

Challenges and Possibilities for Truth and Reconciliation In Teacher Education: An Engagement with the Literature

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Article abstract

This article delves into the evolving landscape of teacher education within the context of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging the profound role education has played in perpetuating colonial violence against Indigenous peoples. To assess reconciliation efforts in teacher education, a targeted search was undertaken, which resulted in an inductive thematic analysis of 36 scholarly works and the emergence of five overarching themes: anti-racist/anti-oppressive perspectives, decolonization, critical forms of pedagogy/narrativity, indigenization, and historical thinking. The analysis provides valuable insights and highlights challenges of advancing truth and reconciliation in education including the need for a paradigm shift within teacher education programs, urging them to adopt community-focused, land-based, and decolonizing approaches. By aligning with the spirit and intent of truth and reconciliation, and as the studies demonstrate, teacher education has the potential to contribute significantly to advancing the process of healing, justice, and mutual understanding in the journey toward a more equitable and harmonious future.



Challenges and Possibilities for Truth and Reconciliation In Teacher Education: An Engagement with the Literature

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Abstract

This article delves into the evolving landscape of teacher education within the context of truth and reconciliation, acknowledging the profound role education has played in perpetuating colonial violence against Indigenous peoples. To assess reconciliation efforts in teacher education, a targeted search was undertaken, which resulted in an inductive thematic analysis of 36 scholarly works and the emergence of five overarching themes: anti-racist/anti-oppressive perspectives, decolonization, critical forms of pedagogy/narrativity, indigenization, and historical thinking. The analysis provides valuable insights and highlights challenges of advancing truth and reconciliation in education including the need for a paradigm shift within teacher education programs, urging them to adopt community-focused, land-based, and decolonizing approaches. By aligning with the spirit and intent of truth and reconciliation, and as the studies demonstrate, teacher education has

the potential to contribute significantly to advancing the process of healing, justice, and mutual understanding in the journey toward a more equitable and harmonious future.

Key Words: truth and reconciliation, teacher education, critical pedagogy, decolonization, indigeneity, anti-racism, historical thinking

Résumé

Cet article explore le paysage évolutif de la formation des enseignants dans le contexte de la vérité et de la réconciliation, reconnaissant le rôle que l'éducation a joué dans la perpétuation de la violence coloniale contre les peuples autochtones. Pour évaluer les efforts de réconciliation dans la formation des enseignants, une recherche ciblée a été entreprise, aboutissant à l'analyse thématique inductive de 36 travaux universitaires et à l'émergence de cinq thèmes principaux : les perspectives antiracistes/anti-oppressives, la décolonisation, les formes critiques de pédagogie/narrativité, l'indigénisation et la pensée historique. L'analyse fournit des indications précieuses et souligne les défis à relever pour promouvoir la vérité et la réconciliation dans l'éducation, notamment la nécessité d'un changement de paradigme au sein des programmes de formation des enseignants, en les exhortant à adopter des approches axées sur la communauté, basées sur la terre et la décolonisation. En s'alignant sur l'esprit et l'intention de la vérité et de la réconciliation, et comme le démontrent les études, la formation des enseignants a le potentiel de contribuer de manière significative à faire avancer le processus de guérison, de justice et de compréhension mutuelle dans le cheminement vers un avenir plus équitable et plus harmonieux.

Mots-clés : vérité et réconciliation, formation des enseignants, pédagogie critique, décolonisation, indigénité, antiracisme, pensée historique

Introduction

As part of a larger pan-Canadian research project examining history education and its contributions to nation building, this article is situated within the field of pre-service teacher education. More specifically, it is attentive to research and scholarship that describes how students enrolled in Bachelor of Education programs are invited to think about, make sense of, and teach about the past and present. Given the colonial foundations of Canada and the ongoing erasure, marginalization, or superficial inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in history education, a growing body of scholarship in teacher education that takes up, conceptually or in practice, understandings of truth and reconciliation is considered along with the possibilities that exist to invite pre-service teachers to interrogate curriculum and pedagogy as reinforcing or disrupting colonialism. In this respect, truth and reconciliation in teacher education is both interrogative and productive (Tupper & Cappello, 2008) as students are invited into the consideration of counter-narratives of Canada's past and present and as they learn the truth of this country. Thirty-six scholarly works were analyzed to identify theoretical orientations, challenges, and promising practices in teacher education that attend to truth telling and that seek to advance reconciliation.

The 2015 publication of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada Final Report highlights how education has played a substantive role in enacting colonial violence on the Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island. It describes reconciliation as the act of “establishing and maintaining a mutually respectful relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in this country” (p. 6). Through Calls to Action 62–65, the report speaks to the potential of education to disrupt dominant narratives of nation-building taught in schools, inviting students to know the truth of colonial, assimilative, and genocidal government policies, and as such, is the overarching focus for this article. However, it is important to recognize that reconciliation is itself a contested term, requiring interrogation especially when there is an overemphasis on improving settler–colonial relations in the absence of an anti-colonial analysis of systems and structures that continually do harm and violence to Indigenous peoples and communities (Hare, 2022). Critiques of reconciliation efforts include concerns that they fail to go beyond conditional inclusion (Stein, 2020), that they cannot be reduced to practice without interrogation of the associated theories underpinning the practice (Madden, 2019), and, that reconciliatory aims can actually “resituate” the dominant power of the settler state (Paquette, 2020, p.

143). While these criticisms focus on reconciliation specifically, Indigenous scholar Jan Hare (2022) reminds us that we cannot be “accountable to Indigenous learners and communities without truth” (p. x). Truth telling must precede efforts to advance reconciliation through education, otherwise these efforts are hollow and in service to settler-colonialism rather than Indigenous self-determination and sovereignty. In light of this, the specific questions that guided the engagement with the literature were: (1) How are scholars in teacher education programs taking up truth and reconciliation efforts? and (2) What themes and theoretical orientations are identifiable across this body of literature?

These questions are situated within considerations of how settler colonial policies and practices have functioned in Canada with the aim to dispossess, displace, disappear, and disempower the Indigenous peoples of this land. Efforts to erase Indigenous peoples have been enacted in various contexts and through various strategies, such as the pervasive frontier myth of *terra nullius*, or the empty land (Furniss, 2000), that legitimizes the settler occupation of Indigenous land and the weaponization of education including through the Indian Residential School (IRS) system. The impacts of settler-colonialism can also be read through Thobani’s (2007) explanation that European colonization relied upon the belief that Indigenous peoples were “not fully human; they were not Christian, they were not civilized; they had not evolved; they were doomed to extinction by history and progress” (p. 41).

These beliefs—the frontier wilderness, and Indigenous peoples as not fully human—are embedded in colonial policies and structures intended to ensure settler futurity (Tuck & Yang, 2012). For example, the recent and ongoing confirmation of hundreds of unmarked graves of Indigenous children who died as a result of the IRS system has brought into sharp relief for many Canadians the truth of colonial violence in this country and the role that education systems play in perpetrating harm for Indigenous learners, their families, and their communities (Ballantyne, 2021). This awakening has included many gestures across the country meant to honour the children who never returned home to their families, increased monetary donations to Indigenous organizations, and a surge in enrolments for the Indigenous Canada massive open online course delivered by the Faculty of Native Studies at the University of Alberta (Cook, 2020). It has challenged communities to rethink Canada Day celebrations, and has elevated the national conversation about continued issues facing Indigenous peoples because of the legacies of residential schools and other forms of colonial violence (Ziafati, 2023). The narrative of Canada as a benevolent,

peaceful, multicultural country is being interrupted, disrupted, and interrogated as settlers acknowledge, and to some extent confront, the reality of past and present colonialism.

All of this lends itself to opportunities for advancing truth and reconciliation through pre- service teacher education. Thus, the engagement with the literature was oriented by anti-colonial and decolonizing perspectives that aim to reveal colonial violence, disrupt Western epistemic dominance, and confront settler ignorance. A more in-depth consideration of the structures of settler colonialism as a theoretical framework for this study aims to better situate teacher education within these systems and precedes the analysis of the literature. The article then articulates the methodological approach to the study, including the process for identifying the relevant literature. Next, the lenses through which the literature was read and organized are described. These include anti-racism/anti-oppression, critical forms of narrativity/pedagogy, decolonization, indigenization, and historical thinking. Finally, the article attends to gaps and tensions in the literature, circulating ideas and insights into the re/conceptualizations and practices that hamper or open possibilities for reframing historical knowledge and pedagogy in teacher education so that truth telling and reconciliatory action become more possible in both post-secondary and K–12 classrooms.

Theoretical Framework: Understanding Settler Colonialism

Veracini (2011) describes colonialism as a system designed to create and enforce unequal relations, the domination of one group of people over another through dispossession, occupation, and unequal relations. Such systems suppress, ignore, and make marginal Indigenous ways of knowing and being in schools, universities, and curriculum (Battiste et al., 2002) as a means to further settler colonialism by reproducing the dominance of settler identities, structures, and processes, including control over and exploitation of the land (Tupper, 2011). In their work, Starblanket and Hunt (2020) aim to shed light on “how settler colonialism narrates itself into being through processes of storytelling” (p. 16) that require the creation of narratives that erase Indigenous presence for the sake of settler futurity (Tuck & Gaztambide-Fernández, 2013).

Within colonial systems, including K–12 schools and post-secondary institutions, settler colonialism is maintained through a series of processes and practices that disavow the presence of the Indigenous other. Wolfe (2006) and Starblanket and Hunt (2020) refer

to such practices as *eliminary logic/logic of elimination* and Bell (2014) frames them as the *settler imaginary*—a constructed narrative of “nationhood, identity, and Indigenous-settler relations” (p. 11) in which Indigenous presence is rendered absent. The settler imaginary is necessary for settler futurity, which requires foundational narratives that rationalize assimilation and obfuscate practices of colonial violence. Importantly, Tuck and Gaztambide-Fernández (2013) trace how narratives and practices of displacement in education make invisible Indigenous presence, as well as contribute to settler futurity and the continued prosperity and dominance of settlers on Indigenous territory. Indeed, what Wolfe (2006) describes as the logic of elimination is about settler futurity and the ability of the settler colonial state to maintain its dominance through continued access to and control over the land.

The IRS system in Canada played an important role in ensuring settler futurity by forcibly removing Indigenous children from their homes and communities for extended periods of time, preventing them from speaking their language, practicing their cultures, and subjecting many of them to physical, emotional, spiritual, and sexual abuse. The IRS system was in place for over 100 years, with an estimated 150,000+ Indigenous children forced to attend residential schools. Following a formal apology to IRS survivors in 2008, Canada struck a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, led by Justice Murray Sinclair. After an extensive national process of gathering the stories and testimonies of survivors, the Commission released its report and 94 Calls to Action in June 2015.

Since its release, Justice Sinclair has repeatedly stated that because “education was the primary tool of oppression of Aboriginal people, and miseducation of all Canadians, that...education holds the key” (Sinclair, 2014, p. 7). Call to Action 62 calls upon governments to “make age appropriate curriculum on residential schools, Treaties, and Aboriginal peoples’ historical and contemporary contributions to Canada” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 238) mandatory in all grades and to “provide the necessary funding to post-secondary institutions to educate teachers on how to integrate Indigenous knowledge and teaching methods into classrooms” (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. 235). Curriculum reform is essential to truth telling, especially because officially sanctioned K–12 curriculum across the country has advanced partial and limited narratives of the past in ways that deny Canadians an opportunity to deeply understand the effects of colonialism and colonial violence on Indigenous peoples and communities. Because teachers are integral to any reform efforts, they too must have opportunities

to deepen their knowledge and understanding of Canada's colonial past and present, and of Indigenous peoples, their perspectives, cultures, and experiences. In light of this, settler colonialism, and its enactment of settler futurity through the erasure of Indigenous pasts and presents, oriented how each scholarly work was read and understood, and how each of the five emergent themes was considered. Thus, settler colonialism becomes a lens through which to consider truth and reconciliation efforts in teacher education.

Methodology

In late 2019, a targeted search of literature began that specifically focused on how truth and reconciliation are being considered and taken up in teacher education in order to identify and synthesize the growing body of research and scholarship on this topic. As previously noted, the specific questions that guided this search were: (1) How are scholars in teacher education programs taking up truth and reconciliation efforts? and (2) What themes and theoretical orientations are identifiable across this body of literature? The search was restricted to online, publicly available academic, peer-reviewed journals, doctoral dissertations, and books published by an academic press and that were available through open source or within the institutional library system. The review period was established as 2000–2020, to capture the specific pre-and-post TRC era. The search terms: “reconciliation” AND “teacher education” OR “preservice teachers” OR “settler colonialism” OR “anti-colonialism” OR “historical thinking” OR “Indigenous histories” OR “Indigenous education” were entered into ProQuest, Eric, and Academic Search Complete. Though not as exhaustive, nor fully inclusive of all literature in this area, the search yielded 51 scholarly works.

Scholarship that focused on pre-service teachers and/or teacher education and those that discussed/described truth and reconciliation efforts in K–12 classrooms (recognizing that there could be implications for teacher education practices within these) were sorted. However, for the purposes of this review, only those situated within teacher education contexts or conceptual articles with clear connections to and implications for teacher education were included. So too were articles more broadly oriented by an analysis of settler-colonialism in education because of their relevance for truth and reconciliation. The 15 excluded works were not situated within teacher education contexts, were not conceptual

in nature, and did not appear to have obvious implications for truth and reconciliation in teacher education. Of the remaining 36, 27 were from Canada, seven from Australia, one from New Zealand, and one from the United States, which was not surprising given similarities in the colonial histories of each of these countries. In the first stage of the coding process, each article was read in its entirety using the research questions as guides, and a preliminary description of focus, methodology, and theoretical framework was created.

Drawing on Braun and Clarke (2006, 2019), a process of collaborative thematic analysis was then used to identify patterns in the data and to group articles accordingly. Themes were generated by sorting the patterns into higher-level topics and creating theoretical/conceptual groupings of articles while acknowledging that themes capture prominent aspects of the data “regardless of whether the theme captures the majority experience” (Scharp & Sanders, 2019, p. 117). From there, the coding scheme was further refined, and five prominent themes were identified in relation to the research questions. The themes—anti-racist/anti-oppressive, critical forms of pedagogy/narrativity, decolonization, indigenization, and historical thinking—become the organizational tool for the study and are considered within the theoretical framework of settler colonialism, affording a more detailed analysis of truth and reconciliation education efforts in teacher education. In one instance (Kerr, 2014), the decision was made to include an article in two themes because of the prominent aspects of the article. In what follows, the articles and their corresponding themes are described and discussed, and the themes themselves further developed.

Themes and Analysis

Cannon (2012), Dion (2007, 2009), Higgins et al. (2015), Kerr (2014), Riley (2019), and Partington (2002) frame their work in teacher education as anti-racist/anti-oppressive, arguing the possibilities for reconciliation require a deep understanding of racist and oppressive systems/structures. Through critical forms of pedagogy/narrativity, Brant-Birioukov et al. (2019), Donald (2009, 2012), Keliipio et al. (2018), Kinzel (2020), Madden (2014), Poitras Pratt and Danyluk (2017), Rodríguez de France et al. (2018), Scully (2015, 2018, 2020), and Taylor (2018) describe critical pedagogical approaches to teacher education that challenge dominant modes of teaching and learning, including the use of storytelling,

land-based learning, and counter-narratives. In their work, Madden (2019), Morcom and Freeman (2018), Korteweg and Fiddler (2018), and Phillips and Whatman (2007) argue for approaches to teacher education that recognize, disrupt, and decolonize dominant knowledge systems. As a means to Indigenize education, Andersen (2012), Hanson (2018), Hare (2020), Kerr (2014), Mashford-Pringle and Nardozi (2013), McDowall (2018), McInnes (2017), McLaughlin and Whatman (2015), and Wiseman (2018) all discuss the need to embed Indigenous knowledge and perspectives in teacher education contexts. Finally, through the lens of historical consciousness and historical thinking (both its affordances and limitations), Manning and Harrison (2018), McGregor (2017), Miles (2018), Ng-A-Fook and Smith (2017), and Parkes and Donnelly (2014) describe how dominant knowledge continues to be manifested in curriculum and what pedagogical approaches/interventions might be used to shift historical understanding so that all students have a deeper sense of the colonial past and present and its effects on Indigenous peoples. In what follows, each of these themes and the associated articles are discussed in more detail.

Anti-Racism/Anti-Oppression

Actionable reconciliation. In utilizing an anti-racist/anti-oppression lens, Higgins et al. (2015), Dion (2007, 2009), Riley (2019), Kerr (2014), Partington (2002), and Cannon (2012) advance learning about the history and legacy of residential schools as a starting position for “actionable reconciliation” (Hare, 2020). This position is anchored by a fundamental premise that settler-educators must understand the link between colonial history and systemic barriers and inequalities inherent in the current educational system (Kerr, 2014). Higgins et al.’s (2015) research on White teacher resistance to Indigenous knowledge and perspective provides insight into pre-service teacher education with regard to the educational goals of reconciliation, and the prevailing challenges, including the systemic and day-to-day racism experienced by Indigenous students given how Whiteness shapes Western education. Because pre-service teachers are implicated in resistance “when they are presented with difficult knowledge that challenges their invisibility of Eurocentrism” and when they are “asked to position themselves historically in relation to Indigenous peoples and lands” (p. 260), these scholars argue for a school and curricular space that challenges Eurocentrism and Whiteness practices in pre-service teacher education.

Historical dynamics. Kerr (2014) critiques settler epistemic assumptions and dominance by looking at the historical dynamics of racism and how they are reinforced within intergenerational dimensions of space and time. Importantly, she examines various intersections of racism and racialization across geographies of time and place and how these intersections have and continue to serve the interest of the White body. Partington (2002) identifies two paradigms that must be combined to advance reconciliation education: cultural and anti-racist. The anti-racist paradigm focuses on the capacity of teachers to recognize and challenge ignorance, stereotypes, and overt expressions of racism against Indigenous peoples in Australia. Although the cultural differences between Indigenous and settler children are acknowledged, Partington (2002) argues that teachers and school authorities must go beyond cultural understanding by recognizing how racism operates in schools. He calls on teacher education programs to support educators to embrace anti-oppressive pedagogies in their classrooms. Cannon (2012) argues that racism and colonialism must not be understood as only the struggle of Indigenous peoples. Rather, efforts must be made to advance a settler-Indigenous alliance against racism through productive and explicit dialogue that addresses anti-oppressive education in practical terms and that has broader implications for how citizenship is understood. Drawing on Schick (2004) who calls for a pedagogy that troubles normalcy, Cannon (2012) advances a similar framework for “addressing colonial dominance” (p. 23). However, he emphasizes the need for Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars to work together to find a common path in the struggle against colonialism through anti-oppressive pedagogies.

Social foundations of racism and colonialism. Dion (2007) challenges how non-Indigenous educators position themselves as “perfect strangers” to Indigenous peoples, describing dominant narratives of “multicultural” Canada that contribute to settler Canadians’ resistance to believe that “colonization sprang from a system that benefits all non-Aboriginal people, not just the European settlers of long ago” (Dion, 2009, p. 57). She maintains that the settler “refusal to know is comforting: it supports an understanding of racism as an act of individuals, not of a system” (p. 57). Through her research, Dion (2007, 2009) argues the root cause of settlers’ self-denial of Canada’s underlying system of colonial oppression and racism and their opposition to Indigenous narratives stems from the motive for self-preservation as settlers seek to “save themselves” from uncomfortable historical and contemporary truths. In the context of racial bias and stereotypes toward Indigenous students, Riley (2019) explores teachers’ decisions about the placement of

Indigenous and non-Indigenous students, with a specific focus to investigate the influence of teachers' perceptions of Indigenous learners. The study examines how systemic power inequalities are based on the intersection of race and ethnicity, and how they shape educational opportunities. Importantly, each of these studies attends to the impacts of the social foundations of racism and colonialism, offering important pedagogical disruptions.

Critical Forms of Pedagogy/Narrativity

Several of the articles draw on critical forms of pedagogy and critical educative frames as disruptive to settler colonial dominance and the structuring forces of coloniality. Brant-Birioukov et al. (2019), Donald (2009, 2012), Keliipio et al. (2018), Kinzel (2020), Madden (2014), Poitras Pratt and Danyluk (2017), Taylor (2018), Rodríguez de France et al. (2018), Scully (2015, 2018, 2020), and Wiseman (2018) challenge Western logic and dominance, which seek to erase Indigenous narratives and knowledge. They advance critical forms of pedagogy as frameworks for education which explore and interrogate the reproduction and nuances of power and dominance as they exist in varying contexts, including curriculum, school structures, and pedagogical practices.

Storytelling as praxis. In her study of how non-Indigenous students in an early childhood education diploma program experienced the inclusion of Indigenous knowledges in their curriculum, Kinzel (2020) uses critical pedagogy as a theoretical framework supportive of reflection and action (praxis) that advances change and transformation within the context of storytelling engagement/encounter. She argues against a “positivist scientific epistemology and pedagogy that advances the idea of universal knowledge” (p. 21), which does not support an understanding that Indigenous worldviews are multi-layered, interconnected, and representative of complex ways of knowing. Taylor (2018) advances critical approaches to history education through the deployment of aspects of critical heritage studies. Against the backdrop of #Canada150, #Colonialism150, and the TRC Calls to Action, she calls for an attentiveness to settler colonial narratives in Canada that shape understandings of the nation and its people. Donald (2009, 2012) draws on critical pedagogy to construct a methodology of Indigenous Métissage “that requires hermetic imagination directed towards the telling of a story” (2012, p. 533) to “make sense of the multiple influences at play in educational contexts” (2012, p. 534). He argues that Indigenous Métissage has the potential to transform the curriculum of teacher education as

students encounter the complexities of their own and others' stories. In their research with Indigenous students, Bissell and Korteweg (2016) use digital storytelling as a critical pedagogical framework to build relationships. They explain that Indigenous students' creation of digital narratives is a promising practice for incorporating un/usual narratives into teacher education because this practice builds on students' capacities, interests, and resources. Brant-Birioukov et al. (2019) describe a required teacher education course in which the "pedagogical act of remembrance" fosters an "ethics of listening" that invites teacher candidates to engage with the experiences and perspectives of Indigenous peoples through orality in order to advance reconciliation and redress settler-colonial harms in classrooms.

Pedagogies of relationality. Poitras Pratt and Danyluk (2017) seek to disrupt deficit discourses of Indigenous learners that many pre-service teachers bring to teacher education. They describe a critical service learning program in Indigenous communities for pre-service teachers which sought to transform/disrupt their colonial knowledge and understanding. Using phenomenology as a methodological orientation, Poitras Pratt and Danyluk (2017) invited the pre-service teacher participants to engage in critical reflective practices as they worked in Indigenous communities. Through this process, moments of cognitive dissonance were revealed, and in some instances led to transformative learning experiences for the participants. The authors maintain "it is the presence of cognitive dissonance that signals the onset of transformational learning within this particular service-learning program" (2017, p. 19).

Keliipio et al. (2018) support the use of narrative inquiry through storytelling, oriented by critical pedagogy and supported by Indigenous research practices (methodology). They suggest that storytelling offers a critical relational pedagogy that invites Indigenous/non-Indigenous students and teachers to embody and enact ethical practices for discovering the value in their personal lives and peer relationships within the sites and spaces of the school. Rodríguez de France et al. (2018) grapple with the ranges of responses from students to required Indigenous education courses and the challenges of addressing, through a single course, the substantive gaps in students due to "colonially oriented" schooling programs (p. 98).

Land-based education. Wiseman (2018) advocates that truth and reconciliation in teacher education require a critical pedagogy of place/Land in which Land is an "active entity in understandings developed in specific places. That is, Land speaks, but does not necessarily speak the same language in every place" (p. 340). In her work, Scully (2015,

2018, 2020) explores the impact of critical place-based education in teacher education contexts, as a means to “trouble whiteness, centre Land, and disrupt settler colonialism” (2020, p. 227). Importantly, Scully calls for an approach to Indigenous education in teacher education that confronts the ongoing impacts of racism and colonialism through Land-based and relational approaches with Indigenous communities, contributing to an understanding of “Land as the First Teacher,” which she attributes to Indigenous scholars Gregory Cajete, Vine Deloria, Jr., Kim Dumont, Greg Lowan, Peter O’Chiese, and Sandra Styres. As Eurocentrism, racism, and Whiteness continue to produce marginalizing impacts on Indigenous bodies and temporalities, Madden (2014) suggests the need to “extend the narrative inquiry for use in school-based Indigenous education contexts” (p. 58) as a means toward decolonizing goals. She uses narrative/storytelling to explore settler teachers’ learning journeys toward Indigenous knowledge as a decolonizing process for education. Importantly, these scholars demonstrate how stories enable the examination of “persisting colonial relations” (Madden, 2014, p. 64) and that stories are important in truth and reconciliation education because experiences of life are mediated through stories about self and other.

Decolonization

The concept of decolonization to advance truth and reconciliation in teacher education was prevalent in articles by Madden (2019), Morcom and Freeman (2018), Korteweg and Fiddler (2018), Kerr (2014), and Phillips and Whatman (2007).

Deconstruction. To facilitate reconciliatory practices, these scholars focus on decolonization as a process of deconstruction. Madden (2019) and Korteweg and Fiddler (2018) provide a foundational understanding of self/other in intersubjective relations and familiar/strange categorizations (Dion, 2007) that support the perpetuation of White settler binaries. For example, Korteweg and Fiddler (2018) offer the “perfect stranger” as a lens through which to understand and deconstruct colonial relationships. The opportunity to engage in decolonization by integrating Indigenous perspectives in school curriculum and classrooms is central to these articles. Each variously argues that most White teachers feel culturally disconnected from/with themselves; they do not see themselves as cultural beings. Thus, many White teachers occupy and uphold the “perfect stranger” position with respect to Indigenous peoples and their histories with implications for classroom practices and how all students are invited to consider and engage with Indigenous perspectives.

Processes of disruption. Kerr (2014) reflects on Western epistemic dominance and the depth of her own assumptions from being raised and educated in modern Western society with its belief in universal truth. She examines decolonization within the context of the dynamics of contemporary colonialism in Canadian academic spaces to explore how epistemic dominance supports the structure of colonialism, arguing that pre-service teachers must demonstrate a commitment to self-reflexivity and develop a willingness to have their assumptions disturbed through the teachings of Indigenous scholars and knowledge holders. Phillips and Whatman (2007) suggest decolonizing higher education as a process of critical reform in Aboriginal education and curriculum through the deconstruction of colonial and cultural interfaces, which are often “mediated by colonial codification that associate Indigenous peoples with negative equivalencies” (p. 4). They argue that, while embedding Indigenous knowledge in curriculum must be a core feature of pre-service teacher education, it is a slow and ongoing process. They conclude that pre-service teachers must commit to disrupting the entrenched ways of ‘coming to know’ (p. 13) that advance forms of philosophical and psychological imperialism. In their work, McLaughlin and Whatman (2015) reference the responsibilities of pre-service teachers in “decolonising education, curricula, and pedagogy by way of embedding Indigenous knowledge in schools cannot be achieved singularly by symbolic policy statements founded on social distributive justice except by the daily work of teachers in schools” (p. 17). McDowall (2018) utilizes a decolonizing lens demonstrated by “thinking and weaving” through theories to explore the approach that Indigenous educators could adopt in the education of pre-service teachers. Drawing on Barad’s (2007) description of diffraction as the “way the waves combine when they overlap and the apparent bending and spreading of waves that occurs when waves encounter and obstruction” (p. 77), McDowall (2018) argues for diffractive methods in shifting epistemic perspectives and dominance as a means to navigate through intersecting knowledges as they present themselves. She suggests a diffractive way of reading, writing, and thinking as a means to encourage a decolonizing attitude that exchanges possessive logic for a logic that speaks of responsibility and connection.

Interrogating colonial logics. Madden (2019) expresses concern about the way(s) pre-service teachers are prepared to engage in reconciliation education in a manner that is theory-based. She argues that the foundation, contents, and processes of the TRC are loaded with colonial logics, and thus require de/colonization. Madden (2019) employs a de/colonizing methodology to advance change that honours and nurtures Indigenous

knowledge and communities with a view to focus on the various nuances involved in interrogating the colonial logics that is manifest in multiple layers of the Indigenous body and society. She contemplates that reconciliation is constructed from the logic and system that created it; thus, no meaningful reconciliation can be achieved if the central idea and logic is cognized from the establishment that benefits from continued colonial inequity. Madden (2019) proposes the use of counter-stories of refusal, resistance, resilience, restoring, and resurgence to challenge the institutional structures/systems that perpetuate colonial systems of oppression. She argues for teacher candidates to engage in self-interrogatory reflections to open critical conversations on issues that are important to decolonization and reconciliation education in the classroom as a means to “evaluate policy, curriculum, and pedagogical approaches for the integration of land in truth and reconciliation education” (Madden, 2019, p. 295).

In related ways, Morcom and Freeman (2018) provide critical insights into how pre-service teachers should decolonize reconciliation, critiquing settlers’ conceptualization of reconciliation that is understood within the context of what is described as the “White saviour industrial complex” that makes it challenging to build allyship. The authors explore reconciliation beyond the Euro-Canadian framework that seeks to assuage settler guilt or “save” Indigenous peoples from current socio-economic and cultural realities. This approach advances a deeper understanding of reconciliation for pre-service teachers that transcends a Western framework of knowledge. Thus, Morcom and Freeman (2018) articulate a framework that offers a holistic educational experience, and in so doing, invites pre-service teachers to multiple Indigenous knowledge and spirituality modalities for engaging reconciliation and decolonization in teacher education.

Indigenization

Gaudry and Lorenz (2018) conceptualize Indigenization “as a move to expand the academy’s still-narrow conceptions of knowledge, to include Indigenous perspectives in transformative ways” (p. 218). In line with the TRC Call to Action for the inclusion of Indigenous content and perspectives in the K–12 curriculum, there are growing courageous voices demanding curricular reforms. Andersen (2012), Hanson (2018), Hare (2020), McDowall (2018), McInnes (2017), McLaughlin and Whatman (2015), and Mashford-Pringle and Nardozi (2013) all focus on centring Indigenous worldviews within educational spaces.

Curricular inclusion. Mashford-Pringle and Nardozi (2013) argue that incorporating Aboriginal content into pre-service teacher education has a potential to enhance the experiences of Indigenous people in Western education systems. They express concerns about the limited knowledge of teachers with respect to Aboriginal perspectives, content, histories, and experiences and how this translates into teaching the most basic and superficial information. Because of this, the authors maintain that “initial teacher education programs across Canada must continue to implement Aboriginal content and perspective within their curriculum” (2013, p. 14). This is one of the rationales for the Deepening Knowledge project described by the authors in the article, as it seeks to increase pre-service teachers’ understandings of Aboriginal history, culture, and worldviews. From an American context, McInnes (2017) also argues for the inclusion of foundational Indigenous knowledge in teacher education coursework as essential for settler teachers, noting the positive effects of culturally responsive pedagogies, particularly in educational contexts that include Indigenous students. More specifically, his research illustrates the transformational effects of foundational Indigenous knowledge on the dispositions, skills, and understandings of pre-service teachers as they prepare to work in allyship with Indigenous communities.

Indigenous foundational knowledge. Hanson (2018) calls for the integration of “understandings of Indigenous principles of relationality and kinship—including the ethical relationality underlying the framework of *métissage*” (p. 325) through the inclusion of Indigenous literature in teacher education programs. In her work, Hare (2020) writes “for teacher candidates whose knowledge base of Indigenous-settler colonial histories may be limited or non-existent, there is a need for curricula aimed at teaching Indigenous-settlers histories that are inclusive of Indigenous perspectives and linked to Indigenous peoples’ present” (p. 26). Hare (2020) highlights a significant criticism in the academy when White scholars teach Indigenous-focused content, noting that White scholars do not have the life experience to teach Indigenous histories and perspectives and may perpetuate damaging stereotypes, racist ideologies, and settler privilege while also challenging Indigenous cultural safety as students struggle to make connections to Indigenous perspectives in their courses.

Historical Thinking

Over the last two decades there has been a call for the use of historical thinking as a pedagogical approach to teaching history in schools. Drawing on the work of Seixas (2006), the approach has been embraced in pre-service teacher education and has significantly influenced the ways in which Indigenous history is taught in schools (McGregor, 2017; Miles, 2018; Ng-A-Fook & Smith, 2017; Parkes & Donnelly, 2014). Seixas (2006) provides the foundation to understand the *logic* of historical thinking and its concepts to teach history in the arts and education. His conceptualization of historical thinking rests on the need to fill the gap he observed in history education; the absence of tools to measure or evaluate teachers' and students' quality and expectations in history education. He notes that the accumulation of facts-to-be-remembered and curriculum statements and documents are not adequate for measuring the progress and impacts of curriculum objectives in history education. Thus, for progression and structure in the teaching of history, pre-service teachers are encouraged to use historical thinking approaches, including establishing historical significance, using primary source evidence, identifying continuity and change, analyzing cause and consequence, taking historical perspectives, and understanding the moral dimension of historical interpretation. Seixas's (2006) conceptualization of historical thinking plays a performative role in transforming content knowledge into skill knowledge; it provides ways for students to think about the present and the means by which the telling of history may be constructed, considered, and scrutinized beyond the surface or commonplace narratives (Parkes & Donnelly, 2014).

Disrupting settler historical narratives. In the context of Indigenous histories and reconciliation education, historical reasoning has the potential to facilitate decolonizing interrogations, questioning, and activities in classrooms meant to illuminate Indigenous narratives and lived experiences, and that name and challenge settler colonialism. While not explicitly referencing historical thinking, Manning and Harrison (2018) describe how narratives of place and land in history education in Australia and New Zealand, rather than a reliance on textbooks to advance understandings of the past, are necessary for the teaching of Indigenous histories. They note the importance of inviting pre-service teachers into an ecology of place-based learning as "an affective and decolonizing approach to the teaching of Indigenous histories in both countries" (p. 71). Thus, they challenge a historical thinking approach that does not sufficiently disrupt settler narratives of the

past and experiences with place. Similarly, Miles (2018) advocates for history and social studies educators to draw on a historical thinking approach as a means of engaging with reconciliation and historical injustice. Miles acknowledges the tensions/problems of applying historical thinking to Indigenous history but argues that “this model in combination with Indigenous perspectives, voices, and ways of knowing presents a way for all teachers to engage with the topic of reconciliation and historical injustice, rather than shying away from it” (p. 308).

Reconciling historical perspectives. In the literature, several scholars are critical of an historical thinking approach as being too methodical. Ng-A-Fook and Smith (2017) identify over proceduralism as a common criticism against historical thinking. They argue that by making the process of doing history something that can be done as a ritual of rules and procedure, “we risk making historical thinking methodical in nature” (p. 73). Thus, Ng-A-Fook and Smith (2017) argue for including oral history in disciplinary history education as a praxis for pushing the limits of historical thinking in education because oral histories open the possibility for deconstructing the “Eurocentric grand narratives, which have been reified over the years” (p. 67). McGregor (2017) offers clarity on the core goal of historical thinking as a way to reconcile historical perspectives through respectful acknowledgment of multiple histories and ways of being-in-the-world. She suggests that educators must consider the relationship between the two reform movements in the teaching of history as a way to navigate and engage with Indigenous history in a meaningful and respectful way, arguing that with due considerations for ecologies of culture, opportunity exists for students to benefit from exposure to the distinguishing features of both Indigenous and historical thinking systems for making meaning from the past (McGregor, 2017, p. 4).

Conclusion

The literature discussed in this article provides insight into tensions emanating from the ongoing effects of colonialism that continue to foment division and violence in Indigenous-settler relations in Canada. The need for truth and reconciliation education to confront this divide has not been overtly contested, but the way the “order of things” and the banality of everyday life within the Canadian space (Foucault, 1970; Bourdieu, 2018) is being imagined and constructed for the benefit of settler futurity (Tuck & Yang, 2012) points to forces of colonality that challenge the possibilities for meaningful reconcilia-

tion. Thus, the literature points to reconciliation and decolonization in educational spaces as essential for meaningful, ethical, and respectful intersubjective relations between Indigenous peoples and settler Canadians. There is an overarching consensus that for reconciliation to happen, decolonization must take place through deconstruction and reconstruction that is accountable to Indigenous sovereignty and futurity (Tuck & Yang, 2012). In teacher education, the TRC and its 94 Calls to Action provide a starting place to address the issues that perpetuate an insider/outsider dichotomy in Canada. This dichotomy is described by Dion (2009) as the “perfect stranger,” and by Donald (2009) as the pedagogy of the fort, in which settler Canadians are always positioned as insiders and Indigenous peoples as outsiders on their own land. What was more difficult to discern across the scholarly works considered was the extent to which teacher education programs as a whole were taking up truth and reconciliation.

While the literature focuses variously on culturally responsive practices, anti-racist and decolonizing approaches that centre Indigenization, critical pedagogy, narrativity, and counter-stories as a framework for reconciliation and reciprocal social and ethical relations, the issues of economics and social policies that affect Indigenous communities received far less attention. The literature did not provide as fulsome an account of how racism, colonialism, and Western epistemic dominance connect directly to Western economics and is a signifying arbiter between race and racism. Nor did the literature substantively interrogate how teacher education programs are implicated in the ongoing White supremacist, capitalist project that is foundational to the Western economic system. Here, Casey’s (2013) work is helpful as it “outlines the culpability of teacher education in perpetuating the neoliberal turn in education” (p. 123) and the need for an approach to teacher education that combats the “disastrous effects of capitalist exploitation on both teachers and students” (p. 123). However, Casey does not connect capitalist exploitation to the settler colonial project and its enactments of settler futurity. In her work, Roth (2019) captures the interconnections of capitalism and colonialism as she advocates for recentring Indigenous peoples and their values in the Canadian art market. Her insights can be applied to teacher education programs.

Although education has been acknowledged as an instrument that enabled Indigenous cultural genocide, epistemicide, and ongoing colonization, researchers in teacher education have paid less attention to the sovereign “power” machine that oxygenates settler domination. Power is a significant category in pre-and post-colonial politics; it was

and is the enabler of subjectivation and racism. Power imbalance generates the *excluded middle* that provides the logic for fabricating racial binaries of superiority/inferiority, developed/underdeveloped, and the savage/civilized. Power sets the rules for who gets what, when, and how. Trouillot (1995) argues that “history is the fruit of power, but power itself is never so transparent that its analysis becomes superfluous. The ultimate mark of power may be its invisibility; the ultimate challenge, the exposition of its roots” (p. xix). Thus, an analysis of power is central to explicating the settler-logic superstructure and how it seeks to ensure settler futurity, especially in and through education. The refusal to recognize Indigenous land and resource rights is one example of a significant arrogation of power that pushes Indigenous bodies to the margins and reinforces the notion of the “imaginary Indian” (Francis, 1992). Land and power are mutual necessities and not mutually exclusive; possessing land produces political and economic power to negate opposing subjectivation and subjectivities. In light of this, reconciliation and land are interconnected and must be understood as such. In this respect, it is important to recognize the work of the many Indigenous scholars within and beyond education who have been shaping, and continue to shape, knowledge and understanding in this respect, including but certainly not limited to Taiaiake Alfred (2004), Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2014), Eve Tuck et al. (2014), Mathew Wildcat et al. (2014), Willie Ermine (2024), and Jeff Corntassel and Tiffanie Hardbarger (2019).

The Western notion of reconciliation is the one that enables Indigenous/non-Indigenous Canadians to smile at each other and does not change colonial systems in substantive ways (Dei, 2000). As Dei (2000) notes, superficial reconciliation cannot deal with the difficult questions of social inequities in Indigenous lands and spaces. Weber-Pillwax (2001) places Indigenous research work within the context of intellectual discourse and praxis to impact Indigenous communities. As the academy flourishes in decolonizing and deconstructing methods in anti-colonial and anti-racist struggles, she articulates the need to move deconstruction beyond abstractions to a level that addresses everyday Indigenous needs and events by committing to community accountability. Sockbeson (2017) describes opportunities for “red hope” wherein Indigenous peoples exercise agency as they shape a different future for themselves and their communities through cultural and land reclamation (Deloria, 1998). Even as Indigenous populations in Canada have grown significantly, they continue to be underrepresented in significant social, political, and economic institutions, including universities (Henry et al., 2017).

One of the indisputable realities in Canada remains that Indigenous land was stolen; it is a point of reality where reconciliation must begin. In addition to the important understandings and approaches to Place-based and Land-based education discussed in the literature, bringing Indigenous land economics to teacher education programs has the potential to reconstruct reconciliation in more impactful ways, supporting pre-service teachers to reflect and reconceptualize Canada as it should be and not as it is. Drawing on the literature discussed in this article, teacher education programs must deeply consider their implications in ongoing colonialism and superficial recognition, especially as choices are made about what and how to teach. Wildcat et al. (2014) argue that “settler-colonialism has functioned, in part, by deploying institutions of western education to undermine Indigenous intellectual development through cultural assimilation and the violent separation of Indigenous peoples from [their] sources of knowledge and strength – the land” (p. 2). Thus, along with many of the scholarly works discussed, this article argues that in teacher education, learning from and with the land should supersede so called “rational” evidence from contents and texts, considering that the land is the primary source of data evidence and a powerful space of learning. Continuing to consider and reflect on what the literature is advancing in terms of truth and reconciliation in teacher education from a phenomenological perspective by developing “historical reasoning” through “first-person experience” to promote more meaningful reconciliation is critical.

The analysis and synthesis of scholarly perspectives of truth and reconciliation in pre-service teacher education in this article circulates ideas and provides insights into the re/conceptualizations and practices that hamper or open possibilities for achieving the educational goal of reconciliation. As such, the targeted review of the literature provides a significant contribution that challenges a dialectical evaluation of efforts to advance the goal of reconciliation. The analysis and synthesis provide thematic data for periodic reviews that generate action plans on how to improve or further advance truth-telling and reconciliation in pre-service teacher education. Only a few of the articles significantly make community resurgence their critical research goal. Manning and Harrison (2018), McDowall (2018), McLaughlin and Whatman (2015), and Scully (2018, 2020) for example, variously articulate the need for pre-service teachers to connect with the local community and that effective historical knowing should rely on a partnership with Indigenous communities. Thus, teacher education programs must enact more community-focused, land-based, and decolonizing approaches as a means of living up to and into the spirit and intent of truth and reconciliation.

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