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Legitimate codes of exchange: Gaining awareness from transnational inquiry

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Understanding the nature of language development and language acquisition has been identified as of key importance for teachers working with the diverse learners in U.S. public schools. One approach is to identify opportunities for Teacher Language Awareness (TLA). How might preservice teachers develop TLA of the complex social forces which dynamically shape the social and linguistic identities of their students? This study explores pre-service teacher responses to intercultural exchanges through an analysis of structured reflections. Students (N=40) from a U.S. university were partnered with students in Mexico and international students. Partners explored each other's language learning experiences and reflected on how their lived exchanges were understood through the course content. An interpretive analysis of post-activity structured reflections (N=90) were examined, drawing Legitimate Code Theory (LCT) inspired codes of analysis. Findings illustrate a dominance of knower codes, creating a code clash with more the balanced knowledge/knower codes. However, by the end of the course, the dominance of knower codes appears to shift in response to engaging in collaborative exchange.

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