



LEEDS  
BECKETT  
UNIVERSITY

---

Citation:

Lander, V (2021) Hopeful or Hopeless? Teacher Education in Turbulent Times. In: Regimes of Belonging, Schools and Migrations: Teaching in (Trans)National Constellations. Springer, pp. 419-435. ISBN 9783658291884 DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-658-29189-1>

Link to Leeds Beckett Repository record:

<https://eprints.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/id/eprint/7238/>

Document Version:

Book Section (Accepted Version)

---

Copyright: Springer Fachmedien Wiesbaden GmbH, part of Springer Nature 2021

The aim of the Leeds Beckett Repository is to provide open access to our research, as required by funder policies and permitted by publishers and copyright law.

The Leeds Beckett repository holds a wide range of publications, each of which has been checked for copyright and the relevant embargo period has been applied by the Research Services team.

We operate on a standard take-down policy. If you are the author or publisher of an output and you would like it removed from the repository, please [contact us](#) and we will investigate on a case-by-case basis.

Each thesis in the repository has been cleared where necessary by the author for third party copyright. If you would like a thesis to be removed from the repository or believe there is an issue with copyright, please contact us on [openaccess@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:openaccess@leedsbeckett.ac.uk) and we will investigate on a case-by-case basis.

**Hopeful or hopeless? Teacher education in turbulent times**  
**Professor Vini Lander**  
**Leeds Beckett University**

**Abstract**

Education policies and schooling in England continue to sustain if not exacerbate the simultaneous notions of assimilation into the mainstream whilst maintaining the discourse of the “Other” within. Teacher education continues to be part of an education system designed to assimilate Black, Asian and minority-ethnic school students be they newly arrived children of migrant families or born in England. The increasingly diverse pupil population is contrasted with a predominantly White teacher workforce which is mandated to promote fundamental British values, to act as state instruments of surveillance and to advance Eurocentric curricula to perpetuate the dominant discourse of whiteness. So, amidst this turbulent social and political milieu, how can teacher education be cultivated as a place for hope and change? This chapter shows how the whiteness of teacher education can be disrupted to advance student teachers’ understanding of race and racism, and how they can become catalysts for hope and change.

**Keywords:** teacher education, racism, whiteness, critical race theory

**1 Introduction**

The chapter is a reflection on race and racism in teacher education in England. My research seeks to illuminate the deficiencies within teacher preparation with respect to race, racism and education and how best to educate teachers to work within ethnically diverse schools<sup>1</sup>. This chapter sets out how the teacher education landscape in England has changed over the last eight years and how these changes, in turn, are set against the turbulent political and social climate which has beset Britain since the vote to leave the European Union (EU) in June 2016. In many pluralist democracies the liberal expectations of equality are taken for granted. However, in recent times it seems that such societies have become less tolerant of racial diversity. This in turn is reflected within schools as evidenced by the rise in the number of racist incidents since June 2016 (Okolosie, 2019). In addition, the war on terror against radical Islamists has elided into the classroom and teachers’ professionalism (Department for Education, 2011). Teachers have been mandated to promote fundamental British values, a

---

<sup>1</sup> Schools in which there are pupils from different ethnic heritage groups e.g. Indian, Afro-Caribbean, Chinese etc.

term which has silently and seamlessly slipped from the government's anti-terrorist legislation, Prevent, to the Teachers' Standards (Department for Education, 2011). As such this has cast teachers as agents of state securitisation to monitor and police classrooms for youngsters at risk of radicalisation, whereby the gaze of scrutiny has fallen predominantly on Muslim students who have become targets of surveillance.

The theoretical frameworks of critical race theory and whiteness are utilised to analyse the recent changes and the persistent inertia to adequately prepare newly qualified teachers to teach in ethnically diverse schools in England. The chapter presents an analysis of teacher education in England as a practice of whiteness (Lander, 2014). It concludes with suggestions for improvement to facilitate teacher education which meets the needs of our multicultural classrooms and constitutes progression in terms of race equality in teacher education.

## **2 Political and social climate in Britain**

Contrary to popular belief, the so called post-racial era (Dawson & Bobo, 2009; Nyak, 2006) was no more than a construct to distract academics and society at large from the ongoing work required to progress race equality. Recent events in Britain, such as the rise in racist incidents following the vote to leave the EU (O'Neill, 2017, p. 6), the climate of intolerance of the 'Other' (Mompelat, 2019), the achievement gaps between students of colour and those from the hegemonic majority at university level (Higher Education Funding Council for England, 2018; Universities UK & National Union of Students, 2019), the persistent pay gap between people of colour and the majority (Chapman, 2019), as well as the rise of racism in schools (Okolosie, 2019) evidence the persistent and pervasive presence of racism in our society.

As people from Britain's colonies arrived on its shores in the post-war years, the new immigrants, most of whom were people of colour from the Caribbean, India and Pakistan, came to fill the labour shortage but encountered hostility on their arrival. The signs in boarding house windows stating, 'No Irish, No Blacks, No Dogs', signalled their status as unwelcome outsiders whose contributions in the Second World War was short-lived in the memories of the government and its populace. Successive legislation to outlaw discrimination on the grounds of race have supported a climate of tolerance but racism has continued to be a malevolent spectre. This is starkly evident in the treatment of people who migrated to Britain on the ship the *Empire Windrush* from the Caribbean and who found

themselves denied British citizenship, some of whom have been deported to the Caribbean because they did not possess documentation to prove their citizenship (Olusoga, 2019). This situation arose from the lack of documentary procedures on the part of the authorities. The “hostile environment” (Grierson, 2018) created by the Home Office, the UK ministry of internal affairs, against migrants has led to deportations or threat of deportation for the ‘Windrush Generation’ many of whom arrived in Britain as children with their parents. The far right has been growing in Britain and Europe (BBC, 2019). However, it has always been present in Britain in the form of the National Front and Britain First. Recently the far right have gained vicarious legitimacy from the Brexit campaign of the UK Independence Party (UKIP) which based its campaign on ridding the country of immigrants, so it is not surprising to learn that the number of race-hate crimes rose after the EU referendum in 2016 (O’Neill, 2017).

### **3 Teacher education in England**

In the last census in Britain in 2011 about 14% of the population identified as Black, Asian or minority ethnic<sup>2</sup> (BAME) (Office for National Statistics, 2012). The fastest growing group are people of mixed heritage backgrounds. Just as the population as a whole is changing to become more ethnically diverse, so is the school population in England. 33.1% of primary pupils in state-funded schools are of minority ethnic origins, as are 30.3% of secondary pupils. The ethnic diversity of English classrooms has continued to increase year on year (Department for Education, 2018a). 21.2% of primary pupils and 16.6% of secondary pupils are exposed to a language other than English at home (Department for Education, 2018a).

Whilst over a third of the secondary and primary pupil population in England is composed of children and young people from BAME backgrounds, the teacher population does not reflect this ethnic diversity. In 2017, the majority of schoolteachers in England (whose ethnicity was known) were White British (86.2%), compared with 78.5% of the working age population of England that was White British in the last census in 2011 (Department for Education, 2018b). There are very few teachers from other BAME groups: 1.9% of teachers whose ethnicity was known were from the Indian ethnic group; 1.1% Pakistani; 1% from the Black Caribbean group; 3.8% from the Other White ethnic group and 1.6% from the White Irish group; this

---

<sup>2</sup> This term is widely recognised and used in Britain to refer to people of colour or visible minorities.

compares with 3.0%, 5.6% and 1.0% of the working age population of England in 2011, respectively (Department for Education, 2018b).

The management of schools in England rests predominantly with those from the hegemonic majority since 93.0% of headteachers (principals) are White British as are 90.0% of deputy or assistant headteachers. Department for Education (2018b) data shows that headteachers were least likely to be from Mixed White and Black African, Bangladeshi, Chinese or from Other Black backgrounds. The BAME population of postgraduate pre-service teachers, which amounts to 18% according to the Department for Education (2018d), is higher than the teacher population. However, this statistic relates to entrants and previous research (Carrington & Tomalin, 2000; Cole & Stuart, 2005; Jones & Watson, 1997; Jones & Maguire, 1998; Lander & Zaheerali, 2016) shows that BAME student teachers' journeys through their initial teacher education or training programmes is challenging with the result that many do not complete, or take longer to gain, qualified teacher status.

There is clearly a wide ethnic difference between the pupil and teacher populations. This racial disparity<sup>3</sup> is described by Chiu, Sayman, Carrero, Gibbon, Zolkoski, and Lusk (2017) as cultural dissonance, meaning there is a lack of understanding or disconnect between majority White teachers and their ethnically diverse students in schools. BAME children and youngsters are more likely to be taught by White teachers, and they are unlikely to see their ethnicity reflected in the body of people who teach and have power over them. Therefore, it can be assumed that the pedagogies employed by teachers from the hegemonic majority are likely to reflect majority values, knowledge and understandings. Yet how do we prepare our teachers to deal with race and racism in schools and classrooms?

Given the social and political climate, key questions which must be asked are: How do we prepare pre- and in-service teachers in England to deal with racism in schools? How confident are our teachers in relation to topics such as race and can they deploy anti-racist pedagogies to counter the rising threat of racism? There are no specific data related to how well we prepare our future teachers to teach in a multicultural society<sup>4</sup>. However, each year the Department for Education issues a survey for newly qualified teachers (NQTs) to

---

<sup>3</sup> This term refers to the difference between the BAME pupil population compared to the BAME teacher population in schools. BAME pupils do not see their ethnicity reflected in the teacher workforce.

<sup>4</sup> A multicultural society comprises people from different ethnic groups, cultures, traditions, faiths and linguistic backgrounds living together in communities within a country.

ascertain how well they were prepared by their universities or other non-higher education establishments for the teaching profession. The instrument, the Newly Qualified Teacher Survey is issued to all new teachers and notoriously the response rate is poor but nevertheless much import is placed on the outcomes of the survey. In 2013, the survey consisted of eighteen questions aligned to the Teachers' Standards (Department for Education, 2011) designed to ascertain the effectiveness of teacher education programmes. Between 2003 and 2013, there was one question which arguably could be considered to gauge NQTs' preparation to teach within a multicultural society. which was 'How good was your training in preparing you to teach pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds?'

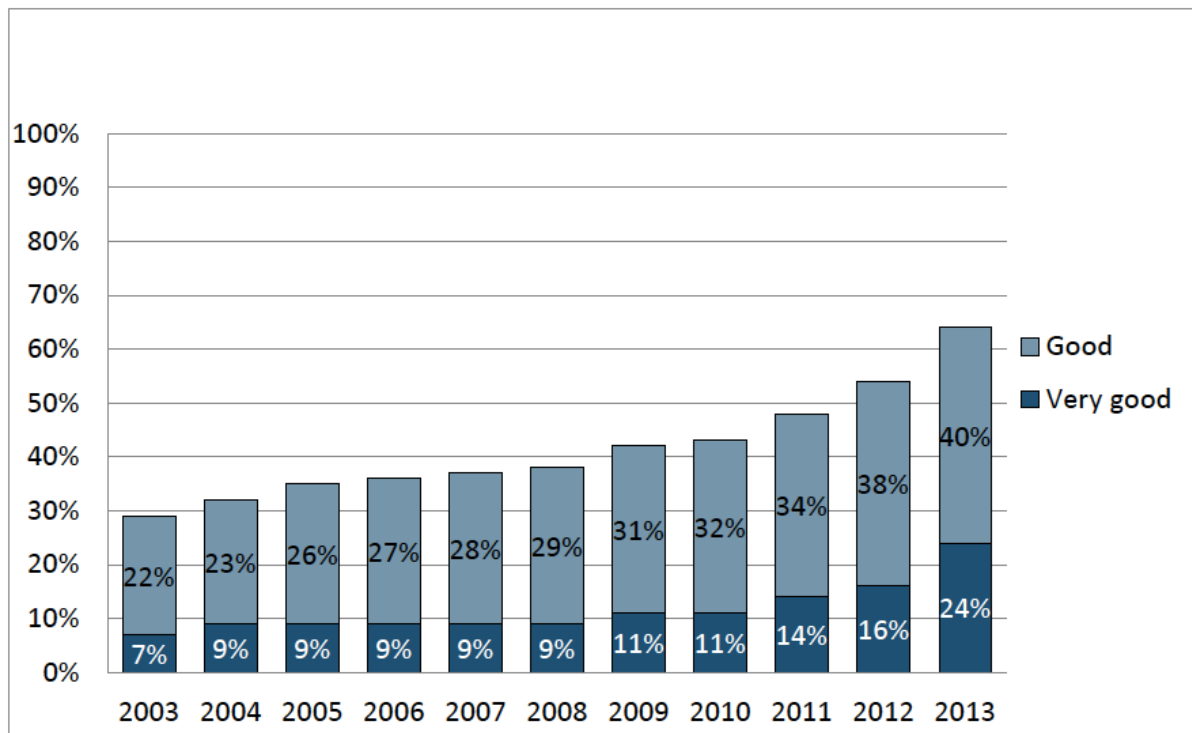


Fig. 1: Primary NQT Survey: How good was your training in preparing you to teach pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds? (Department for Education, 2013, p. 20)

Figure 1 shows the slow increase in NQT satisfaction regarding their preparation to teach pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds as good or very good. Given the low response rates to the NQT survey, approximately 40% of new primary teachers did not feel sufficiently well prepared to teach pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, so entered the profession feeling insufficiently well prepared in this respect. There are no qualitative data on how these teachers fare within ethnically diverse classrooms. We do not know how they manage the learning and achievements of these pupils as new teachers. What stereotypes or deficit notions do teachers operate with when engaging with these pupils? Are these teachers left to

sink? Or do they survive equipped only with classroom craft knowledge rather than a deeper understanding about the theory and practice of teaching in a racially diverse society?

From 2005 to 2013, I was seconded to the Teacher Development Agency (TDA)<sup>5</sup>-funded project called Multiverse which produced web-based resources and provided training to help providers of initial teacher education and training to better prepare pre-service teachers to teach in our multi-ethnic society. As the data from the NQT survey indicates, there was growing confidence in new teachers' preparation to teach in ethnically diverse classrooms. In England, it is widely recognised that the NQT survey is a weak indicator to gauge teacher confidence since there is a low response rate, but it is the best national indicator we have to date. The growing NQT confidence in teaching pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds was borne out of the resources and training provided by Multiverse. But the arrival of a new coalition government in 2010 led to the withdrawal of funds for Multiverse and the archiving of all its resources.

There have been passing references to race in the previous Teachers' Standards enveloped in the term 'cultural diversity'. In the current Teachers' Standards there is no mention of how new teachers should be prepared to teach in multicultural classrooms and even the phrase cultural diversity has disappeared. The only reference to diversity is in relation to teachers' preparation to teach pupils for whom English is an additional language. Also, in 2014 the NQT survey questions changed from: 'How good was your training in preparing you to teach pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds?' to 'How well did your training, including your school placements, prepare you to teach pupils from *all ethnic* backgrounds?' (Department for Education, 2018d, emphasis added). This appears to be a rather odd question since we *all* have ethnicity. Ethnicity appears to be interpreted as a facet or sole characteristic of those racialised as Black, Asian or minority ethnic, in other words people of colour. But if we all possess ethnicity the question is really asking how well we prepare our teachers to teach all children and young people! This is a bizarre paradox. Race seems to have been erased from the Teachers' Standards and the NQT survey. This is a serious omission within two key documents related to teacher training which in the presence of increasing ethnic diversity in our schools appears anomalous.

---

<sup>5</sup> The TDA was a government quango set up to improve teacher education, recruitment, selection and retention.

This change begs the question, has anything changed in the NQT Survey with the re-phrasing of this question? Table 1 below illustrates that new teachers still interpret the phrase ‘pupils from all ethnic backgrounds’ as referring to racialised pupils of colour.

	<b>All NQTs</b>	<b>Primary (A)</b>	<b>Secondary (B)</b>
Promote British values such as democracy, liberty, mutual respect and tolerance	74	72	75
Teach pupils from all ethnic backgrounds	53	51	56
Teach pupils with English as an Additional Language	39	37	41

Table 1. Percentage of NQTs who felt Initial Teacher Training prepared them well for each aspect of teaching, by training provider (Department for Education, 2018c)

It seems little has changed since 2013. Newly qualified teachers still do not feel well prepared to teach pupils from minority ethnic groups: 51% of new primary teachers reported to be prepared to teach pupils from all ethnic backgrounds in 2017. Yet in 2013, 58% reported their training prepared them well in this aspect. It is imperative that initial teacher education does better. There has been a notable increase in the number of pupils from minority-ethnic backgrounds and those for whom English is an additional language since 2006 and yet 11 years later just over half of English NQTs feel prepared to teach pupils of all ethnicities. The pupil demographics in themselves demand we better prepare new teachers for multi-ethnic and multilingual classrooms. But this does not appear to be the case.

#### **4 Critical race theory and whiteness**



The policy silences related to race within teacher education as evidenced by the lack of references to race or cultural diversity in the standards and the erasure of race from the NQT survey perhaps indicate the post-racial approach to race, ethnicity and racism within the training of new teachers in England. In analysing these silences, I utilise critical race theory and whiteness; specifically, I deploy the tools of whiteness (Picower, 2009) to analyse the present absence (Apple, 1999) of race within pre-service teacher education policy, curriculum and practice.

Critical race theory (CRT) was started by Black scholars and has its origins in legal studies in the United States. It “comes from a long tradition of resistance to the unequal and unjust distribution of power and resources along political, economic, racial and gendered lines in America and across the globe” (Taylor, 2009, p.1). CRT advocates that racism is not just acts of violence, hatred or name calling, but is an ever-present facet of society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). It is evident through inactions, silent acts of omission, or deletion, acts of exclusion, or the apparent innocence of polite inclusion which fails to acknowledge the racialised experience of people of colour. This is the type of racism which goes unnoticed. It is embedded within policy and everyday practices. It pervades institutions and remains unchallenged. Gillborn (2008) refers to these as the “hidden operations of power” (p. 27) which construct and lead to disadvantage.

CRT represents a movement of activists and academic activists who study the manifestation of power, race and racism. They seek to disrupt and transform the cycles which perpetuate race inequalities (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). CRT questions the concepts of liberalism and meritocracy which have been insufficient in addressing everyday and structural racism. Indeed, CRT scholars argue these deeply embedded, benign and seemingly unquestioned concepts are hegemonic constructions which serve to maintain the status quo of race inequality. According to Delgado & Stefancic (2017) CRT advocates that, “our system of white-over-color ascendancy serves important purposes, both psychic and material, for the dominant group” (p. 9). Importantly, CRT highlights the social construction of race, which has no biological basis, but is used as a tool by dominant society to manipulate, to switch it on and off, as it sees fit. Leonardo (2009) asserts, “whites created race in order to divide the world, to carve it up into enlightened and endarkened continents, and to delineate the white subject from the black object of history” (p. 124). Thus, this led to differential racialisation to suit the needs of a dominant society (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017). For example, in Britain,

workers were needed to restart the economy and industry after the Second World War. The majority of these workers came from Commonwealth countries such as India, Pakistan and the Caribbean. They were people of colour, with different religions, such as Sikh, Christian, Hindu and Islam. At that point in history they were, perhaps not welcomed with open arms, but they were essential to the country's economic growth. Now, these people of colour and their descendants, in the case of British Muslims, are cast as extremists and terrorists. Differential racialisation is a tool implemented by the hegemonic majority to fulfil its interests. CRT exposes how any gains in equality for BAME people are only accommodated when such gain converges "with the interest of powerful Whites" (Taylor, 2009, p. 5). This phenomenon is referred to by CRT scholars as interest convergence, a concept forged by Derrick Bell, one of the founders of CRT. There are many cited examples of interest convergence in the US. For example, Bell noted that the civil rights gains for Black people were made in the period of the Cold War when the US needed to attract trade from nations in Africa and South Asia, nations populated by brown and black people who would be influenced by media images of the oppression of people of colour in the US as they struggled for their civil rights.

CRT postulates that if race is a socially constructed concept promoted by whites to stratify humanity whereby those belonging to the white group are superior, then this has led to racism as a facet of daily life. Taylor (2009), asserts, "the assumptions of White superiority are so ingrained in political, legal, and educational structures that they are almost unrecognizable" (p. 4). White superiority is ever-present and to most White people it is invisible, yet they benefit economically, politically and educationally from its potent power. White supremacy is, however, painfully visible and its effects tangible in the lives of people of colour. The examination of whiteness enables the exposure of persistent structural and everyday racism and its perpetuation. Delgado and Stefancic (2017) note that the legal definition of whiteness in the US emerged from immigration law as the courts determined who would be afforded the privilege of living in the US. Unsurprisingly, the whites were defined "in opposition to blackness or some other form of otherness, an opposition that also marked the boundary between privilege and its opposite" (Delgado & Stefancic, 2017, p. 87). Whiteness is a social, political and cultural construct underpinning structural racism (Garner, 2010). It is a racialised discourse established over time to privilege those who are white and to maintain the interests of white groups. This is how it is linked to white people and how they gain from

whiteness as a hegemonic discourse in most western societies. It is often silently assumed that Black and minority ethnic people are the deficient and the aberrant 'Other' (Said, 1978/2003) which is a persistent myth to maintain white privilege and disadvantage people of colour. However, discussions of whiteness shift the gaze from people of colour to the white hegemonic majority. Turning the spotlight to illuminate whiteness and how it facilitates historical and contemporary advantage on those racialised as white causes guilt, discomfort and inevitable hostility against those who dare to expose white racial advantage and privilege. When whiteness is exposed white people seek to defend and protect it.

Picower (2009) describes whiteness as an unthinking and uncritical stance towards race and ethnicity. She delineates the "tools of Whiteness" (Picower, 2009, p. 197), or strategies used by those racialised as white to shut down or divert and deflect discussions about whiteness, race or racism. She describes the first as the emotional tools of whiteness manifest in anger, defensiveness, guilt or evident in phrases such as 'I can't change anything so why bother', or exclamations of innocence like 'I don't have a racist bone in my body'. The second are the ideological tools which are beliefs which maintain and protect white positions reflected in phrases such as 'we're all equal now' or 'we just need to be nice'. These ideological tools rely on maintenance of the ethical good self and can draw on colour-blindness as a means to protect the ethical good self from the scrutinising spotlight used to expose the advantages accrued through whiteness. The third, Picower (2009) refers to as the performative tools of whiteness used to protect extant beliefs and practices. Silence is often used as a form of resistance, protection and control when issues related to race or racism arise. These tools of whiteness are thereby used to maintain the power of whiteness and the structures that uphold it.

## **5 Narratives of whiteness**

CRT and whiteness form the key theoretical framework relevant to the study of race and initial teacher education in England. Teacher education is imbued with hidden operations of power. These operations are evident in the lack of ethnic diversity in the teacher and headteacher populations, in the teacher education curriculum where references to race, racism or even cultural diversity are absent and where, most starkly, power operates through teacher educators and the race-absent pedagogical approaches they employ to prepare teachers for ethnically diverse classrooms. As will become clear later in the text, the structures of power are so entrenched in initial teacher education that, "Addressing racism in teacher education is

a process of systematic and cultural change rather than a short term ‘fixing’ of a problem” (Sleeter, 2017, p. 164). As I have argued previously, the assimilationist approach to policy making in teacher education in England and the de-professionalisation of teachers has resulted in the inadequate preparation of new teachers to teach in schools where one third of pupils have Black, Asian or minority ethnic backgrounds (Lander, 2014).

One way in which whiteness is maintained in teacher education is through the predominantly white teacher-educator workforce (Lander & Santoro, 2017). In this section I examine data from research undertaken in an education department at a university in southern England. The research consisted of unstructured interviews<sup>6</sup> with twenty-five teacher educators (20 females and five males), who had completed successful careers in schools; all of them were white, and the majority had no experience of teaching in multicultural settings. Their lack of experience working in multi-ethnic schools and environments meant they had given very little thought to race or racism. It was likely they brought their limited experience or perhaps even their racial stereotypes into teacher education and may have had difficulty engaging with, or indeed may have been hostile to, debates on race, ethnicity and racism in education. However, these teacher educators should support student teachers, as Chiu et al. (2017) postulate,

to view the classroom as a microcosm of the world and that each student is a unique representation of diverse experiences, values, abilities, understandings, approaches and beliefs. Pre-service teachers should be given the opportunities to think critically about diversity and culture in a reflective manner, (p.47)

and I would contend to understand the operation and effects of racial power and privilege.

What emerged from the interviews were narratives demonstrating and upholding whiteness. Using Picower’s (2009) tools of whiteness to analyse the teacher-educators’ narratives revealed the use of the emotional and ideological tools of whiteness. Space does not permit the full range of data to be shared or discussed so a small sample is presented here. When asked how race or ethnic diversity featured in her teaching, one respondent noted, “My modules don’t lend themselves to cultural issues”. This straightforward denial of ethnic

---

<sup>6</sup> After gaining institutional ethical approval, teacher-educators were invited by email to participate in the research. Interviews were arranged at convenient times and venues for the participants. The interviews were one to one, and half an hour in length. The participants were asked to reflect on the ITE provision related to race and racism on their courses.

diversity is an element relevant to this tutor's pedagogical approach. The use of this emotional tool of whiteness absolved her from engaging with the issue of racial and ethnic diversity within her subject area thereby not only maintaining its extant whiteness, but consciously avoiding the integration of race or cultural diversity within the subject. Therefore, I would argue, providing a narrow and impoverished curriculum devoid of other cultural perspectives which constituted a poor curriculum role model for student teachers. When another respondent was asked about the inequality of outcomes for children from certain BAME groups, she said that she, "didn't have time to fit everything in" but gives time "to do EAL<sup>7</sup>". This was another example of the use of the emotional tools of whiteness. It was not an outright denial but a deflection, a move designed to provide a crumb of information which may serve to, as they say, "cover her back" in relation to teaching about diversity, but it was also a means to avoid further conversation about this educator's responsibility with respect to preparing student teachers for ethnically diverse classrooms. The mere fact that she admits to covering EAL indicates a "box-ticking" approach to the subject of racial and ethnic diversity which is conceived neatly as related to children for whom English is an additional language, but not all of whom will be from visible ethnic minority groups. In reality, some of these children may well be from white eastern European backgrounds yet this tutor associates the term EAL with children of colour. This misconception may be transmitted through her teaching to student teachers.

It is not surprising that ex-teachers who have become teacher educators demonstrated a liberal, caring and measured approach to race in order to preserve the image of the teacher as a good and ethical being. In doing so they revealed how they deployed the ideological tools of whiteness to maintain white innocence and niceness. For example, one teacher educator said, "our students are nice people" and another noted, "we don't want to add to our student teachers' layer of worry, they are good people". In using these semantic constructions both teacher educators were indicating that teaching student teachers about race and racism would be worrisome for them on top of all the other aspects of teaching with which they had to contend, as well as implying that race and racism were not important aspects of the students' preparation to teach. When discussing passive racism with one respondent and how inaction with respect to racism could be construed as racist (the interviewer meant it was insufficient to merely be non-racist), she exclaimed, "That's harsh! We don't do that [...] we are nice

---

<sup>7</sup> English as an additional language.

[people]”. The invocation of teachers and teacher educators as “nice” was a key ideological tool of whiteness used frequently within the interviews. The teacher-educators used niceness to uphold their status and that of student teachers as ethical, caring and good beings who could never be associated with such an ugly and aberrant process as racism. No doubt, their conception of racism as the domain of far-right racist thugs jarred with their conception of themselves as nice, middle-class liberals who considered themselves as non-racists. From their white perspective they failed to comprehend the omnipresence of racism in everyday life, a fact painfully obvious to BAME teacher-educators, teachers and children. These white teacher-educators were complicit in the structural racism within teacher education and their failure to be actively anti-racist through the resources and pedagogies they employed simply contributed to perpetuating whiteness and maintain structural racism in teacher education, thus maintaining the status quo of white supremacy (Gillborn, 2008; Lander, 2014).

Another tutor was “utterly, utterly shocked” that students on another course had not wanted to be taught by a Black tutor. This expression of shock can be analysed as an ideological tool of whiteness. This was another example of how this teacher-educator assumed that such an overt act of racism on the part of the students distanced her from this aberrant act and most importantly re-inscribed her liberal niceness and its associated and assumed non-racist status. However, this utterance of shock exposes her whiteness and complicity in maintaining racist structures within teacher education, such as a predominantly white curriculum, which insufficiently prepares student teachers for ethnic diversity. Overall these utterances reveal how the processes of racialisation and socialisation have served to inculcate whiteness in such a way that it seems innate. Such is the character of whiteness it is seen as a natural and ‘normal’ way of being. Thus, the power which sustains whiteness lurks unseen behind the curtain of normality and the tools of whiteness are deployed to ensure the curtain remains firmly closed. This is why teacher education is a practice of whiteness (Lander, 2014).

## **6 Implications and the way forward**

If the small selection of views discussed above are prevalent in one institution, they are likely to be reflected in others. Then student teachers’ understanding of how race and ethnicity affect pupils’ learning and achievement, or any racial stereotypes or myths which pre-service teachers hold are going to go unchallenged and not developed beyond their everyday understandings by the educators who teach them. These tutors are not agents of change; they merely serve to consolidate and perpetuate the dominant discourse of whiteness which is

often reinforced on school practicums. Thus the status quo is maintained through policy silences and the lack of opportunities to talk about and develop student teachers' understanding about race, ethnicity and racism. What then are the implications of this lack of preparation to teach in our multicultural classrooms for student teachers? As illustrated above in the NQT survey results, they feel under-prepared for the ethnic and cultural diversity of our classrooms. Racism is embedded in teacher education through the policy gaps and silences related to preparing teachers to teach in multicultural schools, through a predominantly white curriculum and through the tools of whiteness deployed to ensure there is a lack of preparation within pre-service teacher education to serve the needs of our multicultural society. The pervasive and persuasive hegemonic nature of whiteness remains centred and unshaken. It is dutifully replicated through pre-service teacher education and thus white advantage succeeds.

However, if there are agents of change within initial teacher education willing and able to instigate change and shake some aspects of whiteness, then some hope and change is possible. As Sleeter (2017) contends, instigating any change in teacher education with respect to overcoming whiteness will require massive cultural change. I was able to do this on a small scale within one institution through introducing a citizenship specialism which developed student teachers' understanding with respect to equality and diversity and deepened their understanding of race and racism in education. In addition, as a manager in initial teacher education, I possessed the agency and position to mandate equality and diversity education for all student teachers across the three years of their initial teacher education programme. These programme modifications developed some students' commitment to race equality; they acted as catalysts and agents of change in their student groups and on practicum. They developed confidence in engaging with their peers and tutors on matters related to race and racism. One student was even able to intervene in a racist incident she witnessed at a bus stop. In an email to me she said, "Please be encouraged, you are making a big difference" (personal communication, June 22nd 2013). Teacher-educators with genuine commitment, knowledge and courage can carve out a space in teacher education to offer hope and provide tools for change in turbulent times to better equip our newly qualified teachers to be the hopeful agents of change in multicultural classrooms.

## **Bibliography**

- Apple, M. (1999). The absent presence of race in educational reform. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 2(1), 9-16.
- BBC. (2019, February 18). *Islamophobia behind far-right rise in UK report says*. Retrieved June 30, 2019, from <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-47280082>
- Carrington, B., & Tomalin, R. (2000). Towards a More Inclusive Profession: Recruitment and Ethnicity. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 23(2), 139-157.
- Chapman, B. (2019, July 9). Ethnicity pay gap: lowest earning groups paid a fifth less than white British workers. *The Independent*. Retrieved July 22, 2019, from <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/business/news/uk-ethnicity-pay-gap-figures-british-chinese-indian-workers-a8997556.html>
- Chiu, C. L., Sayman, D., Carrero, K. M., Gibbon, T., Zolkoski, S. M., & Lusk, M. E. (2017). Developing Culturally Competent Preservice Teachers. *Multicultural Perspectives*, 19(1), 47-52.
- Cole, M., & Stuart, J. S. (2005). 'Do you ride on elephants' and 'never tell them you're German': the experiences of British Asian and black, and overseas student teachers in South-East England. *British Educational Research Journal*, 31(3), 349-366.
- Dawson, M. C., & Bobo, L. D. (2009). One Year Later and the Myth of a Post-racial Society. Editorial Introduction. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, 6(2), 247-249.
- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2001). *Critical Race Theory. An Introduction*. New York City, New York: University Press.
- Delgado, R., & Stefancic, J. (2017). *Critical Race Theory. An Introduction*. New York City, New York: University Press.
- Department for Education (2011, July). *Teachers' Standards. Guidance for school leaders, school staff and governing bodies* (DfE Publication No. 00066-2011). London, United Kingdom. Retrieved May 31, 2019, from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/665520/Teachers\\_Standards.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/665520/Teachers_Standards.pdf)
- Department for Education (2013, November). *Newly Qualified Teachers: Annual Survey 2013. Sector Level summary* (DfE Research Report No. RR306). London, United Kingdom. Retrieved May 19, 2020, from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/255659/DFE-RR306.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/255659/DFE-RR306.pdf)
- Department for Education (2018a, June). *Schools, pupils and their characteristics: January 2018* (DfE Statistical Publication). London, United Kingdom. Retrieved May 22, 2019, from <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/schools-pupils-and-their-characteristics-january-2018>
- Department for Education (2018b, July). *The School Workforce* (DfE Statistical Publication). London, United Kingdom. Retrieved, May 22, 2019, from



[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/811622/SWFC\\_MainText.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811622/SWFC_MainText.pdf)

Department for Education (2018c, September). *Newly Qualified Teachers: Annual Survey 2017* (DfE Research Report No. RR834). Retrieved May 31, 2019, from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/738037/NQT\\_2017\\_survey.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/738037/NQT_2017_survey.pdf)

Department for Education (2018d, November). *Initial Teacher Training (ITT) Census for the academic year 2018 to 2019, England* (DfE Statistical Publication). London, United Kingdom. Retrieved May 22, 2019, from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/759716/ITT\\_Census\\_2018\\_to\\_2019\\_main\\_text.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/759716/ITT_Census_2018_to_2019_main_text.pdf)

Department for Education (2019, June). *The School Workforce* (DfE Statistical Publication). London, United Kingdom. Retrieved, May 22, 2020, from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/811622/SWFC\\_MainText.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/811622/SWFC_MainText.pdf)

Garner, S. (2010). *Racisms. An Introduction*. London, United Kingdom: Sage.

Gillborn, D. (2008). *Racism and Education. Coincidence or Conspiracy?* Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.

Grierson, J. (2018, August 27). Hostile environment: anatomy of policy disaster. *The Guardian*. Retrieved June 14, 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2018/aug/27/hostile-environment-anatomy-of-a-policy-disaster>

Higher Education Funding Council for England (2018, March). *Differences in Student Outcomes. The effect of student characteristics* (HEFCE Report 2018/05). Retrieved June 14, 2019, from <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20180405115303/http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/year/2018/201805/>

Jones, C., & Maguire, M. (1998). Needed and Wanted? The school experiences of some minority ethnic trainee teachers in the UK. *European Journal of Intercultural Studies*, 9(1), 79-91.

Jones, C., Maguire, M., & Watson, B. (1997). The School Experience of Some Minority Ethnic Students in London Schools during Initial Teacher Training. *Journal of Education for Teaching: International Research and Pedagogy*, 23(2), 131-144.

Lander, V. (2014). Initial Teacher Education: The Practice of Whiteness. In R. Race and V. Lander (Eds.), *Advancing Race and Ethnicity in Education* (pp. 93-110). Basingstoke, United Kingdom: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lander, V., & Santoro, N. (2017). Invisible and hypervisible academics: the experiences of Black and minority ethnic teacher educators. *Teaching in Higher Education*, 22(8), 1008-1021.

- Lander, V., & Zaheerali, A. S. (2016). One Step Forward, Two Steps Back: The Continuing Saga of Minority Ethnic Teacher Recruitment and Retention in England. In C. Schmidt & J. Schneider (Eds.), *Diversifying the Teaching Force in Transnational Contexts: Critical Perspectives* (pp. 29-34). Rotterdam, Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Mompelat, L. (2019, March 21). *Connecting the dots: structural racism in 2019*. Runnymede. Retrieved June 10, 2019, from <https://www.runnymedetrust.org/blog/connecting-the-dots-structural-racism-in-2019-and-beyond>
- Nyak, A. (2006). After race: Ethnography, race and post-race theory. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 29(3), 411-430.
- Office for National Statistics. (2012, December 11). *Ethnicity and National Identity in England and Wales: 2011*. Retrieved June 20, 2019, from <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/culturalidentity/ethnicity/articles/ethnicityandnationalidentityinenglandandwales/2012-12-11>
- Okolosie, L. (2019, May 31). Racial Abuse in the Playground? That's just England in 2019. *The Guardian*. Retrieved June 3, 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2019/may/31/racial-abuse-playground-schools-racism>
- Olusoga, D. (2019, June 16). Windrush: archived documents show the long betrayal *The Guardian*. Retrieved July 1, 2019, from <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2019/jun/16/windrush-scandal-the-long-betrayal-archived-documents-david-olusoga>
- O'Neill, A. (2017, October 17). *Hate Crime, England and Wales, 2016/17. Statistical Bulletin 17/17*. London, United Kingdom: Home Office. Retrieved June 25, 2019, from [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/652136/hate-crime-1617-hosb1717.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/652136/hate-crime-1617-hosb1717.pdf)
- Picower, B. (2009). The unexamined Whiteness of teaching: how White teachers maintain and enact dominant racial ideologies. *Race, Ethnicity and Education*, 12(2), 197-215.
- Said, E. (2003). *Orientalism*. London, United Kingdom: Penguin. (Original work published 1978)
- Sleeter, C. (2017). Critical Race Theory and the Whiteness of Teacher Education. *Urban Education*, 52(2), 155–169.
- Taylor, E. (2009). The Foundations of Critical Race Theory in Education: An Introduction. In E. Taylor, D. Gillborn, & G. Ladson-Billings (Eds.), *Foundations of Critical Race Theory in Education* (pp.1-13). Abingdon, United Kingdom: Routledge.
- Universities UK & National Union of Students. (2019, May 2). *Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic Student Attainment at UK Universities: #Closingthegap* (Report). London, United Kingdom. Retrieved Mai 19, 2020, from

<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2019/bame-student-attainment-uk-universities-closing-the-gap.pdf>