

# Intersectional Competence

**Batschelet Conference**  
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**PennState**  
College of Education



What is Intersectionality?



# Intersectionality



Kimberlé Crenshaw



Patricia Hill Collins



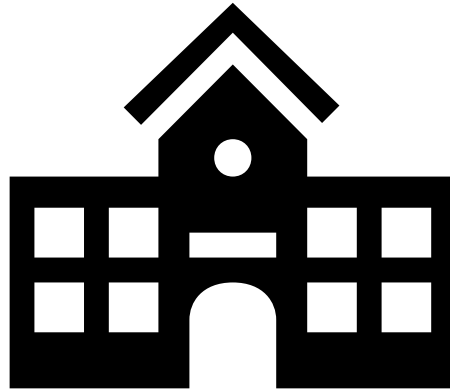
# Further Defining Intersectionality

**"Intersectionality provides language to discuss the complexities in simultaneously considering sociocultural identities. Of primary concern are the effects of multiple markers of difference. That is, intersectionality reveals the identities as they apply to an individual or group, creating overlapping and interdependent systems of discrimination or disadvantage interconnected nature of social categorizations such as minoritized racial, ability, language, and gender."**

(Boveda & Weinberg, 2022, pp.10-11)

# Intersectionality & Education

Schools as Microcosms of Society



# Intersectional Competence

*and the*

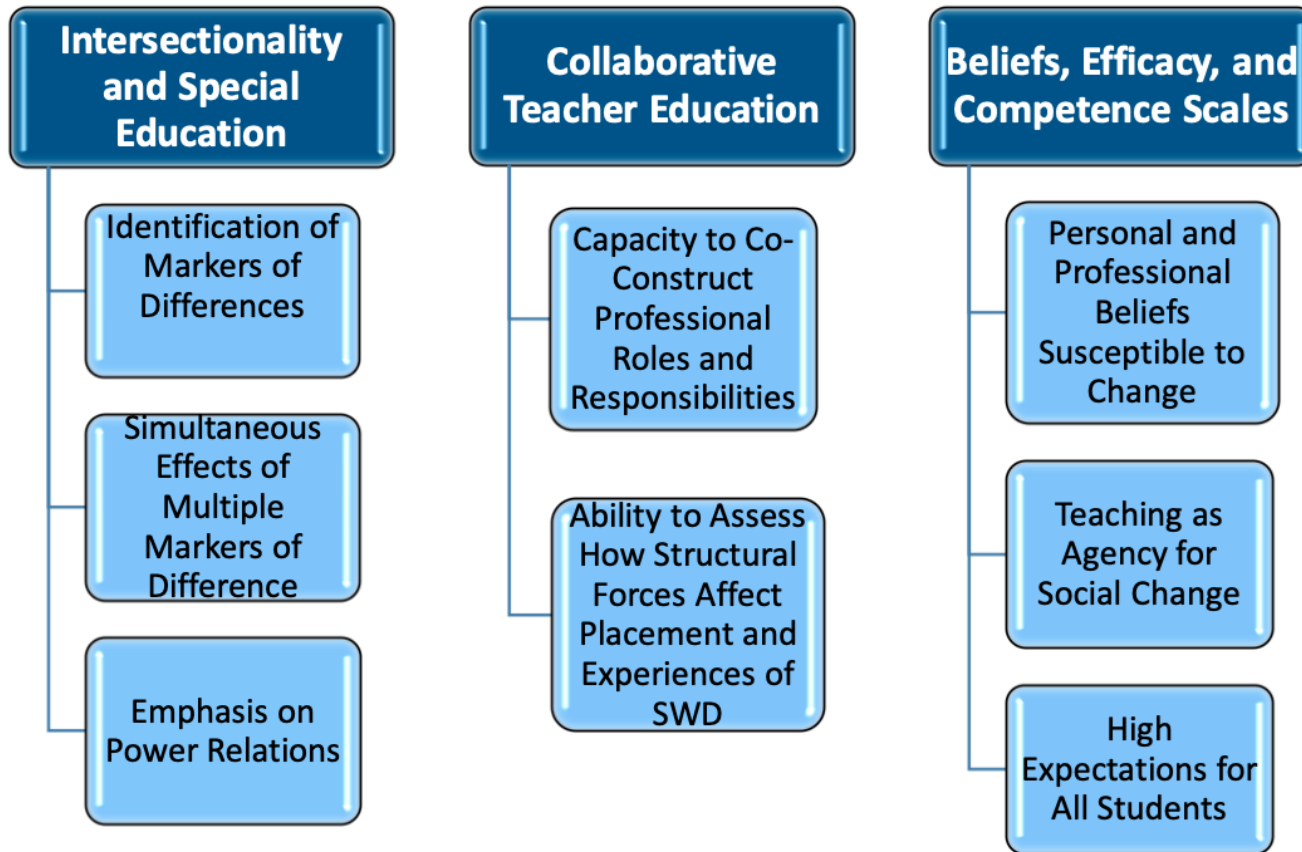
# Intersectional Competence Measure (ICM)

- Dr. Mildred Boveda (2016)
- Black Feminist Theory and Intersectionality (Collins, 1990; Crenshaw, 1989)
- PSTs' preparedness to
  - (1) recognize how schooling is implicated in multiple, intersecting systems of oppression
  - (2) collaborate with relevant partners who themselves navigate multiple social marginalizations, and
  - (3) consider sociocultural differences while making instructional decisions

(Boveda 2016; Boveda and Aronson 2016).

## ICM

- Three (3) distinct categories
  - Special Education and Intersectionality
  - Collaboration
  - Pre-Service Teacher Preparation in working with diverse students



## Constructs of Intersectional Competence

# Intersectional Conscious Collaboration (ICC) Tools

## ICC for Teacher Educators

(ICC-TE; Boveda & Weinberg, 2020)



## ICC for Educator Preparation

(ICC-EP; Weinberg & Boveda, 2021)





# ICC-EP. Assignment 1

## **Part 1: Your Sociocultural Identity**

1. Identify 5 of your sociocultural markers (e.g., race, linguistic origin, educational level, geographic/regional origin, socioeconomic status, class, citizenship, ethnicity, gender identification, sexuality, religion, nationality, immigration status, dis/ability, et al.).
2. Discuss how these sociocultural markers influenced your educational experiences
3. How do your sociocultural markers intersect? If so, are there simultaneous impacts?

## **Part 2: Decentering Dominant Sociocultural Identities**

1. Describe an instance when the discrimination of a marginalized group by a dominant group was challenged/criticized/confronted in an educational setting. *How did you feel about this? How did you act? Reflect on your own feelings and actions as well as on the instance itself.*
2. Describe an instance when you perceived that others were receiving benefits due to their markers of difference?
3. In your own words, what is the difference between equality and equity?
4. Describe an instance where efforts to "enhance equity" were taken in an educational setting. What steps were taken to create fairness or to correct imbalances in students' educational opportunities?

# ICC-EP. Assignment 2

## **Part 1: Student Sociocultural Identities**

1. What sociocultural markers were you able to identify for your focus student(s)?
2. How were you made aware of these sociocultural markers? For example, IEPs, participation in free and reduced lunch program, mentor teacher, other educator-student communication, and parent communication.
3. How do their sociocultural markers intersect? What are the potential simultaneous impacts?
4. What structural forces (e.g., school or societal policies) might influence the experiences of the focus student(s) and their family?
5. What classroom practices might influence the experiences of the focus student(s) and their family?
6. How will you learn more about these structural forces, classroom practices, sociocultural markers, as well as discover the narratives and culture that will help you understand the focus student(s)?
7. Who else might be involved in the collaboration that might help you get relevant information about your students?

## **Part 2: Strengthening your Collaboration**

1. How do you ensure that all collaborators are able to share their views and perspectives?
2. How might you leverage your understanding of your own sociocultural and emerging professional identities as strengths to your collaborations?
3. Create one collaboration-oriented goal. Share this goal with your partner.
4. What are you excited about exploring further or putting to practice with the focus students?

# ICC-EP. Assignment 3

## **Part 1: Implementation of Lesson/Intervention**

1. Since completing the ICC 2 Assignment, what else have you learned that could help you better understand the focus student(s)? (For example, what have you learned about societal forces, diverse sociocultural markers, disability categories, or discovery of narratives and/or culture since completing ICC2 )?
2. Describe the lesson or intervention you created (you will also upload the lesson/intervention plan to canvas).

## **Part 2: Reflecting on your Lesson/Intervention & Implementation**

1. Consider your earlier descriptions of the focus student(s) as you describe the successes and challenges related to lesson objectives and approaches used.
2. Who may potentially benefit or struggle with the approaches used with your lesson/intervention?
3. What were the objectives, and what additional structures might ensure that all students accomplish these objectives?
4. What opportunities did this approach provide for all students to engage with learning activities?

## **Part 3: Reflecting on your Collaboration**

1. How has understanding your own sociocultural identities and your personal and educational/professional experiences enhanced the peer collaboration?
2. How has understanding your own sociocultural identities and your personal and educational/professional experiences revealed tensions with stakeholders?
3. What assumptions about the focus student(s) and your collaborators did you make? How (if at all) have these assumptions been challenged?
4. What goal did you set for yourself in ICC Assignment 2? Reflect on your progress towards achieving this goal.

# Supporting Pre-Service Teachers Through Intersectionally Conscious Collaboration:

*A Multimethod Study Utilizing Transformative Learning  
Theory*

**Elizabeth A. Ruiz** *(she/her)*  
**Doctoral Candidate**  
**Arizona State University**



# SUPPORTING PRE SERVICE TEACHERS THROUGH INTERSECTIONALLY CONSCIOUS COLLABORATION

## Background

K-12 Educators in the US are woefully unprepared to meaningfully engage with culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) special education students and their families.<sup>2</sup> In addition, current educational research and praxis continue to perpetuate prescriptive notions of family involvement and engagement that center white, middle-class practices and marginalize CLD students and their families.<sup>3</sup> To create and sustain the conditions needed to disrupt educational inequities, K-12 educators must deeply understand their own intersecting sociocultural identities, those of other educators, as well as of their students to create effective educational environments for learners across all markers of diversity and to foster equitable engagement practices with CLD families of students with disabilities.<sup>4,5</sup>

## Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation research is to understand how the Intersectional Conscious Collaboration Educator Preparation Protocol (ICC-EP) in conjunction with the online ICC learning modules impact the intersectional competence and practices of pre-service teachers (PSTs) throughout a required teaching course centered on family engagement practices.

## Theoretical Framework

### Intersectionality:

- grounded in Black feminist theory evaluating intentional societal neglect of both the complexities and interconnectedness of multiple social and cultural realities<sup>7</sup>
- originated in legal studies to examine the convergence of sex, race, and class as used to oppress Black women<sup>8</sup>
- opposes essentialist views of identity and interrogates how a person's multiple identities are mutually constructed.

The intervention is grounded in intersectional competence,<sup>9</sup> the Black feminist framework of intersectionality,<sup>10</sup> collaboration,<sup>11</sup> and coteaching.<sup>12</sup>

## Research Questions

- How does the ICC-EP Protocol in conjunction with the ICC learning modules a) support the intersectional competence of PSTs shaping their perspectives, awareness, and beliefs and b) impact the teaching practices of PSTs?
- To what extent do PSTs perceive the a) personal process and b) engagement in transformative learning during the course?
- What evidence is there that PSTs' beliefs and intended practices reflect equitable engagement with CLD students and families?

## Methodology

### Analytical Framework



- Disorienting Dilemma
- Self-Examination
- Recognition
- Exploration
- Critical Assessment

### Transformative Learning Theory<sup>13</sup>

- New Roles
- Planning Course of Action
- Knowledge Acquisition
- Building Competence
- Reintegration

## Research Tools

Course Assignments: ICC-EP Protocol and ICC Training Modules.

### ICC-EP Protocol<sup>6</sup>

The ICC-EP protocol scaffolds the sociocultural awareness of teachers. The protocols are comprised of six elements: 1) Establishing an Intersectionally Conscious Collaboration; 2) Curriculum and Pedagogical Planning; 3) Instruction; 4) Assessment, Data Analysis, and Student Feedback; 5) Reflection and Cogenerative Dialogue; and 6) Maintaining Ethical Collaborations.

### ICC Learning Modules

Eight online ICC learning modules expand upon the protocol prompts with supplementary content (e.g., informational videos, skits, secondary sources, assessments) that aim to further PST's intersectional consciousness and understanding.

*\*This research is supported by the AERA Division H 2022-23 Graduate Student Research Grant Program.*

### Participants & Setting



PSTs enrolled in an undergraduate level teaching course focused on family engagement

### Data Collection



- Course Assignments
- Transformative Learning Survey<sup>14</sup>
- Focus Group Interviews

### Data Analysis



### Iterative Coding Process

- Deductive Analysis using Transformative Learning Theory
- Thematic Analysis

## Implications

Through the utilization of the ICC-EP tools and modules, this research aims to disrupt the current inequities existing in special education. Armed with a transformative sociocultural understanding, K12 pre service educators will be able to create and sustain learning environments, services, educational plans, and family engagement practices in a manner that equitably includes and honors the sociocultural values of diverse students.



Scan the QR Code to view the ICC-EP



ASU Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College Elizabeth A. Ruiz, M.Ed. Arizona State University



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## Methodology



PSTs enrolled in an undergraduate

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## Purpose

The purpose of this dissertation is to explore the utilization of the Intersectional Conscious Collaboration (ICC-EP) in conjunction with the intersectional competence (PSTs) throughout a required engagement practices.

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## Implications

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# Preservice Teacher Intersectional Awareness: A Qualitative Inquiry

**Lindsey Pike** (*she/her*)

**PhD, MSW**

**Assistant Professor of Special Education**

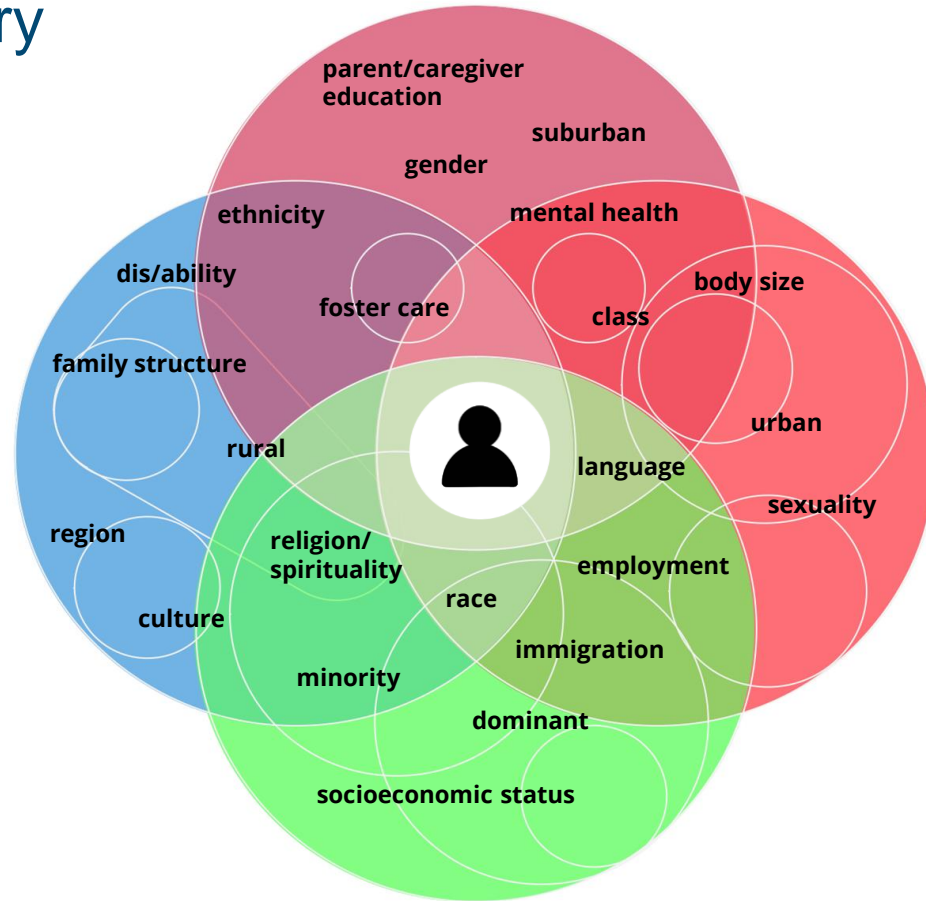
**Roger Williams University**

**[lpike@rwu.edu](mailto:lpike@rwu.edu)**

"If a school system can be built to work for me, it can be dismantled and built to work for everyone."



# Preservice Teacher Intersectional Awareness: A Qualitative Inquiry



# Problem of Practice

## POLICY

Equality v. Equity  
Equity is Intersectional

## TEACHER PREPARATION

Teaching Cadre – Lack of Parity  
Implicit Bias in Special Education Process  
Siloed Preparation

## DISPROPORTIONALITY

Pervasive  
An intersectional issue of Race and Disability (Language, SES, etc.)

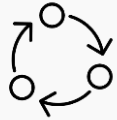


# Research Question & Methodology



## RQ:

What are the lived-experiences related to intersectionality of pre-service general education teachers who complete their internship in an urban, Title-1 funded school?



## METHODOLOGY

Qualitative – Phenomenology  
Purposive Maximum Variation Sampling from a Convenience Pool  
Baseline/Demographic Survey & Semi-Structured Interviews



## ANALYSIS

Verbatim Transcription  
Colaizzi's (1978) Seven-Step Method  
Trustworthiness – Bracketing, Audit Trail, Member-Checking, Peer Debriefing



# Results

*n*=10 across 4 different Elem Schools

## participants identified as:

Black/African Amer. (2)

Latinx(2)

Multiracial(2)

white(4)

Interview Descriptive Data ( <i>n</i> = 10)	
Duration Range	32 – 58 minutes
Duration Average	44 minutes
Total Minutes	439 minutes, 35 seconds

***"where" participants described experiencing intersectionality (but not identified as such)***

## *Emergent Primary and Tertiary Themes*

Primary Theme	Tertiary Themes
Influences that shape the role and identity of the intern in an urban, Title 1 school	Background and experiences as they relate to students Role as a teacher, learner, and facilitator Experiences teaching students who were engaged and students who were challenging Relationship with supervising teacher as a mentor for building student relationships Relationship with supervising teacher as a guide for meeting student needs Relationship with supervising teacher as a model for collaboration
Understanding the context of the students in an urban, Title 1 school	Recognizing student racial, cultural, & linguistic diversity Students experiencing unmet basic needs Students experiencing trauma Factors influencing student behavior Learning about the context and opportunity of the school
Ability of the intern to serve all students through their knowledge, skills, and dispositions	Commitment and dispositions to meet student needs Challenges in meeting student needs Challenges in supporting students with disabilities Deepened understanding of students with disabilities Practices prioritized to meet student needs Areas of strength from preparation coursework Areas for more coursework to increase knowledge and skills



# Results

## *Constructs of Intersectional Competence*

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### *Boveda's (2016) Eight Constructs of Intersectional Competence*

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- Construct 1:* The ability to clearly identify sociocultural group categories and markers of Difference
- Construct 2:* An understanding of the interlocking and simultaneous effects of multiple markers of difference
- Construct 3:* An understanding of oppression and marginalization that occur at the intersection of multiple markers of difference
- Construct 4:* Capacity to co-construct and negotiate professional roles and responsibilities when teaching students with diverse abilities
- Construct 5:* Ability to assess how structural forces have impacted the placement and experiences of students with disabilities and their families
- Construct 6:* An understanding that personal and professional beliefs about diversity are distinct, but interrelated with one another; each is susceptible to change
- Construct 7:* A belief of teaching as an agency for social change
- Construct 8:* Evidence of high expectations for all students
-

# Results

“I just loved my internship experience so much because they were just all so, so different. And just so great in so many ways. Even the things that people thought, you know, weren't great, or even those behavior issues...it made them mean so much more to me because I just knew I had this entire person.”

“I understood what it is to like work hard to get out of certain economic situations ... I want to be a teacher so that I can work in those communities, and maybe be a person that can help uplift someone else.”

“This is something that I don't want to do. Like, I need to do it...I feel like this is going to be one of the best things ever for my experience. And getting to work with these kids that are coming from all over.”

“The school has a clinic attached to it, after school and before school programs, and lunch, free lunch and just different resources that they know that they can reach out to the school for and that they use and they need. And that's really, great.”

“The school is in an interesting part of town.”

“They actually had a lot of resources and newer technology... the school was actually well taken care of and stuff like that.”

“I wish someone would have told me...”

“Some of their parents just don't care.”

Mention race only in describing school demographics

- Lack of connections mentioned between race, disability, language, SES, others, and impacts on student

No explicit mention of systems or power which underly student experiences

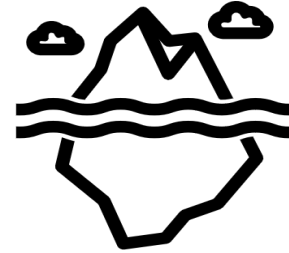
- Some acknowledgement of own privilege but mostly in reference to SES

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Developing Dispositions

Deficit Perspectives

Critical Consciousness

# Implications

## POLICY

- **Defend educational policy which protects students and teachers and emphasizes equity**
- **Preparation program policy should prioritize TC development to serve all students from multiply diverse backgrounds, including critical consciousness**
- **Policy for evaluating TC and preparation programs must include an expected disposition of equity, social justice**



## PRACTICE

- **Equity-Centered Preparation Practices**
- **Collaboration to Develop Theory, Perspectives, and Practices in Teacher Ed**
- **Expanded and Guided Clinical Experiences**



# Future Research

- In what ways do PSTs develop intersectional awareness and competency?
- Which teacher education practices promote intersectional awareness and competence?
- How can intersectional competence be assessed?
- To what extent does intersectional competence impact the practices of PST?







# Comparative Research in Education – The Importance of Intersectionality and Positionality

Dr. Christina Gilhuber  
Assistant Professor  
Illinois State University



# Agenda

01

Intersectionality

02

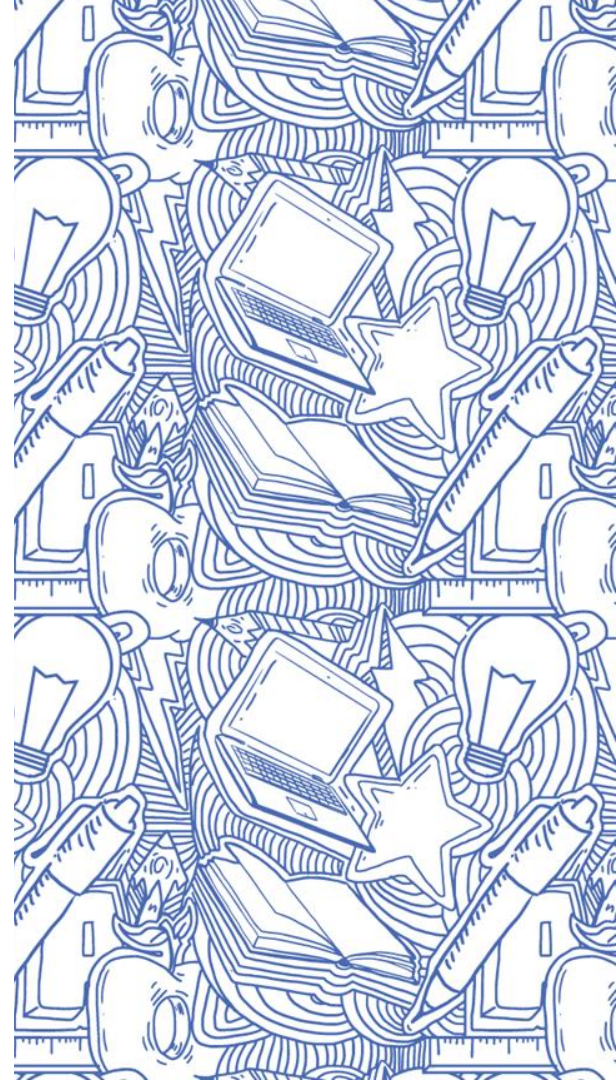
Positionality

03

Research

01

# Intersectionality



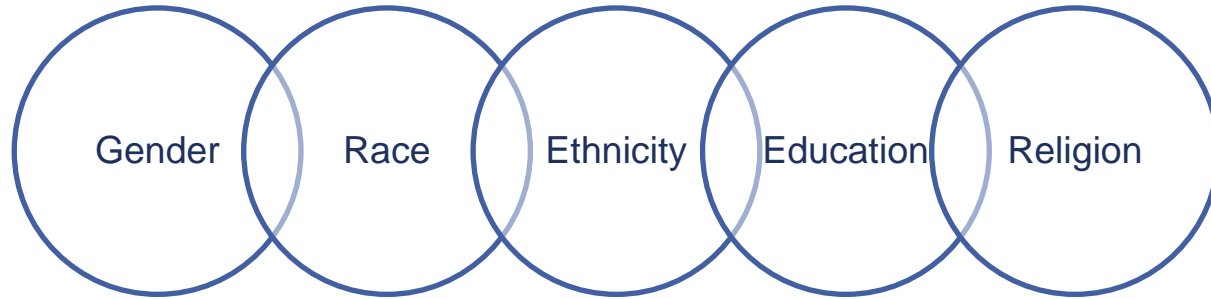


# Terminology

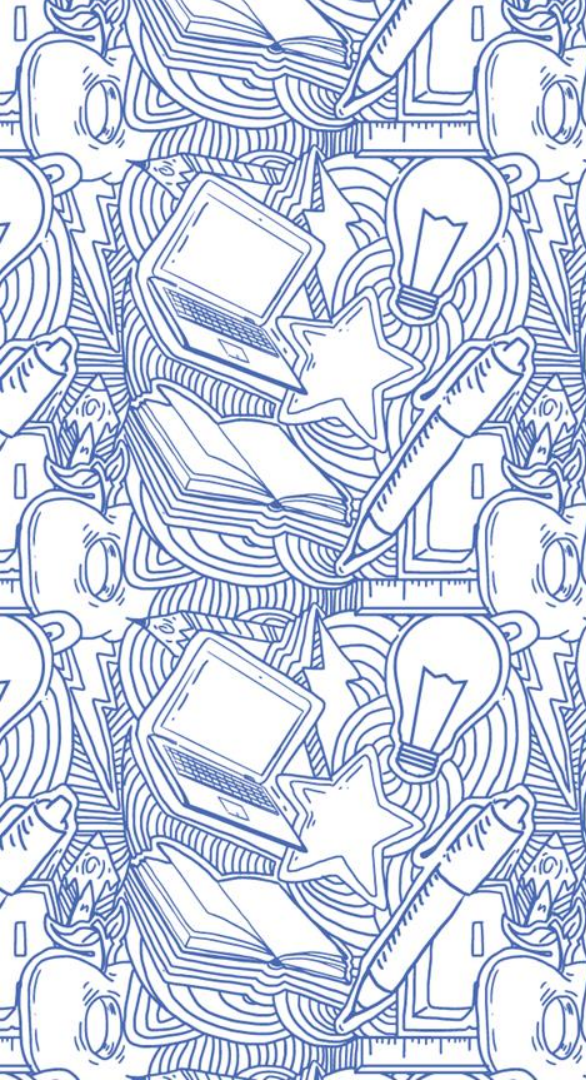
- Sociocultural Categories/Markers
- Normative or Dominant Markers
- Markers of Difference/Diversity
- Minoritized



# Markers of Sociocultural Identity







02

Positionality

# Positionality

- Needs to be adapted to fit the research context
- Different aspects of positionality need to be addressed



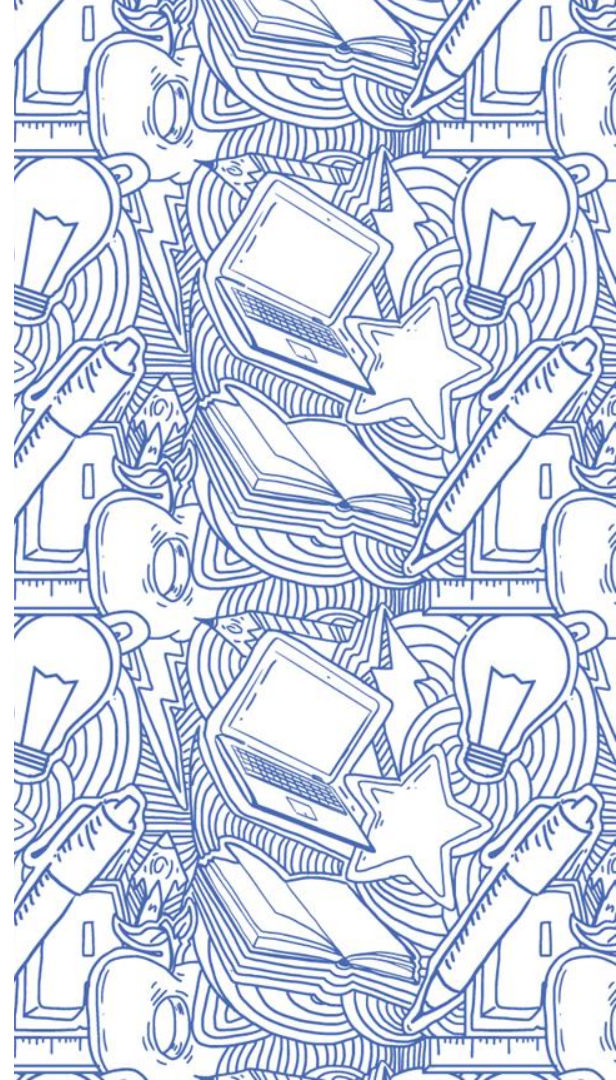
# Positionality (Boveda & Annamma,2023)

- Sociohistorical Context
- Sociocultural Context
- Onto-epistemic Context



# 03

## Research





# Example of the Role of Intersectionality and Positionality in a Comparative Study

- Home literacy experiences of multilingual preschool children on the autism spectrum
- Mixed-method study
- Four phases:
  1. Survey
  2. Interview
  3. Video observation
  4. Video-cue Feedback
- Recruitment in Germany and the US



# Intersectionality

- Intersection of two minoritized markers:
  - Cultural and linguistic diversity
  - Disability





# Positionality – Sociocultural Context

- Personal background
- Similarities and differences between PI's sociocultural identity and participants' sociocultural identities



# Positionality – Sociohistorical Context

- Theoretical context – four professions:
  - Early Childhood Education
  - Special Education
  - Comparative and International Education
  - Linguistics
- Differences in genealogy, understandings of literacy, and critiques
- Involvement of collaborators



# Onto-epistemic Context

- Theoretical Framework:
  - Understanding of literacy
  - Intersectionality
- Role of ableism and linguistic imperialism



# References

- Boveda, M., & Annamma, S. A. (2023). Beyond making a statement: An Intersectional framing of the power and possibilities of positioning. *Educational Researcher*, 52(5), 306–314. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X231167149>







# Thank You!

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An aerial, top-down view of a complex multi-level highway interchange. The roads are dark asphalt with white lane markings and are filled with numerous cars. The interchange features several large, circular overpasses and ramps that create a dense, circular pattern. The surrounding area is mostly green, suggesting trees and vegetation. In the bottom right corner, there is a parking lot with several cars and a building with a sign. The word "QUESTIONS" is written in a large, white, serif font across the center of the image, overlaid on the highway structure.

QUESTIONS