

White TESOL Instructors' Engagement with Social Justice Content in an EAP Program: Teacher Neutrality as a Tool of White Supremacy

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Abstract

This study highlights the teaching practices of three white instructors—who addressed social justice issues in the context of their English for Academic Purposes (EAP) classes—to contextualize their pedagogy in relation to intersections of Whiteness and English language teaching. The study was conducted at a four-year private university on the East Coast in the United States, and data were collected over the course of a semester through observations, interviews with teachers, and document analysis. Using Social Justice Pedagogy (SJP) and Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) as my frameworks for analysis, I suggest that white instructors' remaining neutral on social injustices maintains Whiteness in the context of English language teaching. Implications are discussed for white EAP instructors who seek to engage emergent bilingual (EB) students in conversations about social justice issues and disrupt existing power dynamics of Whiteness and colonial legacies within English language teaching.

Introduction

Historically, English for Academic Purposes (EAP) programs have prioritized using inauthentic, standardized materials to teach skills-based language instruction over adopting more critical positions to English language teaching that recognize the impact of the surrounding sociocultural and political histories on classroom contexts and interactions (Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001). Rather than addressing *ideological issues*, or “cultural beliefs that justify social arrangements, including patterns of inequality” (Macionis, 2010), discussions of societal inequities—which may unveil conflicting views among discussants—are often foregone, withholding opportunities for emergent bilingual (EB) students to participate in complex conversations about relevant social issues (Benesch, 2010). The outer world impacts EB students' school-based experiences, so bringing in relevant content that deals with historical and contemporary societal issues may provide them with opportunities to practise critical reading and research, deducing fact from fiction, and participating in civic dialogue: all skills and competencies that are crucial for their academic and career success.

This study highlights the teaching practices of three white instructors—who addressed social justice issues in the context of their EAP classes—to contextualize their pedagogy in relation to intersections of Whiteness and English language teaching. The study was conducted at a four-year private university on the East Coast in the United States, and data were collected over the course of a semester through observations, interviews with teachers, and document analysis. Using Social Justice Pedagogy (SJP) and Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) as my frameworks for analysis, I suggest that white instructors' remaining neutral on social injustices maintains Whiteness in the context of English language teaching. Implications are discussed for white EAP instructors who seek to engage EB students in conversations about social justice issues and disrupt existing power dynamics of Whiteness and colonial legacies within ELT.

The study offers implications that echo the call of Gerald (2020) for teacher education programs to integrate Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) and Critical Race Theory (CRT) into their curricula in order to better prepare the majority white teaching force to work with diverse learners and adopt self-reflective, harm-reducing practices. It surfaces the “complicated conversation” (Pinar, 2004) about curricula traditionally used in English language teaching and showcases it as a site of struggle reflecting the political, institutional, and sociohistorical priorities of a given moment. Finally, it prompts journals to provide platforms for interdisciplinary investigations that seek to better understand the intersections of language and race, which has been minimally researched.

Literature Review

Whiteness and English Language Teaching

The population of North America is rapidly diversifying, and the relative proportion of white people is declining (Frey, 2020; Harvey & Houle, 2006). For example, according to Statistics Canada (2021), 22.3 percent of the Canadian population belongs to a visible minority group or groups, and that number is expected to rise to between 31.2 percent and 35.9 percent by 2036 (“2021 Census,” 2021). The needs and interests of students are shifting in line with changing demographics, and white educators must evolve their practices to meet those needs. “Decolonizing” English language teaching necessitates recognizing that the English language has been used as a colonizing force around the world to carry out acts of domination and oppression (Kumaravadivelu, 2016; Pennycook, 1998). Lin and Luke (2006) have recognized that the naming of Teaching English to Speakers of other Languages (TESOL) already establishes a dynamic of Self-Other in which the Anglo teacher is “Self,” and the learner is the perpetual “Other” found lacking, which upholds a colonial narrative of oppressor and oppressed. Instead of ignoring historical wrongdoings committed by Anglo English speakers, an alternative is to acknowledge those histories within English language teaching to engage students in critical inquiry over social justice issues related to oppression through content-based language instruction (Lynn et al., 2002).

English language teaching may be seen as a border site where imperialism, linguisticism, xenophobia, and racism overlap (Kubota & Lin, 2006; Liggett, 2014; Sterzuk, 2015; Taylor, 2006). Teaching English and Whiteness—the set of rules, norms, and behaviours that govern status quo society and uphold white supremacy (Roediger, 2006)—are intermingled as a majority of TESOL instructors and college professors are white (Davis & Frey, 2019; Motha, 2006), the idealized Native Speaker is often positioned as white (Ruecker & Ives, 2015), and both being white as well as being a native English speaker are identity markers that connote global power (Motha, 2006). As the mode of communication for many colonialist acts, English has acted as a medium that reproduces and otherizes those of different racial, national, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds (Luke, 2004).

The “Anglo” bias of English language teaching has been well documented in the literature, and scholars have denounced EAP programs’ willingness to forego critical approaches to language teaching (Canagarajah, 2002; Flowerdew & Peacock, 2001), condemning the ways that English language teaching tends to herald Whiteness as “both a prize and a goal” (Gerald,

2020). A study by Lee (2015) showed how EAP instruction in liberal multicultural Canada uses culture as a proxy for race, replicating power dynamics that otherize EB students and position English as metonymic with Whiteness. Mackie (2003) addressed the role of patronizing desire and white saviourism in her teaching of the “ESL [English as a second language] Other,” who she constructed in her mind as “a monolithic community of people, joined by their sameness to each other and their difference from [her], and by their dependence on [her] to help them out of their difficulties and to provide a model of Canadianness to which they could aspire” (p. 30). The task to recognize and disrupt patterns of Whiteness in English language teaching is not an easy one as it has deep ties to colonialism.

To avoid repeating societal patterns of domination and settler colonialism, white English language teachers must account for the intersections of Whiteness and the English language to disrupt the colonizing power of TESOL (Kubota & Lin, 2006). Scholars have been engaged with the question of how to actualize decolonial, anti-racist teaching practices for many years. For example, Kouritzin’s (2005) editorial in *TESL Canada* asked what it means to be a white English Language teacher and teacher educator who seeks to adopt anti-racist practices while simultaneously acknowledging her own internalized racism. Wihak’s (2004) perspective investigated what it means to be white in Canada and offered personal reflections on her own racial identity in a society that continues to marginalize Indigenous communities despite governmental structures that proclaim to offer freedoms equally to all, writing that “insidious blindness to the effects of race is pervasive in white Canadian society” (p. 112). Fleming’s (2005) article asked what it means to be an anti-racist educator who resists personal privilege to challenge EB students to “seize hold of Canada as their own creation to mold” (p. 90).

Educators and scholars have developed theory around the intersection of race with TESOL (Crump, 2014; Enns-Kananen, 2020; Lin & Luke, 2006; Kubota, 2002; Kubota & Lin, 2006; Shin, 2011; Von Esch et al., 2020), investing time and energy into developing curricula that merges English language teaching with socially conscious content (Guerrettaz & Zahler, 2017; Walsh Marr, 2019). However, few studies have asked white English language teachers to reveal their own views about using ideological and/or social justice-related content to teach English. Since English language teaching is wrapped up with Native Speakerism and Whiteness (Motha, 2006; Ruecker & Ives, 2015), this exploration of white English language teachers’ views is a critical piece of the puzzle to understand how to manifest decolonial approaches to English language teaching, and this lack of research into white English teacher views is the gap this study seeks to address.

Uncritical Approaches in EAP Programs

Scholars have long critiqued EAP programs for adopting uncritical and/or pragmatist approaches to English language teaching (Allison, 1996; Benesch, 1993; Hyland, 2004; Paltridge, 2001; Pennycook, 1994; Santos, 1992). Uncritical and/or pragmatist approaches leave EB students unprepared to engage successfully in university-level content-area work, which necessitates understanding ideological issues (such as racism, sexism, gender discrimination, and ethnocentrism) that result in societal inequities. Benesch (1999; 2001; 2010) has argued for the use of critical pedagogy in EAP classrooms and has provided models for intervention and mediation in the context of critical conversations wherein teachers can model that critical

thinking is “neither an unguided free-for-all nor a didactic lecture but a balance between extended student contributions and gentle challenges by the teacher” (1999, p. 578). Haque (2008) has argued that employing critical pedagogy in EAP teaching is futile if not undertaken with simultaneous critiques of the institutions in which it is occurring. The challenge is multiplied when efforts are undertaken in contexts that self-position as “neutral sites” in which EAP is seen as a “service industry to provide students with access to a neutral body of knowledge” (Haque, 2008, p. 94) rather than an institution that is itself ideologically motivated and responsible for perpetuating inequities that otherize EB students.

EAP programs encourage instructors to adopt new genres, technologies, and research-informed practices into their teaching (Bahrami et al., 2019; Hyland & Shaw, 2016); however, the debate about what the larger purpose of EAP programs should be—whether it is to convey a practical set of language skills to students, or to develop students’ critical thinking, effective communication, and abilities to speak in informed ways about relevant social issues such that they can participate in academic communities successfully—remains an active and ongoing one. Canagarajah (2002) posited that the “accommodationist” approach so often employed in EAP settings ignores students’ cultural backgrounds and neglects opportunities to advance their critical thinking skills about subject area content.

More recent scholarship has highlighted potential outcomes of critical approaches to English language teaching that merge language and content instruction, reciprocally, to encourage learners to make text/context connections, and make the rhetorical and social expectations of texts clear (Airey, 2016; Canagarajah, 2006; Schleppegrell 2013). For example, Walsh Marr’s (2019) response to Canada’s 2008 Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) sought to teach students about Canada’s mistreatment of First Nations communities while foregrounding critical English language instruction through examining historical texts and analyzing the language structures within the texts that construct specific narratives about what occurred, such as the use of active vs. passive voice to connote or deny responsibility for the harm committed against Indigenous communities by whites in power. In a United States context, Guerretaz & Zahler’s (2017) article highlighted possibilities to de-silence race in an academic literacy class through using the novel *A Lesson Before Dying* by Ernest Gaines (1993) to foreground multiliteracies and African American Vernacular English (AAVE), as well as initiate critical conversations about historical injustices experienced by Black Americans in Jim Crow-era United States—conversations that can set the stage for addressing contemporary injustices against Black and Brown communities and societal responses such as the Black Lives Matter movement.

Talking to EB students about contemporary societal issues and the impact of culture, race, gender, class, and language (among other identity markers) on individuals’ and groups’ experiences of opportunity and/or oppression in varying contexts can position EB students to be more critical of the authority invested in English as compared to their first language (L1), which is a key component of decolonizing English language teaching (Parkinson, 2016). This case study contributes to the existing literature by highlighting the practices of three white EAP instructors who foregrounded social justice-based content in their EAP instruction. The study offers implications for white English language teachers invested in adopting anti-racist, decolonial practices and highlights the importance of reflecting on one’s personal beliefs,

prejudices, and biases regarding racism, white privilege, and personal responsibility towards societal inequities. This study suggests that English language teachers who seek to decolonize their teaching cannot do so while remaining neutral on issues of injustice.

Research Questions

Data for this study were collected over a semester, and the questions that guided it were:

1. How do white EAP instructors conceptualize the politics of English language teaching?
2. What are tensions and/or alignments between how white EAP instructors understand themselves and their beliefs about racism, prejudice, white privilege, and colonialism and how do those beliefs manifest in classroom conversations about social justice issues?
3. How do instructors' conversations about social justice issues maintain or disrupt Whiteness in English language teaching?

Methods

Theoretical Framing

Social Justice Pedagogy (SJP)

Social Justice Pedagogy (SJP) represents a sustained commitment to acknowledging that systemic injustice is real and that in order to disrupt it, those with more power than other communities/groups/individuals must actively subvert their own privilege. Taking inspiration from the definition given by Cumming-Potvin (2009), I understand SJP to be ethics in action that drive instructors to 1) promote visibility of marginalized persons; 2) speak out against oppressions and continually work to destabilize the status quo surrounding race, class, culture, and all other marginalized or minoritized identity markers; and 3) accept the above two codes of conduct as one's ethical responsibility.

A social justice agenda in teaching is one that sees the process of teaching as being instrumental to creating a fairer and more just society (Zeichner, 2003). In this way, the purpose of teaching is to help students to grow into full participants and change agents for greater equity in their communities (Parker, 2006). Teaching for social justice is not a simple task, and the challenge is doubled when it is undertaken in the context of an educational system entrenched in historical inequities and oppressive institutions. For this reason, it is critically important that teachers not only engage students in conversations about social justice topics, but that they are also continually reflecting on the privileges and prejudices they may bring with them into the classroom and to these discussions.

Freire (2010) identified that liberatory and transformative pedagogy only occurs when both teacher and student are learning together, co-creating and re-creating knowledge, and when hierarchies of Teacher and Student dissolve and all parties are learning Subjects (p. 69). Similarly supportive of liberatory classrooms, hooks (1994) argued that in opposition to the banking model of education in which students are constructed as passive recipients of information, critical inquiry is an important part of learning since the "cozy, good feeling [of

being a passive recipient] may at times block the possibility of giving students space to feel that there is integrity to be found in grappling with difficult material” (p. 154). DiAngelo and Sensoy (2012), Kendi (2019), and Saad (2020) further identified that personal growth and learning may be found through embracing productive discomfort, seeking critical understandings of history, and reflecting on one’s positionality in society in relation to others. It is through this understanding of Social Justice Pedagogy that I approached my analysis of the data and my interpretations of the participants’ words and actions in their classrooms.

Conceptualizing Whiteness

Gillborn (2019) distinguished between “Whiteness” and “white people” as not being one in the same; however, they often work in collaboration. “Whiteness” comprises a set of assumptions, beliefs, and practices that disproportionately privilege white people and their interests; people who identify as white might serve the agenda of Whiteness, but this is not a given, nor is it inevitable. Leonardo (2002) delineated that while “white people” refers to an identity category typically based on skin colour, “Whiteness” is a social concept that relates to structural inequities rooted in white supremacist racial dominance. As a “well-entrenched structure that is manifested in and gives shape to institutions” (Castagno, 2013, p. 102), Whiteness serves as a powerful kind of “social amnesia” that transcends national boundaries (Leonardo, 2002) and upholds the status quo. In the context of education, it undergirds sustained inequities in schools that result in achievement gaps, pushes out students of colour, and maintains the school-to-prison pipeline (Leonardo, 2013; Morris, 2016; Skiba, et al., 2014). In this study, “Whiteness,” “white supremacy,” and “status quo” are used interchangeably to indicate the inextricable connections between society, as it has always been and currently is, and the maintenance of a racialized hierarchy.

DiAngelo (2018) has provided a set of guidelines for identifying and working against *white fragility*—a state in which even the smallest amount of racial stress becomes unbearable for white people, triggering a series of defensive moves such as outward displays of guilt, fear, anger, as well as behaviours like silence, defensiveness, or leaving the stressful situation, all of which serve to reinstate the white racial equilibrium (p. 2). DiAngelo’s (2018) definition and examples of white fragility provided me with a critical framework for understanding statements of teachers in my study that relayed their relative levels of race consciousness and the degree to which the conversations they had with students about ideological issues maintained or disrupted Whiteness in the educational space.

Study Design

Positionality

I am a white, well-educated, Native English-speaking woman. I do not viscerally experience the societal injustices with which I am concerned (Kay, 2018). However, given the privileges I have, I understand that it is my ethical obligation to listen to those whose lives have been challenged by more obstacles than my own, and I must also act out of my awareness of those facts. I seek to use my positionality to give voice to issues affecting individuals and communities for whom society is not constructed, since remaining silent on issues of injustice maintains the status quo of

white supremacy. Milner (2007) identified that studying the self and studying the self in relation to others in one's community can be a powerful means to effect change. Wihak (2004) stated that "the meaning of being white is created by my own actions rather than just by the actions of other members of the white race" (p. 114). I do not believe it is possible to develop a positive white identity, and I agree with DiAngelo (2018) that we may strive to be "less white," less racially oppressive, and more committed to "break[ing] with white silence and white solidarity, to stop privileging the comfort of white people over the pain of racism for people of colour, to move past guilt and into action" (p. 150). It is my hope that through researching my own community of white EAP instructors and through subsequent actions taken in my own teaching and advocacy work, I can continue learning, evolve my teaching practice to be more equitable, and work to be a better accomplice for social justice work (Kendall, 2021).

I conducted this research in a United States context; however, I have chosen to submit this article to a Canadian journal because racism within English language teaching is not limited to the United States, and both the U.S. and Canada have similar legacies of racism, colonialism, and Indigenous genocide with which to reckon (Veracini, 2015). In U.S. universities, the student body is diversifying faster than the university instructors who are educating them, where 70 percent of university professors continue to be white, with disparities increasing in relation to professor status—adjunct, tenure, etc. (Davis & Frey, 2019). Statistics Canada collects data on age, rank, and gender of faculty and students in Canadian universities; however, it does not collect data on race or ethnic makeup of faculty and students, and neither do provincial governments (Wong, 2017). U.S. data may represent the most relevant parallel of information that may apply to Canadian contexts. Because the observations and conclusions made in this study may be transferable to a Canadian context, I seek to understand, in the spirit of Malcolm X's (1965) call to white allies to get to work across our own communities, how we may contribute to building more equitable institutions and disrupt settler colonial, racist, and xenophobic patterns within English language teaching.

Case Study

Case study was a suitable research method for this study as it allows for in-depth examination of a specific field site and community in which there is a shared culture (Leedy & Ormrod, 2013, p. 236). The study took place in the context of an EAP program where I also taught at the time of the study. Like my participants, I am also a white EAP instructor. Because my goal was to understand this group of teachers and gain a better understanding of the impact of white teachers' underlying beliefs on the ways they engage with ideological content in the EAP classroom, case study was a fitting research design as it may be utilized to learn more about a "little known or poorly understood situation" (p. 231). Historically, EAP programs have not adopted ideological approaches to English language instruction, so case study was an appropriate research method to allow me to gain insight into an understudied area. Case study may also be utilized to highlight changes that occur in individuals or programs in response to specific events or circumstances (Leedy et al., 2019), so it was appropriate for my goal of examining white teachers' approaches to ideological content in the wake of social injustices happening in real time, such as instances of police brutality happening against Black and Brown people in the U.S. and in Canada (Simpson, 2020).

Research Context

The study was conducted at a private, four-year university on the East Coast of the United States. The university has about 14,000 students between both the undergraduate and graduate schools, and the EAP program was founded a little over ten years ago. There were about 230 students enrolled in classes in the program for Spring 2018, ranging from undergraduate to graduate levels and including both credit and non-credit bearing courses. Demographically, students in all programs represented over thirty-seven countries; however, the majority of students came from China. As of Spring 2018, there were 19 teachers on staff—14 of whom were adjunct and five who were full-time. Fourteen of the teachers were women, and five were men. The demographics of the instructors were consistent with national trends for both the U.S. and Canada in that 15 of the instructors were white, three were Asian, and one was Black.

Participants and Data Collection

To gain access to participants for this study, I first sent out an informational email to all faculty in the EAP program to explain my goals—namely, to observe the teaching of EAP instructors whose courses addressed social justice issues—to better understand the opportunities and challenges in addressing such content with EB students. I received interest from three instructors, and after discussing the content they planned to address in their classes as well as working out scheduling requirements, since I would be observing their classes throughout the semester, I determined their classes to be suitable for the study. One instructor was male, two were female, and all three instructors identified as white. Two of the instructors were American and one was Canadian. The instructors all had non-tenure track appointments; one had a full-time position within the program and the other two taught as adjunct instructors.

While each class within the EAP program had overarching objectives that needed to be met, instructors had freedom to determine how they did so and could choose their own curricula and materials. The three classes I observed were 1) a graduate course in advanced reading, 2) an undergraduate academic writing class, and 3) an undergraduate course on media and culture. Some of the ideological, social justice-based content that instructors addressed in their classes included police brutality against Black Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC), the Black Lives Matter movement, protests, gentrification of the surrounding metropolitan area, and the violent legacy of Christopher Columbus.

The classes met three times per week for 55 minutes per class. The teachers as well as the students in their classes consented to be observed and have their class participation and words documented. Students in the classes came from Vietnam, Venezuela, Saudi Arabia, U.A.E., Palestine, and Ethiopia; however, a majority of students were from China. I collected the data for the study by audio recording each class period, taking detailed fieldnotes, and transcribing the period after class for later coding and analysis. I received ethics approval for the study from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) committee at the university where I was conducting the research as well as the university where I was completing my doctoral work as this comprised part of my dissertation research. For the sake of anonymity and in keeping with current reference guidelines in the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (7th ed.) (APA,

2020), I refer to the participating individual teachers and their students using the third person singular “they.”

Data Sources and Materials

Data sources for this study included observations, field notes, artifact review (of syllabi, class materials, etc.), and semi-structured interviews with instructors at three points throughout the semester (see Table 1 for summary of database). I audio recorded class periods and interviews on my computer, I took detailed fieldnotes throughout the classes, and I bracketed my personal observations/evaluations in my fieldnotes in an effort to record only that which was observable in the classroom (Emerson et al., 1995). My data analysis was ongoing and recursive, involving continual de-construction of my initial observations to reach deeper understandings (Stake, 1995). In my transcription process, I documented interactions between students and teachers as “scripts” (Grimm et al., 2014) and referenced students as “S1,” “S2,” etc. to maintain anonymity.

Table 1

Summary of Database

Methods	Data collection period (January 2018- May 2018)	Data
Classroom observations	Ongoing	- Fieldnotes, audiotape, and transcription on 54 lessons in three courses totaling 67.5 hours of observation
Fieldnotes	Ongoing	- Recorded notes in classroom observations. Focused on observable phenomena and bracketed personal thoughts
Interviews with teachers	Interview 1: Beginning of semester Interview 2: Middle of the semester Interview 3: End of the semester	- Audiotaped and transcribed nine interviews with an average length of 1.5 hours per interview
Documents	Ongoing	- Course syllabi, outlines, in-class materials, course website
Codebook	Ongoing	- Synthesized quotes from classes and interviews to develop themes using an online qualitative data coding software program

To relay participants’ words truthfully, I utilized verbatim coding (Saldaña, 2021), and I allowed themes to emerge from the data (Leedy et al., 2019). I employed a web-based coding software to help me to categorize, tag, and analyze my data (Salmona et al., 2019), uploading

class and interview transcripts to the program and using the software to create a codebook that helped identify and organize overarching themes and sub-themes across data sources. Creswell's (2013) data analysis spiral served as a model for me to organize my data, analyze it as a whole, identify overarching categories and themes, and delineate findings within those themes. I repeated this process to identify outliers and/or allow for more nuanced understandings to develop from my initial observations. In line with scholars like Maxwell (2013) and Chang (2008), I believe that research is an ongoing process that expands outward to allow for more meaningful connections and analyses to be made the longer one sits with the data.

Findings

I have organized my findings into three overlapping categories that relate to the earlier stated research questions, with my findings contextualized in relation to the research questions. The question related to the impact of instructors' conversations about social justice issues on Whiteness in English language teaching is addressed throughout the findings section and is further elaborated on and contextualized in the subsequent discussion.

Teachers' Beliefs about the Politics of Teaching

"You can't pretend it's not political"

In interviews, teachers shared their beliefs about the politics of teaching and showcased varying understandings of colonialism, xenophobia, racism, and white privilege. During an interview, a participant claimed that "you can't pretend [teaching] is not political—especially language teaching," and indicated that they valued allowing students' own opinions and voices to take centre stage rather than their own, saying that they "weren't there to create Mini Mes." One participant shared that there have been moments when they have heard students' opinions on social issues that they have "found repugnant," which led them to question how they felt about helping students acquire language to express views with which they disagreed. A teacher shared that, in their opinion, it's none of their business what students' personal views are and how they may clash with their own. Another teacher shared that they thought it was important to keep their feelings "tapped [sic] down" during conversations [about social justice issues]." Another teacher shared that they had heard students make homophobic comments in class and asked, "What to do about that? If you figure out that answer, I will happily buy your book."

"I think the teacher should be neutral"

Teachers in the study expressed a desire to be neutral when speaking to students about ideological issues related to societal inequities. One teacher identified that they think that in order to be an effective facilitator of discussion, the teacher should be neutral on social issues. They did not think it was useful to share their own beliefs or "try to convince students of things" and said that instead, they wanted to communicate information to students "just the way [it is]". One instructor shared their own experiences attending a seminar-based high school where teachers adopted neutral stances when discussing social and political issues, reflecting that these experiences shaped their own conceptions of "how things should be" in the classroom. When

discussing the process of choosing texts and resources for classes, teachers reported that selecting materials for how well they revealed “the reality of things.”

Another teacher shared that early on in their English language teaching career, they decided “to try to be as neutral as possible on social issues that come up.” They explained that they were raised in a military family where “you never talk politics and you never talk religion because military’s the family, and you have people from all sides coming in, and for an army officer, you always follow your leader no matter what your personal beliefs are.” Teachers shared that they have had students who ask them on the side where they stand and they refuse to tell them because they have seen other teachers who do “go there” with students, and they were concerned about conflicting views being shared that could result in hurt feelings. When students asked what their political views were, one teacher answered, “I’ll tell you the answer my parents told me for 40 years—secret voter.” The teachers in this study did not see it as desirable or appropriate to share their personal politics with students and instead, insisted it was best to keep these separate from their teaching.

All three teachers identified that “preserving the peace” and “minimizing potential conflict” were values they held in high esteem in their classrooms. They identified that they saw it as important to not “get on a soapbox,” and “yammer on about [their] opinions.” One teacher expressed pride when, in class, a student asked for their opinion on a race-related topic and another student cut in to say, “don’t ask [them]. [They’re] always neutral!” For the teachers, the idea of being seen by students as neutral on ideological issues related to racism, social, and political injustice seemed to be an ideal to which they aspired and viewed as a hallmark of effective and ethical teaching. Teachers did not see a contradiction in acknowledging the political nature of teaching while also remaining silent about social injustices. Scholars like DiAngelo (2018) may assess this denial of personal responsibility to address injustices as retreating from stress-inducing situations rather than showing beliefs that white people with unearned privileges are obligated to speak out on issues of injustice. Many scholars (DiAngelo, 2018; Kendi, 2019; Saad, 2020) would agree that such denials foreground white fragility and reinforce the racial status quo.

Teachers’ Beliefs about Racism, White Privilege, and Personal Responsibility

“I don’t feel that I have the expertise to address these issues”

In interviews, teachers shared their personal beliefs about racism, colonialism, white privilege, and personal responsibility to address societal inequities. Common findings were that teachers believed a) they were not the appropriate person to speak about racism and other social inequities and that education and educating about such issues should be carried out by minoritized individuals, b) present-day inequities had nothing to do with them if they were not acting in racist ways, and c) any conversations about race, racism, or other injustices should be carried out in a “civil” manner in which no one is called a racist or told they are wrong.

One teacher shared in an interview that because they don’t face racial prejudice themselves, they don’t often notice or think about it until/unless it is pointed out. This teacher has close family members of colour, and they identified that sometimes these family members

will “call [them] out on things with comments like ‘that’s such a white comment.’” I asked the teacher if they were bothered by these “call-outs” and they said no—that they found them helpful and that they “want[ed] to be educated about these issues so please, tell [them] what to do.”

Teachers shared that they don’t feel like they have the expertise to discuss racism with their students, and one participant said that “if [students] had a professor from a minority background, that would be very helpful.” Other teachers shared similar views, identifying that because they are white, they don’t feel capable of speaking about injustice in an informed way. They said they would like to help forward the conversation, but they don’t know how, and one participant said, “I would like to be able to hear what the issues are—how can I help forward the conversation? How can I hear you? Please stop me and let me know right away—you know—call me out on it.” They expressed a desire to be educated on racial and social justice issues and to be alerted if/when they were not understanding something, and they indicated feeling like it was more appropriate to be educated by minoritized people on issues related to injustice rather than educating themselves.

“The Confederacy is not my fault... I think we’ve got to drop it”

Teachers did not see themselves as being complicit in present-day inequities if they were not participating in individual acts of racism. One teacher shared their view that the alt-right has a slogan that “being white is okay” and said that they agree with this statement. They further explained their opinion that white Americans “don’t need to bear the burden of the Civil War,” elaborating to say,

I think it’s a little absurd to be having these arguments about the Confederacy still. Because no one my age is responsible for it. I mean even if you are related to Confederate soldiers, even if you know people that protested against the Civil Rights movement—it’s not my fault, and I don’t think it’s their fault either. At some point, I think we’ve got to drop it because as we’ve seen, it creates a lot of animosity.

This teacher did not see themselves as having benefited from white supremacy, nor did they view its historical legacy as something that belonged to them. Their comments highlighted a desire to smooth over past injustices and construct a vision of societal harmony rather than prioritize accountability.

Another teacher shared their experiences talking about racism while growing up, and said that they “were always able to have open dialogue [...] and everyone was allowed to share their opinions. And... you know, [these conversations] were conducted in a civil and organized way no one was called a racist and no one was told they’re wrong.” Similar to the participant comment above, this teacher did not see it as their personal responsibility, as a white person, to account for racism’s historical legacy or present-day impact, and indicated valuing “civility and organization” in race conversations over accurate historical renderings and justice-oriented understandings.

Manifestations of Teachers' Beliefs in the Classroom

Teachers' beliefs regarding racism, white supremacy, the legacy of colonialism, and white accountability manifested in the classroom when speaking about social justice-related issues. Teachers enacted their preferred stances of remaining neutral on ideological issues of social justice while simultaneously revealing their personal beliefs, both of which served to maintain Whiteness.

"I'm not saying right or wrong"

Teachers expressed their desire to remain neutral on issues of social justice in the classroom, and this value manifested in their approaches to teaching about social justice topics. In one teacher's class on media and culture, students spoke about an excerpt they watched of the show *Black-ish* about an upper middle-class Black family trying not to lose touch with their racial community while facing pressure to assimilate to white, middle class norms. The episode is called "Juneteenth" and it highlights a school play for Thanksgiving put on by a white teacher whose efforts at diversity and inclusion include making students of colour play Columbus and other colonizers. During the debrief of the episode, the teacher gauged students' understandings of basic plot points, asking, "So, who's Christopher Columbus?" A student responded that Columbus "invaded North America and got the land and killed people," to which the teacher responded, "OK, 'Invaded.' Interesting terminology. I'm not saying right or wrong." In this case, the teacher's perception of what it meant to be neutral on ideological issues meant that they did not confirm a student's assessment of what Columbus did as an "invasion," which by definition means "an unwelcome intrusion into another's domain."

When I asked the teacher about this moment in a subsequent interview, they shared the following:

T: I felt that it was such a loaded word [L: Invaded?] Yes. So, yes: he [Christopher Columbus] came. And yes, there was a lot of destruction. Not true that he was in North America [laughs] Ok, but I say all this—I was doing research on it, a day or two beforehand doublechecking what we were seeing in the show. 'Cause I was like, 'Well, I've got to see what's true.' So, I didn't have all the research, I wasn't able to go back and make sure: 'This is absolutely true' or not. So hence, I said 'I can't say true or not' [laughs] 'I can't say right or wrong,' but yet, I know there are some facts that we were taught that are incorrect. So, it was the loaded word [that made me respond in the way I did] and it would have been useful to say, 'That's a loaded word,' because 'invasion' means that you are going there to destroy—in my mind, that's the insinuation, the connotation.

In this interaction, the teacher shares that they had been put off by the student's use of a "loaded" term and did not feel adequately informed on the issues to be able to speak to what was true or untrue. This response indicates a gap, not only in the teacher's own education on Christopher Columbus' actions and legacy, but also in their confidence in being able to navigate addressing "loaded" terminology in the classroom. Scholars like Hess and McAvoy (2009), Kay (2018), and Loewen (2018) have addressed the utility of leaning into conflict in the classroom while also

acknowledging that it is an underdeveloped skill in teachers. This contention indicates that there is a gap not only in being informed on the issues, but also being equipped to address moments of discomfort, disagreement, ambiguity, and conflict so that the teachable moments that could come out of such tensions are not sacrificed.

“Riots are uncontrolled, unthinking beasts”

Teachers contradicted their stated desires to be neutral on social justice-related issues in the classroom. In the midst of a conversation about major turning points in the Civil Rights movement, for example, students discussed an image displayed on a screen showcasing burning buildings during civil unrest following the death of Martin Luther King Jr. Students were confused about why Black people were burning their own neighbourhoods in protest, and the following interaction occurred:

- S1: Why are angry people just destroying—
 S2: But when there are riots, you are supposed to fight for some rights... Right? What are they doing?
 S3 [In disbelief]: Why did they destroyed their own neighbourhoods?!
 T: Riots are uncontrolled, unthinking beasts. There is no logic.
 S4: Yeah, because it shows they are not thinking.
 S1: That’s like you just go out and destroy something.
 S5: For example, you’re angry and you destroy your TV. Your own TV! [students laugh]
 S2: I read about Attica—do you know Attica riots? Those African American prisoners were fighting for their rights because they have miserable lives in the prison. I thought that’s right, right?
 S5: They are expressing their anger, but they are not doing it in a proper manner
 S1: I just don’t get it because if I’m fighting for my rights, I don’t burn my own stuff [students laugh]
 T: Well, I don’t think an angry crowd is going to take the bus to [wealthy neighbourhood] [students laugh].
 S3: That’s what I say when I saw the Baltimore thing. Like why are you lighting fires in police cars and the CVS...
 T: Ok, let’s move on. That’s where we finish.

Instead of prompting students further—for example, asking students what they thought would constitute a “proper” manner of protesting and/or providing information about the institutional, systematic disenfranchisement and discrimination experienced by BIPOC that could reasonably lead to an eruption like the one they had seen in the pictures—this teacher positioned protests as unreasonable, illogical, and remained silent while students laughed about the idea of burning one’s own neighbourhood and made flippant comments about destroying their TV. Rather than foregrounding riots as Martin Luther King Jr. did—as “the language of the unheard” —and creating space for debate and informed discussion among students about the efficacy of protests in creating societal change—the teacher presented their opinion about riots in a way that left little room for debate, research, and discussion that may have expanded students’ conceptions of what this historical moment represented for oppressed people around the world.

Discussion

Social Justice Pedagogy (SJP) requires sustained commitment to the idea that systemic injustice is real and that in order to disrupt it, those with more power than others must actively subvert their own privilege. The first research question of this study was answered in that the teachers in this study claimed to understand teaching to be political, conceptually, but did not act out of this understanding—as showcased by their avoidance of discussing social justice issues in unambiguous ways and/or approaching this content through critical lenses. Tensions were showcased in teachers' understandings of themselves in relation to racism, prejudice, white privilege, and colonialism, as they did not see these legacies as relating to them nor did they feel a need to account for them in their life or teaching.

In the instructor's refusal to address Columbus' legacy in clear and unambiguous ways, they sacrificed an opportunity to provide students with additional context and information about what Columbus and other colonizers did, directly, via rape and genocide, and indirectly, to the Taino and other Indigenous people, and then ask students what they thought. For example, they could have addressed that prior to white contact, Indigenous numbers in the United States and Canada are thought to have been around 14 million, and by 1880—due to the disease, destruction, and deculturation brought by European settlers—Indigenous numbers had declined by 98 percent (Loewen, 2018). The teacher could have leaned into this moment of tension to discuss the meaning of the word “invasion,” allowing students to do their own research and debate, in relation to evidence discussed, whether Columbus should continue to be celebrated as a hero. Instead of doing any of this, their “neutral” response reaffirmed whiteness and revisionist history and neglected an opportunity for a critical conversation.

The teacher who claimed riots are “unthinking beasts” that “[have] no logic” similarly missed an opportunity to engage students in a critical conversation while simultaneously sharing their own prejudiced perspective. This teacher did not follow up with students in this interaction during a few critical moments—for example, when the student said *I read about Attica—do you know Attica riots? Those African American prisoners were fighting for their rights because they have miserable lives in the prison. I thought that's right, right?*—this opportunity could have been a moment in which the teacher could ask students to pause and reflect over this statement to consider why someone might “burn their own stuff” as a form of protest: namely when they don't have any other option. In interviews, this teacher indicated that they thought teachers should remain neutral in class conversations about social justice issues; however, in the context of this class conversation, they made their personal views about protests apparent, which students then mirrored in subsequent responses that such acts show “[people] are not thinking” and that “[protestors] are not doing it in a proper manner.”

In contrast to the goals of SJP, the three white EAP instructors in this study showcased personal beliefs and classroom practices that upheld Whiteness when discussing social justice-related content. They forewent opportunities to provide information about complex sociocultural phenomena, historical events, and cultural moments for their students, and in so doing, they did not serve the goal of disentangling English language teaching from colonial traditions but further reinforced dynamics of white supremacy. Rather than minimizing confusion, misunderstandings, and stereotypes that were conveyed within these conversations, they sometimes added to the

misinformation and/or stereotypes themselves. The instructors operated under the assumptions that pedagogical neutrality is both possible and desirable while simultaneously revealing their personal beliefs about what is proper and correct.

In interviews, instructor understandings of their own racial identities mirrored the idea that “they [BIPOC]—not we [white people]—have race, and thus they are the holders of racial knowledge” (DiAngelo, 2018, p. 62), and showcased discomfort in addressing race and social justice issues in unambiguous ways. Scholars like DiAngelo (2018) have addressed how white people often think they exist outside of the racial hierarchy and so don’t have to speak to it, when in fact, these silences are central to the hierarchy’s existence and maintenance. Similar to this, the instructors in this study remained silent in conversations about racial and colonial injustice and did not approach these conversations from critical lenses (DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2012), moving the class along to the next topic when they felt ill-equipped to navigate the challenging dialogic terrain. They denied access to white capital (Solomona et al., 2005) and did not claim responsibility for dismantling hierarchies of oppression. In their discussion of social justice-related topics in their classrooms, they re-affirmed Whiteness with both their contributions and their omissions. Counter to SJP scholars like Cumming-Potvin (2009) and Zeichner (2003), the teachers in this study showed little awareness of teaching as instrumental in creating a fairer and more just society.

In her essay “Age, Race, Class, and Sex: Women Redefining Difference,” Audre Lorde (1984) reminded readers that,

Whenever the need for some pretense of communication arises, those who profit from [Black people’s] oppression call upon us to share our knowledge with them. In other words, it is the responsibility of the oppressed to teach the oppressors their mistakes. I am responsible for educating teachers who dismiss my children’s culture in school. Black and Third World people are expected to educate white people as to our humanity. (p. 114)

In the same way Lorde indicated above, instructors in the study desired to be educated by BIPOC individuals on societal injustices. Questions they asked such as *How can I hear you? Please, stop me and tell me right away*, demonstrated their thinking that “Black and Third World people . . . [must educate] white people as to [their] humanity.” In contrast, white instructors’ personal and professional development, reflection, and personal responsibility to educate themselves about their own histories and racial identities is a necessary step to decolonizing education. In the context of contemporary social justice issues such as ongoing police brutality and disproportionate rates of incarceration of Black and Brown communities (Alexander, 2010), disparate impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on BIPOC individuals, especially women (Erickson, 2020), and the lasting impact of worldwide colonialism on Indigenous communities (Loewen, 2018), white teachers’ neutrality in conversations about such social injustices serves the status quo of injustice (Applebaum, 2009; Nurenberg, 2020).

Love (2019) wrote that social justice pedagogies must call out the ways in which racism, sexism, homophobia, and all other forms of prejudice and hate are structural in order to consciously commit to building equitable school communities and societies (p. 55). The false

presumption that neutrality is possible in the classroom foregoes opportunities to use positions of privilege to a) educate oneself about history in accurate and inclusive ways, and b) use that knowledge to give voice to the social inequities facing minoritized communities. It sacrifices opportunities for rich, nuanced discussions that could help model for students what engaged civic dialogue and debate could look like (Hess, 2009; Parker, 2006).

Neutrality also presumes that all perspectives are competing on an equal playing field, which is untrue in our present-day contexts of societal injustice (Kay, 2018; Oluo, 2020; Wilkerson, 2020). Furthermore, researchers find that neutrality is impossible, and students are able to deduce their teachers' views without them having been explicitly communicated (Hess & McAvoy, 2009). Milner (2017) argued that what and how teachers teach is never neutral since the questions asked, what information is included in syllabi and materials, and even who is called on are all choices that are impacted by one's personal beliefs, values, and prejudices. If teachers' beliefs already enter into their teaching in ways that are unbeknownst to them, one could argue that may be more beneficial to transparently disclose opinions so that these are not presented as facts. Such transparency could help to promote open dialogue, debate, and allow students to develop their own ideas and critical thinking skills. It could also model for students that working through conflict can be an arena for growth and personal development (Kay, 2018).

Research has found that students may perceive information differently depending on the racial and gender identity, among other identity markers, of the teacher who is presenting the information. For example, a study found that when a white man (who teaches at a prestigious U.S. university) taught his students about issues of race and societal injustice, students reported him as "objective," "scholarly," and "disinterested," in their course evaluations. Conversely, when an African American woman at the same institution taught about issues of race and societal injustice, she was perceived as "self-interested," "bitter," or "putting forth a particular agenda" (Ladson Billings, 1996). Ideas about who can be neutral, when certain topics are allowed to be broached, and by whom, are deeply embedded in the racist fabric of our institutions. In order for educators to help build a more equitable framework, they must train themselves to see who discourses of neutrality serve, and who they marginalize. Educators must further acknowledge that neutrality on the part of white teachers and silences on social justice issues are manifestations of white fragility that showcase leave-taking of stress-inducing situations (DiAngelo, 2018), which maintains a white supremacist framework.

Scholarship has shown that engaging students in conversation and debate in which participants may have differing views is essential for the development of requisite skills to participate in civic dialogue (Hess & McAvoy, 2009; Kay, 2018). Teacher neutrality obscures the political nature of education and hides from view the pillars of prejudice on which neutrality, as a concept, rests. Heybach (2014) has traced the etymology of the word "neutrality," and reminds readers that the essence of the word means "no power being transmitted" and "being disengaged." It is worth considering: what are the implications of "no power being transmitted" in the context of white English language teachers' attempting to talk to EB students about social justice issues?

Implications

Implications for MA TESOL Program Development

In light of the disproportionate numbers of white educators as compared to the increasing diversity of the student body (Davis & Frey, 2019), there is an urgent need for MA TESOL programs to integrate Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) into their curricula to address historic inequities, dynamics of white privilege that continue to manifest and duplicate in school settings, and the role of teachers in disrupting these patterns (Gerald, 2020). White teachers must better understand themselves, the lasting legacy of white supremacy, and the power and privilege they bring to classroom interactions to change their behaviours and approaches to teaching English accordingly. Teaching is a political act through which social stratification is either reinforced or disrupted (Buchanan, 2015), so it is imperative to closely examine the content that is being taught in MA TESOL programs to understand the role it plays in disrupting or maintaining Whiteness in education. In English language teaching, this demand is all the more pressing because of ties between the English language, colonialism, xenophobia, and the relative capital afforded based on the languages one speaks and the colour of one's skin, which have social, political, and economic ramifications (Bourdieu, 1986; Guerretaz & Zahler, 2017; Ruecker & Ives, 2015).

There is scant research on white EAP practicing and pre-service teachers' engagement with confronting Whiteness, privilege, and anti-Black racism in the context of their studies (Enns-Kananen, 2020; Motha, 2006). However, CRT scholars such as Boler (1999) and Ohito (2016) have suggested the value of practicing a "pedagogy of discomfort" with white pre-service teachers to push them to see themselves located within an inequitable system and "make meaning of the contours of racial oppression" (p. 455), and similar pedagogies can be practised in MA TESOL programs. For example, Faez (2012) showcased the takeaways of teacher candidates who engaged in critical reflection over their own linguistic experiences and identities, foregrounding race in those reflections. In initiating (white) pre-service teachers' investigation of their own racial identities, teacher educators may help to render visible the "tight yet seemingly invisible hold that white supremacy maintains on teacher education" (Ohito, 2016, p. 454), allowing such programs to begin addressing and responding to historical inequities in meaningful ways rather than being guided by people in power who may be motivated more by interest convergence than true changes of heart and/or a desire for racial equity (Bell, 1980; Gillborn, 2006).

Implications for EAP Programs

There has long been debate in EAP scholarship about the degree to which EAP programs should adopt critical or pragmatist approaches to English language teaching (Benesch, 1993; Hyland, 2004; Paltridge, 2001; Pennycook, 1994; Santos, 1992). Scholarship showcases the importance of language learning being integrated with authentic content (Airey, 2016), and scholars have criticized EAP programs' approach to language teaching that teaches the four skills areas (reading, writing, listening, and speaking) in isolation, arguing that this approach leaves EB students unprepared to participate in university-level content-area work meaningfully, since

university coursework tends to engage with ideological issues (Canagarajah, 2002; 2006; Parkinson, 2016).

The work of Benesch (1999; 2001; 2010) has argued for the use of critical pedagogy in EAP classrooms and provides models for intervention and mediation in critical conversations, demonstrating, for example, how EAP instructors can serve as “conversation facilitator[s] and, more judiciously, intervener[s] (1999, p. 578), prompting students to elaborate on their ideas to model that critical thinking is “neither an unguided free-for-all nor a didactic lecture but a balance between extended student contributions and gentle challenges by the teacher” (p. 578). Haque (2008) and Luke (1992) have identified that critical pedagogy in EAP teaching could fall short in similar ways as uncritical language teaching if it is not undertaken in tandem with critiques of the institutions of which the EAP programs are a part (Haque, 2008, p. 94). This issue is exacerbated when EAP programs, and universities more broadly, are constructed in the societal imagination as “service industries” allowing students access to a “neutral body of knowledge” (p. 94) rather than institutions that are ideologically motivated. In light of this, the primary recommendation for EAP programs that comes out of this study is to engage faculty—in particular white faculty—in professional development that foregrounds:

1. Explicit education about the historical intersections of TESOL with Whiteness, colonialism, racism, and xenophobia
2. Critical approaches to EAP that promote awareness of the politics of language teaching
3. Critical reflection about the role that EAP teachers play in upholding or dismantling white supremacist thought in the classroom setting
4. Guidance for undergoing critical dialogues about social justice issues with students, for example, the BC TEAL Respectful Interactions Guidelines (RIGs) Framework (“BC TEAL,” n.d.) and/or the BC Human Rights Code (“Human Rights,” 2021).

There are many other resources that could aid in this education and professional development, including use of and reflection over the Harvard Implicit Association Test (IAT), critical readings of texts like *White Fragility* by Robin DiAngelo (2018), and *Not Light, But Fire: How to Lead Meaningful Race Conversations in the Classroom* by Matthew R. Kay (2018). Authors such as Davis (2017) have discussed the benefits of professional book clubs for fostering conversations about social justice issues, addressing biases, and reflecting on and critiquing one’s background and personal values to better understand the impact of educators’ socialization on their teaching practices. Engaging in this kind of dialogic inquiry—in supportive and collaborative environments—may be a productive way for white English language teachers to hold themselves and each other accountable to understanding the legacy of Whiteness in their work and the obligation to take action in their practice to effect change (Kendi, 2019; Oluo, 2020).

Limitations and Future Research

This study was limited by time, and its findings are limited to three white EAP instructors whose teaching I followed over the course of a semester. In spite of these limitations, I believe the takeaways from this study are transferable to contexts where similar problems may exist within English language teaching related to Whiteness and settler colonialist histories. This study

responds to a gap in the literature related to calls to de-silence social justice issues in TESOL—namely, how these conversations are undertaken, by whom and with what background knowledge and underlying beliefs—and showcases that understanding these factors are just as, if not more, important than solely the fact of having these conversations integrated into EAP teaching.

This study builds on the body of work that has been done regarding intersections of Whiteness, racism, and settler colonialism in TESOL (Gerald, 2020; Kubota & Lin, 2006; Lin & Luke, 2006; Sterzuk & Hengen, 2019; Von Esch et al., 2020) and provides a cautionary tale to those who are interested in integrating social justice-related content into their EAP teaching about the ways in which Whiteness may find a home in these conversations—just as a spider weaves its web (Lin & Luke, 2006)—if they are not undertaken with simultaneous critical race reflection and anti-racist professional development of white instructors. Future research could engage in critical inquiry about professional development framed by Critical Whiteness Studies (CWS) and Social Justice Pedagogy (SJP) and its impact on white EAP instructors teaching about social justice issues.

Conclusion

The teachers in this study showcased contradictory beliefs about the political nature of teaching and their perceived obligation to account for historical and contemporary racial inequities, which manifested in the classroom conversations they undertook regarding social justice issues. Teachers integrated social justice-related content, yet did not see themselves as the appropriate person to talk about such inequities. They did not believe they had an obligation to speak to historical and present-day racism, and they desired for conversations about such topics to be undertaken in an “open, civil manner” in which no one was called a racist or told they were wrong. They acknowledged the political nature of teaching more broadly and English language teaching, specifically, while simultaneously seeking to remain neutral on ideological issues in their classrooms.

This study showcases the tensions in the three participants’ practices that ultimately maintained Whiteness. White EAP educators who are invested in decolonizing their teaching practices and seek to engage students in meaningful conversations about social justice issues must read and engage more with the concept of white fragility to uncover their own blind spots, understand and interpret their gut reactions to being called to account for racism in present-day society, and be willing to engage in critical conversations about social justice issues within their classes in a clear and unambiguous way. Without programmatic development in EAP and MA TESOL programs to educate white teachers on the intersections of TESOL with race, settler colonialism, and Whiteness, the status quo will continue to reproduce itself through these programs, and use of social justice content in EAP programs will reinforce dynamics of white supremacy rather than provide opportunities for critical inquiry, debate, and growth.

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