where PSTs posed more traditional research-type questions. Differences in projects enabled me to study both questions PSTs posed *to* students (in SPOV papers) and *about* students (in TIs and case studies) and were therefore essential to this project's design. Two issues, however, arise in comparing data from different assignments. First, one might question how such different projects can all be considered teacher inquiry. The response is that the difference in these projects is illustrative of the wide variation of inquiry Cochran-Smith

and Lytle (2009) describe. Here, inquiry is defined not by sameness but instead by the list of common characteristics Cochran-Smith and Lytle provide (p. 39):

- practitioner as researcher,
- assumptions about links of knowledge, knowers, and knowing,
- professional context as site for study,
- community and collaboration,
- blurred boundaries between inquiry and practice,
- new conceptions of validity and generalizability,
- systematicity, including data collection and analysis,
- and publicity, public knowledge, and critique.

In all three projects, whether PSTs asked questions *to* or *about* students, the PSTs went in with specific purposes of investigating specific issues in line with these characteristics. Second, one might question whether passage of time between these projects, with SPOV papers completed in PSTs' second semester of methods coursework and TIs and case studies in either the third or fourth semester, affected how PSTs phrased questions. This is an issue that is difficult to tease out and will be considered further in the discussion section.

Primary data came from PSTs' written and oral reports. Supporting data came from the larger longitudinal study in which I interviewed PSTs and observed them participating in methods-course discussions and teaching field-placement lessons. Throughout this data collection, I took detailed fieldnotes, collected PSTs' course assignments and lesson plans, and audio-recorded all course discussions.

Participants. All 15 cohort members were included in this study (see Table 2 for a list of PSTs and demographic information). Three additional PSTs who left the cohort prior to student-teaching were not included, as they did not complete the inquiry assignments. It should be noted that cohort members are all female and predominantly White, but given that many U.S. teacher education programs are predominantly female and White (Sleeter & Milner, 2011), this composition is not too different from the general teaching population. PSTs completed field-placements in secondary English classrooms. All worked with experienced mentors. Most placements were in traditional public schools, although three PSTs completed student-teaching in charter schools, as indicated in Table 2. PSTs were enrolled in either a five-year combined BA and MT program or a two-year professional master's (PG/MT) program, as indicated in the table.

Role of researcher. Across the PSTs' program, I served in various roles (see Table 3). My most influential role was as university supervisor for four PSTs (Amy, Karen, Lynn, and Robin) during the full-time student-teaching semester. In many of my roles throughout PSTs' training and in line with teacher inquiry philosophy, I assumed what Erickson (2006) called the role of an "observer participant," contrasting with the more traditional and less involved "participant observer." As an observer participant, I actively helped train the cohort, especially PSTs I supervised, often discussing with them challenges in their classrooms and with particular students. Related to these inquiry projects, I do not pretend that I did not influence how students shaped questions. As an active participant, I discussed ideas with PSTs, showed them examples of my own work, and sometimes provided feedback to PSTs on their work and lesson plans. In the spirit of practitioner inquiry, I, too, acted in dual roles.

Analysis

Ongoing analysis. I developed tentative research questions and analysis schemes longitudinally by writing conceptual memos (Heath & Street, 2008) every two to four weeks. Early questions included how PSTs initially experience inquiry tasks. I met weekly or biweekly with the professors and graduate assistant serving as fellow researchers during the two semesters of English methods coursework and the following semester of student-teaching. As "critical friends" (Heath & Street, 2008), we discussed conceptual memos, data, and future research directions. I then practiced "data reduction" (Miles & Huberman, 1994), centering on data pertaining to PSTs' three inquiry-project assignments. PSTs' papers and project discussion transcripts comprised data for the primary analysis, while fieldnotes, questionnaires, and interviews provided supporting or disconfirming evidence.

Coding. Using NVivo software, I specifically coded portions of PSTs' papers stating their questions (1) in SPOV surveys, interview transcripts with students, and papers; (2) in TI papers and presentations; and (3) in case-study papers. This first coding required little inference as most PSTs delineated these sections of papers or presentations with headings or introductions. I then examined marked portions of data with Dana et al.'s (2006) taxonomy in mind as possible "start codes" (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In analysis, however, I found the taxonomy was not well-suited to this dataset. First, in the SPOV and case-study projects, assignment stipulations had already required PSTs to write about students. This data fit my research questions but differed from the more open dataset Dana and colleagues used. Second, I began coding PSTs' TI projects with the six categories as start codes and found overwhelmingly, PSTs had devised questions about

the first category, helping an individual child, or in this data sometimes a specific group of students. Only two other categories emerged: beliefs about management and intersection of teachers' identities, and all of those questions were still within the context of helping specific students. It is unclear why even questions where the assignment did not stipulate helping individual children still focused on individuals, but one possibility for this narrower group of questions is that this dataset studied only PSTs, while Dana et al. (2006) also studied experienced teachers who might be better able to pose questions about other issues, such as curriculum or teaching strategies.

Given the overwhelming focus of questions on individual students, I turned my analysis to better understanding how PSTs used inquiry to consider students, as posed in my first two research questions. I next read through all the data pertaining to questions and began open coding (Erickson, 1986; Merriam, 2009) to group questions into inductive categories based on patterns found in the data. Where possible, I assigned coding categories names using an "in Vivo" process, deriving names directly from the dataset (Strauss, 1987). I coded questions from SPOV projects separately from TIs and case studies, as SPOV questions were asked directly of students while TI and case-study questions were more research-oriented. These results are reported separately in the findings section.

For fieldnotes and my interviews of PSTs, I similarly began reading through data completely and marking sections pertaining to inquiry projects. This data included, for example, fieldnotes on inquiry discussions within methods courses or answers to my interview questions about inquiry. I then used a comparative process to look back and

forth between findings from the primary data and these secondary sources to identify relevant supporting or disconfirming evidence.

It should be noted that this project's third research question grew out of an iterative process. While analyzing questions about students, I found that embedded descriptions of students occurred frequently within the data, apparently forming a key element of questions PSTs posed. Consequently, I added the third research question. Additionally, because I found PSTs' case-study bias statements illuminated these descriptions, I also analyzed these statements. A bias statement was a required portion of the case-study project, which according to the course assignment sheet "reveals understanding of 'researcher as instrument.'" In analysis, I looked specifically for whether PSTs viewed their knowledge of students as bias.

Findings

Before explaining findings, it is important to note that in this project I do not analyze specific discourse features through which PSTs communicate research questions. Although I believe that using a discourse analysis lens to examine questions can provide useful findings regarding PSTs' stances (see Author XXXX and Manuscripts 2 & 3) or inquiry approaches, PSTs in this dataset often followed exemplars provided by course instructors in writing questions. For example, a sample TI project provided to PSTs included three focal questions: two centered around the clause "How can I …" and a third on "What can I do that …" In PSTs' own TIs, questions used these and similar phrases. While these findings might point to the power of exemplars in affecting students' work, they do not necessarily inform PSTs' own construction of questions. Consequently, this project's analysis turns away from question features toward question content and leaves

study of features to future researchers with datasets more fitting that research issue. It should be taken into account, however, that exemplars might have also shaped question content.

Question 1: Questions PSTs Asked Directly of Students

Through analysis of SPOV papers, I grouped questions PSTs posed directly to students into seven categories, including those about students':

- demographics, families, and future plans;
- learning styles and school experiences;
- personal interests;
- and opinions about English class.

Demographics, families, and future plans. Demographic questions typically included questions about students' ages, birthdays, and hometowns, and frequently included questions about students' languages. Interestingly, however, for reasons unclear in this data, PSTs never asked students about their ethnic identities or socioeconomic status. Questions about family most often asked about students' siblings and their ages. PSTs never asked about family structures or about parents or guardians, unless the student had first mentioned the person and the PST was asking a follow-up question. Two PSTs, Samantha and Amy, asked instead whom they should call to brag about students when students succeeded in class, and Marilyn asked students to complete the open-ended statement "My family is …" with a description. PSTs generally included a single question about students' future plans, sometimes embedded within questions about personal interests. For middle-schoolers, PSTs asked students about high-school goals, and for high-schoolers, PSTs asked about post-graduation plans. PSTs also asked

students about their dreams or dream jobs and if students felt prepared for college or entering the workforce.

Learning styles and school experiences. Regarding learning styles, PSTs asked students how they preferred to learn or study and how school could be better structured (e.g., Grace: "And what about us teachers… what could we do to make it something that works better for you?"). School experiences included questions about both past and present experiences in classes besides language arts. These questions often involved asking students to identify or describe favorite subjects or teachers. Additionally, questions asked about students' past school experiences (e.g., Samantha: "The most important thing I've learned in school so far is _____.") or why they attend school (e.g., Rachel: "What do you think is the purpose of school? Do you think school is important?"). For immigrant students specifically, school experiences included asking about students' experiences transitioning to U.S. schools or comparing U.S. classrooms to home-country schools.

Personal interests. Two categories were identified regarding students' personal interests. The most common category by far centered on students' personal interests unrelated to reading or writing. These questions ranged from asking students to draw their favorite superhero and having them list the three greatest moments of their lives to asking about their day-to-day routines, including out-of-school hobbies. Sandwiched between questions about favorite sports and TV programs were questions about favorite books (e.g., Dawn: "You told me that your favorite movies are _____. Do you like the same type of books?"), how students used technology to write (e.g., Karen: "Do you do any kinds of writing outside of school? What about when you're on the Internet? Do

you chat with any friends? A blog you might keep? Anything online? Facebook?"), and how students used libraries (e.g., Cynthia: "If you were in a big library and you weren't allowed to read any of the books, how would you feel about that?").

English classes. Finally, PSTs asked students their opinions of English classes the students were currently taking, where PSTs were assisting with instruction. PSTs often asked students for opinions about specific assignments and the course in general (e.g., Elizabeth: "What do you do in English class that seems important to you? What could you live without?") or about how PSTs or teachers might improve the courses (e.g., Karen: "As you know, I'm going to be a future English teacher. Is there anything that I could do that would interest you if you were to be my student, in my classroom?"). Sometimes, PSTs asked how students would improve the classes or what materials they would teach if they had license to do so (e.g., Cynthia: "If you were the teacher for the day, and the students had to read a book as a class, how would you make this activity fun for them?").

Question 2: Questions PSTs Asked About Students

In considering research questions PSTs posed about students, I analyzed reports from PSTs' TI and case-study projects. PSTs' questions fell within five overall categories:

- academic challenges,
- motivation and engagement,
- behavior disruptions,
- differentiation,
- and relationships.

Academic challenges. Academic challenges were sometimes general in nature (e.g., Linda: "How can I help stabilize [his][1] performance in class?") but at other times focused on students' literacy skills (e.g., Kimberly: "How can [her] confidence and skill as a reader and writer be boosted?"). Given the responsibilities that fall on English teachers to build these skills, the presence of this type of questioning is not surprising.

Motivation and engagement. Related to general academic challenges were questions focusing more specifically on "motivation" (e.g., Amy: "How can his instructor encourage [him] to translate his social persona with his peers to motivation to achieve in the academic classroom?") and "engagement" (e.g., Robin: "If [he] continues to be unengaged in class, what kind of plan should he and I try to come up with?"), both of which appeared to be buzzwords in PSTs' questions and in methods-course discussions (see also Author XXXX for consideration of PSTs' conceptualization of engagement). Fieldnotes indicate PSTs frequently discussed ways to improve students' motivation and engagement, using various strategies, such as selecting interesting reading materials and encouraging creativity.

Behavior disruptions. In questions about behavior disruptions, PSTs asked how they could balance managing disruptive students and others in the class (e.g., Dawn: "How can I best balance dealing with these more difficult students while still attending to the needs of the class as a whole?"). They also asked about "redirecting" students' negative behaviors (Rachel: "How can I redirect, manage, and/or guide [him] to better, more respectful, less disruptive behavior?"). Fieldnotes indicate that this question about redirecting students' behaviors was a course discussion topic throughout PSTs' training. PSTs also asked what actions they should take to intervene. Sometimes they used the

[1] Names are replaced with pronouns.

phrase "at what point" to address when intervention is necessary (e.g., Rachel: "How much do I let go if he stops when asked, and *at what point* do I send him out of the room?"; Marilyn: "How can teachers increase Jane's learning when her behavior disrupts the classroom? *At what point* do we sacrifice her learning for whole class learning?").

Differentiation. Questions about differentiation asked how PSTs might differentiate for students with various school-designated labels, such as gifted or English language learner, or a specific disability (e.g., Grace: "How can I differentiate my teaching and content material for a student with Down syndrome?"). They sometimes asked, too, how these needs might affect students' learning (e.g., Dawn: "As the only ESL student in the block, does this affect his classroom performance?). Sometimes questions focused specifically on one student, as in the examples above. Other times, questions asked about groups of students in various categories (e.g., Robin: "How can teachers accommodate for students with Asperger's syndrome?"). Here, rather than asking specifically about one student with Asperger's syndrome, Robin asked her question more generally about students with Asperger's. In these questions, PSTs also asked how to differentiate classrooms likely containing students with varied readiness levels and interests who do not have school-designated labels, though this pattern was less common. Exceptions came from Robin, who worked in a mixed, 9^{th}-12^{th}-grade classroom at an alternative school ("In a class where students in varying grades with different ability levels learn the same content, how can teachers differentiate and motivate students while focusing on individuality?"), and from Shawn ("How does a teacher keep students who are far above and far below the average level of the class interested and engaged?").

Relationships. Finally, PSTs asked questions about classroom relationships, including those between students and peers, students and teachers, and students and the PST herself (see Article 3 for more on PSTs' actual descriptions of the latter form of relationships). Peer relationships sometimes focused on specific students who were having difficulty socially. Amy, Rachel, Grace, and Kimberly all focused projects on students who were not making friends. Amy, for example, asked the question:

> How can I make group work possible in this class, particularly when other students avoid being [her] partner? I worry about pairing her with some of the more aggressive personalities, but I also don't want to take advantage of the kinder students in the class by always pairing them with her.

Sometimes, PSTs framed peer relationships in terms of including students in a "classroom community." Rachel similarly wrote:

> The class gets along very well as a whole, but this one student has become increasingly isolated. How do I integrate him into the community in a positive and productive way, and foster a better relationship between him and the other students?

Questions posed about relationships between students and teachers besides the PSTs were rare but generally focused on relationships with collaborating teachers present in classrooms. Lynn, the one PST who did not focus her TI primarily on a student or group of students, instead concentrated on the special-education teacher in her classroom but integrated this concern into a focus on students' relationships with that teacher: "How can I encourage my students to build a positive relationship with [her] without putting her on the spot?"

Much more predominant were PSTs' questions about their own relationships with students. In these questions, PSTs asked how they should relate to students. Marilyn, for instance, in talking about a student who she also said was disruptive, asked during her TI presentation:

> What should my interactions with [her] look like? Um, I typically try to ignore and avoid her, considering that it- that my interaction with her encourages her to distract herself and others in class. Is- And then this is kind of a second part to the question, is [her] learning at stake if she doesn't respect me?

Marilyn's question expressed uncertainty about how to interact with her student. In a written version, Marilyn added to the end of her question, "if she doesn't respect me *as an authority figure*." This theme of being an authority figure was prevalent in PSTs' relationship questions. Dawn similarly wrote, "How can I build a positive relationship with these students and help their learning processes at the same time as establishing myself in this authority role?" This type of questioning is interesting in that it coincided with PSTs' development and exploration of their own roles as teachers. In interviews, both Marilyn and Dawn talked about transitioning from seeing themselves as college students to seeing themselves as teachers, referring to this transition as switching "mindsets." In questionnaires at the end of the student-teaching semester, PSTs were asked to comment on how their teacher personas had developed. While some PSTs said their personas had not really changed from the previous semester of part-time practice-teaching, most said they had developed significantly. In light of these changes PSTs were experiencing, it is possible that inquiry questions about PSTs' relationships with students revealed not only how PSTs were attempting to understand students but also how they

were exploring their own roles as teachers (Uitto, 2012). Thus when Cecilia asked, "How do I properly introduce myself as to give the girls an idea of what role I play in the class? (How do I give them a place to put me, in their minds?)," it is possible that she was asking not only how she could help the girls perceive her but also how she would conceptualize herself as a teacher in her own mind, as well.

The one instance of a question about PST-student relationships not about how to relate to students or establish a teacher role toward them was from Samantha, who explained in her presentation that she had already built a strong relationship with her student and was concerned instead about how to help other teachers see his positive sides she had discovered. This questioning builds upon success Samantha had already experienced in relating to the student. Interestingly, Samantha was the oldest PST in this study and had worked four years after college before entering teacher training. From this limited data, it is unclear whether Samantha's greater life experience helped her have an already more firmly established teacher persona. In her questionnaire regarding her teaching persona, Samantha wrote that she learned during student-teaching how to have fun with students while still maintaining order.

Home life. Finally, in analyzing the questions PSTs posed, it is important to note that only one PST asked about students' lives outside school. Cynthia, who student-taught in a high-school ESL English classroom, asked, "How can I best support my students as they juggle school with the realities of their home and work life?" Cynthia's question was posed within a TI discussion in which she asked for input on how to encourage her students to attend college. Fieldnotes indicate she explained in the discussion that students' "realities" included that many did not have immigration

documents and had experienced difficulties coming to the United States. Though it is impossible to know why other PSTs did not ask such questions in their projects, it is interesting to note that Cynthia herself was the daughter of Korean immigrants to the United States and had lived much of her childhood in Mexico. It is possible that such personal experiences, combined with her placement in an ESL English classroom, made Cynthia more apt to ask questions about students' home lives than other PSTs.

Question 3: Student Descriptions Embedded in Questions

Analysis also revealed that many of PSTs' questions included what might be called "pre-findings," background knowledge or findings PSTs stated about students before conducting inquiry projects. The way such pre-findings appeared within classrooms varied widely. Elizabeth, for instance, questioned, "What are some ways to reach a student who is determined to be disengaged?" In this example, Elizabeth did not hedge her language with a modal such as "might" (Biber, 2006) but instead suggested she had already concluded the student "is determined to be disengaged." Here and in instances such as this, one might question what basis Elizabeth had for making this decision. It is unclear if Elizabeth would be open to new information suggesting that the student is not determined to be disengaged. In other examples, PSTs used less definitive language (e.g., Cecilia: "How does [his] reluctant and bored attitude affect his success in the classroom?"; Dawn: "In light of what I know about his behavior (often defiant and resistant to work, sometimes gets into fights with classmates), how does he actually conduct himself in the classroom?"; Amy: "Why does his teacher identify him as 'very capable and very intelligent,' and yet he continues to receive low grades in his AP class?") but still reveal that PSTs' questions are framed by prior experiences with

students. Such pre-findings might be evidence of PSTs' growing understanding of the challenges students face in classrooms. They also might be indicators of ideas PSTs have brought with them into teaching. Torff (1999) called such ideas, "tacit knowledge," which he explained are "intuitive conceptions" that "exert a great deal of influence on the way … people think and act with respect to education" (p. 195).

Interestingly, PSTs overwhelmingly wrote in case-study projects that prior experiences with students were source of "biases" for them in their research. Within a required paper section describing limitations, all but two PSTs wrote that knowing students previously caused bias. In a typical example, Linda wrote:

> During my research process, I definitely had research biases. I witnessed their interactions with other students, graded their tests and assignments, and conferenced with them individually, which made it difficult for me to not bring my past knowledge and understanding of each individual student into my observations and research.

Of the two PSTs who did not claim prior knowledge of students as bias, one was Marilyn, who was placed in a different school for her case-study project than for student-teaching. Marilyn said in her interview that not knowing the students previously allowed her to try to figure out what was going on just from observing them. The other PST who did not depict prior knowledge of students as bias was Rachel, who did conduct research in the same school as student-teaching but who described that prior knowledge as informing, rather than biasing her research.

Discussion

Through studying English PSTs' inquiry questions in a specific teacher education program, this project has revealed concerns PSTs expressed in inquiry-project questions asked both directly *to* and *about* students and how the PSTs embedded conceptualizations of students within questions.

Question 1. Questions PSTs asked directly to students in interviews and surveys appeared in seven categories: demographics, family, future plans, learning styles and school experiences, personal interests besides reading and writing, personal interests related to reading and writing, and opinions about English class. PSTs most often asked about students' lives outside of school, particularly students' personal interests. In keeping with the assignment, these questions appeared aimed at getting to know students better and asking questions PSTs might have expected students wanted to answer. PSTs interspersed questions about literacy interests among questions about sports, music, and other hobbies. This type of questioning might be viewed as PSTs' attempts to relate to students, especially given that issues of engagement and motivation were central concerns in questions PSTs posed about students. Focus on students' interests besides reading and writing might suggest that PSTs expected students to be less responsive to questions about literacy, though fieldnotes indicated that for PSTs themselves, reading and writing were significant personal interests. For teacher educators, such attempts by PSTs to relate to students might be encouraging signs that the PSTs are learning how to build relationships with students who might be very different from themselves, given that a major challenge in teacher education today is to help teachers teach a quickly diversifying student population (Sleeter & Milner, 2011). Further research might also

examine whether PSTs across secondary content areas or at the elementary level similarly focus questions on literacy development.

Another interpretation is also possible. PSTs might also have been reluctant to ask students difficult questions. For example, viewing data through this interpretation might involve seeing PSTs as tiptoe-ing into questions about literacy after first asking about movies or music. Related to this interpretation could be that while PSTs asked students about demographics such as age, birthdays, or hometowns, PSTs did not ask students about ethnic identities or socioeconomic status and asked them only limited questions about families. The most striking exception to this finding was within Cynthia's questions about how to help students in her ESL English classroom juggle outside home and work "realities." Though data in this study alone is limited, such findings appear to support previous work that more extensive experience with ESL students (Author XXXX; Grant & Wong, 2003; Lucas & Villegas, 2013) and personal experiences with language learning (Jiménez & Rose, 2010) can give PSTs greater understanding of language-learners. Additionally, while this study focuses on questions PSTs asked, given that it is impossible to know why they did not ask other questions, it is possible PSTs avoided questions about race, SES, or family status for fear of intruding into personal issues. Fieldnotes indicate PSTs were instructed to practice their interview questions with each other and to consider whether questions would make students feel uncomfortable. It is possible PSTs took this suggestion as advice to skip more challenging questions altogether. In this data, Karen glosses over a student's interview response in which the student said she preferred living far away from her family. Karen commented in the transcript, "Yeah, no family is perfect. That's okay" and moves on to a question about

writing. Fieldnotes also indicate that PSTs sometimes expressed reluctance to broach sensitive topics in class. Though further research is necessary to verify whether these are reasons PSTs might not ask questions about families, race, or SES, a possibility is that PSTs might benefit from training in how to talk with students about these issues and in how better understanding students' identities can enrich instruction (Oakes & Lipton, 2007). For teacher educators, such findings might point to the importance of talking openly with PSTs about how to explore issues, such as race and families, within secondary classrooms and how to teach PSTs about benefits of better understanding students as entire people, not just as students. While learning about students' interests outside of school is a step toward getting to know them as individuals, finding out only about their hobbies and not about other issues in their lives might give PSTs a surface-level understanding of students.

Question 2. Questions asked *about* students centered around five categories: academic challenges, motivation and engagement, behavior disruptions, differentiation, and relationships. Not surprisingly, given the difficulty of learning to manage a classroom (Jones & Jones, 2007), many of the PSTs' questions about students involved questions about how to handle disruptive students or to differentiate for diverse learners. Regarding disruptive students, it is of interest that PSTs often asked "at what point" they should intervene. Such questioning might indicate PSTs believed there should be concrete rules dictating how they should respond to behavioral challenges within classrooms. Fieldnotes, too, indicated that despite professors' emphasis that many classroom areas are ambiguous, the PSTs often in their methods courses asked for direct answers about what they should do in specific circumstances. For teacher educators, these findings indicate

the importance of helping PSTs develop skills to make contextualized decisions while immersed in the classroom. PSTs might benefit from instruction that the practice of good teaching cannot be oversimplified into cut-and-dried rules but instead involves skillful negotiation of complex interpersonal situations (Ohanian, 2004), and further research might investigate how such instruction can best be delivered so that PSTs internalize it. Regarding differentiation, PSTs often asked questions about how to differentiate for specific students with school-designated labels, rather than how to differentiate across all students in classrooms. This finding suggests PSTs might benefit from instruction emphasizing that all students—not just those designated as having special needs—can benefit from differentiated teaching methods (Tomlinson, 1999).

Additionally, of interest is PSTs' questioning of how to relate to students, particularly how to be seen as authority figures. These questions appear to coincide with PSTs' personal development of their teaching personas. Elizabeth, for example, said development of her teaching persona coincided with her becoming an adult, and Cecilia asked how her students should see her in their minds. For teacher educators, these questions suggest the importance of helping PSTs explore varied teaching identities, as discussed in Dana et al. (2006), and of adopting roles that best fit PSTs' personalities and their students' needs. Findings might also suggest that teacher educators could help PSTs understand that teachers construct complicated identities (Olsen, 2011), not only assuming the role as authority figure that PSTs often mentioned in their questions. By learning about and exploring a range of teacher roles and identities, secondary PSTs with varied personalities and backgrounds might be better suited to teach adolescent students

who likewise are developing varied identities based on diverse personal experiences and characteristics (McDevitt & Ormrod, 2007).

When compared with questions PSTs asked about students, their questions to students might demonstrate a mismatch. Questions about students expressed concerns PSTs apparently had, yet they did not ask the students to talk about these issues. Questions about school often asked about students' favorite subjects or teachers. Those questions that did ask about something negative in school generally asked what students would change at school (e.g., Robin: "Let's say that school isn't a perfect place. What is something about school that could be changed so that you'd like it more?"). By not asking students directly about academic challenges PSTs perceive them as having, PSTs might miss opportunities to learn from students' perspectives about challenges students feel they face in school.

For teacher educators, the presence of such a mismatch[2], like the absence of questions about PSTs' race and family backgrounds, might point to the importance of teaching PSTs how to talk to students about difficult issues. For researchers of teacher education, this mismatch might point also to the challenges of studying PSTs as they progress through their preparation. In these findings, it is difficult to tease out the varying roles context and time might have played in the questions PSTs asked. For instance, in the SPOV project, PSTs were just beginning their programmatic instruction and field placements. Questions asked in these projects might appear simple because PSTs had not

[2] Though it should be taken into account that PSTs were teaching different students when they conducted the various projects, the way PSTs describe their concerns about students does not appear to vary among the projects. Though PSTs in their early inquiry work were less likely to give specific information about their relationships with students (see Article 3), the challenges they described among students did not reveal variation across projects (see Article 2). Given the difference in data, however, further research would be necessary to confirm a mismatch between questions asked to and about students.

yet had time to develop skills necessary for asking more complex questions. On the other hand, the context of the SPOV field placement as part-time and less intense than full-time student-teaching might also mean that PSTs had necessary skills but simply had not had opportunities to know students well enough to ask more complex questions (see also Article 3). This uncertainty arises as PSTs are naturally asked to tackle increasingly more difficult assignments while progressing through their preparation.

Question 3. As with Question 2, teaching PSTs to get more information about their perceptions of students directly from students becomes important when considering findings from this project's third question—that PSTs have embedded within questions "pre-findings," possibly examples of "tacit knowledge" (Torff, 1999) that PSTs have brought with them to classrooms. These "pre-findings" might also be similar to Lankshear and Knobel's (2004) "hunches" or to the concept of "pre-understanding" (p. 114), which Coghlan and Brannick (2010) describe in relation to practitioners of action research in various organizations, not necessarily schools. They contend that pre-understandings can include both tacit and explicit knowledge and that inside-researchers should practice reflection through journaling to tease out the difference between the two and to "identify gaps between what you think you know and then find that you don't" (p. 117). Direct discussion of how to use and analyze this background knowledge—not part of PSTs' TI and case-study assignments in this project—might not only improve PSTs' instruction of these students but also help mitigate PSTs' concerns that their prior knowledge of students biased their research. Such concerns suggest PSTs might not understand that in teacher inquiry, teachers are placed at the center of knowledge creation and are not expected to be unattached, outside researchers (Cochran-Smith & Lytle,

2009). In her interview, Samantha said she had difficulty completing the case-study because she viewed it as "inauthentic" in requiring her to become a neutral observer of students she already knew, as if she did not know them previously. It is possible, too, that PSTs' setting in a research-focused university creates a paradoxical environment for training in teacher inquiry. PSTs—exposed to but not specifically trained in, quantitative forms of research—might believe that neutrality is a quality indicator for all research. Samantha, for example, might benefit from learning that teacher inquirers are not required to divorce themselves from prior knowledge of students but instead are asked to examine that knowledge in light of new findings through intentional research methods (Dana, Yendol-Hoppey, & Snow-Gerono, 2006).

In this way, study of PSTs' inquiry questions posed to and about students illuminate novice teachers' concerns about teaching and how PSTs understand teacher inquiry as an instructional practice. For teacher educators, PSTs' questions point to the supports that PSTs need in learning to talk about difficult issues with students, manage classrooms, build relationships with students, develop individualized teacher personas, and understand the role of background knowledge in conducting teacher inquiry projects. Through this instruction, PSTs might become better positioned to be both "doers" and "knowers" (Ball, 2012; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009), capable of generating real change (Ball, 2009) within their classrooms.

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Table 1: Inquiry Assignments

Assignment	Requirements	When Assigned	Types of Questions Asked
Student-Point-of-View (SPOV)	-design and administer a survey to all students -select two students to interview -write a paper analyzing results	Semester two during part-time practice-teaching	Questions asked directly of students in surveys and interviews
Teaching Inquiry (TI)	-write a report of a challenging situation in the classroom -present it orally and in writing to fellow cohort members during a TI discussion meeting -summarize findings from meeting and implement a strategy for improvement -report periodic updates and final findings to cohort about progress	Semester three during full-time student teaching	Focusing questions asked to cohort about the situation
Case Study	-select three focal students for study -conduct five classroom observations -interview regular classroom teacher -write a final case-study report	-For most PSTs: Semester four after full-time teaching -For PSTs who graduated early: Semester three during full-time student-teaching	Focusing questions for case-study research

Table 2: Participants

Pseudonym	Age	Race	Program	Language(s) Spoken	Initial placement school	Student-teaching school
Amy	24	White	PG/MT	English*, some Spanish	middle school	high school
Cecilia	21	White	BA/MT	English*, Spanish	high school	distance charter middle school
Cynthia	21	Korean	BA/MT	Korean*, English, Spanish	middle school	high school
Dawn	20	White	BA/MT	English*, some Amharic, French, and Spanish	high school	middle school
Elizabeth	21	White	BA/MT	English*, some Spanish	alternative middle school	high school
Grace	23	Filipino-American	PG/MT	Kapangpangan*, English, some Tagalog	high school	distance middle school
Karen	24	White	PG/MT	English*, French, some Moroccan, some Arabic	middle school	alternative high school
Kimberly	21	White	BA/MT	English	high school	middle school
Linda	20	Chinese American	BA/MT	Mandarin*, English*	high school	middle school
Lynn	23	White	PG/MT	English*, Dutch*	middle school	high school
Marilyn	20	White	BA/MT	English	middle school	distance charter middle school
Rachel	21	White	BA/MT	English*, Italian	high school	middle school
Robin	21	White	BA/MT	English*, Spanish, Italian, a little Portuguese and French	high school	alternative high school
Samantha	26	White	PG/MT	English*; some Spanish	high school	middle school
Shawn	21	Hispanic	BA/MT	English*, some Spanish	middle school	distance high school

*Denotes first language

Table 3: Data Collection Timeframe

Semester	Course/Field Placement	Role of Researcher
1	English Teaching Methods Part 1	teaching assistant
1	initial field placement (first semester)	observer
2	English Teaching Methods Part 2	observer
2	initial field placement (second semester)	observer
3	student-teaching seminar	university supervisor and observer
3	full-time student-teaching	university supervisor and observer
4	case-study field placement course and project	observer

Online Supplement

This supplement includes assignment materials provided to PSTs for each of the three inquiry projects. Assignment materials were taken from course syllabi and individual assignment sheets and rubrics.

1. SPOV assignment

Field Placement

English from the Student's Point of View (SPOV)

The purpose of this assignment is to explore what interests secondary-age students have and what they already know and think about English. For this assignment, you will interview two students in your [field-placement][3] class. Ideally, the two students that you select for these interviews will be among the five students profiled for your [methods class] Unit Project; they should, at least, reflect the range of diversity (gender, ethnicity, interests, abilities, etc.) in the class where you are fulfilling your [field] placement. Taking advantage of early observations to identify possible students; ongoing observations will be an opportunity to notice their behaviors in context and over time.

You should take detailed type-written notes on the interview responses. Include as many direct quotations as possible. **You may work in your [field-placement] pairs for the interviews** (i.e., you may conduct the interviews together)**; however, you must write the final paper individually**. If you do work together, it is important that you be sensitive to the comfort level of your interviewee, who could feel anxious or otherwise tense if "double-teamed" by two adults.

Record in the Visitation/Reflection Log the date of each interview. The interview has three components: your observations/interactions with the student in the context of the placement, an interest survey, and a general interview.

The paper:

1. With your mentor teacher's permission and the consent of the student involved, audio record the interview†; otherwise, take very detailed notes that capture (as verbatim as possible) the student answers to the interview questions and related interest survey. Transcribe the interview and type any handwritten notes.
2. Read through student responses to both and analyze this data. Supplement this data with your classroom observations, and whatever informal and formal interactions have included the interviewee: To what extent do their classroom behaviors confirm or disconfirm their interview responses? (This is called data triangulation.)
3. Create a summary profile of each student – 1 page maximum length (this can be in narrative form or as a chart); these profiles should portray the most essential, individuating data drawn from the 3 data sources.
4. In the text that follows these profiles, you should use this data to develop 3-4 main conclusions drawn from the data; support each with the use of specific examples from

[3] Course names changed throughout.

this data and explain at least 2 instructional implications of each conclusion: How might you apply what you have learned to instructional choices that target this student? How does this information help you to make appropriate uses of the adopted textbook, given your review of its strengths and limits? In this step, you are synthesizing the data and generalizing from it (as opposed to describing student responses to every question asked).

5. Instructional conclusions and implications **must** be supported by three data sources: 1) interviews; 2) interest surveys; and 3) classroom observations & informal/formal interactions.

6. Reference assigned class readings where you see that they relate.

† When you have received your grade for the placement, you are on your honor to destroy the recording – but only *after* your grade is posted. (Until then, your recording and/or notes should be available for review.)

Suggested paper length: 5-7 d.s. pages. See rubrics for this paper (appended at the end of this document). Though not required, it is recommended that you and your placement partner peer review each other's completed papers; indicate next to your own name, on the cover page, if it has been peer reviewed and by whom.

Calendar (adjusted from posted syllabus):

English from SPOV	
Interview #1 Transcription & Notes	By 4/13
Interview #2 Transcription & Notes	By 4/20
Paper with Interview Data Analysis & Conclusions	By 4/27

Submission Directions: You will post 4 documents in your individual **SPOV** folder: 1) your interview protocol (reflecting any modifications to it that occurred when conducting the interview); 2) your transcription of the interview (audio transcript and/or written notes and direct quotes); 3) your interviewees' interest survey responses; and 4) your finished paper derived from your primary research.

Two critical directions: ***1) Use pseudonyms for all names involved (the school/location, mentor teacher, participating students); 2) remove ALL identifying information on ALL posted documents!***

[FIELD-PLACEMENT] PAPER RUBRICS

Criteria	Unacceptable; important aspects are neglected or unfinished	Marginally acceptable; not all aspects of the task have been fulfilled	Adequate; meets all requirements	Exceptional; exceeds requirements
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**
Scholarly Aspects				
Provides a scholarly discussion				

of the two focal students, with an introduction that profiles the interviewees, indicates the writer's purposes, and provides a conclusion that reflects the whole				
Grounds identified patterns and generalizations in the data sources, making clear the evidence for their warrant				
References relevant texts, where related, with embedded citations				
Avoids overgeneralizing or otherwise arriving at conclusions that exceed the collected data, i.e., clearly distinguishes between what is known and not known				
Qualifies statements that are speculative or that apply to narrow circumstances				
Rhetorical Aspects				
Achieves general cohesion of ideas; uses logical transitions between and within paragraphs & sections				
Creates a logical text structure, signaled by appropriate headings and subheadings				
Avoids making assumptions about the prior knowledge of the reader				
Effectively incorporates charts or other graphics to complement ideas presented in text (graphics are optional)				
Technical Aspects				
Uses correct spelling and punctuation				
Uses academic grammar and usage conventions				
Style use (e.g., APA, Chicago Manual of Style, MLA) is consistent throughout				

2. TI assignment

Teaching Inquiries (TI's)
Over the course of the semester, each Teaching Associate will present one Teaching Inquiry (TI), a brief, thoughtful write-up that describes the context of the concern/problematic situation, frames it with specific questions, and illustrates it with one or more artifacts, such as an assignment, an example of student work, a rubric, a record of a conversation, etc. You will receive a Teaching Inquiry exemplar and the process will be modeled.

TI Preparation: On the Tuesday night prior to its presentation, post your completed TI text [to the course website]. *Bring 10 copies of your TI and related artifact(s)*.

***Teaching Inquiry** (25%)*[4]
You will develop, present, and follow-up on one teaching inquiry over the course of the semester. In **developing** your TI, you will write up:

- A description of the issue/problematic situation,
- The classroom and larger school context, and
- "framing questions" to spark a discussion.

You will also provide an artifact that supports the presentation and/or discussion of the inquiry issue. Depending upon the particular context, a [sic] example artifact *might* be:

- A recent assignment (e.g., writing, reading, research, media) you've developed.
- A sample of a student's work and your written response to it.
- A recreated portion of an in-class discussion or a discussion you had with one of your students/colleagues or a parent that was a key part of a learning experience.
- A copy of your school's vocabulary guidelines or conduct rules.

In **presenting** your teaching inquiry, you will follow the protocol of the TI facilitator (typically a US):[5]
1. TI presenter distributes and reads aloud "write up" & artifact(s) (5-7 minutes).
2. Respondents ask "clarifying questions;" TI presenter briefly responds to all clarifying questions (5-7 minutes).
3. Respondents engage in discussion about the artifact and framing questions. TI presenter listens silently on the sidelines, taking thorough notes (20-25 minutes).
4. TI presenter summarizes the discussion s/he heard, comments on key ideas, issues raised, and identifies actions s/he is most likely to pursue (3-5 minutes).
5. In **following-up** on your teaching inquiry, you will spend 7 minutes the week following your TI presentation to de-brief your peers on the actions you took (and the subsequent outcomes) in relation to the issue of your TI.
6. TI presenter will continue to document relevant ongoing events and outcomes as they occur, resulting in a final TI document that will be posted for summative assessment at semester's end.

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[4] Indicates percentage of course grade.
[5] Protocol is adapted from work by:
Dunne, F., Evans, P., & Thompson-Grove, G. (n.d.). Consultancy protocol: Framing consultancy dilemmas. School Reform Initiative. http://schoolreforminitiative.org/doc/consultancy.pdf

Teaching Inquiry: An Example & Demonstration
The TI Scenario is real; the presenter (Ms. X) is role-playing it

Inquiry Topic: Early resistant response (bordering on negativity) to perceived class work load

The context:

The context for this inquiry is the beginning of the school year. I teach in a public middle school made up of students who vary greatly in their SES, cultural heritage, linguistic heritage, skill levels, and interests, and my classes generally reflect that diversity. I co-teach 16 students in a 7th grade standard-collaborative language arts class; only three of these students are female. My students' reading abilities range from first grade to 6th grade, with one student reading at the 10th grader level. My students, overall, have a positive attitude towards being in class and working with me, though not necessarily to the work itself. The chemistry is positive in the class with only a few exceptions: there is no overt hostility (yet?) among the students or between them and me. My class is made up of young adolescents who share a common desire for social interactions, who enjoy a bit of drama, and want a teacher who can relate to them in some way.

One of the goals I have set for this school year is the creation of a community within my classroom that bridges my students' out-of-school lives with the academic culture of the school where they "live" 5 days a week. I am hoping to lessen the power differential between their school and home lives, building mutual respect in the classroom community for both. My belief is that if I create a safe space in the classroom where the students are encouraged to use the resources they rely on in their out-of-school lives, those resources will support the growth of the academic skills (like academic reading and writing) the culture of school values so much. I am also working from a personal belief that school frequently de-values students and what they have to offer, especially in classes where the students struggle to be successful.

One of the ways in which I plan to bring the students' home lives into the classroom as resources is through the use of video-taping. I am sending home video cameras with my students in order to capture moments from their out-of-school lives that will support our understanding of the elements of a story (e.g., characterization, setting, conflict, plot structure). These short video clips will be analyzed, written about, and shared in class.

The problem/issue for group consideration:

What I am bringing to the table today is my struggle to create a *safe space* for the students to share these video clips (and their home lives) while at the same time showing respect for my students' out-of-school ways of talking and interacting with each other. Frankly, the way they naturally interact with each other outside of class does not appear to me to be very supportive for *all* the students in the class. My class is not made up of a single group of friends. These students have been assigned to this class by a scheduler

based on their ability levels and the other classes they take. This means that there is significant variance in the ways in which they have been raised and the way they interact with each other. Plus, they have different personalities. I am concerned that I will not be able to both create a safe for my students to learn *and* show respect for their "ways of being/talking" outside of school.

Though I am not asking for help with a specific student, rather a more general problem, I would like to use some specific examples to illustrate the problem as it is manifesting itself in the classroom. My artifacts will be snippets of dialogue that have been concerning me—where I am feeling conflicted about how to respond in a school setting, but where I also want to work to break down the power differential that exists between school and home.

Artifacts:

1. Language

This happened in a transition period when students were getting out a paper and some were talking to each other. I don't know what Student2 said to prompt Student1's response.

Student1 (to Student2): "Shut UP!"

Me: "Student1, we do not use that phrase in this classroom ever. And that goes for everyone in here. 'Shut up' is something I never want to hear."

Student1 (to me): "I can't help it; I say it all the time at home."

Student3: "Yeah, nobody cares."

Student4 (to me): "Can we say, 'Shut the barn door' instead?"

Me: "No."

2. behaviors

This happened right after I asked the class to get out their silent reading books. Student1 made a tooth sucking noise and heaved her body dramatically forward slamming her notebook on the desk.

Ms. Y (my SpEd partner): (out loud, to whole class, but addressing me): "Ms. X, did you hear that? The [makes a teeth-sucking noise] has to stop. Everyone is doing it and it is just rude." *Though her words are harsh and firm, her tone does not convey anger.*

Me: "It is really important that we don't convey with our body language anything that might make students or even me uncomfortable. Sucking your teeth is something that you do that shows disrespect, and we are trying to create a classroom where we do not show disrespect for each other."

Student1: "How am I going to remember? I just do it all the time. I don't think I can stop."

3. **Content**

This occurred when I was explaining the whole concept of the video projects, how they would be taking the cameras home and capturing snippets of their family life. The students were very curious about how the whole thing would work, and they started asking questions like the following...Just as a side note, all the questions seemed to revolve around their mothers!

"What if I can't get any video without my mom cursing in it?" *Multiple students asked this question in a variety of ways.*

"What if I take a picture of my mom whooping my little brother?" *or* "What if I take a picture of me and my brother beatin' on each other"

"What if I take a picture of my mom sleeping?"

My response, generally, to all of these questions was along these lines: "You want to make sure that whatever you take a video of would be okay to share in school. If you can't get any video in your house without swearing in it, try at your church or in your neighborhood. You want to make sure that your mom, or whomever you videotape, wouldn't mind the clip being shared with the class."

Focusing questions:

1) What can I do that will show my students that I value their natural ways of interacting with each other (including their language) while at the same time create a safe space for the whole class to share their home lives?

2) If students' out-of-school Discourse is characterized by a whole lot of swearing and by content that is not typically acceptable in school, how can I bring that Discourse into the classroom?

3) How can I exhibit respect for the students whose language and actions are furthest away from what is acceptable in school culture equal to the students who more easily fit into the school culture?

Ongoing documentation (record whatever you do to work on this issue, and how its circumstances evolve; date each entry and include additional artifacts as relevant):

Date: … (etc.)

3. Case-study assignment

THE CASE STUDY:
You will systematically observe three students in your assigned teaching associate classroom. The goals of this case study are to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the students' learning and to develop recommendations for the teacher to consider as he/she continues to work with each student.
The steps of the case study involve:

1. **Identifying Students**: Identify three students who present different learning issues. Examples include an ESL student, a student identified with disabilities, a student identified as gifted, a student who struggles to read, a student with significant behavioral challenges, a quiet student you never quite reached. These students should be students who presented challenges to you as a student teacher.
** If you taught in a 4X4 schedule, you have two options:
a) With assistance from your Clinical Instructor, make connections with a teacher who now works with the three students you would like to study. See if that teacher is willing to have you in his/her classroom while you complete this project.
or
b) Ask your Clinical Instructor to identify three students who he/she feels might present particular challenges. Study those three students for your project.

2. **Observations: When you are in the classroom, you and your CI will explain that you are there to do general observations of the CI and instruction.**

You will also systematically observe these three children in your assigned teaching associate classroom. Conduct a minimum of five observations.

Minimum observations are:

Observation 1 & 2 all three students are observed.
Observations 3-5 are on the focal student and include at least 1 quantitative observation.

The five observations must be spread out over a minimum of three weeks. The goal of these observations is to note specific learning and emotional strengths and needs, academic and social behavior in class, etc. Describe ways that instruction addresses (or does not address) each student's learning needs. You will also collect all classroom artifacts (handouts, worksheets, etc.). Specifically, the observations will include the following information:

- Introductory statement about the focus child and the classroom context
- Dated journal entries including records of observations and key events

You will upload your observations to your Collab Drop Box. **(Use only pseudonyms for all student and teacher names).**

3. **Assessment/Student Work Samples:** Ask your Clinical Instructor to collect assessment data and student work samples that provides evidence of student learning. These data could include any assessment data (benchmarks, tests, daily assessments) available with permission of the teacher. After collecting student class work, analyze students' performance in relation to instructional objectives. **Do not approach the student for classwork**; all requests go through your Clinical Instructor. You are only there as an observer. Be sure to remove student/teacher/school names from work collected and replace with pseudonyms. Clearly, the amount of work collected will depend on the teacher and the course assignments, but do your best to collect as many artifacts as you can. At an absolute minimum, you must collect two artifacts per student. Make photocopies or take photos of the work, PDF or scan these artifacts and upload them to your **[Course Online Inbox].**

4. **Interview with Teacher**: Conduct one interview with the teacher of these three students. Use the protocol you developed in Research Exercise #3. Audio-tape this conversation. The purpose of this interview is to test or verify the themes emerging from data collection and analysis. This interview will assist with triangulation of the data. You will listen to your audio, and make detailed notes on the interview. For portions of the interview that you would like to quote directly in your paper, you should make word-for-word transcriptions, but you do not need to transcribe the entire interview. **Upload the interview transcript summary, with quoted portions completely transcribed, to your Collab Drop Box.**

5. **Research Recommendations:** Analyze your data, and identify one particular challenge facing each student. For each student, read and critically review existing educational research related to the challenge you've identified. Do at least one reading about best practices related to the challenge. Identify/summarize what best practice means for each challenge. Then, choose one student to explore in greater depth through the literature. Based on the research, develop detailed recommendations for the teacher to consider as he/she continues to work with each student. To be effective, the recommendations should be explicit, clearly communicated, and evidence-based (supported by observational assessment, work sample analysis, instructional assessments, and educational research). **The reference list must include, at a minimum, 10 sources. At least three of those sources must be peer-reviewed research articles.**

Writing Process Assignments:

These will be posted to a Google Doc that is shared with the instructor and base group for ease of feedback.

a) **Rough Draft of Focal Case**: You will write up your focal case and get feedback from your instructor(s). We will be assessing whether your case develops key issues; provides descriptive detail, documents, and quotations; and supports assertions with data.

b) **Rough Draft of Paper**: Submit a completed rough draft of your final paper.

FINAL PAPER: See instructions and outline at the end of the syllabus.

FINAL PRESENTATION:
This formal presentation is the culmination of your field project. Presentations will follow a "science fair" format. The class will be divided into presentation groups. You will visit a certain number of your colleague's presentation and take notes (to be submitted at the end of class).

Visual:
You should create a visual that displays the following information:

- Respectful image to represent Students
- Data Collected/Methods of Analysis
- Summary of inferences drawn
- Recommendations for instruction (specific and explicit, supported by evidence)
- Student Work Samples (names removed)

(A specific checklist and score sheet will be given later.)

You are welcome to bring a laptop with a brief Powerpoint; you may also bring a poster or a tri-fold board. Choose an approach that gives you talking points for your audience. Visuals will be collected at the end of presentations. **Powerpoint presentations must be uploaded on [the course website].**

Presentation:
Given the "Science Fair" format, you will give your presentation multiple times (2-3). You should prepare a brief 5-minute presentation, using your visual for talking points.

GUIDELINES FOR A SUCCESSFUL PROJECT

- Remember that this is a field project, not a research project.
- You are a guest in the classroom; do not disrupt the day-to-day flow of classroom activities. Be professional. Work closely with your Clinical Instructor.
- Be discreet, maintain absolute confidentiality; do not share the names of your students with anyone, except your Clinical Instructor. Do not violate the students' privacy for any reason.
- In classroom discussions and any assignments, use pseudonyms for the school, teacher, and students.
- Do not tell the students that you are studying them; maintain absolute confidentiality. You are there to observe your CI further.
- Clinical instructors collect all student work; you do not approach the student for any work samples.

Field Project Outline

The final paper should follow APA (6th edition) formatting guidelines. The paper (excluding cover page and appendices) should be approximately 12 type-written pages and should not exceed 20 pages. You will use pseudonyms to identify students, teachers, and schools. Throughout the paper, you should use properly formatted section headings (APA, p. 62).

Note that there are various ways in which you might organize three case studies. The following outline provides one possible outline of a logically sequenced paper. Also, please note that section page estimates are merely suggestions, not requirements.

I. Title Page and Abstract (see APA 6th edition).

II. General Introduction/Overview of the Project (approximately 1 page)

- Provide a rationale for this work. *Describe:*
  - *i. Your personal interests/background that led you to these cases.*
  - *ii. A justification for the significance of this inquiry.*
- Note your bias(es) and how you worked to raise your awareness of these biases throughout this process.
- State an overall question that encapsulates three cases, identifying a focus for each case study; OR state that you examined three different cases and pursued separate question(s)/focus for each. Include separate questions as numbered bullet points within your narrative.)
- Entice the reader to read more!

II. Methods for all Case Studies (approximately 1-2 pages)

- Explain your data collection methods. Note the period of **time** you spent in the field. (Note the average amount of time you spent on any given observation, as well as the span of time you engaged in fieldwork). Include the number of observations you completed for each student. If you conducted one formal interview of the classroom teacher, say so. If you conducted a number of informal interviews throughout your time in the field and then conducted a formal interview toward the end, say so. *Provide detailed, accurate information that would allow a peer to replicate your study if he/she wished to do so. Tables and charts are very helpful here!*
- Information about school & classroom context, background of classroom teacher. Provide us with a snapshot of the classroom (look, feel, etc.).

III. Context & Participant: (Focal) Case #1 (approximately ½ -1 page)

- Introductory statement about case #1. Provide as much information as possible about this participant (Age, grade level, gender, ethnicity, SES, learning ability/disability)
- General introductory information about this student's learning and emotional strengths and needs, as well as academic and social behavior in class.

III. Findings (Assertions/Themes) (approximately 2-4 pages)

- Introduce your assertions or themes. (Provide a "roadmap" for the reader. This might take the form of a figure, a metaphor, a theory, or a concept that links these assertions)
- Assertion #1 (or Theme #1)
  - Support your claim with three pieces of evidence (ideally from more than one data source, such as field notes, artifact(s), and/or interview(s))
- Assertion #2 (or Theme #2)

    - Support your claim with three pieces of evidence (ideally from more than one data source, such as field notes, artifact, and/or interview)
- Assertion #3 (or Theme #3) *[If applicable; the number or assertions will vary depending on amount/richness of data collected]*
    - Support your claim with three pieces of evidence (ideally from more than one data source, such as field notes, artifact, and/or interview)

IV. Discussion (approximately ½ page)

- Step back from your findings and discuss them from the viewpoint of a teacher-researcher. What implications do these findings have for your practice? Given these findings, what questions remain/emerge? What do you/we need to know more about?

V. Research-based Recommendations**, based on one particular challenge** facing this student *(for the teacher to consider as he/she continues to work with each student)* (approximately 2-4 pages)

- Identify/summarize what research-based best practice means for this challenge
- Based on the research, develop detailed recommendations for a teacher to consider if he/she were working with this student. To be effective, the recommendations should be explicit, clearly communicated, and evidence-based (supported by published research, as well as your study findings). <u>The reference list for this focal case must include, at a minimum, 8 sources.</u>

VI. Mini-Case Studies #2 & #3 (approximately 3-4 pages for both)

- *Note that the subsequent (two) mini-case studies will replicate the process described above (but in much less depth!). These two cases will be brief: provide an introductory statement and as much information as possible about this participant. Give us general introductory information (supported by data). Identify one main challenge (for each student) and briefly and generally discuss what best practice means for this identified challenge (for each student).*
- *<u>You do not need to explore the literature in-depth for these students or to provide detailed, research-based recommendations for your mini cases. You need only **one** citation per student.</u>*

VII. Limitations (approximately ½ page)

- Acknowledge the limitations of your study. No study is perfect. Though you have aimed for rigor and plausibility, discuss ways your study might have been strengthened. (Demonstrate your understanding that research varies in quality).

VIII. Final Conclusions & Implications (Brief) (approximately 1 page)

- Final thoughts pulling the entire paper together. And, overall, what are implications of this research for you as a teacher?

IV. References

- Follow APA Formatting

V. Appendices

- Any additional information you wish to include.

<u>General Guidelines</u>

- It is acceptable to write three separate case studies. These cases do not need to be woven into a single, coherent narrative (provided that you note in the introduction that you will explore three distinct cases for the purpose of broadening your understanding of three very different teaching challenges)
- If all three cases belong under one conceptual umbrella, you may choose to craft a single rationale and focus and then describe all three participants in the same "context & participants" section. Formulate a clear, comprehensible plan for communicating your findings and recommendations for each case. As noted above, the findings and recommendations section should be more developed for your focal case.

CATEGORY	4 (Exemplary)	3 (Good)	2 (In Need of improvement)	1 (Unacceptable)
Introduction *(Inquiry Overview)*	Convincing, clear rationale provided. Bias statement reveals understanding of "researcher as instrument." Clear, focused question(s) frame each case study	Acceptable justification for inquiry provided. Bias statement included. Acceptable question(s) frame each case study	Justification, bias statement, or question(s) needs further refinement. OR One of the requirements is missing	The introduction does not prepare the reader for the cases to follow. No rationale or justification for the inquiry provided.
Data Collection *(Depth of Field Work & Description of Methods)*	5+ observations for each case; 1 teacher interview completed; ample student artifacts collected. All data collection methods communicated clearly; readers could replicate the inquiry project using this info	Minimum data requirements met. The reader has a good sense of how the student collected data for this project, though he/she may struggle to replicate the study with the information provided	Fewer than 5 observations per case complete. The reader has only a vague sense of methods used to collect data and could not replicate this work with information provided	The methods section is missing and/or evidence of data collection is weak
Context & Participants *(Demographic details: Age, grade level, ethnicity, learning needs, SES indicators, where available; anecdotal information)*	Detailed info about the inquiry context & participants allows the reader to "picture" these students and classroom setting. Rich, thorough demographic and anecdotal information provided	The reader has a good sense of the classroom context as well as the participants. The writer has made an effort to provide demographic details (eg., ethnicity, gender, age, grade level, learning needs, SES indicators, etc.)	The writer includes minimal information about the context and participants. Two or more demographic details (eg., ethnicity, gender, age, grade, learning needs, SES indicators) are missing	Little or no information is provided about the context and/or participants

Rigor/Plausibility: Findings *(Evidence/Support)*	At least 3 relevant, telling, quality details and/or quotes support each finding. The writer provides evidence from more than 1 data source to support claims. The reader is convinced the findings are rigorous and plausible.	Supporting details and information are relevant (3 for each claim), but one key issue or portion of the assertion is unsupported. Findings are sometimes supported by more than one data source.	Supporting details and information are relevant, but several key issues or portions of the claim are unsupported. Findings derive from 1 data source. The reader questions the rigor/plausibility of findings.	Supporting details and information are typically unclear or not related to the topic. The lack of convincing evidence suggests insufficient data collection efforts.
Recommendations/ Knowledge of Evidence-Based **Best Practices**	A clear summary of relevant, explicit best practice recommendations addresses one relevant, teaching challenge raised by each case study. Writer explores in impressive depth literature for focal case. S/he has clearly read and digested much published research, including 3 peer reviewed studies.	The writer makes a good effort to identify & summarize what evidence-based best practices means for each case study. S/he attempts to explore one challenge (for the focal case) in greater depth through the literature. Bibliography includes 10 sources (3 of which are peer reviewed studies).	The writer identifies and summarizes best practices for at least one of the case studies; and/or bibliography does not include 3 peer reviewed sources; and/or the writer has read and applied some research though bibliography includes fewer than 10 relevant sources.	The writer has not read sufficient best practice literature to make recommendations based on a challenge raised by each case study; and/or bibliography includes 5 or fewer relevant, appropriate sources.
Discussion & Limitations	The writer reflects thoughtfully on findings to discuss the implications for his/her practice. The writer presents ideas or questions for further inquiry. Finally, the writer identifies specific limitations of this inquiry.	The writer makes an effort to reflect on findings and to suggest "translations" of these findings into practice. S/he acknowledges at least one limitation of this inquiry.	The writer could spend more time reflecting on the "so what" of this inquiry work and/or s/he does not acknowledge any specific limits of this inquiry.	The discussion and/or limitations section reveals little or no reflection/effort

Grammar, Punctuation, Spelling, & APA formatting *(According to the 5th or 6th edition of the APA manual)*	Writing is carefully revised for correctness. The reader is not distracted by grammar, punctuation, spelling, or formatting errors. All sources correctly cited according to APA manual.	Writer makes 2-3 errors in grammar, spelling, or formatting that occasionally distract the reader from the content, though the writing is relatively free of sentence level or formatting errors.	Writer makes 4-5 errors in grammar, spelling, or formatting that distract the reader from the content. The writing is sometimes wordy or unclear. Further revision is required to polish this paper on the sentence level.	The paper has not been revised for conventional grammar, punctuation, spelling, and/or APA formatting. Many errors distract the reader from the content. Many sentences are awkward, wordy, or unclear.

CHAPTER 3

Study 2: *"This Group of Difficult Kids": The Discourse Pre-Service English Teachers Use to Label Students*

Abstract

This study analyzes pre-service teachers' (PSTs) Discourse to understand how PSTs use labeling categories in revealing their own stance toward, and construction of identities for, challenging students. The project considers: (1) How does PSTs' Discourse build identities for students? (2) How does such Discourse build multiple identities for students? Findings reveal that PSTs are taking up a Discourse prevalent in today's educational environment in which students, particularly ethnically and linguistically diverse students, are talked about in terms of inadequacy. PSTs typically describe students in terms of a single label, rather than as having multiple identities. Implications include that PSTs need meaningful experiences allowing them to understand diverse learners and their own Discourse about students.

Introduction

In today's educational environment, an "achievement gap Discourse" (Carey, 2013) about students who are not achieving is becoming increasingly normalized. These forms of language are used to talk about schools and students who are not academically proficient, according to various standardized assessments. Although many of the students who are not excelling on these assessments are also ethnic-minority students, from poor families, or students whose first languages are not English, this achievement gap Discourse employs terms that are not explicitly about race, class, or linguistic background—such as "at risk" (Pica-Smith & Veloria, 2012) or "urban" (Watson, 2011)—terms that are used a proxies for students who are not from White, middle-class, monolingual backgrounds. Although well-meaning educators and policymakers might be trying to raise awareness and achievement of students in using such terms, these well-meaning individuals—frequently White, middle-class, native English-speakers themselves—might also be developing a Discourse in which students from diverse backgrounds are assigned labels steeped in deficit-thinking.

This study is based in the idea that such labels can have real, detrimental consequences for students—particularly adolescents—as they develop their identities. Gee (2011a) believed that Discourse—with a capital "D"—is "a characteristic way of saying, doing, and being" (p. 30), through which an individual not only speaks a language but also assumes all the practices required to project a certain identity, or multiple situated identities. This identity assertion does *not* involve an individual Discoursing[6] in isolation but instead within social contexts, where others, too, participate in co-creating

[6] I use Discourse as both a noun and verb, in line with Bloome et al.'s (2008) argument that Discourse includes both literacy events and actions themselves.

someone's identity, though not all individuals have access to the same types of identities. Gee (2011a) explains that such differential access is "a root source" of societal inequality (p. 30). In order for an individual to adopt an identity, others must recognize that individual's Discourse as asserting that identity. While individuals construct their own identities, they also build identities for others.

This study attempts to understand better how pre-service teachers (PSTs), who are preparing to become English teachers, Discourse their students' identities into being. While in the process of developing teacher identities themselves (McLean, 1999), these PSTs describe challenging students in certain ways, often presenting each student as "a kind of person" (Gee, 2011a, p. 30). Analysis of these PSTs' Discourse offers an opportunity for understanding whether or not novice teachers take up achievement gap Discourse in today's schools and how they ascribe identities to students. This paper will first review relevant literature before explaining the methods and findings of this study.

Labeling Students

In special education. A growing line of research, originating in the field of special education, indicates teachers treat students differently because of labels ascribed both by others and the teachers themselves. In early work, Lemert (1951) considered how sociologists diagnosed emotional disturbances. He called for an end to classifying individuals into categories as either normal or pathological and instead began a movement urging sociologists to look at individuals as whole people in considering differences or disabilities (see Jones, 2009). Researchers within special education extended this line of study. Bianco (2005), for example, gave teachers identical descriptions of a student with gifted characteristics, except different versions also labeled

the student as having a learning disability, an emotional and behavioral disorder, or no disability. Teachers were much less willing to refer the student for gifted services when told the student had a special-education label.

Some limited work has examined, too, effects on PSTs of hearing labels for students. Foster, Algozzine, and Ysseldyke (1980) found that both PSTs and practicing teachers were biased in evaluating a video of a student after hearing the student had emotional disturbance but that PSTs rated the student less negatively than practicing teachers, possibly suggesting PSTs enter teaching with biases that can be further exaggerated while teaching. Allday, Duhon, Blackburn-Ellis, and Van Dycke (2011) also found significant differences for how labeling a student with exceptionalities affected PSTs' evaluations of him. Four groups of PSTs rated how often a student was off-task in the same video after each being told a different label for the student. PSTs told he had oppositional defiant disorder said he was off-task most frequently; next were those told he had ADHD, then no exceptionality, and finally those told he was gifted. The researchers aptly argued studying PSTs is important to understand better new teachers' level of preparation. They called for additional research on how labels affect judgments when PSTs observe live students, as the current study does.

Beyond special education. From an anthropological perspective, McDermott and Varenne (1995) contended that disabilities themselves are "cultural fabrication" (p. 327) and that labeling has been applied to the detriment of students—specifically minority children—who are underachieving in U.S. schools:

> American education has numerous made-to-order general categories for describing children in trouble, for example: deprived, different, disadvantaged, at-

> risk, disabled … There seems to be no end to the ways that a child can be called culturally different. (p. 331)

This early work critiques what Carey (2013) came to call the "achievement gap Discourse," mentioned above, disproportionately correlating what Carey called a "below basic" label with minority status, including Black, Latina/o, ELL, and immigrant students (p. 22; see also McDermott, Raley, & Seyer-Ochi, 2009).

Empirical work has begun considering how such Discourse affects PSTs. Pica-Smith and Veloria (2012) examined how university students preparing to be teachers, counselors, and human service providers specifically developed class-, gender-, and race-based meanings for the term "at-risk," employing it to describe mostly minority boys from poor and urban homes. None of the 67 students defined the phrase as possibly referring to White, middle-class youth, or rural or suburban youth. Watson (2011) contended that a "tension between wanting to name race and ignore it" (p. 24) played a role in how novice teachers used the term "urban," finding that 16 beginning teachers in urban schools described students as being different degrees of "urban." PSTs viewed less urban students more positively and vice-versa, implicitly linking perceptions of "urban" to race and class. Though little is known specifically about how PSTs use the terms, similar critiques have been offered of literacy-related labels, such as "struggling reader" (Alvarez, Armstrong, Elish-Piper, Matthews, & Risko, 2009), and of labels related to family immigration or language status, such as "Generation 1.5" (Benesch, 2008).

Multiple Identities

In addition to disproportionately linking minority students to academic troubles, labels might also limit teachers' understandings of students by preventing them from

seeing the multi-faceted dimensions of students' personhood (Bloome et al., 2005). Identity formation has been conceptualized in psychology as a lifelong process, with pivotal changes occurring during adolescence (Erikson, 1968). Through this process, individuals integrate multiple, perhaps conflicting identities, all within particular social contexts, sometimes necessitating acceptance or rejection of labels assigned by others (Josselson & Harway, 2012).

Equating an individual with any one label risks reducing a person with multiple identities to a stereotype. Willis and Merchant (2001) preface a volume of qualitative researchers writing about their own multiple identities: "We do not see ourselves solely within categories of race, gender, class, language, and religion because these categories occur simultaneously within our lives, nudging and intersecting, shaping and reshaping our realities" (p. xiv). As adults and experienced professionals, these researchers have come to see themselves as comprised of complex, competing identities. The adolescents taught by PSTs in this study, however, are at pivotal identity-development points, at which they are just beginning to decide who they will become and which identities they will accept or reject. Equating an adolescent, in particular, with one label risks limiting his/her identity (Yi, 2013). Berard (2005) urged researchers to approach identity-development study by considering identity categories as they emerge from observational data. While multiple identities include what he called "politically salient" categories—class, race, and gender—they are not limited to these categories alone. Instead, he argued researchers must ask not about pre-determined categories, but about "what matters" to participants (p. 74).

Stance-Revealing Discourse

Through Discourse, individuals reveal stance, positions they take toward various subjects and individuals. In this case, I viewed study of PSTs' labeling of students as revealing PSTs' stances toward students and teaching. Applied linguistics research indicates that writers and speakers address academic topics using "evaluative language," which has been conceptualized as a speaker's "viewpoint on, or feelings about the entities or propositions that he or she is talking about" (Mauranen & Bondi, 2003, p. 269). In this sense, evaluative language can reveal a speaker's or writer's "stance" (Hyland, 2005) toward a topic or individual.

A large body of research has used grammatical analysis to understand stance (Charles, 2003; Hyland, 1996). Biber (2006), for example, used a grammatical framework in analyzing a corpus of written and oral language for stances revealed in four university registers (classroom teaching, class management talk, textbooks, and written course management language such as syllabi). He found that by examining various lexico-grammatical features, he could better understand stances within the registers. This project views PSTs' labeling of students as one element of their Discourse revealing PSTs' stance toward students. I employ a similar methodology to Biber (2006) in analyzing lexico-grammatical elements to understand how PSTs Discourse about students.

Theoretical Frame

This project grows out of the idea that individuals use language to create identities, drawing from Gee's (2011b) "identities building tool" (p. 106), through which he argues discourse analysis can reveal how individuals construct identities for

themselves and others. Gee (2011b) provides an example that within schools, teachers often describe students as being "high" or "low." He explains:

> Within this Discourse … the teacher takes on an identity as a sorter and the students take on—and sometimes are talked about by teachers in terms of—an identity as things to be sorted, on the basis of their fixed internal traits (e.g., being "smart" or "quick"). p. 110

Gee (2011b) advises researchers to ask "how the speaker is positioning others, what identities the speaker is 'inviting' them to 'take up'" (p. 110). In analyzing PSTs' Discourse about students, this project examines specifically how language might be used to label and thereby construct identities for students.

Additionally, Lawrence-Lightfoot and colleagues developed "portraiture" as a method for understanding how individuals become "actors" in various social and institutional roles. Lawrence-Lightfoot and David (1997) described the role of the researcher as portraitist, "interested not only in producing complex, subtle description in context but also in searching for the central story, developing a convincing and authentic narrative" (p. 12) This study draws from Lawrence-Lightfoot's ideas, not in using portraiture methodology but in considering how PSTs' Discourse about students might create portraits. In this sense, Lawrence-Lightfoot's portraiture conception illuminates how PSTs perceive students. As in portraiture, it is believed that examining PSTs' descriptions can explain the decision-making processes PSTs practice—either consciously or unconsciously—in describing students. Lawrence-Lightfoot and David (1997) contend, "In portraiture, the voice of the researcher is everywhere" (p. 85). In this study, too, the PSTs' voice and decisions they make about their students are evident.

Research Questions

Questions include: (1) How does PSTs' Discourse build identities for students? (2) How does such Discourse build multiple identities for students?

Methods

Setting and data. This project examines a cohort of secondary English-education PSTs in a teacher-education program at a large public university in a South-Atlantic state. Data collection spanned four semesters of coursework and related field placements. In collecting data, I took detailed fieldnotes on course discussions and practice-teaching lessons; audio-taped course discussions; collected documents, including all assignments and lesson plans; and periodically asked TAs questions in interviews and questionnaires.

During their preparation, PSTs completed three teacher-inquiry projects within field-placement classrooms: a student-point-of-view (SPOV) paper, a teaching-inquiry (TI) discussion and paper, and a case-study paper and presentation. Two of these assignments—the SPOV and case-study papers—stipulated PSTs should focus inquiry on students, particularly on students they found challenging to teach. In TIs, PSTs often focused on challenging students, although it was not a requirement. Within papers and sometimes corresponding oral presentations, PSTs included sections describing students (see Table 1 for assignment requirements). These descriptions were primary data sources, meaning I began analysis examining these projects. PSTs' focus specifically on challenging students allowed me to see which students PSTs included in Discourse about challenging students and how PSTs constructed their identities. Other data sources (fieldnotes, other documents, interviews, and questionnaires) were reviewed to confirm or disconfirm findings from this primary analysis.

Participants. All 15 cohort members who completed inquiry assignments were included (see Table 2 for demographics). PSTs completed field-placements in middle- and high-school English classrooms—generally traditional public schools but sometimes public charter schools—and were enrolled either in a five-year BA/MT program or a two-year postgraduate PG/MT program. Not surprisingly, given U.S. teacher-education programs' demographics (Sleeter & Milner, 2011), this cohort is made up of all female and mostly White PSTs, though there was some linguistic diversity among cohort members. Results, however, should be viewed in light of these demographics, considering that results might be different for a cohort more diverse by gender and race.

Researcher Roles. In the spirit of teacher inquiry, I served in various practitioner roles during PSTs' training, including: teaching assistant; small-group facilitator; classroom observer; lesson-plan reviewer; and for Amy, Karen, Lynn, and Robin[7], supervisor during full-time student-teaching. I became what Erickson (2006) called an "observer participant," rather than the more detached "participant observer." As an observer participant, I actively helped prepare the cohort, discussing questions about classroom practices and challenges, and offering feedback on PSTs' work. Given this active role and my own teacher-inquiry paradigm, I expect that I influenced PSTs' work and Discourse. I hope that impact might have helped PSTs become more understanding of students' multiple identities. My aim certainly is not to lessen that impact but to improve it in my own and other teacher educators' work.

Analysis

Initial analysis. I began preliminary analysis throughout data collection, testing early questions while periodically writing conceptual memos and reviewing them with

[7] Pseudonyms are used throughout for PSTs and students.

two fellow researchers serving as "critical friends" (Heath & Street, 2008). I eventually practiced "data reduction" (Miles & Huberman, 1994), focusing on written data from inquiry projects where PSTs described students. This coding required little inference, as papers' headings generally marked student-description sections. A decision I did make, given PSTs sometimes mentioned non-focal students in terms of interactions with focal students, was to include in analysis descriptions of only students to whom PSTs assigned pseudonyms. I based this decision on the idea that named students would include those PSTs most wished to describe. Initially, I analyzed this data to examine students' described demographics, regarding ethnicity, gender, grade and class-tracking levels, and any identification of linguistic diversity, special-education identification, or socioeconomic status. I noted this information for each student but only included descriptions PSTs provided, even if I had outside knowledge of students' demographics. To ensure I did not omit information, I not only re-read PSTs' papers but also used computer searches to find keywords, such as "low/middle/upper-class," "poor," or "wealthy."

Coding. I began coding student descriptions using NVivo software, following an "in Vivo" process (Strauss, 1987) and coding data into categories based on participants' Discourse. My first category became "Student X is a …" This category originally included whole sentences where PSTs described students using a linking verb and an article, often preceding a label (e.g., "an English language learner" or "a struggling reader"). In continuing to code, I discovered that while these labels marked noun-descriptors of students, similar constructions also appeared using adjectives (e.g., "Student X is hard-working," as similar to "Student X is a hard-working student.") or

verbs (e.g., "Student X disrupts the classroom," as similar to "Student X is a disruptive student."). Regarding nouns, too, I discovered that appositives and constructions using "as" (e.g., "He identifies as a 'funny guy.'") also contained labels.

Informed by Biber's (2006) grammatical framework in which nouns, adjectives, and verbs demonstrate stance, I began coding nouns, adjectives, and verbs as grammatical markers PSTs applied to students. I marked all nouns, adjectives or participles used as adjectives, and verbs or participles used as verbs and describing students. Initially, I attempted also to mark prepositional phrases (e.g., "He is on the quieter side.") but found these instances so rare that coding them did not yield sufficient data for analysis. I did however discover that PSTs included descriptive labels of students within possessive phrases, (e.g., "his reluctance to participate"), so I conducted one additional round of coding, systematically marking all such objects of a student possessive (e.g., "his … ," "her … ," "Student Name's …," or "Student has …") and using computer search functions to prevent accidentally omitting instances. I found subordinating conjunctions altered coded words' meanings (e.g., "*if* she missed" providing a less definite description of a student's behavior than "she missed"), so I included along with coded words both conjunctions (e.g., "if") and negatives (e,g, "not," "rarely," or "never").

Coding descriptions of all 129 students presented in PST's documents in this manner yielded a table of 267 nouns; 2,127 verbs; 624 adjectives; and 1,736 possessives. Based on this initial coding, I set out to place each student's results within categories of PSTs' labels[8]. In determining these categories, I followed Berard's (2005) guidelines to

[8] Considering race and gender to be identities all individuals have—though not always described by PSTs (see Findings)—I included these in demographic analysis, but not as categories. Because I was concerned

approach data, not with *ad hoc* "politically salient" categories but instead by asking "what matters." I considered how PSTs used "Student X is a …" statements, as well as other coded parts of speech, to label students. I grouped students with similar labels into categories, where possible using in vivo labels for categories directly from PSTs' language. Categorization was exhaustive in that I attempted to group all students but not mutually exclusive in that I placed students in as many categories as appropriate. If necessary to make determinations about categories, I consulted PSTs' full-paper descriptions, in addition to coded segments.

I then examined places where a student's descriptions co-occurred in multiple categories, for instance where a student was designated as both "in special education" and "quiet." I searched for patterns explaining how categories overlapped, and I ran frequency counts to find the most frequently occurring words within each category. In considering frequency results, it should be noted that words such as "able" include both positive and negative forms of the word (i.e., "able" and "not able").

Additionally, I coded all descriptors of students, even if reported by PST as said by someone else, such as a mentor[9]. Though these descriptors might not be PSTs' own words, I included them—in quotation marks—in findings because I believe they might speak to information PSTs received, repeated, and possibly internalized about students.

Findings

Question 1: How PSTs' Discourse Builds Students' Identities

Demographic descriptions. Table 3 includes information about demographic descriptions PSTs provided of the 129 students. I analyzed ethnicity across inquiry

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about the extent to which PSTs used institutionally assigned labels—e.g., language learner or student in special education—as identities for students, I included these as categories when appropriate (see Table 3).

[9] In field placements, PSTs worked with the classroom's full-time teacher.

projects (see Table 4) because I knew from observations that assignments' different contexts might have affected how PSTs reported ethnicity. For case-study projects, PSTs were explicitly instructed to identify ethnicity whenever they knew it, although the instructor cautioned them against making assumptions. For SPOVs, PSTs were told to create student profiles providing the most essential data, but ethnicity was not specifically mentioned. In TIs, PSTs were given the fewest instructions regarding student descriptions because projects were not required to focus on students. Table 4 indicates that in TIs, where instructions were fewest, PSTs reported the lowest percentage of students' ethnicity and described no students as White. In SPOV and case-study projects, however, receiving greater instructions, PSTs described more students as White. For case-study projects, explicitly requiring ethnic description when known, the greatest percentage of students were described as White and the fewest were unidentified. Though it cannot be known certainly, these findings might indicate (1) a reluctance to discuss race and (2) that when not required to mention ethnicity, PSTs were including it disproportionately for minorities. Such findings align with theory that Whiteness can be "invisible" (Dyer, 2003) and that PSTs might not consider ethnicity of White and minority students the same way.

Further, Table 3 indicates that a slight majority of focal students were male. Students' average grade level was essentially in the middle of PSTs' span of placements, grades 6-12. Students were enrolled in many different class tracks, including honors/advanced, standard, inclusion (special education), ESL, and mixed-ability classes, among others. Similar percentages were identified as speaking English as a second language (L2) (15.5%) or as having a disability or IEP (16.3%). In these categories, I

included students not necessarily given formal institutionalized designations. The L2 category thus includes students described as having different first languages (L1s) but not necessarily receiving ELL services. And the disability category includes students described as having physical, emotional, or learning disabilities, or IEPs. SES was largely unreported by PSTs.

Labeling Categories. Grouping student codes resulted in 16 label categories, which might be conceptualized as identities PSTs built for students (Gee, 2011b). Table 5 lists these categories from most to least prevalent and includes for each, representative examples from the "Student X is a …" coding, or the noun-descriptors. Additionally, Table 6 shows the five most frequent verbs, adjectives, and possessives for each category. As noted above, race and gender were not included as categories but were instead analyzed in demographics. Also of interest is how closely categories align with language from the final case-study assignments:

> Identify three students who present different learning issues. Examples include an ESL student, a student identified with disabilities, a student identified as gifted, a student who struggles to read, a student with significant behavioral challenges, a quiet student you never quite reached.

It should be noted that categories were present across PSTs' projects, including in those PSTs created prior to receiving these instructions for case studies. In this sense, similarity between categories and assignment language might suggest the type of Discourse present in the environments where PSTs were studying and practicing teaching. This Discourse will be considered further in the discussion section. Two additional categories are included: one group of students for which there was insufficient information to classify

them, although PSTs gave them pseudonyms, and another very small group that did not fit into categories. Because there are so many categories, I will discuss the three most prevalent individually before providing a more general overview of remaining categories.

Behavior problems. The most prevalent category included students labeled as having behavior problems. Frequently occurring words referred to students' "talking," being "disruptive," and having issues with "work." Interestingly—as the first "Student X is a …" statement indicates—students with behavior problems were most often (78.3%) presented in pairs or groups. Linda described, for example in her TI, three boys and a girl who she said were not individually problematic. In this example and elsewhere, coded noun-identifiers are underlined, verbs are italicized, adjectives are boldfaced, and possessives are highlighted in gray:

> The problem in this class is heavily behavioral. There are four students who are friends with each other and are very **distracting** wherever I put them. Individually, they are not a problem. But their behavioral issues all happen at once, so I'm usually in a constant panic/tense state of mind because as I am trying to settle things with one student, the other three are being **disruptive** behind my back. When these four students all *act* at the same time, they *halt* instruction time.

Linda described the students as acting in tandem to cause behavior problems. In her second sentence, she described them at once as friends and as distracting, though it is unclear if she meant to each other or to others. She included a negative noun-identifier that they were not a problem individually, suggesting that as a group they were a problem. She attributed to them behavioral issues, described them as disruptive, and indicated that when they acted together, they halted instruction.

Interestingly, she twice used these descriptions in relation to her own actions and emotions, in that students were distracting regardless of the seats she gave them and that she was in "a constant panic" or "tense state" managing them. Such descriptions are typical in that Linda portrayed students as creating disruptions together, regardless of her interventions. Interestingly, Linda also appeared to see the students as a group. Though she continued naming and describing students individually, the challenges she presented were collective. Her perception of the students as a group working together to divide her attention and cause problems "behind her back" call into question how she related to them as individuals or to what extent she perceived herself as outnumbered in the classroom by "disruptive" students, "acting" together as an enemy group to "halt" instruction rather than acting with her to move learning forward (see Article 3 for more on such relationships).

Disabilities. After behavior problems, most prevalent categories were students with disabilities or students learning English as a second language, the two categories with institutional designations. Regarding students with disabilities, frequently occurring words included description of how students "read," whether they were "engaged," and again their "work." Emphasis on students' reading might indicate students had literacy-related IEPs, but to what extent was unclear from data. PSTs varied on whether they identified students primarily according to disabilities (23.8%), as in the noun-descriptors provided in Table 5, or if they included such descriptions more secondarily (e.g., Marilyn: "[She][10] has an IEP that I did not see."). Such secondary descriptions sometimes indicated merely that students had—or did not have—official IEPs or that students were

[10] Brackets indicate name replaced.

being tested for disabilities (42.9%), or other times provided more details about how disabilities affected students (33.3%).

L2 learners. Regarding L2 learners, frequently occurring words included that L2 learners "started" working on skills or making progress, that they were "able" or not able to do various tasks[11], and that their "status" as immigrants was noteworthy by the PST. Discussion of students' status comes largely from Cynthia, who student-taught in an ESL English classroom. Cynthia wrote in her TI, "These students *go through* many hardships and harsh realities because of their status as immigrants." She focused inquiry questions on helping students prepare for college even if they thought they could not attend because of costs, academic challenges, or not having documents. PSTs also varied in detail provided about L2 learners. Cynthia typically gave details about students' home countries, native languages, and experiences in U.S. schools, including the Table 5 descriptor about the student from Nepal. Other PSTs provided less detail, such as Dawn's description, also in the table.

Other categories. Because there are so many categories, it is difficult to explore them all in detail. This section instead provides an overview of remaining categories. Students with academic problems were described as facing challenges with either readiness or motivation. In some ways, these two categories appeared opposite in that students with readiness issues were described as hard-working but not having necessary skills or abilities, while those with motivation issues were described as having skills and abilities but as disinterested in applying them. Such disparities are indicated, too, in frequency counts. Students with readiness issues were described as struggling, while

[11] Given the software limitations, it was not possible to distinguish whether results for word frequencies were associated with negatives, such as "not" or "never."

those with motivation issues were described in terms of completeness, or incompleteness, of work. Similarly, contrasts also appeared between students described as quiet, versus those described as loud or as class clowns. Interestingly words such as "polite" appeared in quiet students' descriptions, while words such as "defiant" appeared in loud students' descriptions.

That PSTs described students as athletes might suggest PSTs were learning more about students' lives outside of class, yet some descriptions suggest PSTs were regarding students stereotypically as athletes, (e.g., Amy described a student as a "football player" and as "a ringleader in the bullying."). Additionally, frequency counts for athletes revealed descriptions of "distracted" and "off-task," perhaps indicating PSTs did not view athletes as excellent students. Such descriptions can be complex, given that fieldnotes indicate many PSTs described themselves as taking part in athletics, specifically soccer, rowing, or running. PSTs' regard of athletes might be shaped by cultural, racial, and gendered stereotypes of football and basketball as sports dominated nationally by Black male athletes (James, 2012).

PSTs occasionally described students as gifted and often were unsure how to challenge these students to prevent boredom. Frequency counts include words such as "disengaged" or "disinterested." As a category, minority students referred not to students from ethnic minorities but to students described as minorities in their classrooms (e.g., Dawn's description of a student as the only Hispanic student in the class). PSTs also described students as struggling socially. These students generally fared well academically and did not disrupt behaviorally but instead had trouble making friends or

working in groups. Their descriptions in frequency counts include "bullied," "different," or "stressed."

Those described as excellent students generally appeared among challenging students simply because PSTs wanted to know them better. Leaders were both leaders in a positive sense but also in the more negative sense of "ringleaders," creating problems or leading groups of students with behavior problems. The remaining three categories—overweight students, twins, and artists—occurred rarely but were nonetheless present. Additional research would be needed to draw conclusions about these categories, but some interesting word frequencies include that overweight students were described as having "anxiety." Twins, possibly due to supports they can provide each other in classrooms, were described as "social," and descriptions of creative students included mentioning their needing "freedom" within classrooms.

Question 2: How PSTs' Discourse Builds Students' Multiple Identities

My second question asked how PSTs used Discourse to build multiple identities for students. For this question, I focused on how categories from Question 1 overlapped—or occurred together for the same student—in student descriptions. In conducting Question 2 analysis, I was surprised not by how often PSTs described students in multiple ways but by how often they did not. Of the 114 focal students placed in categories (i.e., excluding those 15 not placed because of insufficient information or a category could not be determined), only 33, or 28.9%, were in more than one category. Of these 33, 25 were in two categories and eight were in three categories. No students were in more than three. Across PSTs' three projects, there appeared to be no discernible pattern in how frequently PSTs described students in multiple categories, although this

did happen most frequently in case studies, the last project completed (SPOV 21.4%; TI 20%; case study 32.6%).

Table 7 lists PSTs in descending order by percentage of students described in multiple categories, with each letter representing a focal student. Though PSTs varied in how frequently they portrayed students in multiple categories, variance had no discernible pattern by school setting or PST characteristics, nor did there appear to be any pattern in whether certain categories might more typically overlap with others. Cecilia, who most often described students in multiple ways, for instance, was somewhat unique in that she completed student-teaching at a charter school and conducted her case study at a different school, but Marilyn also did so, and she rarely described students in multiple ways.

Cases

To illuminate how PSTs did or did not build multiple identities of students through Discourse, I will present two cases. To select cases showing greatest variance, I examined descriptions from PSTs describing students in multiple categories the most—Cecilia—and the least—Grace or Shawn. I picked descriptions of the most central student from case-study projects so that cases would be most comparable, from the same projects, completed when PSTs were most experienced, and from students who were most fully explained. Between Grace and Shawn, I picked Grace because, like Cecilia, she completed student-teaching at a charter school for students from low-income families. Different qualitative contexts, however, are never the same. Grace conducted her case study where she student-taught, while Cecilia was re-assigned to a school closer to the university for her case study.

Case 1: Grace's student. Grace's Discourse of her student Osvaldo employed only the label category of student with disabilities. Grace described him as a sixth-grade, Hispanic male with Down's syndrome in a general-education class, receiving inclusion services. In introducing Osvaldo, Grace wrote that she focused on him and another student to "target specific student populations as [Osvaldo] has a learning disability and [the other student] has emotional difficulties." She described Osvaldo as "a student diagnosed with Down syndrome (DS)," introducing him with a noun-descriptor, related to his disability. From these introductions, it appeared Grace might not have distinguished between Down syndrome—a chromosomal disorder—and learning disabilities, such as dyslexia or aphasia (see Turnbull, Turnbull, Wehmeyer, & Shogren, 2012). Interpretations of Grace's targeting specific populations through studying Osvaldo might offer encouragement that Grace wanted to improve instruction of students with disabilities. It might also, however, warn that Grace expected Osvaldo and others with disabilities to be alike.

Grace explained that teaching Osvaldo was her first time interacting with a student with Down syndrome. Throughout her description, she described him in relation to his disability:

> All of the sixth graders are aware that he has Down syndrome as his mother created a short video explaining his learning disability. His peers, especially the female students, are always eager to escort him to his classes or help him on his worksheets.

The way Grace described Osvaldo in relation to his peers is notable. Though she wrote he interacts well with peers, implications include that he is developmentally unequal with

them. This is visible in her description that (a) his mother created a video about his disability and that (b) students served as his helpers. Regarding the former, it is interesting that Grace included a reference to Osvaldo's mother, given that for sixth-graders who are not disabled, a mother coming in to speak to peers would be rare.

Regarding the latter—Grace's description of Osvaldo's peer helpers—Grace twice talked about peers assisting him. In the previous example and later she told that a high school "PAL" mentor helped him during lunch. Notably, Grace mentioned specifically that especially female students enjoyed helping Osvaldo. This gendered reference is marked in that it would certainly be viewed differently for a male sixth grader without Down syndrome. Descriptions of Osvaldo as having his mother play a central role with his peers and as receiving help from female students portray Osvaldo as the object of assistance from women and girls. Grace did not, however, question whether his relationships with other boys needed developing. These descriptions are consistent with research that girls more often than boys have positive attitudes toward peers with Down syndrome (Gannon & McGilloway, 2009). Such images, coupled with her opening noun-descriptors of Osvaldo, suggest Grace viewed Osvaldo only in light of his Down syndrome.

Concerning Osvaldo's classwork, it is not surprising that Grace found it difficult to determine how to help him. Analysis of possessive language throughout indicated Osvaldo frequently had worksheets. Peers helped him with these worksheets above, and Grace later wrote, "During these classes he has a workbook full of worksheets that he *completes* at his own pace." Though Grace also included descriptions of special-education teachers helping Osvaldo on the worksheets, she did not mention the larger

debate about how inclusion should be structured and whether students with special needs have been "warehoused" with worksheets as distractions, rather than taught, in U.S. schools.

Case 2: Cecilia's student. Cecilia described Nidia as:

> an 11 year old female student in the first block of the standard collaborative[12] sixth grade class. Her ethnicity is Hispanic, and her first/native language is Spanish. Her parents are both Spanish-speaking with limited English proficiency. Her socio-economic status is unknown.

In this opening description, Cecilia largely wrote of Nidia's linguistic diversity. She first described her age, gender, and grade level, similar to Grace's opening description of Osvaldo. Cecilia continued to explain that Nidia's L1 is Spanish and that her parents speak English with limited proficiency. Her mentioning Nidia's parents is marked, as Grace's mentioning Osvaldo's mother is. While Grace described Osvaldo's mother as explaining his disability to peers, Cecilia included Nidia's parents, referencing language proficiency. She continued, explaining Nidia's parents became more invested after bilingual materials were provided, but it is unclear what this involvement consisted of. Given that Cecilia attributed this information to the classroom teacher, it is possible Cecilia did not know.

From this opening alone, Cecilia described Nidia similarly to Grace's initial description of Osvaldo. She provided Nidia's demographic information and depicted Nidia as a language learner, just as Grace gave Osvaldo's demographic information, then described him as a student with a disability. But unlike Grace, Cecilia continued to explain different dimensions of Nidia. She described Nidia as an excellent student:

[12] a standard class including some students in special education

> In the academic realm, [Nidia] has been described as "a strong student." Her Language Arts teacher[13] disclosed the following description of [Nidia] during our interview: "A lot of her strength comes from her personal drive to be successful. She is not the strongest student, but because she has the personal character trait of grit or perseverance, she *does* very well."

Cecilia presented a complicated picture of Nidia's academic abilities. Cecilia described Nidia as a strong student, though she did not state this directly but instead included language that Nidia had been described as such. Cecilia then quoted the classroom teacher using a negative noun-descriptor, as "not the strongest student." This mixed description led to difficulty determining if Cecilia's description fit in the excellent student category. Because (a) the former statement as a strong student was in Cecilia's own words, though hedged with passive voice and quotation marks, while the latter was a quote from the teacher; (b) the negative stated that she was not the *strongest,* while the positive noun-descriptor still described her as a strong student; and (c) the teacher concluded Nidia "does very well," I included Nidia within the excellent student category.

> Cecilia then continued, describing Nidia as a quiet student:
>
> Behaviorally she is a very quiet student. She *will work* well with a collaborative group or small group. She *has come* a long way in *participating*, *raising* her hand, and *contributing* in class.

Cecilia used a direct noun-descriptor in stating Nidia is a quiet student. She then described Nidia, like her parents, as having shown improvement, now "participating" and "raising her hand." While Cecilia attributed description of Nidia's parents' improvement

[13] Because coding of possessives was exhaustive, neutral terms like "teacher" appeared in coding but did not affect labeling categories.

to the teacher, Nidia's description apparently came from Cecilia herself. Descriptions as both quiet and persevering could be stereotypical representations of Nidia as a language learner (Harklau, 2000).

Yet Cecilia unpacked this further. In a very rare instance in the data, Cecilia clearly contradicted the classroom teacher's opinion, stating that although the teacher repeatedly called Nidia quiet, Cecilia would differentiate between quiet and shy:

> Though [Nidia] is very **quiet**, I do not believe her to be a shy student. During my observations I have seen her *advocate* for help many, many times, though typically with a soft, high pitched, or muted voice. Though the manner of her requesting help might go overlooked or seem subtle to many adults, the quantity of times that she *asks for* help trumps that of many of her peers. In the teacher interview, the language arts teacher described her as **quiet** multiple times, but her in class behavior only implies that the volume of her voice is what is quiet *rather than* the idea that [Nidia] *keeps to* herself or is **shy**.

Instead of confirming the teacher's quiet description, Cecilia argued only Nidia's voice was quiet but that did not imply reluctance to participate or shyness. It cannot be known why or whether Nidia spoke softly. Possibilities include that it could be cultural difference, hesitation to be heard speaking her L2, an individual trait, or an adolescent attempt at inconspicuousness before peers (see White, 2011). What is notable in Cecilia's case study is her more multi-faceted picture of Nidia, closer to Lawrence-Lightfoot's idea of portraiture, describing Nidia as a language learner, a strong student, and as having a quiet voice without reluctance to participate. This complex description is atypical of descriptions in this data. One reason for this difference might be that Cecilia's part-time

field-placement was in an ESL English classroom. She wrote in her paper on that placement:

> Observing and working with the two profiled ESL students, I was able to grasp how these individuals vary so much as "students." There is no one ESL type.

Ramifications of this are a subject for the discussion section which follows.

Discussion

This study examined how PSTs built identities for challenging students through Discourse (Gee, 2011b). PSTs were tasked with creating portraits of challenging students (Lawrence-Lightfoot & David, 1997), yet findings revealed that identities were limited. When not explicitly told to describe race, PSTs—most of whom were White—disproportionately reported race of minority students, suggesting they were less apt to notice Whiteness (Dyer, 2003). If PSTs were more frequently noticing students' race for those considered challenging when students were minorities, it would not be a far leap that PSTs might regard minority students as challenging.

Discourse also generally focused on one aspect of students' multiple identities. These aspects were grouped into 16 labeling categories, most common of which were students presenting behavior problems, having disabilities, or learning English as an L2. These categories might suggest that stances (Biber, 2006) PSTs took toward students included feeling particular challenges when they viewed students as in these categories. Two cases—Grace's description of Osvaldo and Cecilia's description of Nidia—provide contrasting examples of how PSTs generally, but not always, limited descriptions to one category. Grace described Osvaldo almost exclusively in terms of his disability. Though Osvaldo was somewhat unique in terms of his disability's severity, throughout this

data—whether a student was described as a behavior problem, class clown, or English learner—most PSTs built these identities as all-encompassing, one-dimensional traits defining students. Cecilia's description of Nidia provided an exception, portraying Nidia as a language learner, an excellent student, and a student with a quiet voice, who Cecilia said was not shy, though the classroom teacher described her as such. Why Cecilia departed from the norm is not altogether clear, but her words above indicate her previous experiences with language learners taught her not to view them as a single "type" of student, suggesting the importance of providing PSTs opportunities to interact meaningfully with diverse students.

For PSTs who portrayed students as single types, such focus might be partially due to assignments' concentration on exploring challenges or the language used in assignments themselves. Though the assignment for final case studies included language suggesting categorization of students, PSTs categorized students in projects completed before receiving instructions for these final assignments. In this sense, PSTs' use of labeling categories suggests not that PSTs themselves came up with categories but that they are taking up Discourse already present in the environments where they are being trained. Their limited focus on students in single categories perhaps reveals a characteristic of today's broader educational Discourse. Well-meaning individuals influenced by the achievement gap Discourse (Carey, 2013) present in today's educational culture create and replicate Discourse reducing students to a "type" or particular classroom challenge. PSTs, who are just building their own teacher identities, enter an educational climate where students' identities are Discoursed into limited categories. Fieldnotes indicate PSTs talked in course discussions about how inquiry

assignments provided different ways of conceptualizing students than talk common in teacher lounges, which they said included complaining about students without goals for improvement. Further research might examine how such language is embedded within professional Discourse among teachers and teacher educators to better understand the various levels at which PSTs receive nuanced messages about students' typecasting. Additionally, research might examine how Discourse in these assignments sets a foundation for how PSTs discuss and evaluate students after becoming full-time teachers (Foster et al., 1980). Finally, this research is limited in that it examines only PSTs' Discourse and not that of students themselves, though identity-building is a reciprocal process. Further research might examine how teachers' implicit Discourse about students affects students and how teachers' and students' Discourses are responsive to each other. Still, research presented here points to ways PSTs built identities for students through Discourse. Within such contexts, teacher educators might provide PSTs with diverse placement experiences, explicit instruction about students' multiple identities, and practice in analyzing their own Discourse both among colleagues and with students. In the larger educational culture, stakeholders might question today's Discourse, considering ways to balance students' needs with recognition of their resources.

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Table 1: Description Assignments

Assignment	Requirements
Student-Point-of-View (SPOV)	"Create a summary profile of each student—1 page maximum length (this can be in narrative form or as a chart); these profiles should portray the most essential, individuating data drawn from the 3 data sources."
Teaching Inquiry (TI)	"… Present one Teaching Inquiry (TI), a brief, thoughtful write-up that describes the context of the concern/problematic situation, frames it with specific questions, and illustrates it with one or more artifacts, such as an assignment, an example of student work, a rubric, a record of a conversation, etc." Template sections include: "the context: class grade level (as relevant), class/student ability level; descriptive contextual details; the problem/issue as it is initially presenting itself"
Case Study	"Detailed info about the inquiry context and participants allows the reader to 'picture' these students and classroom setting. Rich, thorough demographic and anecdotal information provided."

Table 2: Participants

Pseudonym	Age	Race	L1
Amy	24	White	English
Cecilia	21	White	English
Cynthia	21	Korean	Korean
Dawn	20	White	English
Elizabeth	21	White	English
Grace	23	Filipino-American	Kapangpangan
Karen	24	White	English
Kimberly	21	White	English
Linda	20	Chinese American	English, Mandarin
Lynn	23	White	Dutch, English
Marilyn	20	White	English
Rachel	21	White	English
Robin	21	White	English
Samantha	26	White	English
Shawn	21	Hispanic	English

Table 3: PSTs' Demographic Descriptions of Students

Total Students	129
Ethnicity	Unknown: 35.7% White: 24.8% Black: 14.7% Immigrant country of origin: 13.2% Hispanic/Latino: 7.8% Asian-American: 3.1% Biracial: 0.8%
Gender	Male: 55% Female: 44.2% Unknown: 0.8%
Grade level	Average when known: 8.9 Unknown: 12.4%
Tracking level	Honors/Advanced: 20.2% Standard: 18.6% Mixed: 16.3% Inclusion: 13.2% ESL: 12.4% Unknown: 7.8% Remedial: 7.0% Dual enrollment: 4.7%
English is L2	15.5%
Disability/IEP	16.3%
SES	Unknown: 82.9% Low: 9.3% Middle: 7.0% Upper: 0.8%

Table 4: Ethnic Descriptions across Projects

SPOV	TI	Case Study	Total
-White: 33.3% -Unknown: 26.6% -Black: 13.3% -Asian: 10% -Hispanic/Latino: 3.3% -Immigrant country of origin: 13.3% -Biracial 0%	-Unknown: 67.3% -Immigrant country of origin: 18.4% -Black: 14.3% -White: 0% -Biracial: 0% -Asian-American: 0% -Hispanic/Latino: 0%	-White: 44% -Hispanic/Latino: 18% -Black: 16% -Unknown: 10% -Immigrant country of origin: 8% -Asian-American: 2% -Biracial: 2%	-Unknown: 35.7% -White: 24.8% -Black: 14.7% -Immigrant country of origin: 13.2% -Hispanic/Latino: 7.8% -Asian-American: 3.1% -Biracial: 0.8%

Table 5: Labeling Categories

Category	%	Representative "Student X is a …"*
Behavior Problem	17.8	-in this group of difficult kids -a very bright student but can never sit still or stay quiet
Disabilities	16.3	-someone with Asperger's Syndrome -a student diagnosed with Down syndrome
L2 Learner	15.5	-a junior from Nepal who came to the States approximately one year ago -a minority student who I know has taken ESOL classes in the past
Academic Problem: Readiness	10.9	-a hard-working young man who works at a much slower pace than most of the students in his class -a struggling reader and writer
Not Enough Information	10.1	(Students were in supportive roles; noun descriptors were insufficient for analysis.)
Quiet	9.3	-a quieter student -a very quiet boy
Academic Problem: Motivation	7.0	-a bright student capable of the amount of work required for the class -a student whose constant absence from class and high level of distraction in class have resulted in poor grades and minimal understanding of the content
Athlete	6.2	-an enthusiastic football player -a powerful soccer and basketball player
Gifted / Honors	5.4	-a ninth grade honors student -one of the class's more academically gifted students
Loud / Class Clown	5.4	-the loudest most talkative student in class -the class clown
Excellent Student	5.4	-a model student -a wonderful student to have in class
Minority	5.4	-the only African-American male in the section -the only Hispanic student in this class
Socially Struggling	5.4	-not necessarily part of the popular crowd -a bit of an outsider to the rest of his class
Leader	4.7	-a ringleader in the bullying -a leader of her own group
Overweight	2.3	(noun descriptors insufficient for analysis)
Twin	2.3	-a white student who comes from a stable environment, living with her parents and twin sister, who is also in this class
Artist / Creative	2.3	-the type of person she really is: an artist -a very creative young man who loves music and is a deep thinker
Not Fitting Category	1.6	-a laid back student who loves her friends and family -a Caucasian girl in the standard 9th grade English class

*Noun descriptors appear in Table 5, not Table 6, because they included phrases not count-able by software.

Table 6: Word Frequencies by Category

Category	5 Most Frequent Verbs	5 Most Frequent Adjectives	5 Most Frequent Possessives
Behavior Problem	talking (12)*; sits (10); act (9); laughing (9); start (9)	distracted (8); disruptive (5); upset (5); present (3); sent (3)	work (15); behavior (8); friend (6); mother (5); desk (4); grade (4); head (4); seat (4)**
Sp. Ed.	read (19); sits (18); struggles (15); write (12); work (11); become (11)	engaged (8); disengaged (6); able (5); distracted (5); asked (4); off-task (4)	work (40); peers (30); behavior (25); mother (15); class (14); writing (14)
L2 Learner	started (11); speaks (9); asking (8); looks (6); demonstrates (5); lived (5); participates (5)	able (9); distracted (5); talkative (5); bright (3); enrolled (3); quick (3); quiet (3); shy (3); smart (3); surprised (3)	status (10); family (8); work (7); classmates (6); English (6); peers (6)
Academic Problem: Readiness	struggles (15); asked (10); receive (10); sits (10); read (9);	aware (5); distracted (5); interested (3); social (3); talkative (3)	work (20); peers (18); ability (8); hair (7); trouble (7); writing (7)
Quiet	wants (7); speak (6); completes (5); read (5); talked (5); work (5)	quiet (8); shy (4); disengaged (3); interested (3); confused (2); enrolled (2); polite (2)	classes (7); work (7); interest (6); reading (6); survey (5)
Academic Problem: Motivation	complete (6); talks (5); speak (4); read (4); answered (3); interact (3); missing (3); skipping (3); writes (3)	assigned (2); enrolled (2); interested (2); quiet (2); talkative (2); willing (2)	mother (13); behavior (11); work (8); friend (6); classes (5); teachers (5)
Athlete	speak (7); wants (7); demonstrates (5); needs (5); read (5); responded (5)	engaged (7); able (3); determined (2); distracted (2); drawn (2); off-task (2); placed (2)	peers (17); participation (9); work (9); teacher (8); behavior (7)
Gifted / Honors	struggles (6); wants (5); become (4); read (4); received (4); talk (4)	assigned (2); disengaged (2); disinterested (2); open (2); supposed (2)	peers (12); behavior (4); desk (4); difficulties (4); favorite (4); reading (4); sister (4); survey (4); writing (4)
Loud / Class Clown	talk (7); sit (6); seek (5); started (5); turn (5)	corrected (5); moved (3); accepted (2); asked (2); average (2); called	behavior (18); friends (9); peers (9); interests (5)

		(2); compliant (2); defiant (2); moved (2); social (2); task (2)	
Minority	asked (6); answered (5); struggle (5); understand (5); walked (5)	able (4); aware (4); enrolled (3); off-task (3); assigned (2); comfortable (2); dyslexic (2); engaged (2); placed (2); talkative (2)	behavior (8); participation (8); peers (8); work (8); status (5); thinking (5); writing (5)
Socially Struggling	asks (5); enjoys (4); wrote (4); called (3); noted (3); read (3); speaks (3); think (3)	adopted (2); aware (2); bullied (2); different (2); quiet (2); stressed (2)	friends (13); peers (11); survey (6); interest (5); class (4); questions (4); response (4); teacher (4); work (4)
Excellent Student	wants (10); enjoys (4); read (4); work (4); writes (4); asks (3); comes (3); likes (3); needs (3); plays (3); repeats (3); speak (3); stated (3); wrote (3)	quiet (4); able (3); enrolled (3); determined (2); diligent (2); excited (2); happy (2); sure (2)	parents (7); survey (6); behavior (4); language (4); memoir (4); teacher (4)
Leader	seems (3); interact (2); missing (2); needs (2); speak (2); stays (2); turn (2); wrote (2)	enrolled (2); present (2); willing (2)	friend (6); behavior (5); classmates (3); credits (3); teachers (3); work (3)
Overweight	adjusts (5); sit (4); needed (3); puts (3); sat (3); spends (3)	(no multiple occurrences)	ability (4); anxiety (4); work (4); hair (3); test (3)
Twin	seek (4); needs (3); lingers (2); stays (2); struggles (2); read (2)	social (2)	sister (5); book (4); interest (3); peers (3); twin (3)
Artist / Creative	keep (2); speaks (2); states (2); write (2)	able (2); challenged (2); creative (2); interested (2); quiet (2)	teachers (3); work (3); behavior (2); freedom (2); friend (2); grandmother (2); parents (2); samples (2); school (2)

*Parentheses indicate how many times each word occurred. Due to software limitations, counts include both positive (e.g., “able”) and negative (e.g., “not able”) occurrences.
**Where ties for fifth place occurred, all ties are reported.

Table 7: PSTs' Use of Categories

PST	Behavior Problem	Sp. Ed.	L2 Learner	Academic Problem: Readiness	Quiet	Academic Problem: Motivation	Athlete	Gifted / Honors	Loud / Class Clown	Minority	Socially Struggling	Excellent Student	Leader	Overweight	Twin	Artist / Creative	% of Students in Multiple Categories*
Cecilia	DE**	F	ABG	C	G			H	A	F		B	A	E			62.5%
Kimberly	E	DEF	C	FG	BF				G		D	A			G		57.1%
Lynn	D	BC	E			AB	C										40.0%
Linda	BCDE	G		FGH				A					F	H	F		37.5%
Samantha				F	AE		ADG		H	DG		CD				B	37.5%
Amy	G	FG		H	DE		GHI				BF	A	C				33.3%
Elizabeth	A	F		E		BC		F		D			C				33.3%
Dawn	CD		AG	E						A	B			E		F	28.6%
Robin	CD	EF		F	A	G		B								G	28.6%
Rachel	DE	CG			B		A		CH		F	A					25.0%
Karen	CDEF	CGHI				A		B					C D				22.2%
Cynthia			CDEFG HIJKLM	K				A	B						A		15.4%
Marilyn	CD	FG		G	B					G	AE						14.3%
Grace		E	AB		F	C			D								0
Shawn	F			B		CE		D		A							0

* Percent column does not include focal students who could not be placed in any category.

**Each letter represents a focal student.

CHAPTER 4

Study 3: *"I am White, female from a middle-class background": How Pre-Service English Teachers' Figured Worlds Impact Their Relationships with Students*

Abstract

This study uses the lens of figured worlds—individual, culturally based systems for meaning-making—to understand how English pre-service teachers (PSTs) build relationships with challenging students during four semesters of methods courses and field placements. Analysis draws from Gee's (2011b) "figured worlds tool" in examining PSTs' Discourse. Findings reveal that PSTs established group identities, including as women of privilege who were successful students themselves; faced challenges, including having too many students to focus on relationship-building or taking students' misbehavior personally; and experienced breakthroughs, including learning about individual students and using texts and writing to relate to students. Implications include that PSTs who have themselves been successful students might need preparation specifically in relating to students who have not typically experienced school success. This preparation might include teaching PSTs not to "take it personally" when a student's behaviors clash with their own individual values.

Introduction

All adolescents, particularly those with histories of academic underachievement, need positive relationships with caring adults. A solid body of research supports the notion that adolescents benefit from such relationships (see, for example, Noddings, 2013; Resnick et al., 1997; Resnick, Harris, & Blum, 1993). Yet how these relationships develop—or not—particularly between students and beginning teachers, remains unclear. Teacher-student relationships are tricky, two-way balancing acts involving both adult teachers and adolescent students, but steered by teachers, acting from positions of authority. Complicating these relationships, in the case of beginning teachers or pre-service teachers (PSTs), is that novice teachers are just learning how to build professional relationships as they develop teacher identities (McLean, 1999), while adolescents are simultaneously at pivotal points exploring adult identities (Erikson, 1968).

Amid these changes, both PSTs and students bring to the relationships their own background experiences, conceptualized in this study as figured worlds. Holland, Skinner, Lachicotte, and Cain (1998), defined a figured world as "a socially and culturally constructed realm of interpretation in which particular characters and actors are recognized, significance is assigned to certain acts, and particular outcomes are valued over others" (p. 52). In terms of teacher-student relationships, this means teachers and students interpret relationships by recognizing each other as playing certain roles and by assigning significance to certain acts or valuing certain outcomes, based on their own previously developed figured worlds. With growing demographic differences between today's beginning teachers and students (NCES, 2011-2012) and given the culturally affected nature of figured worlds, it follows that PSTs and students from different ethnic, linguistic, and class backgrounds might enter relationships with disparate figured worlds

in which ideas about how teacher-student relationships should be structured do not align. Though work is needed studying how *both* novice and adolescents teachers bring figured worlds to these relationships, this study focuses specifically on ways pre-service teachers (PSTs) do so.

I draw on Gee's (2011b) "figured worlds tool" for analyzing Discourse. Gee (2011a) conceptualized Discourse—with a capital "D"—as "a characteristic way of saying, doing, and being" (p. 30), asserting that big "D" Discourse involves not only language but also actions accompanying it. This project conceptualizes study of PSTs' Discourse as a means of understanding how PSTs draw from figured worlds in approaching relationships with adolescents.

Teacher-Student Relationships

It has long been suggested that strong teacher-student relationships lead to improved student learning. Rogers (1969) brought person-centered theory from the field of psychology to education, contending that attitudinal qualities in personal teacher-student relationships aided learning. Among these qualities are genuineness, trust, caring, and empathy, resulting in a student's feeling "simply understood—not evaluated, not judged" (p. 112). Achieving such understanding in teacher-student relationships might become more difficult (Lee & Fradd, 1996) but no less important when teachers and students come from different backgrounds with varied cultural practices.

In his meta-analysis of 119 studies on person-centered education, Cornelius-White (2007) found that teacher relational practices—including honoring students' voices and adapting to individual and cultural differences—facilitated student learning, having above-average associations with positive student outcomes, such as critical thinking,

drop-out prevention, verbal achievement, and fewer disruptive behaviors. Roorda, Koomen, Spilt, and Oort (2011) confirmed these results in a meta-analysis of 99 studies, also finding more specifically that student engagement and achievement were associated positively with positive teacher relationships and negatively with negative relationships. Additionally, they found teacher relationships were even more important for adolescents than for children. And there is evidence that positive relationships also help sustain teachers through long careers (Veldman, van Tartwijk, Brekelmans, & Wubbels, 2013).

Yet despite such benefits, positive relationships do not always exist in schools. Poplin and Weeres (1994), in a study of problems in four ethnically diverse schools in California, found that students' problems with relationships—particularly with teachers—were more prevalent with adolescents than children, and for minority students: "Students of color, especially older students often report that their teachers, school staff, and other students neither like nor understand them. Many teachers also report they do not always understand students ethnically different than themselves" (p. 13). Additionally, the study found differences in how teachers and students perceived caring. Teachers showed they cared by working hard, while students felt cared about when they had positive personal interactions with teachers.

Training Pre-Service Teachers (PSTs) to Build Student Relationships

For PSTs, learning to build strong student relationships is not always easy. Not only can it be difficult for teachers to understand how students conceptualize caring relationships, teachers might also face challenges in determining appropriate boundaries. Uitto (2012) contended both pre-service and in-service teachers, pressured to appear as "model citizens," grapple with questions, such as whether to tell students about their

personal lives or give their phone numbers to students. From analysis of letters written by 141 Finnish people about their past teachers, she found students learned personal information about teachers, regardless of whether teachers divulged it. She contended that given the impossibility of hiding personal lives from students, PSTs need support from teacher educators in practicing and setting boundaries. Through interviewing 13 teachers at various career stages about relational boundaries, Aultman, Williams-Johnson, and Schutz (2009) found that experienced and beginning teachers drew different boundaries. While experienced teachers believed beginning teachers more wanted to become "friends" with students and consequently sometimes lost control of classrooms, experienced teachers appeared to more easily negotiate balances between professionalism and involvement. Similarly, Newberry (2010) contended that while experienced teachers eventually developed strategies for building student relationships, beginning teachers often struggled doing so.

Amid these challenges, many questions remain about how PSTs develop student relationships. In studying 138 PSTs, Kesner (2000) found PST-student relationships appeared connected to relationships with PSTs' own parents. Those PSTs who recalled less harsh parental discipline generally perceived greater closeness in student relationships. And Jiménez and Rose (2010) found PSTs who had learned second languages and lived abroad themselves most easily related to ELL students, while PSTs who did not understand language learners often engaged in deficit-thinking about them, hindering relationships. In this sense, it is important for teacher educators to recognize PSTs do not come to teacher preparation devoid of past experiences. Yet how to build upon—or move past—PSTs' figured worlds in relationship-building remains a question.

Worthy and Patterson (2001) found in a study of 71 PSTs tutoring elementary students—most of whom were ethnic- and linguistic-minority students—that one-on-one interactions helped PSTs value students as individuals and reject deficit-thinking about students. Such one-on-one interactions are important during preparation, enabling PSTs to understand individual students, but it is unclear whether PSTs continue such relationship-building when working with whole classes.

Theoretical Frame

In seeking to add knowledge that might improve PSTs' preparation to relate to whole classrooms of culturally and linguistically diverse learners, this paper draws from Gee's (2011b) "figured worlds tool" (p. 168) that can be used to guide Discourse analysis.

The notion of worlds as organized differently across cultures has long been written about in the field of anthropology, explaining how individuals understand their belonging to cultures (Hallowell, 1955, reprinted 2010; Quinn & Holland, 1987). Gee (2011b) builds on Holland et al.'s (1998) definition, cited above, of figured worlds, adding that all individuals carry with them "a picture of a simplified world that captures what is taken to be typical or normal" (p. 170). What individuals take to be typical or normal, he said, varies across social and cultural groups. For this reason, people from different backgrounds, told to imagine a wedding, might envision events that vary significantly (Gee, 2011a). Additionally, any individual can simultaneously have multiple figured worlds, which sometimes might compete with each other in influencing the individuals' Discourses[14] (Gee, 2011b). For Discourse analysts, the presence of figured

[14] Along with figured worlds, Gee (2011b) explains that children develop a "primary Discourse," that is "a culturally distinctive way of being an 'everyday person'" (p. 179). In life, primary Discourses "can change,

worlds leads to various questions including: "How are the relevant figured worlds here helping to reproduce, transform, or create social, cultural, institutional and/or political relationships?" (Gee, 2011a, p. 96). Within a classroom, this question might explore how a teacher's figured worlds lead to various expectations about the relationship she has with her students.

To better understand how PSTs approach student relationships, the current project studies PSTs' descriptions of relationships with students in field-placements. In doing so, the study has two primary objectives, understanding: (1) how PSTs describe their own figured worlds and (2) how they describe their relationships with students, given the figured worlds PSTs reveal about themselves and that they might be trying to understand students' figured worlds. This dual approach makes it possible to see how PSTs bring their figured worlds to relationships and employ them in interpreting relationships with students who might have different figured worlds. Such understanding can provide insight into how prepared PSTs are to build meaningful relationships with students who might have different figured worlds than their own.

Research Questions

Research questions include: (1) How do PSTs describe their own figured worlds in relation to those of their students? and (2) How do PSTs describe their efforts to understand students' figured worlds through relationship-building?

Methods

Setting and data collection. Data for this project are from a cohort of secondary English education PSTs during their teacher preparation at a large public university in a

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hybridize with other Discourses, and they can even die" (p. 179) as individuals acquire secondary Discourses.

South-Atlantic state. During four semesters, I observed PSTs in English teaching-methods coursework and corresponding field-placements. For two semesters, PSTs had initial field-placements in which they observed classes weekly and taught eight total lessons over both semesters. The third semester, they completed full-time student teaching in different classrooms, and the final semester, they revisited student-teaching classrooms, observing and writing case studies of students. I took detailed fieldnotes during observations, audio-recorded discussions, collected course assignments and lesson plans, and periodically interviewed and surveyed cohort members. I also transcribed oral presentations and excerpts from course discussions cited in this paper. Through coursework, PSTs analyzed field-placement classrooms in three teacher-inquiry assignments—projects in which PSTs studied their own teaching and students with goals of improving their practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). These assignments in particular provided rich descriptions from PSTs of student relationships alongside fieldnotes and interviews.

Participants. At graduation, the cohort consisted of 15 members, all of whom were participants (see Table 1 for PSTs' demographics). Similar to general teaching-population demographics (NCES, 2011-2012), this cohort's members all are female, and most are White, though there was some linguistic diversity within the cohort. Academically, PSTs were seeking to complete either a two-year post-graduate PG/MT program or a five-year BA/MT program. PSTs completed field placements in public middle- and high-school English classrooms.

Role of researcher. As a practitioner inquirer, I collected data while helping prepare the cohort, assuming various roles: teaching assistant; small-group facilitator;

classroom observer; lesson-plan reviewer; and most influentially, student-teaching supervisor for Amy, Karen, Lynn, and Robin. I acted as what Erickson (2006) named an "observer participant," contrasting with the less involved "participant observer." I actively helped PSTs, discussing with them teaching approaches, specific lesson plans, and challenges including difficulties with student relationships. Viewing my work through the lens of teacher inquiry (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009), I expect my involvement affected PSTs' development. Given research suggesting that how teacher educators relate to PSTs affects how PSTs view student relationships (Kim & Schallert, 2011), it is possible my relationship with PSTs affected their student relationships. My goal is not to eliminate such influence but to discover ways of improving both my own work and that of other teacher educators.

Analysis

Ongoing analysis. Because I believe data collection and analysis can be recursive, I initiated preliminary analysis while collecting data, considering early questions in frequent conceptual memos (Heath & Street, 2008), which I discussed with two fellow researchers serving as "critical friends" (Heath & Street, 2008). As I focused on questions about relationships, I "reduced data" (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to PSTs' descriptions of their own figured worlds and their student relationships within PSTs' inquiry papers and oral presentations, interviews, and fieldnotes from course discussions.

Coding. Using an "open coding" process (Erickson, 1986; Merriam, 2009), I re-read PSTs' papers, transcriptions, and fieldnotes from oral presentations, interviews, and course discussions. As I read, I marked those sections where PSTs discussed their figured worlds—which they might have talked about as their backgrounds—in relation to

students'. Coding criteria included that PSTs discussed their own educational or personal histories (see Table 2 for typical examples). Sometimes, they compared their experiences directly to those of students, but I coded passages as figured worlds, regardless of whether they mentioned students, as in Robin's example from the table. Additionally, I coded portions where they discussed relationships with students, defined broadly as how PSTs made or did not make connections with specific students. I looked for both discussion of teacher-student relationships in general and examples they gave of building—or not building—relationships with individual students. Coding throughout this step and the remainder of analysis was exhaustive in that I examined all data sources described above, where necessary re-listening to audio and fully transcribing to enhance fieldnotes. If a passage was about both a PST's figured world and student relationships, I coded it in both categories to avoid overlooking it in subsequent analysis.

With this initial coding complete, I re-examined data in each category. I looked for patterns in the figured worlds category, illuminating how PSTs indicated their figured worlds might be different from or similar to students'. I grouped data into themes. For the second question, on relationships, I looked for how PSTs perceived relationships with students, and I again grouped data into themes. Findings in the next section present and explain both sets of themes.

Findings

Question 1: PSTs' Figured Worlds

Throughout the data, PSTs revealed various ways their figured worlds shaped their perceptions of relationships. In some ways, these figured worlds appeared group-defined by PSTs' joint cohort membership, the way Gee (2011b) contends groups form

identities to recognize group members. In other ways, figured worlds seemed distinct for individual PSTs, as each brought her own experiences and personalities to student-teaching. In this section, I will explain how PSTs revealed how their group-defined and personal figured worlds impacted relationships.

Group-defined figured worlds. PSTs included in their Discourse several group-defined figured worlds. Although it is unclear to what extent each PST agreed with these group-defined identities, these shared ideas of themselves as a group emerged through PSTs' use of collective "we" in creating what might be thought of as an "in-group" identity, regarded as normative within the cohort (Bloome et al., 2008, p. 17). In-group identities included identifying as:

- women;
- "smart kids";
- new, young, and inexperienced teachers;
- "English people";
- and people of privilege.

Women. First, this cohort was somewhat singular in its all-female composition. Additionally, all the methods and inquiry professors were women, as were the student-teaching supervisors. Some PSTs had male mentors[15], but since mentors did not attend course sessions, discussions generally included only women (see Kesner, 2000, and Roorda et al., 2011, for discussion of teacher gender and effects on student relationships). At times, this gendered identity appeared explicitly within the cohort's Discourse. For instance, at an end-of-second-semester meeting, after the cohort presented their professor

[15]All PSTs worked in classrooms with full-time teachers.

with a bouquet of thank-you flowers, she said she had not taught an all-female cohort in several years. That previous group, she said, had called themselves "the ladies auxiliary" alluding to early covert feminist organizations. "This is really special because that hasn't happened for a while, and it's so clear to me the difference in all-female energy." PSTs themselves would frequently ask in discussing a text or pedagogical strategy how boys might receive it, or they would describe texts as more interesting to boys than to themselves. They thought male students, for instance, would be more interested than they were in graphic novels or video-gaming magazines.

Sometimes, PSTs said gender affected their student relationships. Karen wrote in her final inquiry project that she felt better able to connect to girls:

> Though I try to make strong connections with all of my students, I tend to reach out to the needs of my female students in an extracurricular way. I have helped two different female students outside of school, with attending youth groups at local libraries or going to an open mic poetry night so she could perform. This is perhaps because I am a woman and may feel professionally uneasy taking an adolescent boy to extracurricular events without anyone else present.

Karen discussed how gender affected her extracurricular relationships with students (a theme also present elsewhere in data, with both Marilyn and Amy coaching girls' running teams). This data suggest Karen devoted extra time and attention to female students' learning and to building relationships with them by helping them attend local events promoting language and literacy skills. Data also suggest Karen's figured worlds include differing expectations for how she, a female teacher, should relate to students, based on gender. Interestingly, Karen told in an interview about a male student calling her a gender

slur. She described that incident as a student-teaching moment when she felt powerless. It is unclear what if any impact her own differing standards for relationships based on gender might have had on these complicated relationships. But it is clear gender was an issue in how Karen related to students.

Smart kids. Together, PSTs also defined themselves as having been high-achieving students themselves. In course discussions, they mentioned how "struggling students" or "smart kids" might respond to various instructional approaches, and there was an intimation that PSTs had been among the "smart kids" in school. For instance, in a small-group discussion during first-semester methods, PSTs discussed grading group presentations. Fieldnotes indicate: "Elizabeth said that even then the 'smart kid' could be doing all the work even though others are doing the talking in the presentation. She said that she had a problem with this type of group work because of that." Elizabeth's comments suggest she is very aware of challenges facing "smart kids," possibly suggesting they are part of her figured worlds. Indeed, PSTs were all successful students at a well-respected university, which required they maintain 3.0 GPAs or higher in English and teacher-education courses. It is possible PSTs more easily understood lived experiences of students who were also high-achievers. Shawn, for example, in her final inquiry paper, assigned to her focal student the pseudonym of Hermione—a high-achieving student in the Harry Potter series (Rowling, 1997), which Shawn was then reading. Shawn explained she had special sympathy for the student: "When it comes to Hermione, I have a background in heavy high school course loads, so I have an understanding of her situation that may make me biased." Conversely, PSTs frequently said they worried about teaching students in lower-level courses. Rachel said in an

interview that she was surprised students in a lower-level class were more interested in instruction than students in an advanced class: “I didn’t think I could teach the lower-level kids, like I was afraid to because they were really hard to engage and really didn’t want to be there.” Rachel said her perspectives changed as she learned about students and their aspirations. Such findings apparently point to disparity between PSTs’ figured worlds as high-achieving students and those of students who have not had the same kinds of positive school experiences.

New, young, and inexperienced teachers. PSTs also talked collectively about being new, young, and inexperienced teachers. They talked frequently about students not seeing them as authority figures. Marilyn, for instance, included that being “a visibly young and inexperienced teacher” made her a target for her focal student’s rudeness. Cynthia said being young had made it difficult for her to have skills to build strong student relationships, feeling most prepared to develop students’ cognitive skills but least prepared to build students’ affective skills: “I’m only 22. So like for me to have enough wisdom to kind of know how to pair those two is a process.” It is not surprising, given participants’ status as PSTs, that they share this identity as new teachers, but still, it plays a role in their figured worlds.

English people. PSTs frequently described themselves as “English people,” sharing strong interests in literature and language. In a methods-course discussion of a student writing sample, for instance, PSTs said they saw grammar errors first because they were “language people.” PSTs said in interviews that being “English people” shaped their career choices. They commented in course discussions that as English people, they might like different texts than students, particularly loving canonical literature while

students might prefer nonfiction. Elizabeth, for instance, in presenting a unit she planned for her first methods course, told PSTs:

> Really I guess my aha moment was realizing that not everybody likes fiction and creative writing as much as I do and that many people don't like either of those. So I guess I'm in this mindset where it's like I write my lessons based on what I liked to do in high school.

If Elizabeth planned lessons based on her own figured world of high school, it is possible she also tried to relate to students in ways she wanted others to relate to her in high school. In this sense, relating to students not readily identifying as "English people" might be a stretch for Elizabeth and others in the cohort.

Privilege. Near the end of the second-semester methods course, PSTs occasionally began initiating discussions about their own privilege. Kimberly, in a methods-course presentation to the cohort, compared PSTs' and students' status:

> Looking around the room, I see a lot of us are White middle class myself included obviously. By an accident of birth, we were placed in kind of a privileged position. Our education and our culture were pretty closely aligned, and it wasn't a big jump between our home life and our school life. When we opened up books, it was pretty easy to see the contexts and events of our everyday lives on the pages. And we grew up seeing people similar to ourselves in positions of power and authority. But not all of our students are going to be that lucky. Most of them are going to be from a different kind of background.

Kimberly suggested not only that PSTs could identify with books, perhaps related to the group identity as English people, but also that this identification was possible because

PSTs could see themselves—and others from the White middle class—in books. Kimberly made an explicit connection between privilege and race and class, directly stating that these figured worlds would be different from those of students.

Individual figured worlds. While figured worlds explained above appeared to be Discoursed into group identities, PSTs certainly revealed a host of personal worlds, shaped by individual experiences. Throughout course discussions and interviews, they explained how their decisions in relating to students were affected by past experiences (see Jiménez & Rose, 2010; Kesner, 2000). Cynthia, for instance, explained that being raised in Mexico affected her relationship with Spanish-speaking students. Shawn said her experiences as a resident assistant made her decide that not only girls but also boys should read a young-adult book about rape. And Samantha said her identity as a White woman affected her relationship with a Black male inquiry focal student. These past experiences are multiple and varied across PSTs, and it would be impossible to explain all the ways data revealed individual backgrounds affecting relationships.

Instead, I will explain one poignant example. Karen frequently promoted in course discussions and with her students the importance of showing tolerance and understanding toward others. She expressed strong interests in teaching diverse learners. In interview data, she explained she did not have the type of diverse experience she would have liked in school. She attended a private school where she felt White parents sent children to avoid integration. She said she saw in her family effects of generational racism, which she wanted to end with her. Karen said it was important to her, too, that students learn tolerance of others with diverse sexual identities.

With these strong interests in teaching diverse learners and encouraging tolerance, Karen faced challenges in relating to students who she saw as intolerant. She wrote in her final inquiry project, "As an educated Caucasian and teaching professional who is interested in teaching diverse learners, I harbor a small grain of disdain for Caucasians from a high socioeconomic status." Given the predominance of White students in her student-teaching school, Karen selected three White students as focal cases for her final project. One of them she wrote about favorably in terms of his acceptance of others: "[He] is polite in his interactions with others and during an LGBT panel I hosted during an after school event last semester, he attended and expressed he was tolerant of lifestyles that were different from his own."

She found, however, that another student had a very different attitude. In an in-class presentation, She explained that Thomas—a White student with autism whose parents were upper-middle class professionals—had repeatedly made homophobic comments in class:

> He would say blurbs like, "Oh that's so gay," … or like "I hate homosexuals." He would say these kinds of things, and then other students would call him out and be like, "Dude, shut up." … And he started to notice that like when you say something that hurts someone it could like end all chances of having a social relationship with them.

Karen said one way to help Thomas was by providing him opportunities to interact with diverse students; she found that through working with a classmate who Karen said identified along the LGBTQ[16] spectrum, he was expanding his "view of the world," language which perhaps might suggest Karen's knowledge of Thomas's own figured

[16]Acronyms are as Karen presented them.

worlds. Still—writing that she "internally became irritated" with Thomas—Karen found her relationship with him was affected by his behaviors, so opposed to her figured worlds, including her acceptance of individuals with diverse sexual identities.

Question 2: How PSTs Described Student Relationships

In coding PSTs' descriptions of student relationships, I found variance across semesters. In early field-placement projects—when PSTs were part-time classroom visitors—PSTs wrote generally about the importance of knowing students but did not detail specific relationships. This changed during student-teaching. As PSTs became student-teachers immersed in classrooms and experienced shifts in their figured worlds of what it means to be a teacher as they tried to understand students' figured worlds, they began giving details about specific students, describing at length both challenges and breakthroughs in relationships. PSTs later appeared to return to the more general theme of learning the importance of teacher-student relationships in final reflections and interviews, just before graduation. In coding, I found patterns in the relationships category about how PSTs discussed importance of relationships, challenges in building relationships, and relational breakthroughs. The following sections of this paper describe findings in each of these sub-categories.

Importance of relationships. An overwhelming theme was PSTs' emphasis on the importance of relationships. In their first inquiry papers, PSTs frequently listed among their studies' conclusions that teachers should spend time getting to know students. In part, this might be due to the nature of the assignment, asking PSTs to interview two students to learn about their viewpoints, but it might also indicate how teacher preparation in general—with assignments as one piece of that context—was

affecting PSTs' thinking about relationships. Marilyn, for instance, wrote: "Genuine interaction and intentional discovery about student life are key to knowing your students and ensuring effective learning." In these initial papers, PSTs wrote about their first experiences getting to know students. For PSTs, such as Dawn, these early experiences appeared to be important discoveries:

> During weekly visits to a local high school this year, I got a taste of what it was like to be a teacher—but even more so, I got a taste of what it was like to interact with and become connected to a group of students. … I felt like I learned a lot about the realities of being a teacher and taking into consideration the students I would be teaching.

Dawn linked in this passage "the realities" of teaching and "taking into consideration the students," possibly contrasting "realities" PSTs said they faced in secondary classrooms with pedagogical "theory" they said they learned in methods courses (see Worthy & Patterson, 2001, for importance of having PSTs examine beliefs through theory). Samantha similarly said in her final interview:

> I do think that being in the classroom as much as we were over the past two years has given me specific relationships with students that informed the theory that we're getting in classes. And yeah just, it gives a face and an experience to attach reading and discussion to.

In this sense, Dawn and Samantha indicated practice-teaching gave them experience building relationships, which they suggest is possible only in actual classroom contexts.

Interestingly, a specific area of relationship-building PSTs said they could practice as English teachers drew connections between relationships and text selections.

In conducting interviews, many PSTs chose to ask students about their reading interests[17]. PSTs wrote consistently about what they described as connections between exploring texts in English classrooms and building student relationships. Kimberly, for instance, wrote:

> Every student is interested and motivated by different things. Because of this, we should include in our curriculum a wide range of texts that appeal to different interests. Further, this provides an opportunity for us as teachers to foster personal relationships with our students. If we know our students, we can point them to books and materials that [sic] would enjoy on an individual basis.

Kimberly suggested not only that teachers who know students well can select interesting texts for them but also that text selection provides English teachers with relationship-building opportunities. In this sense, discussion of texts becomes an avenue for fostering shared figured worlds through personal relationships, as Kimberly noted and as PSTs typically described across inquiry projects as an approach leading to relational breakthroughs, which will be further discussed later in these results. We turn, first, to a discussion of challenges.

Challenges. Although PSTs overwhelmingly wrote in initial projects—and continued to do so throughout the program—about the importance of building relationships, in later projects they began articulating challenges in doing so. PSTs said in interviews and course discussions that they gained understanding of actual difficulties in relationship-building once they began full-time student-teaching. Challenges included having:

[17]Assignment requirements stated, "The purpose of this assignment is to explore what interests secondary-age students have and what they already know and think about English." PSTs developed their own interview protocols and analyses of responses.

- too many students;
- students who were too dependent on teachers;
- students who had emotional disturbance or had experienced trauma;
- students who were often absent;
- secondary roles in classrooms to mentor teachers;
- institutional obstacles;
- issues establishing professional relationship boundaries;
- and most prevalently, difficulties in not taking it personally when students misbehaved or did not show interest in course content

In this section, I will briefly give examples of each of these challenges.

Too many students. PSTs typically said having to manage and provide instruction for large classes distracted them from focusing on individual relationships. Rachel, for instance, said that through the inquiry project she had seen progress with one student as she began talking to her individually, but said she found it difficult to give such attention to every student: "When you have so many classes and they have 30 [students], then looking at every student is hard." She continued, explaining how she was juggling learning several skills:

> The hard part for me right now is that I have so many other things I'm trying to master—this is especially in student teaching—that like I can do like maybe two at a time or three at a time and I have to slowly stage things in as I'm going. … It's all a lot more complicated than people on the outside think it is.

Rachel faced dual challenges of managing relationship-building with individual students while also trying to concentrate on developing her teaching skills. In commenting that

teaching is harder than "people on the outside think," she might have been referencing others in her life without teaching experience, or she might have been suggesting her previous figured world of teaching did not include an understanding of how difficult teaching would be (see Moon, Callahan, & Tomlinson, 1999, for more on complexities of student-teaching). Throughout discussions, PSTs talked about having to set limits on individual relationships so they could help other students. Grace, for instance, described an inquiry-project focal student, "He takes so long to give me nothing, that you know I need to move on to check on other students. Just as much as I'd like to devote my time to him, I have 40 other students." Though spending time with a student may not equate to relationship building, PSTs typically expressed that a relational challenge was not having time to spend with one student, for fear of neglecting others.

Students who were too dependent. While building relationships despite having so many students was a general challenge faced by PSTs, some discussed challenges with students they described as being too dependent on them. For some, these students always seemed present. For instance, Amy discussed a student who was always first to show up before class and last to leave afterwards. I observed in Amy's student-teaching classroom as Amy repeatedly asked the student to leave for lunch so we could meet privately. Amy's consideration of this student involved trying to determine how the student could build stronger relationships with peers and be less dependent on adult relationships (see Pianta, 2001).

Students who had emotional disturbances or had experienced trauma. For PSTs teaching students with emotional disturbances or past traumatic experiences, specific challenges arose. While several PSTs taught students with emotional disturbances or

other disabilities, Karen taught in an alternative high school where she frequently worked with students who had experienced trauma. She described two focal students as having histories of sexual abuse, and she told in course discussions the second week of student-teaching that one of her students—who was close friends with several others in her class—had been murdered. These specific circumstances created a host of challenges Karen described in relationship-building. She explained in a course discussion that one of her students, for instance, had made her feel threatened:

> When I mediated[18] with him, he stared at me for 30 minutes straight. … He was compliant; he was cooperating; he was participating; he was articulate, but he would not stop staring at me, and that was um, it was- it felt like some kind of psychological warfare with him.

Karen continued throughout student-teaching to use the school's mediation system to work on relationship-building with this student and others. Though Karen taught a population frequently having emotional difficulties, other PSTs described individual students with emotional disturbance as difficult to relate to, perhaps because they did not personally identify with these challenges themselves.

Students who were absent. PSTs typically said they had difficulties building relationships with frequently absent students. Sometimes, these students were described as skipping school, missing class due to disciplinary suspensions, or leaving the class or school permanently. Occasionally, PSTs said in interviews that they did not choose absent students as inquiry-project focal cases because they did not have sufficient observational data. Rachel described a student, for instance, in an interview: "He actually

[18]Karen's school had an established structure for third-party mediated meetings between teachers and/or students addressing difficult relationships.

liked me and the class. It was kind of- it was great because when he was in my room he was fine, but he was a kid where I felt like there was like almost nothing I could do because he was never there."

Secondary role to mentor teachers. PSTs also described challenges feeling students responded more readily to other teachers. Notably, these situations did *not* appear to be ones in which PSTs had stressed relationships with mentors. Dawn, for instance, who repeatedly expressed admiration of her mentor, said students listened to her mentor or a collaborating teacher instead of her. She told how a student ignored her asking him to stop bouncing a basketball but stopped when the other teacher asked. Additionally, PSTs described not having full information about students—including IEPs and family information—that classroom teachers had. Such experiences might be typical for PSTs, given their professional situations as pre-service, rather than fully licensed teachers, but this secondary role appeared to be an obstacle for PSTs in building positive student relationships.

Institutional obstacles. Occasionally PSTs said schools themselves hindered relationship-building. Cecilia and Marilyn, for instance, who both worked in alternative charter schools for students from low-income families, complained strict discipline policies prevented them from relating to students. Cecilia told of taking a fieldtrip to a performing-arts center:

> In that environment, it was pretty fun too. It was like you know one girl was like, "Come sit next to me, Miss [Mulligan]. I've warmed the seat up for you." Like something just being totally goofy and weird, and then of course she was slouching in her seat, and I had my grade-level chair like pointing at me to make

> her sit up, so like I have to yell at her, and it's just like oh my gosh. So that's just how I feel um, conflicted.

Establishing professional boundaries. In line with previous research (Aultman et al., 2009; Uitto, 2012), PSTs frequently said they were learning where to set relational boundaries. Sometimes, PSTs felt students clearly overstepped boundaries, as with Amy, who said a male student repeatedly asked her out. In less obvious situations, PSTs said they were conflicted, wanting students to regard them as teachers but also wanting to be seen as friends or "real" people. Rachel told in her final interview about an experience in her initial placement:

> I was realizing the importance of them like seeing me as being a person, not just a teacher, … and [a student] and her friend go, were like "Miss [Thomas,] you don't really seem like a *Star Wars* person." And I was like, "I love *Star Wars*!" And they were like, "Wait! What?" … And they started to see me as being more human I think.

In this way, Rachel wanted to be regarded not only as a teacher but also to reveal to students enough information so they could also see her as a person, in this case one who likes *Star Wars*.

Taking it personally. Finally, PSTs consistently indicated it was challenging to not take students' actions personally, causing them to be offended and shutdown their relationships. Shawn described, for instance, that it was difficult to have students not participate: "Watching students constantly avoid or ignore work was frustrating, considering the amount of time that both I and my clinical instructor put into preparing." PSTs expressed frustration, too, when students were disinterested in English content,

possibly particularly hurtful to PSTs, given findings above that PSTs' figured worlds included strong connections to English content. Regarding behaviors, too, PSTs expressed they often felt disruptions were directed at them. Rachel described a student in her case-study presentation: "He's one of those students where you feel like he's always out to get you." Rachel depicted the student as belonging to a category of students targeting the teacher specifically. Marilyn similarly described her relationship with a student:

> She consistently disregards the behavior expectations of the classroom when she defies the teacher, distracts other students, and mocks students and teachers. … I was shocked by her rudeness and mean attitude. As a visibly young and inexperienced teacher, I serve as a great target for [her].

In an interview, Marilyn told why she focused her inquiry on the student, "[She] was just like really bothering me, and I like really wanted to hear other people's perspectives and to like talk about it because she was just like so personally offending me or hurting me."

Breakthroughs. Despite challenges, PSTs also described varied approaches toward building relationships with students. While they said some of these approaches did not yield great results (e.g., recommending students see counselors or changing classroom arrangements), others seemed to allow PSTs to have real breakthroughs in tough-fought relationships. These breakthroughs came from:

- one-on-one interactions with students,
- learning about individual students,
- using texts and student writing,
- positive interactions with families,

- involvement in extracurricular activities,
- seeing mentors build positive relationships, and
- discovering—often when they finished student-teaching—that students liked them.

One-on-one interactions with students. Although PSTs said it was difficult to carve out time with individual students, they consistently said one-on-one interactions were key to improving tough relationships. PSTs said student interviews in initial inquiry projects supported such conversations. Elizabeth, for instance, said:

> I think that was really helpful just because it was nice getting your students like one-on-one, and I was surprised at how much they really opened up. … It was really helpful, but I'm not sure like in my future as a teacher how often I would be able to just like interview kids.

Elizabeth said in full-time teaching, she would more likely have informal conversations with students. PSTs often described such conversations in student-teaching contexts. Samantha, for instance, explained she was able to build a relationship with a student other teachers found difficult because she consistently spent time with him during before-school tutoring:

> Our personal relationship is strong as well, and I think he sees me as an ally. We frequently high-five in the hallways; he invites me to his basketball games, and he'll say hi to me, even when he's with his friends.

She said she attributed his openness to tutoring to her attendance at his games and her acknowledgement to him that it was difficult for him to attend tutoring.

Learning about individual students. PSTs said they had relational breakthroughs through intentional attempts to learn about students individually. Instead of taking students' behaviors personally, PSTs generally in the context of inquiry assignments adapted classroom instruction or management to individuals' interests. Cecilia said in her final inquiry project, "It has become clear to me that each student handles the obstacles and challenges of a classroom in a different way. Some may act out, some may zone out, and others may find out-of-the-ordinary ways to participate." Linda said in her final interview that she changed her perspective, learning different students require different approaches. When she realized a student who had been constantly getting up responded to humor, she joked with him that from then on he would be "glued to his seat." Through such changes, not only did PSTs find behaviors improved but they also related to students in positive ways, as behavior issues subsided (see the discussion section for more on these co-occurring changes).

Using texts and student writing. Many PSTs talked about using language content to build student relationships. Cynthia said she established rapport with ELL students by trying to learn some words in their first languages. The only PST placed in an ESL class for student-teaching, Cynthia was singular in her inquiry-project emphasis of including language learners' first languages in class. But other PSTs similarly said they designed reading or writing assignments around students' interests. Grace, for instance, said she would use a discovery that a hard-to-reach student loved pit bulls to provide him with writing prompts about dogs. PSTs said students' content-related work provided opportunities to know students better, by discussing texts students were reading or learning about students through their writing. Lynn, for instance said a defining moment

in teacher preparation was getting to know students in her remedial English class through their "conversation calendars," weekly calendars students and teachers use to write to each other about daily life, concerns, or curriculum-related questions (Tovani, 2011, p. 18). Later, as she interviewed for full-time jobs, she told employers that she would use conversation calendars to build student relationships.

Positive interactions with families. PSTs said positive interactions with families brought about changed relationships. Amy perhaps found the most dramatic change. A student complained Amy moved his seat from racist motives, and his father requested a conference with her and the principal. Amy was visibly upset, crying when she told cohort members about the situation. A conference outcome included that Amy or her mentor would call the student's father about any future problems. After the first week with no problems, Amy decided it was worth calling to report the student had done well:

> His dad was like I've never received a positive phone call about my son. … And just like the buy-in that we got from that parent having reached out proactively was so amazing. And the student, although he still was like a discipline problem, I feel like I understood the student better after having that interaction. This poor child has never had a good relationship with school. I can't imagine going through school and never having a positive comment from a teacher.

In this example, Amy saw a shift in a strained relationship after reporting a student's good work to his father. Not only did she report that the student's attitude changed in class, but Amy also explained she understood the student better. She said she could not imagine never hearing a teacher's positive comments in school, revealing something

about her own figured world, perhaps as part of the cohort's "smart kids" group identity explained in Question 1 findings.

Involvement in extracurriculars. Extracurricular activities, particularly sports—but also drama and poetry readings in Karen's case—helped PSTs build relationships. Sometimes, PSTs did this by watching performances or games, such as Samantha's attendance at basketball games. Other PSTs coached sports, although they debated in interviews and course discussions the wisdom of taking on extra responsibilities when they were busy learning to teach. Some opted to lead activities and said they built relationships through them. Marilyn, for instance, who was quoted above on how she felt targeted by her student's behaviors, said she joined a running club in which she ran and led health-related talks with girls, including her challenging student:

> I called on [her] and she just- she gave like a really solid answer, and um, I affirmed her, and it was just a really good moment between us, also in front of other kids, which is very rare in that social setting to have like a good connection with a student especially [her], so I thought that was really great. And then we talked one-on-one while we were running.

Marilyn said in her follow-up interview before graduation that getting to know students through the running club had helped her improve in not taking student defiance personally: "You cannot take it personally. It's not about you it's just that like you are someone telling them that they can't do something or they have to do something."

Seeing mentors build positive relationships. PSTs also said they learned to build relationships by watching mentors. Dawn, for instance, who also said sometimes students

listened to other teachers instead of her, told cohort members how her collaborating teacher advocated for a student at a teacher meeting:

> She was saying like how teachers need to, for this kid … that relationships are the key thing. So like yelling at him—not going to happen, but you need to you know, you know that's what's really going to help him is building that relationship, so I tried to take that um perspective with him this week. And work on that. And it's been really good in my experience.

Dawn explained she had talked with the student about topics outside of class and had gotten him to return to reading by asking about the book rather than pointing out his misbehavior.

Discovering students liked them. Finally, PSTs described feeling better about relationships after discovering students liked them. PSTs typically expressed surprise at hearing kind words from students they thought disliked them. Sometimes, such interactions occurred when PSTs received students' notes, as with Cecilia, who described how students wrote Thanksgiving thank-yous to her:

> I had another kid, who he had some severe problems staying on task … He wrote me this Thanksgiving letter saying that he felt like I was his mother at school, and the only interactions I could remember with him were like me yelling at him.

More frequently, these discoveries occurred as PSTs left student-teaching classrooms. Karen remembered her last day:

> A student I had that you know absolutely couldn't stand me at the beginning, and at the end he was able to say, he wrote in my little card, "We had a rough time, but I still learned a lot from you." To still get that, to know that you're not

> necessarily the best liked by everyone but to know that the teacher-student relationship is totally happening.

Such kind words from students helped PSTs feel better about challenging relationships, though PSTs typically received comments too late to impact relationships with these particular students. How these interactions might affect PSTs' future teaching is not altogether clear, but Karen's remark suggest the student's note helped her complexify her figured world regarding "teacher-student relationships," recognizing they can be built even when she was not "the best liked by everyone." This contrast suggests Karen might be differentiating between personal relationships where she is liked and professional relationships where learning is occurring. Her acknowledgement that professional relationships were happening even amid challenges might also lend Karen confidence in future difficult relationships.

Discussion

This study used Gee's (2011b) "figured worlds tool" to examine how PSTs' Discourse revealed: (1) their own figured worlds, as related to those of students and (2) PSTs' efforts to relate to students who might have different figured worlds than themselves while adapting to their own new figured worlds as novice teachers. These questions are here discussed together in exploring a general explanation for how PSTs' figured worlds affected their student relationships.

PSTs came to teacher preparation already having established figured worlds based on lifetimes of accumulating experiences. Though PSTs certainly had many varied individual experiences, they also enacted within their Discourse common identities. These included that PSTs were all women, that they themselves had been successful

students, that they were now becoming new teachers, that they loved English content, and that they came from privileged backgrounds.

They entered student-teaching, consistently talking about the importance of establishing relationships with students. Whether originating from their own personal beliefs which they brought into teacher preparation or from the context of assignments and instruction they received in preparation, PSTs' Discourse frequently stressed the importance of teacher-student relationships. But once tasked with full-time student-teaching, PSTs encountered a host of challenges in actually establishing such relationships, including having: too many students; overly dependent students; students with emotional disturbance or past trauma; absent students; secondary roles to mentors; institutional obstacles; issues establishing boundaries; and difficulties taking it personally when students misbehaved or were uninterested in content.

It is possible to interpret data as suggesting PSTs entered classrooms with figured worlds about teacher-student relationships, including that they as teachers would work hard to develop and deliver engaging lessons, while students would respond to these lessons with interest and courtesy. When relationships did not develop in this way (possibly because of differences Poplin & Weeres, 1994, found in how teachers and students perceived caring), PSTs were surprised. Marilyn said she was "shocked" at her student's "rudeness and mean attitude." Instead of becoming a kind and benevolent teacher relating to students through diligence in creating an engaging classroom, Marilyn began considering herself a target for the student who she said would "mercilessly laugh" at even her mentor, a more experienced teacher. PSTs appeared to develop their own category of students, as Rachel said, who are "always out to get you." These students did

not fit into the figured worlds PSTs described bringing to classrooms. PSTs, in contrast, had been successful students who had loved English content and had often had deep, personally meaningful relationships with their own English teachers. Faced with such unexpected and challenging behaviors, PSTs said it was difficult not to take students' actions personally.

Sometimes, PSTs saw little change in these difficult relationships. However, many did describe breakthroughs. In some cases, these breakthroughs occurred simply as PSTs found out students liked them but in most cases, breakthroughs can be conceptualized as stemming from PSTs' efforts to better understand their students' figured worlds: one-on-one interactions, learning about individual students, using texts and writing to relate to students, having positive interactions with families, involvement in extracurriculars, or watching mentors build relationships. These breakthroughs seemed to occur as PSTs learned not to take students' behaviors personally (see McDevitt & Ormrod, 2012, for more on typical adolescent behavior).

In this sense, PSTs had to relate to students who might have had different figured worlds for teacher-student relationships than theirs. Samantha, for example, in establishing a break-through relationship with her challenging student, explained he was not "malicious at heart," in striking contrast to PSTs' descriptions of students as "out to get" them. Linda found that when she related to her student through humor—telling him he was glued to his seat—his behavior improved. In this way, it seemed PSTs' student relationships improved simultaneously with students' behavior. The two appeared to go hand-in-hand. Stronger relationships made better behavior and better behavior improved relationships, in support of Cornelius-White's (2007) findings that positive relationships

were associated with reduced disruptive behaviors and that associations appeared bidirectional.

Data indicate consequences of improved or failed relationships for students are not simply the appearance of tidier, better-managed classrooms but of real lasting effects for students. PSTs said their relationships mattered for students in making decisions about staying in school or attending college. While PSTs' comments merit further investigation from students' vantage points, such life-altering consequences suggest the importance of teaching PSTs early not only that they need to build relationships with students who are different from them but also how to build such relationships (Jiménez & Rose, 2010).

In terms of helping PSTs know how to build relationships, first, PSTs from "smart kids" figured worlds need instruction on not taking it personally when students misbehave or do not share their love of school or content. Additionally, findings included in this study as breakthroughs these PSTs experienced might be taught to other PSTs as strategies for relationship-building with challenging students that help build shared figured worlds. Schools might make institutional changes, such as providing PSTs—and teachers (see McCombs, 2003, for more on how pressures affect full-time teachers' relationships with students)—with caseloads that are not so heavy as to preclude time for establishing relationships or attending extracurricular events. Discipline policies, too, might be written with flexibility, allowing teachers to provide correction in ways offering dignity (see Reeve, 2006, on "gentle discipline") and allowing further relationship building. Researchers can examine how PSTs in other contexts—and male PSTs—establish student relationships and how relationships compare with these results. They

can explore questions comparing how PSTs relate to students in student-teaching and later how they build relationships when becoming full-time teachers.

Finally, one additional point of importance emerges. In considering PSTs' individual experiences, this study explores how Karen became personally upset when a student made intolerant comments about others of diverse sexual identities. These comments were inappropriate in Karen's figured world of tolerance. Too frequently, in talking about cultural and ethnic divides between teachers and students, discussion focuses only on preparing teachers from the dominant culture to teach students from diverse backgrounds, as this is predominant in the United States. Of equal importance is providing meaningful support for teachers from diverse backgrounds in teaching students from the dominant culture who might make comments or harbor attitudes not appropriate within the teachers' figured worlds (Dillard, 1994; Quinn & Meiners, 2011). In this study, it is possible that Karen, who said she had disdain for upper-class Caucasian students and who wanted most to teach students from diverse backgrounds, might benefit from targeted discussion on how she might protect herself from becoming personally offended at her student's homophobic comments and how she might move from her own disdain toward change in students' language. In this sense, preparing teachers for diverse classrooms includes preparing a diversity of teachers for a diversity of students and teaching teachers how to relate to students, regardless of who they are.

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Table 1: Participants

Pseudonym	Age	Race	First Language(s)
Amy	24	White	English
Cecilia	21	White	English
Cynthia	21	Korean	Korean
Dawn	20	White	English
Elizabeth	21	White	English
Grace	23	Filipino-American	Kapangpangan
Karen	24	White	English
Kimberly	21	White	English
Linda	20	Chinese American	Mandarin, English
Lynn	23	White	English, Dutch
Marilyn	20	White	English
Rachel	21	White	English
Robin	21	White	English
Samantha	26	White	English
Shawn	21	Hispanic	English

Table 2: Sample Figured Worlds-Coded Passages

PST	Excerpt
Rachel	"Additionally, my *background** is very similar to many of the students at [school]. I grew up, as most of these students are, in a middle class predominantly white neighborhood. However, I went to a medium size private Episcopalian college preparatory middle and high school."
Cynthia	"Also, because this class consists of ESL students, I knew that my upbringing in Mexico could possibly affect my perception of these students and the challenges that they face."
Robin	"I also believe that my educational *background**—attending a large urban public school, but being in Honors and AP classes with predominantly white, upper-class youth, affected my study."

*PSTs often discussed figured worlds in terms of "backgrounds."