

## Beyond Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Decolonizing Teacher Education

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### INTRODUCTION

This book is a project in criticality. In the introductory chapter, we set out an argument supporting what we identify as the need for teacher education to be decolonized. This was, in part, in response to our growing concern that culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) as practiced in education was not having the desired effect. Drawing on our varying experiences of working with pre-service and in-service teachers, we have had many opportunities to reflect on two things. First, multicultural education and CRP, as taken up by white educators, often focuses on surface features and the needs of the “Other”. This is a focus based on narrow understandings of culture, on deficit dispositions towards difference, and on the teacher self as an agent in changing the Other (e.g. minoritized students’ academic achievement, and life chances). Second, our attempts to connect CRP to the more fundamental issue of white privilege (embodied in education systems, curricula, school structures, and the teaching profession), as a

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means of decolonizing what we perceive to be the key barriers to successful implementation of CRP, is often met with resistance.

In this concluding chapter, we wish to make the case that CRP/relevant teaching is never going to be effective in the ways in which Gloria Ladson-Billings (1992, 1995) and Geneva Gay (2002, 2013) originally intended because it does not speak to mainstream educators in ways that are intelligible to them – much is “lost in translation”. In the chapters of this book we see some of the reasons why CRP may not be intelligible and these are grouped together as four interconnected, ideas, or issues: CRP, by its very name, encourages a focus on the Other, albeit from a positive rather than deficit position; this enables teachers (who are, as established in Chapter 1, predominantly white European/European settler) to avoid facing their own whiteness and white privilege; it does not address the “epistemic blindness” (Andreotti 2016, p. 104) of whiteness and Eurocentric worldviews; and finally, it focuses on changing individual teachers’ practices and does not address systemic and structural inequalities inherent in education systems which are a direct product of the colonial world system (Grosfoguel 2011).

In Chapter 1 we set out the reasons for calling the current world system “colonial” and showed how it is a totalizing system that has affected every aspect of society. We showed how Indigenous studies and research on minoritized students (Gillborn 2010) bring much needed perspectives to our understanding of the pervasive effect of colonialism over time, not least the ontological and epistemic violences that were perpetrated and which continue to be felt as collective trauma today (Cote-Meek 2014). We proposed that nothing short of radical change is needed, change that works at macro- and micro-levels from policies to practices, and whole systems to classroom relationships. This change is a transformative process of decolonization – a decolonization of minds (Dascal 2009) and, by default, a decolonization of the colonial world system:

Decolonization, if it is to be successful as a reaction against such a deep, powerful, and long lasting colonization of the mind, cannot but be itself as radical as its opponent. It must, therefore, eradicate not only its surface manifestations and the concomitant “colonial system”, but its epistemic roots as well. (Dascal 2009, p. 316)

For us, this means confronting whiteness and white privilege – turning the gaze 180 degrees towards those whose assumed normalcy and neutrality

support their narratives of “doing good” while hiding from themselves their complicities in ontological and epistemological violences. In proposing this shift, we are cognizant of the danger that whites who reflect on their own whiteness may “centre the analysis on themselves and make the object of whiteness studies (the oppressive nature of white supremacy) more about the subjectivity of white people” (Preston 2013, p. 2). We agree that this is a very real danger *if* the decolonizing project is taken on by only whites, or only people of colour, or only Indigenous peoples. If the metaphor of a war is used, then the places of war are situated in the mind (the battleground), while the spaces in which the “fighting” is done are the third spaces between cultures, with the tools (the weapons) of intercultural communication and dialogue. In addition, “Since different knowledge practices take place on different spatial scales and according to different durations and rhythms, inter-subjectivity [between different knowledge systems] entails also the disposition to know and act in different scales (inter-scalarity) and articulate different durations (inter-temporality)” (De Sousa Santos 2007, p. 14).

Centring narratives of the marginalized, Indigenous, and people of colour is essential to the initial process of conscience and consciousness-raising among white, mainstream populations. This requires *critical* interculturality, which we discuss below.

### CRITICAL INTERCULTURALITY

The field of intercultural communication and understanding in the West is dominated by research in the United States (Bennett 1993; Bennett and Bennett 2004; Hammer et al. 2003; Deardorff 2006) and the United Kingdom (Byram 1997; Byram and Parmenter 2012). The work in the United States is a response to increasing globalization and the need for greater intercultural sensitivity and competence in, for example, commerce and education. In the United Kingdom, the research has been driven by the field of foreign language acquisition and an understanding that during their study abroad semesters, language students need to be interculturally competent. In both regions, although the emphasis is on individuals’ levels of competence and sensitivity, this is framed within a neoliberal discourse of commodification and a culture of pragmatism (Gorski 2008) in the focus on categorization, assessment, and judgement on the one hand, and on the value ascribed to successful intercultural competence on the other. Bennett’s (1993) work, built on by Hammer et al. (2003) and Deardorff (2006), created a developmental model of intercultural

sensitivity in which individuals could be assessed against six categories from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism, with movement from one category to the next being seen to be evolutionary/developmental. Byram's (1997) work focused on the knowledge, skills, and values necessary for successful intercultural *communicative* competence, bringing the role of language to the fore. Therefore, while there is a discourse of individual competence and sensitivity, these attributes are measured against categories and sets of competences with the assumption that it is (a) desirable to measure such things (i.e. to make judgements in order to assign people to categories) and (b) possible to do so. The second area of concern is that the value ascribed to successful intercultural competence within the west is, ironically, often couched within an ethnocentric discourse itself. Two examples serve to illustrate this point: first, that interculturalism as a dimension of international understanding is about securing a new form of imperialism in the World, for economic advantage (Kabir 2011, p. 47); second, in the context of international students studying in a Finnish university, intercultural competence centres on offering advice to international students that enables them to fit in – i.e. to take on Finnish ways of being (Dervin and Layne 2013).

In accordance with Dervin and Layne (2013), we view this as a further example of abyssal thinking and the pervasive effects of the colonial world system. De Sousa Santos (2007) shows how, with abyssal thinking, the debates about what counts as valid knowledge – objective and scientific versus existential and philosophical – are based on visible differences on one side of the abyss, while being ignorant and thus rendering invisible what is on the other side of the abyss. We interpret this, in the context of interculturality, as a debate over the differences in *perspective* about whether the emphasis becomes intercultural communication/intercultural competence/intercultural sensitivity/intercultural understanding/intercultural education. These perspectives may be informed from different knowledge communities, but their validity as acceptable forms of knowledge is not questioned. In other words, while the tensions between the various perspectives are visible in academic debate, this

visibility is premised upon the invisibility of forms of knowledge that cannot be fitted into any of these ways of knowing. I mean popular, lay, plebeian, peasant, or [I]ndigenous knowledges on the other side of the line. They vanish as relevant or commensurable knowledges because they are beyond truth and falsehood. (De Sousa Santos 2007, p. 2)

Today as then, both the creation and the negation of the other side of the line is constitutive of hegemonic principles and practices. Today as then, the impossibility of co-presence between the two sides of the line runs supreme. Today as then, the legal and political civility on this side of the line is premised upon the existence of utter incivility on the other side of the line. (De Sousa Santos 2007, pp. 4–5)

If, as we contend, intercultural studies are inscribed with abyssal thinking, it needs to move not into a mode of anti-abyssal thinking (which would continue to be derived from abyssal lines), but into a mode of post-abyssal thinking which

involves a radical break with modern Western ways of thinking and acting . . . to think in non-derivative terms means to think from the perspective of the other side of the line, precisely because the other side of the line has been the realm of the unthinkable in Western modernity. (De Sousa Santos 2007, p. 11)

We support this view as our own experiences testify to the ways in which white Europeans and European settlers appropriate knowledges (Grosfoguel 2011) from the other and create history in ways that erase the histories of others, leading to the disappearance of knowledge that is inconvenient (see Dussel 2012 for a discussion of Muslim culture in Spain prior to the “conquest” of America), and the construction of knowledge that is more convenient, for example, the “knowledge” that has been created about Muslims as a homogenized, fundamentalist group since 9/11 (Kabir 2011).

A post-abyssal interculturality would therefore need to be founded on ontologies and epistemologies that are unthinkable; a *critical* interculturality that requires centring the knowledges of southern, Indigenous, and other marginalized peoples by those communities and their allies, and which then is negotiated interculturally. It also requires the creation of spaces for interaction and dialogue that address “structural inequalities, unequal power relations and discrimination” (James 2008, p. 13).

In the remainder of this chapter we connect the themes that have emerged in Chapters 2–10 to our own intercultural experiences. Our aim is to make explicit the process of connecting the authors’ practices in CRP to the theories introduced in Chapter 1, and how the interplay between the two enabled us to extend theory and to consider the

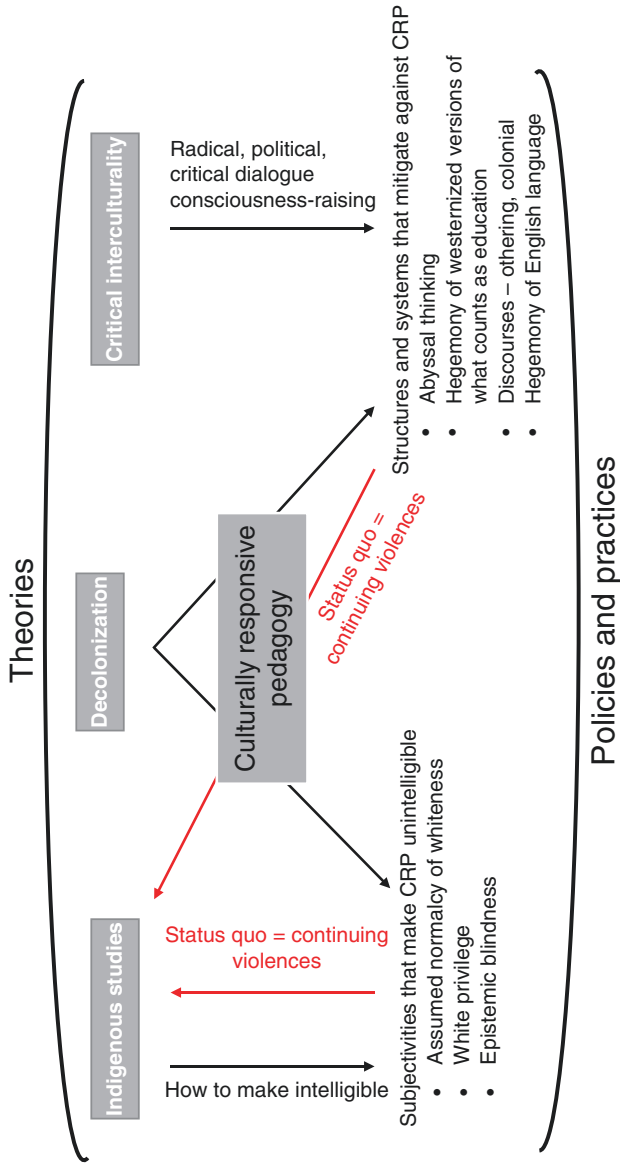


Fig. 11.1 Theorizing issues in policies and practices that mitigate against CRP

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implications for teacher education. In the weaving of theory with practice we pay particular attention to the ways in which our colleagues attempted to create spaces for post-abyssal thinking, and the barriers to this that they identified. We have structured this discussion under two headings: structures and systems that mitigate against CRP, and subjectivities that make CRP unintelligible (Fig. 11.1).

## STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS THAT MITIGATE AGAINST CRP

Four themes were consistently identified creating barriers to the learning of marginalized students in the chapters – although not necessarily using the same language: (1) abyssal (or colonial) thinking; (2) the hegemony of westernized versions of what counts as education; (3) discourses of marginalization and othering; and (4) the hegemony of the English language. These macro-level issues are examples of the divisive effect of the colonial world system and serve as the context for the issues in practices discussed in the section that follows.

Macro-level issues require macro-level solutions and, as argued above, nothing short of radical change to current education systems will suffice. Education policy, schools, and national curricula are three areas written through with hegemonic discourses and we focus on these as potential spaces for radical change.

All of the chapters in Sections 2–4 provide evidence of the damning effect of abyssal thinking and how it has created a hegemony of what counts as education, of how education policy, schools, and curricula are centred on White European and European settler ways of being and knowing, and of how this marginalizes and erases alternative ways of being and knowing: “a massive epistemicide has been under way for the past five centuries, whereby an immense wealth of cognitive experiences has been wasted” (De Sousa Santos 2007, p. 16). The use of English as “world language” is a prime example of the processes by which those who gain most from abyssal thinking retain their hegemonic position. These processes are evident at all phases from primary (Ford, Austin, and Daly) and secondary (King and Joyce) to higher education (Jabbar and Mirza; Pete; and Tinker Sachs et al.), in curricula (King and Joyce) and assessment materials (Austin and Daly), and in partnerships with communities (Blair and Ford).

What is illuminating is that, even in those chapters that focus more explicitly on structures and systems that support abyssal thinking, their

solutions have focused on partial rather than systemic change. For example, Jabbar and Mirzar (Chapter 2) argue for epistemological change, “mainstream academic knowledge needs to become more responsive in the creation and production of knowledge”, but then focus on individual teacher choices about pedagogy and curriculum rather than radical changes at faculty/university level; equally, Austin (Chapter 9) and Daly (Chapter 10) suggest changes in the cultural contexts for math and literacy assessments, but do not query that English is the language in which assessments are conducted. We do not criticize the authors, but highlight this as an issue that is facing us all – that the hegemony of neoliberal, colonial, westernized ways of doing education has become so dominant that it is difficult to imagine “other possible worlds” (Andreotti 2016, p. 105).

Between two fundamentally different positions, such as western knowledge and Indigenous knowledge, “there are those who defend that there are not one but many philosophies and believe that mutual dialogue and enrichment is possible. They are the ones who often have to confront the problems of incommensurability, incompatibility, or reciprocal unintelligibility” (De Sousa Santos 2007, p. 16). However, De Sousa Santos (2007) goes on to argue that this does not mean that communication is impossible. Communication may lead to “ unsuspected forms of complementarity” depending on “the use of adequate procedures of intercultural translation” (De Sousa Santos 2007, p. 16). This chimes with our own discussions about the risk in suggesting radical changes to systems, that the messages are unintelligible to precisely those audiences for whom they are intended. In one conversation, we spoke of the challenge of expecting white pre-service teachers to care for others – that this is not something that can be forced on them. We also agreed that it is not that they do not care, but that they care in ways that are *laden with color blindness, and laden with not taking on difficult topics*. In addition to this, we gave examples of how their pre-service teachers often avoid listening to the voices of the marginalized students in their classrooms because they can’t relate to the stories of poverty, hunger and trauma.

An ethics of care is taken up by Blair in Chapter 5 where she discusses her own position in relation to the Brazilian street children with whom she is working. Hers is a reflexive moral standpoint, but there is an assumption that it is possible to care in the ways she outlines that we trouble here. What it means to care has been the subject of discussion in many fields (Gilligan 1982; Held 2005; Noddings 2003) and theorized within the western academy largely from feminist, and philosophical/ethical perspectives in



the contexts of motherhood, international relations, and political theory. For the purposes of this discussion we focus on how “care” is construed from different ontological and epistemological positions, and from particular ideological perspectives. Ontologically and epistemologically, notions of care are just as subject to the effects of abyssal thinking as any other area of life. De Sousa Santos (2007) argues that, in the colonial world system that is capitalism, there has been a withdrawal of the state “from social regulation. . . . as public services are privatized” (p. 7). The result is that services delivered by non-state actors are free of some of the regulations that constrained the state – not least that services could become a commercial enterprise. Even in those companies that are not commercial (e.g. International Non-Governmental Organizations [INGOs]), they are still subject to a value for money discourse. In effect, the constitutional state is being “replaced by privatized, depoliticized contractual obligations under which the weaker party is more or less at the mercy of the stronger one” (De Sousa Santos 2007, p. 7).

The dual ideologies of neoliberalism and liberalism coexist in this structure, evident in the commodification of care on the one hand, and the increase in charitable activities on the other. The place of charity in society brings with it a discourse of deficit, pity, and paternalism with regard to the recipients, and a discourse of benevolence, self-worth, and exceptionalism (Andreotti 2016) with regard to the donors/caregivers. The rise of charitable fundraising through, for example, television and social media platforms has created a discourse of what it means to care that is so pervasive that it makes it hard to imagine other modes of care, and when those other modes call into question the modes that charities and individuals are heavily invested in, they become unintelligible. This presents a challenge to educators such as the authors in this book, because their work requires “the softening of edges if one wants to be effective in inviting people into conversations where their self-image and world views will likely not be affirmed”, and a recognition that “pedagogical possibilities are circumscribed by constraints of intelligibility, educational desires and investments, institutional mandates and availability and attention of learners” (Andreotti 2016, p. 107).

If we return to the example of Blair, she is married to a Brazilian who is part of a group who established the charity for street children, and so she is heavily invested in needing to unpack her white privilege and westernized modes of care. This is not the case for those who are heavily invested in the privileges afforded to them by westernized education

systems. Care features strongly in the reasons that teachers give for entering into the profession. The pre-service teachers we work with, when first confronted with knowledge that calls their view of care into question, they don't want to believe it. Fatima has discussed the notion of "innocent racism" in an earlier paper (Pirbhai-Illich et al. 2011, p. 28), while others have referred to it as the "luxury of ignorance" (Howard 2007, p. 6). This ignorance is sanctioned by the current world order, the colonial world system. But if the continuing cycle of ontological and epistemological violence (Fanon 1967) from one generation to the next is to be disrupted, sanctioned ignorance is no longer an option. We go beyond this to argue that through the K-12 and higher education systems there is *pedagogical* violence that is being perpetrated against marginalized students, because the teaching approaches that are used, the way in which classrooms are set up, how the days are structured, who is seen to be the holder of knowledge, and the pedagogies that flow from that are also colonial.

These hegemonic, violent ways of "doing school" have to be disrupted, and it is that disruption that Tinker Sachs et al. (Chapter 4), King (Chapter 6), and Ford (Chapter 8) aim to achieve through the expansion of what counts as a classroom space and an education pedagogy. Through partnerships with community groups (Chapters 4 and 8), what counts as *knowledge* is opened up; through educating in the community, *where* education might take place is opened up; and through using Indigenous approaches of song and drum with young people, what counts as *pedagogy* is opened up. They achieve differing levels of success, but we argue that they are extending understandings of CRP and moving towards something that might be post-abysal.

Another form of correction to violence is in the centring of other languages as a direct challenge to the hegemony of English, such as the use of Māori metaphors by Joyce (Chapter 7). In discussing how cognitive experiences lost through colonialism might be recuperated, De Sousa Santos (2007) proposes an ecology of knowledges which necessarily require "intercultural translation" (p. 16) in order to relate to each other. "Embedded in different Western and non-Western cultures, such experiences use not only different languages but also different categories, symbolic universes, and aspirations for a better life" (De Sousa Santos 2007, p. 16). It is with this in mind that we have discussed at length what term we might use to encompass what we see as being beyond CRP, a

radical post-abyssal pedagogy that moves us towards decolonization, indigeneity, and critical interculturalism. We discussed concepts from other cultures, such as “Ubuntu” from South Africa, “manacihitowin” from the Cree people, and “Ujamaa” from Tanzania. But none seem to cover all of the elements that we are now proposing should be used to extend CRP. So although all the authors in this book have used the term CRP, we believe that this no longer describes what is being done through their practices. As discussed earlier, the term culturally responsive is commonly interpreted from a mainstream, multicultural perspective, as teachers needing to be responsive to the cultures of *others* while continuing to be ignorant of their own culture and how it is bound up with white privilege and superiority. It is to the issue of whiteness and the “epistemic blindness” (Andreotti 2016, p. 104) that comes with it that we now turn.

### SUBJECTIVITIES THAT MAKE CRP UNINTELLIGIBLE

In my practice as an educator and educational researcher in this area, the greatest challenge I face is indeed one of intelligibility. (Andreotti 2016, p. 105)

A single theme dominates the chapters in their identification of barriers to successful implementation of CRP, that of whiteness and white privilege. Despite the availability of well-known tools such as that by Peggy McIntosh (1988) on unearned privilege which raises white students’ awareness of the privileges afforded to them on a daily basis that are invisible to them, the issue of whiteness continues to have a profound impact on people of colour, diaspora populations, and Indigenous peoples. Without addressing the issue of whiteness, education will continue to produce future citizens who (if they are also white) may continue to be ignorant of their whiteness and racism, and who (if they are marginalized) continue to be othered.

Lund and Carr (2013) identify the following problems associated with whiteness: that it is racist, that it carries an assumed normalcy as *the* way of being leading to deficit theorizing about difference, that it carries with it a superiority and certainty leading to blindness to other ways of being, and that it is individualistic and that it reaps unearned privileges. Our experiences of working with white pre-service teachers testify to this

(Pirbhai-Illich et al. 2011; Pete, Chapter 3). The assumed normalcy of whiteness and white culture renders it invisible to them and makes it possible for them to say,

“This is irrelevant to me”, “I may have classes where most of my kids will just be like me, so why should I need to learn how to be culturally responsive?” And if we are saying being culturally responsive is to be *intercultural*, then they’ll say, “But I don’t have any culture to be intercultural with.” (Pirbhai-Illich, Pete, & Martin, editors’ discussion, May 2016)

The issue of being cultureless is one thing, but the impact of this on minoritized and marginalized groups is, as we have argued, violent and traumatic. The work for pre-service and in-service teachers of decolonizing their ways of being and doing is an absolute necessity. This is a responsibility held by teachers (Chapters 5–8) and teacher educators (Chapters 2–4, 9, 10).

It is our contention that the majority of teachers have been socialized into a teacher ontology that is written through with colonialism. This conclusion is inescapable if one subscribes to the view that we are in a colonial world system. It is therefore essential to do the work of decolonizing the mind (Thiong’o 1986), and it means facing the discomfort of truths that white people have been protected from. We described this earlier as turning the gaze 180 degrees. CRP, in the way in which it has been taken up, encourages teachers to move from deficit theorizing to working with, and honouring their students’ cultural funds of knowledge. This needs to be turned 180 towards members of the dominant group who have to examine the deficits that they carry for themselves, deficits that “*are evident in their discomfort, their anger, guilt and shame*” (Pirbhai-Illich, Pete, & Martin, editors’ discussion, May 2016).

There is no shortage of examples of anger, guilt, and shame in the book. For example, Blair talks about her own guilt and anxiety in relation to the poverty she experiences in Brazil, which moves to a fear of reproducing coloniality in her relations with the street children – a move that only happens through her openness to new knowledges, to questioning her identity and to letting go of old investments through a process of “hyper-self-reflexivity” (Andreotti 2011, p. 17). Tinker Sachs et al., and Joyce, in their chapters, discuss how they worked with teachers in decolonial ways and the challenges faced by those teachers as they became aware of their subjectivities and positionalities – and in both chapters there are examples of teachers’ self-denials. These denials are vividly brought to life in the

opening of King's chapter, expressed often as direct hostility to the "otherness" of song and drum that has been brought into their school. The teachers in King's chapter are examples of those who do not wish to develop another way of relating to difference other than the one they have been socialized into.

The denial of possibilities of other ways to be as teachers, and that other knowledges have a place in the curriculum is connected to the barrier of what we call "teacher ontology". Pre-service teachers do not come to teacher education programs devoid of knowledge of what it means to be a teacher. They have, in effect, served an apprenticeship through their years as school students themselves (Martin 2008).

Thus, they enter teacher education already knowing and believing a great deal about the field, and assuming they know a lot about teaching (Richert 1991). According to Lampert and Ball (1998), student teachers, therefore, believe that what they need to learn during their teacher education is what to do, not to think or reflect on what they are seeing or hearing. . . . as the classroom is a well-known arena, it is difficult for prospective teachers to consider alternative visions and ways of teaching. (Moen 2006, 65)

Again, it is an issue of unintelligibility. Pre-service teachers are not disposed to question what it means to be a teacher in the same way they might if they were entering a less known profession (Moen 2006). Laid onto this is the problem of socialized colonial identity, which they are also not disposed to question. It is for this reason that we propose that there is no other way forward than to disrupt whiteness and white dominance, colonialism, and all that goes with it. This presents a huge challenge for teacher education and we do not underestimate the task.

### BEYOND CRP: DECOLONIZING TEACHER EDUCATION

In this final section we offer some thoughts on the processes that for us show potential to move beyond CRP towards a radical, decolonizing pedagogy in teacher education. We repeat that *this book is a project in criticality* and therefore we are not going to provide a set of principles, a blueprint, or a recipe to follow. To propose something that is already formed in such a way would be to fall foul of the essentializing, totalizing

discourses that we critique. As evidenced in the preceding chapters, there is no one way of going beyond CRP towards something that is decolonial.

Any...movement is going to be necessarily unique to each area, to its nations, to the colonial encounters in its territory, because context with colonialism has not been all alike, and these diverse histories and experiences would need to be addressed. Decolonising these spaces... is also not a linear and tidy process. Rather, as in the case of making universities responsive to Indigenous peoples, women, minorities, or diverse knowledge systems, the sites of struggle for recognition, acceptance, and integration were going to require collaborative, interdisciplinary, participatory, and Indigenous research methodologies to decolonize educational institutions. (Battiste 2013, p. 111)

Every teacher educator, teacher, and class of students will be unique, and the solutions that are found for those situations will need to be co-created to suit the specificity of their contexts. *And* solutions will also need to place the contexts into the broader sociopolitical and historical forces that have influenced them. What we *do* have is an agenda – one of decolonizing teacher education (Tables 11.1 and 11.2). In this agenda we do not negate CRP and the pedagogies associated with it; we argue that given that the majority of teachers in the West are from white, mainstream backgrounds, unless a decolonization of minds written through with whiteness is done first then CRP is seriously undermined. In this agenda, we also do not set out clear goals and objectives; it is an agenda based on a “logic of emergence” (Osberg 2008, p.144) in that we do not have a clear end point – this will emerge because it is currently unimaginable (Andreotti 2016). Our agenda has a pedagogical dimension and addresses the teacher education system as a whole. Colonialism is a process, not an act (De Sousa Santos 2007) so we also need to decolonize the structures, knowledge systems, and institutional processes that support the status quo. This includes working with teacher educators, administrators, relevant government bodies, funding bodies, librarians, and so on, to critically examine the content of teacher education (curricular, resources) and the processes (procedures, pedagogies, assessment practices) by which teachers are prepared to enter the profession.

At the macro-level we identified four key, interconnected, themes each of which brings a series of issues that need to be addressed through this decolonial project: (1) abyssal thinking – which divides the world and makes “Otherness” impossible as a way of being and doing; (2) the

**Table 11.1** Addressing issues in systems and structures

<i>Systems and structures</i>			
<i>Barriers</i>	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Agenda</i>	<i>Processes and dispositions</i>
Abyssal thinking	Divides the world and makes “otherness” impossible as a way of being	Decolonize the whole system – policies, curriculum, administrative	Radical change – minds, discourses, and systems as the battleground; critical
Hegemony of European version of education	Suits students from mainstream backgrounds; individualistic; disadvantages/perpetrates violence on others	structures, funding mechanisms; addresses institutional racism	interculturality using post-abyssal thinking and decolonizing processes as the weapons; commitment to withdrawing allegiance to
Othering discourses	Often hidden under rhetoric of liberalism, inclusion, care, and responsibility – hard to think or be otherwise; renders otherness unintelligible to mainstream		hegemonies and abyssal thinking; pedagogy of <b>solidarity</b> ; Ethical relation: Inter-faith, inter-cultural, inter-disciplinary, inter-agency, inter- . . .
Hegemony of English language	Represents the world using a language system developed through colonialism		

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hegemony of westernized education – which suits students from mainstream backgrounds, and fails/traumatizes students from marginalized communities; (3) othering discourses – which are often hidden under a rhetoric of liberalism, inclusion, care, and responsibility making it both hard to imagine otherwise and rendering Otherness unintelligible to the mainstream; and (4) the hegemony of the English language – which represents the world using a symbolic system developed through colonialism. Our agenda here is both simple and complex. It is simply to decolonize the whole system – policies, curriculum, administrative structures, and funding mechanisms. It is complex because of the enormity of the task, the processes that are involved, and the risks that are inherent for marginalized peoples in any call for them to work with the very people who subjugated them in the first place. In this

**Table 11.2** Addressing issues in practices

		<i>Practices</i>	
<i>Barriers</i>	<i>Issue</i>	<i>Agenda</i>	<i>Processes and dispositions</i>
Whiteness	Not seen as racial category; assumed normalcy; racist	Awareness raising; make visible the histories of peoples who have been	Anti-racist; commitment to work on decolonizing “self”; hyper self-reflexivity;
White privilege	Invisible to whites; creates inequalities; individualistic	subjugated over centuries; ethical accountability;	humility; learning from the other as a gift;
Epistemic blindness	Own way of being is considered to be the only way of being; denial or minimization of difference	relational responsibility; expand notions of culture beyond race and ethnicity; awareness of dispositions towards difference	letting go of old investments and investing in new ways of being; expanding repertoires

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radical agenda, the minds, discourses, and systems are the ground on which the decolonizing project will be enacted, where critical intercultural dialogue using post-abyssal thinking will be the tools. As we have already pointed out, this is not a project that can be achieved by any one group – it must involve the voices and experiences of the diaspora, the colonized, Indigenous peoples, and European colonizers/settler colonizers. For those from mainstream groups who might be initially involved, the work requires them to commit to withdrawing allegiance to hegemonies and abyssal thinking, to developing an ethical relational responsibility (Wilson 2001; Swanson 2009) with the Other, and to work as allies with them in solidarity.

The concept of solidarity has been used in many ways with many connotations, so we set out here what we understand by the term. Gaztambide-Fernández (2012) explores the concept of solidarity, showing it to stem in part from Freire (2000) who described it as an inextricable relation between the oppressor and the oppressed. The relation is at the heart of what we propose as critical interculturality. Solidarity can be shown at a human, social, political, or civic level (Gaztambide-Fernández 2012), and it is associated with a moral obligation, a sense of mutual responsibility, and an ethic of reciprocity. The danger of social,



political, civic (and we would add global) solidarity is that “it always operates in tension with [the] logics of domination” (Gaztambide-Fernández 2012, p. 47). Any form of solidarity therefore needs to break with the past, to be non-normative and non-hierarchical, to hinge not on similarities but on radical differences, on “relationships of incommensurable interdependency” (Gaztambide-Fernández 2012, p. 46), to have an orientation not of *doing to* but of *being with*, and it needs to be clear about who has a moral obligation to whom. This might be an ethical, relational foundation for a post-abyssal decolonizing project.

At the micro-level – that of working with pre-service and in-service teachers in teacher education – we identified (a) whiteness, (b) white privilege, and (c) the epistemic blindness that flows from that as the key themes. Our agenda therefore also focuses on decolonizing the spaces and places within which teacher education is enacted – that is, on decolonizing the mind (Thiong’o 1986). Whiteness and white privilege are either invisible to the mainstream, denied, or resisted by them. Associated with this is the racism that is also denied. People from dominant groups have a lot to lose and, as DiAngelo (2011) points out, they often develop defensive discourses of victimization that enable them to avoid the discomfort of owning up to their responsibility for, and complicity in, “the racial power and privilege they wield” (p. 64). Raising awareness of whiteness has to be the starting point (see, e.g., Andreotti’s (2016) HEADS UP tool, pp. 107–109) from which to then disrupt the colonial socialized teacher ontology by moving away from questions such as *what or how will you teach?* to questions of “Who is the self that teaches? How does that quality of my selfhood form – or deform – the way I relate to my students, my subject, my colleagues, my world?” (Sapp 2013, p. 200). This awareness raising has to go hand in hand with making visible the histories of peoples who have been subjugated over the centuries, with notions of culture that are expanded beyond race and ethnicity, and with an understanding of the colonial world system. Expanded notions of culture, the concept of multiple identities, and culture as something that is fluid and constantly in the making are not new, but these are still rooted in the colonial world system with an *idée fixe* (Bhabha 1994). Gaztambide-Fernández (2012) rejects the idea of multiple cultures and identities and instead proposes that there are multiple ways, multiple spaces, and places in which cultures are made, and this can only happen through encounters with difference.

The spaces of teacher education are precisely those where difference is encountered. The types of relationships that are created in these spaces

need to be based on an understanding that people's cultural identities are made in and through relationships. To break with abyssal ways of relating requires a break from thinking it is possible to know the other "since the other is, according to Levinas, 'infinitely unknowable'" (Gaztambide-Fernández 2012, p. 52). This is a further area where we depart from CRP, where one of the tenets is based on teachers getting to know about the cultures of diverse groups they are working with so as to positively utilize their funds of knowledge (Gay 2002, 2013). Aside from the practicalities, this is based on the assumption that it is possible to know the Other despite all one's subjectivities. We propose that, alongside developing awareness of whiteness, it would be productive to develop awareness of one's dispositions towards difference and how these relate to one's subjectivities. Andreotti (2013) identifies four dispositions: the first is a refusal to engage with difference; the other three are different dispositions towards engaging with difference that are objectivist, relativist, and plural (p. 13). She uses the idea of dispositions (plural) because its meaning is contingent. A disposition is an inclination towards, a tendency, and an emotional outlook; in the plural it suggests that a person can have several dispositions towards the same thing, but that the prevailing one may vary according to the circumstances. They differ from "competencies" approach to interculturality

in that they do not bring with them guaranteed behavioural patterns. . . . we carry all of these dispositions (and many others) with us at any time. Thus, when we face a concrete encounter with difference . . . we tend to manifest a combination of dispositions. (Andreotti 2013, p. 13)

We find the use of metaphor and dispositions helpful, as they are not offered "as progressive stages but rather as different positions, all of which might be appropriate in particular contexts[,] [i]n order to genuinely enlarge possibilities for learning" (Andreotti 2013, p. 13). This is not about developing them or even *a* way of relating, but of increasing repertoires for responding to difference.

We would like to conclude by considering the work that needs to be done by those towards whom these ways forward are intended – the pre-service and in-service teachers, the education policy-makers, the teacher educators, the librarians, administrators, and managers, who are from mainstream backgrounds or who have been socialized into mainstream ways of being and doing education. This work requires a commitment: a

commitment to discomfort, a commitment to questioning oneself and one's identity, a commitment to engagement with difficult truths and alternative histories, a commitment to developing ethical relations with the Other, a commitment to being taught in unexpected ways in unexpected situations by unexpected people, a commitment to seeing learning from the Other as a gift, a commitment to critical and hyper self-reflexivity, a commitment to letting go of investments that support unearned privileges, and a commitment to investing in new ways of being and doing. For the privileged, a suspension of the ego that has developed over centuries (as the trauma experienced by subjugated peoples has been felt over the centuries) and a disposition of humility in relation to the learning relationships is essential when thinking about how to change the colonial self and to develop a new way of relating with the Other. For the subjugated, these commitments may be the beginning of a new relationship in which the trust, destroyed through colonialism, might gradually re-emerge. For both, this is a journey into the unknown and currently unimaginable, but,

What unimaginable and unimaginable outcomes might become available if we were willing to risk the possibility that we simply do not know where we are going? (Gaztambide-Fernández 2012, p. 55)

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