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Considering EcoJustice and place-based responses to market-oriented schooling

Monica K. Shields

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Considering EcoJustice and Place-Based Responses to Market-Oriented Schooling

by

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Dissertation

Submitted to the College of Education

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Educational Studies

Concentration in Urban Education

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Ypsilanti, Michigan

Dedication

To all the students who were failed by the mechanized and neoliberal educational system,

and

To all the teachers who show up every day to make the world a better place.

Acknowledgments

I am blessed to have people to love and support me throughout this long and intense journey. I am so thankful for each of the people listed below and so many more who are not listed here.

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Trimmer • Chloe Wilson

Abstract

The politics of neoliberalism fester within education behind discourses of success, deficit, and normalcy. They intersect with discourses such as anthropocentrism, individualism, racism, ability, and others to organize society in a hierarchal manner and prioritize unfettered competition within an economic framework. The power of these discourses resides in their ability to communicate systemic ideology—masking the systemic oppression inherent to neoliberalism. These discourses can be traced to a mechanized worldview that understands matter, relationships, and knowledge through the metaphor of a machine. This study was designed to investigate how discursive meanings combine to create alternative discourses and to answer the research question: *What kind of discourse is produced by a pedagogy that challenges competition as a common sense assumption, challenges mechanized ways of understanding relationships, and understands humans and the other-than-human world to be interrelated?*

One objective of this inquiry was to bridge EcoJustice and place-based education theory and practice. Another was to explore how these pedagogical approaches challenged neoliberal relationality. The last goal was to bring attention to the imbalance of educational aims that disproportionately focus on skills needed for economic prowess and skills needed to maintain ethical and sustainable relationships. Critical discourse analysis was the best methodological fit given the question and objectives. Data were generated via interviews. The socio-cognitive and three-dimensional approaches to analyzing discourse were used to understand the significance of discursive exchanges and how they communicate meaning.

The findings revealed that participants used an ecocentric perspective of relational exchanges to guide their students through a systemic critique of injustice. They defined competition through a frame of mutuality and used affection to enact politically charged care

agendas. They used place as a tool to teach lessons of affection and membership. Students were taught to find and appreciate the uniqueness of their place and how to frame differences as assets. Teachers used a nonjudgmental awareness to engage students in a way that decentered humans and flattened the hierarchy. They provided students with tools that allowed for immediate change. Lastly, they used post-inquiry instructional approaches to show students an alternative way to make meaning and assess unethical situations.

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Chapter 1: Neoliberal Free-Market Discourse Within Education

The current educational approach has failed students, communities, and the planet. For my dissertation research, I chose to look at the educational aims of market-based education—such as who benefits, who is harmed, and why—to make explicit some of the systemic flaws within modern schooling that are embedded within our language, culture, and which allow some groups to benefit more than—or at the expense of—others. This model schooling uses a narrowly defined understanding of knowledge within a competitive relationality to make becoming educated a pursuit for personal gain. The costs of unfettered pursuit of individual gain utilizing specialist-driven knowledge is a system of education that has lost sight of the individual students. Further, this approach to education is shielded by the discourses within neoliberalism that devalue social structures, like education, and reduces them to a cost efficiency equation.

These ideologies are systemic and communicated through language and discourses that have a specific set of customs and practices for how to arrange and act toward Others in society. These practices are justified with scientism and its related mechanized metaphor. To begin, I detail the discourses within superstructures that make inequality seem inevitable within market-based education. I explain the broader role language plays in making meaning, and I then introduce educational approaches that use and understand science as something that is known—rather than as the sole reason for decisions or actions. I introduce the educational approaches used in this research that allowed teachers to resist neoliberalism and exercise agency within an ethic that prioritizes relationships and understands humans in terms of codependent relationships with life communities.

Considering EcoJustice and Place-Based Responses to Market-Oriented Schooling

The following critique focuses on the mission statement of the US Department of Education (USDE, n.d.), which states: “Our mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access”. While this mission statement has many layers, within the confines of this dissertation research I primarily examined and explored the ways in which this statement reflects the intersection of competition, individualism, and standardization in contemporary education and the nuances of competition that are included in policy and practice (Martusewicz, Edmundson, & Lupinacci, 2015; Merchant, 1980). This mission statement uses language that is nested within multiple layers of meaning, the widest being a mechanized metaphor. Within this metaphor students and teachers are understood in terms of their potential contribution to the economy. This way of schooling reinforces the social hierarchy and presents those living in poverty the illusion of equal opportunity. Within this system, students are expected to conform to expectations while supplementing their own limited access to one small set of narrowly defined passive knowledge. Further, this type of education does not provide many students with any comparative advantage to be successful within a competitive society. Rather students who learn differently—such as those in special education and those living in poverty—are placed at a further disadvantage. To be successful, these students need more resources and time to achieve basic proficiency, and thus, less educational resources are used to cultivate the skills that would confer a comparative advantage within our society (Bull, 2009; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980).

Given this perspective and critique, I sought to explore the discourse of a pedagogy that has made explicit the implicit language and discourses that are harmful and imbedded within the mechanized metaphor, neoliberal politics, and the education system they inform. The pedagogy

of responsibility within the EcoJustice approach to education provided a unique epistemological perspective that could challenge neoliberalism with everyday practices and relationships (Martusewicz et al., 2015). To illuminate this alternative, I used educational approaches that addressed the ethical imperatives of teachers in a context of interrelation. I was interested in an approach to education that did not create more work for teachers and offered them an immediate response to injustice in their classroom.

EcoJustice is an approach to education that includes a cultural and ecological analysis about social justice issues. Teachers make explicit the types of knowledges and skills needed to build and repair communities. Teachers use politically charged care agendas to challenge mechanized forms of knowledge and relationships by prioritizing intersectional ecofeminist critiques to language. Teachers use the critique to make explicit the harm caused by language and discourse. In doing so, they pinpoint areas of improvement for everyday interactions (Martusewicz et al., 2015). Place-based education (PBE) is then used to bridge the alternative perspective generated from the EcoJustice approach to the current curriculum (Gruenewald & Smith, 2010). PBE is a model in education that allows educators to teach collaborative problem solving to strengthen democracy within a framework that understands the self as part of a larger interrelated web of life. Students learn how to be comfortable with the attitudes and behaviors needed to communicate ethical responses to injustice. Combined, these classroom approaches allow differentiated lessons that honor diversity, create and strengthen community, and restructure educational thought around teaching and learning (Lowenstein, Grewal, Erkaeva, Nielsen, & Voelker, 2018). This study combined pedagogical approaches rooted in epistemological and ontological assumptions that are not mechanized. Rather these approaches assume humans to be interrelated with other life communities, they acknowledge and accept a

knowledge other than reason, and they understand each person to have a responsibility to respond to injustice with care.

Before moving forward to address the problems raised in neoliberal politics in education, it is necessary to define and clarify the terms neoliberalism, mechanization, and mechanized metaphor. Neoliberalism can be understood in three modalities (Couldry, 2010). First, it is a philosophy that emerged from the work of Hayek (1991), Friedman (2002), and others that has informed a purely economic approach to the use of the state, wherein the state is not used to mediate the interests of the people and the market but to maximize the economic gain of privileged market actors (Harvey, 2000). Second, neoliberalism is a doctrine, pointing to the ways specific national governments have integrated it into their traditional systems of government and national political cultures (Harvey, 2000). Third, neoliberalism is, perhaps, most powerfully understood as a culture, highlighting the ways in which neoliberalism's core principles and values (such as competition, winner-takes-all, idolization of the market as the template for all sociality, rabid individualism, and unfettered consumerism) get normalized in everyday interactions from intimate relationships and spirituality to workplace rituals and the allocation of common goods, opportunities, and services (Bauman, 2003; Couldry, 2010; Henderson & Hursh, 2014).

Neoliberal policy restructures the politics of race, gender, ability, and so on through disinvestment and disenfranchisement (Duggan, 2003; Fraser, 2014). It frames those who are not valuable to the market-economy as redundant or worse—waste—and it protects those who are able to participate in the market economy (Bauman, 2013; Lipman, 2011, 2017). As a form of cultural politics, neoliberalism is one of the most powerful socializing forces in our entire culture (Couldry, 2010). Neoliberal free-market ideology creates a false cultural understanding of how to

prioritize human needs and wants while reshaping everyday life to prioritize one's competitive edge and maximizing profit within global capitalism (Duggan, 2003; Giroux, 2015; Harvey, 2007; Mirowski, 2013; Pagden, 2013). Neoliberal politics must be understood to coexistence with conflicting and shifting power relations within multiple lines of difference and organized hierarchically (Duggan, 2003; Martusewicz et al., 2015).

Neoliberal politics have changed the expectations, experiences, and outcomes of becoming educated (Giroux, 2015; Golden, 2018). Changes can be seen in public opinion, reduction of material resources, shifts in pedagogy, and curricula that have changed the roles of teachers and students. Before the education policy No Child Left Behind, a teacher's role was to develop students' skills and capacities for how to relate to people, ideas, knowledge, and differences through relationships and pedagogies that examined commonsensical and official knowledge, public opinion, and dominant media (Giroux, 2015). Now they are expected to modulate students' behavior and deliver predetermined curriculum and pedagogy. Giroux (2015) detailed that as policies progressed through the years teachers' roles have increasingly been deprofessionalized, deskilled, and redefined through an economic and competitive framework—which ultimately redefined learning and teaching to be understood as synonymous with testing and evaluation. The shift in discursive expectations highlights a systemic change in cultural practices, and social relationships, creating a need for further inquiry.

I understand the mechanized metaphor to be the foundation of neoliberal politics and education. To adequately frame this study, I used historical contextualization to trace the rise of and insidious nature of the mechanized metaphor (see Appendix A). The machine was understood at various points in history to illustrate how an anthropocentric relationality rose to dominance. The concept of machines gradually grew in complexity and availability to structure

everyday living. A mechanized metaphor uses a machine as a way of understanding the known and unknown. A machine can be deconstructed into individual pieces. The individual pieces can be replaced as needed with identical copies. When this way of making meaning is used, the pieces are reduced to their simplest terms. When there is a problem with the machine, experts are called to fix the individual pieces, which in turn fixes the machine. This metaphor is used in education, to guide relationships, pedagogy, and curricula and to make meaning of experiences. This is not an active thought process—rather it is the way of understanding that can be traced to changes happening to thought, knowledge, and society during the period of time known as the European Enlightenment. This metaphor is the conceptual model for how the world is, and has been, understood (Merchant, 1980; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Ivie, 2007; Berry, 2000). It provides the foundation for a mechanized worldview, which includes a mechanized metaphor and has shaped Western philosophy and educational thought and practice (Ivie, 2007). The thinking, practices, and values associated with mechanization define knowledge, how to make meaning, and how to respond to differences. This is one of the foundational metaphors to modern culture, and while I point out the limits of mechanized metaphor where appropriate, I am careful not to dismiss its usefulness entirely. The clock acts as an example of how the machine has come to impact everyday life—namely by becoming a metaphor to regulate everyday interactions. The clock did not create inequality, but it contributed to the modern social structure and competitive framework that reproduces inequality (Landes, 2016; Shuffelton, 2017).

Market-Based Education

Neoliberalists cast the changes made through policies as inevitable, unstoppable, and in economic terms to mask the political biases and interests (Duggan, 2003; Fraser, 2014; Giroux, 2015; Harvey, 2007; Mirowski, 2013). This market phenomenon is rooted in pro-business

activism that developed in the early 1980s to increase the United States' ability to compete in the global economy (Harvey, 2007). These authors argued that global competition is merely a ruse to consolidate wealth and political power. The neoliberal movement has been expanding for decades and can be seen in the relocation of public funds from social supports to efforts aimed at enhancing corporate profits—for example charter schools. It is responsible for increasing economic inequality and reshaping the day-to-day understanding of capitalism and citizenship (Duggan, 2003; Endacott et al., 2015; Fraser, 2014; Giroux, 2015; Golden, 2018; Harvey, 2007; Henderson & Hursh, 2014; Lipman, 2011; Mirowski, 2013). Neoliberal politics generate discourses that restructure educational relationships towards more mechanized ways of understanding the teaching and learning dynamic (Sancar & Sancar, 2012).

The neoliberal framework structures education to socialize students who can compete in a global knowledge economy and prioritizes marketable professional business skills above all other skills (Bradford & Shields, 2017; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Sancar & Sancar, 2012; Wilson, 2013). The social exchanges in the classroom allow students to experience and recognize social attitudes and patterning structures that contribute to a lifestyle (Bourdieu, 1986; Stahl, 2016). Within this context, classroom practices are reduced to allegedly neutral best practices, curriculum is standardized, and success is narrowly defined (Endacott et al., 2015; Golden, 2018; HB 4822, 2016; Henderson & Hursh, 2014). Giroux (2015) brought attention to how teachers are one of many public service providers that are subject to social control through the “institutionalization and widespread adoption of a set of values, policies, and symbolic practices that legitimate forms of organized violence against human beings and lead inexorably to hardship, suffering, and despair” (p. 13), which he called the “politics of humiliation.”

This humiliation is dispersed through symbolic systems that frame the targeted individuals as demons and position them in ways that invite ridicule, violence (Giroux, 2015), and a disdain for the teachers' day-to-day suffering. The disdain is both for the teachers as a professional group and for the students who cannot or will not conform to the dominant cultural understanding of mechanized expectations of perfection. The cultural expectations of teachers shift towards maximizing student achievement at the cost of including curricula that provides alternative perspectives and teacher agency. Teachers are rewarded for being flexible technicians when students can pass standardized evaluations, and the politics of humiliation are used to cover up the neoliberalism, its politics, and its biases (Bourdieu, 1998; Giroux, 2015; Golden, 2018). For example, neoliberalism structures social relations in economic (mechanized) terms (Fraser, 2014). Rather than question the market-schooling initiative as reason for all the failure in education, interventionists will examine classroom interactions and teacher pedagogy.

In this framework, the learning relationship is reduced to a mechanized exchanged between students and teachers, one that stunts teachers' and students' imagination (Endacott et al., 2015; Giroux, 2015; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Shuffelton, 2017). Teachers must develop their identity as a teacher in a test-prep culture within the politics of humiliation instead of generating a personal teaching philosophy (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011; Endacott et al., 2015; Giroux, 2015; Ivie, 2007).

In a neoliberal framework, social control is veiled by the authority of achievement, performance, and economic discourses, while pedagogy consists of dreary tasks, memorization, and mastery of rote skills that emerge with passive leaning experiences (Giroux, 2015). The accompanying social and emotional framework prioritize the willingness to conform—be normal—and acceptance of authority. As time passed from policy initiatives in the early 2000s—

such as No Child Left Behind—schools, and by extension the field of education, changed. Schools are no longer a place to create dreams of greatness, bring imagination into fruition, or sites of social development where citizens have the social and emotional wherewithal to “point to a future that refuses to mimic the present” (Giroux, 2015, p. xv). These priorities emphasize a mechanized way of understanding relationships within education, which is problematic because it determines—through a series of discursive relationships—what is possible within education and shapes how meaning is made in other areas all throughout life (Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980).

Market relationships in schools undermine the conditions in which teachers can exercise and teach voice and agency (Couldry, 2010; Endacott et al., 2015; Giroux, 2015; Golden, 2018). They weaken teachers’ professional status within society by reducing their influence on how to address topics and needs in the classroom and how school resources are allocated. Neoliberal education denies the social need for ecological relationships and interconnection and defines education as a competitive global endeavor where knowledge is the commodity. These shifts have strengthened a competitive market in education that uses test scores as management techniques and rarely focuses on skills outside of those to support sales, leadership, or otherwise marketable assets. The skills and knowledge required to establish and maintain relationships are often taken for granted or left unaddressed (Henderson & Hursh, 2014).

My critique begins with the neoliberal efforts to absolve public education that have resulted in a narrowly defined curriculum influenced by multiple discourses that all use a mechanized way of knowing to make meaning. The discourses function to reproduce oppression through a series of interrelated aspects of communication. Mechanized communication uses discursive understandings and a reductive framework to communicate and reproduce oppression

and is problematic because it shapes how meaning is made with regard to relationships, education, and the surrounding environment (Berry, 2000b; Bowers & Flinders, 1991; Henderson & Hursh, 2014; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Martusewicz et al. (2015) used ecofeminism to trace the philosophical roots of the relationships between oppression and language. They describe a critical communication analysis that can be used to find hidden patterns of communication—or the *industrial communication pattern* (see Appendix B). The industrial communication pattern is a concept that includes multiple aspects of communication that combine with systemic and cultural discourses to justify and reproduce systemic injustice. It is a cultural way of making and exchanging meaning that relies on a social hierarchy to define order. The industrial communication pattern is nested within assumptions about the structure of being that can be traced to 17th century philosophy and are used to form the mechanistic nature of reality (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Gimpel, 1977; Ivie, 2007; Landes, 2016; Merchant, 1980; Shuffelton, 2017).

Broader Role of Language

Language is part of the currency within a knowledge-based economy (Fairclough, 1981/2001). It is embedded with metaphors that are situated within cultural knowledge and is exchanged through metacommunication, which Bowers and Flinders (1990) described as “communication about what is being communicated—involves changes in body posture, pitch of voice, use of longer or short pauses, change in gaze, laughter, spatial distances, and so forth” (p. 62). This feature of communication is what happens within communication (Bateson, 1972/2000). Metacommunication or extralinguistic communication can be simplified to nonverbal communication. It is the subtle or implied exchanges such as the indicators of friend or foe (Bateson, 1972/2000). These can be understood as the interactions that occur between

bodies, alongside language, that exchange personal and cultural knowledge of what is to be explicit expressed and what needs to be silenced. They are used intentionally and unintentionally by the speaker to develop a fuller sense of the context (Bowers & Flinders, 1990).

Bowers and Flinders (1990, 1991) used the concept of a root metaphor to explain how thinking interfaces with language and how shared cultural meanings are constructed and given value. Bowers and Flinders (1991) asserted that “thinking is...dependent upon the use of root metaphors, which help generate a particular way of understanding but are more deeply embedded in the collective consciousness of a language community” (p. 14). The metaphoric nature of language is important because “the most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture” (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003, p. 22). Lakoff and Johnson (2003) explained that human values are not independent from the metaphorical nature of language resulting in cultural assumptions about race, class, gender, ability, and any non-dominant feature will be seen in the language choice and metacommunication.

The language used in everyday interactions is scientific in nature (Martusewicz et al., 2015). It has a root metaphor of mechanized thinking that is used to make meaning and draw parallels, and it is a framework for understanding nature, relationships, and other social interactions that negotiate power around logic structures steeped in injustice (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Gimpel, 1977; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980; Shuffelton, 2017). Education based on mechanized metaphors is a way of educating that takes for granted the social and emotional skills needed for negotiating relationships, responsible language, and stewarding the Earth. Science and technology are the dominant frames use in this paradigm and they prioritize skillsets of logic, order, predictability, control, and efficiency—which define education by

standardization and competition (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Henderson & Hursh, 2014; Ivie, 2007; Merchant, 1980).

Language combines with metaphorical thinking, discourses, symbols, and metacommunication to generate meaning (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bowers and Flinders, 1990; Fairclough, 2000; Foucault, 1981; Mead, 1934a). Cultural knowledge shapes understanding, and meaning is created with what the culture determines to be of value and without value. Sometimes cultural knowledge is overtly shared, but more often it is acquired by discursive patterns that identify and silence what is known, what counts as knowledge, and how it is understood (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Foucault, 1981). The cultural knowledge and its framework for making meaning often exist outside an individual's active awareness. In a communication exchange, participants' need to use cognition to interface discourse structures to social structures (van Dijk, 2017). Colloquially and in a mechanized sense, cognition is understood to be an independent feature of the mind that can be quantified and measured (Freud, 1930/2010). Its purpose is to mediate between knowledge, attitudes, and ideologies (social cognition) and social structures.

The EcoJustice approach to education is designed from a Batesonian understanding of the mind that considers the whole mind as primary rather than the individual functions (Bateson, 1972/2000; Martusewicz et al., 2015). He conceptualized the mind to be an ecology where each aspect is connected to and supported by the others. In this framework he used epistemology to describe what the mind does, to encompass ontology, and the habitual assumptions or premises resulting from cultural knowledge that are implied when interacting (Bateson, 1972/2000). Bateson's definition places the person within the "symbolic world of culture within a system of interdependent relations—not outside it, as is the case with the Cartesian [mechanized] metaphor" (Bowers & Flinders, 1990, p. 234). In this sense, discourse is about the rules and

contingencies of relationship (Bateson, 1972/2000). Meaning made within this understanding will have different discourses and provides a way of conceptualizing interactions within a sociocultural perspective (Rogers, 2011). Discourse is understood as more than the bridge between thought and speech—rather it is the combination of social practices, subjectivity, and power imbalances in a communication exchange that combine and intersect to create knowledge (Foucault, 1981)

Metaphor of mechanization within education. A mechanized understanding of relationships emerges from the language selected to understand and communicate human problems (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Ivie, 2007; Merchant, 1980; Shuffelton, 2017). Cultural knowledge is distilled and encoded into words that reduces the complexity of the human condition, their interactions, and ecological relationships to be analogous to pieces in a machine that exists independent from the other pieces. All of which is assumed and communicated through language.

The generalized demands of modern education coopt children's time as a resource to be measured and manipulated (Shuffelton, 2017). Shuffelton (2017) drew attention to the time spent in education to learn how to prepare for an imaginative future at the cost of addressing the present. In education, the clock orders the school day down to the fractions of a minute. For example, during my first year of teaching, my principal used to leave me notes in my mailbox with "Monica, B2B!"¹ These messages were reminding me to use every minute of instructional time, bell-to-bell. The discursive knowledge that comes from how time is currently used in education is a mechanized way of experiencing the self in relationship to others. (Foucault, 1980; Merchant, 1980; Shuffelton, 2017).

¹ All teachers in the building were monitored for time compliance as part of our school improvement plan for failing schools.

I argue the clock is the emblem of mechanized priorities and detail their influence on everyday living (see Appendix A). The clock became a literal model of power and order, but it also became an internalized model guiding life, prioritizing what could be observed, described, measured, and made into a routine (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Landes, 2016; Merchant, 1980; Shuffelton, 2017). Neoliberal economic principles brought a mechanized metaphor to education by the same *techne* of mechanization and quantification that dominates politics and economics (Duggan, 2003; Henderson & Hursh, 2014; Ivie, 2007; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Cultural reliance on the clock reinforced the power and influence of the machine as the metaphor for day-to-day living. It was responsible for restructuring and the human experience to be understood as built upon order and power, which enabled humans to predict and control nature (Freud, 1930/2010; Merchant, 1980).

Unbalanced skills within neoliberal education. United States education prepares students to compete in global markets and uses high-stakes testing, standardized curricula, and teacher evaluations based on student scores to reproduce the knowledge most able to be commodified—such as science, math, and technology (USDE, n.d.). Students are taught competitive ways of understanding relationships that combine with other cultural ways of knowing like anthropocentrism—a belief system that understands humans separate from and superior to other life communities—which intersect with multiple other discourses to create a discourse of success in education that is deeply embedded in language and is reproduced during day-to-day classroom interactions (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Clycq, Ward Nouwen, & Vandenbroucke, 2014; Foucault, 1981; Martusewicz et al., 2015).

An education focused on competition centers on manipulation and control at the cost of creative and critical thinking (Nelson & Dawson, 2017; Sancar & Sancar, 2012). Students learn

superficially and are skewed towards skills and interests that produce winning at the expense of cooperation, social-emotional, interpersonal, and communication skills (Garner, Bender, & Fedor, 2018; Nelson & Dawson, 2017). Within the neoliberal framework, profit and potential to make a profit supersede human well-being and environmentally sustainable lifestyles (Henderson & Hursh, 2014). What is lost in the imbalance of skills is the ability to generate and foster healthy and sustainable relationships that support connection. The loss occurs when classrooms only prioritize lessons that can prove student growth. The state standards and documentation consume all the teachers' resources, namely time and energy, which forces them to omit or silence lessons that do not directly improve test scores but would otherwise be beneficial.

The mechanized and competitive focus in education hides the necessity of ecological relationships that sustain healthy communities and it hides the ways the industrial communication pattern as a cultural way of knowing, maintains the status quo, and reproduces oppression (Berry, 1977; Henderson & Hursh, 2014; Kropotkin, 1902; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016). Social and emotional learning is not prioritized in modern education but is needed for successful day-to-day interactions (Garner et al., 2018; Henderson & Hursh, 2014). Neoliberalism rationalizes a specific way of understanding relationships that are both mechanized and anthropocentric (Berry, 1977; Giroux, 2015; Plumwood, 2002). This prioritizes technical, numerical, and objective skillsets to the detriment of affective and interpersonal communication skills (Henderson & Hursh, 2014). To borrow from Henderson and Hursh (2014), "Neoliberalism has undermined community and deliberative decision making, along with non-monetary values" (p. 7). The communication skills needed to navigate the ebbs and flows of relationships are left to be negotiated with technology. In this frame, becoming educated prioritizes development of skillsets that are most marketable within the sociopolitical context

rather than focusing on what brings happiness, uses innate talents, is best for the community, or is culturally appropriate. Nor does it meet the diverse needs of individual students.

Systemic oppression. Mechanization is seen in the everyday structuring of schools, and it can be found guiding educational discourses (Robbins, 2009; Shuffelton, 2017). The strongest example is in the mission statement that directs educational discourse throughout the country. This statement is of interest because of the multiple imbedded messages that intersect within a social-political context and shape what it means to become educated. As previously mentioned, the US Department of Education mission statement has multiple layers and intersects with multiple discourses. My interest lies in how it supports discourses of success, deficit, and normalcy.

As a guiding overture, the mission statement used by the US Department of Education is only a minor improvement from separate but equal schooling policies that divided education by race and (dis)ability (Mirel, 1999; Smith, 2013). Like separate but equal schooling policies, it decontextualizes the person from his or her history and omits the larger sociopolitical circumstances shaping identities and negotiating understandings such as hegemonic normalcy, deficit thinking, and mechanized ways of knowing—which combine to create a competitive way of relating rooted in anthropocentric and industrial communication patterns to create meaning (Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980; Valencia, 2010). Under this framework, teachers are responsible for the success of the students but they are not trusted to use their skills and knowledge to meet the needs of their classroom. Rather their worth and dignity are tied to their ability to industrialize their classroom and learning relationships, which omits the empowering possibilities of teaching critical knowledge (Giroux, 2015).

Teachers are forced to comply with neoliberal education because of a political disregard for their struggles, which feeds the logic of disposability (Giroux, 2015). As a logic premise, it sanctions views and opinions by those who view justice and democracy as optional liberal fodder and disguises systemic injustice because of individual choices. Neoliberalism festers in education because of the politics of humiliation, the logic of disposability, and the ways in which acts of resistance—such as compassion, compromise, notions of community, working together, and mutuality—are viewed as “a pathology, a blight on the very meaning of politics” (Giroux, 2015, p. xi). Under current educational politics, education is understood to be an act of individual achievement with private rights rather than as a public good, which means schools navigate the tensions of market values and elitist ideologies—which ignore or are ignorant to the costs dispersed to students and include assumptions of perpetual immaturity (Giroux, 2015). Students are not trusted to make informed decisions and their relationship to learning and its connection to social change is replaced by competitive notions of “survival of the wealthiest.” One of the costs of this type of education is a narrow curriculum and a failure to address the skills needed to create and sustain healthy relationships with ourselves, Others, and the other-than-human world.

The mission statement for the US Department of Education sets the tone for education across the country, and when positioned within an industrial communication pattern framed with neoliberalism, it creates a mismatch between the form and functions of education (Biesta, 2009). Biesta (2009) detailed three functions of education. The first is qualification—or the knowledge, skills, and forms of judgment that prepare for the dominant cultural workforce. The second is socialization, which is the process of becoming a member of specific social, cultural, and social circles. This will be taught either explicitly or implicitly with the hidden curricula (Bowers & Flinders, 1990). The last is subjectification, which are the skills needed to increase students’

autonomy and independent thinking and acting. Rather than address multiple functions of education, US Department of Education's mission statement focuses primarily on qualification and allows socialization and subjectivation to occur implicitly or as a byproduct of qualification.

The first problem with the mission statement is the focus on access and not the learning process. In this context, "access" to education does not mean acceptance by the community and access cannot communicate important values like tolerance and solidarity that are needed to negotiate differences with members. The function of the statement "ensuring equal access" is to prevent non-dominant groups from being denied a free and appropriate education. However, when situated within larger social structures reproducing oppression and marginalization, the mission statement used by the US Department of Education functions to maintain the status quo by defaulting to neoliberalism and market ethics to understand education (Duggan, 2003; Endacott et al., 2015; Giroux, 2015; Henderson & Hursh, 2014; Spring, 2009). In this framework, the responsibility for education falls onto the individual families, which shifts the financial burden off the state and ignores the obvious social problem of poverty and the increased financial barriers to obtaining an education and functioning as an educated member of society. Access-only initiatives ignore the social emotional ramifications of going without basic needs met and how those barriers impact your ability to compete, despite the "equal access." An education aimed towards ensuring equal access ensures those who start with the most will achieve the most because there is no way to ensure equal access when the barriers begin before birth in a hierarchal ordered system.

The next problem with "ensuring equal access" is how access is provided. The function of this statement is to ignore individual differences and ensure all students have access to education (access to the qualifications). Rather than question the aims and ends of education,

leaders stick to what they can measure (Biesta, 2009). Students are provided with tools to modify themselves in order to reach the goal of becoming normal and achieving educational success (Clycq et al., 2014; Foucault, 1981; HB 4822, 2016; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Wilson, 2013). To this effect, legislation is in place that details students', parents', teachers', and schools' responsibility to participate in the narrow definition of literacy success (HB 4822, 2016). The problems are myriad and begin with the students who learn differently, communicate extralinguistically, do not conform to behavioral standards, or are in non-dominant groups, and where standardized models are insufficient. These students are provided with supports to overcome and change themselves to achieve normalcy. This way of approaching different learners frames the students' ways of interacting with the world as deficiencies or abnormal and in need of change. The legislative insistence to change assigns the education community (students, parents, teachers, and schools) with specific responsibilities to ensure normalization of the students, which discursively implies one right way to become educated and a normalized way of understanding schools and learning.

Another problem with the US Department of Education's mission statement is its only goal of excellence is defined within an industrial communication pattern where differences are sorted hierarchically and privileged lives are attributed to individual merit (Clycq et al., 2014; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). An institution aiming to "foster educational excellence" juxtaposes success with failure—which implies shortcomings of the student while also highlighting the meritocratic ideal of success (Clycq et al., 2014). This example also emphasizes the qualification function of education allowing the accompanying discourses to deliver socialization and subjectification functions (Biesta, 2009). These systems define the dominant understanding and expect others to conform,

which is problematic because it privileges some students' abilities more than others (Nelson & Dawson, 2017). The current system validates one experience of existence and invalidates another. This redirects responsibility from the system to the individual. It also maintains the dominant cultural understandings that mask the other functions of education that only understand one way of interacting and making meaning in the world.

Within a meritocratic framework, those unable or unwilling to achieve are considered incompetent due to a lack of personal effort or cultural shortcomings (Clycq et al., 2014; Valencia, 2010). Meritocratic standards are a result of deficit perspectives of differences and an understanding of resource distribution based on individual effort and competence; these standards are used to make sense of those whom fall short when competing (Clycq et al., 2014; Martusewicz et al., 2015). As an explanatory framework, thoughts and behaviors within this approach are a result of normalized standards from dominant culture (Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Valencia, 2010). This is problematic because it defines differences as a deficit, reproduces meritocratic expectations, and ignores the complex range of learners within a school. Further, it denies the socio-emotional cost to poverty, its effect on education, and the complex interplay between individual choice, the educational system, and neoliberal schooling (Giroux, 2015).

The last portion of this critique is not with the obvious emphasis on competition but with the discursive implications from an education designed to “prepar[e] for global competitiveness”—where knowledge is the commodity. Schools use standardized curricula, high-stakes testing, and pre-packaged learning designs created by experts who rely on national trends over individual learning needs. The primary focus for teachers is on the delivery and behavior/classroom management which reduces education to a mechanical myth and spoils the joys of learning and

teaching (Sancar & Sancar, 2012). Within neoliberal education, schools create partnerships with businesses that focus students on individualized ways of understanding, deny the relational need for intimacy, and take for granted the skills needed to successfully communicate and participate in relationships (Sancar & Sancar, 2012).

Reason is the only form of knowledge that is readily available to negotiate meaning and has been used for generations to hierarchize and sort society outside of nobility (Landes, 2016). Initiatives that prioritize skills and learning to improve the student's scores on the standardized tests, focus on decontextualized facts that improve accuracy, precision, and efficiency rather than develop creativity and creative thinking and skills. This can be seen in the decrease in value, priority, and funding, in general, of the arts in schools and the increase of skills and priorities that align with science, math, engineering, and technology. The discursive message is that reason is the most competitive form of knowledge creating competition between different kinds of knowledge, such as humanities and social-emotional. Relationships defined in this framework are enslaved to social convention with illusions that standardized conventions and cultural knowledge will be sufficient and successful for interacting with differences. Students are limited to a scientific way of making meaning that removes cultural context and assumes sameness. They have the mechanized template and their cultural knowledge to make meaning.

Another problem with prioritizing reason within education is the imbalance between the skills needed to compete in the global market and those needed to negotiate day-to-day living. An education that uses reason and mechanization as the primary way of knowing prioritizes characteristics like initiative, efficiency, assertiveness, and extroversion. These characteristics are value-hierarchically juxtaposed with care, affection, play, listening, humility, fun, or any non-competitive feature that is not clearly related to a competitive edge (Cutter-Mackenzie &

Edwards, 2013; Gray, 2009; Martusewicz & Johnson, 2016; Sharma, 2018). The global competitive perspective referenced in the mission statement of the US Department of Education is decontextualized from the larger sociopolitical circumstances and aims to prepare students for the job market with marketable skills. The skills that are not marketable become overshadowed, underfunded, eventually forgotten, and taken for granted, sending the discursive message that other knowledge is not valuable (Foucault, 1980; Giroux, 2015; Henderson & Hursh, 2014).

The mission statement of the US Department of Education functions to exclude non-dominant groups of people by prioritizing unlimited competition of specific sets of shared cultural knowledge within a neoliberal and anthropocentric way of understanding relationships. The assumption here is that all students have legal access to an excellent education, and if they do not achieve one, it is their fault and are they are solely responsible for the consequences (HB 4822, 2016). Further, success is polarized with failure as a metric because it is used as an indicator of future contributions to society. An education within a larger social paradigm like neoliberalism transforms how people think about relationships and the practices that allow intimacy and community relationships to flourish (Berry, 1977; Henderson & Hursh, 2014). To balance reason, emotion must be understood to be of equal importance. Emotion is poorly understood and valued in dominant culture; it needs to be understood as part of the human condition because people respond to ideas and events with emotions as well as reasoning (Noddings, 2017). Emotion is needed to make concepts, places, or experiences personal. Once something is personal then it has value and meaning (Berry, 2012).

The mission statement for the US Department of Education narrowly defines success to be those able to compete—with reason-based knowledge—on a global scale. This is problematic because the neoliberal and mechanized discourses of education organize and sort information

with a culturally created industrial communication pattern that inherently privileges some lives over others (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Wilson, 2013). The heavy emphasis on the qualification function of education does harm across the lives of students by denying them an opportunity to enrich their lives with multiple perspectives and to develop other areas of the human condition.

Neoliberalism requires identity politics and attacks on public institutions to maintain its centrality and power (Duggan, 2003; Fraser, 2014; Giroux, 2015). Its effects on education have aimed to create educational markets where schools are in competition with each other and curriculum and pedagogy have shifted away from skills that are not bound to any place—resulting in a discourse of success that mechanizes learning, thwarts the development of becoming fully human, and disconnects humans from the traditions that sustain them (Bradford & Shields, 2017; Fraser, 2014; Henderson & Hursh, 2014). Culture wars and other boundary struggles combine with an upward redistribution of resources and use multicultural and equality politics to hide structural violence behind non-redistribution forms of equality (Duggan, 2003; Fraser, 2014; Harvey, 2007). The ongoing debates of how to distribute surplus hide how resources are distributed irrespective of social-political context, nature, and public power, and generate a specific type of education that focuses on fixing deficiencies to achieve normalcy (Duggan, 2003; Fraser, 2014; Lipman, 2017).

Statement of the Problem

The mechanized metaphor used in education hides the systemic flaws and injustices that generate circumstances of poverty. Competition, neoliberalism, and science-based knowledge are embedded in a mechanized way of understanding the world. This mechanized approach contextualizes thought structures within the relationship framework (Bowers & Flinders, 1990;

Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980, 2006; Sancar & Sancar, 2012). Neoliberalism is a larger economic paradigm structuring society—where the state’s job is to create the necessary conditions for hyper-capitalism can flourish (Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018). Competition is part of the discourse of success in education and is a way to understand the self in relationships to another person (Clycq et al., 2014). As a social construct, competition generates a normalized way of understanding relationality that is based on competing for what is available, and because it is embedded in the discourse of neoliberalism, it appears to be unquestionable common sense (Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Nelson & Dawson, 2017).

Education in this context consists of mechanized relationships between students and teachers which become reified between consumers and providers of things. These rigid roles marginalize other forms of knowledge, deny the learning exchange that occurs between people, and generate passive learning experiences (Endacott et al., 2015; Sancar & Sancar, 2012). Knowledge in this sense is understood to be a commodity transmitted to students through mechanized pedagogy—without critical perspectives (Bowers & Flinders, 1990, 1991; Sancar & Sancar, 2012). As a guide for social interactions, neoliberalism undermines dialogue and community participation because it prioritizes global rather than local power and scale (Berry, 1977, 2006b; Bradford & Shields, 2017; Henderson & Hursh, 2014). The educational experience becomes highly skewed towards vocational, utilitarian, and professional-oriented skills that prioritize developing marketable skills while downgrading general knowledge and adaptability skills in favor of new knowledge and ever-changing technologies (Sancar & Sancar, 2012).

Justification

Neoliberal policies impact learning spaces and their generative framing. In this cultural framework, marketable skills and knowledge are prioritized to define success. Politics of neoliberalism are nested inside a mechanized worldview, understood and rationalized as commonsense, and used to reproduce marginalization and sustain the status quo. Social control is achieved with discourses of normalcy that thrive alongside discourses of deficiency to create a rigid system of understanding that is used to make meaning. The problems with this system are many; however, I am most interested in how the myopic knowledge base creates more problems than it solves. For the students, the hyper-emphasis on global competition shifts the focus to skills that are most marketable, which conflicts with what is needed to be successful and happy on a day-to-day basis. The students may learn the skills to get a job, but they do not have the skills to maintain the interpersonal relationships needed to sustain their employment.

Teachers are also impacted by the same systemic problems. When I was a behavioral consultant within the public schools, I saw clear patterns among the teachers. Teachers were trained to focus on their area of specialization, which is problematic because they lost sight of—or were not taught to consider—the complexity and diversity of the learning continuum. This way of understanding education also produces hyper-specialized teachers who understand the student from one perspective. They also lost sight of—or perhaps never saw—the students as complex learners, each at their own place on a cultural continuum. The reading and math content specialists become over-focused on literacy and lose sight of all the literacy opportunities within the other subjects. Lastly, perhaps the most harmful result of this form of education is a limited understanding of what constitutes knowledge and learning.

I argue that to counter the ignorance that is inherent to a mechanized neoliberal education, communities need a pedagogical approach that challenges competition as a common sense assumption and mechanized way of understanding relationships, while simultaneously understanding that humans and the Other-than-human world are interrelated. EcoJustice and place-based approaches offered nonanthropocentric and nonmechanized educational frameworks. The EcoJustice approach to education is an ethical framework that can be used to teach students how to identify and respond to injustice with care (Martusewicz et al., 2015). In this framework, teachers use place to build connections with students and the other than human world to learn how humans are interrelated and the human responsibility to provide care. The EcoJustice approach to education makes explicit the systemic discourses shaping culture and offers an alternative cognitive behavioral response (Martusewicz et al., 2015).

PBE is a model for instruction that, when used with the EcoJustice approach, positions the student as an ethical steward of the Earth and a valuable member of his or her community. Further, it expands the purpose of education to include the betterment and overall health of the community and student (Lowenstein et al, 2019; Gruenewald & Smith, 2010). Place consciousness within education addresses how humans interact with other life communities. Place is the oversimplified label for the diverse communities' teachers use as "texts" for students to engage with the learning experience. Teachers utilizing these frameworks use place to explicitly address the land, bioregions, and ecosystems as part of the wider community (Gruenewald & Smith, 2010). PBE is a pedagogical shift that anchors learning with inquiry-based instruction, connection to place, and informed civic engagement (Demarest, 2014; Gruenewald & Smith, 2010; Lowenstein et al., 2019). I used PBE in the classroom because it is

an approach to teaching that could accommodate all students' learning needs with lessons that are naturally differentiated.

I designed this study to explore the alternative discourse presented by teachers who used the EcoJustice approach to education combined with PBE to challenge the mechanized knowledge and character inherent to neoliberal education. The combined instructional approaches shift educational goals to include developmentally appropriate, sustainable, and ethical ways of relating, thinking, and being. Both instructional approaches empower students to develop knowledge that cannot be taken by power or money by teaching them how to identify systemic injustice, respond with care, and use their communities' assets to make change and generate ecologically focused relationships of mutuality. Critical discourse analysis allowed me to describe an alternative discourse used in the classroom that pushes thinking past logic and reason to embrace the affective knowledge and skills needed to become more fully human (Bradford & Shields, 2017). The meaning making process is complex and lengthy. My interests lie in (a) how meaning making is derived from and informed by personal experience, language, and culture; and (b) how these aspects of meaning are both interconnected and deeply rooted in cultural history. I focused on these areas of meaning making because the ways in which we make meaning shape our perception of the world, what/who we value, and how we interact with the surrounding environment and the beings within it.

Significance

The significance of this study is multilayered. It calls attention to the mismatch between policy initiatives and the needs and wants of communities while providing teachers with options to resist dominant educational discourses. The teachers in this study created spaces where students could develop an ethical attitude towards all life communities and the desire to respond

with care to injustices. They also generated educational experiences that were relevant to the learner and supported the local community. Thus, the significance of this dissertation research was in making explicit the discourse and actions that are occurring to resist neoliberal schooling as well as highlighting which discourses are causing harm to students and communities and which are healing and generating relationships of connection.

The teachers who participated in the study used an alternative discourse based on love that uses affective relations as tools for lasting social change and a pedagogy that champions teachers as leaders of a relationality that is strengthened by an understanding of interconnection and community well-being. These teachers had a different understanding of what it meant to become educated and extended that knowledge to their students by providing them with the opportunity to connect to community and learn how to become stewards of their place. Teachers using PBE and the EcoJustice approach to education are unique because they engage their students with a way of knowing outside of reason and challenge competition as the only way of relating. Further, their teaching philosophy is not shaped by a linear teleological understanding of development (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Gruenewald & Smith, 2010; Martusewicz et al., 2015). These educators used ecocritical and place-based ethics of care to challenge the mechanized worldview and they have not been previously studied as a group.

Lowenstein, Martusewicz, and Voelker (2010) detailed the adult developmental trajectory of becoming an EcoJustice educator. They explored the necessity of teachers' ongoing development with the ideas from within EcoJustice and ongoing professional development for teachers to learn how to "translate" ideas into classroom appropriate materials. They argued that this form of education is more complex because teachers need to learn socio-political history, and how it affects various marginalized groups, and then examine and address their own personal

contribution to suffering—all in addition to their specific content area knowledge for general education teachers and all content areas, developmental and behavioral blueprints, and learning strategies for special education teachers.

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to bridge theory and practice and bring attention to how educational policy guides oppression and day-to-day interactions, while enabling dominant discourses to maintain power. Further this research was designed to provide teachers with a resource to challenge the neoliberal education argument. To achieve these goals, I present some harmful consequences to a mechanized worldview that frames neoliberal education and perpetuates the myth of human superiority and disconnection while denying ecological relationships. I selected an ecocritical pedagogy and used philosophies of place to juxtapose dominant practices, bring attention to the harm done by current practices, and present an alternative epistemological and ontological understanding of what it means to become educated. I examined the extralinguistic features of the teachers and how they were used to define and present the alternative discourse to the students. Finally, this research presents the beginnings of an ethical discourse in education where students and teachers work to identify the structural causes of social inequality and work towards resisting its power.

Research Question

What kind of discourse is produced by a pedagogy that challenges competition as a common sense assumption, challenges mechanized ways of understanding relationships, and understands humans and the other-than-human world to be interrelated?

Brief Overview of Study

I used inductive and deductive analyses to explore the nested relationship of discourses. I consider the nested nature of the mechanized and neoliberal discourses and how these discourses intersected with the mission statement of the US Department of Education. Next, I articulate the alternative discourses that were used in the resistance-pedagogy. To do so, I use the same analysis style with data generated from interviews to examine six teachers who were challenging neoliberalism and mechanization with their language, actions, and interactions. See Figure 1 for a graphic display of the conceptual model of the study.

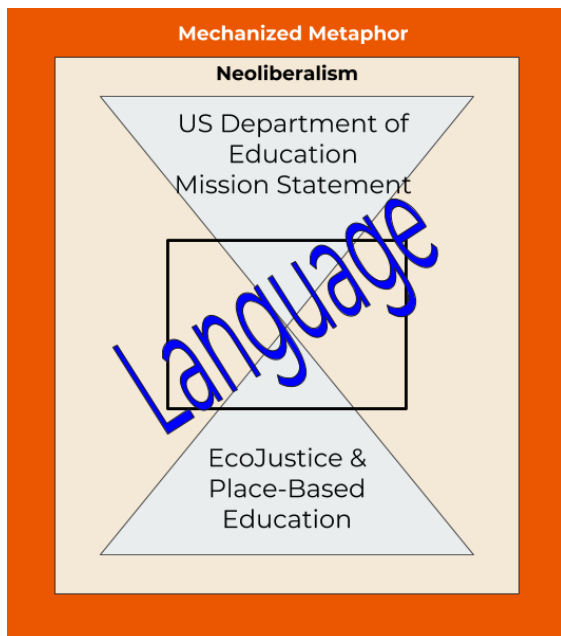


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the study.

Organization of Chapters

In this chapter, the foundations of market-based education and the broader role of language were used with the mission statement from US Department of Education to illustrate the systemic injustice inherent to modern education. In Chapter 2, Ecocritical pedagogical approaches are combined with place consciousness and ecofeminism to theorize place as resistance to neoliberal schooling. Chapter 3 addresses how critical discourse analysis was used

to examine embedded power within language, metaphors and communication patterns were used to detail how meaning is made within communication, and discursive meanings were used to explain metaphoric significance within communication. Chapter 4 presents the participants, data, and reports the results of the study. Finally, Chapter 5 details the analysis and the alternative discourse.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Prior to designing this study, I reviewed relevant research that challenged the isolating and disempowering effects of modern life and the ways in which it prioritizes profit over life. I sought pedagogical and theoretical traditions that challenged the mechanized nature of education and made space for and placed value on emotionality, affection, and the Other-than-human world. This chapter presents the theoretical positions I chose that best represent the participants teaching philosophy. The following sections include literature on EcoJustice education and ecofeminist politics of language. I used place-based education, place philosophy, and feminist love studies to support a critical discourse analysis of teachers whom engage students with a “pedagogy of solidarity” (J. Lupinacci, personal communication, January 24, 2018). Lupinacci used this as an umbrella term to refer to critical pedagogies that challenge the systemic inequality. Combined, these frameworks create the teaching philosophy that guides their day-to-day interactions and which is a viable and ethical alternative to dominant neoliberal education discourse.

Ecocritical Resistance to Neoliberal Education

Ecocritical pedagogy is a trend in curriculum inquiry growing out of interdisciplinary environmental literary criticism. It has ecofeminist roots that look towards indigenous and first peoples culture’s for guidance surrounding problems in education (Tsai, 2017). Ecocritical forms of education call attention to the interrelated nature of social and environmental crises and refer to them as one social crisis (Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Turner, 2018; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). Teachers use critical pedagogies of solidarity to engage students in meaningful learning opportunities that are in line with their community’s social and political history. Ecocritical perspectives include three deeply related foundational understandings (Wolfmeyer &

Lupinacci, 2017). These are (a) to examine root assumptions in Western industrial culture, (b) generate inquiry into how such assumptions rationalize violence and have detrimental impacts on social and environmental systems, and (c) highlight the importance of teaching habits and skills that support socially and environmentally just communities. Teachers who use ecocritical pedagogies prioritize inquiry and examination of the relationship between a logic of domination and the day-to-day actions and behaviors that contribute to inequities (such as racism, classism, sexism, ableism, and anthropocentrism). They value and identify how to share skills and habits of mind that create and support socially just and environmentally sustainable communities (Bradford & Shields, 2017; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016, 2017; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Turner, 2018; Tsai, 2017; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). Lastly, they make explicit the mechanized metaphor as it informs educational settings, the broader community, and the ways in which it functions in society to systemically oppress.

EcoJustice approach to education. Multiple pedagogies aim to bring attention to the cultural causes of social and environmental injustices (see Bowers, 2002; Gruenewald, 2008; Kahn, 2010; Martusewicz & Edmundson, 2005; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Orr, 2005; Rasmussen, 2001; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). The EcoJustice approach to education is one ecocritical pedagogy. This approach is different from the others because it brings attention to the intersection of language, culture, and education by using ecofeminist logic structures to deconstruct and understand thought processes and how they contribute to reproduction of unequal power structures of white supremacist, patriarchal capitalism (hooks, 2009; Martusewicz et al., 2015). It makes explicit the mechanized metaphor and how it impacts knowledge, relationships, and everyday life. Students and teachers use this framework to question the

purposes of education through a form of critical discourse analysis that helps them to learn how to question the larger social structures responsible for shaping day-to-day interactions.

The EcoJustice approach to education focuses on the relationality and politics within language to identify systemic injustice (Martusewicz, 2018b, 2018a; Martusewicz et al., 2015). It provides tools for students and teachers to analyze language that employs harmful cultural discourses that shape thoughts and actions (Bowers, 2001; Fairclough, 1981/2001; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). Teachers using this approach shift their pedagogical themes to move past inquiry into the Other-than-human world and toward inquiry into personal responsibility for social crises (Martusewicz et al., 2015). They consider the relationships between thought and behavior, and question the communication and logic structures guiding day-to-day interactions (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Plumwood, 2002). This pedagogy is unique because it engages students with place to learn how to question their own culpability and participation in harmful cultural habits.

Within the EcoJustice approach to education teachers are taught the limits of mechanized knowledge such as how it lacks a framework to contextualize differences (Martusewicz et al., 2015). EcoJustice educators are presented with commons-based knowledge—necessary resources shared by all—as an alternative way to make meaning of relationships and differences. This type of knowledge is ancient and used by indigenous cultures to develop one’s moral capacity to protect the ecosystems and relationships that support life (Bowers, 2006; Mander & Tauli-Corpuz, 2006; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Within this approach to education, teachers make the morals and ethics of their actions explicit and in the same conversation expose the lack of ethics and morality within becoming educated with only a mechanized-neoliberal knowledge. EcoJustice teachers and scholars look to Wendell Berry to navigate complex issues of morality

(Foster, Mäkelä, & Martusewicz, 2019; Krynski, 2018; Lowenstein et al., 2018; Martusewicz, 2018; Martusewicz et al., 2015). His work is used to inspire students' and teachers' imaginations in ways that are non-mechanized and to model what an alternative epistemology could look like. His work is also used to show students how cultivating intangible relationalities can benefit the individual and challenge the brutality of everyday living within a culture dedicated to for-profit market initiatives (Foster et al., 2019; Martusewicz, 2018).

EcoJustice pedagogy stands apart from others because of the priority it gives to cognitive features of relationality. Teachers using this pedagogy learn how the “logic of domination” is responsible for rationalizing oppression (Warren, 1990, p. 128). They use it as an entry point for curricular planning and for critical historical and cultural analyses (Martusewicz et al., 2015; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). For example, teachers will challenge student to imagine a reality without a social hierarchy. They create a space where students can make inquiry around the multiple intersecting discourses used to conceptualize how meaning is made with language (Martusewicz et al., 2015; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). Then teachers guide students in discussions about how these understandings are used to inform interactions when relating to others and reproducing harmful cultural habits.

As a critical pedagogy, EcoJustice approach to education considers the various intersecting institutional discourses around race, gender, class, ability, and other categories to uncover the deep cultural assumptions guiding modern thought that undermine local and global ecosystems (Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Martusewicz et al., 2015). EcoJustice educators identify where logics of domination under-prioritize people of color, women, the poor, and other groups of marginalized humans and frame the Other-than-human world to be limitless and its health inconsequential. Students and teachers analyze modern thought for where hyper-

consumption and consumerism exploit local and global resources worldwide (Martusewicz et al., 2015). Students and teachers learn to recognize and protect diverse cultural and environmental commons, which include healthy, sustainable, and ethical relationships with water, land, air, and other life communities (Martusewicz & Johnson, 2016; Shiva, 2005). Teachers use “Earth democracies” to guide decisions about how to relate with the Earth in a way that allows for the regeneration and repair of resources (Shiva, 2005). This framework includes an approach to teaching that emphasizes deep cultural analysis and community-based learning through classroom strategies that engage students in learning (Bowers & Flinders, 1991; Lupinacci, 2013; Martusewicz & Edmundson, 2005; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Those using this approach challenge the notion that humans are the center of the social hierarchy and emphasize the interrelated nature of people and the Other-than-human world by providing students an opportunity to make connections with and care for their place while also addressing the powerful role culture plays in developing relationships and values (Bradford & Shields, 2017; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016).

Pedagogy of responsibility. The EcoJustice approach to education uses a pedagogy of responsibility to build eco-ethical principles and understandings into the everyday schooling experiences of students (Martusewicz et al., 2015). Teachers focus on the habits of the mind and body that provide students with the capacity and skills to protect and create just communities that are sustainable. Martusewicz (2018a) described the changes that happen to students as a result of this pedagogy as an eco-ethical becoming that guides the individual when interacting. She stated, “[E]co-ethical becoming is not a universalizing process; it is tuned to place, while attentive to larger contexts and forces affecting those places, specifically the creatures who share those places” (p. 18). Teachers using this approach to education to give students an opportunity to

explore setting limits, using personal restraint, and responding with care to social injustices (Edmundson & Martusewicz, 2013; Lupinacci, 2013; Martusewicz et al., 2015). They teach students the cognitive linguistic features of communication that responsible for fostering an awareness to hidden information within the self, like inaccurate information, that can be used to shape understandings. Once they are aware of problems within their thinking, students are provided a safe and developmentally appropriate place to explore changes in their behaviors.

Teachers who use the pedagogy of responsibility explicitly teach students how they are related to the larger social system (Biesta, 2009; Martusewicz et al., 2015). These teachers are taught with their training in the EcoJustice approach to education, through non-profit professional development organizations or college courses, that communication and the mental aspects of any event are shaped with external systems often shaped by cultural knowledge. This pedagogy teaches students how to analyze discourses and to have ongoing consideration for which cultural traditions need to be maintained and which need to be transformed (Bowers, 2013a; Edmundson & Martusewicz, 2013). All pedagogies frame the future with a specific perspective. A relational pedagogy within an educational context becomes an ethical stance which defines what should be reproduced (Martusewicz & Edmundson, 2005). In this case, teachers aim to shift educational reform paradigms to include community centered cultures and traditions (Bowers, 2017).

Within the pedagogy of responsibility is what I call an *ecological relationality*—a way of recognizing human interdependence with a much larger set of ecological relationships—which requires learning how to recognize and respond to injustice with care (Goulah, 2017; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Lupinacci and Happel-Parkins (2016) described the relational framework needed to understand the multiple different types of

relationships humans have with the Other-than-human world. In an ecological context, relationships are multidimensional and occur within the physical ecology of a living ecosystem, requiring students and teachers to shift paradigms from a competitive and human-centered perspective to one of interrelation that is actualized through connecting to place. The shift begins by noticing, becoming aware of, and critically examining the larger social, cultural, political, and historical discourses responsible for structuring day-to-day interactions.

Teachers using this pedagogy have an unwavering commitment to human interdependence, which requires learning to balance stability and transformation while also renewing aspects of the cultural commons that support life (Edmundson & Martusewicz, 2013). Students learn to protect complex ecological systems, challenge the deep structures of modern assumptions, and prioritize the significance of and interrelation between self and others (Martusewicz & Edmundson, 2005). This cognitive behavioral shift requires students and teachers to imagine ways of living together outside of competition and to look towards ways of mutuality in order to stop the reproduction of harmful cultural behaviors. Further, they embrace local knowledge and a commitment to a place and the members (Kropotkin, 1902; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016).

Place as ecocritical resistance. Teachers in this study taught subjective and socialized functions of education alongside the neoliberal qualification function of education (Biesta, 2009). They used place as a framework for mutuality where students engaged in an immersive learning experience that is centered on local history and culture and created a space for differentiated, engaged, and transformative learning (Kropotkin, 1902). Teachers used PBE to leverage the power of imagination and move learning from an independent action of rationality to an interdependent knowing of relationality. Within this context the learning objectives expand

beyond individual cognitive pursuit of acquiring passive knowledge to a community effort where the individual is nourished alongside the community. Together students and teachers decolonize education and resist neoliberal social politics by engaging with the significance of their local history and the social political structures needed to create just and sustainable futures. Place is gaining popularity with educators across United States for its ability to provide educators with an authentic space to prioritize community needs within a non-mechanized learning model (Demarest, 2014; Lowenstein et al., 2018). It is an appropriate instructional model for diverse classrooms of all ability levels because it naturalizes and thrives on differences. Projects with place are cooperative in nature and require a wide range of skills and abilities. For example, not all students can be the leaders. Community projects needs good followers just like they need good leaders. Similarly, not all students can conceptualize and implement projects and other students struggle with physical labor or hand-eye coordination. Cooperative projects that thrive with diverse skills and abilities allow for differences to be experienced and expected within a group (Demarest, 2014; Lowenstein et al., 2018; Sobel, 1998; Williams & Brown, 2012)

Ecocritical educators generate viable and alternatives discourses in education to create awareness of the systemic injustice reproduced by language. They move forward with curriculum and pedagogy to rethink the purposes of education and the meanings of teaching, learning, and community (Lowenstein et al., 2018; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Teachers challenge the illusions of separation inherent to neoliberal schooling by orienting students to the values and opportunities inherent to place (Gruenewald & Smith, 2010). An education in place engages students with appreciation, beauty, wonder, and mutuality where students learn how to get comfortable with differences and to form connections within and between communities (Berry, 2011; Gruenewald & Smith, 2010; Kropotkin, 1902).

Teachers using place as resistance look towards local knowledge to anchor and direct pedagogy that includes an ethical imperative and civic engagement (Lowenstein et al., 2018; Martusewicz, 2019). The familiarity and connection to place create a space where affection can develop (Berry, 2012). The space where familiarity and connection intersect can be used to expose common sense knowledge and challenge what is assumed to be true. It is also the site where local knowledge can be accessed and developed. Teachers challenge the mechanized nature of knowledge by directing inquiry into the linguistic and structural influences on oppression. They use their place to unite the members of their community and reframe the functions and purposes of education. These teachers prioritize a local knowledge and an ethical way of being to orient students towards their community and provide a viable, alternative way to understand relationality.

The neoliberal mechanized knowledge that dominant education uses its association with science and logic—concepts portrayed as infallible and affording objective solutions to all problems—to rationalize its superiority. This is akin to using the same logic to identify and solve a problem that was used to create the problem in the first place (Benton & Craib, 2011; Kuhn, 1962/2012). The limits of mechanized knowledge, such as decontextualization, intersect with the complexity of defining and understanding social problems. Berry challenged the hubris that comes with mechanized knowledge in his fiction and non-fiction (Berry, 1977, 2006a, 2010b, 2012). He also wrote of the various skills, dispositions, relationships, and knowledge needed to negotiate a responsible relationship to place (Berry, 2000a, 2004a, 2013a). A local knowledge includes the day-to-day workings of the community and is the crux of resistance because it is the type of knowledge that “cannot be taken from you by power or by wealth” (Berry, 2011, p. 92).

That quote comes from a poem in his Sabbaths collection. In that same poem, Berry (2011) detailed a local knowledge further:

Belong to your place by the knowledge of the others who are
you neighbors in it: the old man, sick and poor
who comes like a heron to fish in the creek,
and the fish in the creek, and the heron who manlike
fishes for the fish in the creek, and the birds who sing
in the trees in the silence of the fisherman
and the heron, and the trees that keep the land
they stand upon as we must keep it, or die. (p. 91)

For Berry, caring for the Earth and its creatures are part of his shared cultural knowledge and a way of thinking and being that is fulfilling and rewarding—not a burden or obligation (Berry, 2002). This knowledge is used to create and maintain relationships of mutuality (Berry, 2004a). Throughout his work he described a relationality between humans and the Other-than-human world that thrives because of local knowledge. Members use their local knowledge to make sense of new information and decisions for the community. For example, in the same poem, Berry (2011) described how to use this type of knowledge:

Answer with knowledge of the others who are here
and of how to be here with them. By this knowledge
make the sense you need to make. By it stand
in the dignity of good sense, whatever may follow. (p. 92)

Berry teaches of the local knowledge that comes from a connection and familiarity to place. His perspectives are useful to conceptualize relationships of mutuality and to see the harm done by relationships overly focused on competition.

Place and the local knowledge that comes with affection to place resists the neoliberal rootlessness that is inherent to the entrepreneurial individual. Throughout Berry's work he referenced the importance of membership within communities, which includes everything from the soil to the memories and shared knowledge of generations of the past, the living present, generations of the future, and everything in between. A local knowledge includes the shared cultural skills, language, and dispositions needed to be in a loving relationship to place and resist globalized life (Berry, 2011; Henderson & Hursh, 2014). He presented an alternative form of knowledge that has transformative educational potential (Martusewicz, 2018a). With place, teachers leverage the power of local knowledge and results of mutuality to teach an ecological relationality.

Place-based education: Personalized instruction models for resistance. My training and experience in special education taught me to select learning models that made space for diverse learners with an equally diverse set of needs and assets. When in the classroom, PBE allowed me to teach abstract and complex science and mathematics benchmarks to middle and high school students in special education. This is a personalized approach to education that inherently accommodates differing learning needs. It challenges the neoliberal education context that uses a top-down approach to teaching and learning. Combined with critical social theory and care ethics, PBE is a holistic counterapproach to the neoliberal means-to-an-end understanding of education (Giroux, 2015; Gruenewald & Smith, 2010; Martusewicz, 2018a; Smith & Sobel, 2010; Sobel, 1998).

As an instructional model, PBE has a certain history in formal schooling in the United States, but many indigenous people have been using place-based educational traditions for generations (Goulah, 2010; Mander & Tauli-Corpuz, 2006; Mies & Shiva, 2014; Prakash & Esteva, 2008; Shiva, 2005). It has roots in the Foxfire project, which was a local response by people in Southern Appalachia to resist the changes in dominant educational initiatives during the 1960s and 1970s (Foxfire, n.d.). Foxfire created and disseminated print media and resources drawing from and specific to Appalachian mountain culture (e.g., Wigginton, 1972). The idea was to engage and guide students towards generating questions about real community problems and aimed to foster a better understanding of sustainable dwelling in one's own surrounding (Hayes, 2017; Semken, Ward, Moosavi, & Chinn, 2017). From there, PBE can be historically traced to commons-based education, rural education, progressive education, natural and environmental education, and critical pedagogy (Smith, 2016)—with the common goal to integrate the importance of community functions for an informed and participatory democratic society. Ecocritical traditions combined with PBE include a decentralized form of decision making where decisions are made by those impacted, all voices are included, even if the voice is not word. Each voice contributes towards “situational, local economies in support of living systems” (J. Lupinacci, personal communication, January 24, 2018).

Within place-based instructional methods, the local community and environment are used as starting points to teach academic content and emphasize real world learning experiences while helping students develop a stronger connection to the community and enhance the students appreciation for the Other-than-human world (Smith & Sobel, 2010; Sobel, 2005). There is no short or universal definition to PBE. But all definitions socially and historically contextualize the *place* where learning is happening (Gruenewald, 2004; Gruenewald & Smith, 2010; G. A. Smith

& Sobel, 2010). The definition that best describes PBE used by the participants in this study is “a community-based effort to reconnect the process of education, enculturation, and human development to the well-being of community life and introduces children and youth to the skills and dispositions needed to regenerate and sustain communities” (Gruenewald & Smith, 2010, p. xvi).

This educational model goes past inquiry and includes a holistic approach to education that can be inquiry based, but also includes teaching that is engaging, grounded in the local context, critical and interdisciplinary. Place-based educators work with community partners and intergenerational relationships to explore historical and social-cultural conditions in the lives of anonymous and ordinary people and communicate how their lives were or could have been effected by social relationships of power (Shopes, 2015). The purpose of the place-student relationship is to engage students with their community in an authentic and developmentally appropriate manner in order to focus on caring for their place (Demarest, 2014; Sobel, 1998; Williams & Brown, 2012). Place-based educators aim to create a sense of community in the classroom and work to bridge the gap between school and community relationships (Hayes, 2017). PBE, with critical ecological literacy, allows for a space that responds to social and cultural conditions and disrupt deficit discourses that often define the schooling experience of students of color and students with diverse abilities like those in special education. With PBE, students learn how to create mutually beneficial relationships that can be maintained with tools and skills outside a capitalist exchange that only finds value in money.

Developing local knowledge: Visual spatial application. Teachers who combine PBE with ecocritical pedagogies consider the historical, social, and political contexts around areas of injustice prior to developing an action plan for community projects (Lowenstein & Erkaeva,

2016). Students learn to protect their place after learning about its history and uniqueness (Berry, 2011, 2012). Teachers work with students to narrow their interests and focus by facilitating the development of realistic, activist-oriented stewardship projects where all students can contribute towards protecting their place from unsustainable and exploitive relationships in a common place that has meaning (Lowenstein & Erkaeva, 2016; Lowenstein et al., 2018; Schindel Dimick, 2016; Sperling & Bencze, 2015). Community mapping projects are one way for students to engage with their place, create a greater connection with place, and develop a shared cultural knowledge that acts as a medium for learning content standards (E. Lowenstein, personal communication, January 27, 2018). Two of the pedagogical results from sociocultural mapping projects are an awareness and appreciation for local knowledge systems and an understanding of how people impact a physical space (Kropotkin, 1902; Sinha et al., 2017).

Place-based instructional approaches help teachers move students from theory and discussion to application by giving attention to what is in the community, what is missing from the community, who the stakeholders are, what needs to be done in the community, and who can do it. Pedagogies of place can use maps with a social and political focus as a teaching tool to develop an ecological relationality that supports community flourishing. When combined with ecocritical assumptions, students learn to critically analysis day-to-day culture for unequal power relations. Sobel (1998) called for a developmentally appropriate approach to environmental education and activities. He argued that after a loving and caring connection to nature has been established children will want to make ethical choices surrounding the natural world.

Community mapping projects are suitable for differentiating instruction and thus all learning levels. Students learn to work with the community to create a narrative of a usable past in a social and political context and an awareness of the current and historical struggles of

various non-dominant groups within their community (Shopes, 2015). This instructional approach has the power to remove the veil of separation between individuals and their community and create a space where students can deepen their understanding of and relationships with various community members and stakeholders. After students become aware, or deepen their awareness, of day-to-day marginalization and oppression and the interrelation of people and the Other-than-human world, teachers focus the resulting passion—which can look like curiosity, anger, outrage, or even shock—to take action with stewardship projects.

The community map engages students with place in a way that is dynamic and creates a connective relationship between students and the culture of their place (Fieldhouse & Bunkowsky, 2002; Sinha et al., 2017). The community map is more than the geography of the place. It includes barriers, historical markers, areas of blight, recreation, and countless other variables that allow students to generate a narrative around the history of their place and include alternative and non-dominant perspectives. Teachers determine a developmentally appropriate goal, such as examining the social inequalities around transit routes in areas of poverty, exploring the food accessibility options, or in rural areas, considering the limited availability of locations to receive social programs like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). Through a critical mapping project, students use technical skills like collecting, organizing, and mapping information and in an ecocritical social context this provides students an opportunity to enlarge their perspectives to include a wider understanding of differences and the local perceptions (Sinha et al., 2017).

Politics of Language as Resistance

Power is communicated through language, discourses, and ideologies and is used to generate meaning. Ideological power works by normalizing or rationalizing the institutional

practices that people draw upon without thinking (Daldal, 2014; Fairclough, 2001; Foucault, 1981, 2010; Gramsci, 1971). The ideological nature of language is important because power is transmitted through language, which makes language the primary means of social control and social power (Daldal, 2014; Fairclough, 1993, 1995, 2001, 2011, 2013b, 2013a; Foucault, 1981, 2010). For example, when people directly or indirectly draw upon institutional norms they are legitimizing the institutional beliefs—including the power relations (Fairclough, 2001). One assumption in discourse studies is that communication exchanges do not happen in social vacuums (Fairclough, 2001; Foucault, 2010; Gee, 2011a; Rogers, 2011a; Wodak & Meyer, 2013b) and researchers need to consider the “institutional practices which people draw upon without thinking [that] often embody assumptions which directly or indirectly legitimize existing power relations” (Fairclough, 2001, p. 27). To explain how and why discourses work they must be understood from a social and cultural ideological perspective encompassing more than personal truths, but are dimensions of a culture’s shared set of knowledge (Bowers, 1993; Fairclough, 1995, 2001; Foucault, 1981, 2010; Jager & Maier, 2013; Martusewicz et al., 2015; van Dijk, 1993).

An ecocritical relationality has the capacity to expose the systemic violence that results from human-centered perspectives and redefines community to have an ecological understanding of relationships (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016). The power in ecocritical approaches to education are the ecofeminist analytic tools used to deconstruct relationships of power and challenge cognitive thought structures that guide understandings (Tsai, 2017). As an intersectional form of feminism, ecofeminism brings attention to the domination of women and the Other-than-human world by deconstructing the naturalized moral framework of sameness within a system of reasoning, which seeks to control what is considered knowledge and how it is

valued (Martusewicz et al., 2015; Newcomb, 2008; Warren, 1990). This is achieved through discursive knowledge that is communicated with the use of a social hierarchy (Foucault, 1981; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Ecocritical pedagogies highlight how societies arranged by “isms of domination” (such as racism, sexism, etc.) are used to normalize power and privilege within systems of inequality (Warren, 2000, p.188).

Ecofeminism is diverse in philosophical groundings; however, a common focus is around the connections between the domination of women, non-dominant groups, and non-human-Others (Kings, 2017; Lloro-Bidart, 2017; Martusewicz & Johnson, 2016; Plumwood, 2002; Shiva, 2005; Warren, 2000; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). Ecofeminism rejects hierarchical ways of relating to life and instead respectfully and nonjudgmentally acknowledges differences as a way of understanding and embracing new relationships (Warren, 2000). As a critical philosophy, ecofeminism understands humanity to be inseparable from the non-human Others and to harm either is to harm to all of humankind—not just women (Kings, 2017). An ecofeminist ethic requires an awareness of who you are in the world and considers ethics to be just as much about character as about actions, making it an ethical and critical evaluative framework (Cuomo, 1998).

Ecofeminist scholars challenge the nature-culture binary and bring attention to the ways oppressive conceptual frameworks are used to organize social life. The ecofeminist line of philosophy deconstructs the cognitive features of communication that are responsible for oppression (see Appendix B; Plumwood, 2002). These aspects are the ones that bridge thought and language. Briefly, binary hierarchal relationships are used to give meaning. Within the binary, the two categories are arranged in opposition and the meaning of differences is made with a hierarchal understanding—communicating relational structures and reproducing

dominance. The metaphoric nature of language uses centric thought to communicate ideas that are central in priority. The logic of domination enables a morality that places the dominant binary in a position of power over the subordinate. The dominant will have more value and their version of reality is accepted as truth (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Plumwood, 2002). Activists and scholars use these cognitive communication exchanges to highlight oppression and challenge industrialized and anthropocentric culture (Martusewicz et al., 2015; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). Analyses of language and communication are useful to identify where multiple cognitive frames intersect to create systemic boundaries affecting day-to-day decision making (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bowers & Flinders, 1990).

Ecocritical teachers and scholars teach students to critically examine personal language use and language used in media, literature, and policy to peel back the systemic influences on day-to-day language. Language includes acquiring a cultural heritage of preunderstandings that guide the interpretation of new experiences (Bowers & Flinders, 1991). This knowledge—shared cultural knowledge or common sense knowledge—is expressed through words and operates discursively to become part of the individual’s natural attitude and is responsible for guiding new experiences (Bowers & Flinders, 1991; Fairclough, 1981/2001; Foucault, 1981; Warren, 1990). Ecocritical teachers work with students to identify oppression that is reproduced through language (Martusewicz et al., 2015). They also create and support an alternative ecological relationality where relationships depend on the ecological context (Kropotkin, 1902; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016). They purposely bring a viable, ethical, and alternative framework for understanding relationships to challenge the dominant anthropocentric perspective.

Cognitive thought structures and curricular planning. In education research, a cognitive model is important for understanding the discursive intentions guiding the teachers’

communicative events, allowing for the exploration of the cognitive interfaces bridging mind, society, and discursive interactions (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Cyn & Ganapathy, 2016; Fairclough, 1993, 2001; Foucault, 1981, 2010; Rogers, 2011a; van Dijk, 2000, 2013). Cognition occurs when the individual human interacts with the social context and is responsible for communication and language selection. Words are selected based on a variety of variables—such as a person's cultural knowledge, attitudes, sociopolitical context, and ideologies. Language combines with cognition to prioritize, organize, and contextualize sensory information determining what we understand and know. The cognitive processes are responsible for causing and controlling all human action and interactions as well as where root metaphors and mental models are comprehended to create meanings (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; van Dijk, 2017).

Ecofeminist philosophy aids in deconstructing categorical language to expose harmful shared cultural knowledge acting as an undercurrent to Western industrial culture (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Johnson, 2016; Kings, 2017; Lloro-Bidart, 2017; Martusewicz & Johnson, 2016; Plumwood, 2002; Shiva, 2005; Swanson, 2015; Warren, 1990, 2000; Whyte & Cuomo, 2016; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). Day-to-day language use interacts with cultural understandings to create meaning that is discursively reproduced (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Fairclough, 1981/2001; Foucault, 1981). Discursive understandings flow through cognitive thought structures and are expressed in language to generate meaning. Two cognitive structures foundational to the normalization of oppression and anthropocentric relationality are the logic of domination and human-centered thought (Plumwood, 2002; Warren, 1990, 2000a).

Wolfmeyer and Lupinacci (2017) argued for the use of the logic of domination as an entry point for curricular planning. Teachers using this the EcoJustice approach to education first learn to dissect language by identifying how humans orient themselves in relation to other

humans and the Other-than-human world. This involves identifying the anthropocentric ordering used in dominant culture and bringing attention to the harmful systemic results. Teachers often use literature to expose the ordering system in modern society.

I have used *Animal Farm* (Orwell, 1996), *Ishmael* (Quinn, 2009), and the science fiction film *Avatar* (Cameron & Landau, 2009) to expose the ways culture is ordered and assumed to be ordered. To begin, students are taught the social hierarchy in the text or film. Next, they learn how categorical divisions are arranged within society and create the social hierarchy which is communicated through language and ordered within the media and dominant culture. They next learn to blend the new perspective initiated above with core beliefs about oneself, others, and the future to identify thoughts feelings and behaviors responsible for oppression. Many if not all students working with this pedagogy find areas in their life where they have unknowingly reproduced oppression. The ecofeminist language of politics enters here to imply multiple perspectives and to deconstruct the cognitive thought structures responsible for oppression. Warren (1990) brought attention to the intersecting conceptual frameworks that depend on a logic of domination to organize thoughts and creates a discourse for how to engage with those deemed as social subordinates. Warren (1990) stated,

A logic of domination is not just a logical structure. It also involves a substantive value system, since an ethical premise is needed to permit or sanction the “just” subordination of that which is subordinate. This justification typically is given on the grounds of some alleged characteristic (e.g., rationality), which the dominant (e.g., men) have and the subordinate (e.g., women) lack. (p. 128)

This framework allows for the systemic advantage of power and privilege to go unnoticed (Warren, 2000b).

The logic of domination is perfect starting point for breaking the lock-step curriculum steeped with neoliberal values because it is a common cognitive component in all forms of oppression (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Warren, 1990, 2000; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). Teachers using this pedagogy open classroom discussions to include cultural heritage and preunderstandings that guide the interpretation of new experiences (Bowers, 1990). Then teachers advance students through more cognitive structures that operate discursively and cause harm because of the logic of domination. When the logic of domination is used to critically analyze social discourses it exposes the systemic dependence on a moral justification that rationalizes behaviors and thoughts, arranges living organisms hierarchically, and with mechanized language (Warren, 2000). When preparing lessons, I have taught students about the logic of domination and then used it to guide student to think through injustice and how it is reproduced and normalized.

Teachers using the logic of domination as a starting point to analyzing culture show students the systemic structures and frameworks that cause injustice (Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). Students explore oppressive cognitive frameworks that include value-hierarchical thinking, value dualisms, power, and privilege in relation to a logic of domination (Martusewicz et al., 2015; Warren, 1990, 2000). In brief, value-hierarchical thinking organizes thoughts in such a way that uses mutually exclusive categories (binaries) where difference is seen as oppositional; power is conceived as *power over someone/something*, and this type of power is used to reinforce unequal power relations by distributing resources and assigning value based on social hierarchy. With a logic of domination, the binaries are used to conceptualize relationships and justify oppressive behaviors to socially subordinate groups such as non-White, women, non-heterosexual, (dis)abled, queer, the natural world, poor, and other non-dominant groups. The

binaries set up an either/or situation that engages the value system within the logic of domination. Next, an ethical premise of lack is assumed for the non-dominant binary (Martusewicz et al., 2015; Plumwood, 2002; Warren, 2000; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017).

These cognitive structures create the shape for the core belief and those beliefs guide the ways of thinking and being, which direct actions and behaviors and shape how we understand the world and our place in it (Bateson, 1972/2000). The logic of domination combined with centric thinking (see Appendix B) is traced as the root of *anthropocentrism*—a belief system that culturally constructs ways of understanding relationships and experiences based on a valuing humans over all other life communities (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Anthropocentrism is a way of understanding relationships that positions humans in the center of and disconnected from all other life communities. The purpose of learning about anthropocentrism and the logic of domination is to unlearn harmful cultural ways of relating and dissolve the shared cultural understanding that humans are not deeply dependent on webs of relationships. Plumwood (2002a) called this way of relating “an illusion of disembeddedness” (p. 97)—which is an understanding of humans to be separate from and superior to other species and the natural world (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Martusewicz et al., 2015), resulting in a way of relating that denies a human ecology of relationships and assigns low priority to social and ecological crisis—or “ecological denial” (Plumwood, 2002, p. 97). Relationships built with an ecological denial combine with systems of inequality like patriarchy, race, ability, heteronormativity, and other harmful habits of the mind that result in systemic violence, such as the indifference to need. Teachers using the EcoJustice approach to education teach students an ethical and alternative relationality to ecological denial.

Ecocritical politics and discourse of relationality. Teachers can address the affective domain of caring and love relations by combining feminist love studies' arguments with an ecocritical pedagogical approach. Discourses of love are impacted by culture and politics and have been historically silent (Brown, 2017; Davies, 1999; King, 2000, 1958/2015; Lewis, 1960/2017). Feminist love studies challenge the affective inequality associated with care, love, and solidarity as well as the feminized reputation that association with the affective domain is dangerous, romantic, and neither political nor connected to political freedom (Lynch, 2014; Weir, 2017). The ecocritical approach creates a discourse for matters of love, care, and solidarity that illuminates the necessity of care that all humans need at some point in their life (Kittay, 1998). In the classroom, this could look like teachers creating a space where giving and receiving care is normalized. Students learn the value in caring for place and the interdependence of humans with the natural world by participating in the reciprocate care relationships resulting from PBE. These teachers challenge the human self-enclosure which has diminished the power of love and affective relations for making personal and social change (Bowers, 2013b). Teachers who participated use the EcoJustice pedagogy of responsibility to redefine what it means to become educated when they shifted from caring about their students to loving them.

Care relations and practices in education have been dominated by the research of Nel Noddings. Noddings (2003) called attention to the unequal power relations and gendered nature of caring and argued that a disposition towards caring for others is the nexus of moral life (Noddings, 1988, 1995, 2007). Noddings (2017a, 2017b) most recent work illuminated the lack of meaningful connections based on peaceful relationships in our educational institutions and argued that without connections we impede lasting learning. She defined ethics to have a primary focus on caring relationships between humans and extended this argument to the natural world as

one of the earliest attempts in the philosophy of education to “address ethical responsibilities of humans to the natural world” (Martusewicz, 2012, p. 29; Noddings, 2005). Noddings used a maternal metaphor to describe the roles and responsibilities of the caregiver and to define her philosophy. However, this metaphor can be problematic because her analysis and philosophy are built on a model that is inconceivable to non-mothers or to those whose mothers did not show care like Noddings’ detailed.

Ecofeminist care ethics. Like Noddings, Ecofeminist ethics begin from a social ontology of connection but are explicit in the interdependence of humans and the Other-than-human world and are built from the voices that are traditionally marginalized (Martusewicz, 2012, 2013b; Mies & Shiva, 2014; Plumwood, 2002; Warren, 1990). Ecofeminists draw attention to how the dominant culture’s marginalization of care and care practices supports the cultural myth that individual success is solely dependent upon the autonomous individual (Cuomo, 1998; Lawson, 2007; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Martusewicz & Johnson, 2016). The dependence argument of care is also relevant because it conceives giving and receiving care as an inevitable part of the human condition and an aspect of the inherent interdependence of all humans (Kittay, 1998, 2015; Lynch, 2014; Lynch, Baker, & Maureen, 2009). Dependence scholars call attention to the collective caring needed to challenge the systemic violence of neoliberal capitalism (Cantillon & Lynch, 2017; Jackson, 2014; Kittay, 2015; Lynch, 2014; Lynch et al., 2009). Their argument is best summed up by this statement:

Connection-based conception of equality and justice...recognizes that dependency is a typical condition of human life, that dependents need care, and that dependency workers, both paid and unpaid, cannot and will not have parity of participation in social or political life without recognizing the primacy of affective relations in the framing, and

misframing, of social justice. (Cantillon & Lynch, 2017, p. 173)

Ecofeminist and dependence scholars honor the affective domain as a discrete site for relational equality that deconstructs and reconstructs capitalist relations intersecting with economic, political, and cultural relations (Cantillon & Lynch, 2017; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Lynch, 2014; Martusewicz & Edmundson, 2005; Warren, 2000). Teachers using an ecocritical approach use the affective domain to resist anthropocentric and neoliberal relationality (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Martusewicz, 2019; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). They argue for a relational and more inclusive theory of justice that recognizes the inherent value of all life communities and brings resources, respect, and representation to those who nurture one another. The affective domain combined with place and PBE empower teachers in their classrooms and challenge the dominant cultural emphasis on reason as the sole form of knowledge.

Politics around care and self-care. Neoliberal politics hide the importance of most forms of care by excluding affective labor from cultural value. This process is informed by the culture wars around the gendered division of labor and how care is organized globally (Fraser, 2014; Lynch, 2014). Lynch (2014) argued that “affective inequality occurs indirectly when people are not recognized economically, politically, and/or culturally (e.g. through education) for their love and care work and when love, care, and solidary work is trivialized by omission from public discourse” (p. 176). Ecocritical resistance to dominant discourses teaches students to value and create alternative communities ordered by an ecological relationality (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Tsai, 2015). Students are taught to understand relationships to exist in and depend on the ecological context (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016). More specifically they depend on what is readily available in their environment (Kropotkin, 1902). Relationships

understood in that context are diverse, dynamic, and complex—needing a multitude of interpersonal communication skills to initiate and maintain.

Inequality of the affective domain grows from the omission of affective relations and from the gendered dominant discourses surrounding care practices left for women by affective relations framed as inferior work (Cantillon & Lynch, 2017; Davies, 1999; Kittay, 1998; Lawson, 2007; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Lynch, 2014; Martusewicz & Johnson, 2016; Mountz et al., 2015; Weir, 2017). The cultural disregard for care relations results in care work framed as a service—which is received from a position of dependence and considered the sole responsibility of the individual who must often seek out and pay for it (Kittay, 1998; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017). The people who enter care fields within this kind of culture are denied respect; they are paid a low wage and are generally misunderstood in capitalist society because they place their own interests aside for someone or something else—resulting in competition for social goods from a disadvantage (Kittay, 1998, 2015; Lynch, 2014). Care ethics exchanged within a mechanized neoliberal discourse are limited because they are epistemologically rooted on assumptions of standardization (Bateson, 1972/2000; Merchant, 1980).

As an alternative approach, ethics of the heart draw from more than logic and reason. The goals of an ecocritical relationality include creating relationships that can work towards the elimination of all forms of domination by providing places for values hidden by dominant discourses—like care, trust, love, and friendship—to flourish (Cuomo, 1998; Plumwood, 2002; Warren, 2000). Within these parameters ethical decision making is founded upon humans surrendering to their interrelation with natural systems and requires relationships conceived and

understood in such a way to include all—even those we dislike, fear, or hate (Warren, 2000).

Warren (2000) stated,

If we dare to care, if we dare to enter into community with others through an honest recognition of our commonalities and differences, we will be posed to create genuinely respectful, nonviolent, care-based, intentional communities where commonalities and differences are just that—commonalities and differences. (p. 204)

Warren called for people to enter into communities open to appreciate the similarities and differences in others. She argued that care ethics must include taking care yourself and courage. The courage to see oneself in another and to “hav[e] our most cherished beliefs about ourselves and others challenged” (p. 203). This perspective challenges the dominant way of understanding care, care practices, and other affective relations.

A education centered on linear progress in a culture motivated by greed, money, property, and power prioritizes the highly professionalized specialist (Berry, 1977, 2006a, 2012; Bowers, 2005). The cultural push for power and money combined with the gendered nature of care work contribute to the neoliberal “culture wars” that further divide groups (Duggan, 2003). For example, without systemic change, when a woman leaves a role that held traditional gender norms, her role will be filled with another woman. That woman is in the same hierarchal position as the woman before her who left, except now those two women are divided by the same thinking and hierarchy within the group as experienced outside group. At the interactional level this creates conflict within the group—ultimately denying interdependence and hyper-separating communities (Kittay, 1998, 2015). Finding a way to bridge communities of difference is the crux of articulating an ethic that blends ecological justice and dependence work that can be used in

schools to redefine community and personhood to include, value, and prioritize bonds of affection that bind relationships.

Neoliberal institutional discourses have valorized caring as a virtue of women's work, which disproportionately places the burden of care practices on women. Further, they have ideologically placed caring for the body and emotional well-being as a personal and individual responsibility, which discursively delegitimizes the need to give or receive care (Kelly, 2013; Kittay, 1998; Lloro-Bidart & Semenko, 2017; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Mirowski, 2013; Mountz et al., 2015). Lastly, they frame care-practices as non-necessary and within a discourse of charity (Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017). EcoJustice scholars aim to expose discourses of anthropocentrism, individualism, mechanism, and progress and how their power depends on privileging some groups over others (Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Scholars use root metaphors of thought as explanatory frameworks to understand which cultural behaviors need eradicating or adjusting (Bowers, 2012; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016).

Care ethics as discussed here focus attention on social relationships of unequal power and move the discussion towards political resistance by creating relationships that not only explicitly include the natural world but use commons-based knowledge to maintain just and sustainable communities (Bowers, 2006; Godrej, 2017; Lawson, 2007; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Ecocritical teachers do not get caught up in the conflicting cultural messages surrounding care practices and understand relationality to start with the self. A modern understanding of self-care is discursively associated with feeding one's own ego and with an individualist mindset where the self is prioritized over the community (Lloro-Bidart & Semenko, 2017). This understanding can be historically traced to a paradox within Christianity (Fornet-Betancourt, Becker, Gomez-Müller,

& Gauthier, 1987). Christianity was intimately connected with self-care, and thus, it was rejected from dominant culture during the time period when the church was systematically removed as a cultural authority and society was shifting towards a more mechanized and scientific understanding of knowledge and reality (Lloro-Bidart & Semenko, 2017; Pagden, 2013; Pollak, 2016a). During this time, anything that could not be quantified and mechanized was deemed inferior and excluded from public discourse. Further explaining the paradox, Fernet-Betancourt et al. (1987) highlighted how Foucault connected the paradox to binary language where caring for the self is positioned as the binary of caring for others.

Fernet-Betancourt et al. (1987) asserted that for Foucault, self-care was the moral precedence to caring for others. They maintained that he understood it to be to be knowledge of the self, and rules of conduct of a particular way of behaving or ethos. As an ethos, it is needed for collective resistance to neoliberalism and requires structural supports like space and time for the expression of emotions and truth telling (Lloro-Bidart & Semenko, 2017). I understood self-care similarly to Lloro-Bidart and Semenko, as the everyday looking after ourselves and each other to assemble just and sustainable communities—that will look different for every person. Self-care deficits occur when people have limitations that prevent them from meeting their needs (Hartweg, 1991). Deficits could occur in a range of areas such as environmental, social, and material.

The ongoing cultural rejection of the importance of self-care is made obvious by the lack of research surrounding self-care in feminist and environmental ethics and ecofeminist literature (Lloro-Bidart & Semenko, 2017; Warren, 2000). Its unfavourability is echoed by patterns in general conversations where colloquial responses dismiss the importance or need. Lloro-Bidart and Semenko (2017) argued to include self-care in feminist and environmental feminist ethics

and called for more empirical research into the issue. Self-care nested within ecofeminist and dependence discourses conceptualizes caring for the self as an act of affective labor that can only be done by the individual and is the required for nurturing the relationship itself (Cantillon & Lynch, 2017). An ecocritical relationality begins with a healthy relationship with self and an awareness that emotional labor becomes exhaustive with compassion fatigue and cumulative grief—which are common experiences in teaching, activist, and care work (Krynski, 2018; Lloro-Bidart & Semenko, 2017).

Affective Knowledge Resistance

Ecofeminist, dependency, and self-care authors (Cantillon & Lynch, 2017; Kittay, 1998, 2015; Lynch et al., 2009; Plumwood, 2002; Warren, 2000) focus on the ways in which nature and women have been dominated by the same system of hierarchizing and conquering logic and argue for ways of relating that promote building and healing connections within and between communities. Self-care provides a starting point for a discourse of love because it brings attention to where care practices need to begin. If we cannot care for ourselves, we will not have the ability to care for others. In the affective labor paradigm, affective relations like love, care, and friendship are valued as intrinsically good and generate motivation and desire for justice. They also strengthen the ability to survive and thrive (Dillard, 2016; Kropotkin, 1902; Lewis, 1960/2017). The result of affective relations are skills in connecting with one another. Skills in connecting like self-care practices and loving relationships are needed to generate a relationship with place and the Other-than human world, to shift from a competitive framework, and to incorporate relationships of mutuality.

The shift from care to love are closely related in practice but are theoretically different affective labors. Love departs from care in many ways, one of which is in emotional intensity. It

is not commodifiable, and it cannot be standardized or mechanized (Cantillon & Lynch, 2017). New scholarship in the recently claimed area of “feminist love studies” brings a range of voices and perspectives to the material practices and embodied experiences of love, power, and domination in order to move towards liberation from patriarchal, heterosexist, and colonial concepts of love and care (Ferguson & Toyne, 2017; Jónasdóttir & Ferguson, 2014). A goal in this field is to disarticulate love from sexuality and reframe it as a connective force responsible for making sense of the world and empowering individuals and communities (hooks, 2001a, 2001b, 2004; Jónasdóttir, 2014). The scholars in this field—like others (see Berry, 2012; Lewis, 1960/2017; King 1963/2010)—aim to challenge how we understand intimate relations.

Of the many forms of love, heterosexual love dominates our cultural understanding of love (Jónasdóttir & Ferguson, 2014). Romantic love, as it is often called, is known for “snaring [women] into subordination [in the relationship],” which is a discourse responsible for the limited cultural understanding of love and marriage (Jackson, 2014, p. 33). As Jackson (2014) detailed, gender differences in the meaning and experience of love have potentially negative effects on women and maintains heterosexuality as a dominant discourse. Relationships that become universalized are then defined by culture and individual goals and contribute to the common sense knowledge shaping love within intimate relationships (Cantillon & Lynch, 2017; Jackson, 2014; Lewis, 1960/2017). Within the neoliberal context, affective labor is excluded from public conversation and discursively communicates an undervaluing of its importance and a denial of the human need for care and generates a socialized inferiority. Meaning in these contexts is created through passive discursive messages generated from shared cultural knowledge, which become normalized as nonnegotiable facts. Resistance to the neoliberalism occurs when knowledge is used to promote just and sustainable relationships.

Knowledge from a connection to and familiarity with place. Ecocritical teachers understand love as a creative human capacity and energy that fuses with other essential capacities to act together, in solidarity with others towards change for justice, and as balance to the politics that apply free market ethics to social relations like education (Giroux, 2015; Jónasdóttir, 2014; Lynch, 2014; Martusewicz, 2019). They recognize the transformative power of love and understand its relevance for ongoing resistance in contemporary movements for social change (hooks, 2001a). They have the courage to make changes to their cognition and communication patterns to cease participation in the reproduction of oppression. These teachers use their minds, hearts, and affective skills to negotiate relationships built on affection. They teach students how to engage ethically within and between life communities and outside the harmful mechanized and neoliberal frameworks.

Affective relations are and have been ordered around modern capitalist interests and relations (Freud, 1930/2010; Huhtala, 2016; Marcuse, 1955/2015). In 1930, Freud dichotomized love with hate—which he understood through a framework of aggression. He used a nondialectical understanding that is inherent to rationality with overt gender discrimination to apply scientific management to the instinctual needs of humanity. In doing so, he argued that laws and culture could organize society rather than notions of love. Freud heavily influenced education in behavioral and socioemotional contexts, even though his mechanization of psycho and social relationships did not account for the differing socialization that occurs between genders or cultures. The mechanized relationships also created a framework for understanding that contradicted the cognitive subjectivity required to discern between the needs of humans and the intricacies of governing systems (Biesta, 2009; Foucault, 1981; Freud, 1930/2010; Huhtala, 2016; Marcuse, 1955/2015).

Marcuse (1955/2015) challenged Freud's mechanization of the human condition and argued to balance rationality with aesthetic. He argued for education to have the political and psychological dimensions needed to develop mature relationships. He described mature relationships in similar terms to those resulting from the EcoJustice pedagogy of responsibility (Martusewicz, 2018a; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Marcuse argued to blend rationality and sensuous desire to enable a critical rationality that enabled thinking through the needs of the individual within a governing system. He argued for a politic of everyday life that included reciprocity, mutuality, rationality, and eros—which can be understood as the physical experiences of existence, such as a sensual connection between place and others (Griffin, 1995). It is important for an individual to learn, develop, and maintain the social and emotional skills necessary to cultivate relationships and to form love and trust (Griffin, 1995). Biesta (2009) called this function of education subjectification—wherein students learn to understand themselves as individuals within a system of systems. To achieve Marcuse's goals, education needs to balance the psychological and political dimensions to develop mature personalities capable of engaging with sensuous conditions that are inherent to stewardship (Griffin, 1995; Huhtala, 2016; Marcuse, 1955/2015; Martusewicz, 2013a).

Structurally, love and its meanings have developed alongside a mechanized, industrialized, and neoliberal context. However, love and affective relations need to be defined ecologically and with intention to make explicit the discursive power of language. The dominant discourses around love maintain divisions of gender and institutionalized heterosexuality within a capitalist framework (Jackson, 2014). Jackson (2014) argued that “love is bounded by the material conditions of our lives and socially scripted through interpretive, socially situated practices” (p. 38). Love within heterosexual relationships is known for its lack of affection and

fluid understanding that cannot be standardized; however, it can be thought of as dependent on larger social structures that commodify feelings and frame love to be defined by formal and informal social controls (Jackson, 2014). However, when it is framed as a social emotion interacting with multiple intersecting discourses, it needs language to discuss its complexity. One way to discuss love is to explore how love guides everyday practices, interactions, and applications in specific relationships.

Teachers using love as resistance have changed the power structures of education. Love gets its strength because it is personal (Berry, 2012). Berry uses affection as a guiding principle in his everyday life and has argued that, rather than dismissing it as a subjective emotion, it should be used where efficiency is unsuitable and mechanized indifference is cruel. Affection can connect people who come from different backgrounds and connect people with other life communities who have no obvious commonality besides proximity. Further, it can create relationships that allow these groups to flourish. This approach is in line with Kropotkin's (1902) argument for relationships of mutuality.

Perspectives of Love

The final section of this chapter explores three perspectives of love that are used to unite rather than divide. I selected the perspectives of C. S. Lewis, M. L. King Jr., and Wendell Berry because their radical sociopolitical positions rendered a unique perspective on love. For Lewis, love had different forms, each enhanced by affection which grows from the day-to-day interactions. King considered loving your enemy the most challenging and pertinent form of love to endure and insisted nonviolence was at the root of all love. King did not reference Lewis in his sermons, but I identified where his perspectives could have been influenced by Lewis' discussion of love. Berry described caring for one's connection and fidelity to place as the ultimate act of

love. His theological roots are seen in what Lewis described as gift-love and need-love. All three authors addressed issues of injustice resulting from culturally defined hierarchical relationships, and combined, argued for a cultural love that honors interdependence and creates a space for differences.

C.S. Lewis: *Storge* (affection). Writing from the United Kingdom in the early 1960s, C. S. Lewis (1960/2017) explored the nature of love. He detailed the different kinds of relationships of love and argued the four loves can stand alone but work best together. Lewis used Greek language to explain four relationships of love; he defined *storge* (affection), *phileo* (friendship), *eros* (erotic), and *agape* (charity) and further divided love to be need-love or gift love. The focus of this section is *storge*, which can stand alone or alongside *phileo* or *eros* but needs *agape* to avoid perversion. *Storge* mitigated with *agape* allows for love to be given until the need has been met, which places the recipient in a position where he or she no longer need gifts.

Lewis wrote from a religious perspective and opened his text with “God is love”—positioning his perspective within Christian spirituality. As a non-practicing Christian, I understand Godly love to be a love for the greater good which is closest to what Lewis described as charity. Lewis acknowledged that love can be twisted by selfish people and argued to balance affection with humility to protect the relationship from misuses of power—such as creating dependence rather than independence or identifying and responding to a false need. The relational energy generated from *storge* crosses barriers of gender, class, age, education, and species and is the form of love that comes from day-to-day relations.

Lewis argued that the goals of *storge* in an educational relationship are “dangerous” because “we teach [pupils] in order that they may soon not need our teaching . . . [and] work towards the moment at which our pupils are fit to become our critics and rivals” (p. 50-51).

Lewis understood love in all its forms to be either gift-love or need-love. Gift-love aims for what is best for the beloved and is boundless and unwearied, and Lewis argued it is a primal love. Gift-love longs to serve, give happiness, comfort, and protection, or even to suffer or provide wealth for if possible. It provides joy and is required for the physical, emotional, and intellectual relationships with ourselves and others. Need-love is the counter point to gift-love and reflects the true nature of human interdependence. Need-love comes from a position of deficiency in contrast to gift-love which needs to serve. The recipient of the gift-love acts as a mirror to the needs of the giver, which shows the physical, emotional, and intellectual dependence humans have on others. An important feature of gift-love is that it does not last longer than the need because its purpose is to promote independence and show interdependence.

As both a gift-love and need-love, *storge* is the broadest love and is responsible for binding members in the relationship. *Storge* unites people who have nothing to do with each other. *Storge* has familial origins but extends beyond the human species and is displayed through day-to-day actions that enable well-being. It is the least ecstatic and most comfortable of loves. *Storge* grows from the familiarity of an experience, person, or action and is an appreciation of the things you love about the relationship, which often have nothing to do with the relationship. *Storge* is not loud in its presence and often has happened or is happening before it is noticed. It is the humblest of the four loves and the least discriminating. A relationship with *storge* is filled with ease and relaxation and can teach awareness, endurance, happiness, and joy with who or whatever happens to be there. As an appreciative love, it nurtures the bonds of the relationship, and is the base for other loves.

Martin Luther King Jr.: *Storge* and *agape*. Martin Luther King Jr. also wrote about love during the early 1960s, and he also used the Greek *phileo*, *eros*, and *agape* to describe

different forms of love central to the human experience. King was a seminarian and social activist committed to freeing people of color and people marginalized because of economic disadvantages. King and Lewis understood love in a similar framework and lexicon. However, Lewis used affection as the broadest form of love capable of bridging differences and nurturing relations, while King (1963/2010) used “love your enemies” as the crux of resisting injustice and healing communities (p. 43). For King (1963/2010), at the center of nonviolence are the principles of love which build the bonds in relationships needed to strengthening grow communities. King taught nonviolence and “love your enemies” as resistance in response to the ongoing physical and systemic violence experienced by people of color and of economic disadvantage (King, 1958/2015). One approach was to teach a definition of love that is broader than a personal experience and an extension of Godly love (*agape*) that aimed to support individuals without wasting their potential.

Echoing Lewis, King cautioned against perversions like egotism, spiritual pride, and martyrdom that provide for the self rather than the person in need (King, (1967/2015). Both King and Lewis noted their own and the general social difficulty of discussing love, despite its power to unify and build bridges. Like Lewis, King wrote from a Christian religious perspective, growing from “God is love,” and taught love was to be given to others for the sake of giving. King argued for love to be the center of our communities and relationships because “love is ultimately the only answer to mankind’s problems” (King, 1967/2015, p. 175). King challenged his parishioners to love even those they hate—challenging reductionist and romantic notions of love—and he argued this type of love has the power to transform.

King understood *agape* combined with nonviolence to be a noble response that asserted ethics as a priority. King (1967/2015) stated, “We must stand up amid a system that still

oppresses us and develop an unassailable and majestic sense of values” and argued against the temptation of becoming bitter or indulging in hate campaigns (p. 170). King urged his congregations to engage in a love that was creative, purely spontaneous, not set into motion by the quality or function of the recipient, and which had the greater good as a main interest. One theme of King’s (2000, 1958/2015, 1967/2015, 1963/2010) sermons was that *agape* can be used to resist dominant social structures that deny interrelation.

In a collection of his speeches and sermons, King (2000) taught Godly love (*agape*) is what is needed for relationships to grow towards a new understanding of interdependence. *Agape* for King was a love that seeks the good of the neighbor rather than oneself. He defined love from the Greek New Testament to include *eros* (erotic love), *philia* (intimate affectionateness between friends), and *agape* (goal of good will, without sentiment or affection). King (2000) trusted God to be the arbiter of justice, which allowed him to seek redemption rather than retaliate with violence. Love in King’s context is not referring to sentimental emotions rather a connection generated through an understanding of good will, which he argued opens one to the value in difference (King, 2000).

King taught *agape* does not hierarchize nor discern friend from enemy, but rather it begins by loving others for *their sakes*. It is a neighborly love given away freely that King described as “neighbor-regarding concern for others, which discovers the neighbor in every man it meets.” (King, 1958/2015, p. 51). For King, and others (Dillard, 2016; hooks, 2001a; Kelley, 2002; Kittay, 1998; Lynch et al., 2009), love was and is a way of life and a “way of struggle” (West, 2015, p. 4) that oppressed people use to fight for freedom and to imagine and create spaces for the possibility of transforming relational interactions and discursive social understandings. King’s insistence on prioritizing community relations positions love as an

action. Within this conception, neither giver or receiver is considered weak or passive. This view challenges the gendered and inferior understanding of love (King, 1958/2015).

Wendell Berry: *Storge* and place. Wendell Berry (2012) wrote about love and affection throughout his corpus years after King and Lewis. Berry teaches about love through narrative and metaphors rather than using the Greek language to deconstruct love or explicitly define love. He has used fiction and non-fiction to critique the industrial way of life and the resulting cultural indifference to the relational connections between cultural people and land. He argued that love, namely affection, is what is needed to make a cultural turn towards more just and sustainable communities (Berry, 1977, 2009, 2012). Throughout his work, Berry (1977) described the necessary skills like “workmanship, care, conscience, and responsibility” (p. 19) needed to create the relationships capable of repairing the damage of fake standards and “incomplete accounting” (Berry, 2012, p. 19) that are the result of an increasingly mechanized way of making meaning and an economy based on profits.

Like the previous two authors, Berry also wrote from a Christian spiritual perspective. He considers himself to be a “bad-weather churchgoer” and prefers to spend the Sabbath quietly enveloped by the local natural landscape. For Berry (2013b), “to be quiet, even wordless, in a good place is a better gift than poetry” (p. xxi). Berry’s work challenges the industrial cultural values that increasingly mechanize modern life. He has argued for relationships that work towards the health of the community and a way of living built upon principles that “define a world to be lived in by human beings, not exploited by managers, stockholders, and experts” (Berry, 2009, p. 47). Berry’s cultural critiques and love for life in place are useful for understanding affection for place that defines community from the perspective of interrelation, stewardship, and affection between humans and the Other-than-human.

Like King, Berry (2012) argued for love to heal communities, and like Lewis, he understood love to be an affection of familiarity. Differing from Lewis and King, he argued for a connection to place to be the starting point for all other love (Berry, 2012). All three authors considered love to have the power to unite differences, heal the social “wounds” of our culture’s past and present, and to make way for a better future. Berry relied on imagination to see what the eyes cannot. He understood imagination as an active visionary force capable of change (Berry, 2012). He argued for imagination to be included and valued within dominant culture as a social-cognitive function, as the precursor to affection and as a bridge for the mind and heart (Berry, 2010a). Imagination is what allows the mind to conceptualize the past and consider the future in a specific setting with known and unknown attributes (Berry, 2010a). For Berry, a connection to place is imperative for engaging with place and other community relations. He stated,

Place, to have a place, to live and belong in a place, to live from a place without destroying it, we must imagine it. By imagination we see it illuminated by its own unique character and by our love for it. By imagination we recognize with sympathy the fellow members, human and nonhuman, with whom we share our place. By that local experience we see the need to grant a sort of preemptive sympathy to all the fellow members, the neighbors, with whom we share the world. As imagination enables sympathy, sympathy enables affection. And it is in affection that we find the possibility of a neighborly, kind, and conserving economy. (Berry, 2012, p. 14)

For Berry, imagination is a changing force that can bridge our head and heart for developing empathy, rather than sympathy (or pity) for others (Berry, 2010a). A connection to place makes space for differences because it creates a commonality between differences (Berry, 2010a, 2012). Berry (2010a) argued that imagining oneself in place helps to conceptualize the incalculable

worth of relationships and establish an identity that includes a “practical respect for what is there besides ourselves” (p. 33).

Berry (1977, 2006a, 2009) harshly critiqued the cultural divide born of mechanized industrial values between people and their place, which results in the polarization of reason and emotion. Industrial and mechanized values are based on the understanding that value is equal to price, all relations are mechanical, and human motivation is defined through competition (Berry, 2009). Industrial values create a false understanding of the relationship between humans and their place, which is illustrated by “human life become[ing] less creaturely and more engineered, less familiar and more remote from local places, resources, pleasures, and association” (Berry, 2012, p. 23). From this perspective, he argued that “there is in fact no distinction between the fate of the land and the fate of the people. When one is abused, the other suffers” (Berry, 2012, p. 18). Berry asserted that affection is what will remedy the denial of interrelation and create a concrete understanding regarding personal responsibility towards the Other-than-human world.

Berry stated that in order for humans to have a responsible relationship with their place, they must imagine belonging and living in a place without destroying it (Berry, 2010a, 2012). Like Lewis, Berry’s understanding of affection comes from familiarity. For Berry, affection for place develops from the tangible connection created through imagination, which motivates people to preserve and remain in that place (Berry, 2012). Berry’s emphasis on place is not unlike Kropotkin (1902), whose argument of mutuality depends on the relationships in proximity. Familiarity with place allows for bonds of affection to form between place, people, and culture and create the possibility of a “neighborly, kind, and conserving economy” (Berry, 2012, p. 14), which allows for an “authentic economy” defined in terms of “thrift and affection, our connections to nature and to one another” (Berry, 2012, p. 20).

Unlike Lewis and King, who noted their personal and cultures unease around the language of love, Berry used it bountifully to describe how to respond to the industrialization of the economy, create a land community, and to address the cultural barriers (wounds) resulting from racism and other forms of domination (Berry, 2010b). Berry's work—namely the connection to place—bridges the dominant culture's divide between nature and culture and challenges the mind/body dualism that hierarchizes the mind over the body (Martusewicz, 2014; Pollan, 2009). Berry's work also challenges the reason/emotion dualism and provides a narrative that does not value reason over emotion. He, like King and Lewis, directly addressed hierarchical relations responsible for systemic and day-to-day violence within and between communities.

Berry understands love through affection and connection to place. King had an unwavering commitment to loving your enemy, even when faced with the violence of White human supremacy. His sermons provide guidance to resist cultural conditions with nonviolence. Lewis discussed the gift-love need-love paradox and its ability to mirror our self in another. His explorations provide candid reflections on the nature, value, and danger in loves multiple forms. These three are echoed by feminist love studies scholars and make visible love's ability to unite through difference. Jackson (2014) highlighted the dominant understanding of affection that is based on heterosexual relationships to which both women and men are socialized to understand differently. Similar to Lewis, King, and Berry, the feminist love scholars include a shared cultural understanding of affection that is primarily sexual and excludes non-heteronormative people and the natural world. The teachers who participated in this study similarly moved beyond caring for their students and inquiry learning to teach an alternative relationality that includes a personalized curriculum and a discourse of love. By challenging the reason/emotion dualism, the teachers provided students with an alternative discourse to the dominant

understanding of education in general. By connecting to place, they provided students an opportunity to build and repair their communities and see the benefits of their work.

Conclusion

This chapter introduced the theoretical and practical components guiding the critical discourse analysis. The ecocritical pedagogy and the ecofeminist politics of language provide tools for critically examining language for where dominant culture is reproducing and normalizing violence. PBE provides tangible (concrete) experiences to engage students with local knowledge. It allows students of all learning abilities to become attuned to injustice and become comfortable responding with care. The commitment of teachers utilizing this approach is anchored in a definition of community that is defined in ecological terms. They combine politically charged care agendas with a connection and commitment to place by demonstrating nonviolent acts of resistance to larger globalizing forces.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study was designed to explore the alternative discourse within an ecological relationality that challenges mechanized neoliberalism by analyzing inter and intra-personal communication from a perspective of interdependence. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was the best tool to study and analyze questions of discursive knowledge formation because it allowed for the exploration of how meaning is generated. To explore discursive production, I focused on the social practices embedded within language and the orders of discourse within a communication exchange that represent modes of interacting, representing, and being. I chose to explore how social functions of language generate meaning and commonsensical assumptions (Daldal, 2014; Fairclough, 1995, 2001; Foucault, 1981, 2010; Jager & Maier, 2013; Rogers, 2011a). I used an inductive and deductive analysis approach to evaluate language for anthropocentric and ecocentric metaphors.

I focused my analysis at the intersection of the mechanized neoliberal superstructure and the pedagogical resistance because I am interested in common sense knowledge and how it functions to determine decisions and behavior. I designed this research to understand how meaning was made in a framework that considered the ecological and non-mechanized relationships humans have with the Other-than-human world for decision-making. Teachers who align their practice with the EcoJustice approach to education challenge common sense knowledge by learning how communication patterns reproduce dominant culture. Teachers and students learn how communication consists of verbal and extralinguistic language and contribute to generating meaning (Martusewicz et al., 2015). CDA as an analytic tool allows for an examination of the contexts of human consciousness responsible for making and shaping understandings (Foucault, 1981, 2010; Jager & Maier, 2013).

Discourse and Knowledge

In addition to knowledge of the mechanized and neoliberal politics in education, teachers need to understand how knowledge is produced and how common sense knowledge is responsible for oppression and marginalization. EcoJustice educators are taught to critically analyze culture with an awareness and understanding of the systemic communication and structural frameworks reproducing marginalization and perpetuating the social crises (Martusewicz et al., 2015). They are taught to turn inward and make changes within themselves regarding thoughts, language, and behaviors in their day-to-day interactions. EcoJustice educators understand language as a system of socially created metaphors that are used to communicate discursive information and generate meaning (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Foucault, 1981; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Mead, 1934a). These discursive understandings gain power by defining the body of knowledge that regulates social practices and imbedding power in ideology that is maintained through hegemonic control (Foucault, 1980, 1981; Gramsci, 1971).

Discourse and power. CDA allowed me to illuminate the destructive common sense knowledges that are embedded in the ideologies and the features of discourse that shape taken for granted assumptions (Foucault 1972/2010; Gramsci, 1971; Rogers, 2011a; Wodak & Meyer, 2013b). Common sense knowledge gains power from ideology and discursive interactions, and it operates at the superstructure level to guide social relations (Daldal, 2014; Foucault, 1980, 1981, 2010; Gramsci, 1971; Jager & Maier, 2013). Gramsci (1971) understood ideology to be involved with the psychological validity that determines consciousness and locates power in systems of ideas. He understood power to be embedded in relations of force and which therefore resides in ideology (Daldal, 2014). For Gramsci, once the ideology is brought into awareness, the complex social forces shaping decisions can be manipulated—making them common sense knowledge

and creating hegemonic order. Foucault was also aware of the complex social relations generating hegemonic order; however, he separated power from ideology (Daldal, 2014; Foucault, 1981, 2010). Foucault, differing from Gramsci, explained power to be separate from the common sense knowledge resulting from ideology (Daldal, 2014; Foucault, 1980). Whereas Gramsci understood power to be embedded in relations of force, Foucault understood it in a more abstract manner and maintained that power itself was unable to explain power relations (Daldal, 2014; Foucault, 1980, 2010; Gramsci, 1971).

For Foucault (1982), power relations decide upon the possible actions for the subject and always exist, but are only able to be identified at the point of application. They are important to understand how culture makes human subjects (individual or collective) and how certain actions modify others (Foucault, 1982; Sørensen, 2014). A subject, according to Foucault (1982), is a person who is “subject to some else by control and dependence” or one who is tied to her or “his own identity by a conscience or self-knowledge” (p. 781). His understanding of power and power relations are important because he discussed the ethics of how to govern the self, which is the aim of the pedagogy of responsibility (Fornet-Betancourt et al., 1987; Gamez, 2018; Martusewicz, 2018a)

CDA within this framework is useful because it highlights where institutionalized discourses exercise power in society by regulating of ways of talking, thinking, and acting (Jager & Maier, 2013). For Foucault, certain kinds of knowledge regulated social practices and his response was to shift the focus from language to discourse—where meaning included nonlinguistic communication (Foucault, 1980, 1990; Hall, 1997). Knowledge, formed through discourse, is useful for locating systemic discourses in this context (Daldal, 2014; Foucault, 1981, 2010; Hall, 1997). The analysis of knowledge creation is useful for locating where

systemic power is hidden within discursive interactions (Foucault, 1981, 2010; Jager & Maier, 2013).

Metaphors as inherent to education. Foucault understood discourse to be a system of representation with rules and practices that generated meaningful statements that interact with larger social discourses to create a lexicon that represents a body of knowledge. He rejected scientific knowledge as the knowledge produced through discourse and argued that discourse generates the topic and constructs what is considered knowledge (Foucault, 1980; Hall, 1997). The purposes of CDA in education are to conceptualize interactions while considering larger sociocultural perspectives. A goal of CDA in education is to inform subsequent action for ongoing resistance to neoliberalism (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bowers, 2010; Fairclough, 2011; Giroux, 2015). The outcomes of CDA show how some meanings are privileged over others (Foucault, 1980; Rogers, 2011a). EcoJustice educators challenge the mechanized understanding of language that understands it as a conduit for transmitting meaning. They reframe it as a metaphor that communicates social, historical, and political contexts that influence meaning (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Martusewicz et al., 2015).

Within the EcoJustice approach to education students and teachers are taught how meaning develops from exchanges between social processes and behaviors that involves nonverbal and verbal states of language (Bateson, 1972/2000; Foucault 1972/2010; Kropotkin, 1902; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Mead, 1934a). Language exposed as a metaphor challenges common sense knowledge by illuminating the recursive nature of cultural beliefs, how they are embedded in language, and how they contribute to the metaphors and discourses that direct dominant culture (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bowers, 2010). After students are taught the industrial

communication pattern and how it contributes to every day marginalization, they are taught how language and discourses generate knowledge.

EcoJustice educators use the work of Bateson to define knowledge ecologically and with extralinguistic considerations (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bateson & Bateson, 1987; Bateson, Jackson, Haley, & Weakland, 1963; Bowers, 2010; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Bateson (2000) also understood language as socially-created, metaphoric, and inclusive of extralinguistic information. He challenged the mechanized and anthropocentric foundations of language by exploring the process of knowing with an ecological understanding of consciousness. Bateson argued for radical transformation of thinking patterns for cultural survival and detailed how social awareness of ecological relationships was needed to change how knowledge is understood. Bateson focused on the relational interaction of differences, which he argued could shift the process of knowing from understanding ideas as “units of description” to the process in which ideas interact and thrive—or wither (Bateson & Bateson, 1987).

Bateson understood knowledge to grow from exchanges of mutuality (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bateson & Bateson, 1987; Kropotkin, 1902). He argued for an understanding of knowledge that placed more importance on how relationality is negotiated than the “units of description” used to communicate (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bateson & Bateson, 1987). To communicate this idea, he used the geographical metaphor, “the map is not the territory,” to conceptually explain the nature of how meaning is generated (Bateson & Bateson, 1987). Bateson explained that the details of the map do not account for the interactional relationships and the knowledge generated from the relational differences that cannot be represented on the map (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bateson & Bateson, 1987). Rather, he focused attention on to the cultural rules and knowledge within the differences that generate meaning (Bowers, 2010).

Bateson understood thinking and awareness as being independent from relationality (Bowers, 2010). Bateson's perspective is useful for focusing the analysis on the interplay between cognition, behavior, and communication to understand how meaning is generated in relationships of mutuality (Kropotkin, 1902). For Bateson, changes in society come from altering the communication structures and metaphors used to communicate knowledge. The knowledge base needs to represent an ecological knowing rather than a mechanized framework modeled from mathematics. Educators within the study used discourses describing an ecological relationality strategically alongside harmful discourses to generate a critical awareness. CDA allowed me to study power relations alongside the triangulation of cognitive, behavioral, and communication patterns to explore the alternative discourse.

Metaphor and communication. Everyday conceptual systems play central roles in defining interactional reality (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). CDA as a research tool allows for exploration into the common sense assumptions responsible for shaping the lexicon used to negotiate meaning. For this research, I analyzed discourses within the mission statement guiding the US public education system and those within a pedagogical resistance to understand how meaning is generated within a specific culture (Rogers, 2011a; Wodak & Meyer, 2013b). The metaphoric conditions of mechanization develop corresponding attitudes and dispositions towards situations of significance and identify what to perceive and how to prioritize within an interactional reality (Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Mead, 1934b; Steen, Reijnierse, & Burgers, 2014). Language, thought, and communication are independent, but all are rooted in discourse (Steen, 2011). The meaning generated in this context is determined by conceptual structural discourses that mold thought (Foucault, 1981; Novitz, 1985). The metaphors interact recursively with discourses and language to communicate meaning and determine behavior—generating

common sense knowledge (Bowers, 2004, 2009; Farberman, 1979; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Mead, 1934a; Novitz, 1985; Steen, 2011; Steen et al., 2014).

Interactional reality needs language awareness to negotiate communications within contradictory dualities (Bowers & Flinders, 1991; Farberman, 1979). The EcoJustice pedagogy of responsibility challenges the mechanized nature of knowledge making the above understanding of metaphors incomplete (Martusewicz et al., 2015). Bowers (2009) critiqued Lakoff and Johnson for their limited definition of the metaphor, namely for lacking a culturally specific and political history as well as an omission of how this type of thinking reproduces social crises. He asserted that they failed to contextualize the larger social systems that are inescapable in everyday living. Bowers argued that the mechanized framework omits the significance of the meta-cognitive schemata that frame thinking with generations of cultural practices. For Bowers, schemata are the extralinguistic messages encoded in language that are responsible for communicating meaning (Bowers & Flinders, 1990). I liken this to what Mead (1934b) described as the “generalized other.” For Mead, selves can only exist in relation to other selves and even though each self is unique with different needs, it develops within community memberships that influence attitudes and principles of a personality. Bowers detailed multiple pathways (such as spoken, written, kinesics, and prosody) that shape the character of a person (Bowers & Flinders, 1990). Within my research, I included dispositions towards music, pragmatics, learning styles, and emotional regulation as additional features of culture that also communicate cultural expectations and discursive knowledge.

Bowers and Flinders (1990) defined the metaphorical basis of thought in three pieces: analogic thinking, iconic metaphors, and root metaphors. Analogic thinking is part of common sense knowledge that is used to communicate similarities—but not differences—and is the

framework for understanding new concepts. Another common sense form of knowledge is iconic metaphors that use image words to encode precognition regarding known similarities (such as progress, success, or normalcy). They rely on direct association between words and images to communicate the conventionally accepted understanding. Root metaphors are used as the “conceptual guidance system” (Bowers & Flinders, 1990, p. 38) that guide and organize cultural and political knowledge to interpret experiences. They frame what is seen, understood, and inform subsequent actions. Students and teachers working in EcoJustice education learn how to identify root metaphors and the ways in which they impact on everyday interactions (Bowers, 2002; Martusewicz et al., 2015).

In the mechanized framework (see Appendix A), individuals are abstracted from the Other-than-human world and ecological relationships are ignored. Metaphors made within that exclusion form the paradigms that encode thought and give frameworks for behavior and communication. The intricacies of language and communication are crucial for teachers to learn because the art of teaching is in part the art of language use. It allows educators to analyze language for metaphors of all kinds and know when to make implicit knowledge explicit (Bowers & Flinders, 1991). CDA is useful for understanding how metaphors impact communication and therefore how institutional metaphors are responsible for oppression (Jager & Maier, 2013; Rogers, 2011a).

Research into power relations and ideological alignments is useful for understanding how injustices become normalized into our common sense knowledge. Harmful cultural ways of knowing expressed through language contribute to how people understand their world and construct meaning. In this dissertation research, common sense assumptions serve as a starting point to examine ideological relationships (Fairclough, 1981/2001). CDA is an explanatory

research tool that aims to expose the underlying ideologies of discourses and expose how language legitimizes the resulting imbalance of power (Rogers, 2011a). In education this type of analysis is important because otherwise these pieces of the communication exchange go unnoticed. CDA goes beyond the linguistic surface and uses a deep structural analysis of what was said and not said to explore the intersecting cultural discourses. This process of analysis also considered cognitive processing, contextualizing, and dialectical-relations used by the participants to link students to complex political ideas.

Approaches Used to Inform Analyses

Approaches differ in CDA, but a common assumption is that discourses and social practices and relationships are mutually constitutive—one leading and the other following depending on the specific context and set of issues (Fairclough, 1981/2001; Mullins, 2012; Rogers, 2011a; Shubo, 2015; Wodak, 2011). I chose to study the process of interpretation and the social conditions of interpretation by way of qualitative interviews (Glesne, 2011; Seidman, 2006). I opted not to do classroom observations because teachers must often improvise because of external classroom disruptions (Scherzinger & Wettstein, 2019). Rather, I chose to study how teachers assigned meaning through their classroom and lesson planning intentions (Cruickshank, 2012; Mead, 1934b, 1934a). I combined a three-dimensional textual approach with a social and cognitive analysis to consider the relationship between text, practices of production and interpretation, and the larger social cultural setting to inform social practices. The socio-cognitive approach allowed me to decode where cultural messages were embedded in language and how they spilled back into society to contribute to other contexts and renew the discursive loop (Cyn & Ganapathy, 2016; Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983; Foucault, 1980, 1981, 2010; van Dijk, 1981, 2013).

Three-dimensional approach. Analyses combining socio-cognitive and textual perspectives explore the cognitive interface of the interplay between mind, society, and discursive interaction (Cyn & Ganapathy, 2016; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; van Dijk, 2013). The three-dimensional perspective is used to categorize instances of discourse as a language text that is spoken or written, discourse practice that includes text production and interpretation, and sociocultural practices—or the context (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Fairclough, 1993, 1995, 2001). The first phase of the analysis examines the text. The textual analysis focuses on the participants' word choices to construct an idea or response and includes linguistic features such as vocabulary, grammar, cohesion, and textual structures (Fairclough, 1995, 2001). The textual analysis does not stand alone but is situated within other discursive practices (Fairclough, 1993, 1995; Foucault, 1981, 2010).

Figure 2 illustrates the three-dimensional approach to discourse analysis utilized in this research and displays discourse in relationship to larger structural discourses (Fairclough, 1993, 1995, 1981/2001, 2011, 2012). In this figure on the right, there are three squares, each a different size. The smallest square is centered inside the medium square, and both are centered in the largest square to represent a nested understanding of discourses. On the left there are explanation boxes that point the reader to the space between the layers of discourse—where the different layers interact with each other. Fairclough (1995, 1981/2001) considered discourse to be simultaneously a language text, discourse practice, and a piece of discourse situated within sociocultural practice. He further asserted that pieces of discourse are embedded in a culture and enacted upon by multiple other discourses (Fairclough, 1993, 1995, 1981/2001). Fairclough's three dimensions of discourse helps to illustrate the relationships between text, discursive practice, and social practice (Cruickshank, 2012; Foucault, 1981).

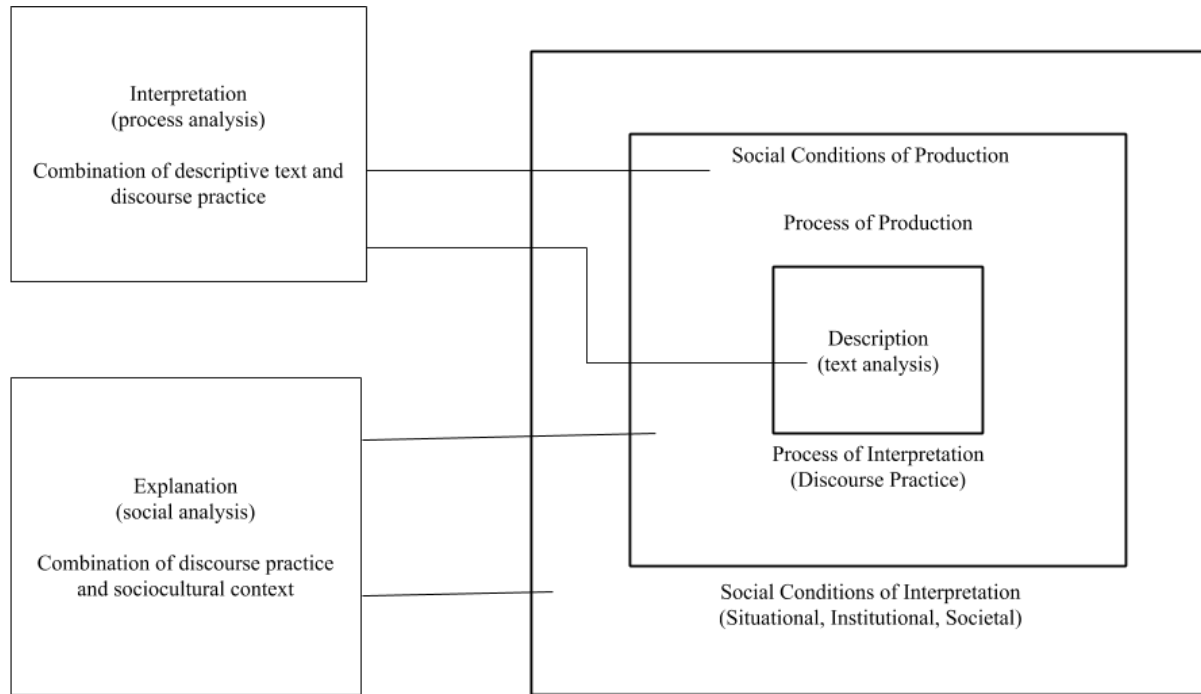


Figure 2. Three-dimensional approach to discourse analysis.

The second phase of Fairclough’s analysis includes considering the complex environment that informs the production of the texts. A main feature of Fairclough’s work is the interdiscursive relationship between language metaphors (discourses) and social world (Fairclough, 1993; Rogers, 2011a). Analysts can interpret power relations within texts by examining the nature of the discourse practices and how they shape the textual analyses (Fairclough, 1995, 1981/2001; Foucault, 1980, 1981). The next phase of Fairclough’s analysis moves out of the myopic and into the larger social context to consider the institutional and local influences generating ideological construction of texts and representations (Fairclough, 1995; Foucault 1972/2010; Gramsci, 1971). Fairclough used the third dimension to bridge text and discourse practice considering the different ways discourses interacts to produce new and alter existing discourses (Fairclough, 1993, 1995, 2011; Mead, 1934b). The methodological outcome

of a three-dimensional analysis is useful for explaining why and how discourses interact and ultimately work (Fairclough, 1995; van Dijk, 1993).

The socio-cognitive approach. The socio-cognitive approach to analyzing discourse considers language processing and analyzes text from discursive, cognitive, and social angles to identify where root metaphors of violence and oppression are located within the lexicon (Bowers, 1993; Bowers & Flinders, 1991; Foucault 1972/2010; van Dijk, 1981, 2013). The socio-cognitive approach considers discourse from a generative perspective and explores how messages are embedded within discourses as group knowledge—or common sense—echoing back into society and generating power for the idea (Bateson, 1972/2000; Cyn & Ganapathy, 2016; Foucault 1972/2010; van Dijk, 1981). Van Dijk (1980, 2000, 2013) argued that CDA cannot be limited to analysis between discourse and social structure; rather, it triangulates society, cognition, and discourse. The socio-cognitive perspective includes inquiry into how narratives become conceptualized through cognitive devices such as comprehension and interpretation. The significance of this approach lies in focusing inquiry to where sensory information is contextualized.

Van Dijk (1980) argued that cognitive processes are a product of both a mental (or personal) and social phenomenon. Thus, cognition, society, and discourse are deeply rooted in our social interactions. The socio-cognitive approach combined with the three-dimensional, dialectical relational approach allowed for an analysis of the interface between the participants and their sociocultural setting. This type of analysis is useful for exploring metaphoric assumptions regarding socially or culturally shared knowledge (Chouliaraki, 2008; Fairclough, 1993). CDA examines the ways cognition interacts with communication to produce meaning. This type of exploration assumes the existence of mental representations and extralinguistic

communication facts that act outside active awareness and are useful for the examining ways cognitive phenomena are related to social structures (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Mead, 1934b; van Dijk, 2013).

In a dialectical-relational analysis, language is both a linguistic and social phenomenon that can be shaped by ideological power relations (Bowers, 1993; Dreyfus & Rabinow, 1983; Fairclough, 1993, 1995, 1981/2001; Foucault, 1980). The question directing this research related to how teachers employ ethical and sustainable social relationships and ideas within a mechanized and neoliberal culture. Fairclough's approach allowed for a broad discourse analysis that stressed the inter-discursive relationships and allowed the analysis to shift from the individual's actions to the discursive practices within the context. Analysis of the broader sociocultural discourse attended to the unspoken and ideological power relationships embedded in culture and specifically within educational institutions. The three-dimensional approach allowed for research into the ways in which social elements interacted to establish and reproduce unequal power relations (Fairclough, 2011).

When discourse is considered a social practice, cognition must be considered because it contributes to the interface and interpretation of discourse and society. The three-dimensional approach does not provide theory or method for inquiry into text interpretation and production (Mullins, 2012). To fill this gap I used a socio-cognitive approach, which allowed me to consider the ways in which texts are situated inside larger social cultural settings (Mullins, 2012; Rogers, 2011b).

Data Collection and Production

I used purposeful sampling to select participants (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Gentles, Charles, Ploeg, & McKibbin, 2015; Stake, 1978, 1995, 2005; Yin, 2009). I intentionally considered

participants gender, race, and location to include a variety of perspectives and to maximize the effective use of limited resources, such as time and money, while completing an in-depth analysis of teachers discursive knowledge (Gentles et al., 2015; Stake, 1995; Foucault, 1981).

Participant selection, demographics, and participant pools. The goal of this study was to provide a robust and compelling experiential analysis of the participants as they were influenced by their social, political, and other contexts. I collected data by interviewing six teacher-activists and restricted inclusion criteria to practicing K-12 teachers who had implemented a place-based project in their classroom. Place-based projects fall within place-conscious educational paradigms that cultivate community life and emphasize the importance of a local economy while also taking into consideration economic globalization trends (Gruenewald & Smith, 2010). These teachers use stewardship initiatives to teach students how to care for their communities and the Other-than-human world while also challenging the rootlessness that comes with globalized identities (Gruenewald & Smith, 2010).

I selected two equal-sized groups of participants from two different teacher programs in southeast Michigan. One pool was from Eastern Michigan University's Master of Arts in Social Foundations of Education: EcoJustice and Education concentration. Participants were considered from the pool of teachers whom had completed the graduate course SOFD 661 titled *EcoJustice and Education* and implemented a place-based project in their classroom. The other pool was from a professional development training sequence through the Southeast Michigan Stewardship Coalition (SEMIS), a non-profit professional development organization for teachers. Each program pool teaches the EcoJustice traditions and concepts out of the textbook titled, *EcoJustice Education: Toward Diverse, Democratic, and Sustainable Communities* (Martusewicz et al., 2015). An EcoJustice approach to education includes analytic tools to

critically analyze harmful cultural ways of thinking, being, and knowing as well as a deep understanding of how language is used to reproduce culture. It provides a framework for an alternative way to respond to injustices and marginalization. Teachers use place-based projects to emphasize care-based responses and value that come from connecting to the land. The combined traditions create a space where students learn how cultural oppression works on an everyday basis through language and actions, and how to respond to injustices with care.

To represent a range of teaching experiences, I recruited participants of differing demographics and backgrounds (see Table 1 for the combined self-reported participant demographics). The first two participants were White males, the second pair of participants were non-White females, and the third pair of participants were White females. Their teaching experience varied from 3 to 15 years. Teachers from general education, special education, elementary and secondary grade levels, as well as from public and charter schools were included. The EcoJustice traditions promote a radical inclusivity, and as my research question was a complex inquiry into the culture of education, it was best answered by as many perspectives as possible in order to strengthen the reliability of the findings. Brief participant profiles and more details about the participant pools are included in Chapter 5.

When selecting participants, I sought recommendations from my advisor, committee members, co-directors of SEMIS, the advisor for the master's degree program, and used personal connections. I had relationships with the participants from community events and connected via email to request participation.

Table 1

Combined Table Participant Demographics (Self-Reported)

| Participants | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------|----------|---------------------|----------------|
| Master’s Degree Pool | | | | |
| | Race | Gender | District Descriptor | Years Teaching |
| Sonny | African American | Female | Urban | 12 |
| Alton | White | Male | Suburban | 15 |
| Giada | White | Female | Urban | 9 |
| | | | | |
| SEMIS Pool | | | | |
| | Race | Gender | District Descriptor | Years Teaching |
| Kimberly | African American | Female | Urban | 6 |
| Duff | White | Cis-Male | Suburban | 4 |
| Rachael | White | Female | Suburban | 12 |

Participant safety and privacy. The University Human Subjects Review Committee at Eastern Michigan University approved the dissertation research project (see Appendix C). I assured the participants safety in written and oral formats, and all participants signed a consent form agreeing to participate in the study (see Appendix D). Participants were assigned a pseudonym to ensure privacy. All transcripts used the pseudonyms and all printed copies of the data were stored in a locked area accessible only to me. The key with the participants’ names and pseudonyms was in a file on a password protected hard-drive also accessible only by me. The audio recordings and transcribed documents were shared with transcriptionist through a secure file exchange. Participants were further informed that, upon completion of the dissertation project, all audio recordings would be destroyed, only the signed assent/consent forms would

have identifying material, and these would be kept in a locked space for three years, after which they would be destroyed.

Data production. This study used a combination of qualitative frameworks to produce and handle the data while using CDA to analyze and interpret the data. Data were generated through the interview process (Seidman, 2006). Interviews were best suited for this study because they aligned with the indirect nature of the research question and allowed for differing perspectives on issues (Glesne, 2011). I used a semi-structured, in-depth interview style with open-ended and close-ended questions to help empirically explain the causal links between teachers and their intended actions for implementing an alternative way of relating within their classroom while navigating the institutional restraints (Cruikshank, 2012; Gee, 2011b; Seidman, 2006; Yin, 2009).

I created a conceptual framework by gathering general constructs (via the language used) of these six teachers, personal and professional experiences, theoretical grounding, and generalizations based on empirical data that allowed the claims to be generalized (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Stake, 1978, 1995, 2005; Yin, 2009). Replication can be claimed when two or more cases support the same theory (Yin, 2009). This is significant because EcoJustice educators must develop their capacity to balance the teaching tensions between their own beliefs, the demands of the state, and the dominant cultural beliefs that are rarely stated but very much expected (Krynski, 2018; Lowenstein et al., 2010). I was interested in providing insight into what EcoJustice teachers internalized, understood, and how they incorporated these philosophies into their identity as a teacher. Via interviews, I contextualized people's actions (Seidman, 2006).

Interviews within discourse studies. Discourse analyses can be done on many different texts—such as letters, diaries, public documents, observations, movies, interviews, and articles

(Cruikshank, 2012; Gee, 2011a; Rogers, 2011b; Wodak & Meyer, 2013a). Cruickshank (2012) argued that the qualitative interview is an excellent method for data collection if one wants to investigate the “intentions, feelings, purposes and comprehensions” of the phenomenon being studied (p. 42). Throughout the interview process, I learned how participants interpreted themselves and how they interpreted the phenomenon under study.

Discourse analysts seek to do more than describe language data. Rather, they seek to bring attention to the ways language creates and maintains narratives of power and dominance within our everyday interactions that represent various cultural beliefs (Daldal, 2014; Fairclough, 1981/2001; Foucault, 1980; Gee, 2011a; Gramsci, 1971). This dissertation research sought to study societal norms as they occurred in language and interview data facilitated analysis of the dominant beliefs of the teachers (Cruikshank, 2012). My goal was to give insight to an alternative ethic can be enacted in the classroom.

Interview process. This research sought to learn how people’s behavior represented the social world and to look closely at the relationship between discourse and the construction and representation of a social world. This approach to analysis made different ways of understanding society accessible, meaningful, and understandable while also producing critical insights about community, race, self, and identity (Denzin, 2001; Rogers, 2011b; Seidman, 2006). I used a three-interview series to collect information regarding the participants’ lives and the ways they navigated tensions within the classroom. I created three interview guides, one for each interview, to ensure uniformity across the study (see Appendix E; Seidman, 2006). When constructing the guides, I used a dynamic conversation dimension to facilitate natural conversation exchange (Pedersen, Delmar, Falkmer, & Grønkjær, 2016).

I offered participants the option to conduct the interviews in a private room at the local library or at a location selected by the participant. All interviews were conducted at a location suggested by the participant. Each interview location was private, conducive for audio recording, and comfortable for the participants. The interviews ranged in duration from 45 to 60 minutes and were done face-to-face with audio recording. Informed consent was addressed and signed at the first interview, after initial greetings. After the interview, the participants were thanked for their time, and the next interview was scheduled. I attempted to schedule interviews 3–7 days following the previous interview in order to keep the material fresh for both me and the participants. However, on more than one occasion I had to wait more than seven days between interviews due to scheduling conflicts. Upon completing each interview, I scheduled the audio for transcription.

During the interviews, I listened to participants' language and made note of prosodic-pragmatic responses (for example, pitch, tone, cadence, pauses, and emphasis, etc.), which allowed me to differentiate between words and utterances that represent the participant as an individual and those that generate the web of meaning. During each interview, I brought a printed copy of the interview guide and made notes that included corresponding times in the audio recording when a prosodic-pragmatic shift occurred. I used these shifts to identify areas of significance to the individual participant and then looked for similar experiences and language across all participants.

Credibility of Researcher

The strength in using CDA lies in the data it allows the researcher to collect and the interpretive power it provides in the analysis of data. The validity of CDA lies in its argumentation and theoretical grounding. When it includes support from semiotics, functional

linguistics, and critical theory, CDA is considered credible research approach because it shows convergence at multiple levels to justify interpretations (Al-Rawi, 2017; I. Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2018; Gee, 2011a; Greckhamer & Cilesiz, 2014; Jaipal-Jamani, 2014; Rogers, 2011a).

Statement of researcher reflexivity. I identify as a White, nonbinary cis-female. I grew up in poverty, and despite my degrees and employment with public schools, I need to be in a two-income relationship to know where my meals are coming from and pay my bills. My experience with discrimination started from birth in a low-income family. While growing up, I witnessed racial discrimination and experienced overt gender discrimination. As an adult, I was obese and experienced injustice for my size. Below, I detail these some of these experiences and how they helped me develop into a critical scholar-teacher.

Growing up, I pestered my mom with questions trying to find answers for what I witnessed. I recall as a small child watching the news during the collapse of the Berlin Wall and again during the Gulf War and asking my mother, “How did we get lucky enough to be White?” In a similar vein, I was also very aware of gendered differences. I remember the frustration and anger from the different set of standards that I had compared to my brothers. I was very close to my younger brothers growing up, but they got to do things that I was punished for doing. My parents cited God or “because he is a boy” as their reasons. I did not have the language to articulate the injustice, but I was very aware of the different treatment for girls compared to boys and for people with dark skin compared to my light (White) skin. My family was very religious, and rather than work through my childhood questions of injustice, my parents deferred me to Jesus, God, or the bible to seek answers and understanding. I was aware of differences and injustice and not satisfied with the default religious response.

Further sensitizing me to the experiences of marginalized people, as a child our meals were provided by government social aid and community support programs in Detroit, Michigan. I distinctly remember wondering why we got our food at the “strange store” (food pantry) and why my family looked different from the other families at this store (we were often the only White family in the line). Again, I was not able to articulate the marginalization and oppression, nor the historical, cultural, and social constructs that warrant unequal distribution of resources to non-dominant groups, but I was very aware of the day-to-day differences in treatment. My intrinsic understanding of gendered and racial differences from an early age positioned me to be aware of others’ and their differences—and aware of my privilege. I share these memories of my life because they inform both my positionality as the researcher and the direction of my research.

My undergraduate teaching credentials socialized me to have a mechanized understanding of life with root metaphors from B. F. Skinner and behaviorist traditions. I did not know about ecocritical types of teaching methods, and I had minimal if any education in social theory prior to the coursework required for a doctoral degree in educational studies. I come from multiple generations of teachers, and I have argued that teaching is in my blood. I relied on my intuition and gut knowledge to guide me in the classroom. For 10 years, I was employed in a low-income suburban school district outside of Detroit. My experience as a special education teacher required personalized instructional models with minimal resources. I worked with students who were different from me regarding gender, race, and ability. I created my lessons and instructional approach by considering my students’ unique learning needs, their need to function in their community, and their need to pass upcoming standardized tests. The resources and curriculum I designed considered the students’ learning style, interests, assets, culture, and community to maximize the learning experience for the students.

I began to understand place-based education and ecocritical curriculum studies after my career in the K-12 classroom ended. This is significant because I learned these pedagogies from a textbook. My graduate degrees further socialized me into the behaviorist traditions within pragmatic and semantic contexts. Rather than look at how meaning was made from structure and linguistic knowledge, I was trained to consider how context contributes to the interactional context. I learned to consider social, cultural, and environmental factors and how they impact a student's ability to engage successfully in the classroom. In the K-12 setting, I had responsibilities as a behavior consultant where I was often called to evaluate student-teacher conflicts. I quickly learned that these conflicts were more often than not with students challenging hierarchal relations. My assessments frequently found the students' negative actions were the result of cultural mismatch between the student and teacher. During this time, I learned the range of possibilities for a student acting out, but I also learned how dominant cultural assumptions create barriers between people that stall teaching and learning even despite the best of intentions. These experiences, trainings, and knowledge prepared me to pay attention to discourses, and provided a foundational knowledge base of contextual interactions, which allowed me to identify and articulate dialectical argumentation and sensitized me to communicating a multi-layer analysis.

Despite becoming educated, I failed to understand my privilege; I did not become educated on the politics of privilege until I completed my post-graduate coursework. To account for my able-bodied, White, perspective I sought to diversify the literature and purposefully selected diverse participants to include as many perspectives as possible. I engaged in conversations with my professors, peers, and many others to fill the gap in my education and deepen my understanding of how social, political, and historical contexts intersect and contribute

to the interactional context. The politics of privilege go both ways, so after learning of my privileges, I also learned where I had experienced injustice based on gender, living in poverty, discrimination based on body size, and then discrimination for becoming educated within my family's culture. However, I did not have the language to process or skills to make meaning, so as I experienced the microaggressions, I did not understand what was happening.

My education in undergraduate and graduate school combined with my post-graduate studies provided me with the skillsets to analyze inductively and deductively. My initial education was aligned with a scientific, technological, and quantitative perspective, which allowed me to approach critical political theory with scientific inquiry. The foundational training in behavior studies trained me to question more than what was obvious and to consider the ways in which the environment (physical and cultural) contributes to interacting. My training in social theory tempered my mechanized beginnings and allowed for the development of a balanced perspective. These skills helped me to be consistent with my participant interviews and mindful of how I inserted myself into interactions. The mechanized model that is often used in special education prepared me to observe, take notes, and seek patterns while focusing on pragmatic and semantic properties during the interviews. These skills helped me to identify areas of interests for the participants as well as what they emphasized and prioritized while not losing track of the question guides or disengaging with the interview. These observations techniques allowed me to determine topics of significance during the interview. These topics helped point me towards what was significant to the participants. I considered this significance in the individual participant and then across the whole group. These experiences and skillsets are a few of many that add to my credibility as a researcher and strengthen the interpretative focus of the analysis.

Measures to monitor positionality. I depended on my researcher's notation system to record questions, concerns, frustrations, uncertainties, the possible ways I could be projecting my views on the participants, or not seeing the significance in their view. To challenge my thinking, I was mindful to employ a recursive systematic analysis across all participants, which included giving all participants equal analytic time and consideration. My prior learnings in language and analysis deepened my understanding of critical discourse studies as a field and allowed me to consider the linguistic details of the interaction and the larger social, cultural, and political context in my analysis. All of these considerations strengthened my analysis; created trustworthiness; and ensured rigor, transparency, and valid results (Chilton, 2005; Greckhamer & Cilesiz, 2014; Rogers, Malancharuvil-Berkes, Mosley, Hui, & Joseph, 2005).

Explanation of analysis: Validity and rigor. My research methods are rooted in the theoretical frameworks of critical discourse analysis alongside the broader field of ecojustice. My approach was influenced by participant narratives, ongoing scholarly peer support, and a peer-reviewed publication. These factors combined with my classroom and life experiences to provide empirical epistemological and ontological claims in education (Bradford & Shields, 2017). My analysis aimed to explore the ideological differences between a pedagogy of responsibility and the dominant discourses in education and required the use of the three-dimensional and socio-cognitive approach to discourse analysis (Martusewicz et al., 2015). These combined analytic tools allowed for assumptions to be made about the cultural, personal, and larger social structures responsible for shaping worldviews, while also considering personal autonomy and free-will.

The three-dimensional approach defined discourses in three nested layers used to make meanings of experiences—the personal, cultural, and larger social structures. This approach was

useful because it allowed for a systematic deconstruction of the different dimensions of culture and how they influence the individual. The socio-cognitive approach addressed various ways personal values and principles shape one's understanding of reality. The results of the analysis acted as a bridge between public and personal discourses by identifying the shared cultural knowledge (or common sense) shaping the narratives used to make meaning. Combined, the two approaches allowed me to generate an analysis that contributed to a critique of discourse ethics within education, evaluated the ways personal and shared cultural knowledge impacts practice, and explored how the educational discourse presented by an ecocritical teacher differs from the dominant understanding of education (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2012; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2018).

The validity of this analysis comes from my theoretical framing and the substantiation and presentation of my analysis and data. I selected an analysis style that allowed me to give care to both an inductive and deductive approaches while also considering larger social discourse and how they interface with the individual. I established credibility by detailing my analytic process and describing relevant training and education that spans more than twenty years. My experience with communication disabilities allowed me to consider subtle signs that indicate nonverbal communication of deceptive intent, attitude, emotional intent and more (Chilton, 2005). CDA requires the researcher to be critically aware of how her position evolves throughout the analysis. I followed my analytic development through a dated notation system on index cards, inspired by a researcher's log (Glesne, 2011), where I noted questions, connections, and possible assumptions while analyzing the data. I monitored my notations throughout the analysis to verify and clarify research bias. My notation system allowed me to track and articulate my analyses

process, monitor biases, and record other relevant details necessary for communicating the results.

Conclusion

This chapter introduced the theoretical and practical components guiding this CDA. First, I provided a description of the relationship between power, ideology, and knowledge in order to clarify why studying discourses and discursive knowledge is an appropriate approach for challenging injustice. Next, the concept of a metaphor was detailed and its connection to culture, language, and communication was exposed as central to meaning making. Understanding the metaphoric nature of language is important for recognizing and responding to common sense knowledge that results in injustice. I also outlined the various approaches to CDA that were used in this study to show how meaning is made within multiple frames. Lastly, I detailed data collection methods, production of data, and my credibility as a researcher.

Chapter 4: Data

This chapter presents the data and analysis used to answer the research question: What kind of discourse is produced by a pedagogy that challenges competition as a common sense assumption, challenges mechanized ways of understanding relationships, and understands humans and the natural world to be interrelated? The three-dimensional model organized and focused this study while also defining discourse as a multilayered mode of communication that is nested within personal and sociopolitical dimensions (Fairclough 1981/2001; Foucault, 1981, 2010). In line with my critique of education (see Chapter 1), I focused on how the teachers challenged the discourse of competition. The dialectical relationship between the sociopolitical context and discourse is critical for understanding how individual choice is influenced by the surrounding discourses and how these discourses shape what choices are considered (Fairclough, 2011, 2013a, 2013b; van Dijk 1980, 1981).

This chapter is broken into two main sections. The first section details the programs and educators who participated in this study. I changed the participant's names but not the program names as approved by Eastern Michigan University's institutional review board. The second section details analysis of the data with the three-dimensional and socio-cognitive approaches to discourse analysis in order to understand how teachers created a space where students developed the ability to recognize and respond with care to social and environmental injustices. I preface the data with a summative analysis to present the reader a point of entry into the outcomes of the project to add to the generalizability of the outcomes, and to prepare the reader for an understanding of the alternative discourse (Rapport, 2010; Stake, 1978; Yin, 2009). I approached this analysis with a creative perspective that searched for essential elements in the text while considering the text as a whole (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). This type of analysis allows for insight

into and an entry point to the discursive meanings made within a non-mechanized pedagogy (Foucault, 1981, 2010; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Rapport, 2010).

Participant Pool 1: The Southeast Michigan Stewardship Coalition

The first pool of teachers came from a non-profit teacher professional development program focused on Great Lakes ecological literacy and stewardship. The Southeast Michigan Stewardship Coalition (SEMIS) is a regional hub within the Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative—also referred to as the GLSI (GLSI, 2018; Lupinacci, 2013; SEMIS, 2018). Each of the nine GLSI hubs in Michigan share three core practices: (a) sustained professional development, (b) place-based education, and (c) school-community partnerships. The initiative aims to develop knowledgeable and active stewards of the Great Lakes who carry their stewardship skills and commitments into adulthood to become lifelong stewards of their environments (GLSI, 2018). GLSI was launched in 2007 with a \$10 million commitment from the Great Lakes Fisheries Trust (GLFT) to support ongoing environmental education. The goals were to invest in programming that provided leadership, expertise, and material resources to K-12 teachers for environmental stewardship in the Great Lakes (GLSI, 2018; Lupinacci, 2013). Nationally, the investment of the GLFT in the GLSI and its hubs to grow place-based programs over a 10-year period was a unique and historic opportunity (E. Lowenstein, personal communication, November 19, 2018).

The GLSI uses the regional hubs to develop ecological and place-based knowledge while using hands on experiences to increase student achievement (GLSI, 2018). In 2007, the SEMIS coalition received funding from Great Lakes stewardship initiative for its inception and continued to apply for and receive grants to establish and maintain SEMIS as a regional hub advancing Great Lakes literacy and stewardship (GLSI, 2018; Lupinacci, 2013; SEMIS, 2018).

From the beginning, lead personnel conceptualized SEMIS as providing support for both EcoJustice and place-based approaches to education. The professional development sequence is offered to teachers for little to no cost, professional development sessions are paced throughout the calendar year, and the first session starts in June of each year. SEMIS teachers meet for professional development nine times throughout the year, ending with a community forum that allows educators to participate in learning opportunities that refine and enhance their teaching skills. In 2018, SEMIS had 18 youth-led presentations, and 250 people attended the forum. Teachers receive coaching between professional development days where customized support is tailored to the teacher's students, school, and community context (E. Lowenstein, personal communication, November 8, 2018). In addition to SEMIS scheduled sessions, the teachers are given personalized curriculum coaching at their school site and encouraged to create affinity groups with each other around similar interests. For example, there is an affinity group for secondary science teachers and one for teachers who use gardens for learning.

SEMIS is one of the hubs that has begun to transform teaching and learning to resist neoliberal politics and develop undergraduate teacher training programs (Bradford & Shields, 2017; Lowenstein et al., 2018). These teachers journey through an adult developmental learning process that allows them to recognize, analyze, and respond with care to the behavioral and communication patterns that are responsible for reproducing marginalization (Drago-Severson, 2009). They use their awareness to make explicit the implicit cultural meanings within language (Bowers & Flinders, 1990). These teachers are unique because they use inquiry-based learning alongside an ongoing dialogue into the *whys* of human behavior to prioritize a cultural analysis (Bradford & Shields, 2017; Lowenstein et al., 2018).

The founding leaders designed SEMIS to support teachers in their developmental journey with EcoJustice and place-based education—which includes nurturing the minds, bodies, and souls of the members. The SEMIS professional development program creates a community of educators, with regularly scheduled places of convergence to grow their identities as educators through membership in professional communities. During the interview process, several participants described their professional development experiences with SEMIS as an “oasis” where they “look forward to getting recharged” with like minds and hearts. They credited SEMIS staff for their career success and expressed gratitude for the access to and support from SEMIS. They also shared that without SEMIS, they believed their teaching philosophy would be unsustainable because of the affective and emotional resources required for ongoing resistance to market-based schooling initiatives. The SEMIS coalition emphasizes place-based education, sustained professional development, and community partnerships to create a space where teachers, students, community partners, and university teacher educators join to creatively resist unequal educational structures and challenge the undermining of an ethics of care by neoliberal educational policies and practice (Lowenstein & Erkaeva, 2016).

Teachers from the SEMIS pool. I selected participants with the goal of obtaining a diverse pool of perspectives. I recruited three individuals who self-identified as a White male, a White female, and an African American female from SEMIS to participate in the study (see Chapter 3 for a summary of SEMIS participant demographics).

Kimberly. Kimberly is an African American female who is both a special education teacher and a basketball coach. She dedicates countless hours a week—after the school day is over—to being a positive role model and supporting her students to achieve their dreams. She was entering her sixth year in the classroom at the time of her interview. Throughout her

teaching career she has spent time with elementary and secondary aged students, in self-contained and co-taught classrooms within general education.

Kimberly was on a team of teachers who ran a large tire clean-up project in Southeast, Michigan. This project spanned a school year and resulted in the removal of hundreds of tires in the school community. This project is legendary within the SEMIS community and is often referred to for examples during lectures and teaching within the professional development sequence. Kimberly is no longer working in that school but is close by at a neighboring public high school. Her classrooms have all been diverse and the general demographics are low-income, at-risk, or urban students of color.

Rachael. When interviewed Rachael had been teaching elementary aged students for 12 years. She is a White female who works in a diverse suburban community that has parental and community support in a university town in southeast Michigan. Rachael is passionate about exploring and experiencing nature and engaging her students with the learning process. She taught primarily fourth and fifth grade but had decided that the upcoming year would be her final year in the classroom. She was schedule to have a classroom of third, fourth, and fifth graders, each grade with its own set of state standards. For Rachael, class mix was problematic because of the time and resources required to provide a high-quality instruction. She detailed the difficulty balancing the state requirements, the students' needs, and her own life. During the interview, she was still in shock that she would be asked to teach three different grades the following year. She spent a lot of time shaking her head and saying, "I just don't know what they expect from teachers [with that kind of a schedule]." She shared her reluctance to step out of the classroom and that she felt like she did not have another choice.

Rachael sees the art in every-day situations and creates art to push herself and her students to be the best they can be. She prides herself on having healthy human relationships and brings the mystery and joy of the natural world to everyone around her. Rachael aims for engaged learners in all that she does and expressed the most joy when speaking of her students' success. For one learning project, her class sponsored a professional development day for the SEMIS teachers where the students were responsible for leading the learning activities for the teachers' professional development. Rachael recalled the powerful learning that occurred and was most proud of how her students "really owned their learning."

Duff. When interviewed, Duff, who is a White cis-male, was in his fourth-year teaching. He is a special education teacher whose primary student population consists of adolescents, in Grades 7 or 8, who were labeled with a communication (dis)ability. Duff's teaching assignments have changed throughout his career depending on the needs of his district. Typically, his students have limited or no verbal communication skills and an educational diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder. Duff works in a predominately White, middle-upper class district, which he shares "is known more for its schools than its downtown area," in Southeast Michigan.

Duff also lives an art-filled life. He pushes himself and his students with learning through poetry. He is passionate about educating people on the privilege of a spoken communication and takes pride in working with the soil. During our time together, he expressed the most joy when telling stories of teaching others how to care for the land and to enjoy the bounty of their efforts. After becoming a member of SEMIS, Duff was inspired to install an accessible school garden with universal design principles, including raised beds so people with physical limitations could engage with caring for the land.

Participant Pool 2: Master's Degree in Social Foundations with a Focus on EcoJustice

The second pool of participants came from the Eastern Michigan University College of Education (COE). The COE houses the Department of Teacher Education, which has a branch of studies called the Social Foundations of Education (SOFD). SOFD is an interdisciplinary graduate program designed to affirm how social, cultural, historical, and political contexts of schooling are not only related but also affect our day-to-day living and impact ecological and social justice and democracy (COE, 2018). The program introduces students to a wide range of social theories, philosophies, and analytic styles to critique and analyze educational contexts. Within the SOFD program, students can study a range of topics such as gender, class, (dis)ability, or race issues in education as well as ethics, the philosophy of care, and militarization of schools. Another topic is EcoJustice education. This approach to education examines the deep cultural roots of our violent and destructive cultural ways of thinking and being, and includes learning about how other cultures have resisted the globalized economic and political shifts. Students focus on protecting and reinvigorating communities, sustainable social practices, and relationships which emphasize the deep connection between the land and humans.

Teachers from the master's degree pool. I selected participants for the master's degree pool the same way I did the SEMIS pool—with diversity in race and gender. I recruited three individuals who self-identified as a White male, a White female, and an African American female from master's degree pool to participate in the study. See Chapter 3 for a summary of the master's degree pool's participant demographics.

Sonny. When interviewed, Sonny had been teaching for 12 years as a high school science teacher. She is an African American female. Sonny is athletic and has been for most of her life. She is passionate about gardening and being a positive role model for her students. She serves on

multiple school committees and runs various weekly social groups for students. Sonny is the teacher in the building who is sought out to solve problems and dry tears from students and staff. She displayed wisdom when handling conflict. For example, when she needed to assign consequences to a student she contemplated and thought it through before announcing the terms of the consequence.

Sonny worked in multiple schools and districts throughout the years. When interviewed, she was working at an alternative high school for Grades 10–12 in an urban setting in the Southeast Michigan area. This school mostly consisted of students and teachers of color. Most of the students in the school received free or reduced lunch and had been referred to the program from other schools within the district for difficulty with the mechanized nature of education. For example, Sonny shared that students reported difficulties with getting to school on time, conforming to behavior expectations, and failure to follow dress codes as the reasons for attending the alternative school. Many of the students struggled to attend classes or complete homework because of parental or caregiver obligations that impacted the students' attendance and time spent on homework. At Sonny's previous school, she led a team in installing a large community garden. She taught the entire process of getting food from seed to the table. She worked within the limits of the school's resources to teach the ethics of making choice and often used visual projects that were displayed throughout the school. Sonny taught the same ethical food lessons in her current school but had not yet installed an outdoor learning space. Instead she used news, video, print, community resources, cross-curricular collaboration, and imagination to interact with food and food politics.

Giada. At the time of the interview, Giada was in her ninth year of teaching and at an urban school in the Southeast Michigan area. She is a White female. She takes great pride in

teaching five- and six-year-old children how to live peacefully with each other and the Other-than-human world. Giada is passionate about music, dancing, and loving the earth. Aside from working directly with the children, she expresses joy when discussing the programs she has engaged with that are designed to help children learn and mature with an ecological understanding of relationships. She teaches dance classes and runs a summer camp for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. The academically based camp emphasizes learning how to live ethically and peacefully with the Other-than-human world.

Giada has taught in multiple schools around the country but usually in low-income, inner-city, at-risk schools. Her current school serves mostly students of color, and the entire school receives free or reduced lunch. Giada is known within the EcoJustice community for her commitment to applying the EcoJustice principles and is commonly referred to as “walking the walk.” Her most noteworthy project at this point is the summer camp. Her camp started as a summer hobby and in six short summers expanded its capacity to accommodate a larger age range of students and their interests. Now, the Washtenaw County Parks system collaborates with Giada and funds the camp.

Alton. At the time of the interview, Alton—a White male—was an elementary teacher for fourth grade. He had been teaching for 15 years, 14 of which were in his current public school. Alton teaches in a suburb of southeast Michigan and has access to community and parental support. Alton attended the seminary prior to becoming a school teacher and he is active in a band and multiple other social groups. Alton is known in the EcoJustice community for the music he writes with his students surrounding EcoJustice and activism.

Alton is very aware of the ways in which nonverbal signs, actions, and silences can produce loud messages of meaning and significance. He takes great pride in teaching others

about alternative and ethical ways to live through his actions. He states, “As teachers, we bring our whole selves to the table.” Alton considers himself to be “the EcoJustice person in the room. I don’t sit there and preach it, but boy, when there’s a chance I can slightly color the conversation, I do.” With this disposition, Alton uses a documentary titled *Ancient Futures: Lessons from Ladakh for a Globalizing World* as a reference for a mature culture, which he uses as a reference, to generate discussion about different and dominant cultural practices, to understand a mature culture, and as a jumping off point for ethical discussions for the entire school year (Walton & Page, 1993). He generates conversation and asks questions surrounding the effects of globalizing places and its impact on happiness and local culture.

Analysis of Social Cognitive Frames

I found that two relevant social cognitive frames were evident among the participants. One was that the teachers were raised in families that emphasized and prioritized a spiritual or religious upbringing. The implications from such a rearing are belief, understanding, and acceptance of a knowledge that defies and cannot be explained by reason. Another result was that participants benefited from guidance on how to interact with others without causing harm. The third was an understanding of the inherent value of the Other-than-human world that included seeing human and the natural world as interdependent (Berry, 1977; De Botton, 2013).

Another relevant socio-cognitive commonality among the participants was a teaching philosophy that engaged students in the learning process. The participants in this study used classroom techniques that challenged passive learning habits resulting from rote practice and other test-prep measures used to improve standardized test scores (Bulunuz, 2015; Cutter-Mackenzie & Edwards, 2013; Lu & Liu, 2015; Mercer et al., 2017; Parks, 2017; Pyle & Danniels, 2017; Waller, 2014). The teachers used a loving playful disposition and attitude to lead

their classrooms (Lugones, 1987). The power within this attitude is in its ability to generate certainty within uncertainty, create an openness to surprise, or an attitude that does not expect neatly packaged answers, solutions, or relationships (Becker, 2014; Casey, 1993; Lugones, 1987; Malaby, 2009). This attitude fosters active learners and connective social bonds that allow discourses of love to be cultivated. A discourse of love in the classroom create spaces that need to be comfortable discussing complex and sensitive topics (such as racism, sexism, and anthropocentrism) and how to respond with care to injustices.

The loving and playful disposition is useful for leading a discussion where uncertainty often dominates the students because the new non-mechanized ideas are radical in comparison to neoliberalism. Further, the students need to develop new language to communicate these ideas, which makes expressive language emerge. The first step to teaching critical language awareness is to create a naming framework for observations (Bowers & Flinders, 1990). EcoJustice educators use a ecocultural analysis to examine the language and metaphors guiding meaning (Martusewicz et al., 2015). They guide students through exploring their thoughts and behaviors as they contribute to oppression. This analysis and approach to education does not address the feelings and emotionality that accompanies social-cognitive development involved with (un)learning anthropocentrism. The socio-cognitive approach to discourse analysis can be used to explore the interface of mind, discursive interaction, and society (van Dijk, 2013). To support the social and emotional development, the participants created a narrative in their classroom that includes laughing, conviviality, and joviality.

A playful disposition is different than what is typically experienced as humorous—like making jokes, cringe-humor statements, insult comedy, or reenacting lines from movies. It is a feature of these teachers' dispositions that works towards a group relationality (Bowers &

Flinders, 1990). They achieve this disposition by generating a communication style that is sensitive to both the nature of the topics and the emotional impact on the students. This disposition was seen more in the totality of the whole interview rather than in a specific instance of communication. For example, the quiet one-liners, language puns, and other subtle nuances that emerged when talking to participants. When they talked, they referred to things happening in the room where we were interviewing with an alternative perspective, or built on a story that was started 20 minutes ago. Or they would think out loud in the form of a conversation with themselves to get a point across. All these little personality quirks add up and contribute to a disposition towards relationality that is fun or playful. To be clear, I am labeling these behaviors as fun or playful based on their presentation, how the participants described the students' responding, and how I responded.

These types of communication exchanges are difficult to represent with the limitations of printed text because they often include side-comments, facial features, or other visual cues that tell part of the story but are not linguistically represented. Still, they use metaphors and language that plays on words with local metaphors that are specific to the classroom community. As Alton stated,

You know, we all zone-[out], we all quit paying attention. But if you can make it fun, you can make people on a visceral, deep-down level want to be in that classroom. They will have a very positive experience being in there and [they] know that every once in a while there will be a brain break, a little humor, a little fun just to kind of reset. And then we go back to the serious stuff. I do believe that we overtax our kids in school. I think we try to shove too much into their little brains when they're not really ready, which is why I try to balance the learning experience. I'm a very stoic teacher. I mean when I'm serious, I'm

serious. I'll say to the kids, "This is important." But then once that's done, then we can have some fun. Because fun is free and it's also very helpful. It kind of lubricates the mind so that they can go on to the next stoic thing that I'm going to teach them.

Laughter was a characteristic of Alton's life. In addition to the expressed value in his response, the interview this quote was taken from had seven instances of laughter noted during the interview period. His disposition is clear. Sonny, on the other hand, was not trained to see her responsibility to incorporate fun into the classroom. However, she is working to change that, as she shared,

But with kids that are not comfortable with education, there has to be some type of fun component to them or you're going to lose them. . . [fun delivery content] is something I've tried to get better at, at least in the last two years.

Sonny detailed some of her assignments and projects and her attempts to keep them exciting and interesting. She described activities that were visually interesting and accommodated different learning styles, abilities, and interests. She described her classroom as beautifully functional and she took responsibility to coordinate student and staff incentive initiatives. One included student designed t-shirts and a pot-luck cookout. All of these factors supported what I am referring to as a playful disposition.

A loving, playful disposition is a skillset that helps teachers build connections, teach complex ideas, and places high value on sustainable community relations. Teachers use this disposition to flatten the social hierarchy and build solidarity (Bowers & Flinders, 1990). Social-cognitive considerations make explicit the attitudes, knowledge, and ideologies that generate the language used in the classroom and thus communicate socially shared knowledge otherwise known as common sense (Bowers, 2012; van Dijk, 2017). The socio-cognitive inquiry is useful

for analyzing how social structures are related to cognitive phenomena, and it attempts to untangle discourses within their specific context while simultaneously aiming to make explicit individual mental models guiding language and the ways these models mediate shared experiences (Bowers, 2012; van Dijk, 1993, 2017). Lastly, the socio-cognitive approach helps answer the research question in terms of how teachers generate a space where students were encouraged to respond to injustice with ethical attitudes.

Analysis via the Three-Dimensional Approach

The socio-cognitive approach to analyzing discourse acts as a bridge between the public and the personal discursive messages. The three-dimensional approach situates discourses within the larger social political context, while the socio-cognitive approach makes space for the personal. A dominant model guiding personal and public interactions is competition (Ivie, 2007; Martusewicz et al., 2015). In education, competition is tightly woven into the day-to-day operations and can be seen in the priorities for advancing students' competitive edge rather than cultivating interpersonal skills—like cooperation and creativity—that are often deemed unnecessary because they are not quantifiable or measurable (Biesta, 2009; Giroux, 2015; Hursh, 2007; Lipman, 2017). This frustration was expressed by all participants in some way.

For Duff, the daily battle with neoliberal politics was impacting decisions made in his classroom every day. He had district and state mandates that were developed for students with verbal skills that he needed to accommodate and modify for his non-verbal students. He also needed to prove, with high-stakes tests, that they were learning. He stated,

And like teaching does not mean people learn. Teaching is like a different thing than learning. Sometimes it lines up; sometimes it doesn't. . . And we think somebody knows something when they tell you or they write it. And when people aren't talking or they

don't want to talk or it's too hard to talk or for whatever reason, or their writing is just wack, people assume that those people don't know shit. And that's really prejudiced, and that really bothers me. But I was, you know, I was forced to prove that people were learning. And that was really a challenge. Because I have total respect and I always presume competence, like as much you possibly can. Like people are always learning. . . sorry getting all passionate and shit here, but this is the struggle I live with day to day as a teacher.

Duff explained his struggle with the neoliberal documentation required to show adequate yearly growth and meet the diverse needs of his students. He critiqued this privileged knowledge and the communication systems within neoliberal education that are best displayed in high-stakes testing. His students had alternative communication systems² that allowed for teaching and learning to occur but do not meet the neoliberal progress requirements. Duff also expressed dissatisfaction around dominant types of knowledge, their uses, and their privileged past. The struggle he described reflects the same sentiment as Krysnski (2018) when she stated, "Speaking and writing against the dominant stream is in many ways a daunting challenge" (p. 45). Teachers using the EcoJustice approach to education use their skills to make explicit the systemic structure that empowers anthropocentric relationality.

Analysis of Discourses

Discourses of success. The neoliberal competitive undercurrent of education can be seen on the US Department of Education (USDE, n.d.) website, where it states, "Our mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access." In the classroom, this mission is enacted

² Communication systems can range from word processing, a stack of cards with images on them, a pictorial choice board with different options, or the student could draw their response.

through focusing on measurable skills, which can directly contribute to the students' competitive edge. Alternatively, within a mechanized neoliberal culture, the silence around alternative and unmeasurable skills creates a discourse of inevitability, where the status quo is accepted and unquestioned as common sense and resistance is understood to be futile. Further, this national mission shapes the thoughts and practices of teachers and schools to emphasize particular ways of relating, which manifest through excellence initiatives that normalize competition and discursively teaches exchange-value is more important than use-value (Saunders & Blanco Ramírez, 2017).

Educational discourses of competition within neoliberal politics prioritize individual success over the success of the group (Martusewicz et al., 2015). It can also be seen in the education legislation responsible for funding and guiding discourses. Two recent educational initiatives are titled the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA) and the Race to The Top fund (RTT) that was established in 2009. The ESSA shifts accountability for student success from federal responsibility to the states and uses standardized testing as the measurement of success (USDE, 2015). The RTT program is, to date, the largest federally funded education initiative toward competitive school reform. The program mandated the use of international curricula and prioritized the knowledge obtained from data systems and scores from standardized tests to reward schools, teachers, and students. RTT aimed to “turn around our lowest-achieving schools,” encouraging a rise in the charter school movement (USDE, 2015, p. 2). It is important to note here how the titles and intentions of these programs include language and discursive knowledge that becomes part of the culture within education. With policies and programs like these, it is difficult to think of education outside of market-based initiatives.

Both of these initiatives inform the culture of education in the United States and discursively communicate the priorities and purposes of becoming educated. In a society organized by neoliberalism, individualism and competition are part of the shared cultural knowledge for how to interact one another and the community. People within this context are considered independent from each other, autonomous and distanced from their own history and the history of the dominant culture in which they live. Further, this perspective portrays other life communities as objects to be utilized in the pursuit of self-interest (Martusewicz et al., 2015). Competition combined with individualism from a larger cultural perspective creates a toxic devaluing of community relationships and associated skillsets such as thrift and humility (Berry, 1977).

The US Department of Education mission statement and the political efforts informed by this mission ignore the social and historical struggles of non-dominant groups by obscuring their cultural values surrounding knowledge, language, and relationships (Duggan, 2003). The statement discursively and explicitly communicates the purposes of education to be for the “preparation for global competitiveness,” which is assumed to be achieved by racing to the top. Discourses of competition within a neoliberal context are pervasive in public and private life where doctrines like competition are presented as natural and inevitable rather than as independent social forces condoning negative consequences within a system built from oppression. Relationships created through a dominance structure create a social understanding that rationalizes violence and blurs the lines around the human responsibility for recognizing and responding to injustices with care (Giroux, 2015; Lipman, 2017; Martusewicz & Johnson, 2016; Newcomb, 2008).

Ecocentric perspective on competition. The teachers in this study reframed competition and redefined what it meant to be successful. Rather than deny competition completely, a practical understanding can be used to start relearning how to coexist interdependently. Berry (2010) harshly critiqued dominant culture for its competitiveness; however, he did not advocate for rejecting competition outright. Rather, he called for moderating its use and application. Berry (2010) stated,

There is no denying that competitiveness is part of the life both of an individual and of a community, or that, within limits, it is a useful and necessary part. But it is equally obvious that no individual can lead a good or satisfying life under the rule of competition, and that no community can succeed except by limiting somehow the competitiveness of its members. One cannot maintain one's "competitive edge" if one helps other people. (p. 134)

As presented in Berry's quote, competition has its merit. However, as the main feature considered for relational responsibility, competition can also create tensions between one's competitive edge and one's willingness to provide help.

Neoliberal market logic marginalizes activities and behaviors that hinder the marketability of a person and reframes economic competition as the primary relationality. As a consequence, care-based practices and relationship skills become a lower priority than a skill that directly contributes to the competitive edge of a student. The teachers in this study understood their world from a position of interconnection rather than as isolated beings. They learned how to relate in a way that decenters humans from the social hierarchy and were in the process of (un)learning anthropocentric ways of thinking, being, and knowing (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016). One way to engage in this process to challenge normalized competition is to

redefine what it means to be successful. Later in this section, I use data from Alton to show how competition can be understood differently. He makes explicit the need to learn how to compete and the need for the whole community to succeed rather than just an individual.

Shifting conceptions of competition and success. The participants in this study spent large portions of their instructional time teaching students to recognize, challenge, and redefine culturally shared knowledge located within language. One approach to a multilayered inquiry into the assumptions guiding our language is to question the reasons behind what we do, say, or think. The teachers who participated in this study were taught how to examine the connections between the behavior, thoughts, words, and metaphors. One of the leaders of SEMIS has simplified this process by telling coalition participants to “just ask why.” To date, the process is unnamed and used in professional development sessions where he guides teachers through the process of analyzing language for root metaphors contributing to rationalizing cultural circumstances. He always uses a critical analysis and points teachers towards where oppression and marginalization are culturally accepted and structurally implied. As a program leader, he guides teachers to interrogate their assumptions by exploring the social, environmental, political, and practical knowledge within the language they use. A question is then generated that explores a social or ecological injustice and the teachers work through a variety of possible reasons. He draws attention to the words used and discusses the various understandings from political and social perspectives. He then asks why again and generates another set of responses and the process repeats until members of the class begin to lead the discussion.

This process is simple and highlights one way students can explore the cultural, political, and economic factors contributing to assumptions. The answers are used to map out the big issues, root causes, and symptoms of racism, poverty, sexism, and other systemic injustices that

guide and give meaning to the relationships within and between life communities. Teachers are encouraged to use this technique to help students research personal and structural social-political circumstances resulting in rationalized violence. Kimberly provided an example of how the outcomes from this type of analysis can guide a classroom in stewardship projects. For this project, her class teamed with another SEMIS class and synergized their efforts for community well-being.

Kimberly. A participant from the SEMIS pool, Kimberly, humbles herself among her students effectively making ignorance (not-knowing) acceptable and engaging students to help direct and shape the nature of the inquiry. She recalled,

Well, it was, well we don't, we don't really know how to answer that question— let's look it up. Let's Google it—why do people dump in [southeast Michigan]. . . like “*Why do they think it's OK to dump tires here?*” So [when researching] just random videos would pop up [and we would watch a video and keep asking why]. And then we also had different community partners, people come in, speak with the kids on the tire sweeps, different things like how to clean up the environment. So [the students] decided they wanted to clean them up [tires].

In another account from Kimberly shared,

So I just incorporated more outside of the classroom learning experiences where we actually went and [worked towards making a difference in our community]. We *did* more than we *talked* about. So we did a couple of tire sweeps. We did research using Earth Force on burned-down and abandoned buildings. And then we put on a [community event to showcase what we did]. We did a parent forum at the end of [a unit]. Along with another [SEMIS teacher]. . . they [both classes] chose graffiti and how they can get it out

of the community. [We looked at] good graffiti versus bad graffiti, tidy versus not tidy. And we talked about burned-down, abandoned buildings, the laws and the policies and how you get them torn down. [For example], can you just go and board them up. . . [we looked at] how they got that way. . . different things like that. So they learned the underlying effects of [social and ecological injustices] . . . and we did more projects that they will remember versus more reading that they wouldn't or really couldn't do.

Kimberly used the students interests to make explicit the implicit. Per Kimberly's account, she facilitated conversations with her students surrounding the reasons why environmental pollution was considered okay in their neighborhood and not in others. She also pushed their thinking to continually name what was happening and question how and why things were the way they were. In other interviews, she reported the classroom conversations quickly turned to race and economic inequalities, which Kimberly connected to systemic oppression and an anthropocentric understanding of relationality.

In addition to discussing the structural and cultural inequalities, Kimberly redefined competition to be a cooperative effort. She teamed with a neighboring teacher—who was a SEMIS teacher but not part of this study—to use their common interests to jointly teach students how to evaluate data critically and analytically. Kimberly recalled discussing questions such as why to open dialogue to difference and facilitating discussions around the sociopolitical impacts of various situations. Kimberly represents how the teachers engage their students with critical cultural inquiry into the root causes of social and ecological issues and resist mechanized neoliberal market logic in their classrooms by redefining what it means to be successful (Giroux, 2015; Happel & Atkinson, 2013).

Another example of how these teachers resisted the discourse of competition was provided by Alton. He regularly played with his students. They had a math game that was used to practice math facts and provided another example of how success can be understood.

Alton. A participant from the master's pool, Alton, used a humanitarian approach to competition in his classroom. He used a puppet and game he created to practice competing for causes other than one's personal gain. He described,

On Fridays, we have what I call Math Moose. It's a puppet. And we have these flash cards that we put on the document overhead cam. The kids line up and they have to beat Math Moose when the card comes up. [Student has to say the correct math fact before the Math Moose]. So, if it's seven times eight, if the moose, which is me, I'll go "56." And if they beat me, or the moose, or tie, the whole class gets a point. If not, the moose gets a point. The class's job is to beat the moose. So there's 28 kids in our class, so if they get 15 and the moose gets 13, they get to hug the moose. We also have another class next door that plays with us. And so we're kind of in competition with them to get the trophy. But everybody's in competition with the moose so they can hug the moose. . . and as far as the two classes go, whatever class gets the most points gets a little trophy. . . the trophy is a little tiny thing that they put a little tiny stuffed moose on. It looks like one of those plastic, metal trophies. . . and they get to have the trophy for a week.

Alton used competition in a way that decentered the importance of the individual and focused on the greater good of the group. Per Alton's account, he approached competition from a more humanitarian perspective that considered the community success more important than the individual success. He also made the incentive a gesture of affection and conviviality rather than just an accumulation of material goods, thereby placing priority on caring relationships in his

classroom. Alton's students were engaging in a form of community competition where Alton limited the competitiveness of the members. He created a space that encouraged relationships of mutuality (Kropotkin, 1902). Alton constructed a space where students were taught to value the group outcome. The hug as a reward is significant because it is inherently an affective experience rather than accumulation of a good. He taught students how to compete in ways that reject self-interest and prioritizes community gain. Unlike Kimberly, Alton also competes in a more traditional sense with a neighboring classroom, which is an important skillset because students are expected to compete in all areas of life. Rather than reject competition, Alton and Kimberly use their values and priorities to redefine what it means to be successful.

Both Berry (2000b) and Kropotkin (1902) critiqued the mechanization of life and offered an alternative relationality that challenges the mechanized neoliberal understanding. Berry's work emphasized the value in a diverse community and critiqued competition as a social goal rather than a skillset. He argued that communities cannot survive under the rule of competition (Berry, 2010c). In this same essay, Berry argued that the ideals of competition exclude affection and its associated language such as love, care, mercy, forbearance, and respect. For Berry, the language communicates more than subjective emotions, and he understands them as a virtue of connecting to place. Berry's (200b, 2010c) argument for affection as the basis for community challenges the dominant social understanding of upward mobility and personal autonomy and focuses on the space between personal virtue and structural change.

Discourses of love. This section focuses on why and how teachers achieved a space where students could develop an ethical attitude towards all life communities and highlights the discourses presented by the teachers as an alternative to competition and an exploration into the power of community knowledge. These teachers worked with their students to examine the

interrelatedness of humans and the Other-than-human world, decenter humans from the social hierarchy, and prioritize a social understanding centered on ecological well-being. This form of education is founded upon the understanding “that local and global ecosystems are essential to all life,” and it required students and teachers to challenge the “deep cultural assumptions underlying modern thinking that undermine those systems” (Martusewicz et al., 2015, p. 362).

Teachers using this approach to education teach past inquiry by including a purpose to educating that is beyond simply preparing for competition in the market economy. Teachers connect with their students using a social-cognitive frame rooted in love. These teachers challenge institutional social hierarchies, like patriarchy and racism, by prioritizing diversity and teaching the power in mutual support (Jensen, 2017; Kropotkin, 1902; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Salzberg, 2002). They aim to create communities of learners who rethink the relationship between education, citizenship, and human responsibility. These teachers use a discourse of love to teach students how to recognize injustice while also engaging and imagining solutions that work towards a common goal rather than self-gain.

When considered from this perspective, love is generated from a connection of mutuality and includes the capacity to recognize if a need is present and responding to the need in a way that can be understood by recipient. It is not a set of curriculum materials or a how-to manual. The definition of love used in this study positions itself philosophically within ecofeminism, EcoJustice, and feminist love studies to describe a relationality that disarticulates love from sexuality and male dominance, while also creating a response to larger political structures that make change seem ideologically impossible (Jónasdóttir & Ferguson, 2014; Lewis, 1960/2017). This way of conceptualizing love acts as a creative energy that joins humans and the Other-than-human world (Ferguson & Toye, 2017).

A discourse of love within this context requires responding to needs with care (Martusewicz & Johnson, 2016). It places high value on working towards creating and healing community relationships. With place-based projects, the teachers created a space where students connected to the land and engaged with a local economy within institutional discourses nested in discourses of economic globalization. Teaching the importance of the local is a response to the modern economic development patterns which disrupt—rather than cultivate—community and generates a form of cultural knowledge that cannot be taken by power or wealth (Berry, 2011; Gruenewald & Smith, 2010). In a discourse of love, classrooms are designed to be give-and-take from all members, and becoming educated includes knowing and making decisions with an understanding of the interdependent relationships between humans and the Other-than-human world.

Teachers employing this discourse use place-based projects to take direct action to care for the land (Lowenstein & Erkaeva, 2016). When working with the land, students learn to moderate their actions to avoid harm and learn the limits of scientific knowledge (Berry, 1977). In a discourse of love, the love exchange will look different for each participant—meaning you cannot walk into a classroom and verify it is happening. Rather, you look to see if the students are thriving. To illuminate the ways in which this discourse informs practices in the classroom, I have selected narratives from two participants: Giada and Rachael.

Giada. One participant from the master's degree pool who displayed a discourse of love was Giada. Giada taught her students how to love the Other-than-human world by taking initiative to enact their affection. She taught her students to respect the lives of other creatures even if they spoke a different language and explained that we do not need to speak the same language to avoid causing harm:

You can't do anything. You can't do anything in the class, the classroom doesn't run smoothly, and you can't do anything as an adult if you can't get along with each other. So a huge focus [in my classroom] is on how to get along, but then also other ways I teach peace are like how to live peacefully. So we talk about a lot how to treat not just other people, but other things. How all living things are valued, how all living things deserve a voice, and as simple as like, you know, those bugs that you're stepping on do not want to get stepped on. We can know that without them being able to speak English to us. We can know that those bugs don't want to get stepped on and killed. So we need to respect that desire.

As Giada saw it, the students showed their affection by protecting life—even if it communicated differently. This example is very important to understanding a discourse of love when considering the Other-than human world. The Other-than-human world cannot tell us it is in pain, that it is harmed, or that it needs more time to heal and replenish. Giada taught young students to be aware of their surroundings and spent a large part of her instructional time teaching students the importance of engaging with each other and the Other-than-human world in a way that promote healthy relationships. She called her classroom organization technique a “PEACE Plan,” an organizational tool she has been developing throughout her career. Giada cringed when I asked if it was like a behavior management plan, to which I assumed was because of my language and the implied mechanized relationality, then she clarified:

It's called a PEACE plan and it is the foundation on which the classroom is organized. In the PEACE plan the “P” is to play and be safe, the “E” is everything gets respect, the “A” is to have an awareness of our surroundings, and “C” is that we communicate with each other. The last letter, “E” is that we enjoy the fun.

Giada connects her students with the Other-than-human world by teaching them to be receptive to its needs, despite its inability to communicate in English. One of Berry's responses to modern culture is to establish relationships that return to "the nature of place." He suggested that rather than using a metric of competition and innovation, we look to the health of the natural world to measure our actions and cultural habits. He asserted that "by returning to 'The nature of the place' as standard, we acknowledge the necessary limits of our own intentions" (Berry, 2010c, p. 207).

Giada's direct instruction on how to act towards the bugs applies value to the smallest creature, which discursively communicates the importance of the Other-than-human world. She connected her students to their place through the other lives that shared the place and taught them how to relate to the other lives in ethical and caring ways. Giada was aware of the communication barrier (between humans and bugs) and responded in a way the students could understand. The discursive implication behind her actions align with the discourse of love and Giada provided her students an alternative way of understanding their place in the world with a relationality other than competition.

Giada's PEACE plan is also an example of one way to create a community within the classroom. The teachers in this study assumed interrelation between humans and the Other-than-human world and used commons-based relationships of reciprocity and mutuality to ensure group well-being (Bowers, 2006; Kropotkin, 1902; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Martusewicz & Johnson, 2016). This means they viewed the self as part of a community rather than as an autonomous being seeking self-gain. They understood community membership to be included in the shared cultural knowledge (Lupinacci & Ward

Lupinacci, 2017). To prioritize community over the self is antithetical to Western industrial cultural ways of knowing and therefore needs to be taught like all other skills.

A definition of community that values interdependence comes from Berry. In defining community, Berry (2004b) stated,

Community. . . is the mental and spiritual condition of knowing that the place is shared, and that the people who share the place define and limit the possibilities of each other's lives. It is the knowledge that people have of each other, their concern for each other, their trust in each other, the freedom with which they come and go among themselves. (p. 61)

For Berry, a community includes relationships that holistically support each member as a unique individual while not losing sight of community well-being. When the definition of community stands on relationships of interrelation, members are required to take care of themselves so that they can take care of others. When engaging in relationships of interdependence, each person has a responsibility to bring their best self to the group. The first step to taking care of others is taking care of oneself (Lloro-Bidart & Semenko, 2017). Lloro-Bidart and Semenko (2017) argued for the organization of self-care as part of the ecofeminist care ethics. They drew attention to the need for self-care to be a respected part of our shared cultural knowledge. Within this framework, self-care is also an act of resistance.

During the interviews, participants were asked to describe their average workday from the moment they opened their eyes to the moment they went to bed. Participants spoke of various ways they imposed limits on personal resources—like the amount of time they spent at school or worked on school-related projects after the school day ended. Additionally, they described spiritual, physical, and emotional practices they performed on a regular basis to care for

themselves. More than one participant indicated that the sentiment of “bringing-my best self” to the students stood as a reason for “strict-ish” boundaries on the personal time available for the classroom.

Rachael. Rachael came from the SEMIS pool and she also brought a discourse of love to the classroom by engaging in practices that facilitated self-love. A discourse of love must include self-love. An ecocentric relationality prioritizes the community well-being differing from the neoliberal priority of the self. Contemporary understandings of self-care or self-love are tied to individual pursuits of self-betterment often without regard for the social or ecological cost (Kisner, 2017; Penny, 2016). Within a neoliberal framework, these practices further separate individuals from the struggles of Others and provide fuel for an ideology of wellness. Wellness is now a personal pursuit that has a moral demand to create a lifestyle that maximizes well-being in ways that others can see (Cederström & Spicer, 2015). It is more than cultivating the self, it is part of the grand narrative of American individualism (Cederström & Spicer, 2015; Martusewicz et al., 2015). This is problematic because individuals are isolated to work through and solve their own problems, and it paints wellness as spontaneous and as an individual effort. Self-love within the EcoJustice framework results in teachers meeting their own needs and preparing themselves fully so they can meet the needs of their students. Caring for the self within a framework of interrelation is something other than an individual endeavor for wellness because of the expressed emphasis on community well-being rather than the betterment of the self. Rachael’s self-love routine began when she woke up and went on throughout the day:

So what I do to set up my day is get to school a little bit early. I’ve got lots going on in my mind about the big picture and then the details. I’ve already planned for the most part what I wanted to teach for the day. I know what my goals are. And what I’m doing is I’m

just concentrating on centering myself. So much of the work that I do with the kids is evaluated by if it's a good day, [for good days] I can reflect, "Okay it was because I felt really centered; I felt on; I felt confident; I felt prepared." So what can I do to make sure all those things are in place so that when the kids come in, I'm ready to greet them, I'm really ready to be with them.

In another part of the interview, Rachael shared,

I really pace myself to keep the energy . . . So by 5:30 or 6:00 [in the evening], I'm kind of moving out of [thinking about the classroom] and moving into family time, me time, which is usually a mix of again more self-care, taking care of myself, talking to my family and friends, eating really well, exercising, and then doing things that feed me as just a person in the world, things that make me feel happy to be alive . . . Once school comes to a close, I often feel like I'm kind of, I'm on fumes. I mean I'm really spent. I've given very fully, and if I was asked to give more, it would be really hard for me. I pace myself.

Self-care within a discourse of love is performed in order to replenish personal resources to maintain sustainable and ongoing contributions to community. Rachael recognized that she has limited mental, spiritual, and physical energy so she moderated and limited her behavior in ways that allowed her to refill her resources. Rachael's actions were acts of self-care. However, her purpose was for the betterment of her community ("so that when the kids come in, I'm ready to greet them, I'm really ready to be with them"), and this dynamic moves her actions from self-care into the discourse of love. Rachael and Giada also challenged the discourse of neoliberalism by making space and time for affective development (Lloro-Bidart & Semenko, 2017) and prioritizing emotions and spirituality in a system that has long discounted their merit.

Discourses of resistance. A culture shaped by individualism within neoliberalism defines people by their perceived lack rather than honoring their unique cognitive, physical, sensory, communication, or emotional traits (Wilson, 2013). It also ignores its own history, orders itself by a hierarchy, and prioritizes one form of communication. A culture organized around individualism assumes humans are inherently selfish and that society should be organized to prioritize certain abilities, sexes, genders, and races over others (Martusewicz et al., 2015). Cultures that are based on economic development or industrial policy making use hierarchies and dualistic language to group and prioritize able, White, male, cis-gendered, bodies that use verbal language to communicate (Bowers, 2013; Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Mander & Tauli-Corpuz, 2006). In education, this looks like thinking for yourself, monitoring your competitive edge, and prioritizing one standardized set of knowledge as the only set. Teachers in this study asserted the well-being of the community as a top priority and challenged individualistic tendencies by valuing diversity.

Duff. Duff is a participant from the SEMIS pool who has a caseload and classroom of students with a primary communication disability and comorbid disorders that range from physical to cognitive delays and include limitations on mobility. Students with these kinds of (dis)abilities rarely know life independent of other people. Their standards and goals for independence are different from a neurotypical person. The competitive individualistic metaphor used for education is not successful for this group of students. To start, they are unable to compete without extensive support for the educational rewards, so they lack often the skills and the experiences to develop their competitive edge. Despite his students' differing abilities, Duff is still required to use state guidelines and standards to teach these students.

Rather than push his students to gain skills to help with the culturally defined knowledge base—which focuses on students’ personal gain—Duff combined the groups’ assets and led the students in designing, installing, and planting a community garden made with raised beds to accommodate assisted mobility devices and remove other physical barriers. Duff described his memory of these events:

One year with a small grant from SEMIS I was able to help the kids design a community garden they could use. We designed it and built it and planted it. So that was amazing. I mean personally for me I’d never done anything like that. A raised bed [community garden on school property]. I’d never built a raised bed, never thought about what is an accessible garden. Never really done the Earth Force inquiry process, assessments, surveys, and stuff. And I’m grateful that I was given that freedom and support from administrators in the building I worked in to do that.

In this example, Duff challenged the discourse of neoliberalism by using a community garden to teach his content lessons. In a community garden, the interconnected relationships between humans and the Other-than-human world are exemplified, and humans experience their place in a living web of reciprocity rather than a hierarchy centered on personal gain (Gaylie, 2009, 2011; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Williams & Brown, 2012). In the garden, success depends more on working together with what you have rather than one person working for personal betterment.

Another way Duff challenged neoliberal education is by caring for the well-being of his community and making time and space for the diversity inherent in community, even if the cost was reflected in his teacher evaluation. Duff recalled,

Yeah, gosh, you know, my classroom is so not [EcoJustice] theoretical. But I try to be a respectful person. You know, it’s easy [to accidentally disrespect] when you’re around

people that don't communicate like you do. [You can] diminish them, [when you] talk about them in front of them. You know, whether that's good or bad, to me that is a bad thing, because it hurts that person. It tells that person they're not meaningful. What do I do? Don't talk about them like they are not in front of me. And I don't just place myself over them (physical or ideologically) and I just include them. [These actions are] totally awkward and weird and time consuming, but I think that's the biggest thing I do [to connect my students to our community]. Because a lot of people I work with communicate totally differently than like [with speech]. Speech is a totally privileged form of communication. . . And [in education it is] all based on standards (speech, behavior, curriculum). And who's saying what is the standard?

In this case, Duff reflected on how he communicated with his students by identifying and relearning what it means to communicate normally. During our interviews, Duff expressed great duress over various aspects of his classroom actions and how they translated to his end of the year evaluations. For example, he preferred for his students to address him by his first name. Duff's administrators preferred the traditional classroom hierarchy and teacher titles. He also shared a few of the various areas of privilege he considered when creating lessons and painstakingly described the tension he navigated when planning for his students as he considered what was best for his students given the uncertainty of neoliberal teacher politics (Giroux, 2015).

Duff knew the value of communication within a community and prioritized good communication within his community despite the cost in time that could otherwise have been used to work on test-prep or other more measurable skills. His actions were clearly intended to do meaningful work to challenge ableism, and for him, this meant rethinking the shared cultural knowledge shaping communication (Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017). Each classroom will

make a space for diversity differently, but the goal is the same: to engage in relationships honoring diversity while also recognizing and celebrating differences. The moral tension involved with resisting neoliberal education is not unresearched (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011; Lowenstein et al., 2010). Duff's inner-conflict represents a large group of teachers whose evaluations are not only defined by the students' growth but by students who do not meet general education standards.

Each district is different. In some Michigan districts, a teacher's teaching evaluation is largely based on students' standardized test scores. In the district I worked in, evaluation outcomes were ranked in the district and scores were used to distribute district privileges. Minor allowances were made for educators teaching in special education but with the ever-growing accountability movement dominating education, special education teachers were often held to the same accountability standards as a general education teacher despite their diverse populations. The push for one educational outcome highlights the neoliberal mechanized overlay that seeks to homogenize schools and disregard the needs of the students. My experiences with resistance include witnessing some teachers manufacture data, signal answers to students, ask some students to not attend during test time, and various other questionably-ethical behaviors to get the best numbers for reporting.³ Sometimes I saw it work, and a teacher was allowed another year of a dignity with an effective or highly effective rating on his or her end of year evaluation. And when it did not work, the district closed the school and reorganized the remaining schools in such a way that created a new school with a new name. That school started over with state reporting despite consisting of mostly the same teachers and students.

³ In the same vein, I know teachers that have been harassed with bribery from parents to place a student on an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) prior to testing. The parents intended to remove the students from special education services after test scores were recorded.

Teachers circumvent a mechanized neoliberal education in all sorts of active and passive acts of resistance. One participant needed to work within particularly tight set of school rules as well as abilities. Sonny used creative implementation to blend the principles of mutuality within a highly controlled environment. Her students were part of a transitional program that was tightly monitored by district administration. Despite the tight confines of the situation, Sonny was still able to teach ethical dispositions and relational skills.

Sonny. Sonny was a participant from the master's pool and had both a unique role and student population. Sonny's school was an alternative placement program for students who could not be successful in a traditional classroom setting. Many of the students had been incarcerated and many had missed large chunks of school. One way that Sonny challenged neoliberalism in her classroom was by requiring everyone follow a strict routine. This routine was set in place so that students could work with personal accommodations and styles towards the group goals embedded in the lessons with minimal distraction and disruption to the other members of the classroom. Multiple times during our interviews Sonny mentioned the significance of a routine and how it was needed for successfully running her classroom. Sonny described, "Kids will come in second hour, so then maybe about 8:45 kids walk in, "do nows" on the board and ready, presented on PowerPoint [with directions] so my kids are really good at following a routine and classroom procedures." In another interview, she stated,

So again [wrapping up the block] with those routines and procedures, and questions. And that's kind of my model for the day really. And then maybe at some point in the day, helping with homework, dealing with kids' individual needs and issues. Some days there are none; some days there are a bunch. [The routine] helps me, also help out with staff members, dealing with their issues and concerns, helping behavior management protocols

within the building. And if it's a smooth day, that's pretty much it and the kids go home.

And after school, be about decompressing with staff.

A strict routine could be interpreted as a mechanized approach to the classroom, but the way Sonny taught the importance of the routine was by having ongoing discussions with her students about the significance of community and how to treat others inside and outside the community. She stressed the significance of individual learning within a community that is also learning. She used the routine to teach the students awareness of others and their unique needs and to make space for mistakes and corrective action. She acknowledged that the world is mechanized and “hates being so strict,” but she felt her students would be most successful if they had the ability to function in both ways.

Another way she challenged neoliberalism was by using learning objectives that explicitly considered how the neoliberalism is impacting the community and emphasized the community over individual gain:

Again, easy example is a community garden. You're in the garden, you're doing the work. But you're not doing the work just for a grade per se, you're doing it for the greater good. You're doing it for the betterment of yourself, the betterment of your community, could be the school community, community at large, family. So learning [in such a way] it just doesn't affect yourself but affects other people.

Sonny used place-based projects—such as a learning gardens to explicitly teach the value of community—as an ecological perspective that decenters humans from the value-hierarchy. When she worked with her students in the garden, she taught them how to respond with care to needs for sustenance, security, and meaning within the community (Martusewicz et al., 2015;

Martusewicz & Johnson, 2016; Williams & Brown, 2012). Sonny worked hard to make explicit what is implicit (Bowers & Flinders, 1990).

Sonny's routine could be assumed to reaffirm and reproduce aspects neoliberalism, but it retains value for bridging the EcoJustice principles within a neoliberal context. She described her actions in ways that were accompanied by different discourses, language, and intentions than neoliberal teachers, such as an emphasis on community betterment rather than solely individual betterment. She was limited to a neoliberal curriculum and education culture, so she used ideas and language from the systems she was resisting (neoliberalism) to teach her students how the structure of society can be connected to everyday oppression. Her explicit focus on calling attention to the reasons for why things are done in the classroom is what Bowers and Flinders (1990) referred to as making explicit the implicit. She created a space that normalized respect for others and peaceful community relationships that used a nonjudgmental awareness of differences. She chose to provide her students with the skills they needed to be successful in a neoliberal culture while providing an ethical and alternative way to interact.

Sonny also made explicit the silences that oppress while attending to the students' realities. Many of her students were trying to learn the neoliberal approach to education to return to the city high school. A group of them had parole requirements that would have made a complete rejection of dominant culture unrealistic. Sonny's population was unique and extreme, but that is what makes it such a good case (Stake, 1978; Yin, 2009). Each classroom is a unique and extreme case. Part of being an EcoJustice educator is to continuously consider what needs to be changed and what needs to remain the same. Sonny opted to address changing the everyday interactions within the existing system. Her efforts also provide an example of what a new EcoJustice teacher could do to begin changing his or her approach to education. Sometimes too

much change at one time is harmful. Sonny met students where they were and provided them with a viable and alternative relationality that could be adopted in a mechanized culture. Further, she considered what was needed to be successful within the community and incorporated that with her pedagogical approaches.

Both Sonny and Duff challenged the discourse of neoliberalism by prioritizing the community needs over individual needs and honoring differences. The neoliberal sociocultural context brings attention to the ways in which the larger social discourses contribute to the ideologies of our day-to-day decisions and further situate actions as the result of multiple intersecting discourses that constitute ideological power. The teaches in this study used place-based education and an ecocentric relationality to challenge the neoliberal educational discourses of success by reframing everything—even dominant discourses—through a lens of interdependence and elevating the importance of community well-being. They responded to the discourse of success with a discourse of love. Within this section, teachers normalized a relationality of interdependence with the Other-than-human world, and responses to injustice were based on care. In doing so, the teachers constructed a space where students learned an alternative way to understand relationships and the power and potential in affective and mutual support.

Explanation of Analysis

I designed this study to learn what, if any, discourses were being presented as resistance. For the mission statement, I used the industrial communication pattern (see Appendix B) to trace language to shared cultural knowledge (common sense) responsible for systemic oppression. The social behavioral and cognitive features of this communication style generate an understanding of the systemic forces shaping social crises and allow for an examination of personal culpability

within the system (Martusewicz et al., 2015). I was interested in the historical, cultural, and political roots of the discourses that shaped classroom interactions. For the teachers, I identified patterns in actions and language used to challenge and resist dominate ideologies to explore which discourses were presented as an alternative. First, I identified commonalities around them as individual teachers and then I analyzed the data with the second and third dimension in Fairclough's three dimensional approach (Fairclough, 1995; Rogers, 2011a; van Dijk, 1981). The three-dimensional approach is a conceptual tool used in discourse studies to explore the relationships between personal, cultural, and systemic discourses. The second dimension allows for a condition of social interpretation. I used the socio-cognitive approach to focus my analysis on how the participants processed language, which allowed me to pay attention to their process of belief, opinion, and attitude formation within communicative contexts (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; van Dijk, 1981). I saw two similarities across all participants: (a) they were raised with a spiritual or religious background and (b) they lived their life—and thus conducted their classroom—with a playful disposition. I sought literature around the communication and social skills that resulted from religious training (De Botton, 2013). The spiritual aspect of the teachers' identity combined with their non-mechanized approach to leading a classroom tells a story with different discourses. The value in this commonality was they were comfortable with knowledge that cannot be understood in a mechanized context.

Literature on fun or play within an educational context, on a whole, was limited. The United States has a small presence within this body research (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Bryant, Coombs, & Pazio, 2014; Cutter-Mackenzie & Edwards, 2013; Lucardie, 2014; Lugones, 1987; Pyle & Danniels, 2017). The literature approached play, fun, and humor as a pedagogical or learning tool which is different from how I use it here. Within this dissertation, a playful

disposition can be understood as a feature of the teacher that is always present. Teachers engaging with a playful disposition generate a relationality that impacts the political attitudes of the students (Becker, 2014). Unlike the participants in Becker (2014), the teachers who participated in this research used indirect humor and did not use Others as the subjects or victims of the humor. They used what was happening in that moment—that all students could understand—to challenge the passivity that is inherent in some of the rote experiences unavoidable in the classroom (see Alton). This skillset positioned the teachers to be ready for improvisation within their communities and it challenged the dichotomy of play and nonwork (Malaby, 2009). In the classroom, this skillset can be used to resist neoliberal educational discourses by engaging the student in a communication style that makes space for differences and flattens the social hierarchy. Teachers who use a playful disposition inherently reject discourses of normalcy by challenging the overall mechanized worldview and finding wisdom and delight when interacting with ambiguity (Lugones, 1987; Malaby, 2009).

I took the personal aspects of the participants' ways of meaning making and included it in the analysis (Rogers, 2011a; van Dijk, 1981). This highlighted that knowledge made with social consciousness, ecological imperative, advanced communication skills, and a teaching philosophy that challenges passive learning generate understandings differently than an industrial mechanized way of understanding knowledge and communicating. I used Fairclough's third dimensional frame to explain the alterative discourse guiding their classrooms. I looked for patterns across the participants around how the teachers connected to the students' well-being independent of the outcomes. I used these similarities to begin articulating a discourse of love, success, and discourse that is based on an ecological understanding of relationships and a commitment to community well-being.

Analysis of Evidence

I designed this study assuming that these teachers would display affection in the classroom. The work done using place-based education can be distilled down to engaging students with an affection for place. Wendell Berry's book and essay titled *It All Turns on Affection* inspired me to learn about Berry; I read as much of his corpus as possible. I appreciated how he used extreme settings and contexts to articulate a lifestyle of moderation and mutuality. In the EcoJustice community, he is used as a model for how to care and cultivate intangible skills like kindness, acceptance, understanding, and goals of mutuality (Martusewicz, 2018a). His love for place is used to frame EcoJustice education and the pedagogy of responsibility (Martusewicz, 2018a; Martusewicz & Edmundson, 2005; Martusewicz et al., 2015). His lifestyle and fiction create realistic examples of relationships of mutuality in a rural setting.

The rural setting is important to an urban educator because it makes explicit many of the industrial conveniences that are implicit. People steeped in the mechanized culture of an industrial city life with limited traveling experience need a juxtaposition to everyday life to draw attention to all the little things taken for granted. Berry bridges our minds and hearts with iconic metaphors and good storytelling and positions readers to understand mutuality alongside the dominant culture where hyper-mechanized discourses dominate all aspects of life.

Pedagogically, Berry gives teachers a discourse that can be used to problem solve and help determine which topics and ideas to make explicit. They can simply challenge themselves to consider "how would Wendell Berry respond?" This is not to elevate him to guru status or to mythologize his ideas. Rather, educators can use Wendell Berry's work to critique modern education and to inspire imaginative solutions to modern problems. However, anyone looking to Berry should be careful not to fall into the trap of romanticizing his ideas or assuming them to be

all encompassing moral directives that can be directly translated from theory to practice (Hill Murphy, 2017; Lindberg, 2018). While Berry does not paint agrarian life to be without family problems as Dreher (2016) has stated, Berry does primarily focus on alternatives for how to respond to Others who are experiencing different relational struggles (Berry, 2013). Berry's fiction is unique because of how it details the events of everyday living alongside the cultural and political backdrop of industrialization, inequalities, and misuse of the land. He uses that background to focus on systemic dysfunction and how that creates a ripple effect in families and communities. Rather than a map to make change, his lifestyle and fiction offer ways of thinking, being, and knowing that are alternative to what is known to modern culture. His individualized response to his place is not intended to be overlaid on other places. Rather what can be learned from him is an affectionate relationship to place, regardless of what it looks like at face value. The value is in the "what-if" questions that will be generated because of his perspective and stories.

Alternative discourses. The discourse of love that develops with an EcoJustice approach to education is an affective love that starts by honoring differences. This is best seen with Duff and Sonny. They recognized the need to resist within their classroom and acted according. Their community needs required creative manipulation of instructional approaches and skilled communication exchanges. Duff's students communicated extralinguistically. Extralinguistic and metacommunication is communication about what is being communicated and is used to establish a fuller sense of the context and the interpersonal relationships (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bateson & Bateson, 1987; Bowers & Flinders, 1990). To draw from my personal experience, when I had a classroom of students with limited verbal expression, I would show students materials, objects, or pictures and then watch closely for how the students responded. They may

have flapped their hands or gestured with a different rhythm or part of their body, they could use their eye gaze to make selections, or they could make preverbal sounds mixed with hand gestures and eye contact to try and communicate a story or situation. I, like Duff, monitored changes in the students overall expressive communication to negotiate a communication exchange. I was not surprised to learn Duff organized the installation of a garden with principles of universal design. Special education teachers are trained to be learning experts in all content areas in Michigan. Their combination of skills make them curricular artists who inherently think in cross-curricular frames and consider developmental ranges of skills. They often learn and teach in multiple modalities and styles and must have exceptional communication skills to work well with the wide ranges of abilities within the (dis)abilities (Drago-Severson, 2009; Smith, 2013). Duff was no different.

Duff falls in line with every other EcoJustice educator I have met who felt a burning passion to protect their students and resist neoliberal education, to learn to (un)learn at a different pace, and to negotiate their teaching identity as time passes. Duff was the most inexperienced teacher I interviewed—meaning he had the least amount of time to learn EcoJustice and place-based education, unlearn anthropocentrism, and apply EcoJustice and place-based principles alongside neoliberal curriculum. The students' humanity was top priority and used to structure his interactions and lessons. His limitations were with negotiating his classroom needs and the state and district politics of humiliation (Giroux, 2015). Duff's passionate commitment toward an ethical classroom was a clear indicator of his love for them.

Duff was one of few teachers who communicated with his students through actions. He resisted the neoliberal curriculum with learning in a garden. He also displayed resistance via the modification of himself and the classroom based on careful observations of the micro changes in

students throughout the day. Duff used his intuition to guide himself on when to push with curriculum and when to move forward with (un)learning anthropocentrism. He communicated with the students in ways they could understand. The value in Duff's case is to help prepare new teachers for the feelings and intense emotionality involved with navigating the double-bind of a teaching philosophy that was designed to challenge neoliberalism and the everyday politics of humiliation (Achinstein & Ogawa, 2011; Giroux, 2015; Krynski, 2018; Lowenstein et al., 2010).

A second value of his case is to highlight the courage that teachers need to negotiate the politics of humiliation. Giroux (2015) simplifies this political understanding: "Put bluntly, knowledge that can't be measured or defined as a work-related skill is viewed as irrelevant, and teachers who refuse to implement a standardized curriculum that evaluates young people through 'objective' measures of assessment are judged as incompetent" (p. 3). A teachers' competence is represented on his or her evaluation—with merit pay and other priorities within the district. The teachers who do not participate in the neoliberal incentives have to resist against the culture of the school, parents, and the larger educational discourse. The political disinvestment charges the social atmosphere with a willful ignorance to the teachers' struggle and takes a blame-the-victim approach towards educators expressing discontent (Krynski, 2018; Vitek & Jackson, 2008). Teachers who walk into the classroom each day and resist the current of oppression within dominant education need courage to stand alone, fight every day, and not let the ongoing resistance harden their hearts.

The participant Sonny adds to the discourse of love by creatively subverting the structure of a closely monitored mechanized school. Sonny's students needed and wanted to learn the culture of mechanized neoliberal education. The anthropocentric relationality that accompanies that model is a direct conflict with her principals and beliefs. She needed to negotiate the needs

of the community and her teaching philosophy. She displayed resistance by not silencing her morality, rather she creatively negotiated multiple conflicting social, political, and cultural variables. Sonny was a member of her students' community outside of the school day; she visited their homes, was called in crises, and lived nearby. Place-based education approaches prioritize teaching students how to meet the needs of the community (Gruenewald & Smith, 2010). She was positioned to teach them both a neoliberal and EcoJustice education. Students were taught to recognize and respond to injustice with care while still within the framework of the community goals (discourse of resistance).

Sonny was a science teacher, but she had more responsibility than other teachers in that building. The additional responsibility was in part from her administrators and part from her obligation to her community. She used her position to address the students' non-science needs. When I listened to her describe her interactions with the students, it was easy to see her affection for them, and it inspired me to solicit her as a participant. As my understanding of Sonny's relationships with her students deepened, it was clear, Sonny was providing more than care. It was more than washing their clothes and bringing snacks. It was more than drying eyes and mediating conflicts. She remembered the sick relatives that weighed on their minds and offered supportive words. She knew whose parents were violent and what the signs of a traumatic night were. She was aware of the gendered violence that comes with being an effeminate or nonconforming male, or a single black mother and told guest staff how to best meet their needs. She also told them the hard things—like if they had body odor or if their opinions and language were inappropriate or crass. She had a way of talking to the high school females about their dress and body that prompted them to take pride in their bodies and take care of it.

Sonny changed the schools' plans based on the needs of the students—acting in direct resistance to mechanized schooling. If there was too much trauma the night before, she would adjust her approach and the direction for the day. She taught them to see the value in their assets and how to stand up in the face of adversity—which is explicitly teaching resistance. She started with differences and used affection to generate a relationship of trust where learning could flourish. Along with its example of affection, Sonny's case adds value because of the hybrid approach she used. She taught the students how to love themselves—similarly to Rachael. It shows that even in with extreme and unique classrooms, teachers can employ an EcoJustice approach to education and challenge mechanized life and a neoliberal education.

Challenged discourse. The participants reframed competition to be within cooperative framework. Kimberly framed success with mutuality and was aware of what her students needed to be successful. Like Duff, she contributes to the discourse of love by subverting outcome-oriented goals to prioritize the students' needs—resisting neoliberal educational aims. She teamed with another like-minded teacher during the tire sweep so they could make a bigger impact in the community. She taught the students the value in their community and skills and how to use them to make meaningful change. Her expressed morality resists the neoliberal shunning of ethics. She trusted her skills and resources within the school to meet the evaluation requirements, and she relied on daily communication with family and community to keep her spirits high so she could show up for another day for the students. In some ways, all teachers decide what defines success, such as when they create and grade assignments. For the teachers within this study, self-love strengthened their notions of success and resistance by creating a pocket of resources they could draw from to speak and act out against injustice. I understood Kimberly's actions of self-love as a bridge to connect resistance and success. When she engaged

in self-love, she had more internal resources that could be used to engage students with mutuality in the classroom and at the same time with alternative notions of success. She demonstrated the ecocritical relationality with discourses of success, resistance, and self-life to create stable and inclusive classroom communities.

Students need to understand relationships of competition to live in a globalized society. However, the hypercompetitive focus of education conflicts with the alternative discourses presented in the EcoJustice approach to education. I illustrated with Kimberly's case how the participants tempered competitive relations with direct instruction and conversation around community needs and well-being. Alton provided an example of how competition can be relearned in the context of community rather than individual gain. He and Kimberly used competition as a cooperative effort to reach a common goal. I selected these two cases to illustrate a cooperative competition because they subverted the discourse rather than silenced it and made the subversion explicit, displaying an act of resistance. In this case, they made explicit the well-being of the community, minimized personal gain, and generated discourses of awareness.

Alton's affection for his students was obvious. He rewarded them with a developmentally appropriate physical connection: a hug or a handshake. His willingness to comfortably display affection, to all students, is foundational to ecocentric relationality. He had the courage to display affection and be comfortable making explicit the implicit—which he called, "being the EcoJustice person in the room." Alton's case provides an example of physical affection and competition framed with mutuality, resisting discourses within neoliberal education. Sonny also used a physical connection to show affection, but hers was more indirect and less obvious. For example, she discussed cultivating positive relationships with students, even it meant a hug or

other physical contact. She said, “They need to know you care, and sometimes words don’t cut it.”

I did not expect to discuss self-love in this study. However, all the participants discussed details of their life that keep them balanced. Rachael’s interviews invited me to see affection differently. Instead of an exchange with a person group or place, she saw affection as part of a relationality that valued the well-being of the community and generated a responsibility towards contributing, resisting the individualistic tendencies of neoliberalism. Rachael’s students and classroom seemed to be an extension of her family. She did whatever was needed, when it was needed, to meet their needs. I selected this case to illustrate the measures that are taken to sustain the double-bind of teaching pedagogies that challenge dominant culture. Like Kimberly, Rachael gave fully every day to the students, which was tiring. They relied on their communities and an overall healthy lifestyle to support their ongoing everyday resistance.

The value in Rachael case is that it shows self-love as the beginning of an ecocentric relationality. Teachers cannot show up for their classrooms every day to navigate neoliberal politics if they are not properly cared for. The mechanized neoliberal culture does not see the value in actions or skills that are not able to be commodified. Neoliberal politics create a culture that does not see a problem when teachers need to work multiple jobs to live. Teachers are no different than other working professionals and need money to survive. They never stop paying for their choice to become a teacher with material costs, time, social capital, and so on. Their efforts to navigate those politics and meet their daily living needs costs them the time that could, at minimum, be otherwise used to prepare themselves for their students the next day. Rachael’s case is a clear example of the resources needed to recoup from engaging fully with students daily. It also generates a question: When there are only 24 hours in a day, how can a teacher

teach all day, work a part time job, recoup her or his energy, tend to family and personal needs, and seek entertainment? Her case adds to the conceptualization of an ecocentric relationality and discourse of love that understands affection from a place of responsibility and is required for ongoing acts of resistance.

The last case, Giada, makes explicit the importance of the Other-than-human world and the human responsibility to protect it. Her example is useful for both challenging and creating alternative discourses. She rejected any system that thwarts the PEACE plan or hurts the Other-than-human world. She organized her classroom with a proactive discourse that recognized and responded with care to injustice and they enjoyed it. She provided direct instruction on an ecocritical relationality through her classroom organizational PEACE plan. She enjoyed EcoJustice activism and showed students the joy that comes from hard work. The last stage of the PEACE plan is to enjoy the fun, highlighting the importance of fun for Giada.

She explicitly rejected the anthropocentric relationality that places humans as the center of the universe. Giada used “stepping on ants” as an opportunity to teach students the value in the Other-than-human world. This example makes explicit an awareness of self in relation to another. With the bugs, Giada taught students to recognize harm and respond with care. She taught her students to be aware of themselves and change their behavior if it causes harm. She provided students with the communication, intrapersonal, and interpersonal skills needed to sustain relationships of mutuality. Students learned that protecting what they love requires taking initiative towards protection rather than waiting for permission or a for a problem to occur. They also learned of the power they held to make changes in everyday life. Like Rachael, Giada used affection as part of a relationality that initiates relationships of mutuality.

The value in Giada as a case is that she taught students affective and responsible nonviolent acts of resistance towards the Other-than-human world. She taught them to be receptive and to pay attention to communication other than English. She taught them to be aware of how they impact the world around them and to take initiative to change themselves if they were causing harm. Giada made explicit the human responsibility to protect the Other-than-human world and act peacefully within and between communities. Her case makes explicit a relationship of affection is needed to protect the Other-than-human and resist the mechanized and neoliberal discourses in education.

Conclusion

The teachers who participated in this study led their lives and classrooms with politically charged care agendas. Their communication styles and emotional maturity allowed classrooms to generate spaces of vulnerability where students could be comfortable being uncomfortable. Students learned to process their emotions and create solidarity with a fuller understanding of the forces of the human creative capacity. They began with differences and united with humor and affection to develop relationships based on a nonjudgmental awareness and model nonviolent acts of resistance to larger social forces. These perspectives challenge the educational discourse of success and present an alternative and ethical way of understanding relationships. It is different than the dominant neoliberal educational approach in its critical holistic approach (mind, body, and spirit) to education. They taught students forms of knowledge that will not crumble under the weight of neoliberal power struggles and manufactured culture wars. I argue it is a more appropriate form of education because it begins with and assumes differences—unlike a neoliberal education that looks at each piece of learning as a discrete part instead of one aspect

of the student. A mechanized education is not able to be individualized, but rather, the student must change to meet the discursive goal of normalcy.

These teachers and students were in the process of unlearning anthropocentric relationalities. The EcoJustice approach to education offers set of relationships and ideologies aimed at decentering and flattening the human hierarchy and reorienting perceptions towards an ecological understanding. The EcoJustice approach to education is based on recognizing the harmful language and discourse used in everyday interactions and acting with care and ethics rather than the indifference that results from a hyper-mechanized culture. These teachers meet the definition by engaging in a relationality that is based on relationships with an ecological understanding of humans and the Other-than-human world (see Giada). They have an awareness of themselves in relationship to those around them and are willing to take initiative to make a change if harm is caused (see Giada and Sonny). They use a playful disposition to unite (see Alton and Giada), and they subvert the outcome-oriented goals to increase students' overall capacity to function within the community (see Sonny and Duff). They are comfortable making explicit the implicit through being the "EcoJustice person in the room" (see Alton, Giada, Duff, and Kimberly) and by using physical affection (see Alton and Sonny) and self-love as resistance (see Rachael and Alton). Lastly, they redefine competition within a frame of mutuality (see Alton and Kimberly).

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The following chapter details how the EcoJustice approach to education combined with place-based education generate an alternative discourse and how it provides a practical and ethical alternative to anthropocentric relationality. This chapter details the analysis, the alternative discourse, and how the faults of the current structure to education are hidden within cultural knowledge. It highlights examples of students and teachers who are working within the system—with a discourse of love and resistance—to challenge neoliberal cultural knowledge. They expose the ongoing injustices that have been normalized by culture by taking ethical ideas out of the abstract and applying them within a place and context. Specifically, the students experience how relationships are understood outside of a neoliberal perspective. The chapter concludes with the limitations of the study, contributions to the field, recommendations for policy, and future directions.

Detailing a Non-Mechanized Educational Discourse

I understand language used in everyday interactions to be a symptom of a much larger problem of communication that occurs within a culture of normalized violence and oppression. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a tool for understanding how reality is constructed within an institutional organization and to explore what conditions or problems are at the root of injustices. CDA, broadly, combines a systematic analysis of language and other sign modes with social theory and ethnographic grounding, allowing for studies in education that inquire into how people learn in groups, develop identities, and engage with each other (Rogers, 2011a). I used this approach to critique power relations in mechanized neoliberal education and again to identify and articulate the alternative discourses presented by teachers to answer the research question: What kinds of discourses are produced by a pedagogy that challenges competition as a

common sense assumption, mechanized ways of understanding relationships, and understands humans as interrelated with the Other-than-human world?

The alternative discourses begin to answer the research question by offering some of the dispositions and features of this group of teachers used to challenge the discourse of success in education. These teachers did not omit what the districts and administration asked of them. Rather, they responded from a non-mechanized position of responsibility with affective relations to protect and repair. This approach to education challenges the mechanized neoliberal discourses through making them explicit. Teachers exposed the individual aspects of the industrial communication pattern and taught students how to analyze contexts for systemic inequalities and empowered them with alternative discourses to take action.

I set the stage for this analysis with a historical analysis of social structures that shaped how we understand knowledge, communication, and an anthropocentric relationality (see Appendices A and B). I narrowed my focus to the mission statement for education in the United States, where I used CDA to explore the discursive knowledge resulting from a mechanized neoliberal education. My participants used an alternative, ethical approach to education that teaches students how to critique systemic injustice, identify and challenge dominant forms of education, and respond with care (Martusewicz et al., 2015). I limited my scope to the social and cognitive aspects of an alternative relationality that used an ecocentric framework within a system of normalized oppression to understand how meaning was generated from a place of affection. My research interests are rooted in my classroom experiences, credentialing, and my interests in how group behavior changes based on the environment and how those changes are communicated to the members.

Answering the Research Question

This study was an inquiry into the epistemological and ontological alternatives resulting from the EcoJustice approach to education (Martusewicz et al., 2015) to answer my research question—which was derived from my broader interest of how teachers construct a space where students are exposed to discursive practices and relationships that convey an ethical attitude towards all life communities and the desire to respond with care to injustices. This required me to both define a harmful discourse and search for an alternative discourse within a pedagogy that was aligned with a non-mechanized and ecocritical perspective. Teachers used ethics, critical analytic tools, and place-based projects with students to development of an ethical awareness of the self in relationship to others within a frame of mutuality. They taught students the practical value of prioritizing the collective while decentering the individual and used discourses of love and resistance to generate and sustain momentum.

The EcoJustice approach to education is one example of an ecocritical pedagogy of solidarity that is used to challenge the neoliberal educational push towards hyper-competition (Martusewicz et al., 2015). It is a reasonable and viable form of education working towards relationships of mutuality that offer solutions to the growing social crises (Kropotkin, 1902). The teachers in this study engaged students with place-specific knowledge and prioritized ethical and sustainable relationships. Together, they generated inquiry into social injustices specific to their location, decided on an appropriate plan of action that considers community well-being first, and moved past a curriculum designed solely on inquiry to include instruction on how to create ethical relationships with those who are different. These teachers nurtured students' emotional intelligence with affection, care, and a connection to place and frame emotional experiences as tools to correct the mistakes of the past and imagine a better future.

I used a multi-layered analysis to show the relationship between ideologies and cognition and aimed to explore the relationship between ideology and action. I was interested in what ways the educational institution defines how we understand relationships. As a theory and methodology, discourse analysis allowed me to explore the relationships between language, power, ideology, and the everyday social practices and relationships that emanate from and are rationalized by thinking and assumptions that normalize injustice. In education, this analysis is useful for ethical critiques because it provides “feasible, achievable solutions to problems” (Fairclough, 1981/2001; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2018, p. 15). As such, CDA allowed me to define discourses through power relations between social power and ideology and then use a linguistic analysis that included the intersection of multiple dominant discourses to understate how meaning is made and ideology is generated.

This analysis combined critical social theory and the politics of language to challenge political power dynamics and detail a way of interacting that allows for the regeneration of communities and supports repairing the broken community relationship. I asserted that the use of the EcoJustice approach to education, with place-based education, can teach a social, political, and affective understandings to the human responsibility to protect the Other-than-human world. They generate discourses that invalidate an anthropocentric relationality as the only logical way to move within society. These approaches offer teachers the tools they need to resist the mechanized neoliberal education politics.

I selected the mechanized neoliberal discourse of success in education to be the problematic discourse of focus (see Chapter 1). A few of the assumptions within this discourse are a hyper-competitive relationality, differences are deficits, and intervention that is myopic and frames failure as personal while hiding the inadequacy of an educational system run as a

business. The discourses associated with these values provide the justification for validating the anthropocentric relationality that uses reason—with competitive individualism—as the primary mode of interacting. Knowledge is reduced to its simplest terms, and the decontextualization helps strip knowledge of the social, historical, political, and cultural influences—which are responsible for the root metaphors that guide behaviors, actions, and relationships. Further, this interpretation of knowledge is responsible for generating unrealistic expectations of the self and for others. The discourse of success is reproduced and becomes pervasive when personal, cultural, and political discourses combine and intersect with language to allow systemic oppression to seem like part of the “way things are” or shared cultural knowledge (common sense) rather than structurally dependent inequality maintained by relationships of competition.

To challenge this harmful discourse, the teachers created a classroom atmosphere and used pedagogies that directly and indirectly assigned value to affective relationships and involved students in prioritizing local knowledge and resources to solve local problems. They presented an alternative discourse that included a way of relating that blends the practical reasoning of place-based education and the epistemological reasoning of love, care, affection, and other affective relations to define a discourse of community that centers around interrelation and mutuality, within an ecological understanding of relationships (Gruenewald & Smith, 2010; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016). Teachers helped students imagine different non-destructive and nonanthropocentric ways of relating (thinking, acting, and being) with the self and others, within a local and global context, and presented a discourse where students were taught to recognize and respond to injustice with affection, non-violence, and commitment to place and community. Teachers were actualizing the human need to give and receive care by discussing the importance of relationships with students, which creates a discourse. This approach uses

language to create possibilities that do not yet exist because they have not yet been imagined.

The discourses used by the teachers in this study normalized affective relations and engaged students with projects and learning that taught a form of knowledge that could withstand abuses of power.

The participants' alternative way of understanding human relationships and responsibility to the Other-than-human world helped challenge mechanized neoliberalism by working from a discourse that prioritized interdependence and mutualism. This helped answer the research question by critically contextualizing both dominant and alternative educational discourses used for understanding the purposes of education. Teaching students a relationality that includes care, affection, and attention to place strengthens the affective and tangible connections to an ethical attitude within relationships with differences. These teachers taught their student how to understand a non-violent relationship with the self and others and the importance of a social and emotional knowledge.

My analytic approach used an inductive and deductive analysis and multiple critical perspectives to consider individual autonomy within larger social and cultural discourses. This helped answer the research question by allowing for inquiry to otherwise shadowed identity features that facilitate the teachers' internalization of complex non-anthropocentric material and application in a K-12 setting. The holistic analysis considers both private with the social cognitive approach and the public variables with the third dimension of Fairclough's three-dimensional approach. I combined the two approaches to give attention to the larger social structures shaping the day-to-day discourses that are responsible for ongoing social inequality (Fairclough & Fairclough, 2018; van Dijk, 1981). The combination of analytic approaches allowed me to articulate the discourses framing the teachers' relationships with students,

learning, and place while also contextualizing individual actions in a broader social political context. As an explanatory and interpretative analysis, it stands apart from other educational research by identifying the alternative ideologies associated with interdependence and community well-being that contribute to the way the teachers experience and understand curriculum and instruction.

A discourse of love challenges the root metaphors of anthropocentrism and individualism, which manifest in schools as competition and discourses of success. The discourse of success narrowly defines student achievement and is based on neoliberal notions of economic global competition. The discourse of resistance challenges the common sensical knowledge about how to organize society and culturally defined notions of what is considered successful. The teachers in this study used the EcoJustice approach to education and place to guide students in how to engage affective knowledge towards social change. This approach to education is important for blending transformative action with practical and epistemological reasoning to prioritize something other than oppressive discourses (Fairclough, 2018; Fairclough & Fairclough, 2018; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Specifically, teachers challenged reason as the only useful knowledge by using place to move affective learning into something tangible, allowing students to experience the benefits that come with relationships of mutuality. The combination of skills obtained from using the EcoJustice approach and place-based education provides students with language and knowledge to go beyond reason and inquiry to engage more ethically and more fully as human, which helped answer the research question by moving ideas of care, love, and affection out of the abstract and into the concrete.

Implications

The alternative discourses I have presented are radically different from dominant models, but do not differ greatly from indigenous models (Goulah, 2010; Mander & Tauli-Corpuz, 2006; Mies & Shiva, 2014; Prakash & Esteva, 2008; Shiva, 2005). A discourse of love results from a relationality that starts with a connection to place and inquiry into the history of social and political injustices. This discourse tempers the outrage of injustice with healthy responses that include aspects such as humanitarian competition (see Alton), interacting peacefully with Others (see Giada), and caring for the self as the first step to a contributive community member (see Rachael). This discourse prioritizes identity features of humility (see Duff), limitations and restraint (see Sonny), and doing more than saying (see Kimberly). They discursively normalize ethical attitudes towards ecological relationships.

This research offers theory for critically analyzing language and generating action towards healing. It identifies ongoing educational resistance as daunting and provides insight into the social and emotional complexity involved with teaching and learning. It is hope for the mothers who plead with me for help: “Monica, her/his teachers care, but caring is not enough to help her/him.” This research is a resource for schools and classrooms to begin to imagine what a discourse of love would look like in their community. It acknowledges all the students who have been known as “shriveled grapes” and other innocuous metaphors used for students who are different—but are laced with meanings of deficiency—that were failed by the system. Lastly, it traces the roots of the problem to the production of knowledge and communication rather than student deficit. Teachers use non-mechanized pedagogical approaches and metaphors to guide students in cultural and political explorations exposing historical and ongoing power struggles. They move affective relational concepts from the abstract into concrete learning experiences that

can be used as a bridge between radically different views and what is already known—exposing the ongoing injustices that have become normalized parts of culture.

These teachers were not only unique in their values and principles, but they also challenged the passive learning that results from current educational models in the United States (Bryant et al., 2014; Cutter-Mackenzie & Edwards, 2013; Lugones, 1987; Tews, Jackson, Ramsay, & Michel, 2015). Teachers prioritized a learning process combined with an affective form of knowledge to engage the students and create an alternative discourse that constructed a space where students could develop an ethical attitude and disposition towards responding with care to injustice. Students and teachers nurtured their relationship with place through learning about its uniqueness and what it could provide for them that no other place could. Teachers used their knowledge, experience, ecocritical and place-based principles, and local assets to teach students a relationality that prioritized community by de-centering and flattening the species hierarchy. They focused energy on educating students to connect to and support the local community rather than solely prioritizing a globalized, growth, and profit model. They reached their goals by teaching students how to trace historical and political events to identify marginalization and injustice, identify the language used on a day-to-day basis that contributes to the harmful discourse, and become comfortable responding with care to build and repair relationships and communities.

This study highlights an alternative set of priorities used by teacher-activists and brings attention to the various ways educational trends are failing teachers and students. This research articulates an alternative discourse that includes ethical ways to think about relationships rooted in a commitment to a place nested within a globalized context. Teachers using these approaches to education consider what it means to be educated and assert that the function of education is

more than preparation for competing in the market economy. The teachers in this study became aware of the harmful cultural habits that depend on a “logic of domination” (Warren, 1990, p. 128) and “illusion of disembeddedness” (Plumwood, 2002, p. 97) to rationalize reductive thinking habits and are (un)learning the anthropocentric relationality (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016). They taught their students the same—which prioritizes a form of knowledge that cannot be taken by power or money but can sit alongside reason. Lastly, they provided students an opportunity to engage with their place, see its beauty, repair damage of the past, and to imagine solutions for a better future. All of which bring attention to the tension between reason and emotion and its need to be addressed.

Contribution to the Field

This research contributes to educational studies scholarship in a variety of ways. The participants expressed views and perspectives contrary to dominant discourses and used their passion for in/justice to present an alternative discourse to students. The teachers in this study are six of many whom demand something better from education and their pedagogical approaches represent a shift in educational priorities at the ground level and thus a mismatch between political and educational discourse and student and teacher needs and wants.

This study serves as a model of CDA in education, and it explores ecofeminist ethics through educational research, as ethics for education, and for teachers who want to challenge dominant discourses. It provides insight into how teachers view themselves in relation to others when an assumption of community well-being is prioritized. Lastly, this analysis moves beyond the inquiry model dominating education research to a research that critiques the social practices, institutions, and structures (discourses) generating the framework responsible for reproducing injustice and offers an ideological and practical response.

In addition to the contributions to the larger discourse of education, this research also adds empirical research to ecocritical curriculum studies field with a pedagogy of solidarity that is used to problematize overreliance on reason as the primary form of knowledge. It is also an example of how PBE synergizes with critical theory to resist neoliberal injustice. This research further contributes to the feminist love studies field by widening its theoretical positioning to include the application of a discourse of love with intersectional ecofeminist pedagogy, ethics, and principles. This CDA further opens the care ethics used in education to an understanding of care outside of maternal metaphor and dependency model. It adds to ecofeminist care ethics a way to frame self-care in a way that challenges an individualized understanding of care and validates the emotional labor involved with discourses of love and engaging fully with a classroom full of students. And for students, it generates personalized learning opportunities blurring the lines between special and general education.

Limitations

The focus of this dissertation research was confined to the EcoJustice approach to education (Martusewicz et al., 2015) in order to specifically address (un)learning anthropocentrism through a lens of everyday action that begins with the self. This approach to education understands knowledge to exist outside the Cartesian context (Bateson, 1972/2000; Bowers, 2010). Its efforts to understand life from a non-mechanized perspective that lack of conventional or mechanized thinkers makes it difficult to use alongside unsympathetic perspectives. This is a strength in that it is an alternative to the current neoliberal cultural structuring. However, it is also a weakness because it limits how the approach interfaces with other critical pedagogical approaches such as strong democracy, inclusive/radical democracy, restorative justice, or other ecologically focused restorative approaches which, in their fuller

versions, could also have an ecocritical component to them. The data are therefore limited, and other themes may have arisen if data had been more extensive. This analysis would perhaps be stronger if I had used a political philosophy with the pedagogical philosophy. It may have created wider models of relationality and values that would support the relations and practices associated with this approach.

The second limitation involves the analysis and the methodological approaches used in this research. This includes the limits of print media and the space needed to represent multi-layered analyses. It is also limited with the default black and white text. I selected data that were most representative of the whole sample. I was mindful of print limitations, and as part of my systematic analysis, I selected text equally from all participants that was clear and brief (Rogers et al., 2005). Chapter 4 uses snapshots of the participant's language, to represent both a larger pattern among the participants' interviews and common themes across participants. Their narratives were combined with a summative analysis to articulate a relationality that allowed students to develop the social-emotional skills needed to recognize injustice and respond with care.

Another limitation of this dissertation involves the study design. I opted to conduct interviews with teachers rather than classroom observations as my presence in the classroom would have caused disruptions to regular classroom activities and interactions. Interviews allowed me to explore how participants made meaning but lacked insight into how they actually executed their pedagogy and instruction. The addition of an observation piece to this research could provide more variables to analyze and could yield different conclusions. Observations of the classrooms would also allow for analysis of how language is used in relationships of mutuality or to normalize violence as a sign of achievement. For example, with classroom

observations would have the opportunity to pay attention to everyday language that reinforces and assumes our culture's casual—if not celebratory—relationship to guns and militarization in general. For example, “You blew it right out of the water,” “You totally slayed him, you're the bomb,” or “You kind of got caught in the crossfire.” Phrases such as these—and the violence they both normalize and obscure—create a tolerance for gun-wielding compatriots and the accompanying metaphors and discourses that shape perception and frame our relationships (Robbins, 2009).

Another limit of this analysis is its insistence on strong interpersonal and intrapersonal relationships between species within a cooperative framework and elevating emotional and social intelligences next to reason as dominant forms of knowledge. Dominant non-analytic, non-quantifiable, or unverifiable knowledge is dismissed, mocked, ridiculed, and trivialized and new ideas are not received well. These teaches had the courage to move forward with a relationality that valued mutuality. For example, the first task of a teacher using the EcoJustice approach to education is to do a close examination of the ways in which you are contributing (language and actions) to the marginalization of others (Martusewicz et al., 2015). This requires a close and critical examination of one's privilege and how it manifests in one's day-to-day interactions. This analysis is done by tracing the history of language and looking into the root metaphors that direct shared cultural knowledge and are used to create meaning. Upon learning where one's cultural understandings (or common sense) have been misguided and then feeling the pain of shame and disappointment, one has the opportunity to make changes in how to engage with one's self. This includes having compassion for mistakes and (mis)education; responding to others in ways that honor difference; making changes to correct language, thoughts, and behaviors; and eventually sharing knowledge with others. Teachers engaging with these

developmental challenges had the courage to experience and teach students how to use emotions as tools to achieve their goals.

The next limit to this analysis is the dominant discourse of education which problematizes love, care, affection, and any of the words or skills that are associated with emotion. As discussed throughout these chapters, individual gain and the ability to compete in the market economy are goals within an educational discourse of success—which could cause uncertainty with new adopters. Teachers who choose this model resist dominate schooling initiatives at the risk of consequences that could come from the state at-will employment laws and ratings on teacher evaluations that are needed for licensure. Lastly, the participants from the SEMIS pool all credited SEMIS staff and activities for their success. They explicitly noted the social supports within the coalition as vital to their success. Despite SEMIS continued growth and establishment, they are limited to the number of teachers they can help in one year, which means teachers newly implementing these approaches will need to create and seek out professional support for program fidelity and sustained resistance.

Recommendations for Policy

Education is nested within larger social cultural discourses like neoliberalism, where competition combines with individualism, logics of domination, and an overreliance on decontextualized rational knowledge. It focuses on skills that primarily serve a for-profit economy. One such skill is a hyper-competitive relationality that prioritizes the self over the community resulting in conflict between cultural groups and preventing communities from flourishing (Berry, 1977; Duggan, 2003). This analysis used language as an entry point into a social, political, and historical context. This language was used to identify and untangle the different discourses shaping identities, relationships, and responsible for dominant culture. The

teachers challenged dominant educational discourses by teaching students first how to identify normalized violence and injustice. Second, they taught students' relational skillsets and how to use the affective domain as a tool to effect change. As such, these recommendations are aimed towards policy-makers, interventionists, and advocates for systemic political change (Starks & Trinidad, 2007).

The following suggestions are situated within the ecofeminist and ecocritical politics discussed in Chapter 2 and require a shift in public and private life. The neoliberal schooling model needs to be discontinued and education needs to be redefined to include an awareness of the political nature of language. Then parents, teachers, and communities need to work together to create local schooling experience relevant to each students' life. Classroom instruction needs to broaden its scope to develop the whole student, which includes placing public value on developing of social-emotional skills and those who teach those skills. This would effectively normalize, affection, care, joy, sorrow, anger, fear, and other affective aspects of life. To achieve the necessary ideological shift argued in this analysis, teachers would need to present students with alternative relationality and identify the mechanized worldview shaping economic interactions. Teachers need to make explicit how these ideologies impact everyday life and inherently cause harm.

After the mechanized worldview is identified, the first recommendation is to bring attention to and remove the mechanized, militarized language dominating education policy. This would render most, if not of all, systems like standardized curriculums, teacher accountability, and standardized evaluations invalid, outdated, and unusable and would require education to be redefined. At the core of mechanized world view is a misunderstanding, or ignorance, to the discursive messages that prioritizes the individual parts over the whole (Merchant, 1980). As a

root metaphor, it shows up in various contexts and the repetition promotes popularity. For example, in health it allows us to see our body as organs instead of a combination of a mind, body, and a soul. In education, it rationalizes separate subjects with limitless discrete parts, student groupings by age, and promotes individualism by creating an illusion of separation between people and the natural world. It can be seen in the way dominant culture uses mechanized language to understand social experiences despite their inability to be deconstructed without losing integrity. Students need to learn alternative, sustainable, and ethical worldviews that assume interrelation between humans and all other species. A worldview of interconnection generates policy from a perspective of safety and well-being of the whole community rather than serving the interests of a few.

The second recommendation is to relocate schooling power to their communities. This is by no way a new idea. Rather, it mimics movements of the 1960s and 1970s that fought to give communities control of schools. The difference would lay in how the programs were executed. Today, the communities first task is to the question, “What does it mean to be educated?” Then systematically and critically question the ethical implications of their definition. They would need to consider how to remove the special and general educational binary and community leaders would need to inventory community assets to ensure all talents and skills are used. Next, they need to establish an interval schedule to systematically determine what needs to be changed and what can stay the same within their schooling design. Teachers should consider how to teach political engagement with place and the EcoJustice approach to education and rely on intergenerational leaders to help with emergent circumstances when they arise (Martusewicz et al., 2015). Communities would need to consider and define a school day, week, and year and what kinds of local history should be prioritized alongside the students’ interests. A final

consideration should be given to creating a program where students give back to the community after completing the education requirements. For example, perhaps each student returns in five years to give a presentation about what they have done since leaving the community. This would allow someone who does not leave the community to gain insights to how things work elsewhere.

A third recommendation is to create a public and private discourse that includes respect for teachers and allows them to champion a positive perception of the affection domain. Teachers are skilled leaders trained in human development, behavior management, conflict management, and so much more. They are also able to make major social changes by developing pedagogy and curriculum with an understanding of the affection domain. To begin this process, the education field needs to be (re)professionalized, which includes giving teachers more social and monetary resources. For example, the salary for a first-year teacher should be large enough for to make payments on student loans from attending a private institution, have reliable transportation, safe and sufficient housing, daily living needs met, and financial security. Another way to (re)professionalize the career is to remove alternative certification programs and provide teachers with appropriate time, funding, and support to do the job for which they were trained. A branch in education needs to be created for parents to get schooling and training on the politics of language and how they impact day-to-day interactions. This training would allow them to align efforts with educators and school leaders and would support the united relationships of solidarity between parents and teachers' imperative to supporting an ideological shift. These considerations are hardly exhaustive but are a start towards allowing communities to control education. Each of those recommendations suggests a radical social change, and I argue

these changes can be made by tracing the history of our thoughts, ideas, and language to uncover our own (mis)education in shared cultural understandings.

To close, this drastic shift can be successful, but it will take time. Community control of education will take time. Teachers would need to take responsibility for maintaining students' schooling until communities can develop and implement their own curricula agenda. While teachers, students, parents, and communities are adjusting, teachers could use their skillsets to meet the needs of their classroom with a suggested compensation of \$2,200/week, with parity for special education teachers, teachers on special assignment, and other ancillary staff. This calculation was derived from a \$2.50 per pupil per hour in a class of 35. As a temporary measure it would offer communities time to develop and implement learning and schooling plans and an opportunity to (un)learn the harmful cultural habits, rebuild their place, and make movement towards the discursive changes needed to (re)professionalize the education profession.

Future Directions

This study, in line with other CDAs in education, opened more questions than it answered. For example, one area for future inquiry would be into the how this approach to education effects students in special education. How does a personalized curriculum rooted in an ecocritical perspective change the schooling experience for students in special education? How does engaging with a personalized curriculum change students' relationship to learning, schooling, and community? How does the alternative discourse in education change the health and strength of communities?

It would also be worthwhile to use anarchist philosophy to define ideas like liberty and property or freedom within a nonmechanized framework. Then to consider how those definitions changed the discursive knowledge inherent to neoliberalism. Competition could be

reconceptualized and understood in wider frame of mutuality. These types of analyses would provide more insight into what is needed to sustain communities built on mutuality. They would provide more detailed options for change that can be used in everyday interactions rather than waiting for systemic change. Finally, the additional analysis opens the ecocentric relationality to identify more values and practices that support nonanthropocentric ideals and widens the framework for understanding relationships of mutuality.

Lastly, this inquiry could be repeated with different participants from the same pools to explore similarities and differences with the discourses I presented. As this form of education grows and expands, there will be a need for more programs like SEMIS to both teach educators and to allow for ongoing professional development and support for new and experienced teachers.

Conclusion

Within this dissertation research, I sought to explore the alternative discourse presented by teachers using the EcoJustice approach to education. These educators chose to conduct themselves in such a way that resists anthropocentrism, which in turn presented students an ecologically focused relationality. They ignored the politics of humiliation to act for the betterment of the student. The goal of CDA is to examine how a discourse performs its function to construct a specific reality. These teachers used affection, care, and humility and other affective assets to create a space where students developed an ethical attitude towards all life communities and the desire to respond with care to injustices.

I answered my broader research inquiry and responded to the recommendations of ecocritical scholars before me and began to define an alternative discourse of education (Lupinacci, 2013; Martusewicz & Edmundson, 2005; Turner, 2011; Wilson, 2013). I did so by

considering how larger social structures construct the reality we believe to be true. Then, I looked at six teachers, with similar training, for commonalities. I used the two analyses to define a way of interacting that prioritized an ecological understandings and thus an ecological relationality (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016).

I began this study interested in how to bring an alternative discourse into the classroom and learned it is done by engaging students with their place around areas of injustice alongside the problematic and alternatives discourses. This required me to define the discourse they are challenging and then define the alternative they presented. I used CDA to identify and articulate how a discourse of love within education functions to construct a reality that can reduce oppression and includes relationality that is ecological, ethical, and sustainable, giving students a different worldview to order reality, make decisions, distribute, and define resources.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Considering the Historical Context of Modern Thought

The interconnected nature of competition, individualism, and standardization in contemporary education often fails to be translated from theory into practice. Modern thought depends on rigid rationalization and logic to make meaning. My research question focused on approaches to education that challenge mechanized worldviews. Within this appendix, I detail how reason rose to its status in modern society and use time and the clock to demonstrate the power the mechanized metaphor holds over everyday life. Next, I use ideas of mutuality to present an alternative way of making meaning, and I end by briefly discussing the impacts of this metaphor on relationality and education.

Mechanized Framework for Making Meaning

The scientific process and theory have been distilled into colloquial conversation for hundreds of years. It is often assumed to be—and used as—common sense and it is the primary form of knowledge taught in modern education (Martusewicz, Edmundson, & Lupinacci, 2015). Scientism is primarily concerned with such matters of logical structure and openness to empirical testing (Benton & Craib, 2011). This form of knowledge is used to evaluate all aspects of life. It is situated underneath a neoliberal political framework which accepts any idea, product, or service that increases the bottom-line or decreases costs as common sense—making these constructs appear to be inevitable and the only option (Giroux, 2015; Lipman, 2011). The reduced analysis creates a frame around knowledge that limits what is considered reasonable lines of thinking.

Kuhn (1962/2012) made an interesting and compelling argument about how scientific thinking has influenced the bounds of thinking. He highlighted how science and reason rose to its status today from hundreds of years of use and development to shape the discourses. Kuhn

addressed the larger discursive ideas shaping the group beliefs, values, and techniques shared by members of the science community. One of his main arguments was that the discourse ascribed to by the group limits what is questioned and researched by the group. Kuhn's argument exposes a paradox. The paradox is that scientific knowledge is created with the same guidelines that define it. This creates a problem that is hidden by the success from solving problems that needed scientific thinking and reasoning to articulate and develop the problems. Kuhn draws our attention to the ways that knowledge is constructed across time and how scientism confines thinking to matters defined by science. This paradox is useful to situate the importance and dominance of the mechanized worldview and science within modern thought (Ivie, 2007).

Science to challenge church control. The European Enlightenment housed changes in society that undermined the tyranny of popes and kings. In response, western Europeans began to order society based on reason rather than revelation (Landes, 2016; Trombley, 2014). This period spans across 1650-1800 and is credited with establishing scientific inquiry and natural sciences (Kuhn, 1962/2012; Pollak, 2016a). This period of time was highly complex, heterogeneous and human reason was claimed as the most valuable condition of life that allowed intellectual light to replace moral darkness (Landes, 2016; Pagden, 2013; Pollak, 2016b). Science and reason offered assurances through predictability and control which assuaged everyday fear and offered a response to the larger social struggle against the church (Gimpel, 1977; Goetz, 1993; Merchant, 1980; Pagden, 2013; Pollak, 2016b).

Knowledge expressed through science and reason excluded shared culture knowledge and prioritized neutral, objective, verifiable pieces of data (Merchant, 1980; Pagden, 2013; Pollak, 2016b).⁴ Simultaneously, people experienced other intense cultural transformations that included

⁴ This set the stage for hierarchizing people base on cognitive capacity and discrimination based on ability or perceived (in)ability.

shifts in personhood, class, kinship structure, gender ideologies, the rise of print culture, and emergence of a literary marketplace (Pollak, 2016a). An emphasis on science and reason across domains rose to dominate everyday interactions. Its use is the assumed protocol when evaluating information. Through time, the popularity of this perspective generated language, metaphors, and discourses assumed to be common sense to guide behavior and interactions. Its dominance can be seen today with the cultural obsession with time. In education, this is seen in expectations of teachers to hold students' attention "bell-to-bell."

Scientism and reason are part of the mechanized thought construct that developed alongside other technologies of the time like geared mills—which drastically changed the functions of the day and how knowledge is understood (Gimpel, 1977; Landes, 2016; Merchant, 1980; Pollak, 2016b; Scattergood, 2003; E. P. Thompson, 1966). During the late 18th century and early 19th century, time was no longer based around harvests and planting but upon factory shift and rhythms of industrial life (E. P. Thompson, 1966). Thompson (1966) detailed social changes that defined structure through dynamic relationships including the shift from agricultural to industrial labor that not only created the working class but also fundamentally altered notions of time. As machines progressed in accuracy, precision, and reliability, time began to be measured in increasingly finer increments. The experiential and symbolic power of machines provided certainty and guided the social values and assumptions of reality, which influenced society's broader understanding of knowledge (Merchant, 1980, 2006). Knowledge in a mechanized context is considered objective, value-free, context-free, and is important for social control. The mechanized epistemological and ontological assumptions act as structural models guiding modern day-to-day living (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Kuhn, 1962/2012; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980; Shuffelton, 2017).

Philosophically, this determines what could be considered knowledge and what could not. Further this informs which claims of scientific knowledge could be used to understand society (Mazlish, 1998/2017). The intellectual assumption at the time was to reconsider every assumption of the mind independent of the dogmas of religion or tradition, and the quest for universal identity, one truth, ideas of about justice, virtue, and so on (Pagden, 2013). The Enlightenment thinkers extended the emergent scientific thought to issues of morality and delegated responsibility for moral issues to the transforming private realm of society (Landes, 2016; Pagden, 2013; Pollak, 2016b). The private sphere used scientific thinking to assume certainty in matters of the human condition and relationality (Mazlish, 1998/2017; Pollak, 2016b). This established mechanized, rational, and scientific thinking as the dominant mode for interacting and prioritized rational intelligences over other intelligences—such as emotional or spiritual intelligence.

Clock as an emblem of mechanized priorities. The mechanized philosophy is rooted in order and power and, as a discourse, took over the experiential and intellectual traditions. This was followed over time with corresponding value systems (Merchant, 1980). Merchant detailed the mechanized structural model guiding society and how machines became the symbols for ordering thoughts, experiences, and relationships. Its foundational position for structuring society is important for understanding the ways language and culture intersect and reproduce oppression through common sense assumptions. She emphasized the metaphors and events that paralleled women and nature to dead, inert machines to become the object of scientific inquiry, social subordination, and domination shaping modern cultural hierarchies (Merchant, 1980, 2006; C. Thompson, 2006). Merchant's analysis brought attention to the structural and shadow sides of

placing total faith the cultural metaphor that reduces the living world to a lifeless machine. Her analysis made explicit the limits of the machine as a metaphor.

Despite the limitations of the metaphor, the clock and time in general are critical components in the modern educators' classroom. The modern clock and its various predecessors like the sun dial, church bells, and water clocks have been used to guide behavior and act as a point of reference for understanding the universe and the image of proper morality for centuries (Landes, 2016; Scattergood, 2003; Shuffelton, 2017). The clock is both a literal product of the mechanization of Western culture and a metaphor responsible for guiding interactions. The clock did not create inequality but represents a way of framing understandings (Shuffelton, 2017). It can be used as an index of inequality. Thus, temporality or people's relationship to time is a relationship that can reinforce inequality.

Mechanization as a worldview reordered reality around power and order and is fundamental to the value system of the modern world. These systems were influenced by the increase in control that resulted from power and order when autonomous rather than nonautonomous machines were the focus of daily living (Merchant, 1980, 2006). Shuffelton (2017) drew attention to the harmful effects mechanized frameworks have on children's well-being. She made an interesting and compelling argument for radical structural changes in education that consider how time is used. She used Rousseau's work to argue that neoliberal educational misappropriates children's time towards activities that teach students to rank themselves against each other. Shuffelton detailed how the clock and its incremental time-measurements emphasized skillsets in education to facilitate competition. Such skills include those used to determine the quickest way to do a task and those that consider how to eliminate wasted motion like false, slow, and useless movements.

Shuffelton's argument is useful for bringing the mechanized metaphor directly into the classroom and addressing the structural significance of mechanized thinking. She explained how mechanized metaphors marginalize relationships of mutuality and create an inherent competition. She argued for radical educational reform that considers the lifelong dissatisfaction that results from a competitive relationality as the only framework for relationships. She stated, "When we measure ourselves against others, when we learn to think of ourselves as 'better than' our 'worse than' other people, we are alienated from ourselves, enslaved to social convention, under the sway of illusory and deceptive notions of happiness" (p. 842). She argued that a mechanized education misappropriates children's time towards activities that take them out of the now and rank themselves against others.

Clock's influence on everyday living. Day-to-day life during the Middle Ages is difficult for historians to account, however a few aspects are generalizable. People arranged their lives around what was available within the existing conditions and depended on available relationships for their sustainability. When combined with other conditions of the time, life lacked order and consistency, which generated uncertainty (Goetz, 1993). Clocks gradually moved from religious and monastic community settings to community and public areas, and eventually to the individual homes (Gimpel, 1977; Scattergood, 2003). Some historians have speculated that the mechanized clock was a major shift in culture (Landes, 2016), while others (Scattergood, 2003) have argued that the clock—and what it represents—in its various forms has always been a part of culture so it was not a major shift but rather an irreversible slow shift towards dependence on machine precision. The prevalence of the clock made numeracy a form of common sense that was required of all people, even those from rural areas and peasants, who

often were in low-density populations and their day-to-day living activities were directed by the cycles of nature (Scattergood, 2003; E. P. Thompson, 1966).

Prior to the reliability of modern clocks, time was imprecise and people needed to verify the time with someone else. However, with the increased reliability of the clock people could rely on their singular interpretation of the time and did not need to consult the community to verify. The incremental advancements with time instruments allowed people to use machines to order life, which redirected the priorities from cultural norms and natural rhythms towards measured and consistent increments (Landes, 2016; Merchant, 1980, 2006; Scattergood, 2003; Shuffelton, 2017). Time within a mechanized worldview becomes problematic because when measured, time can be used to compare, alienate, and control (Merchant, 1980; Shuffelton, 2017). The clock metaphor is important because it represents the deeply held cultural beliefs surrounding the how life is ordered.

Machines have not always been the metaphor guiding everyday life. This became the dominant discourse guiding reality after the clock became affordable and reliable (Landes, 2016; Merchant, 1980, 2006; Shuffelton, 2017). Mechanical timekeepers “privileged virtues such as regularity, consistency, punctuality, and exactness” to create the image of proper moral behavior (Scattergood, 2003, p. 469). In moral matters, time was used to organize religious, social, and moral life and the clock became the metaphor of well-regulated behavior (Scattergood, 2003). Thinking about Shuffelton’s argument, this metaphor contributes to the intrinsic drive to compete because it uses scientific management to coordinate human effort. Shifting to matters of education, the mechanized view of ordering relations tightly defines the focus of becoming educated, includes a false premise guiding how relationships are understood, and intersects with neoliberalism to mythically understand relationships to be fundamentally disconnected rather

than interconnected (Henderson & Hursh, 2014; Ivie, 2007; Merchant, 1980, 2006; Sancar & Sancar, 2012).

Outcomes of Ordering Life Around Mechanization

This brief chronicle of modern thought suggests dramatic changes in modern ways of knowing throughout history. Throughout time these changes have been met with dissenting arguments and resistance. Hermeneutics was one response to the shift in knowledge that prioritizes the whole as much as the pieces (Benton & Craib, 2011; Mazlish, 1998/2017). In this framework, the analysis is required to observe the ebb and flow between theory and fact to build a composite picture (Mazlish, 1998/2017). It can be distilled to the art of understanding the human condition (Mazlish, 1998/2017). As Mazlish detailed, reason fails in matters of the human sciences because it is used to determine the shared assumptions of shared symbols. He explained it is the incorrect assumptions that cause a breakdown of the scientific theories when used within the human sciences.

Neoliberalism depends on and masks the mechanized worldview hiding or minimizing its significance to the foundation of how meaning is made (Foucault, 2010; Giroux, 2015; Merchant, 1980). Inquiry into the mechanized worldview is important because it makes explicit the implicit metaphors guiding everyday thought and interactions. Consequences of this worldview include relational models and shifts in education that prioritize mechanized ways of thinking and being. This priority overprepare students for entry into the workforce at the expense of skills that could otherwise be used to contest inequalities or imagine democratic forms of work and ways to engage with others who are different (Giroux, 2015).

Neoliberal politics have an economic understanding for society and politics, which functions to blur the lines of value around the social in politics (Couldry, 2010). To draw from

Couldry (2010), neoliberal doctrine creates meaning by embedding rationality in everyday social organization and imagination, bringing regulatory economic logic to the classroom and human development. Couldry pointed towards the neoliberal strategy of simplification where extreme generalization of markets and their advantages are espoused as obvious choices and alternative perspectives are discounted. It is successful because of hegemonic rationality which is a series of thought patterns that reduce the complexity of what is described, to its simplest form. This becomes problematic when variables do not have clear economic value and are excluded from consideration.

Mechanized relationality. Knowledge within a mechanized framework includes an ontological assumption that matter is composed of particles and includes a value hierarchy that defines natural order to the universe (Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980). One type of outcome from this type of worldview is relationships that are based on a socially constructed hierarchical ordering of life (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016). Mechanized knowledge reproduces an ontology and epistemology that rely on reduction and decontextualization for success (Merchant, 1980). When this type of relational expectations is used for human interactions it fractures the opportunity for connections. Similarly, when used within a larger social setting dominated by individualism and competition, it makes mutuality look foolish. A mechanized relationality uses a cost-benefit to determine (or judge) if help is warranted. It also satisfies a larger aim of the Enlightenment thinkers toward understanding the human condition.

A goal during this time period was to break away from religion and the church and to create a meta-narrative that included a universal human identity (Duggan, 2003; Merchant, 1980, 2006; Pagden, 2013; Pollak, 2016b). Pagden (2013) detailed that the intellectual content at the time was aimed towards creating a society that disavowed religion and lived by minimal legal

and moral codes responsible for understanding human relationships. The new set of ideas were based on reason and were aimed at creating “citizens of the world” that separated themselves from history, their past, and other traditions to create a universal way of knowing—which rendered the obvious and recognizable differences as irrelevant and not part of the structural part of the human condition (Pagden, 2013). The machine metaphor allowed for such reductions and facilitated Enlightenment thinkers’ goals to break away from the church.

Part of the cultural changes of the time included the use of rationality as a moral compass (Pagden, 2013). The attitudes of the period were opposed to any type of dogma. Morality and issues of character were assumed to be part of the church. The church teachings were falling out of fashion, which added to human dependence on rationality. This combined with the increase in power and control brought by the industrialization of machines to generate a reliance on mechanized language and metaphors. As the natural science developed, expanded, and began to reach everyday people, the mechanized worldview traveled within their discourses. Its insidious popularity was alongside the cultural understanding that scientific inquiry had been severed from itself and knowledge we derived from the absence of prior conditions, beliefs, customs, and authoritative texts (Pagden, 2013).

This way of knowing continued well after the 18th century despite its flaws and can be seen in modern culture (Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980, 2006; Pollak, 2016a; Shuffelton, 2017; E. P. Thompson, 1966). Pagden (2013) argued that this way of knowing elevated reason to the only human good and has been used to allow reason to create a European form of tyranny that incorrectly assumed humans “could and should decide how to live their lives by their rational abilities alone, independent of the communities, the religious beliefs, the customs, and the bonds of affection into which they had been born” (p. 20). Science and reason

rose to religious status, challenged traditions and norms of the past, and redefined humans to be the central and most important species (Merchant, 1980, 2006; Pagden, 2013).

Wendell Berry critiqued the mechanized structure of knowledge throughout his fiction and non-fiction work. For example:

A little harder to compass is the danger that we can give up on life also by presuming to “understand” it- that is by reducing it to the *terms* of our understanding and by treating it as predictable or mechanical. The most radical influence of reductive science has been the virtually universal adoption of the idea that the world, its creatures, and all the parts of its creatures are machines-that is, that there is no difference between creature and artifice, birth and manufacture, thought and computation. Our language, wherever it is used, is now almost invariably conditioned by the assumption that fleshly bodies are machines full of mechanisms, fully compatible with the mechanisms of medicine, industry, and commerce; and that minds are computers fully compatible with electronic technology (Berry, 2000b, p. 6).

Here Berry described how the metaphor of mechanization influences how we understand relationships. Later in that same essay he described the associated “dogma” that accompanies mechanized thought as, “survival of the wealthiest” and the mechanical efficiency that dominates the academy (Berry, 2000b). Berry (1977) argued that this is problematic because competences and responsibilities that were previously universal and personal (like caring for the Earth or preparing food) are diverted to the specialists, which prioritizes cost and efficiency over care and artisanship. For Berry, “From a public point of view, the specialist system is a failure because, though everything is done by an expert, very little is done well” (p. 21).

Berry went on to argue this is problematic because if a person can only do one thing, they can do virtually nothing for themselves. He asserted that as society become more intricate with less structure and more organized but less orderly, profits are made from symptoms and problems “become the stock in trade of specialists” (Berry, 1977, p. 22). Specialists use money as a proxy for action, thought, care, and time (Berry, 2015, p. 25) and he argued, the willingness to be represented by money represents divisions in character and community. This critique specifically and his critiques in general focus attention on the long-term consequences of the dominant mechanized cultural lifestyle. Berry’s work is used by EcoJustice Scholars and educators to help students see how cultivating intangible relationalities can challenge the brutality of everyday living within a culture dedicated to for-profit market initiatives (Foster, Mäkelä, & Martusewicz, 2019; Martusewicz, 2018).

I liken Berry’s ways of thinking and being to what Russian anarchist and ecologist Petr Kropotkin (1902) called the mutual aid factor. In *Mutual Aid: A Factor of Evolution*, Kropotkin described how behavior changed depending on the circumstances of the environment. He detailed mutual aid to include solidarity and sociability, which he articulated as a vague instinct developed over time that has taught humans and animals they can borrow from others through mutual aid to ease existence and insert joy into social life (Kropotkin, 1902). Kropotkin found that even in the natural world, other-than-human animals acted/interacted on a default mode of mutuality in the tending to and protection of their space/place. Mutualism, he argued, was both biological and sociological rather than strictly competitive. During this period, thinkers of the day were maturing into the predictability of machined life, which was used to define humans, human behavior, and control the natural world (Merchant, 1980; Pollak, 2016a; Shuffelton, 2017). The worldview reduced all interactions to be an aspect of Social Darwinism.

Kropotkin understood behavior as adaptable and refused to accept it as a static condition nor believed it was uncontrollable, thus while challenging Social Darwinism he was also arguing against the mechanized world view. He argued for mutualism to be considered alongside competition as a factor of evolution namely because it has more value than just reproducing the species (Kropotkin, 1902; Proudhon, 1851; Purchase, 2010). Kropotkin challenged the dominant view of social Darwinism that competition was the only struggle for existence and argued rather cooperative economic behavior improved overall survival chances (Kropotkin, 1902; Purchase, 2010). He was ahead of his time by considering the moral relationships between humans and the other-than-human world, and like Berry, understood society to be based on consciousness, another form of knowledge. Knowledge from conscience is experienced with conviction and commitment where as a theoretical (science) knowledge, is knowing something *in theory* (Williams, 2015).

The mechanized worldview discounts knowledge that cannot be translated into scientific language, which is problematic for creatures, social relationships, and politics. As mechanization increased in everyday reality all aspects were reordered around power and order (Merchant, 1980). Berry directly and Kropotkin indirectly challenged the mechanical efficiency of creatures, the dominance of a mechanized worldview, and offer viable alternatives for making meaning and understanding relationships of mutuality (Berry, 2000b; Kropotkin, 1902). They offer a perspective to understand relationships that is ecologically centered and focused on a place-based affection.

Impacts on education. The mechanized metaphor is an attractive and insidious model in industrial cultures. It is and has been responsible for organizing thoughts, experiences, language, and social life around scalable metrics, and efficiency prioritizing independent pieces

disconnected from the whole (Biesta, 2009; Landes, 2016; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980; Scattergood, 2003; Shuffelton, 2017). Education leaders use political leverage to increase the mechanization of teachers, students, and learning (HB 4822, 2016; USDE, n.d.). They prioritize corporate cultural values that become synonymous with the functions of education (Biesta, 2009; Endacott et al., 2015). School-community partnerships have been replaced with school-business relationships where practitioners can get easily get stuck in scientific modes of interacting that are known as evidence-based or best-practices.

This is problematic for many reasons, namely because this knowledge is controlled by specialists who are controlled by the industrial consumer culture (Berry, 1977). The educational response to market driven education must be challenged with pedagogy that connects language, culture, and identity. Further, a response to mechanized schooling needs to include knowledges that challenge passive knowledge and where students learn to act on their beliefs to create a future that does not mimic the present (Giroux, 2015). A mechanized or robotic approach to education positions teachers to reproduce a set of standardized knowledge.

Within in the neoliberal framework, teachers are expected to surrender, be docile, and compliant with the authoritative administrative hierarchy. Schools use educational approaches that preference changing the child rather than the expectations and conditions for the child. The relational rapport has been replaced with behavior management specialists, who are conditioned to make meaning of the human condition and interactions through a mechanized framework and support teachers with strategies for student behavior change (HB 4822, 2016). The art of lesson delivery and audience engagement is rushed and replaced with scripts by experts (Endacott et al., 2015; Nelson & Dawson, 2017). Still yet, teachers need to redistribute energy toward negotiating the politics of humiliation rather than reach for the joy of teaching that includes preparing

lessons, developing curricular materials and, establishing connections of care (Giroux, 2015). Their time and resources are used to produce required documentary paperwork on themselves and their students to justify progress as a student and worthiness as an employee and professional.

Conclusion

Neoliberalism as the guiding force in education is the global scale of applying market instrumentalism given the normalization of and domination across a range of spheres (Giroux, 2015; Harvey, 2007; Plumwood, 2002). As part of the narrative of globalization, neoliberalism uses logic and rationality grounded in science, to create a normalized discourse of standardization and success within education (Plumwood, 2002). The larger economic and exclusionary elements remain hidden behind cultural wars over differing views of ethical life and social order (Duggan, 2003; Fraser, 2014). As a globalized market phenomenon with deep roots in the mechanized framework, neoliberalism, prioritizes a competitive way of understanding relationships within a knowledge economy that privileges market place knowledge and skills and uses a structural view of ethical life (Fraser, 2014; Ivie, 2007; Merchant, 1980; Nelson & Dawson, 2017,; Sancar & Sancar, 2012; Shuffelton, 2017).

Thinking back to Shuffelton's argument, the mechanized discourse guiding education is problematic for communication within relationships. It causes harm to intimacy and the need to be ethical with relationships (Nelson & Dawson, 2017). A neoliberal education blends a competitive way of relating with a narrow definition of knowledge—limiting the creative freedom of students and focuses on preparing them for adult responsibilities (Shuffelton, 2017). The problem with mechanizing education is shifting the motivations for study from intrinsic beauty and attraction to an extrinsic competitive focus (Nelson & Dawson, 2017). It fails to

consider the whole person in relationship with Others or the Other-than-human world. For teachers it has reduced their profession and all the intricate skills needed to help young people develop to a set of industrial skills where teachers act like robots reproducing other little robots.

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Appendix B: Definitions

The first purpose of this appendix is to detail the *industrial communication pattern* and how it is used to reproduce marginalization. The aspects of this pattern are used to identify and critique systemic inequalities that are hidden by everyday language and discourse (Lowenstein & Erkaeva, 2016; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). I used the industrial communication pattern to critique educational discourse and make explicit the implicit systemic oppression. I used a historical analysis of how reason became the dominate form of knowledge and to better understand the religion-like status of science, reason, and all associated ways of thinking, and understating. The second purpose of this appendix is to define the discourse of normalcy and deficiency that are part of the educational discourse of success. I have defined the dominant educational discourse the discourse of success. I argue the discourse of results from the overarching goal of the mission statement. The discourse of normalcy and deficiency are negotiated in everyday interactions within the discourse of success. They are important for understanding how hegemonic control works to marginalize difference and reproduce the dominant perspectives.

Mechanized Language: Industrial Communication Pattern

The mechanized worldview lives in our assumptions about humanity. It manifests in language metaphors, is used to communicate, and creates the framework for creating meaning (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Fairclough, 1981/2001; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Sancar & Sancar, 2012). This metaphor includes shared cultural knowledge that is implied on legacy, unquestioned, and communicated verbally and nonverbally. Bowers and Flinders (1990) detailed the communication aspects of language that contribute its to metaphorical understanding and cultural reproduction in the classroom. They explained, “The language of the

culture provides the shared set of preunderstandings that will guide the interpretations that individual makes of new experiences,” which includes the “heritage of meaning and patterns of understanding,” that shape the attitude and disposition of the learner (p. 32). Bowers and Flinders argued that the mechanized cultural orientation alters the connections between culture and language because it changes the basis of what students think about and subsequently value. They detailed how ideas are communicated through patterns that are responsible for the language systems that carry out cultural frameworks.

Bowers and Flinders (1990) bring the cultural language patterns responsible for thinking and communicating out of the shadows and argue for more complex professional knowledge around responsible language. Responsible language use considers not just the form but the purposes of language (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Krynski, 2018), which means considering the cultural history of language use (Martusewicz et al., 2015). Ecocritical thinkers pinpoint day-to-day language use as sites of reproduction within education (Krynski, 2018; Lupinacci, 2013; Martusewicz et al., 2015). They argue that the reproduction of injustice is enabled by communication patterns built around “human-centered thought” and the “logic of domination,” which is foundational for mechanized and oppressive relationships (Lowenstein & Erkaeva, 2016; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017).

To identify and resist the harmful mechanized neoliberal discourses, ecocritical scholars (Krynski, 2018; Lowenstein et al., 2010; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017) identify interrelated aspects of language responsible for a communication patterns that facilitate oppression and marginalization in education. Each aspect is detailed below—however, for now,

what needs to be known is how “human-centered thought,” “logic of domination,” and myths of human supremacy exist outside of ecological reciprocity and combine to create a justification system for cultural domination.

Humans make meaning with an understanding “human-centered thought,” which is a way of thinking that places humans as primary and other species orbit in relationship to the primary (Plumwood, 2002). This understanding is morally sanctioned with the “Logic of Domination” (Newcomb, 2008; Plumwood, 2002). It is responsible for articulating the purposes and goals within the relationship and acts as a value system that rationalizes subordination. The resulting condition is an “Illusion of Disembeddeness,” where relational value is assigned through perception of disconnection. Rather than embrace differences, cultural understandings of others create “isms of domination,” or justified domination based on the value assigned from cultural knowledge (Plumwood, 2002; Warren, 2000a).

Language within this framework orders differences on a hierarchy and creates hyper-separation with dualistic language (or dualisms), where differences are understood as opposite and mutually exclusive. Language processed and communicated within this framework generates value-hierarchized anthropocentric relationships with other-than-human world (Bradford & Shields, 2017; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Plumwood, 2002; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). As part of neoliberal politics, this way of understanding relationships shapes how meaning is made and creates culturally understood metaphors (Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018). Lowenstein and Erkaeva (2016) discussed the impacts of language on behavior and how it shapes the stories of our lives. They and others (Erevelles, 2017; Harper & Jones, 2009; Martusewicz et al., 2015) traced the roots of social injustice to an anthropocentric way of

understanding relationships of difference. I refer to this combination of linguist features as the “industrial communication pattern.”

Teachers using ecocritical pedagogies challenge the educational discourses reproducing marginalized relationships and use responsible language to present a discourse of love that offers a way of relating that challenge the above structure and creates relationships based on mutuality and affection (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Krynski, 2018; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018). To illustrate this concept, I have designed three figures. Figure 1 displays the relationship between human-centered thought and the “Logic of Domination.” In the center of the image is a black dot that represents humans as a species. The dot is placed central to multiple smaller dots, which surround but do not touch other dots. The smaller dots represent other species that surround but are not connected to humans. This image is squared off with a frame that includes a few of the words that represent a human-centered perspective within day-to-day language.

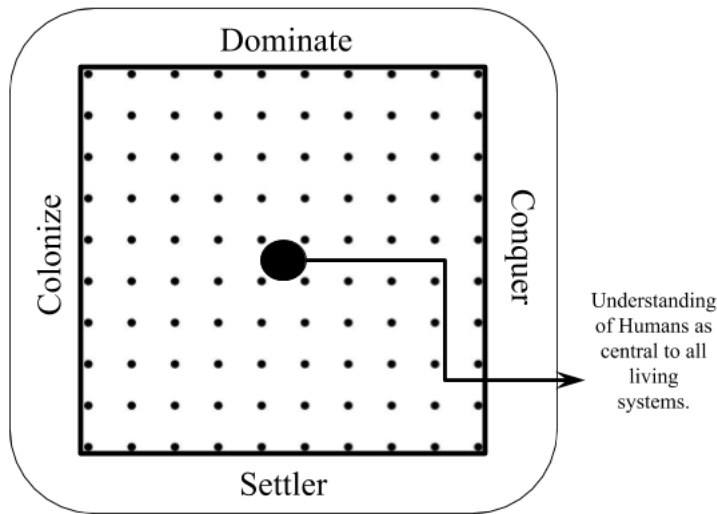


Figure 3. Human-centered thought.

This figure illustrates a disconnected relationship between humans and other species within a context of domination (Newcomb, 2008). This figure is based on Plumwood’s (2002) critique of

anthropocentrism and human-centeredness and Warren’s (1990) description of “Logic of Domination.” Figure 1 shows the socially constructed understanding of humans in relationship to Others with “Logic of Domination” is a logic sequence and rational justification for the ill circumstances (or subordination) of Others. Descending from this perspective, Figure 2 represents the hierarchy of relationships within the dominant discourse (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Martusewicz et al., 2015).

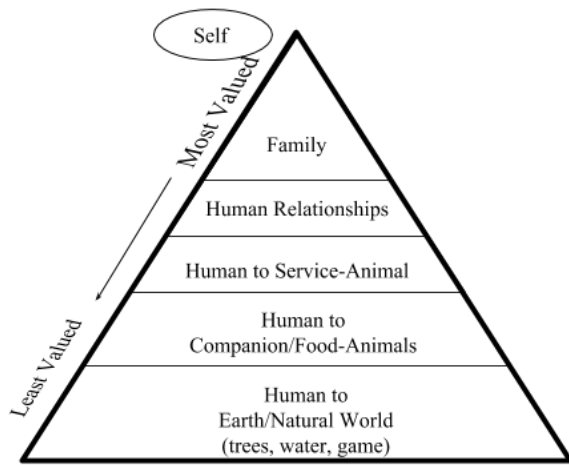


Figure 4. Hierarchy of relationships.

This figure displays the organization of relationships between humans and the natural world considering “ecological denial” and “Illusion of Disembeddedness” (Plumwood, 2002). In this figure I have divided relationships into five categories, which were based on Plumwood’s (2002) articulation of the “Illusion of Disembeddedness,” to illuminate the divide between humans, the natural world, and other hierarchically ordered language. In line with (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016), I divided the natural world into three categories human to service animal, human to companion/food animal, and to human-natural resources, which are hierarchal and arranged in a triangular shape based on the dominant, discursive, and hierarchical power relations within the relationships (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward

Lupinacci, 2018; Martusewicz et al., 2015). Figure 2 shows the socially constructed hierarchal organizational frame used to understand how to position the self in relation to others.

The third figure, Figure 3, shows a more detailed arrangement for ordering and making meaning of differences. Differences are arranged in categorical opposition, in a hierarchical relationship, and situated within a larger social and political context to generate value-hierarchized thinking (Martusewicz et al., 2015; Plumwood, 2002; Warren, 1990).

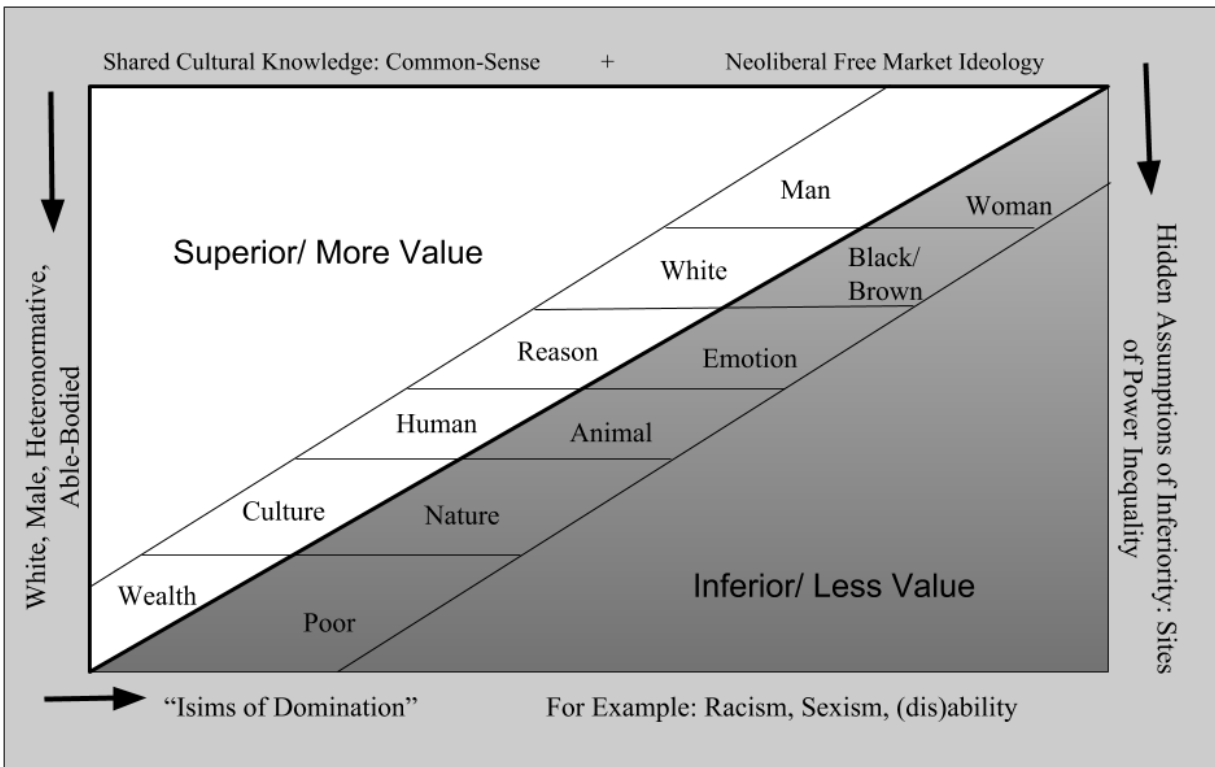


Figure 5. Multi-layered language processing.

In this figure I have started with a square frame that includes both neoliberal discourses and shared cultural understandings (common sense knowledge) as categories rather than lists or examples. This frame encourages the reader to consider the multiple intersecting discourses that create meaning and the multiple shared cultural understandings derived from cultural understandings of language. The square within the frame is bisected diagonally from left to right, starting at the bottom with the right side shaded gray. A line divides the two spaces to separate

pairs of words like man/woman, mind/body, adult/child where the inferior set of words are on the right side (gray) and the superior words are on the left side (white) modeling linguistic dualisms. A dualism, juxtaposes categorical differences as mutually exclusive and the social hierarchy dictates categorical value (e.g., man/woman, White/Black, able/(dis)able; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Warren, 2000).

This frame is nested within the larger structural frames (Figure 1) and is ordered within a socially constructed understanding of relationships (Figure 2). Together these communication patterns limit understanding of personhood and create an anthropocentric way of relating (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018). In modern industrial cultures, it communicates humans were born to control and dominant the Earth and others limits development to becoming fully human, and the superior of the pair is morally justified in subordinating the other (Bradford & Shields, 2017; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980; Newcomb, 2008; Plumwood, 2002; Warren, 2000). The industrial communication pattern is nested within the cultural worldview of human supremacy (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Wolfmeyer & Lupinacci, 2017). Lastly, it has philosophical undertones of mechanization (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980). It is used to critique ideas and language and investigate the political and social framework shaping everyday interactions and decisions.

Assumptions of Normalcy

The neoliberal market politics are designed as downward attacks on redistributive social movements to shift resources upward (Duggan, 2003). In education it is evident by the privatization of schools, high-stakes testing, standardized curriculum, mechanized behaviors and devaluing of relationships, emotion, and interdependence normalized commodification, and the

devaluing of social-emotional skills (Bradford & Shields, 2017; Giroux, 2015; Golden, 2018; Lipman, 2011; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Martusewicz & Johnson, 2016). In the classroom, teachers' roles have been disrupted and defined according to a profit model within a neoliberal market context (Duggan, 2003; Endacott et al., 2015; Giroux, 2015; Golden, 2018).

Hegemonic normalcy is a broadly defined ideal way of acting, behaving, and interpreting the world within a shared culture (Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Wilson, 2013). Notions of normalcy emerge from common sense understandings and create a discourse of fitting-in, or socially acceptable ways of understanding situations, which contributes to a restrictive conception of personhood that understands relationships through sets of hierarchized dualisms and obscures and denies the power relations. In education competition is assumed to be normal, which is clearly defined by the mission statement and is reproduced with the industrial communication pattern (Martusewicz et al., 2015). A discourse of normalcy is problematic because it ensures the reproduction of harmful relationships and causes Western industrial cultures to generate relationships through hyper-separated hierarchically ordered dualisms. And it uses "Logic of Domination" and value-hierarchy to frame humans as non-ecological beings. It generates the conditions for a mechanized relationality that is based on anthropocentrism (Lupinacci & Happel-Parkins, 2016; Martusewicz et al., 2015; Merchant, 1980; Plumwood, 2002).

In this framework, anthropocentrism is also assumed to be normal and its roots can be traced to racism, sexism, ableism, and other non-dominant injustice, (Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Martusewicz et al., 2015). The problem with a discourse of normal is how it marginalizes students' day-to-day experiences of injustice that are influenced by

neoliberal politics and hides the inherent violence from anthropocentrism. The violence and experiences go unnoticed because they have been accepted as normal (Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; Sharma, 2018). As a discourse, it adds to the overlooked cultural assumptions guiding relationships that are imbedded within larger economic and exclusionary structures (Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017). Lastly, it creates a frame for society that discourages new ideas and differences.

Teachers using inclusive teaching philosophies are challenged to rethink understanding differences and focus on students' assets and what they can do (Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017; McKnight & Block, 2010). The discourse of normal defines what needs to be included in neoliberal spaces and governed by free market ideology (Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018; Lupinacci & Ward Lupinacci, 2017). Non-normal is deemed deficient. Normalcy requires an able mind and body, which inherently creates a division between the "haves" and the "have-nots" and allocates power towards reproducing the status quo and common sensical knowledge. It is through identifying and questioning this type of knowledge that conditions of difference can be renegotiated as assets rather than deficits in need of modification.

The educational discourse is embedded within larger historical and sociopolitical systems and functions to reproduce marginalized ways of thinking, being, knowing, and relating (Foucault, 1981; Giroux, 2015). A discourse of success in education is more than a set of individualized standards it sets the tones and assumptions that shape the rest of your life experiences with specific ways of thinking, being, knowing, and relating. This discourse is maintained by a mission statement that is situated within a broader neoliberal social structure

where educational failure is reflected onto the individual rather than generate questions surrounding the larger social politics shaping the context. Students are given access to an education, but they must modify themselves to accommodate the requirements of the curriculum. When all support options have failed, fault is assigned to the student and they are understood as deficient in normalcy.

In the case of achieving success, students are left unaware of how to orient themselves towards a profession and have not developed a passion or curiosity for learning (Cloete & Duncan, 2016; Cutter-Mackenzie & Edwards, 2013; Lugones, 1987; Parks, 2017; Pyle & Danniels, 2017). Often, they have not created ties to a community and have few, if any, intergenerational relationships to seek guidance. Within a mechanized and neoliberal education, skills that can be commodified are the focus to the detriment of all others, which denies the social interactions needed for intimacy, communication, and relationships (Sancar & Sancar, 2012). On the other hand, the students who fail (by choice or design) are written off as failures, assumed to have a failed career paths and unable to meet their social and economic responsibilities, and expectations of normalcy (Bowers, 2017; Lupinacci, Happel-Parkins, & Ward Lupinacci, 2018). The discourse of success continues to gain strength because of how deeply embedded into the institution it is and because its located within relational habits (Sancar & Sancar, 2012).

Assumptions of Deficiency

Deficit theories undergird the discourse of success in education by claiming individual talent as the determining factor for dominant groups and as explanatory paradigms for non-dominant groups inability to overcome their personal and cultural shortcomings to succeed (Clycq et al., 2014; Jimenez-Castellanos & Gonzalez, 2012; Valencia, 2010). Within education,

deficit thinking is an explanatory paradigm used to communicate systemic failure onto the individual citing internal deficiencies such as intellectual capacity, divergence from dominant language structures, lack of motivation, and amoral behavior as reasons for educational failure (Clycq et al., 2014; Sharma, 2018; Valencia, 2010). Deficit thinking is another aspect to the industrial communication pattern that creates tension between assumptions about the students' home and culture as reasons for failure and is problematic because it ignores the sociocultural roots of dominant culture and their contribution to day-to-day decisions.

Deficit approaches blame poverty or cultural differences for lack of student achievement instead of looking at the dominant discourses surrounding education or at inadequate reform policies (HB 4822, 2016; Payne, 1995). They are problematic because they cover up the inherent cultural biases in the system that go unproblematized and ideologically organize students as “at-risk” (Clycq et al., 2014). Pedagogically they generate low expectations for non-dominant students and, when situated within an industrial communication pattern, deficit thinking defines the Other and frames differences as inferior (Bowers & Flinders, 1990; Lipman, 2017; Martusewicz et al., 2015). The deficit paradigm creates a barrier between efforts to address multicultural and inclusive education (Tyler, 2016; Wilson, 2013).

An example of a systemic deficit perspective in education can be seen in current educational policies such as The Revised School Code of 1976, which commonly known as PA 451 (HB 4822, 2016). Act 301, HB 4822 was added to PA 451 effective October 16, 2016 to add a minimum state literacy benchmark to the requirements of students moving into 3rd grade. The educative purpose of the bill is to ensure all students achieve. However, the language is situated in a much larger intersection of discourses that are tied to capitalism, neoliberalism, and mechanized understandings of reality, which means the language is situated within intersecting

discourses that combine to shape how meaning is made (Foucault, 1981; Fraser, 2014; Harvey, 2007; Henderson & Hursh, 2014; Merchant, 1980).

Deficit thought patterns hide the complexity of social relationships and the authority given to common sense knowledge and people's experiences (Bowers & Flinders, 1990). HB4822 details how the schools will support the student in becoming "proficient" and details who the other responsible parties are what they are responsible for. For example, students will have "highly effective teachers of reading, as determined by the teacher evaluation system," parents are provided with training in how to "Read at Home" to support the schools in their efforts, and students receive intensive "evidence-based reading intervention" during the school day to learn how to read. It does not say at who is monitoring the success of this bill or how its efficacy will be determined. Or how long it can fail before corrective action will be taken. At face value the bill appears as a map of strategic interventions for educators but the language is situated within a neoliberal context and understood with the industrial communication pattern, which functions to redistribute responsibility for success and failure onto the individual and serves to further mechanized the teaching, learning and student relationship.

The function of HB4822 is to create an accountability system for the schools to ensure students are provided every opportunity to succeed. Instead policies framed in a discourse of deficiency create rules to mechanize the learning process. One discursive understanding is that the predetermined tools for success should render students able to pass a standardized test and if not, blame is deferred to the student and their family. Another discursive message is the students' history and culture does not matter, the path to success has been defined and tools have been provided to conform to dominant ideas of normalcy. Top down education reform validates deficit thought patterns by abdicating institutional responsibility for non-dominant students' failure.

This approach to education places responsibility on the student to conform to the state's mechanized and marginalized standards despite his or her needs,⁵ and it hides the structural inequalities and unequal relationships of power imbedded within the institution of education.

⁵ Students in Special Education have slightly different predefined standards but still fall into this generalization. An Individualized Education Plan (IEP) is only personalized to an extent.

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Appendix C: Institutional Review Board Approval**RESEARCH @ EMU**

UHSRC Determination: EXEMPT

DATE: March 30, 2016

TO: Monica Shields-Grimason
Department of Teacher Education
Eastern Michigan University

Re: UHSRC: # 880512-1
Category: Exempt category 1
Approval Date: March 30, 2016

Title: Teaching for Love Through Pedagogies of Responsibility: Translating EcoJustice Theory into Practice

Your research project, entitled **Teaching for Love Through Pedagogies of Responsibility: Translating EcoJustice Theory into Practice**, has been determined **Exempt** in accordance with federal regulation 45 CFR 46.102. UHSRC policy states that you, as the Principal Investigator, are responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of your research subjects and conducting your research as described in your protocol.

Renewals: Exempt protocols do not need to be renewed. When the project is completed, please submit the **Human Subjects Study Completion Form** (access through IRBNet on the UHSRC website).

Modifications: You may make minor changes (e.g., study staff changes, sample size changes, contact information changes, etc.) without submitting for review. However, if you plan to make changes that alter study design or any study instruments, you must submit a **Human Subjects Approval Request Form** and obtain approval prior to implementation. The form is available through IRBNet on the UHSRC website.

Problems: All major deviations from the reviewed protocol, unanticipated problems, adverse events, subject complaints, or other problems that may increase the risk to human subjects **or** change the category of review must be reported to the UHSRC via an **Event Report** form, available through IRBNet on the UHSRC website

Follow-up: If your Exempt project is not completed and closed after **three years**, the UHSRC office will contact you regarding the status of the project.

Please use the UHSRC number listed above on any forms submitted that relate to this project, or on any correspondence with the UHSRC office.

Good luck in your research. If we can be of further assistance, please contact us at 734-487-3090 or via e-mail at human.subjects@emich.edu. Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

Beth Kubitskey
Chair
College of Education Human Subjects Review Committee

Appendix D: Informed Consent Form

Informed Consent Form

The person in charge of this study is Monica Shields-Grimason. Monica Shields-Grimason is a student at Eastern Michigan University. Her faculty adviser is Dr. Rebecca Martusewicz. Throughout this form, this person will be referred to as the “investigator.”

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this research is to examine how using love within an EcoJustice approach to education challenges the dominant schooling paradigm. This research is interested in what teachers believe are the dominant Neoliberal market discourses and how they think those discourses are being challenged by their implementation of EcoJustice classroom pedagogy.

What will happen if I participate in this study?

Participation in this study involves

- One 1-hour semi-structured face-to-face interview, audio recorded
- 1-2 shorter interviews. If necessary, these interviews will be used to clarify and follow up with ideas presented in previous interview(s).
- Participants are asked to be available via phone call or electronic communication for the duration of this research project. (Scheduled completion March 2017)
- Each participant will be given the option to review their transcribed interviews.

I would like to audio record these interviews. If you are audio recorded, it will be possible to identify you through your voice. If you agree to be audio recorded, sign the appropriate line at the bottom of this form. In addition, the investigator will be taking notes throughout the interview.

What are the anticipated risks for participation?

There are no anticipated physical or psychological risks to participation.

The primary risk of participation in this study is a potential loss of confidentiality.

Are there any benefits to participating?

You will not directly benefit from participating in this research. However, benefits to society include:

EcoJustice approach to education examines the unconscious cultural assumptions carried into the classroom, and attends to the relational interdependence that we share with the natural world. The teachers in this study will help contribute to a greater understanding of what it means to be educated.

What are the alternatives to participation?

The alternative is not to participate.

How will my information be kept confidential?

The interviews will be held in a private location as chosen by the respondent in collaboration with the PI so as to ensure confidentiality and privacy. All interviews will be coded with pseudonyms. Coded identifies will be stored separate from data files.

We will keep your information confidential by using a coded labeling system that stores study key codes separate from data documents. Your information will be stored on a password protected external hard drive. Hard copies of data documents and the external hard drive will be stored in a locked drawer. We will make every effort to keep your information confidential, however, we cannot guarantee confidentiality. There may be instances where federal or state law requires disclosure of your records.

Other groups may have access to your research information for quality control or safety purposes. These groups include the University Human Subjects Review Committee, the Office of Research Development, the sponsor of the research, or federal and state agencies that oversee the review of research. The University Human Subjects Review Committee reviews research for the safety and protection of people who participate in research studies.

We may share your information with other researchers outside of Eastern Michigan University. If we share your information, we will remove any and all identifiable information so that you cannot reasonably be identified.

The results of this research may be published or used for teaching. Identifiable information will not be used for these purposes.

Storing study information for future use

We would like to store your information from this study for future use related to EcoJustice Pedagogy. Your information will be labeled with a code and not your name. Your information will be stored in a password-protected or locked file. Your de-identified information may also be shared with researchers outside of Eastern Michigan University. Please initial below whether or not you allow us to store your information:

_____ Yes

_____ No

Are there any costs to participation?

Participation will not cost you anything.

You will be responsible for your transportation costs to and from the study.

Will I be paid for participation?

You will not be paid to participate in this research study.

Study contact information

If you have any questions about the research, you can contact the Principal Investigator, Monica Shields-Grimason, at mshield1@emich.edu or by phone at [REDACTED]. You can also contact Monica's adviser, Dr. Rebecca Martusewicz, at rmartusew@emich.edu or by phone at 734.487.1414

For questions about your rights as a research subject, contact the Eastern Michigan University Human Subjects Review Committee at human.subjects@emich.edu or by phone at 734-487-3090.

Voluntary participation

Participation in this research study is your choice. You may refuse to participate at any time, even after signing this form, with no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may choose to leave the study at any time with no loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you leave the study, the information you provided will be kept confidential. You may request, in writing, that your identifiable information be destroyed. However, we cannot destroy any information that has already been published.

Statement of Consent

I have read this form. I have had an opportunity to ask questions and am satisfied with the answers I received. I give my consent to participate in this research study.

Signatures

Name of Subject

Signature of Subject

Date

I agree to be AUDIO recorded for this study.

Signature of Subject

Date

I have explained the research to the subject and answered all his/her questions. I will give a copy of the signed consent form to the subject.

Name of Person Obtaining Consent

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent

Date

Appendix E: Interview Guides

Interview 1: Life History

TOPIC: Schooling Experience

1. How old are you?
2. Where did you grow up? (city state)
 - a. What would a commercial or billboard look like?
3. What lessons did you learn from this time in your life?
4. Did you have a nickname? How'd you get it?
5. Do you have siblings?
 - a. Where are you in the birth order?
6. Do you have a significant other? (for how long; how did you meet?)
7. Do you have children?
8. Starting with Kindergarten, can you take me through your formal education?
 - a. Highs School?
 - b. After high school?
 - (name, city & state, grades/academic life/social life)
 - Any significant experience?
 - What did you take away from that experience?
 - c. After undergrad?
9. Can you tell me about things you like or that you are good at; even if you have no formal training?
10. Is there anything we didn't talk about that you would like to add?

TOPIC: Commitment to Education

11. Do you come from a family of teachers? Can you talk about your relationship with _____?
12. Tell me about why you wanted to become a teacher?
13. How many years have you been teaching (TOTAL)?
14. Where do you teach (School, City, State)
 - a. What would a commercial or billboard look like?
 - b. What grades and subjects do you teach NOW?
15. Can you tell me about all the different teaching jobs you have had?
 - a. Why did you leave?
 - b. What would a commercial or billboard look like?
16. Is there anything we didn't talk about that you would like to add?

TOPIC: Ideological Integration

17. What brought you to your program (SEMIS or EMU)
 - a. What would a commercial or billboard look like?
18. Can you tell me about a memorable event or moment (SEMIS or EMU)?
 - a. How did you try and bring that idea into your classroom?
 - b. What did the materials look like, what did the lesson look like?

Interview 2 Details of Experience

(The purpose of the second interview is to concentrate on the concrete details of the participants' present lived experience in the topic area of the study.)

1. Give me the typical day in your classroom?
 - a. I am interested from the time you get up until the time you go to bed.
 - b. I am interested in what you actually do in the classroom.

TOPIC: Classroom/ Experience

2. What is your definition of EcoJustice? (How do the two mesh?)
 - a. CEA
 - b. PBE/Commons
3. Can you tell me about a time when you tried to incorporate a new EJ idea into your classroom? How did you get the philosophy to the students?
4. What are some challenges to teaching (above)
5. Why did you choose X?
 - a. (What is easier to talk about, have assignments to go with, did it your existing lessons plans)
6. How did you change your teaching practice change during and after your SOFD/SEMIS?
7. How did your teaching practice adapt to your new awareness of "isms" and privilege?

Interview 3: Understanding

(The purpose is to explore past events to clarify how they are, where they are today)

1. Open this interview by asking if there is anything you have thought of since we last talked that you want to bring up?
2. Given what you said about your live before you became a teacher and given what you said about what your work now, how do you understand your role as a teacher?
3. Where do you see yourself going from here?