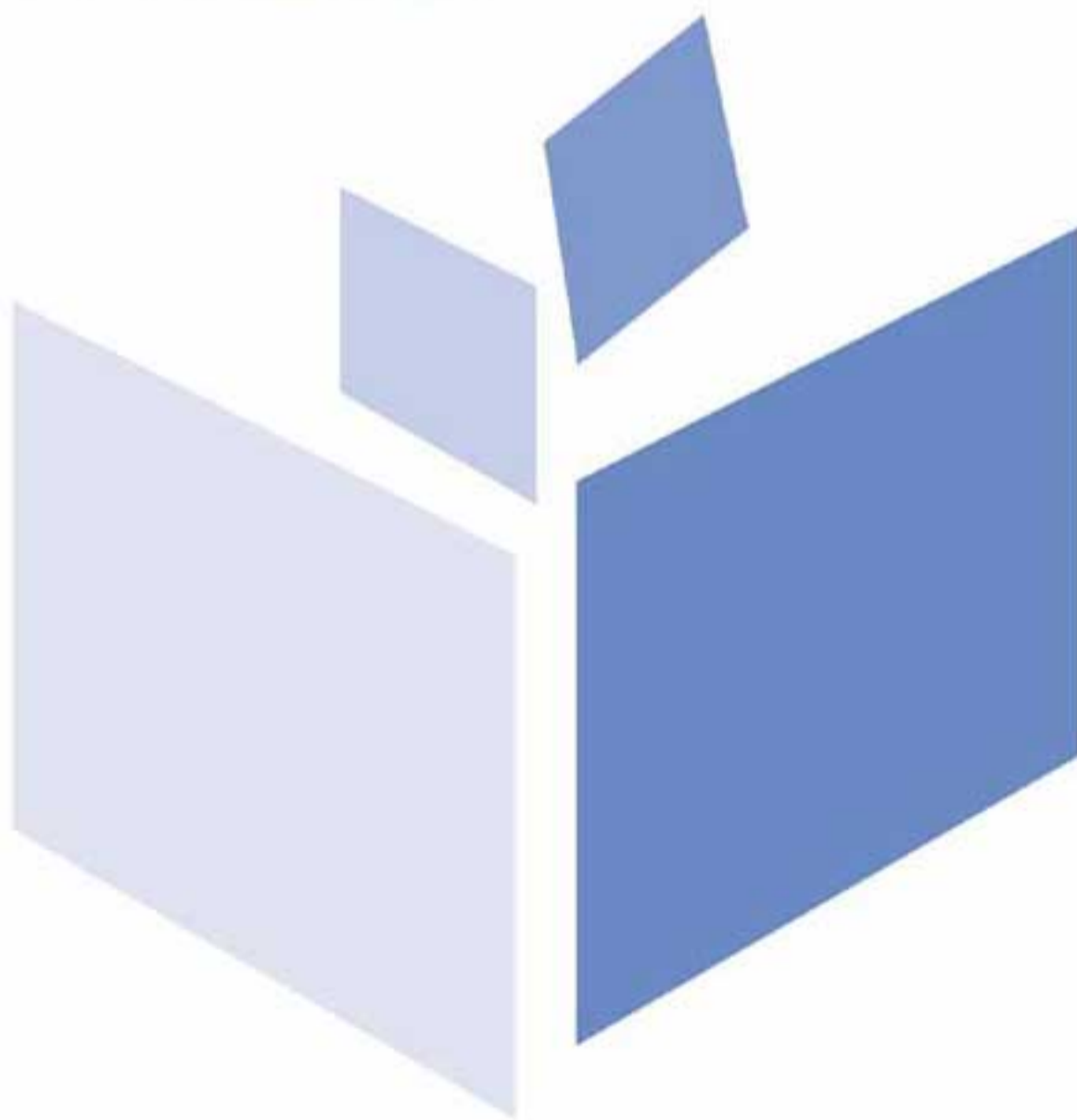# Making a Difference in Teacher Education Through Self-Study

Studies of Personal, Professional and Program Renewal

Edited by

Clare Kosnik, Clive Beck, Anne R. Freese
and Anastasia P. Samaras

Springer

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN TEACHER EDUCATION
THROUGH SELF-STUDY

Self Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices

Volume 2

MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN TEACHER EDUCATION THROUGH SELF-STUDY

Studies of Personal, Professional and Program Renewal

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Springer

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Dedication

For our parents,

Georgina and Henry Madott,

Sylvia and Lawrence Beck,

Kathleen and Ken Reilley,

*Magdalene and Savvas
Pantelides*

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Series Editor Introduction

In teaching generally, and in teacher education particularly, there has been a long history of research that has had little influence on practice. One reason often cited by teachers themselves is that much of the research has little to say to them as the end users of such research. However, because self-study of teaching and teacher education practices is largely driven by participants' questions, issues, and concerns, self-study, it seems fair to suggest, offers the promise of research that is immediately applicable to practice.

For teaching and teacher education to become better equipped to respond to the growing expectations heaped upon them there is a realization that change in teachers and teacher educators themselves must occur if there is to be genuine educational change. Thus, it can be argued that through focusing on personal practice and experience, teacher educators' inquiries might lead to a better understanding of the complexities of teaching and learning – for themselves and their students.

The importance of the individual or the "self" in research on practice has long been highlighted. Feiman-Nemser and Floden (1986) drew particular attention to the issue of "self" when they outlined the shift in the research focus from studying teaching at a distance to trying to understand how teachers actually viewed and defined their own work. This shift in focus, they contended, was important because the knowledge of teachers (which is largely untapped) is an important source of insights for the improvement of teaching. The same clearly applies to teacher educators and is particularly important in relation to the knowledge that might be made available through such a focus. Therefore, teachers and teacher educators alike, as they continually adapt, adjust, and alter their practice in response to the needs and

concerns of *their* students in *their* context seem naturally drawn to examine practice through self-study. The results of self-studies are then important in helping others utilize the knowledge gained in their own endeavors as they interpret, shape, and teach about that knowledge in ways that seek to make it meaningful and valuable in learning experiences with their students.

As self-study has dramatically expanded from its original roots in the late 1980s and early 1990s, it has become a field of interest and concern building on the work in areas such as action research, reflective practice, practitioner inquiry, and teacher research. The growing interest in self-study appears to focus largely on practitioners' desire to teach for understanding in ways that genuinely impact students' learning. The allure of self-study appears to relate to the desire to better understand the nature of teaching and learning about teaching and to develop a genuine sense of professional satisfaction in that work. Put another way, self-study offers participants a way of being liberated in their practice in a system that is often far too restrictive. Thus self-study creates opportunities to develop the relationships and understandings in teaching and learning that tend to characterize much of the work of teachers and teacher educators but have largely been ignored in the past by academia.

In his 1998 Division K Vice-Presidential address, Zeichner traced the development of teacher education research in the U.S. over a twenty-year period. The subsequent paper, *The New Scholarship in Teacher Education* (Zeichner, 1999), explored the major research strands that have emerged in teacher education.

> Researchers in the self-study movement in teacher education have employed a wide variety of qualitative methodologies and have focused on many different kinds of substantive issues. … A whole group of self-studies focuses on the tensions and contradictions involved in being a teacher educator in institutions that do not value this work. … Much of this work has provided a deep and critical look at practices and structures in teacher education. (Zeichner, 1999, p. 11)

Self-study allows (and encourages) a focus on teaching and students' learning. Both are high priorities in teaching and teacher education and thus self-study complements and informs the work of teaching and learning about teaching. As a result, a most valuable aspect of self-study is apparent in the development of ways of knowing, or the professional knowledge of teaching and learning about teaching. Kosnik, Beck, Freese, and Samaras have developed this book as one tangible example of such development and, as such, it is an important foundation for this series in *Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices*.

This book as part of the series complements the *International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices* (Loughran, Hamilton, LaBoskey, and Russell, 2004) and offers powerful examples of cutting edge work in self-study, extending this field in new and exciting ways. Kosnik, Beck, Freese, and Samaras have worked closely with their chapter authors bringing together a range of scholars through a process that has led to the structure around which this inviting text has been created. Their attention to detail and concern to illustrate how self-study impacts teaching and teacher education is readily apparent and highlights the importance of teacher educators teaching, researching, and building on their knowledge of practice in personally meaningful ways.

It has been a pleasure to work with the editors; I trust your reading of this book is equally rewarding.

J. John Loughran
Series Editor

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Foreword

In these times, when educational policymakers and politicians in a number of countries including my own are seeking to transform teaching and teacher education into "scientifically-based" or "evidence-based" practices based only on the results of experimental trials and other forms of what is perceived to be "real science," it is refreshing to read these thoughtful accounts of teacher educators' inquiries into their own teaching practices in university-based teacher education programs. This collection of studies by practicising teacher educators from a number of different countries exemplifies Shulman's (2002) call for embedding programs of research in ongoing teacher education programs. These studies make two valuable contributions to research and practice in teacher education: (1) they serve as a source of professional development for the teacher educator researchers who conduct them and as stimuli to improving their programs; (2) they provide new insights about various aspects of teacher education that form an important part of the research literature on teacher education. There is clear evidence in these studies that teacher educators can come to see their practice differently during, and as a result of, careful examination of their work.

Amid all of the criticism of a perceived lack of commitment to teacher education in colleges and universities, this volume demonstrates the existence of innovative and committed faculty and staff who are working hard to offer high quality programs to their students, programs that model the reflective and analytic stance toward teaching practice that they encourage their students to take on. Reading these studies makes me optimistic about the future of teacher education in colleges and universities even when the attacks continue on university teacher educators from the

privatizers and deregulators who would dismantle all university and college-based teacher education programs if they could.

In this volume, there are studies that examine particular aspects of entire teacher education programs such as integrated curriculum and collaboration, specific instructional practices such as the use of Theater of the Oppressed techniques, co-autoethnography, and self-study, and the role of different strategies for the professional development of teacher educators such as professional dialogue and memory work. There is a lot of useful information in these chapters that teacher educators can use to help them rethink their practice. Most of the studies include careful attention to the impact of particular practices (programs, courses, instructional strategies) on teacher education students, and a few follow their students into their early years of teaching to examine if the impact of the practices lasts beyond the program.

Although teacher educators have been doing research about their own practices and programs for many years (Zeichner, in press), self-study as an explicit research orientation is a relatively recent entry into the field of teacher education research. Since the early 1990s with the founding of the self-study in teacher education special interest group within the American Educational Research Association (Loughran, 2004), there has been growing visibility of self-study research at major educational research conferences throughout the world and in the top professional journals. This past year there was even the emergence of a new peer-reviewed journal devoted exclusively to self-study research in teacher education (*Studying Teacher Education).*

There is currently a lot of debate internationally about the current status of teacher education research and the directions that it should take in the future. One point of view is that a relatively small group of researchers within elite research universities, if given more money to do research will produce the knowledge base that is needed to transform teacher education programs. This "theory- into-practice" view reflects the belief that it is mostly through the research of people who are not themselves directly involved in the practice of teacher education, that the field of teacher education will be improved. Over the years, teacher education research has been very much under funded in comparison with research in other areas and very little funding has been available to teacher educators to conduct research. In my view, this strategy will not take us very far in better connecting research about teacher education programs to teacher education programs. For this to happen, teacher educators need to be integrally involved themselves in conducting research, either in the kind of self-study work represented in this volume, or in research partnerships with non-teacher educators from inside and outside their own institutions.

During the last four years, I served as the co-chair of a panel of the American Educational Research Association that was charged with synthesizing what we know from the peer-reviewed research on preservice

teacher education in the U.S. (Cochran-Smith & Zeichner, 2005). During this work, it quickly became apparent that for some of the topics we were examining such as research on instructional practices, methods courses and field experiences, self-study research was the modal form of research that has been done.

One of the major criticisms that we made of the research on preservice teacher education as a whole in our final report was the lack of attention to the contexts in which the research was carried out. The literature is filled with studies that examine the impact of various approaches to program structure and organization, curriculum, and instruction that include very little information about the settings in which the practices under study were used. One strength of self-study research in teacher education has been the rich contextual information that it has provided about the various settings in which teacher education take place. This contextual richness of self-study research enables a better understanding of why and under what conditions particular things happen in teacher education programs.

One major limitation of the self-study work though has been that the research has been carried out in many individual teacher education classrooms around the world with minimal effort to look across the research sites within coherent programs of research. A logical next step for this kind of work is for self-study teacher education researchers like those represented in this volume to develop collaborative investigations across institutions and programs that begin to provide data about the kind of practices investigated in this volume in multiple settings. Currently, teacher educators in a number of places in the U.S. are getting together across institutions and conducting research programs that include self-study work (e.g., Kirby et al. 2004; Ohio Partnership, 2005). The kind of self- study research contained in this volume provides a strong foundation for the examination of teacher education practices across institutions and cultures as well as within individual settings. While there is a place for the experimental trials and other "outside-inside" research on teacher education that is currently being advocated in some countries, it would be a mistake for policymakers and teacher educators to ignore the wisdom that is offered by the research like the inquires included in this volume.

KEN ZEICHNER
University of Wisconsin-Madison
March, 2005

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INTRODUCTION

Education continues to be criticized from both the left and right. Teacher education, in particular, is under threat in many parts of the world. Movements to reform teacher education are underway in many parts of the world, including Europe, Australia, New Zealand, and the U.S. These attempts at reform are motivated by various forces, but appear to reflect international convergence towards uniformity, conformity, and compliance (Delandshere and Petrosky, 2004).

For example, Australia has moved to generic teaching standards, New Zealand is raising standards and moving to a national curriculum, and Europe is standardizing teacher education through the development of common experiences and a course credit transfer system (Delandshere and Petrosky, 2004). In Canada, education is a provincial matter, with the federal government having very limited jurisdiction over it. However, there have been attempts in the last ten years by the Ontario government and its "arm's length" body, the Ontario College of Teachers, to determine program content and structure for teacher education.

The challenges we are now facing as teacher educators are perhaps of a different nature from those of the past few decades. They have taken on an urgency and a magnitude not witnessed before. Strict government control of education is increasing, the social problems in schools are more severe, the budget restrictions we face in the university are greater, the number of alternative certification programs is increasing, the negative consequences of the No Child Left Behind policy are reverberating through the entire education system, and the public disillusionment with education, in general,

is more than just a passing malaise. This period will be crucial for the future of teacher education; we need to rally together to support our colleagues, collaborate with others, and offer examples of programs that do make a difference.

Those of us with a long history in teacher education have witnessed the ineffectiveness of many large-scale reform efforts. In this text we profile individuals and small teams who have found ways to meet the challenges in their specific contexts: those who have renewed their programs, adapted to changing requirements, found innovative solutions, and thought differently about their work. Although there have been broad developments in teacher education, many teacher educators are turning their attention more and more to self-study as they begin to "walk their talk" and examine their own efforts to improve student learning.

As the chapters in this volume demonstrate, renewal of teacher education is not easy. We often face institutional barriers, resistance from colleagues, and opposition from governments. Ironically, our efforts are often not appreciated and at times firmly rejected by the very group we are trying to help, the student teachers. Developing innovative programs and courses can be lonely and at times disheartening. However, when we collaborate we often receive much needed support from other committed teacher educators. Many of the chapters in this book are co-authored and some are written by large teams. We suspect that as a group of researchers move forward together, they often develop a momentum that sustains them through the difficult periods. As we share our work through both formal and informal networks we provide examples of renewal, offer support, and share our lessons learned.

Yet "good work" in our specific settings is not sufficient to withstand the sheer force of the challenges we are facing. We need to come together with a strong voice and documentation of our work. As Cochran-Smith (2004) notes, "in many of the major 21st century debates about teacher quality and teacher preparation, the central focus, at least on the surface, is research itself, particularly on whether there is a research base for teacher education" (p.111). With data to support our claims we will have the evidence to show that teacher education makes a difference, and that the types of programs we are proposing and offering help teachers personally and professionally.

The subtitle of the book -- *Studies of Personal, Professional, and Program Renewal*-- identifies the three broad areas that contribute to making a difference in teacher education. It also summarizes the complexity of the work of a teacher educator. From our work in the Self-Study of Teacher

Education Practices (S-STEP) Special Interest Group of AERA, we have grown in appreciation of the need to consider the personal, professional, and programmatic. We cannot have strong programs unless we support our teacher educators in being effective and healthy. When teacher educators feel a connection between their personal and professional lives, they come to the education enterprise with wholeness. The teacher educator's self has a strong influence on the program. Hence, the personal, professional, and program dimensions form a unity. We have organized our text under these headings, but recognize that the three domains are interconnected. The personal cannot be attended to without consideration of the program or the professional components.

As you read the chapters the authors' passions can be felt, along with their belief that their innovations helped their student teachers become better teachers. Authors from many countries – Australia, New Zealand, Canada, the U.S., and South Africa -- are represented, and interestingly the challenges faced cut across national boundaries. This text presents stories of teachers reflecting and systematically examining their work from a personal, professional and/or programmatic stance. It describes the accomplishments of individuals (and in part the programs in which they work) that have resulted in overcoming many of the hurdles typically faced in teacher education. These authors have made a difference in the lives of their students, their colleagues, the pupils in elementary and secondary schools, and many classroom teachers. We applaud and appreciate their efforts.

Claire, Clive, Anne & Anastasia

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PERSONAL RENEWAL

Ann Freese and Clive Beck

This section discusses the "personal" in self-study, looking at the ways self-study research contributes to the personal development and renewal of teacher educators. It includes examples of how self-study research helps teacher educators frame and reframe their knowledge about teaching and learning within their unique contexts. In these chapters, the authors explore difficulties and dilemmas within academia, as well as their personal struggles as they examine their work with the goal of improving their teaching and their students' learning. As the authors reflect upon and grapple with their beliefs and challenges, their studies convey a sense of hope and optimism that by conducting self-study they will discover new ways of viewing and conducting teacher education.

In his chapter Tom Russell describes his transformation as a teacher educator based on twenty years of studying his teaching; he relates how his continual examination of his assumptions about learning to teach led to changes in his own teaching. He discusses how metacognition (attention to his own professional learning) and perception (identification of changes in how he perceives himself as teacher as a result of new actions) have been important elements in the development and interpretation of his teaching and research. Arguing for relevance in research and against the notion that self-study is less rigorous, he states that "those who embrace and engage in self-study research appear to be reaching for relevance with rigor to improve teacher education."

Lesley Coia and Monica Taylor's four-year study had as its starting point the dissatisfaction of the authors and their colleagues with a purely autobiographical approach to self-study in a teacher education program. The

authors noted that student teachers were deeply influenced by their peers as they developed their personal stories, and they came to see this as an inevitable and valuable feature of autobiography. They realized that the same was true of themselves, even when they were communicating with each other by distance mode. The chapter gives powerful confirmation of the fact that self-study is not a purely individualistic enterprise, and also provides useful ways of enhancing collaboration in self-study.

Allan Feldman provides an elegant discussion of how existentialism can serve as a theoretical basis for self-study; he states that he is not just looking "at the process of becoming a teacher educator, but also the nature of what it means to me to be a teacher educator." Identifying three key features of an existential approach -- situatedness, emergence of self, and freedom -- he utilizes these perspectives in exploring how conflicts and challenges in his personal and professional life can be understood and reframed. He contends that self-study scholars are "discovering the importance of self in practice and how it affects the way we understand and do our work as teacher educators."

In their chapter the Arizona Group present their findings on how professional dialogue can be viewed as a self-study methodology, a useful tool in critically examining one's views and practices. Grounding their research in the professional dialogue literature, the authors explore the interplay of "how we talk about practice and how we practice teaching and teacher education individually, collectively, and individually again." They provide specific examples of how they systematically analyzed and collaboratively critiqued their conversations, correspondence, and e-mail exchanges, leading to multiple perspectives and a reframing of their thinking.

Anne Freese's research was unusual in that it focused mainly on self-study conducted by her student teachers and how this, in turn, impacted her own views and practices. As the author systematically reviewed the students' self-study papers, she learned that they were preoccupied to a greater extent than she had realized with issues such as theory-practice contradictions, fear of failure, and classroom management problems. This helped her see that developing teachers cannot be shielded entirely from unpleasant challenges and struggles, but rather must be supported in coping with these and learning from them. The study helped her "appreciate the importance of allowing [students] time to explore, inquire, and personally fit the puzzle pieces together at their own pace."

Chapter 1

HOW 20 YEARS OF SELF-STUDY CHANGED MY TEACHING

TOM RUSSELL
Queens University

Abstract: My study of my own teaching as a teacher educator began with Schön's (1983) publication of *The Reflective Practitioner* and my first research grant in 1984 to study beginning teachers' development of reflection-in-action. This research led me to connect with The Arizona Group in 1987, and our conference collaborations led to an international self-study group (S-STEP) in 1993, when I was finishing the second of two experiences returning to the high school physics classroom to better understand what I ask of those who are learning to teach physics. Teaching a graduate course on teacher and action research since 1994 has further extended my self-study and the changes to my teaching. Self-study has led me to see that new teachers' development, like my own, must begin by unpacking the assumptions about teaching taught implicitly and unintentionally by our own teachers through 12 years of school and 4 years of university. In this chapter I study my own development, identifying the evolution of my own assumptions about learning to teach and linking them to specific changes in my teaching of future teachers.

My efforts to study and improve my practices as a teacher educator are naturally set within the structure of the pre-service program at Queen's University, the decisions I have made about focal points for research and writing, and the international collaborations I have developed with other teacher educators. Our pre-service program has always been an eight-month program leading to both a B.Ed. degree and recommendation for certification; it has always required an initial undergraduate degree that is completed either in advance or concurrently.

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The preservice program at Queen's has, since 1997, provided extensive practicum teaching experience relatively early in the academic year. When the preservice program opened in the late 1960s, there were innovative features but the practicum component seemed traditional: four two-week experiences, usually in four different schools. Classes in the Faculty of Education always seemed to be the dominant program element. Later, in a change that some may have seen as dramatic at the time, the practicum was changed to three three-week experiences, with two of these practicum experiences in the second half of the year. The program continued to offer limited periods of practice after extensive instruction, thereby embodying the traditional view that one first learns theory and then puts theory into practice.

Dramatic change occurred in 1997, after a pilot experience in 1996. For two years, the program began with an early week of orientation and the practicum began on the day that Ontario schools opened for the new school year. While many teacher-candidates found this exhilarating, not all did; many associate teachers and faculty members found the change extreme and lacking a supportive structure that would allow them to adjust to the new pattern (Russell, 1999; Upitis, 2000). Since 1999, the practicum has begun after three or four weeks of education classes and generally includes October, November and December, with a two-week return to classes at Queen's in early November. This revised program includes a total of 13 weeks of practice teaching, significantly more than the eight-week total that continues to be the minimum requirement of the province of Ontario. The practicum component also includes an opportunity to complete an action research project.

During my many years at Queen's, there have been minor adjustments to the particular mix of education courses required to complete the preservice program. Curriculum courses have always been the familiar central focus for both elementary and secondary candidates. Courses categorized as foundational and professional have been supplemented by "focus" courses (intended to build on personal interest or background) and by courses designated as educational studies. Most of my own teaching in the pre-service program has involved curriculum courses (in secondary science) and a professional course that includes practicum supervision and development of an action research project.

By the late 1980s, I had sufficient research and conference experience that I began to develop closer links with teacher education colleagues in the USA, the UK, and Australia and New Zealand. The advent of e-mail communication contributed significantly to my self-study, as did sabbatical leave time spent in the UK, Australia, and New Zealand. Since its founding in 1993, I have been an active member of the Self-Study of Teacher

Education Practices (S-STEP) special interest group within the American Educational Research Association. I have been active in the five international S-STEP conferences at Herstmonceux Castle in the UK, and I am a co-editor of the self-study journal, *Studying Teacher Education.* This account of how 20 years of self-study changed my teaching builds on this context.

1. THEORY AND RESEARCH THAT INSPIRED SELF-STUDY

Those who engage in self-study often confront an apparent contradiction, for self-study is not the private and personal affair that the label might suggest. Self-study relies on interaction with close colleagues who can listen actively and constructively. Self-study also relies on ideas and perspectives presented by others and then taken into one's personal teaching and research contexts for exploration of their meanings and consequences. Schön's work (1983, 1987a, 1987b) spurred my movement into self-study by re-emphasizing the importance of attending to the gaps between our professional goals and our professional practices and by suggesting new perspectives for thinking about the processes of professional learning in and from practice. Donald Schön's lectures and seminars at Queen's University in 1984 and again in 1987 provided opportunities to interact with him personally and helped me see practical implications of the arguments developed in his books.

In the period from 1984 to 2000, my Queen's colleague Hugh Munby and I conducted a series of research projects funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Schön's work helped us join our interests in metaphor and reflection in a series of studies of teacher education and development that culminated in a major literature review of the development of teachers' professional knowledge (Munby et al., 2001). This research collaboration provided incentives to attempt innovations in my classroom and to document their impact with help from my students. One major insight from this research was the development of the construct "authority of experience" (Munby and Russell, 1994) to help us conceptualize how experience plays a role (along with research findings and advice from those with more experience) in the development of professional knowledge.

About 1990 I began to draw practical inspiration from the Australian *Project for Enhancing Effective Learning (PEEL)*. This project is, to my knowledge, unique in the English-speaking world—a collaborative action research project that began in one school in 1985, led by a teacher and a

teacher educator, and that continues to this day, supported by the sale of materials developed by participating teachers (see http://peelweb.org). The superficially simple but practically complex insight that teachers might improve the quality of students' learning not by criticizing "poor learning tendencies" but rather by praising "good learning behaviors" (Baird and Northfield, 1992) has evolved into more than 1200 accounts of innovative teaching practices. Here was a realistic platform for inspiring changes in my own teaching and a powerful resource base for those I was teaching how to teach. John Baird, Jeff Northfield, John Loughran, Ian Mitchell, and Judie Mitchell all became significant professional colleagues who, knowingly and unknowingly, inspired and sustained my self-study efforts to develop my own teacher education practices. Loughran, Mitchell, and Mitchell (2002) provide insightful accounts of PEEL teachers' learning from experience.

2.   METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES

The methodology supporting this chapter is fundamentally qualitative. Given my focus on how self-study has changed my teaching, the only quantitative data available are those provided by annual course evaluation exercises. Methodology for self-study continues to evolve, but a major set of guidelines is provided by Bullough and Pinnegar (2001) and extensive discussions are now available in Section 3 of the *International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices* (Loughran et al., 2004). Bullough and Pinnegar (2001, p. 19) set criteria for self-study in these words:

> A self-study is a good read, attends to the "nodal moments" of teaching and being a teacher educator and thereby enables reader insight or understanding into self, reveals a lively conscience and balanced sense of self-importance, tells a recognizable teacher or teacher educator story, portrays character development in the face of serious issues within a complex setting, gives place to the dynamic struggle of living life whole, and offers new perspective.

Preparation of this chapter began with identification of "nodal moments" in my work as a teacher educator. By searching for patterns in the development of my teaching and professional learning, I have constructed a retrospective and autobiographical account of what I see as major changes in my teaching practices and in my interpretation of those practices. In constructing this chapter I have tried to be particularly attentive to the following guidelines set out by Bullough and Pinnegar (2001):

1. Biographical and autobiographical self-studies in teacher education are about the problems and issues that make someone an educator.

2. The autobiographical self-study researcher has an ineluctable obligation to seek to improve the learning situation not only for the self but for the other. (p. 17)
3. Quality autobiographical self-studies attend carefully to persons in context or setting.
4. Quality autobiographical self-studies offer fresh perspectives on established truths. (p. 18)
5. Before describing some of my most significant moments of self-study, I offer comments about two fundamental themes of my work: listening to students and exploring the role of reflective practice.

3.   LISTENING TO STUDENTS WITHIN THE TEACHING-LEARNING PROCESS

Listening to students' perspectives on their learning experiences is a powerful resource for the improvement of teaching (Cook-Sather, 2002). A willingness to view students' comments as central to the teaching-learning process is a powerful incentive to the study of one's own teaching practices. My understanding of the importance of this perspective has grown steadily throughout my career in pre-service teacher education.

My memories of my first year as a teacher educator working with pre-service students are still vivid some 27 years later. While many former teachers appear to move smoothly from teaching a subject to teaching others how to teach that subject, I was incredibly uncomfortable. Teaching a subject at a specific level almost always involves working with a curriculum document; pre-service teacher education has no such document. It had been 10 years since I last taught in a physics classroom. I had taken time to work as a Peace Corps administrator in Nigeria, to earn my Ph.D., and to work for three years as an in-service teacher educator. Because firsthand teaching experience makes such a difference, working with inexperienced teachers in compulsory pre-service courses proved to be radically different from working with experienced teachers in voluntary courses. As I worked with two classes of 30 pre-service secondary science teachers in a room that offered all the flexibility of a strait jacket, I occasionally dared to admit to myself that I had not a clue what I was doing. The Faculty of Education at Queen's University was less than 10 years old, many faculty members were experienced teachers with master's degrees in their own subject area, and most seemed supremely confident about their teaching. My colleagues seemed to have all the right answers, both about how students should be taught in schools and about how new teachers should be taught in a preservice program. Surrounded by right answers, I had countless questions.

Gradually, I realized that my best resource, and perhaps my only resource, was listening to my students, whom I invited in small groups to talk over pizza so that I could better understand what they expected and what they needed as they moved into the teaching profession.

Early on, I began using a mid-course evaluation exercise as a structure for eliciting what my students/teachers-in-training thought about my work with them; three categories of strengths, weaknesses, and suggestions seemed to bring out the details I was seeking. Students and I seemed to agree that formal course evaluations at the last class of the year might be useful for administrators but could hardly be of value to the individuals completing them. I would assemble their comments into categories and respond as a way of explaining my approach to working with them. My work with experienced teachers just before beginning at Queen's had revealed teachers' tendency to talk far more than they realize, and thus one element of my approach was to deliberately reduce the amount of time that my own words were filling our classroom space. In a truly unforgettable moment, one student listened to my explanations as we discussed the mid-course evaluation and burst out in eloquent frustration: "Why didn't you tell us you weren't going to tell us?" Here was the tip of the iceberg, signaling early the complexities of the "standard premise of pre-service teacher education" that one can effectively shape teachers of the future by telling them how to teach.

4.   REFLECTIVE PRACTICE AND TEACHER EDUCATION

Journal writing has long been a familiar component of teacher education, and this tradition partially explains the way that teacher educators embraced Schön's (1983) argument that reflective practice should be an essential feature of professional education. I recall years when students complained that every course they took required its own journal—hardly a strategy for coherent and productive analysis of one's overall development. My first sabbatical leave in 1983-1984 took me to Mills College in Oakland, CA, where I found a small cohesive group of teacher educators who shared my interest in Schön's idea of reflection-in-action. Funded research in the period 1984 to 1998 enabled Hugh Munby and me to explore many implications of a reflective practice perspective for individuals learning to teach.

Twenty years later, I am less confident than ever that pre-service programs have incorporated what I took to be Schön's central point, namely, that reframing may occur in the midst of active practice, with the possibility

that the new way of perceiving events may lead to more productive actions. The following vision statement for the pre-service program at Queen's University contains phrases and expresses values that appear quite broadly in visions for teacher education:

Our vision of the graduate of Queen's University Faculty of Education is that of a critically reflective professional. Graduates are expected to integrate theoretical, practical, and experiential knowledge in the understanding and resolution of professional issues. We see the beginning teacher as an active agent in the development of a socially inclusive pedagogy aimed at social justice. In our vision, the critically reflective teacher is the one who asks questions that go beyond immediate pressures of daily practice, and who has a disposition to work in collaboration with other members of the profession and with all those involved in the education and development of children. (Retrieved October 26, 2004, from http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/education/)

Notice that reflective practice is not quite enough; it must be "critically reflective." Year after year, the prospective teachers with whom I work tell me that they are frequently urged to reflect yet they are rarely taught how to reflect and they rarely learn the results of their own teachers' reflections. Later in this account of the evolution of my own teaching through self-study, I describe my most recent efforts to teach (rather than preach) reflective practice. In general terms, we need many more critiques of teacher reflection like the one provided by Fendler (2003).

5.   DETAILS AND FINDINGS OF MY SELF-STUDY

The following "nodal moments" in my work as a teacher educator are associated with significant changes in my teaching and in my thinking about how we learn to teach and improve our teaching:
1. Returning to the secondary school physics classroom in 1991 and 1992.
2. Incorporating Predict-Observe-Explain (P.O.E.) from the Project for Enhancing Effective Learning.
3. Understanding the impact of radical program change on a group of teacher educators.
4. Seeing teaching first and foremost as a relationship.
5. Exploring new ways of listening.
6. Teaching skills of reflective practice.

5.1   Returning to the Secondary School Physics Classroom

In the fall of 1991 I arranged to teach one class of Grade 12 physics, 75 minutes every day from September through January, and I repeated the experience in the fall of 1992. Only by teaching the second time did I fully understand all that I had learned and re-learned in the previous year. When I say, write, or think "experience precedes understanding" (Loughran and Russell, 1997), I treat the statement as an element of formal knowledge. When I interpret my personal experiences in terms of "experience precedes understanding," I treat the statement as a comment about changes in perception. By returning to the classroom from my vantage point as a teacher educator, I came to perceive differently both my work as a teacher educator and the relationship of that work to what happens in schools (Russell, 1995). The way in which experience has authority may be the most challenging issue in pre-service teacher education: until people have experience in the role of teacher, they seem unable to *see* how the words and activities we offer them as new teachers relate to their early teaching actions.

5.2   Incorporating Predict-Observe-Explain (P.O.E.)

Now that I have taught myself to use Predict-Observe-Explain as a teaching strategy, it is always the *first* thing I do in the first meeting of every course I teach. Having posed a question to which I can eventually demonstrate the answer, I invite predictions about what will happen. We then discuss possible explanations for each of the predictions that have been made. This creates a unique classroom atmosphere in which it is not necessary to be right and it is actually safe to be wrong. Once all predictions have been discussed, we observe the event and build the appropriate explanation for what we observed. Only after several years in which future teachers reacted quite positively to this strategy did I begin to perceive the full significance of moving out of the right-answer focus that fills virtually all classrooms. Many individuals seem to begin a pre-service teacher education program with a "right-answer stance" that was developed and nurtured in their prior experiences of school. If teaching is usually experienced as "telling" and if assessment is largely dominated by "getting the right answers," then it is only natural to assume that there is one right way to teach and that it can be learned by being told. By virtue of changing my teaching to incorporate P.O.E. as a major teaching strategy, I have also come to see how important it is to help future teachers see that their professional learning is much more than a search for right answers about how to teach.

5.3   Understanding the Impact of Radical Program Change

When we changed our program dramatically in 1997-1998, I had one of my best years of teaching. I was so caught up in my own teaching that I failed to realize that many of my colleagues were finding it difficult to adjust to teaching people with 14 weeks of recent teaching experience. When the positive reactions of those learning to teach were not enough to convince colleagues that we should continue to begin the practicum on the first day of school, moving forward required me to look carefully at the differences between my own goals, perceptions, and beliefs and those of many of my colleagues (Russell, 1999). This instance of self-study unleashed a new sense of confidence as well as recognition of the importance of helping my own students understand why I teach as I do within the broader context of our program.

5.4   Seeing Teaching First and Foremost as a Relationship

Teaching is first and foremost a dynamic relationship; mastery of content is important, but a successful teaching-learning relationship requires trust in the person as well as in the person's knowledge of a subject. Over several years, I came to realize an important rule: *Always stay positive.* Most of us have memories of teachers' criticisms of our work, our behavior, or both. We tend to remember criticisms far more than praise, especially when that criticism occurs before a class of peers and generates embarrassment. This insight was a fundamental starting point of the Australian *Project for Enhancing Effective Learning (PEEL)*. At times it is disappointing to realize in practice how long it took me to see that rewarding constructive classroom behaviors is far more productive than criticizing weak ones.

5.5   Exploring New Ways of Listening: Tickets Out of Class

Finding ways to listen to one's students can be challenging for any teacher. Most of us have never seen a teacher use one or more techniques for listening to students. One of the simplest I know is a technique that a teacher in a graduate course began to call "tickets out of class." In the final three minutes of a class, students are asked to respond (on a 3x5 card or a scrap of paper from a recycle bin) to two questions: "What was the main point of today's class?" and "What point in today's class would you like to

understand better?" Most of the time, the range of responses is as impressive as the quality is high. The contribution such comments can make is substantial, both to understanding what one has just done and to planning what one should do next. Tickets out of class are now a regular feature of my teaching that guides both me and those I teach.

5.6   Teaching Skills of Reflective Practice

A student several years ago was waiting to start training as a pilot and knew he would never be a teacher. This gave him more time to attend to the "big picture" of our preservice program, and he provided me with some useful insights into our emphasis on the importance of reflection: "Everyone advocates it, but no one shows us how to do it." This comment inspired me to restructure a five-part assignment into an electronic file containing five tables in which the first column contains a series of questions about the most recent phase of the program. Teacher candidates respond in the second column of the table, and I comment on their responses in the third column. Through the year I intentionally try to avoid advocating reflection. The file goes back and forth electronically until the final installment provides me with the opportunity to point out that I have been trying to help them experience the processes and value of reflection. When people review the series of five tables, they get a sense of their development over the year that might otherwise remain hidden because it was not documented. (Once again, experience precedes understanding.) Placing my comments immediately beside theirs provides much clearer responses than jotting in margins, and table cells expand as we write, so neither students nor I am restricted in how much we write.

Having made these and other changes to my teaching, I have also come to see that a teacher cannot deal with every aspect of the diverse goals and needs present in every group of students. "*Focus on three or four central features of good teaching and learning*" is now my advice to my students and to myself. Society seems to expect teachers to help students make progress on an endless array of important goals while responding uniquely and simultaneously to each of 30 diverse students. Without clear focal points, a teacher can quickly become frustrated by trying to do everything at once. In 2004-2005, major goals of my teaching of pre-service teacher candidates include developing an understanding of the nature of learning from experience, fostering an awareness of the "default" teaching behaviors residing within every new teacher, encouraging skills of reflective practice, and exploring the value of self-directed learning skills in a successful teaching career.

6.   TEACHER EDUCATION INSIGHTS GAINED FROM CHANGES TO MY TEACHING

We have ample evidence that lecturing to teachers and distributing print materials have limited impact on teachers' practices, regardless of whether they are new teachers, experienced teachers, or teacher educators themselves. There have been interesting discussions of whether changing beliefs helps change practices, or vice versa. Perhaps we should be speaking more of changing perceptions rather than of changing beliefs.

When I review my own changing practices and interpret them from a self-study perspective, I begin to better understand the perspective I began to explore when Kessels and Korthagen (1996) discussed the distinction between episteme and phronesis. Individuals who have had difficulty with school knowledge (episteme) rarely choose to become teachers. While episteme is the central focus of our schools and universities, understanding and developing our perceptions receives little attention. Schön's (1983) arguments called attention to the importance of learning from experience; learning *in* experience might be closer to the mark. Our perceptions are closely linked to our experiences, and we tend to be relatively unaware of the ways that our experiences develop our perceptions. Self-study has led me to see that much of the "resistance to change" attributed to practitioners in schools (and universities) arises from efforts to promote change only with propositional forms, with no attention at all to our unacknowledged and unexamined perceptions that unwittingly support existing practices by allowing us to recognize them as familiar and appropriate.

Self-study has been central to my growing understanding of how I have learned from my teaching experiences. By listening to my students and by listening to myself, I have changed my perceptions of the effects of my teaching actions on those I try to help learn to teach. As I perceived my classroom in new, more accurate, and more interesting ways, I developed new values and priorities as I changed my practices. Many of the new practices emerged from work with teacher education colleagues at other universities; my recent interest in creating experiences of self-directed learning emerged from conversations with a prospective teacher who had experienced self-directed learning throughout his undergraduate studies. Analyses such as Segall's (2002) also sustain and encourage self-study.

I have worked with Schön's (1983) perspectives on *reframing* and *reflection-in-action* over the last 20 years. Studying pre-service teachers' development in a variety of ways has been engaging and productive, with significant impact on my practice. One of several consequences of Schön's work has been that it is now far more common than before to hear people speak of how they "frame" situations. That language shift has important

potential, but it is *re*framing that is more significant and also closely linked to *phronesis* and issues of perception. Framing calls attention to how we seem to perceive a situation at present; *re*framing calls attention to shifts in perception arising from experience. Much of the conceptual change we seek for students, teachers, and teacher educators involves reframing of existing knowledge and perceptions.

We have many experiences that do not lead to reframing, perhaps because so little attention is paid in our culture to our awareness of our perceptions. Virtually anyone who has attended school for a number of years can go to the front of a classroom and act in ways that observers would recognize as the behaviors of a teacher. One way to explain this involves acknowledging that extensive observation of many teachers has developed strong perceptions of how teachers behave. Of course, an individual's first efforts at teaching are never the behaviors of an experienced teacher. Years of observing teachers have generated a strong set of perceptions of the actions appropriate to teachers, yet the complete lack of discussion of teaching and learning in most classrooms means that beginners rarely understand how to plan and enact a productive sequence of teaching behaviors. People have learned what teaching looks like, but they have not learned to teach.

In coursework and in schools, pre-service teacher education seeks to create the conditions and experiences necessary for learning to teach. Few pre-service programs seem to acknowledge explicitly that our extensive base of perceptions of teaching behaviors also needs to be considered. Those learning to teach seem aware of this point, for they consistently report that in-school practicum experiences are the single most important element of the preservice program. Working in school classrooms, guided by an experienced teacher, is the only way they can learn which teaching behaviors, which sequences, and which proportions constitute minimally adequate teaching.

I find it increasingly important to reframe what I am doing when I study my own teaching. Initially, I simply sought to better understand my teaching, on the familiar premise that better understanding should foster more productive teaching moves. Today I perceive my self-study activities differently. Self-study helps me identify how I perceive my interactions with pre-service teachers, in my classes and when I work with them in schools during their practicum placements. As I identify my perceptions, I explore their implications in relation to my basic principles and values. New teaching moves allow me to test my perceptions and develop them. A major underlying theme involves recognition of the importance of perceptions and the ways that they may evolve as I experience my self in my own classroom. It is from this perspective that I support the argument by Korthagen, Kessels,

Koster, Lagerwerf, and Wubbels (2001) that explicit recognition of and attention to pre-service candidates' perceptions of classrooms and their own learning and teaching behaviors is long overdue in programs of initial teacher education.

7. REVISITING METHODOLOGY AND CHANGES IN TEACHING

The question "Is self-study research?" will be with us for many decades. The perceptions that "real research" is objective and scientific and that self-study is neither objective nor scientific are deeply rooted in academic culture. These views continue to separate theory and research from practice: "researchers do research; practitioners engage in practice." Somehow, the actual doing of research is deemed to be unimportant, protected by methodological guidelines. These traditional assumptions miss something profoundly important about teaching, learning to teach, and teaching others to teach.

A significant group of teacher educators has come together since 1993 in the Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (S-STEP) special interest group within the American Educational Research Association. The guidelines for quality outlined by Bullough and Pinnegar (2001) and the international handbook edited by Loughran et al. (2004) demonstrate that self-study has found a significant place within the complex domain of teaching and teacher education. My own view of the power of self-study goes back to the situation in which I found myself in 1983, when Schön's (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner* spoke directly to my concerns about the perennial "gap" between theory and practice. My first six years engaged in teaching and observing preservice teachers made it impossible not to be concerned about the differences between how teaching is approached in a faculty of education and how it is practiced in a school. Those first six years also made it impossible not to be concerned about the role of my own teaching in understanding and addressing those differences between theory and practice.

Twenty years of self-study have done more than change my practices as a teacher educator. They have inspired me to take actions that generated powerful personal learning experiences. Studying and interpreting those actions through self-study generated important shifts in my personal perceptions of my own teaching and learning as well as the learning of those I was teaching to teach. Self-study is often opportunistic; recognizing and pursuing opportunities is an important element of self-study. When a sabbatical year in England prompted me to consider returning to the physics

classroom, I could never have predicted how valuable that experience would be. I certainly did not anticipate that repeating the experience would be essential to understanding the value of returning to the duties for which I was preparing new teachers. When an invitation appeared to contribute a chapter to a book on analogy and metaphor in science education, I quickly made links to the writings of one pre-service science teacher in my class whose materials were unusually rich in metaphors. Our analysis of his use of metaphors in his learning from experience inevitably led me to understand my own practices in new ways (Russell and Hrycenko, in press). Both metacognition (attention to my own professional learning) and perception (identification of changes in how I perceive my self as teacher as a result of new actions) are crucially important elements in recognizing how experience acquires authority in the development and interpretation of my teaching and my research.

Late in my career as a teacher educator, I continue to see the gaps between goals and actions as ones that must not be ignored. A central issue is whether researchers can continue to focus solely on the production of new knowledge, to the neglect of whether such knowledge ever influences the quality of learning for students and both new and experienced teachers and the quality of teaching by teacher educators. Those who would minimize the significance of self-study research appear to be opting for rigor over relevance. Those who embrace and engage in self-study research appear to be reaching for relevance with rigor in their efforts to improve teacher education.

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Chapter 2

FROM THE INSIDE OUT AND THE OUTSIDE IN:
CO/AUTOETHNOGRAPHY AS A MEANS OF PROFESSIONAL RENEWAL

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Abstract: This self-study is an ongoing four year project that began with an exploration of the use of autobiography with students in our undergraduate courses, progressed through the formation of a teachers' autobiography group, and continues with the use of co/autoethnographic methods in the study of our own practice. The chapter centrally addresses how we have come to understand self-study as an important process for us as teacher educators, for our students as they prepare to be teachers, for the teachers with whom we work, and for the teacher education programs within which we work.

In this chapter we describe how the use of autobiography to examine, understand, and improve aspects of our own teaching practices turned out not to be enough. Coming to know vitally involves telling our stories, but it is more than this. We share our stories with the purpose of understanding our identities as teachers/individuals/members of multiple communities as well as our teaching practice (Bakhtin, 1981). It is through this exchange of stories that, as Stanton (1996) writes, "Teachers ask themselves not only what they know, but what the enterprise of education is all about, who they can be as a teacher, who the students are, and how to connect students with knowledge" (p. 35).

Stories are part of knowledge construction, and that construction cannot occur in isolation. We have to share our stories in order to push us to think reflectively about our experiences. It is not enough simply to tell the story or write a journal entry; it is the give and take of dialogue that refocuses the

lens (Manke & Allender, 2004). We become transformed when we engage in this type of sharing and discussion (Kincheloe & Steinberg, 1995). These concepts of the value of sharing personal stories as a process of understanding one's identity as a teacher grounded our research.

Our self-study research in fact involved three successive studies, the later ones building on what came before. We will describe in turn each of these studies and what we learned from them, before outlining the impact they had on us and our practice.

1.   STUDY ONE: STUDENT TEACHER AUTOBIOGRAPHY

The first study began as a result of conversations about the use of autobiography in pre service teacher education courses; particularly the use of students' own autobiographies. At the time, we were teaching at a small liberal arts college in the New York City area. Over the summer prior to the 1999-2000 academic year, we determined that the issues of authority and coercion and the influence of narrative structure on the telling of our students' stories were important to investigate. We were particularly concerned about the individualism that seemed implicit in autobiography and whether autobiographical writing could be used to heighten students' self-awareness of social justice issues.

1.1   Initial Study and Methodology

In the first semester, we asked our undergraduate pre service teachers to write autobiographical reflections. After reading various academic texts, the students wrote their own personal narratives, discussing a variety of themes. The students were provided a series of stimulus questions to help them begin their autobiographical writings. Each week students met in small groups to share their personal narratives aloud. We hoped this assignment would bridge the gap between our students' interpretations of their readings and the narratives they designed about their own teaching beliefs and experiences.

There was a clear distinction between us, as teacher educators and researchers, and our students as pre service teachers and participants of a research study. We collected our students' written autobiographies, their reflections on the writing process, and our own field notes as data. Using a traditional qualitative research methodology, the data were analyzed inductively by means of constant comparison (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and

categories were derived from the data. We looked for regularities and patterns of words, phrases, images, and participants' perspectives.

1.2 Findings of the Initial Study

We discovered that our students understood self-reflection as "thinking like a teacher." Writing autobiographically encouraged students to unearth, clarify, and make concrete the beliefs and concepts that they already held about teaching rather than focus on new information. Our pre service teachers were able to connect their past, present, and future selves and strengthen their perspectives on teaching.

For most of our students, the process of sharing autobiographies greatly contributed to the development of a safe and trusting community. Sharing one's writing with others as a means of strengthening voices and creating community became central tenets of our research as our questions about self-study evolved. Some students, however, stated that writing a personal narrative was an individual endeavor undertaken solely for the author herself. Concerned about this expression of individualism, we continued to search for the best possible ways to use autobiography as a method of self-study. We began to wonder if a more authentic community of writers would be more honest and productive in the use of autobiography to pursue a deeper understanding of teaching; and whether it was possible to analyze these autobiographical texts with the writers rather than as teacher educators looking in from the outside.

Initially, then, this was a self-study in the sense that we each took a course we were teaching and used qualitative research methods to understand and assess our teaching by examining our students' autobiographical writings and reflections. In the second through fourth semesters, our research study took on a more recognizable self-study aspect as we more directly considered how autobiography could be used to improve our practice[1].

2. STUDY TWO: A TEACHER'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY GROUP

As the first study proceeded, we began to realize that we needed to conduct our own self-studies alongside the students and teachers with whom we work; that the only way to truly explore the potential of autobiography as a reflective teaching tool was to look at autobiographical texts from the

inside out and the outside in. We found that we could not answer on our own our fundamental questions about the influence of our course on the production of autobiography. As we grappled with this issue, we came up with the idea of a teachers' autobiographical writing group that was non-coercive and democratic. Our writing group was composed of 10 educators at various stages of their careers, including new and veteran teachers, staff developers, and teacher educators. The writing group emerged from an informal partnership that developed between the education department of a small liberal arts college and a local public school. The format for our meetings was quite unstructured. Our sessions involved the oral reading of partial or full autobiographical texts and group discussions. At the end of each session we reflected in writing about the purpose and process of our endeavors.

2.1   Participatory Methodology

The data for this second research project encompassed a collection of our written autobiographical pieces; reflective field notes on the process of writing autobiographically in a collaborative setting and the place of personal narratives in teacher self-reflection; and transcribed audio tapes of our meetings. All of the members of the writing group contributed to the data and participated in the analysis. The mode of analysis was both participatory and introspective; we moved beyond the role of "observant participant" (Erickson, 1996) and acted as both researchers and informants.

As a group, we examined the data as they were collected, arranging them into "manageable units, synthesizing them, searching for patterns, discovering what's important and what is to be learned" (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992, p. 153). We analyzed the data inductively by means of constant comparison (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) and triangulation (Gordon, 1980). Our inferences became categories once they were cross-checked across data sources. Our data were more extensive than in the previous study, and our analytical lens moved from us as researchers analyzing other people's work to everyone being a participant and analyzing the data.

2.2   Findings: Moving to Autoethnography

As we analyzed the data, a key finding was that our autobiographies, while produced autonomously, were much more collaborative than we had anticipated. We worked within the group to fashion our stories, and as a result our narratives frequently addressed common themes. By contrast with our students, however, who tended to avoid being critical and focused mainly on commonalities, the members of our writing group were able to examine their autobiographies and discuss and probe similarities and differences and reflect on their significance.

During one of the meetings, Lesley explained the openness of topic selection: "If you look back at our tapes and writing, one of the things that you see is that we share our writings, give each other very honest feedback, and then come up with another issue or problem [to explore]." The autobiographies could therefore be seen as collaborative, but not because there was some implicit or explicit division of labor. Each of us adopted all the major roles: we all wrote, we all shared the narratives, and we all directed the group.

Our work suggested that in a democratic community, defined by respect and common purpose as well as democratic virtues, the space between the narrator and the narrated becomes more visible and thus available to be explored. Most interestingly this space welcomes the experience of others. One participant made a slightly different but connected point in her remarks on how the group dynamic had influenced her writing: "I write what I like, but I actually do the writing to be part of the group and to have a contribution to make. The group gives me direction and it often inspires me." In this way, we wrote individual autobiographies together. As we found new ways of writing into each other's lives, we were forced to stop seeing our group as a traditional autobiography group. It no longer seemed that we were writing individually.

We became a living example of what Stanley (1992) has called "auto/biography." While not implying there is no distinction between autobiography and biography, we found that there was an important sense in which we write in each other's autobiographies. This goes beyond the now commonplace understanding that, as MacIntyre (1981) so evocatively put it, "we are at most co-authors of our own lives." The separateness of persons became less important as we wrote into each other's lives and produced our own collaborative autobiographies (Coia and Taylor, 2001).

This narrowing of space between writers encouraged the retelling of stories, so we encountered our autobiographies not as fixed entities but rather as texts that encouraged re-examination, re-living, dialogue, and inquiry. It is through this rewriting and retelling that we were forced to examine our beliefs from different perspectives and to initiate change. In a reflection, a writing partner wrote: "I am enjoying the process of writing and

rewriting, and I am starting to think in more depth about some of the experiences that have shaped who I am as a teacher and as an individual."

Our way was messy. It was filled with the lived experience of actual teachers working through their pasts, whether the events happened yesterday or twenty years ago, from the perspective of the present. We mixed the language of the oral with the literary conventions of autobiography; we interrupted each other; we celebrated our "personal practical knowledge" (Clandinin, 1985), anchoring our narratives in the concrete and specific, working with our "high context knowledge" (Elbaz, 1991). Our writing group opened a space and time away from the everyday constraints of school where teachers could problematize their past and present teaching, validate beliefs and experiences, and mold their future teaching practice.

Related to our growing awareness of the collaborative nature of our writing was an increasing sense of the limitations of traditional autobiographical methods. While autobiography is a notoriously contested concept, with not even the identification of the subject and the author (the "I" writing and the "I" being written about) being undisputed, we realized that it does not adequately capture the complex construction and depiction of self revealed in our work and interactions. We began to explore the concept of autoethnography, drawing on Reed-Danahay's work in anthropology and Lionnett's work in post-colonial literary theory.

The notion of autoethnography foregrounds the multiple shifting nature of selfhood and opens up new ways of writing about social life. As Reed-Danahay (1997) notes, autoethnography is a fluid concept, synthesize[ing] both a postmodern ethnography, in which the realist conventions and objective observer position of standard ethnography have been called into question, and a postmodern autobiography, in which the notion of the coherent, individual self has been similarly called into question. The term has a double sense—referring either to the ethnography of one's own group or to autobiographical writing that has ethnographic interest. Thus, either a self (auto) ethnography or an autobiographical (auto) ethnography can be signaled by "autoethnography."

While we continued to work with the autobiographic method, we increasingly used ethnographic methods to analyze our autobiographical writing. Although we started from the subjective in exploring our work as teachers, privileging our autobiographical work, we emphasized autoethnography to signal that our autobiography was neither abstract nor isolated. Our work started out as private, as a conversation between us, but in making it public, in reconstructing it to be read by others, we addressed both ourselves and the wider group of which we are part and yet apart. As we are all too aware, the current dominant form of educational discourse and research into teaching resolutely leaves our experience out. We saw our

autoethnographic method as a form of resistance to this. Like Pratt (1999), we see this resistance as not being heroic or romantic, but as an important way of complicating the categories of person and teacher. In our work, we mixed up the categories. By not adopting an objective outsider perspective on our work as teachers, by incorporating elements of our life experiences, we were, on the most simple level, telling our stories in the context of a larger culture: that of teaching and learning.

3.   STUDY THREE: CO/AUTOETHNOGRAPHY AS A LENS FOR SELF-STUDY

Were it not for the fact that we moved away from New York, the group would still be meeting, as we know from repeated attempts to keep in touch by electronic means. And while the larger group has ceased to meet, we (the two authors) could not give up the idea of writing our autobiographies together, writing into each other's lives to better understand our practice. In many ways this third self-study was a continuation of the second one. But apart from its reduced size, the physical context was quite different: we were at different teaching sites and communicated with each other largely by distance modes. Furthermore, we became even more conscious of and explicit about the collaborative nature of our inquiry; hence the shift to the term co/autoethnography.

3.1   Continued Collaboration Across Different Sites

Combining what we had learned from our work in the autobiography group with our understandings of self-study, we (Lesley and Monica) designed a collaborative self-study to examine our teaching practice in our new situations, teaching at very different institutions a thousand miles apart. We analyzed aspects of our individual teaching collectively, using the methods developed and used so successfully in the autobiography group; we also took specific questions derived from our practice as the focus, rather than writing on any issue we wanted to. We envisioned our self-study as a way of examining how our beliefs about self, teacher self, and teaching and learning intersected to inform our pedagogical practice. Our aim remained the same: to understand and improve our own teaching practice.

Initially, we planned to concentrate primarily on the ways in which authority is defined in our democratic classrooms. As our narrative sharing continued, however, we found ourselves focusing more and more on the collaborative process of our analysis. We began to wonder if the issues of

authority we were investigating in our teaching could usefully be looked at through the lens of our collaboration.

4. METHODOLOGY AND FINDINGS

Co/autoethnography involves investigating our own selves and engaging in self/other analysis based on the understanding that teaching is a profoundly personal and social activity and cannot be accomplished well without self-awareness in a social context. Our specific contribution lies in what happens in the interweaving of our stories: the reliance on the reflection that results from our stories being in dialogue, the role of the other in this dialogue adding validity, and analysis. Our analysis is derived from the theoretical, practical, and personal knowledge we bring to conversation, trying to make explicit our experiences and the theories that inform and are informed by them, trying, in effect, to reveal the process of coming to know where this does not privilege either the subjective or the objective. The process is about heightening awareness—becoming more knowledgeable about our identity development as teachers/people, something that we believe can only be done in collaboration.

We avoid the Scylla and Charybdis of pure individualism and pure social constructivism: We are finding a place for the individual in a world that is socially constructed—the world of education. This form of self/other social reflection furthers our sense of agency. The ownership of our knowledge construction fosters a feeling of empowerment.

We are focusing on aspects of our identities and how they affect the ways we see teaching in diverse contexts. We accept from the beginning that identity is complex, constructed, dynamic, and multi-faceted. We therefore see the sharing of our stories as part of what is means to construct our identities now—together. We are continuing to write into each other's lives. The power of the move to autoethnography lies in the recognition of the role of narrative structure, how our backgrounds shape our experiences and the way we relate them. We are not interpreting each other by rewriting our stories according to some preconceived format of what needs to be included, whether narrative or theoretical; but then again, the process demands we reject some posited innocence or the primacy of raw experience.

We are not inserting ourselves in a story where we have no business, or trying to make ourselves invisible as traditional researchers did. We are insiders and outsiders. We are talking about our own experiences but they are analyzed from a number of perspectives and vantage points, including our own, combining the defining features of autobiography with the methods of ethnography.

This method addresses some of the criticisms that have been made of autoethnography. Holt (2003) for example, has suggested that there are problems in using the self as a source of data. We, however, are saying that when we do this type of reflection with someone else we are able to see the selves—us as a form of data—from multiple perspectives. Our blending of stories pushes the analysis to another level. Similarly, our method does not seem open to the criticism that it lends itself to self-indulgence and individualism. We freely admit that it encourages introspection, but not self-indulgent or individualistic introspection precisely because co/autoethnography is a joint venture for the purpose of something outside ourselves—the betterment of our teaching practice. We are interested in how we come to know, and what we know. Knowledge is social and individual. It has to do with who we are. The knower is important. To write individual experience is to write social experience.

We are looking at ourselves from the inside and outside—the main advantage of co/autoethnography over autobiography—recognizing that there is no one way to capture experience. The subjective is needed to make sense of human beings, but the other perspective (outside) is needed to prevent solipsism, narcissism, and pernicious individualism. We play backwards and forwards with self and other, interpreting each within the context of teaching and learning.

5.   IMPACT ON THE PROGRAM AND US

We began, as we say above, researching the use of autobiography with undergraduates. A certain amount of skepticism about the use of autobiography in our classes led us to develop the teachers' autobiography group. We were fearful that our students would write their autobiographies as a means of satisfying a requirement and receiving a grade rather than as a process of reflection and coming to know. We wondered if they considered us, the teacher educators, their primary audience or if they felt a sense of being part of a collaborative community of peers. We were also concerned about our method of research, as we examined these autobiographical reflections. Could we really analyze our students' narratives without their input and reflection?

Our experience in the teachers' group led us to deeper insights into the positive effects of writing autobiographically, in a sense addressing our earlier skepticism. But it also served to raise further questions about the use of autobiography, leading us to embrace autoethnography. In this section we demonstrate how a more sophisticated understanding of how writing about

the self has enhanced our practice, leading us to make a number of changes in the ways we teach our classes.

Our research has impacted our practice in a number of tangible and intangible ways. Our autobiographical assignments, the work we assign our students, have undergone a significant shift. We now make the writing into each other's and our own selves more explicit in the carrying out of the assignment. We encourage students to produce a retelling of their stories in response to their own and others' reflections. In short, our more sophisticated use of personal narrative and narrative inquiry in our classrooms supports LaBoskey and Cline's (2000) argument that simply telling stories is not enough, given that all stories are not only limited in their perspective but can represent "particularly detrimental distortions of reality" (p. 359). More than this, we are saying that students' autobiographical reflections must themselves become a text, suggestive of Clandinin (1993) and her colleagues' practice of sharing and "giving back" stories to allow the authors to retell their stories in new forms. By seeing this as a collective endeavor, we reap much more in understanding our individual and collective practice. We illustrate this with the following example from Monica's classroom.

During Monica's undergraduate and graduate foundations courses, she asks students to construct an autoethnography of schooling using artifacts that represent experiences in such areas as teachers, self as student, community, family, peers, and schools. Through artifacts, students describe their past and present experiences and then reflect on how these experiences have informed their identities as they become teachers. She provides them with some guided prompts to help them to think about how their experiences have shaped their current beliefs about teaching and learning. The students are invited to construct and share with the class their autoethnographies in a creative way. In general, the co/autoethnographic process is personal and at times emotional.

The impact of this co/autoethnographic process is evident in the following illustration from her graduate course this semester. One of her students constructed an autoethnographic presentation where she hid her artifacts in brown paper bags and then asked her peers to reveal the artifacts one by one while she told stories and explained their relevance. She had always been an avid writer/poet and traced this throughout her autoethnography. As a teacher with several years experience, she had always been vehemently against whole language teaching for all the reasons that most people are, until she examined her artifacts of early childhood writing and realized that her first teachers had embraced a whole language philosophy. She began to problematize her own negative beliefs about whole language as she reflected on her passion for writing. She also reflected on

her use of writing as a tool to process difficult life situations. In fact many of the artifacts that she shared were such examples of her writing. She showed the class a letter that she wrote to her cousin after he died in the World Trade Center Towers on 9/11. She felt that writing the letter was a means of comfort and closure. She also shared a published collection of her poetry from high school that gave her a space to think about the issues of a gay relative. Reflecting on these artifacts, she acknowledged that her elementary teachers had helped to nurture her love of writing and her awareness of the potential of writing. They invited her to write for authentic purposes rather than stifling her voice with a focus on form. Monica's student might not have come to these conclusions had she not embarked on the process of looking back and constructing something to share collaboratively with her peers. Her co/autoethnographic experience has significantly impacted her teaching beliefs and practice.

By asking students to engage in the co/autoethnographic process, they are also asked to enter into a forum, which can be difficult and uncomfortable. Some students are quite resistant and overwhelmed when Monica begins to discuss the assignment with them. As they begin the process, they gain more confidence and eventually many students reveal a variety of understandings of their identities, some of which are concealed in their usual interactions in courses. By inviting students to share multifaceted views of themselves rather than simply their identities as "students" or "teachers," they are able to understand in a more holistic way what it means to be a teacher and how different frames of reference shape who we become as teachers. They begin to understand that being a teacher means being a person, with the attendant expert knowledge, emotions, and uncertainties. They also gain insight into the need to invite their own students to bring themselves into the classroom.

Our research has led us to pay much more attention to our students' developing sense of self as teacher, and how it intersects with their own deeply held beliefs about almost everything. We focus much more consciously on developing personal relationships with our students, modeling what it means to be a teacher. Sometimes this new awareness brings us up short when we notice how we ourselves have changed. We have always prided ourselves on being "student-centered," but our understanding of what this means has altered as a result of us engaging in co/autoethnographic work on our own teaching practice. We have noticed that we are much more interested in who our students are as people and how we intersect with them to help them realize who they are as teachers. In an online student forum where students review professors for their peers, one of Monica's students recently wrote: "Dr. Taylor requires you to really, really

think about who you are, why you want to become a teacher, and your overall place in society."

Fostering true personal relationships with and among our students requires that we work with them over the course of several semesters. It requires us to ask students each semester to think about their identity and who they are becoming as teachers, and for us to ponder these questions about our own identity alongside them. A sense of community needs to be nurtured to invite students to write into each other's and our own lives. As LaBoskey and Cline (2000) point out, many students want to become teachers because of the relational aspect of teaching. They care about children and their well-being and see teaching as a relational act. If this is the case, it only makes sense that we devise ways to help them nurture relations with their own selves through self-reflection, with their peers and their students.

Although neither program in which we teach is based on a cohort model, we have both had a core group of students (3-4) who, over a period of two years, have taken four courses with us including, for most of them, having us as their supervisor for their student teaching. We have maintained close contact with these students as they have begun their first year of teaching. Indicative of the relationship is this extract from an email Monica received from one of these students at the beginning of September:

> Teaching is great. I love it. I am not nervous anymore. As soon as I stepped into the classroom I became a different person. I became a teacher. It is so weird that I am a teacher, and that this is my class and I set the tone. I never felt so in charge or so responsible for so many people. I love it. I wanted to thank you for being such a huge role model for me. This week is all ice breakers. You really taught me to be myself.

Besides programmatic changes such as adopting a cohort model, we teacher educators have to re-think the ways in which we conceptualize authority in our classrooms. It was only through our own co/autoethnographic self-study that we realized our practice was greatly informed by our understanding of how our authority with students is established through our relationships with them. Even amid difficult and challenging dynamics, we strive to create a community of learners that cares for one another and invites the personal into the discussion.

We value the process of sharing with one another as equals or peers and believe that, by fostering these learning experiences for our students, they will become collaborative teachers who rely on one another for support and insight about their teaching practices, thus helping to debunk one of the cultural myths of teaching (Britzman, 1986). It is a spiral process: we develop relationships with our students to foster learning, later our students

value the relationships nurtured with their own students, and finally our students develop relationships with one another creating a professional support network that is empowering.

Co/autoethnography in teacher education is a two-way lens. It is a way to uncover identities that are always in the process of becoming: our own teacher identities, those of our students, and eventually the identities of their students. We are learning that our way of examining ourselves as teachers is vitally connected to the way we approach understanding our students.

We hope that our students, as they become teachers, realize the potential value of co/autoethnography as an empowering method to develop and understand their teaching practices. The stories that they generate together can serve to guide them as teachers, rather than looking to outside "experts." Co/autoethnographers value themselves as critical thinkers who can problematize and generate theories and methods of teaching and learning. While, as Van Manen (1991) says, "storytelling is a form of everyday theorizing," co/autoethnography is an even more effective way of realizing this because of the social nature of the process. A co/autoethnographer looks both inside out and outside in. Co/autoethnography is about redefining the idea of being critical: It invites teachers to approach one another by listening and recounting stories rather than acting as "all knowing."

6.   CONCLUSION

We would like to sound a word of caution. One of Lesley's students, who was part of the original autobiography study when she was a first-year undergraduate, recently graduated. She proudly sent Lesley an autoethnography she had written as part of her work in her senior year. Pride not withstanding, she told Lesley that the reason she was sending it was because it was the autobiography she had written during her first year that had had such an impact on her. There was no discernible difference between the two pieces of work. We must be careful to distinguish between autobiography and co/autoethnography if we are to effectively use these methods in our teaching. It is only by so doing that we can uncover and discover the problems and the positive effects of using these different methods. Legitimate disclaimers as to the vagueness and contestability of these concepts do not mean that they are indistinguishable.

This anecdote also reminds us that the impact of our work will often not be felt at the time of our courses. The work, because of its nature, is likely to take time to influence our students. While this is true for all teaching we feel it has special relevance here, since we are talking about using complex autobiographical methods to unearth, discover, and construct our teaching

selves. This is one reason why we recommend the use of cohorts in teacher education programs. We need to work with people over time as they construct their teaching identities. This cannot happen in one semester.

As we continue refining our methods of co/autoethnographic research we again look back to look forward, returning to our own stories, the texts we have already produced as we study our present for future improvement. We do this by looking from the outside in, and from the inside out.

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Chapter 3

USING AN EXISTENTIAL FORM OF REFLECTION TO UNDERSTAND MY TRANSFORMATION AS A TEACHER EDUCATOR

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Abstract: In 2002, I presented the paper "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator" at the Fourth International Conference on Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices (Feldman, 2002a). I called that paper a self-study, and in it I analyzed the narrative that I have told myself and others of my transition from teacher to teacher educator. I return to that paper in this chapter as a way to explore two questions that I have about self-study. While this chapter includes a self-study (Feldman, 2002a), my intention in writing it is to use it as a vehicle with which to examine the following two questions or concerns that I have about self-study as a scholarly activity.

The first question is whether there is a way to define self-study as an endeavor that demarcates it from other forms of inquiry yet allows for the wide variety in the ways that self-studies are done. I do this by reviewing the analysis done by Pat Paugh, Geoff Mills, and myself in our chapter that appeared in the *International Handbook of Self-Study of Teaching and Teacher Education Practices* (Feldman et al. 2004) in relation to my self-study.

My second question relates to the theoretical basis for self-study, and in particular, whether existentialism can serve as that basis. This is not a new area of interest for me. I explored it in a short piece that appeared in *Educational Researcher* (Feldman, 2003) and in the handbook chapter. However, I do it here in the context of self-study. That is, I consider this chapter to be a self-study that uses philosophical methods to examine the

nature of self-study itself. I return to a discussion of these methods in the conclusion.

1.   BEC(O/A)MING A TEACHER EDUCATOR

I do not intend to use this chapter primarily as an opportunity to report the findings of my self-study, "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator." Instead I am using that self-study as a vehicle with which to explore the questions that I posed in the preceding section. However, it is important for me to provide some details so that my analysis can proceed. First, because I believe it is necessary for every representation of research to provide at least minimal information about how that representation was constructed (Feldman, 2003), I provided in that paper an "After word" that briefly described the methods I used:

In this paper I sought to understand the usefulness of the existential approach in understanding my own growth as a teacher educator. I used three methods to collect data. The first was the phenomenological interview (Seidman, 1998). The second was the existential interview developed by Dolly Pedevillano (Pedevillano and Feldman, 2001). The third was a reflective journal that I have been keeping for over 20 years. I used these data to construct an autobiographical narrative centering on the existential crisis that was the catalyst for the change in my way of being a university professor. I embedded in the narrative an analysis of the narrative using the existential framework that Dolly and I developed. (Feldman, 2002a)

Second, I used excerpts from some writing that I had done for a book on existential action research that has not been published. These excerpts provided a narrative framework on which to build my argument for a theoretical framework based on existential concepts. For example, I wrote about my first year as a doctoral student at Stanford University. That was the 1989-1990 academic year. I had just turned 39 years old and I had ended a 17-year career as a teacher in middle and high schools. In "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator" I included this excerpt from the unpublished book:

During my first year at Stanford I was like a sponge, soaking up the knowledge about teaching, learning, and schooling that I had been unaware of as a teacher. But even as I took it in I was filled with a sense of uneasiness. I could not find myself in the research literature. There were few portraits of teachers, and those that I found did not describe me or my former friends and colleagues. Why didn't I see the smart, well-educated, articulate and caring professionals with whom I worked in New

York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, in middle schools and high schools, and in public and private schools?

I used this excerpt to illustrate how concepts that are associated with existentialism arise when we reflect on who we are and how we arrived at our current place in life. In particular, I highlighted the sense of uneasiness and alienation that this passage suggests:

What was the source of my uneasiness? From what did I feel alienated? The uneasiness and alienation were to myself, whom I was before and who I was then. There was a shift occurring in my way of being and I wasn't sure whether I liked what was happening to me. (Feldman, 2002a, p. 66)

What I argued was occurring was a shift in my way of being: "Beginning in 1989 I found myself in an existential tension between being a teacher and being an educational researcher" (Feldman, 2002a, p. 67).

In 1993 I joined the faculty of the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. In "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator" I wrote of another existential tension that I felt in my first seven years there – the tension of being pulled between teacher education and science education. During those seven years I made a variety of decisions that related to that tension. It had to do with which doctoral concentrations I identified myself with, what journals I published in, and even what AERA special interest group meetings and sessions I attended. In the paper I explored an existential crisis that I found myself in during the 2001-02 academic year that I became aware of and examined through existential reflection (Pedevillano and Feldman, 2001). It was as a result of that crisis and the existential reflection that I relieved the tension between being a teacher educator and being a science educator.

I end this brief revisit to "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator" by explaining what the title means to me. I could have simply titled the paper "Becoming a teacher educator," but I wanted to include the suggestion that what I was looking at was not just the process of becoming a teacher educator, but also the nature of what it means to me to be a teacher educator. Therefore, not only am I continuously in the process of becoming a teacher educator, I am also continuously in the process of being a teacher educator. In order to be a teacher educator, I need to be able to say that I became a teacher educator. Hence the title: Becoming/Becaming a teacher educator. As I proceed to address the questions that frame this chapter I will return to "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator."

2. METHODOLOGY OF SELF-STUDY

In Robert Bullough and Stefinee Pinnegar's (2001) analysis of the quality of autobiographical forms of self-study, they suggest that a reason that self-study researchers have difficulty publishing their work is that there may not be "adequate grounding and authority for this work" (p. 15). I agree with their suggestion that to further self-study scholarship it is important to theorize about its underlying and overarching principles. However, I also believe, given the eclectic nature of the field, that any underlying and overarching principles may not necessarily be universal. That said, in the chapter that Pat Paugh, Geoff Mills and I wrote for the *International Handbook of Self-Study* (Feldman et al., 2004), we attempted to characterize self-study research by using Sandra Harding's work on feminist methodology (Harding, 1989).

In her chapter, Harding distinguished between feminist *method* and feminist *methodology*. She argued that there are no research methods that are uniquely feminist in nature. I would say the same for self-study. The methods of self-study come from a wide variety of scholarship including narrative, ethnography, and the arts. Harding defines methodology as the theoretical basis for the field of research as seen in what is made problematic in the inquiry. In feminist research, for example, it is gender that is made problematic and which becomes the researcher's lens. In the same way, a Marxist methodology problematizes economic class and critical race theory makes problematic race and ethnicity. A self-study methodology would then be one in which the focus is on one's own self, and it is the role of the self in practice that is made problematic (Feldman et al., 2004). Harding pointed to three features that distinguish feminist research. They are:

1. The "discovery" of gender and its consequences
2. Women's experience as a scientific resource
3. The reflexivity of feminist research.

2.1 The Discovery of the Self

When I speak with my students about Harding's work they are often perplexed about the "discovery" of gender. Most of them cannot remember a time when the concept did not exist. As they look around themselves they see gender everywhere. But as I and some of the older students point out to them, there was a time before feminist scholars discovered/illuminated/invented the "idea of a systematic social construction of masculinity and femininity" (Harding, 1989, p. 26) and people instead saw masculinity and femininity as products of biology. I would argue that self-study scholars are doing the equivalent for the self that feminists did for

gender. We are "discovering" the importance of self in practice and how it affects the way we understand and do our work as teacher educators or other practitioners.

2.2   The Practitioner's Own Experiences as Resources for Research

One of the outcomes of the discovery of the self is that we are aware of the importance of putting ourselves out in front of our research. This can be seen in the fact that I am writing this in the first person and using my experience as the basis for this inquiry into the nature of self-study. This is similar to the ways that Harding said that women's experiences have become a resource for research. In "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator" I made public, personal aspects of my professional life, and used that as a resource for my inquiry into my becoming a teacher educator. For example, I wrote about the conflict between colleagues and myself:

> Part of my struggle at UMass is to develop a cohort of preservice science teachers working together. I struggle with my colleagues over such issues. We are like one dysfunctional family. … [Prof. X] is clear about how he wants to have things done and he kills the ideas of others. … My interaction with colleagues is problematic. I dread STEP faculty meetings. (Feldman, 2002a, p. 68)

I then used this data, which came from an interview of me, to show how this conflict could be understood from an existential perspective, especially given that it filled me with dread.

2.3   The Reflexivity of Self-Study

Harding's third feature of feminist methodology is its reflexive nature. She described this as "the emerging practice of insisting that the researcher be placed in the same critical plane as the overt subject matter"(Harding, 1989, p. 29). I am not sure how successful I was at doing this in "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator." When I help doctoral students to become researchers of teaching and teachers, I remind them that every teacher has good reasons for doing what he or she does in the classroom, and that those reasons are often connected to beliefs about what is best for his or her students. One of the ways that I could have been more reflexive would have been to assume the same for the colleagues with whom I disagreed and attempted to make better sense of their positions in order to be more critical of my own.

2.4   Summary

My first question was whether there is a way to define self-study that demarcates it from other forms of inquiry yet allows for the diverse ways in which self-studies are done. In this section I have done that by using Harding's framework to analyze my text. I now return to Harding's framework and suggest a self-study correlate to her features of feminist methodology. In the self-study handbook chapter, *Self-study through action research*, Pat, Geoff, and I suggested that a self-study methodology would have the following features:

1. It would bring to the forefront the importance of self

2. It would make the experience of teacher educators a resource for research

3. It would urge those who engage in self-study to be critical of themselves and their roles as researchers and teacher educators (Feldman et al., 2004)

In this section of this chapter I have shown how Harding's framework can be used to suggest a theoretical framework for self-study scholarship, and how these features are present to some extent in the paper that I presented at the Fourth Castle conference.

But there is another aspect of this analysis that is important for me, and that is that self-study makes the self in practice problematic. During the same time period in which I have been engaged in self-study, I have been exploring another set of literature that makes the self problematic-- existentialism. As a result of my reading of that literature I believe that existentialism, as it has been represented in education in the United States, can serve as a basis for some ways of doing self-study and (though not as a universal meta-theory for all varieties of self-study). In particular, I find existentialism attractive as a basis for self-study because of the themes with which it is concerned, such as "the nature of the individual, the central role of passions and emotions in human life, the nature and responsibilities of human freedom, and the irrational aspects of life" (Johnson & Kotarba, 2002, p. 3).

3.   EXISTENTIALISM IN EDUCATION AND SELF-STUDY

Over the past 15 years I have grown fond of existentialism. This may seem an odd thing to say, possibly even tending toward the masochistic because to many, existentialism has a dark and gloomy feel to it. But it may

have been my entry point to the literature that led me to see it as a way to think about teaching and teachers that is, in fact, optimistic.

Although during my doctoral studies I took a philosophy course in which I read Husserl and Heidegger (1962), my real introduction to questions of being came through authors most would not label as existentialists (e.g., Dreyfus & Dreyfus, 1986; Nussbaum, 1986; Searle, 1984). At the same time that I was reading these works I was defining my overall research goal as an attempt to understand what it means to teach and to be a teacher. When I was introduced to Barbara Stengel and her work, I began to think of teaching as a way of being (Stengel, 1996). Then, possibly in 1997, when I was having one of the many conversations that we have about our work, I found my conversational partner saying, "Oh, so you take an existential perspective." It was only after that that I began to read existentialist literature (e.g., Merleau-Ponty, 1962; Sartre, 1956) and begin to explore the literature on existentialism in education (e.g., Greene, 1967; Kneller, 1958; Morris, 1966).

It was from this literature, and especially the work of Maxine Greene (1973), that I identified three features of an existential approach to teaching:

1. The person is always situated. Everyone exists in a web of relationships that spread through time and space (Dewey, 1938; Greene, 1973).
2. The self emerges through experience (Gordon & Gordon, 1996; Greene, 1973; Sartre, 1956).
3. People are free to choose, but freedom is finite (Arendt, 1958; Greene, 1973, 1988). I look at each of these in turn and relate them to my narrative in "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator."

3.1   Situatedness

In "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator" I wrote the following:

I am sitting in my office in Furcolo Hall. It is part of a suite that I share with Kathy Davis. We each have an office off of a larger room that I call the "outer office." The outer office is used by graduate students, as a library, as a seminar room, and as a kitchen. I look around my office and see a wall of windows that looks out at several old locust trees and a white clapboard building. If I crane my neck I can see some dormitories on hills in the distance. I am almost surrounded by books. A poster of Raul Julia as Mackie Messer stares down at me. The wall over my desk is covered with photos, mostly of my son but also the group picture from the Second Castle conference, Mickey Mantle, and a sketch of the Willingboro High School science department in the guise of the crew of the starship Enterprise. (Feldman, 2002a, p. 66)

In this passage I described the physical layout of my location. This is what many people think of when they hear the term context. In this way my context is similar to being on a stage and all the objects that I described are parts of the scenery. To ask about my situation at that time is to go beyond the actual objects and to seek to understand my placement in relation not only to the objects but also to my cultural environment and what Dewey described as the "traditions, institutions, customs and the purposes and beliefs they carry and inspire" (Dewey, 1938, p. 43). It is important to note that the existential idea of situatedness goes beyond the ways in which the object and circumstances provide meaning because they are imbedded in traditions, institutions, and customs.

That way of thinking of situation is similar to how the term is used by those who consider "situated cognition." James Gee, for example, has used the example of these three sentences to explain what he means by situation:

The coffee spilled, get a mop.

The coffee spilled, get a broom.

The coffee, spilled, can you restack it? (Gee, 2004, p. 19)

In the first sentence the coffee is a liquid, in the second it is coffee beans or grounds, and in the third, cans of coffee. What this shows is that it is the situation in which the action is occurring that gives meaning to the word "coffee." While this may be the way that context and situation help us to understand the world of objects, it does little to help us understand how we are situated in a human world. In an existentialist sense, to say that we are situated is to pay attention to our past and present, presence, moods and gestures, expectations, intentions, and the other people with whom we are engaged (Feldman, 1997).

So when we look at the excerpt from "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator," we can see more than the way that I am situated among the objects in my office. I was sitting in my office. What do I mean when I say it is my office? What are the ways that my past and present, presence, moods and gestures, expectations, intentions, and interactions with other people are encapsulated in the sentence "I am sitting in my office"? Some are more obvious than others. I have an office, which implies that I have status that warrants an office rather than say a cubicle or a desk. It is my office, rather than one that I share, which suggests even more status. It also tells us something about the institution that it has space to devote to private office space and that the norms of the institution are such that professors are expected to have this space.

Not so obvious is that there is very little office space available for graduate students, which tells us more about the norms of the institution. It was not always my office. Before it was my office Dick Konicek, who has retired, used it. And it is part of a suite of offices that I share with my

colleague Kathy Davis. It is impossible for us to understand how my being is situated without taking into account my interactions with these other human beings. This is not to discount the meaning that can be derived from the objects that surrounded me. In my paper I described some of the artifacts that I put in the room--a poster of Raul Julia, photos of my son, the group picture from the Second Castle Conference, and Mickey Mantle. These objects are more than the props on the stage on which I act as a professor. Each can be understood as part of my situated existence that is inseparable from my way of being a human being.

3.2   The Emergence of the Self

Sartre wrote, "Man is nothing else but that which he makes of himself. That is the first principle of existentialism" (Sartre, 1982, p. 28). That is to say, we are what we make ourselves to be. In "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator" I wrote:

> I speak with my students about the changes I felt and feel in bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator. I tell them about how I really had no idea what I was getting in to when I moved from Pennsylvania to California in 1989. I could not foresee myself now sitting in this office, thinking and writing. And, I could not foresee who I would be. (Feldman, 2002a, p. 67)

I then continued to tell my story of transition from teacher to educational researcher to teacher educator with an excerpt from my unpublished book. In reflecting on the events of that story I wrote:

> Many of the events that occurred since 1989 may be seen as examples of serendipity but as I look back through the lens of existentialism, I realize that even though "being in the right place at the right time" contributed to my story, what made them the right places and times were choices that I freely made. This idea that we are continuously becoming who we are through our experiences, and that what we experience is partially due to what we choose to do is a basic characteristic of existential thought. (Feldman, 2002a, p. 67)

I have become who I am because of the choices that I have made as I have lived my life. But it is important not to stop here with the admission that we construct who we are. The fact that our lives do not just unfold but rather we chart the path that it follows makes it important for us to acknowledge responsibility for who we are. Maxine Greene put it this way:

> If he is to become an identity, he must plunge into action and relate himself reflectively to the situations marking his life in time. Also, he must choose. He must create values, and indeed create himself, by

choosing the kind of person he is moment-by-moment, year-by-year. His essence, that which he "really" is, turns out to be the identity he defines for himself as he lives. (Greene, 1967, p. 8)

If I am to become an identity, I must plunge into action and relate myself reflectively to the situations marking my life in time. This is not easy to do and it was not until I found myself in an existential crisis that I took the plunge:

During the 2000-2001 academic year I found myself thrown into the situation of urging my colleagues in math and science education to take a more active role in teacher education. I had several reasons for this. First, I needed help. As the only science educator in the University who works with preservice secondary teachers, I was, and still am, overwhelmed by and drowning in the responsibility that I have taken on to help prepare teachers who are committed to democratic and equitable education. I also believed that the teacher education program would be improved if others would become actively involved. And I believed that a closer connection between the math and science doctoral program and the preservice program would provide a better education for doctoral students and would help my colleagues to transform their research agendas to better match the needs of teachers, students, and schools. My existential crisis peaked when my most senior colleague told me that he would not become involved in teacher education and would block any attempts to involve the math and science doctoral program in teacher education because it would weaken his program by draining resources. (Feldman, 2002a, 69)

As I stated earlier, I felt the tension between being a science educator and being a teacher educator from the moment I arrived at the University in 1993. It was a tension that was disturbing in several ways but one that I lived with by not being proactive in the choices that I was making. It was not until I found myself in a crisis that I realized that it was time to make a clear choice. But to do that I needed to be aware of the freedom that I had to choose and act in the situation.

3.3   Freedom

Maxine Greene wrote that human freedom is "the capacity to surpass the given and look at things as if they could be otherwise" (Greene, 1988, p. 3), and that freedom allows us to "name alternatives, imagine a better state of things, [and] share with others a project of change" (Greene, 1988, p. 9). Greene's definition of freedom goes far beyond the idea of being untethered – the existential concept of freedom suggests that when we are free we are aware of alternatives to our condition and are able to consider ways to

change the current state of affairs. To do this we must be able to distinguish between the real and mythic constraints on how we can act (Tobin & McRobbie, 1996).

Looking once again at "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator" it is clear that I felt that I had large constraints on how I could act, most of which had to do with my beliefs about tenure and promotion. To put it simply, I believed that to get tenure and be promoted I needed to publish in prestigious journals, become known in my field, get large grants, and have a group of strong graduate students working under my guidance to further my research program. While there is some truth in these beliefs, the extent to which my beliefs constrained me was far beyond the reality of my situation in the School of Education at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. I believed they constrained my freedom to act because of the importance I placed on the following set of "facts":

1. Science education is more prestigious than teacher education.
2. More external funding is available for science education than teacher education.
3. Potential students seeking to do doctoral work in science education would apply to the science and math education doctoral program rather than the doctoral program in teacher education. (Feldman, 2002a, p. 68)

My beliefs about tenure and promotion and the "facts" that I valued about science education acted as constraints on my ability to envision things as they could be. I couldn't choose to change because I saw no way to change my situation.

Van Cleve Morris, in his work on existentialism and education (Morris, 1961), suggested that there is an "existential moment" when we become aware of our own existence and make free choices. In a sense what he was suggesting was that at some point we need to make problematic who we are in practice, that is our selves, in order to be able to distinguish real from mythic constraints. I believe that it is through self-study that it is possible to create those existential moments. For example, in "Bec(o/a)ming a teacher educator" I wrote that it was the interactions with my colleagues that I described above that instigated an existential moment for me:

But I believe that that did not happen spontaneously. It was an existential moment because I was already asking myself questions like, "Who am I as a professor in a college of education?" and "What do I believe is important about my work?" … My awareness of the existential nature of the crisis led me to change my way of being a professor in a college of education. The constraints that I felt began to evaporate. Their truthfulness was gone as I realized I had been living in bad faith and had been acting out of the fear and anxiety that led to my self-estrangement (Sartre, 1956). I chose to act to declare myself a teacher educator. I used my freedom that I was now aware

of to choose to leave the doctoral area in math and science education and to fully ally myself with the education of teachers and teacher educators, and with research on teaching and teachers. (Feldman, 2002a, p. 69)

3.4   Summary

My second question was whether existentialism could serve as a theoretical basis for self-study. A return to the list of methodological features of self-study that Pat, Geoff, and I developed (Feldman et al., 2004) shows that existentialism can provide a theoretical basis for those features. The first feature of a self-study methodology is that it brings to the forefront the importance of the self. It is the problematic nature of our awareness of our selves and of our being in the world that is the most fundamental concern of existentialist thought.

The second feature is that a self-study methodology would make the experience of teacher educators or other practitioners a resource for research. Sartre called the idea that we create ourselves through our experiences the first principle of existentialism (Sartre, 1982). Therefore from this principle, if we are to understand ourselves in practice, we must examine closely our experiences and the choices that we make.

The third feature of a self-study methodology is that it would urge those who engage in self-study to be critical of themselves and their roles as researchers and practitioners. An existential perspective, by acknowledging our freedom to choose even when our ability to act is constrained, makes explicit the responsibility that we have for who we are, for our actions, and for those we care for (Feldman, 2002b). It is this sense of responsibility that requires us to be reflexive – to put ourselves "in the same critical plane as the overt subject matter" (Harding, 1989, p. 29). Therefore, we must examine our selves as researchers as well as ourselves as practitioners in our self-studies.

4.   CONCLUSION

I began this chapter by posing two questions: "Is there a way to define self-study as an endeavor that demarcates it from other forms of inquiry?" and "Can existentialism serve as a theoretical basis for self-study?" The method that I have used to wrestle with these questions is one that is becoming more common among philosophers of education. It straddles the gap between philosophical inquiry and empirical studies by using a case, often derived from practice, as a context for philosophical reflection and argumentation. The reason for doing this is to derive and support new ways

of thinking about educational situations and practices that have practical implications.

I answered my first question by suggesting that self-study be considered a methodology in which the self in practice is made problematic, and that this methodology has the features that Pat, Geoff, and I (Feldman et al., 2004) based on Harding's analysis of feminist studies (Harding, 1989). I believe that our framework has important implications for the field of self-study, distinguishing it from other forms of inquiry by making clear that the self is either the focus of the inquiry and/or is made problematic in some way in the analysis. In this chapter I have amended our framework by using the phrase "self in practice" rather than just "self" because I believe it is important for us to make explicit that self-study is not purely psychological but instead is a form of inquiry that deals with what we do in the real world. I return to this below. A major question that remains for me is how this focus on the self in practice relates to self-studies done by groups of people in which the group becomes the self.

For me, the most important implication of my response to the second question is the idea of existential responsibility (Feldman, 2002b) and how that relates to self-study. As practitioners, existential responsibility affects us in two ways: First, because we are what we have made ourselves, we are responsible for who we are. This responsibility is to our selves and not to some outside agency. When we accept this responsibility, we become aware of our freedom to choose, even though our actions are constrained. Therefore, it is imperative for us to determine in some way which constraints are mythic and which are real. I see self-study as a means of doing this. Second, because we are practitioners who work with other people, we are responsible for helping them learn the responsibility that they have for who they are, and learn how to distinguish real from mythic constraints. What this means to me is that self-studies ought to have an action component. The actions that we perform as a part of, or as a result of, our self-studies are tied to our sense of responsibility for ourselves and to others, and these ensure that self-study goes beyond "navel gazing" and helps to improve our lives and the lives of those for whom we care.

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Chapter 4

EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF DIALOGUE IN THE SELF-STUDY OF TEACHING PRACTICES

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Abstract: This paper examines professional dialogue as a crucial element in self-study practice and research. Over time our group has consistently employed professional dialogue to critically explore our work. Using electronic communiqués, institutional documents, informal interviews, and more we have recorded and analyzed our experiences in academia and beyond. In this work we begin to question Dialogue as either method or methodology.   We consider the interweaving: how we talk about practice and how we practice teaching and teacher education individually, collectively, and individually again. We consider the themes of community, cycles, and knowledge building for knowing and using dialogue. Finally we assert that through dialogue, we come to more clearly walk our talk.

1.   INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

This chapter has two beginnings. The most recent occurred when the editors of the *International handbook of self-study of teaching and teacher education practices* (Loughran, Hamilton, LaBoskey, & Russell, 2004) asked that we develop a chapter on dialogue in self-study as part of the methodology section of the handbook. We were caught off-guard. While it is true we had been talking, writing, e-mailing, and phoning each other in the process of studying our practice as teacher educators for over ten years, we

had never considered that what we were doing was dialogue. We agreed to write the chapter, and then we immediately began a quest to discover how this process of studying our practice could be dialogue. We wondered whether dialogue was a methodological tool like survey research, a Methodological Approach at the level of Narrative Inquiry, or was Dialogue even more fundamental.

The earlier beginning of our chapter started in graduate school and extended into our first academic appointments, as one of us reported.

At the University of Arizona a group of professors joined the faculty while I was a student; they changed my ideas. They (and others) taught me about qualitative research methods and research on teacher thinking and practical inquiry. I realized if I wanted to re-experience the processes I wished to study, I would need to work in teacher education...As I began [my first academic appointment], I felt silenced. I came to teacher education with good credentials. Yet, it quickly became apparent that my expertise would be irrelevant (Arizona Group 1995, p.41).

As this quote reveals, our graduate education connected us to teacher education. We wanted to do research in teacher education and we wanted to be part of educating new teachers. Yet, no one wanted to listen to our voices. There did not seem to be a place to express the things we felt so deeply and when we did find place we worried about the impact on our future. Our confusion in this role is further illustrated by this statement:

Most of us know the language of academia–grant money, research, computer, tenure. Yet the implications of that language are partially lost to us. We don't have fluency–not really. Even worse, most of us are standing alone. No one has come to serve as our translator. No one can elucidate the secret smiles or silent behavior (October 28, 1990).

In addition to feeling we had no space for speaking, we recognized that we knew the language but the implications of what was being said were not clear. There was no one who helped us join the conversation at our institutions. As we graduated one of our mentors had told us to spend the first year as ethnographers and try to figure out the meaning of what was being said rather than merely charging ahead. One of us writes:

As a new faculty member last year, I pretty much took V's advice about being an ethnographer and not butting in until I knew what was going on. Well, now that I know what is going on, I find I have strong opinions and a lot of pent up anger….My hand is getting tired from typing so fast (October 8, 1990).

From this situation, we decided to correspond with each other and then use the letters as data to explore the experiences of beginning professors of teacher education. We entered into conversation, dialogue with each other, which has continued from that day when, standing in a hallway at AERA,

we committed to communicate with each other and study our practice as teacher educators.

When we entered academia as teacher educators, the field was in the midst of reform. The focus of public opinion concerning schools had broadened calling for accountability not only for teachers, but also for the colleges and programs where they were educated. Concurrent with this focus was a concern with the issues of equity and excellence in education. As a result of the Critical Pedagogy movement, teacher educators tried to prevent future teachers *from* recreating the hegemonic classrooms in which they had been educated and were currently the norm in most public schools.

When I reflect on my experience, I think about how often I am reminded of a 'journey'. In constructing the meaning of my journey as teacher educator, I see it as 'The Struggle'. For me, it is a struggle to navigate the terrain of academe. I continually encounter sharp curves, steep hills, and detours that are difficult to understand in a system that outwardly speaks of creating knowledge, change, restructuring education, and rethinking curriculum at all levels (p. 45 Arizona Group 1995).

From the beginning our interactions in teacher education and being successful members of our academic communities felt like a struggle. When we started as teacher educators, the conversation of the field was about alternative ways of knowing, the inclusion of all voices, and a belief that solutions to problems at a particular place could best be solved through interaction among those most intimately concerned. This led to a focus on Teacher Education Reform that involved retreats, dialogues, and new plans. Our concern in reform was often about the confrontation between older colleagues who continued to embrace a transmission model of education or about the resistance we met in our students who had been educated under transmission models of education (See Lather, 1991).

Ten years later as we begin to examine and consider our conversations as dialogue, we find ourselves in an arena of top-down accountability. Often only two views of teacher preparation seem to be addressed in conversations about teacher education (Cochran - Smith & Fries, M., 2001). We hear the voices of those who would professionalize teacher education and those who would abolish it. Neither group seems to be concerned about the issues of equity or even to remember the conceptions of excellence with which we began this teacher education reform movement. In fact, voices like our own seem absent from this conversation. We wonder how the conversation changed so drastically. While we engaged in dialogue that has led to the development and maturation of the self-study in teacher education practices movement, did we lose track of the larger research conversation? How did the field move from a careful concern with how to create teacher education practices that would produce outstanding new teachers to a concern about

whether alternative or regular teacher certification was preferable? How did research on teacher thinking and teacher development give place to studies of performance of best practices? How did the focus of concern in the larger teacher education and teaching research field alter so rapidly?

We know each discipline has a research conversation. The research conversation is the language and meaning of that field and the ideas that find credence are the ideas that form and shape the community. As we found ourselves on the outside of the current teacher education reform dialogue with no place to raise an alternative voice, we wondered even more strongly about the role of dialogue in knowledge production. As a result of these two intertwined beginnings in our study of dialogue as a method, we began to study dialogue as it had been used in the research literature, our research history, and our interaction.

2. THEORY AND RESEARCH

In the literature on teacher education and related fields, the documentation of professional dialogue has been infrequent. For example, the works of Friere and Macedo (1995), Hollingsworth (1992), and others, have provided a look at the conversations conducted by scholars about their ideas and the ways to push them forward, yet this approach to exploring the profession has never been examined carefully as a research methodology. This is an exploration of that conception.

Bohm (1990) proposes that in dialogue through our language we reveal our assumptions, beliefs, and theories about issues. He proposes that the point of dialogue is to focus not on the conversation, but on what our language reveals about our knowledge and understanding. Further, many of us know that like practical arguments (Fenstermacher, 1986) which end in action, our dialogues may lead us to action. We come away from an intense conversation revitalized and energized particularly when we have been able to reconceptualize old ideas, participate in a forum where the value of our ideas is supported and enriched, or learn new ways of seeing the world.

What are the roots of dialogue? A review of the literature on past uses of "dialogue" produces a array of advocates of dialogue and its uses in different social contexts. But interestingly, in all of these contexts there has been an emphasis on the participants' learning through the construction of new understanding. Therefore the use of dialogue can be seen as a basis for making meaning, establishing the validity of ideas, and promoting action. From this perspective, our self-study dialogues can be placed in a long historical context. Yet in examining the nature of dialogue as a way of knowing, we might be constructing something new.

When we consider philosophical accounts of the use of dialogue we think of Socrates and the Socratic method. Such dialogue can position one person as knower of all questions. Ideally, both teacher and student would learn from the pattern of question and answer, but in the Socratic dialogues we have read, the person in Socrates' role seems to already know and is simply questioning a learner who comes to understand what the teacher already knows. Aristotle, Hegel, Krishnamurti and others introduce "opposition" in dialogue. In these perspectives, two different positions or claims are posed and the point of dialogue is reconciling, synthesizing, or integrating the opposites. The point of the opposition is not debate (in which one side wins or loses or one side is silenced) but the production of something new. Rather than competition there is an ethical dimension--a sense that dialogue is good as a process and results in good outcomes (Gurevitch, 1990, 2001).

More recent work in literary criticism, discourse analysis, and cultural theory gives us interesting lenses to consider the particulars of a methodology of dialogue. Bakhtin (1984) examines dialogue within the discourse of the novel. His perspective provides insights into analysis of narratives, interviews, documents, and conversations. He proposes that discourse is hetroglossia since meanings for words and phrases always have some idiosyncratic element. Further, he articulates the way in which any event has a history yet also extends into the future. Thus as we consider an event we reach into the past, with the hindsight of the present. In the same way, this reconsideration of past, brought in contact with the future in this present moment, introduces the unknown because the future has not happened yet. In this way, dialogue must always exist in a zone of inconclusivity with past (both the past of the speakers and the past of public record), the present, and the future engaged at the zone of maximal contact.

Many who use conversation as a tool for educational reform and change look to Habermas (1984) who posed the possibility of the ideal situation in which communication is unimpeded and equal. Habermas, however, asks for consensus. But if researchers in the human sciences are willing to allow findings to be a guide to immediate action and understanding and exist in a zone of inconclusivity then consensus is not productive. In a dialogue where researchers push for consensus the results might be silencing or monologue or chorus. In fact Tannen's (1998) studies indicate that academic discourse impeded both knowledge construction and community because of the conflictual style of that discourse.

Augusto Boal's (1992) work has led to the creation of new theatre where audience and actors dialogue to produce a representation of the oppressions experienced in their society. In this public dialogue, we develop new ways of seeing our culture and we come to experience our role in the creation of the discourse we experience. Other dialogues central to change

include therapy, peace talks, cross-cultural and interfaith dialogue, and international development.

Within education, our group has not been alone. The practice of dialogue has appeared in many different contexts. Research has explored the impact of dialogue in these ways:

1. The contributions of dialogue to professional development of inservice and preservice teachers ability to reflect critically. (Brundage, 1996; Clark, 1996; Gitlin and Russell, 1996; Hollingsworth, 1992; McMahon, 1997; Richert, 1990; Tillema, 1997).

2. The way it furthers theory development or clarification. (Barbules and Rice, 1991; Freire and Macedo, 1995; Rice, 1993)

3. The role of Socratic or other dialogue in enhancing classroom learning. (Brogan and Brogan, 1995; Dysthe, 1996; Freire, 2000; McCarthey, 1994; Nassaji and Wells, 2000; Padilla, 1992; Vygotsky, 1978)

4. Dialogue as a basis for collaboration, collegiality, and community among professionals (John-Steiner, Weber, and Minnis, 1998; Palmer, 1993)

5. Its role in facilitating relationships among different educational groups as well as research. (Clark, 1996; Greene, 1986)

6. Dialogues relationship to cross-cultural understanding and other diverse perspectives (Flecha, 1999; Flores, 2000; Hollingsworth, 1992; Padilla, 1992)

3. METHODOLOGY

Our methodology for exploring dialogue involved four steps as we tried to bring together several kinds of data at once. We began with a review of literature focused on professional dialogue. Then, we reexamined our individual and collective work as the Arizona Group. We also explored our work in relationship to the work of others in the self-study of teacher education practices community to see how and where dialogue emerged in their work. Third, we used chat on Blackboard, and face to face chat, to discuss with each other our conceptions of dialogue. Finally, we e-mailed and phoned each other as we came to grips with what we meant by dialogue and how we saw it in terms of method.

In this process, we re-read our chats individually and then in new dialogues with each other we proposed what we thought we had learned. We would discuss and critique these assertions in our interaction. Then we would re-read the interactions. We would write independent definitions of dialogue,. This would then form the basis of our next conversation. When we finally reached a shared statement of what dialogue was, each of us was assigned to review a different piece of our earlier work or to analyze the

conversations and chats that had led to our current understanding. We each turned to the particular work or data we were assigned and used the conception of dialogue to examine the evidence of dialogue. We then each created an analysis of the assigned work. We submitted our analysis to each other for critique. In response to the critique we reworked our analysis and then re-submitted the work to each other. In this very fluid way, we developed, critiqued, and created an account of how dialogue as a method at the level of the scientific method works in self-study research. What follows is an account of what we came to understand about dialogue through this process.

4.   FINDINGS

What is a dialogue? In systematizing our understanding of dialogue, we begin to question more deeply our naive conceptions of it. We know that essentially it is a conversation or verbal interchange between two or more persons. While a conversation can refer to being in relation to others in a setting or a circle of acquaintances, we think of a central feature being an interchange of thought or talk. We know it can be contrasted with monologue where a person produces a long harangue in company or conversation with others.

4.1   Critique and Inquiry

In drama in addition to the monologue, the chorus--an organized band of interested spectators who speak together and give voice to the moral feelings the play evokes- provides another kind of contrast. In the monologue, there is the single voice which controls the group by silencing the voice of the others. In the chorus there is the community of dialogue but absent in the conception is the idea of individual voice raised in opposition or counterpoint to the collective. We began to see that in conversations there are different levels of talk, and that it was only when reflection and critique (Peterson 1992) came together that we were able to establish a basis for making assertions for action or understanding that we could be confident in.

In earlier work (Arizona Group, 2004), we argued that "dialogue is the process of coming to know on which we base our claims for action (in knowing, understanding, and doing)...[it] is the tool that supports the process and provides us with an authoritative basis for the claims we make" (p. 1111). In other words like the scientific method in positivist research, dialogue in self-study research is a process of inquiry and like the scientific method it provides a process for inquiry and authority for the assertions for

action and understanding that emerge from self-study research . The key themes that emerged in our dialogue were the following.

4.2   Community

Productive dialogue requires community. Bohm (1990) speaks articulately about the need for trust if dialogues are to be productive. There needs to be a space where we can reveal our minds and our ideas without holding back and with a willingness to be challenged. Morgan-Fleming and Johnson (2002) propose that in educational reform resistance as well as consensus is important. Clandinin (personal communication) refers to such challenge as response: with the idea that we respond to our friends sometimes in agreement or disagreement, but there can be a conception of kindness in response that may be absent in our shared self-study notion of critical friend and in Morgan-Fleming's use of resistance.

As we reconsider our community, we are aware that contrasts and conflicts emerged in both our public and private voices. One of us talked of community in our last conversation in July 2003 in this way:

[Communities of congruence] practice a fragile, private language so we can grow strong enough to enter the rough and tumble public ground. I often think that is true with us. Sometimes I don't trust myself. Maybe it's because of the ways people have reacted to me in my department or in my college and so I just begin to think I'm this fringe person...but when I get with you and I try out my voice, I try out my ideas. I try out my thinking and you share your thinking. It supports me so that I can go back with more confidence and take that idea into the more public realm...In communities of congruence advocates find their public voice. That is some of what we have done in our dialogue...I'm listening to you and I think I might not say it that way, but then it pushes me to think of an alternative of how I might say it in a public way.

In this way, dialogue within a community provides confidence for those participating to publish their ideas both within the community and beyond. In this private fragile space, ideas can be questioned and strengthened. Individually and collectively we may not agree, but by having a context in which ideas can be intensely discussed without disagreement ending in contention or disrespect, our community allows us to speak with safety and authority about the ideas we have considered. Our discord gained harmony as we conversed and thus wove together congruence and discord. We experienced support and acceptance as we constructed a representation of the challenges and agreements in the ideas explored.

4.3   Opposition Within the Community

However, if dialogue is to form a basis for authority for claiming knowledge of our practice and our action, this is not always a neat and clean process, it is messy. There are "hold your breath moments" when discussion gets heated. Since the conversation exists in what Bahktin has named the zone of maximal contact (the point where present, past and future merge) there are always centrifugal forces that would tear the dialogue apart just as there are centripetal forces that hold it together. The community must be a safe place to raise opposition and there has to be strong enough commitment to the community that we are willing to listen to what others have to say.

The community did not just spring up because we came together. The community emerged because we took what the members said seriously. We gave each other space to completely express ideas. We also pushed one another to explore completely each other's assertions. We raised absent voices that might contradict, dismiss, or attack the position presented. In every discussion, we approached each other with respect. For example, one of us said in our summer conversation (July 2003).

We're not working on each other. When we come together, I'm not working on you, or you, or you. I'm working on me.... We can think about using strategies as tools, but we have an understanding that just in the moment you are with that child or with that future teacher and in that moment you want to have at your command and you want to insightfully use whatever in that moment.

We come together in community to better understand teaching and teacher education practices. But we individually enact that understanding in our practice. Having a safe community allows us to work on understandings and issues that we might, in less safe places, keep hidden. In community we can grapple with the difficult issues of being teacher educators.

4.4   Cycles

Dialogues run in cycles of personal reflection, professional interchanges and public analysis, followed by private analysis. We see our development in dialogue beginning usually in our coming together and making statements about our current understanding of our private experience. We then usually negotiate a way to come together and hear each other's voices either face to face, through e-mail, or telephone and now chat.

Our dialogues usually have as a base some collection of individually constructed texts that our situation and present our view. We come together then in statements of our own understanding of the situation and questions about the statements of others. Next we grapple with ideas. These

conversations include as much questioning and request for clarification as they do monologue or response.

Usually in the second or third episode we reach points of shared epiphany and usually at that point one of us takes on the role of the chorus as used in Elizabethan theatre and represents the voice of moral feeling we have arrived at. Ironically, our dialogues do not end in answers but we usually push forward to a phase like if X then what? Or a question such as, how would that look in my context? We come away renewed because we have reached new epiphanies about the analyses that brought us together and new questions to explore. We leave with new ways to walk our talk and learn.

4.5   Knowledge Building

Dialogue flows like water. It can meander like a stream or gather force like a flash flood but when you look at the pattern of water coming together from different sources or points of origin, you find patterns of divergence and convergence. What does the process of knowledge construction in dialogue look like? In dialogue one of the participants makes a conversational move. The person may make an assertion "I think…" or something more definite "X is Y, because." The person may provide tentative and exploratory statements such as: "I'm beginning to think…" "It seems like." The speaker may ask a question "Have you noticed that…" "Am I the only one having an experience like X?" "This is what seems to happen to me. Am I crazy? [Am I the only one who has this experience?]

The response to the conversational move can be convergence, ignoring or divergence. Convergence is agreement , additional evidence or support provided in the form of a story or a fact or a quote from a colleague or from research. Ignoring occurs when no response is made to the comment. Divergence involves a statement such as I've never had that experience, [with either a proposal of a different experience, a question or reinterpretation of the experience or a flat denial, a counter assertion or a request for more information.

Because some conversational moves are ignored and because the participants in dialogue are constructing meaning for themselves, convergence and divergence can come after a pause—sometimes a minute or two, sometimes much later. In fact, the person who originally asserted an idea may come to disagree with it. But in dialogue as a basis for assertion for action or understanding, the impetus is always for understanding. These patterns of divergence and convergence in flow are what make the dialogue productive—meandering streams cut new trenches across the meanders and therefore renew themselves and become young and productive.

Dialogue provides valuable ways of knowing. I come to know what I know as I say it. (As I explain my position to you, I either realize, "Yes that is what I know and believe {convergence}" or "My word—why am I saying this I don't believe what I am saying at all" {divergence} or somewhere in between—I believe this but not this [I mean this but not that]. This reveals itself in conversation when we object to what is said, go back and more fully explain, expand on or contradict things we said earlier [these contradictions are not happenstance but conscious]. We go back and identify or expand on a contradiction between what we are saying and what we said or what we are doing and what we did. In this process, of expanding, revisiting, supporting or contradicting, participants in the dialogue may build new understandings and interpretations or develop strong authority for the stance they already take.

Another kind of understanding that is revealed in dialogue is that I come to know what I know—when I hear you say it. I may either agree or disagree but in what has been said I immediately know what I know. In dialogue, I come to know as the discourse develops and I realize that what we have been saying collectively is X—At that point one or all participants say, "Are we saying?" or "Hey, we've been saying and I think that is exactly right—notice we usually then provide additional evidence, repeat what we've heard, or provide a new example."

Because dialogue is multi-vocal it provides us a basis for checking ideas, developing evidence, and creating an authoritative space from which to make claims for assertions for action or understanding. Still we must ask, how in dialogue do we come to develop a faith in our ideas that others might call validity? One way this happens is when we get convergence—with lots of support and other examples. This does not mean that we must reach consensus, because we also develop authority for what we know when we work through divergence to understanding and acceptance of the other's ideas.

Another way to establish knowing in dialogue is working through divergence to common ground or a new way of understanding that puts ideas at rest and workable. We come to see the commensurability of two ideas that had seemed incommensurate. This happens when we express our ideas and we feel them resonate within and flow through us and each new insight captures us. We recognize that the assertions we are making for understanding and action may become open later for new interpretation and exploration, because knowledge for teaching and understanding teaching builds and grows. Such knowledge exists always in a zone of ongoing uncertainty and inconclusivity. We attempt to use dialogue to build Praxis, in the true sense, where activism and verbalism balance each other), which in turn brings integrity. We are who we say we are to the best of our ability.

5.   CONCLUSION

The creation of community allowed us further support in our individual explorations of what counted as knowledge and we moved away from Modernist notions. As a result of our dialogic explorations of modernity and post modernity and our intellectual relationship to knowing, we were able to make breakthroughs in epistemology. Our community encouraged us to explore and experiment with the use of new methodologies and create new forms and formats for representing our accounts. In this setting our interchanges with each other, the professional literature and the members of the academic community impacted the development of self-study research methodology and publication. Our dialogue has positioned us to resist.

Our collective dialogues enabled us to see that issues in our individual community were not idiosyncratic, as our institutional colleagues would have us believe. In dialogue we began to understand the larger cultural themes being played our in our individual contexts. Such insight positioned us to resist locally. Our dialogue enabled us to be more theoretically and politically aware in the larger research arena. We saw ways to join a larger dialogue about knowing and teaching represented by the *Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices* SIG. As a group, we found ways to support more universal resistance to a return to modernist ideas of research, teaching, and teacher education. We suggest in this piece that the cycle and pattern of dialogue we uncover in our work echoes things we have read in the self-study work of others. It establishes the centrality of community, and gives new power to our resistance to simple notions of teacher education, which argue for total acceptance of all teacher education or complete abandonment of it. While we see the power of dialogue as methodology in our own self-study work we still find ourselves wondering is dialogue an essential feature of self- study work? Does self-study always require community, collaboration, and response from the other? We use our dialogues to (move forward together) as teacher educators, and perhaps more importantly we use each other to support our resistance to the so-called reforms and establish assertions for action and understanding.

Sometimes in research, what changes about us is our knowledge. We know new things and we know new ways to interpret what we see around us. Our new understanding of dialogue as a basis for self-study research has changed our hearts. It gives us new courage both in our research and in our action. We stand in a different relationship to the world. Since we have embraced dialogue as the most fundamental characteristic of our work in self-study, we have gained new courage in accepting and acting upon the assertions about teacher education that emerge from the work of the self-study researcher community. Recognizing that our work has a basis from

which to act not in terms of foundational criteria for knowing but one which gives us confidence in our action, we have more power to make a difference in teacher education in our colleges of teacher education, in our interaction in the larger teacher education research community and in our work in self-study. Understanding dialogue as a foundation, allows us to focus on the value in our work.

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Chapter 5

TRANSFORMATION THROUGH SELF-STUDY:
THE VOICES OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS

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Abstract: This chapter is designed to highlight how self-study can lead to transformation in preservice teachers' thinking. It examines how telling one's story can create spaces for rethinking, revising, and digging more deeply to uncover personal theories, beliefs, and contradictions (Ritchie and Wilson, 2000). The chapter focuses on the self-study research conducted by eight preservice teachers in a two-year master's program. Drawing upon a wide range of data sources (philosophies of education, reflective journals, critical incidents, action research papers, lesson plans, and videotapes of their teaching), the preservice teachers systematically analyzed their teaching and learning experiences over a two year period. Using the method of constant comparison (Glaser and Strauss, 1967), I analyzed the students' master's papers for themes and emerging patterns. The analyses revealed themes such as the following: theory and practice contradictions, fear of failure, classroom management issues, and the shift from self to students. The chapter concludes with a discussion of how I, the teacher educator, reframed my understanding of what learning to teach looks like through preservice teachers' lenses. The chapter also discusses how the students' self-studies will be used as a teaching text: a text for future preservice teachers to learn from the voices of other preservice teachers who honestly and articulately shared their stories of learning to teach.

As a teacher educator working with preservice teachers in a graduate program, I have found that students often ask me with skepticism, "How can studying my own teaching constitute research?"; and "Wouldn't it be more useful to do something on curriculum, or homework, something that would directly affect my teaching? If I don't know anything about teaching, what could I possibly learn from myself?" I am amused now when I hear these

questions because they are similar to the ones I asked a number of years ago when I first became familiar with the area of self-study.

In this study, I explored the impact of self-study research on the personal and professional lives of eight preservice teachers. I was interested in knowing how their self-studies helped them come to understand their personal and professional selves. Reading and analyzing their studies allowed me to stepback and truly listen to the voices of my students. As I reread their work and analyzed their writings in a systematic manner, I came to hear their voices very differently. I discovered themes and concerns that impact many preservice teachers. I discovered how their self-studies helped them to gain ownership of their personal theories and their teaching. As a teacher educator, I gained valuable insight about preservice teachers that will help me improve my effectiveness with future preservice teachers.

1.   CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

The participants in this study were enrolled in the Master of Education in Teaching (MET) program at the University of Hawaii. The two-year preservice graduate program emphasizes inquiry, reflection, and collaboration, and involves extensive field experiences. During the first year of the program the students are required to spend 12 hours per week observing and teaching in schools. In the second year, they student teach for one semester, followed by a semester-long internship. The students are encouraged to make connections and construct meaning from their integrated coursework, field experiences, reflective journals, readings, and assignments. They are required to inquire into questions about teaching and learning, conduct action research, and write a master's paper. The questions and problems that arise in the field become the focus of the students' inquiry and research.

The MET program is grounded in the following theory and research. Classrooms and schools are viewed as "research sites and sources of knowledge that are most effectively accessed when teachers collaborate, interrogate, and enrich their theories of practice" (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1993, p. 63). Teacher development and learning require problem identification and problem solving through continuous reflection, active involvement, and professional inquiry into one's practices (Cochran-Smith, 1990; Dewey, 1929; Schon, 1983, 1987).

The question of how to prepare teachers and facilitate professional development has been a focus of considerable research in teacher education

(Beck, et al., 2004; Bullough and Pinnegar, 2001; LaBoskey, 2004; Zeichner, 1999). Research indicates that self-study can be a powerful means of helping preservice teachers reflect on their practice, increase their self-knowledge, and improve their teaching and their students' learning (LaBoskey, 1998; Loughran, 1998; Russell, 1998). The term self-study has a very personal reference and involves reflective inquiry, personal narrative, and interrogating one's personal beliefs to arrive at new understandings (Beck, et al., 2004; Cole and Knowles, 1998; Connelly and Clandinin, 1999).

In this paper I draw upon the work of self-study researchers to better understand my students' learning in this field and their development as preservice teachers (Clandinin and Connelly, 2000; Holt-Reynolds and Johnson, 2002; Knowles, 1994). By systematically analyzing their self-studies, I can gain a window into what they went through, their struggles, their concerns, and learn how they came to make sense of these experiences. Through studying their work, I have gained a better understanding of my teaching and, in turn, been able to improve my practice.

2.   METHOD

As a faculty member teaching the graduate core courses and advising the MET preservice teachers, I had the following goals for the study:

1. To systematically analyze the self-study master's papers of my students to see the impact of self-study on their beliefs and practices;
2. To examine to what extent reflection, inquiry, and self-study have influenced the students' views about teaching and learning;
3. To explore how their prior experiences and beliefs influenced their expectations and interpretation of schools and schooling;
4. To "critically analyze" the students' voices to learn a new story of teacher education through the perspectives of the preservice teachers;
5. And to apply what I learned from the study to my own teaching.

In order to address these goals, I began by exploring how the course assignments influenced the preservice teachers' beliefs and approaches to teaching and learning. As I reviewed numerous papers such as student inquiry projects, ethnographic portraits of the school, action research studies, and the preservice teachers' master's papers, I was intrigued by the number of self-studies the students were writing for their master's papers. Although the majority conducted curriculum implementation action research projects,

eight preservice teachers conducted self-studies which examined their field experiences over the two years of the program. As I read and reread the preservice teachers' self-studies, I realized how their stories and their voices had so much to teach me. Taken together, their voices allowed me to see the MET program from the perspective of the students. The master's papers, written at different times over the seven year period of the study, chronicled their personal and professional experiences, their challenges, their conflicts, and the process they went through on their way to becoming teachers. Accordingly, I decided to focus just on these eight cases.

The research was designed as a collective case study (Stake, 1994) involving data obtained from the eight participants who did self-study in their master's papers. The individual self-studies were compared and contrasted to explore the students' two-year journeys in the program, the challenges encountered, and their emerging identities as teachers. Of the eight participants, four were males and four were females. Six of the participants were high school preservice teachers (four science majors, one math, one English) and two were elementary preservice teachers.

The data for this study came from the following sources: the preservice teachers' self-studies (master's papers) and my analysis of their self-studies. The master's papers drew upon a wide range of data sources (their philosophies of education, reflective journals, critical teaching incidents, action research papers, lesson plans, videotapes of their teaching, etc.) collected over a two year period. I encouraged the students to reread and reflect on their journals, assignments, and papers, and use qualitative research methods to analyze the data to discover themes and issues that emerged from their writing. Drawing upon the work of Clandinin (1993), Gudmundsdottir (2001), and Cole and Knowles (1998, 2000), they wrote self-study/narrative inquiries about their two years in the program. I, in turn, analyzed their writings using the method of constant comparison (Glaser and Strauss, 1967) to identify recurring themes and emerging patterns across the different papers.

3.   FINDINGS

The self-studies revealed powerful information about how these preservice teachers lived their stories of teaching and learning, and how their prior experiences shaped their thinking and their beliefs. Although each story was undeniably unique, the stories had a number of common themes. The primary themes that emerged from the papers included: personal

theories, belief and practice contradictions, use of metaphors, fears, classroom management, and the shift in focus from self to students.

3.1   Personal Theories

One theme that emerged from the analysis involved the preservice teachers' personal theories and how their assumptions and theories conflicted with the realities of teaching. Embedded in this conflict were the taken for granted assumptions and idealism that they had when entering the program: *"I began as a precocious college graduate with the belief that if I could conquer school from one end, it would be a cakewalk on the other."* As the preservice teachers explored their personal theories and evolving philosophies of education, they discovered how their beliefs and personal theories were shaped by their experiences prior to entering the program. One commented: "Initially, I was so concerned about the emotional well-being of the students that I truly forgot to think about what they would be learning and how." Another said: "I think I was so influenced by Stand and Deliver and The Dead Poet's Society that I never realized the reality of teaching."

The preservice teachers discovered how their images of teachers had been shaped by their prior experience as students, as well as by exposure to the media images of teachers. "I don't want to sound like the teacher in the Charlie Brown cartoon--Charlie Brown, whaa wha wha whaaa." A commonly held "taken for granted assumption" was that anyone can teach. One preservice teacher wrote in her journal: "In the first year of the program, I had been incredibly self-assured about becoming a teacher. I thought it would be the easiest job because I had my content down pat."

3.2   Belief and Practice Contradictions

As the preservice teachers attempted to find their identity and understand and recognize their personal theories, they asked the question, "Do I practice what I preach?"   Through their reflections they uncovered contradictions in their personal theories and beliefs. All four science majors discovered that although they criticized the way they learned science as "too structured" and "too rigid," they themselves resorted to traditional teaching styles: "lecture driven" and "text centered." They mentioned how their undergraduate experiences were focused on content and facts, and how this transferred into how they taught. They acknowledged that they did not create learning environments that encouraged student inquiry.

Another contradiction involved a preservice teacher who believed that making mistakes and learning from mistakes was a valuable part of learning.

She stated: "I wanted to raise students who would always try to grow from their mistakes and who know that they're not dumb if they make mistakes…it was a trait I wanted my students to have." However, she admits in her student teaching semester, "I was afraid of making mistakes…. I was scared to do and say something that might be stupid." Through her self-study she came to the realization that she was not applying her belief about making mistakes to herself, since she was not allowing herself to be less than perfect. She confronted an important contradiction: "My main stance in my teaching philosophy had been the idea of letting students make mistakes and to learn from them. Yet, this philosophy had been put in the back seat." When she discovered this contradiction, she gave herself permission to make mistakes and be a learner of teaching.

3.3   Fear and Uncertainty

In a number of cases, as the preservice teachers' idealism about teaching and their images of themselves as teachers waned, the idealism was replaced by fear and uncertainty. In several cases, the struggles the preservice teachers encountered were so intense that they questioned their adequacy as teachers and expressed feelings of uncertainty about their decision to become a teacher. "What kind of teacher was I if I felt this way about my students? Was I even a teacher? Was I in the wrong career after all?" Another posed the question, "Why Teach? Did I enter teaching for the wrong reasons?"

Others revealed their fear of not being true to their beliefs. "At times I felt like a fraud because my style of teaching that I was putting in action was not emulating my philosophy of teaching." Another reflected: "I did not create a learning environment that encouraged student inquiry. I felt like a fraud."

The preservice teachers wrote about the fear of failure, fear of making mistakes, fear of judgment, and fear of what the students thought of them. In two cases the fears were crippling and nearly led to the preservice teachers quitting. "Fear had power over me…I was scared out of my mind that I was in the wrong profession." The fear of failure and judgment became so powerful that these two preservice teachers distanced themselves from their mentor teachers and cohort members. One stated: "Fear had paralyzed my ability to contribute to the group. I did not want to talk to anyone about my feelings, for I did not want anyone to know how much of a failure I felt I was, or to know that I was seriously thinking about quitting."

An interesting characteristic of each of these two preservice teachers was that they were outstanding science and math students with excellent grades as undergraduates. They learned that there was more to teaching than being knowledgeable in their content areas. One stated: "I didn't want to be a failure. I didn't want to fail the expectations others had put up for me." What became clear from their self-studies was that many of them had always been outstanding students and had not experienced feelings of failure before. They set high expectations for themselves and when they didn't meet their expectations they felt they were failures. Their self-studies helped them sort out their feelings of fear and helped them face these fears. In other cases, the sense of fear was not as crippling. Rather, it served as a catalyst for taking more control of their actions and success.

3.4　　Classroom Management

The preservice teachers all experienced shifts in their thinking about classroom management. For the most part their early beliefs about management involved giving students considerable freedom and not setting limits. Since most of the preservice teachers were highly motivated, successful students throughout their own school years, they assumed that their students would be motivated and respectful. They had difficulty relating to disrespectful, disruptive students. One preservice teacher revealed, " I never thought about classroom management in the proactive sense and didn't appreciate what went into classroom management. I assumed that the students would want to keep the peace." Another stated: "As a student I never thought about classroom management. I was a good student and ignored the other students."

In general, the preservice teachers didn't have an image of disruptive students, or scripts of how teachers handled these students. "I had not made the connection between my students' "how do we do it" questions and my not teaching the students procedures… I basically chalked these regular interruptions up to the students' inability to listen carefully and follow directions."

Another issue that impacted the preservice teachers' classroom management was the desire for the students to like and accept them. One preservice teacher stated: "Upon reflection I have come to understand that my lack of effective management was largely affected by my lack of self-confidence and my need to be liked by my students." Another stated, "I wanted to be liked—more of a friend than power figure." Because of these assumptions and beliefs about management and the need for acceptance by

the students, the preservice teachers often resisted suggestions about how to establish a well managed classroom.

3.5 Use of Metaphors

Three of the preservice teachers used metaphors (surfing, driving lessons, navigating the high-school seas) to explore and uncover their theories and assumptions about teaching. In her philosophy of education paper, one preservice teacher stated: "I am the ship's navigator on the vast sea of teaching and learning experiences. I am not the ship's captain." However, at the end of the self-study this preservice teacher revised her metaphor. "At times I am the navigator suggesting directions for the student-explorers, other times I become the captain providing needed knowledge and explicit orders and sometimes I even get to become a student-explorer myself." She explained how this revision of her metaphor "symbolizes my belief in student-centered teaching because it allows me to transition between teaching styles to best accommodate the needs of my students."

Another preservice teacher used surfing as his metaphor for learning to teach. He compared surfing to teaching a lesson. "Before paddling out for a session I often watch the waves, surfing mentally. Following each wave I reflect upon the previous ride. I think about what went well or what I could have done differently. I try to learn from my actions with the hope of improving and learning from each single ride." This preservice teacher goes on to say how his philosophy changed over the two years in the program. He drew upon surfing as a source of his guiding teaching philosophy which replaced his earlier idealistic philosophy. He states: "In surfing we live in this world where, if we don't get along, at least tolerate each other in the line-up, the whole magical ambiance of the ocean is destroyed. If we can't take turns and respect others while they pass on the wave, the joy becomes void." He goes on: "It's no different in a classroom. If we don't teach tolerance and patience and understanding, where will young people learn it?" He incorporated these values in his classroom.

One preservice teacher who was learning how to drive during the second year of the program gained insight from her "learning to drive" metaphor. She reflected on her frustrating experiences in the classroom and compared these experiences to her experiences as a student driver. She reflected on how her driving instructor, her father, was a proficient driver, but was an ineffective driving teacher. Likewise, although she was brilliant in her content area, mathematics, she could not convey the material to her students. She realized that "it was not enough for a teacher to simply know how to do

the problems; teachers must be able to anticipate any possible questions that may arise and problems students may encounter." She also talked about her struggles in the classroom and her brush with quitting the program as detours and near accidents.

Weaving these metaphors throughout their stories became a powerful way for the preservice teachers to "scratch beneath the surface," to clarify, and compare and contrast their theories about teaching by using concrete examples from their own experiences. The metaphors were powerful because they were personally constructed and personally meaningful in helping the preservice teachers explore their beliefs and arrive at a deeper understanding of their philosophies and personal theories about teaching and learning. Their metaphors changed as they reframed their experiences, thus helping them see how their beliefs and practices were altered by their teaching experiences.

3.6 Shift of Focus from Self to Students

Nearly all of the preservice students discussed a time during their student teaching or teaching internship when they acknowledged a shift in their thinking from being self-absorbed to focusing more of their attention on their students. In some cases it came about as a result of rereading their philosophies of education or journal entries. One preservice teacher summed it up this way: "The journals were in the most egotistical way only about me and my views. It wasn't about the classes and what could be done to improve the management. It wasn't about the students and what could be done to improve their learning. It was about me and my exhaustion and my growing lack of interest in teaching." Others came to the same conclusion. "I never seemed to think beyond myself—I had a shallow, superficial approach." "Teaching is not simply about me, it's about the students who trust me to navigate an entire year of their education."

Several students realized there was a time when they were indifferent towards their students, and it wasn't until they took the focus off their own personal struggles and shortcomings that they were able to address the needs of their students. One preservice teacher stated that a significant turning point in her growth occurred in her fourth semester. She stated: "I will put my students at the center of my focus. I will focus on their needs." The same preservice teacher emphasized how she moved from being paralyzed by her fears of failure to facing her fears. She wrote: "I was no longer afraid of asking for help, and neither was I afraid of the opinions of those around me… All that mattered was my opinion and whether or not I believed in myself. And that was really something I wanted my students to be like: to have faith in themselves."

3.7   Increased Maturity and Professionalism

Preservice teachers often want a recipe, a formula for becoming a teacher. "What hoops do I have to jump through to get my certification?" When things aren't going well, preservice teachers are prone to blame the program, their professors, the mentor teachers, or even their students. What was evident in the self-studies was the personal growth and maturation of the preservice teachers. They gained an increased level of professionalism. They took personal risks, and made themselves vulnerable as they stepped back and systematically reconstructed their knowledge, their experiences, and their images of who they are. They went well beyond seeking a formula for teaching, and they began to take personal responsibility for their teaching and their students' learning.

After writing their self-studies all of the preservice teachers achieved an increased sense of self as teachers. Following is one preservice teacher's testimony of the power of the process of self-study: "The most important thing I learned about was, believe it or not, myself. And this isn't something that anyone can just read out of a book to learn about." Another preservice teacher wrote: "The events I chose were those that gave the most meaning to my future self... The events were markers for my winding journey as I worked to become a better teacher."

Nearly all of the preservice teachers reported, in one way or another, a transformation or reframing of their views about teaching. One commented: "After writing about the experiences and changes that I went through during my first few years of becoming an educator, it is clear to me that I may never be the same. Although this realization may be disconcerting, it is also very liberating. Many of my deepest feelings and strongest beliefs have changed in a period of two or three years. Is this a sign of instability? Or a sign of strength? I found strength in change, and I knowingly document some of my beliefs now. So that I may look at them in years to come in hopeful anticipation of further change."

The preservice teachers' writings showed evidence of the changes in their thinking, their growth, their uncovering and unraveling of their beliefs, as well as their ability to reframe their thinking about teaching. The self-studies helped the preservice teachers sort through their conflicts and contradictions and examine their taken for granted assumptions, prior beliefs, and philosophies. New understandings and theories emerged as a result of their inquiry into their personal and professional identities. One preservice teacher articulated what many of the other students experienced. She described the process of uncovering her personal theories and beliefs: "The reflective process of self-study created the voice that I used to synthesize this Plan B paper, which is my way to "reflect upon" and "talk"

about my personal theories to others. From this "talk" I have reached conclusions that have provided me with a more clear understanding of the personal theories behind my style of teaching, as well as my philosophy of teaching metaphor."

And finally, another student wrote: "If it were not for this paper, I would not have realized the full extent of the changes that occurred in my student teaching. This paper forced me to open the doors to the person I am. Even after writing this paper, I will leave the doors open so that I continue to grow and learn about myself."

4. IMPACT ON MY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In the opening address at the Fifth International Conference on Self-Study of Teacher Education Practices, John Loughran asked the following question about self- study: "How is the learning useable, applicable, and informing?" The question focuses on a key goal of self-study research, namely, to make a difference in teacher education. His question has relevance for me as I reflect on how the preservice teachers' self-studies impacted my professional development and informed my teaching. What I learned from these self-studies is indeed useable, applicable, and informing.

One of the most important impacts was to help me re-experience student teaching by seeing the practicum through different eyes. I could not actually be "in the experience" of student teaching again, but these stories brought me much closer to what the preservice teachers encounter. The words of the preservice teachers helped me gain insight into their personal theories, their needs, anxieties, and crises of confidence. As I systematically analyzed the self-studies, I gained insight into how they were making sense of their experiences, and what influenced their thinking, behavior, and decision-making. I came to realize how important it is for me to explore with them the intricate relationship between their personal identities and their professional identities. I began to appreciate the complex interactions of the person and the performance, as I saw how an individual's confidence can be shattered when the performance does not meet the image of the idealized teacher.

I learned the importance of listening to their experiences, and the knowledge they bring to the experience. I now see more clearly that an important part of my job as teacher educator is to enter into dialogue with the preservice teachers (Holt-Reynolds, 1994) and work closely with them to help them identify, name, and reframe their personal theories, beliefs, and assumptions. What questions are they asking? What dilemmas and concerns

do they have? How are their questions framed? I learned the important role that their perception of past and present events plays in their growth and development.

These self-studies brought to life for me the fact that in the past I have been tempted to view teacher development as a linear process whereby the preservice teacher proceeds from novice to more experienced teacher through the observation-participation and student teaching stages. But I now realize that this linear view ignores or minimizes the unique personal experiences and background knowledge that each student brings to the program. This linear view downplays how these experiences shape who they are, and how the experiences can influence their reactions to challenges they may encounter on their way to becoming teachers.

Over the past seven years teaching in the MET program, I had this illusion that I could create the perfect set of seminars and practicum experiences so that everyone would be successful. I thought I could shield students from encountering unpleasant challenges and struggles. With each new cohort, I focused on incorporating the recommendations of the previous cohort. For example, students' concerns about the program being too open-ended and too unstructured were met with more tightly designed assignments, and detailed and structured roadmaps/syllabi. Although I continued to value the need for flexibility, I found myself removing some of the much-needed down time and spaces to unwind, to reflect, and just catch our breath. The students' master's papers helped me appreciate the importance of allowing time to explore, inquire, and personally fit the puzzle pieces together at their own pace. Their papers helped me realize that the struggles, the disillusionment, the career-questioning, the uncertainties, and anxieties are all part of the journey of becoming a teacher.

From this study, I learned how the preservice teachers' work has become like a mirror for me to learn about what I should emphasize and value in my teaching. I see the importance of helping the preservice teachers synthesize their experiences and regularly go back and reflect on their prior work (journals, philosophies of education, etc.) to gain an understanding of their teacher selves. I realize I need to make spaces and provide opportunities for the students to identify their expectations and assumptions and see how they are connected to their personal histories, and how these expectations and assumptions can conflict and collide with the realities of teaching. I intend to help the learners articulate their assumptions and misunderstandings and uncover conflicts and contradictions. I intend to focus on analyzing personal theories and images of teachers and create a climate that balances the tensions inherent in providing structure while at the same time fostering discovery and inquiry. This study more clearly shows the importance of guiding the preservice teachers' inquiries so they arrive at self-knowledge.

5.   CONCLUSION

Over the past several years, I sometimes wondered whether writing a self-study as the master's paper might lack rigor and/or be viewed as inferior to other research-oriented approaches. As I look back, I realize that I undervalued the use of self-study, partly because of the attitude of the academy and partly because of my own tendency to see quantitative and experimental research as superior to having students tell their stories. During this research, the power of the self-studies jumped out at me as I saw how "critical reflection" and the systematic analysis of the data led to a transformation in the preservice teachers' thinking and teaching. I saw how telling one's story can create spaces for rethinking, revising, and digging more deeply to uncover personal theories, beliefs, and contradictions (Ritchie and Wilson, 2000). I saw how the preservice teachers framed and reframed their conceptions of teaching and their roles as teachers, and how these changes were reflected in their readiness to take personal responsibility for their actions, be open-minded, and view events from different perspectives. These self-studies were invaluable sources of information about learning to teach, because these preservice teachers articulated and made public the personal knowledge, background, and philosophies that influenced their beliefs about teaching and their practice. They took personal risks and made themselves vulnerable as they systematically reconstructed their knowledge, their experiences, and their images of who they are.

These self-studies helped the students and myself resituate our understandings of ourselves (Loughran, 2004). I intend to use some of the self-studies as assigned reading, a text of a sort for me to teach from: a text for future preservice teachers to learn from the voices of other preservice teachers who honestly and articulately shared their stories. With future preservice teachers, I'll help them explore the issues and experiences that shaped these student teachers' perceptions about teaching and learning.

I'd like to end this paper with a quote from one of the preservice teachers: "It is an amazing feeling to realize one can learn a lot about life by not only "reliving" fifth grade but by listening to the students we teach." That quote reminds me of how important it is for me to listen to the stories of my students and to try to put myself "in their shoes" and "relive" the student teaching experience from their perspective. I am sure I will meet other preservice teachers who face challenges similar to the students in this paper. And, predictably, there will be others who experience their own unique challenges. I intend in the future to encourage self-study among student teachers to an even greater extent, so I can go on learning new

lessons from their stories and journeys and continue to help them find their teacher selves.

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PROFESSIONAL RENEWAL

Anastasia P. Samaras

In this section, teacher educators present examples of self-study research that led to professional development, their own and that of their colleagues, research assistants, and students. These sophisticated and theory-based accounts contribute to the knowledge base of teaching practice, linking the theoretical world to the preparation and practices of teachers and teacher educators.

With rigor and candor, the authors sought out answers to questions about their own work. Their bold research efforts moved self-study from reflection to action, asking questions such as: What can we learn about our teaching and its meaning for our students? What can I learn about myself as a teacher today by looking back at my earliest teaching, placed in the sociohistorical context of that time period? What does a faculty teaching team learn about their professional growth through a collective self-study? These chapters demonstrate that self-study has immediate utility in teacher and student learning and is an essential vehicle for transforming teaching practice.

In the first chapter of this section, Chapter 6, Clift, Brady, Mora, and Choi use a multivocal approach to explore the ways they work as a research team and how that impacts their interpretations of a large, ongoing research project. Clift, the tenured professor in the group, courage- ously examines her teaching practice with English preservice teachers through the lens of a research assistant, with other research assistants joining the analysis after the students graduated. The study includes a fascinating metaconversation of each research team member's percep- tions of being a part of this research team. They discuss the power rela- tionships inherent in their roles, the tensions and interactions, and how

these get played out and better understood in their evolving research community.

Ham and Davey, in Chapter 7, offer a detailed analysis of the effectiveness of their virtual teaching in two action research projects. The first project, the Email Project, involved Davey working with teacher preparation students who provided formative assessment and feedback on writing assignments to male high school students via email. The second project, the Discussion Board Project, involved Ham as the teacher studying his interventions and the online interactions among his students in a course for practicing teachers on managing information and communication technologies. Both are exemplary self-studies that examine formats for e-learning and include multiple and rich data sources. Together, the authors provoke readers to consider the consequences of using technologies in teaching and the social relations that evolve or do not evolve in on-line learning environments.

In Chapter 8, Mitchell invites readers into her private world through a self-study of the diaries and journals she kept during her first years of teaching, 25 years ago. She takes the reader through her questioning of how to make sense of a voluminous data set, and ultimately shares what she discovers about her teaching through that exploration. We hear her sincere reflections on a sample of her teaching life, a seven year period where she struggled to teach English to junior high school students in Nova Scotia. The accounts are laced with beautiful interplays of how the personal impacts the professional life of a teacher and vice versa. Well-known for her work in self-study using visual analysis, the author brilliantly demonstrates that she is equally well-versed in textual analysis.

In Chapter 9, Placier, Cockrell, Burgoyne, Welch, Neville, and Eferakorho remind us that developing pedagogies for raising preservice teachers' consciousness with respect to privilege, social justice, and multiculturalism is difficult and necessary work. Inspired by Augusto Boal's work on *Theatre of the Oppressed*, this research team of faculty and graduate students conducted an action research self-study of a cross-disciplinary course. Placier, a teacher educator, and Burgoyne, a theater teacher, joined their students in an innovative interdisciplinary curricular experiment. They discuss the students' slowly emerging conceptual changes, involving much discomfort and uncertainty, and offer insights into the practical and social implications of this work.

In the final chapter of the section, Chapter 10, Samaras, DeMulder, Kayler, Newton, Rigsby, Weller, and Wilcox employ a Vygotskian sociocultural lens to frame their research in two self-studies that focus on building collaborative cultures in a professional development program. In

the first study, alumni discuss program components they believe to be essential in transferring their learning at a program level to their continued professional development and subsequent acquisition of National Board certification. In the second study, a faculty teaching team reveal their secrets to building a successful collaborative teaching team embedded in their differing perspectives and peer scaffolding. Collectively, the studies provide an intriguing account of how professional development in one program is enhanced through shared learning, for students and faculty alike.

Chapter 6

FROM SELF-STUDY TO COLLABORATIVE SELF-STUDY TO COLLABORATIVE SELF-STUDY OF COLLABORATION
The Evolution of a Research Team

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Abstract: This is not one teacher educator's study of her teaching, nor is this a report of a working collaboration among a professor and research assistants in which her self analysis and interpretations are triangulated with their analysis and interpretations. Although elements of both are present in the chapter, the specific focus is on the evolution of the research team that was an unanticipated result of a professor's original self-study and the larger, ongoing research project of which it was a part. For us, self-study has begun to incorporate our reflections on our selves as part of a research team.

1.   A SOCIOCULTURAL FRAMEWORK FOR STUDYING TEACHER EDUCATION

The larger study in which we are engaged is called "Crossing Contexts," a set of longitudinal case studies of 13 graduates from our secondary English

teacher education program (Clift et al. 2003; Stegemoller et al. 2004). Our work draws from two theoretical bases: the interplay among *habitus and field* as discussed by Pierre Bourdieu (Bourdieu, 1990, 1993; Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992) and concepts derived from activity theory, including situated cognition (Lave and Wenger, 1991) and the appropriation of conceptual and pedagogical tools (Leont'ev, 1981; Vygotsky, 1978). What we are ultimately concerned with is the development of practice across contexts and among individuals. Teaching practice, we believe, refers to a social action or series of actions that is constructed as an individual seeks to bring about change within a classroom or school. Our research practice is also a series of social actions as our team of individuals seeks to generate, refine, and understand questions related to teaching practice. All social actions are influenced by our individual histories and cultures, the social and cultural environments in which we live and work, and the context(s) with which we are interacting.

The individual, as Bourdieu (1990) argues, continuously creates a *habitus*, or a system of structures and principles that establishes practice within and across individuals. The habitus seeks to preserve itself over time as it generates practices that are known and understood by both the individual and the society of which he or she is a part. Furthermore, these practices are acted out in social settings in which human interactions are defined by social rules, including rules that prescribe actions in terms of status and power differentials. Bourdieu argues that practice does not happen randomly, comparing it to a game. In *The Logic of Practice,* he (1990) refers to practical sense as a "feel for the game," which includes learning the social conventions and rules of the field, as well as interactive strategies. Practice involves the ability to understand, select, and enact the most appropriate social conventions (rules) for a particular context. We would argue that learning to teach and learning to work in a research team both involve the interplay among individuals who simultaneously learn the rules and then continue to learn what negotiations among individuals are possible within the field.

We have drawn on Vygotsky's (1978) and Leont'ev's (1981) conceptualization of psychological and technical tools as we think about the acquisition and instantiation of strategies and on Lave and Wenger's (1991) conception of learning to practice as a function of legitimate peripheral participation. Vygotsky argued that signs act as representations for ideas, mental processes, or physical objects and are analogous to using psychological and technical tools to mediate higher cognitive functions. Language, memory, and reasoning are examples of psychological tools that facilitate development within the self. Technical tools, such as pens, the Internet, and books, allow individuals to extend their individual mental

processes to a broader social context. Leont'ev explained that human cognitive development is an active, social process as opposed to adaptation to an environment, typically an involuntary biological process. He argued that appropriation of tools occurs when people participate in social interactions as they make sense of the settings in which they live and work to accomplish goals. Current theorists such as Lave and Wenger (1991) and Wertsch (1991) have elaborated on this idea by using the term "situatedness" to point out that development happens in conjunction with historical, cultural, and institutional factors. Grossman, Smagorinsky, and Valencia (1999) added that different settings provide opportunities and inhibitors as teachers strive to adopt social and professional practices. We would argue that learning to teach (or conduct research) comprises both conscious and unconscious selection and adaptation of tools. For example, Lortie's (1975) often cited concept of the "apprenticeship of observation" might be viewed as a teacher's unconscious assimilation of how a teacher is supposed to begin class, comment on behavior, respond to student writing, etc. When a people decide to become teachers, they may revisit some prior experiences and make conscious decisions about how they (or the technical tools they afford) might be incorporated in his or her own future practice or they may unconsciously adopt their teachers' behaviors. When they work in actual classrooms, the remembered practice may or may not get implemented in the same ways as did the original practice in no small part because the contexts are different – as are the individuals. Lave and Wenger's analysis adds to this by arguing that novices (student teachers, graduate student researchers) often learn to practice by affiliating with a community of experienced practitioners and work toward being accepted as full members of the community by engaging in legitimate (meaning acknowledged and sanctioned by the community) peripheral participation (meaning performing tasks related to but not at the heart of the main task).

Recent studies in English teacher education (e.g., Grossman et al. 2000; Newell et al, 2001) have drawn from activity theory and have concluded that, although the teachers do not specifically mention acquiring knowledge of teaching practices from their teacher education coursework, it is possible to map the teachers' practices back to the methods courses, although the influence of the teacher education program may not emerge until the second year of teaching (Grossman, et al., 2000). Newell and colleagues (2001) found that student teachers were more likely to appropriate the pedagogical tools from the teacher education program when the teaching philosophy of their teaching contexts matched that of the teacher education program. Smagorinsky's (1996) analysis of three experienced teachers' discussions about theories of learning indicated that individuals approach tools with their

own priorities and goals in mind and if they do not match, they are unlikely to appropriate the tool.

In science education, Tobin and colleagues (e.g., Roth and Tobin, 2001; Tobin et al. 2001) examined the power relations inherent as student teachers co-teach with an experienced teacher a university based teacher educator. They suggested that such a relationship somewhat diminishes traditional power relations and impacts the *habitus* of both student teachers and teacher educators. They also wrote about their work so that the different participating individuals' voices were represented throughout much of the data analysis and interpretation. This multi-vocal approach, we feel, has much to offer in terms of mitigating against traditional status and power assumptions and forces a minor change in the rules of the publication "game." Following Tobin and colleagues we have adopted a multi-vocal perspective in our interpretations of the meaning of our work in order to provide a window into some of the dynamics of our work. We first describe the original self-study that Renée began, followed by our discussions of Renée's interpretations of her data, and, then, the awareness and questions we all experienced because of our discussions. We conclude with what we have learned about our team approach based on the insights and continuing dialogue generated by our ongoing discussions and our analyses and interpretations of data from the larger study.

2.   THE ORIGINAL SELF-STUDY DESIGN

In Fall 2000 Renée and a graduate assistant (not part of this research team) began teaching a two-semester methods course sequence for prospective English teachers: C&I 301, Teaching in a Diverse Society and C&I 302, Teaching Diverse Middle Grade Students. In anticipation of two studies, one a self-study of her own teaching and the other a possible longitudinal study of participants' development as teachers, she asked Patricia to take class notes and, with human subjects approval, asked the students for permission to use the notes and their work as data. All of the students, but one, agreed to participate in the self-study and the larger study.

2.1   Renée's Original Data Collection Plan

Data for the self-study included class notes from C&I 301 and 302, course syllabi, Power Point presentations, and handouts. No analysis was conducted until one year after the students graduated because Renée wanted some distance between the year and her reflection on the year. One year following graduation, 13 of the former students remained participants in the

study; four of them were not teaching at that time. We held a summer reunion for the participants to share our data summaries from the larger study and to provide extensive time for written reflections and comments. We also invited an external researcher to conduct a focus group interview with the participants in which she inquired about any lasting impact of the teacher education program.

2.2   Data Analysis for Renée's Self-study (in her Words)

I read through all of the notes for each semester of the class, summarizing the classroom talk in terms of topic. Throughout this process I made notes on what, for me, were "jarring" statements and what the classroom talk might imply about my teaching. I then read through the transcriptions of the focus group interviews and condensed and summarized the participants' responses to the interview questions and grouped the responses into two categories—the teacher education program, in general, and the specific classes for which I had responsibility. I shared all of my summaries (condensed below) with the research team for their comments and modifications.

2.3   Fall 2000, C&I 301

Based on lines of dialogue, I inferred that the graduate assistant and I were able to encourage a great deal of student interaction around issues of race, class, and social justice. I was satisfied that we provided more than an introduction to issues of race, class, teaching, and education – we enabled the students to grapple with their responsibilities for teaching in a diverse society. I was pleased to note that there was almost no lecture or recitation and that that the students interacted with course content through a variety of pedagogical techniques.

I was less pleased to notice that I established a pattern of beginning class with discussion about upcoming assignments, much of it in response to students' questions.   I did not model beginning class with content instruction. I also felt that my relationship with my graduate assistant/co-teacher was not well formulated and was, perhaps, condescending.   She seldom began class; I often told her what to do with very little lead-time.

2.4   Spring 2001, C&I 302

My assistant and I began the semester with conscious attention to sharing both the decision-making and teaching responsibilities more equally and to

providing more structure for the assignments in writing. The reading process and the teaching of reading from a cognitive and interpretive stance was covered early and linked to the students' own reading of two, possibly controversial, novels. Much of our instruction was related to how to plan lessons and to structure classroom management. Several classes were devoted almost entirely to lesson planning, as students practiced the integration of lesson plans with unit plans. I felt that the co-instructional relationship was cohesive and egalitarian. I was a bit disturbed to learn that I did seem to assume that a lot of written work and, therefore learning, would occur outside of class. We may not have made the connections among field, in-class, and out-of-class work as clear as we might have.

2.5   Summer 2003, Focus Group Summary

The graduates appreciated the cohort structure, and the program's focus on diversity and multiculturalism:

Not growing up in a very diverse area, it was a great part of preparing me, made me feel a lot more comfortable about helping the students.

There was more of a focus on understanding diverse cultures and understanding the broader things, but there was never any of this guilt thrown at you.

Being able to go through with the same group of people the whole time, and getting to work together and getting to know each other.

The [university] classroom was a really comfortable place.

They also identified gaps in the program:

And writing? My first semester, yeah, I didn't teach them squat. And I know that. I look back, and I'm like, God, they didn't learn a thing.

Oh God, I don't know anything about grammar, still don't know anything about grammar, don't know how to teach it, afraid to touch it, very bad.

We didn't talk about ESL students…I didn't know how to get them to where they needed to be. Because while we talked about diversity in the curriculum, I don't think we ever got into… how to teach people who don't speak English.

When I examined my courses, specifically, I was unhappy to find that they did not remember that we had covered certain material or that we had focused on classroom practice:

I think I'd like to start with more practical stuff.

I think in 301 and 302, they…asked us to write a unit or do a lesson plan but we'd never actually talked about how to do it, so it was just kind of thrown on us.

I feel bad about some of those things that we said about C & I because I think some of that comes from not remembering the beginning…I have a much clearer picture of last year…

If one were to judge the impact of my courses by anonymous, and required, student evaluations over those two semesters, the ratings were very positive. The interviews with the external reviewer, however, tell me that they barely remember much of what happened in my courses. Because I deliberately did *not* summarize the interviews until after analyzing my own classes, I was surprised and saddened to learn that all of the time I (and we) spent being practical, modeling lesson planning, talking through classroom management, etc. was forgotten.

2.6   Our Group Discussion of Renée's Analysis and the Shift in Focus

At this point we abandon both the larger study and Renée's self-study because of our shift in our, collective, focus during and after the discussion summarized below. It is at that point we became more conscious of *us* as a focus for our reflections on ourselves.

2.7   January 2004 Group Discussion

Renée talks through the summaries of her data and emphasizes her disappointment to learn that impact, if any, was not reflected in the students' comments. After that, she stops and the research assistants ask questions. We have collectively agreed on the summary statements we present next.

PATRICIA: Are there different ways you might have covered or taught the same material?

RENÉE: I haven't really thought about that.

RENÉE: Have I said anything or written anything that rings false?

Silence

SOO JOUNG: In the second semester you tried to provide more structure for the assignments. How did you find this information? What are the data for this?

RAÚL: How do you reach that conclusion that in a way your relationship [with the teaching assistant] was condescending? Is there any chunk of the data that led you to that conclusion?

RENÉE: Yeah, There's a comment about being asked – or maybe told – to do something at the last minute. Although she could have taught the class all by herself in the first semester I don't think I accorded her that honor or that respect.

PATRICIA: I remember her being an integral part of the planning, but then you would enact it.

SOO JOUNG: I think it is almost impossible in any human relationship to ignore the power relations among people. How are you going to explain that?

More silence

PATRICIA: As you went through this whole process were you thinking about, "Next time I teach 301/302 what I plan to do?

RENÉE: No I wasn't. I was thinking about how in the world do you document the impact of teacher education? How do I document the impact of my instruction?

JASON: In 303, they talk about the different activities that went with the book. That's what they remember and talk about from that isn't it? Those are the tangible things they did.

RENÉE: We did the lesson plans early in the program

JASON: They want someone to say this is how you do it.

RENÉE: I did. We gave them three different formats for doing lesson plans. And they did a whole week of lessons in their unit plan.

JASON: How do you know what they would be doing if they didn't have this teacher education program. At least two have talked about how teachers they've met from other teacher education programs have a different outlook.

RAÚL: Jenni (code name) makes it explicit that she can be so critical of her law school program because she has a teacher education background.

RENÉE: Anything on my style of teaching?

RAÚL: I've found it surprising having gone through two different classes [you taught]. One you had us be more active; the research class had more background. Research for me was hell because of writing. It taught me to have more focus. In the other class it was more group work. I benefited from both.

RENÉE to PATRICIA directly: Was I a lot different in Year Two than this year?

PATRICIA: I was just thinking about my own personal self study for the past five minutes. Having watched you [teach 301 and 302] once; doing it with you a second time; and then the third time by myself in which I took what you'd done, but I made some changes. I was so intimately involved with the course I am finding it hard to comment on you. When I think about you I think about you and me together and then I think about me solo.

RENÉE: I don't think I could have done this analysis if I'd had current students in my head. I don't think I could have done it.

PATRICIA: I'm your advisee and your employee and I've taken two of your courses plus an independent study plus we've coauthored [a chapter] that's like so many relationships…

RENÉE: Is this kind of research possible?

PATRICIA: It's not only that I am thinking about issue of power, etc. between us, but also there are so many different data points between me and this course.were necessarily involved with.

RENÉE: Is it possible to have to have a conversation about my teaching given that I am a professor and that we know each other in multiple ways?

RAÚL: In other circumstances I probably wouldn't be able to go through this…When I was reading the draft you sent the first thing that struck me, you used the word, "colleagues." And you never referred to us as, "my graduate assistants."   Under those conditions, and with the structure we've laid out for the research team, it is possible to have a self study in which all four of us are asking questions and challenging some elements of your previous teaching.

PATRICIA: You're using the first person plural when you probably should use the first person singular.

RAÚL: Yeah

RENÉE: Patricia, what would you say? I'm not going to put Soo Joung on the spot, she looks too uncomfortable.

PATRICIA: Well also it has to do with our own, how we've always related to authority, etc. And I think that I have become increasingly comfortable telling you how I really feel, but I don't know if…there is definitely a very strong edit button.

RENÉE to JASON: And you're not my advisee and you're not looking uncomfortable, but the fact that I can pick is a power relation and I want I acknowledged that I understand that. Is it possible for you as a graduate student to be a useful checker, validater, challenger?

JASON: I mean so far I haven't felt like I've had to hold back or felt uncomfortable. But checking your perceptions of the class or asking if we had similar perceptions or if we saw some different, I don't have a problem with that.

RENÉE: What would you have a problem with?

JASON: Probably if it was like, "Was there something I did that you didn't think was a good idea or that you didn't like?" There haven't been any contentious issues that have come up.

SOO JOUNG: I didn't say I'm uncomfortable, you just got that.

RENÉE: Let me tell you why I said it –

SOO JOUNG: I am jet lagged and for me it is time to sleep

RENÉE: Then I apologize but I did have to say that was what I was inferring.

SOO JOUNG: You say that and now I think – what did I do?

After the audiotaped conversation, we each wrote reflections, then shared them at our next meeting. Because of space limitations, only a few comments are included in this paper. They were chosen to illustrate the issues raised by the preceding interchange.

RENÉE: What contextual and individual factors facilitate friendly, but professional, respectful and critical exchanges? It seems to me that power/social relations are *never* equal, but the issue – I think – is the use or abuse of power. I am learning that it is really quite helpful to have this group pushing me to consider previously unthought thoughts in context and to justify decisions. I've learned that part of my own *habitus* (Bourdieu, 1990) involves being in charge while, at the same time, trying to share control in a context where I am clearly the teacher. This came out in my control of (or felt need to direct) the group discussion.

PATRICIA: After I left on Tuesday, I thought that I had done too much talking during the taped conversation—talking that may have interrupted my colleagues or could have taken up space that prevented them from talking. How does this affect group dynamics? And, given that I feel like I talked too much, will I self-silence during our next group conversation? I must say that, although I feel free critiquing Renée's writing, I do *not* at all feel comfortable critiquing Renée's teaching of the courses that I took myself.

SOO JOUNG: I felt uncomfortable when Renée put me on the spot. [In] using English as a second language, I do not like to provide my opinions on the spot because I might regret my unreflected comments later on. On a different note, as Renée acknowledged, I think Renée does have the power over us as the two quotations show. Would it be possible to have this type of conversation about Renée's teaching given that Renée is the professor and we know each other in multiple ways?

JASON: So we talked about how a lot of self study researchers ask their graduate students to discuss and analyze their teaching. To me that makes sense because who else are you going to ask to do this? I think that any time people analyze their teaching it can be a difficult thing to do. It may be that some people feel uncomfortable about a professor's teaching and that they hold back for that reason. To me, that's ok. I think you get the data you get and you work with what you've got.

RAÚL: When does the transition from "grad students" to "colleagues" happen in a professor's mind, if that ever happens? Is it easier for some to look at their students as colleagues-to-be? When does that transition happen in a student's mind? Does the academia really prepare both professors and students to realize that one day they might be at the same level? I also

thought about whether I'd be willing to work on a similar [chapter] with different grad students and another professor. I could think of some people with whom I would and some (mostly professors) with whom I would be afraid to do so.

3.   A COLLECTIVE REFLECTION ON OUR WORK TOGETHER

The group discussion and the reflections have made us more consciously aware of our *habitus* and how it influences the ways we work as a research team. We now shift back to a more collective voice as we discuss what we are learning about an instructional setting also known as our research group and the tensions that are ongoing in our work. Our reflection on these tensions revolves around at least three issues that impact our performance on individual and collective levels: (a) varying levels of ownership of the study; (b) differing roles within the team, across time; and (c) competing individual versus group agendas.

Ownership refers to the extent to which each group member feels personally invested in the study. Four factors that have impacted our ownership are: the length of time each team member has worked on the project; the nature and extent of exposure (or experience) with the data; individual backgrounds and the extent to which there is a perceived fit with the project in terms of research interests; and initial reasons for joining the project. Renée began this project as part self-study of her teacher education practices, and partly as a longitudinal study of novice teachers' growth and development. She is strongly committed to the welfare of the participants and to ensuring that the research does no harm, but equally committed to generating new understanding about the relationship between teacher education coursework and career development after graduation. Patricia, who joined the project when she began her doctoral study with Renée, has been involved since its inception and created many of the early data analysis procedures. Jason began working on the project three years after it began, at the same time as Raúl. Raúl arrived from Colombia to pursue a master's degree and was invited to join the project after his first meeting with Renée, who is also his advisor. Soo Joung began working on the project half way through the third year but got involved in working on data collection and analysis starting in the forth year. As each person joined the project it took time to develop a feeling of investment in the project.

The length of time one has worked on the project is related to how much data the graduate students, who have done most (but not all) of the data collection and analysis, have worked with. They feel that they have a closer

relationship with the data than Renée, although she has become more actively involved in analysis in recent months. But time may be less of a factor than the individual team members' perceptions of the fit between their individual backgrounds and the overall focus of the research. Renée and Patricia both worked as high school English teachers and have experience in secondary English teacher education. Jason, Raúl, and Soo Joung all have backgrounds in teaching English as a Second Language. Renée, Patricia, and Raúl have academic interests that lie primarily in teacher education whereas Jason and Soo Joung are primarily interested in applied linguistics. At this point Raúl and Patricia have used project data for a master's thesis and an early research requirement (respectively) and may continue to use the data in their dissertations.

Roles in the project are defined principally by the *field* that comprises graduate education. Renée's title is "professor" and "principal investigator" and Raúl, Soo Joung, Jason, and Patricia are "doctoral students" and "research assistants". Professor-graduate student and principal investigator-research assistant relationships are inherently characterized by power and status differentials and many interactions are bound by university regulations overtly and social norms less overtly. The role of professor is thought of as being imbued with higher status than the role of graduate student and, in addition, comes with more power and responsibility. The role of research assistant is generally considered to be a lower status role that carries with it less power and responsibility. Roles and levels of responsibility are directly related to the issue of ownership/investment discussed in the previous section. The role that team members take on can influence the level of ownership that they feel for the project. For example, when Raúl took on the role of "principal investigator" for his master's thesis, the level of investment and responsibility he felt for the project increased, as did the direction he gave to the research focus. In a strong sense, the research assistants are engaged in legitimate peripheral participation as they develop their own research skills and acquire the psychological and technical tools that will enable them to join the community of educational researchers.

In so doing, members of the research team have, at times, taken on roles that are new to them. Because the project has been exploratory from the very beginning and generates vast amounts of qualitative data, everyone has had to contribute to [re]conceptualizing the study, collecting and analyzing data, and writing research reports. We have collaborated on all papers and presentations produced through this study, which has often required us to negotiate leadership and decision making authority, but we acknowledge that these are negotiations *within* the field, not the construction of a new field.

We have come to realize that the process of working outside of roles requires the ability to label and, where possible, to discuss what we are

doing. It also requires the time and the will to become comfortable with performing different roles and negotiating different relationships, which has not always been easy for any member of the team. For example, being involved in a research activity situated in the United States academic context has meant an ongoing learning and relearning of and constant adjustment to communicative patterns and codes of academic discourse communities for Soo Joung and Raúl, in addition to coping with challenges of the cultural and linguistic differences in day-to-day interactions. Working within this field presupposes an understanding of implicit rules and codes for communication and action appropriate for an U.S. academic context, and requires knowledge and experience of culturally loaded discourse patterns. Soo Joung's and Raúl's home cultures work from quite different assumptions about roles students can/should take and operate with different rules and codes of discourse from the ones of the U.S. Negotiating one's position in the research team and understanding the complex and malleable nature of role changing assumes that all parties involved have an equal understanding of where they stand and when to change flexibly, but this does not come naturally for people from different cultural backgrounds.

The issue of how our personal and professional goals overlap and impact the research project as a whole remains an ongoing tension. We are all negotiating our professional agendas with those of the study, and we all wonder about how much of a say we have in decisions, an issue that intertwines with that of ownership. For example, Renée is involved in another large project, in addition to serving as a university department administrator. She is wondering how she will continue to balance competing demands. Patricia is a young mother who wonders how she will continue to manage her role in the project and her responsibilities to her family. Jason's dissertation is unlikely to draw from data in the larger study and he wonders if he can remain with the larger study and, at the same time, collect data for his own work. While we acknowledge that these questions are inherent in much of academia, they are central to teams who are conducting longitudinal studies such as ours. As we continue with this project, however, an overarching interest has emerged: our interest in the participants. Throughout the process of data collection and analysis, we all have become interested in the professional and personal evolution of each participant. We all have found some elements of the participants' beliefs and practices that we seem to resonate with as practitioners ourselves. In the process of working with these participants and their beliefs, we are not only concerned about safeguarding their identities as part of human subjects' protection; we are also interested in their stories and development. Whether this will enable all of us to participate in the conclusion of the study remains an open question.

4.   A SUMMARY FOR NOW

While much has been written about reflective practice in teaching and its relationship to the self-study of teacher education (e. g., Loughran, Hamilton, LaBoskey, & Russell T, 2004), our work is suggesting to us that there is much more to be interrogated when a study comprises more than one "self." As we become more reflective about our practice and about continuously improving ourselves as researchers and teacher educators, many issues have surfaced. These include learning to work as a team, to surface and negotiate (some, but never all) status and power relationships, to question what is consensus, and to wonder about one's responsibilities to self especially when there is some tension as self interest diverges from group interest. In the previous sections we have tried to allow you, the reader, a window into our process as well as our reflections. We intend that you be able to see, for yourself, the complexity surrounding our attempts at improving our own practice and our attempts at both communal and individual reflections on our practices.

We have come to think deeply about what it means when graduate students and professors work together to analyze the professor's self study as *habitus* and *field* constrain us – even as we become more and more aware of those constraints. We have become more aware that as we appropriate some of the technical and conceptual tools of research, we are also acquiring United States-centric rules about the *field* of qualitative longitudinal studies and the *field* of principal investigator/research assistant dynamics.   We, therefore, offer some fledgling thoughts on what we have learned:

1. Validating self-study through a graduate student's collaboration with a professor requires an acknowledgement of power status imbalances and the identification of safeguards or, at least, guards against agreeing with the professor in order to maintain a sense of safety or security.
2. Interrogating all participants' assumptions about the culturally loaded meanings inherent in actions, words, and texts is an important step in order to assure common ground in the data analysis and interpretation process and an imperative step when working with a multi-cultural, multi-lingual, multi-national research team.
3. Silencing can occur all too easily (and often unconsciously) when a professor and when team members do not maintain a conscious awareness of their powers to make space for diverging thought.
4. Recognizing that no one leaves emotions in the hall as team meetings commence and that both professors and research assistants experience elation, sorrow, boredom, and satisfaction as a result of team interaction.
5. Working with a team involves more time than doing research alone, as we continuously must surface and reveal our own biases, tensions, and

contradictions while also negotiating roles and interactions with other team members; however, we have found that the resulting analysis is far more fruitful and complex because of the interactions of the team.

Finally, we would like to note that because we are writing for a self-study audience we are fortunate to be in a *field* where the rules allow us to write in this way and to think in very different ways about our work – ways that we would not if we only wrote for more traditional academic audiences, for the business community, or for education practitioners. But we all interact with members of those communities and we all are aware that our practice shifts as we change communities – much as our teacher participants' practices have shifted as they move across different work contexts. Our selves comprise a conscious awareness that as researchers we must learn multiple sets of rules and that it is helpful (and sometimes disconcerting) as rules from one field cause us to closely examine rules in a different field.

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Chapter 7

IS VIRTUAL TEACHING, REAL TEACHING?
Learnings from Two Self-Studies

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Abstract: Read as two case studies in "putting teacher education online," the investigations reported in this chapter represent a small contribution to the small but growing body of "case law" focussed on how the increasing expectation to provide teacher education online plays out for those engaged in doing it, and on what might constitute effective practice in virtual (teacher) education. We provide an account of two action research studies looking at the incorporation of an email component and an online discussion board component into two teacher education courses, and the practical androgogical lessons learned from those experiences.

Read as a formative, collaborative self-study, however, the investigations may also stand as a reminder that professional renewal is, or should be, as often the consequence of self-critique as it is of self-affirmation. It can be, as in the cases reported here, the consequence of active reflection on experiments and strategies which, though perceived as innovative and progressive in their inception, in the end were felt not only to have only partly worked, but in not working stimulated a valuable re-view of professional beliefs which went much deeper than the initial stimulus to try something out demanded. For us, what began as an exercise in expanding our repertoire of techniques and modes of teacher education course delivery, became an enquiry into what we really valued most in the experience of teacher education.

1.   CONTEXT OF THE STUDIES

The rapid development of the internet as a means of both information dissemination and social intercourse has led to an apparently inexorable imperative in higher education to put teacher education, like many other

things, online. Often such pressure or expectation is made manifest in the name of improved access for distant students who would otherwise not be able to undertake tertiary study (Owston, 1997). Some advocate online learning in the name of learner convenience, or more efficient use of lecturer or student time (Allen & Thompson, 1999; Dorman, 1998; Gifford, 1998; Tao & Reinking, 1996). Others promote universities' and colleges' economic interest in obtaining some sort of digital edge in the higher education marketplace, by which online courses become a way of simultaneously increasing student rolls (i.e., income) on the one hand, and reducing the cost of course delivery on the other (Farrell, 2001; Luke, 1998).

But, increasingly, online education is also being advocated in the name not just of more accessible, or more efficient, or more cost-effective, or more marketable education, but of qualitatively *improved* teaching and learning. By such arguments online education is not merely useful for getting to the students whom face-to-face doesn't reach, but it is potentially a qualitatively better, value-added alternative to traditional face-to-face modes. What has traditionally been seen as a second best alternative for the distant goose, is implicitly promoted as a mode of preference for the local gander as well (Collins, 1998; McFerrin, 1999).

It is our reflection on this latter issue, the pedagogic *quality* and *value* of online teaching, that forms a core discussion in this chapter. While we look at the practical lessons learned from the experiences of two teacher educators coming to grips with the use of online modes within our respective programs, we also conclude that the experience of incorporating online elements into our respective teacher education courses has seen us confront issues which go well beyond such technical or instrumental questions of what works as a matter of good teaching techniques. In our efforts to find out *how* to teach well in a virtual environment, we have also engaged in more value-laden self-enquiries about *why* we should. What, for us, is, or could be, the relationship between *virtual* teacher education and *virtuous* teacher education?

2. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDIES

One of us, Ronnie, teaches an English methods course to pre-service secondary teachers in a one-year post-graduate Diploma of Teaching program. The other, Vince, teaches in-service courses related to the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in education to practicing primary and secondary teachers as part of a postgraduate Diploma in ICT. The first project reported here, the Email Project, involved 24 pre-

service student teachers in an English Education methods class at the College of Education providing formative assessment of transactional writing assignments via email to two classes of year 11 (Grade 10) boys at a local high school. The project aimed to give the student teachers practical experience applying assessment rubrics related to the writing process, and to give the high school students a chance for some additional one-on-one tutoring before their final examinations. From the self-study point of view, the project was also to provide us as teacher educators with an experience in designing an authentic assessment activity for student teachers based exclusively on the use of email rather than difficult-to-timetable face-to-face contact with the school students.

The second project, the Discussion Board Project, was part of the delivery of an in-service Diploma course on the management of ICTs in schools. The course was taught in a mixed format in which regular face-to-face classes were supplemented by the use of the bulletin board and threaded discussion features of the Blackboard website to stimulate learner-learner interactions and discussion in between formal classes. The bi-weekly face-to-face classes involved some local teachers who came physically to the College and some distant teachers who took part via audio-conference. Both the local and the distant groups were expected to take part in the online discussion aspects of the course. Again, the aim was to provide us as teacher educators with experience in the setting up and running of an online component in a degree-level course.

If we were obliged to categorize the research methodology of the two studies we would see them both as examples of "practical action research" (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Mills, 2000). By such a typology, practical action research is practitioner self-study conducted largely to solve situated problems in one's own professional practice through reflective, empirical enquiry. Typically, this involves a practitioner trying out one or a series of interventions in a naturalistic setting, gathering empirical data on participants' roles, views and actions, including the researcher-practitioner's own, and actively engaging in individual or collaborative action-observation-reflection cycles around those interventions. In our case, empirical data for the Email Project came from the teacher educator's reflective journals, post-project interviews with both the student teachers and the participating school students, and two written participant questionnaires. Data for the Discussion Board Project consisted of an ongoing tutor journal, regular iterative content analysis of the discussions on Blackboard, periodic interviews with participating teachers during the course, and a written questionnaire completed by the teachers at the end of the course. We also held ongoing collaborative discussions and meetings about each other's projects, and jointly analyzed each other's data sets.

3.   FINDINGS

At a pragmatic level, both self-studies involved asking ourselves what it was that we as teacher educators needed to *do* in order to maximize and optimize the effective use of ICTs (direct email in one case and a web-based discussion board in the other) as a vehicle for ongoing student-student interaction during a course of instruction. At a more theoretical level, we also became increasingly interested in the *conceptions*, and *preconceptions*, that both we and our respective students had about the traditional (i.e., synchronous and face-to-face) versus the virtual (i.e., asynchronous and distributed) as effective forms of pedagogy/androgogy.

It would be fair to say that for most of those involved, including ourselves, neither project lived up to its perceived potential in terms of sustained inter-student or teacher-student contact, connection, engagement, and discussion. However, the two projects were remarkably consistent with each other in two core respects: in both, the nature and extent of interaction among the group seemed directly related to the amount of teacher intervention made to stimulate the process, and for both sets of participants the experience was seen as a second best rather than preferable to face-to-face alternatives.

3.1   The Email Project

With regard to the email project, it is clear from the questionnaire and interview data that participants, especially the pre-service student-teachers, were enthusiastic about the possibilities of the project. Participation for both groups was voluntary. Student-teachers spoke of the exercise as especially valuable because it put them in contact with real school students and provided an authentic context in which to look at student writing and practice their assessment skills. They spoke of building relationships ("a valuable relationship to foster"), of looking forward to authentic contact with school stuidents ("the chance to read real student writing and to offer feedback") and of improving their own assesment skills ("the opportunity to practise marking and improve my skills," "seeing a variety of assignments," and "getting ideas on how to assess poetic writing").

For their part, the school students valued above all the chance to get feedback on writing from others besides their teacher: "I liked getting other people's feedback and opinions on my work," "getting different comments on the same piece of work was good," "I liked the feedback aspect." Moreover, despite the generally low participation levels from students, all but two said at the end of the project that they would like to participate if it were offered again.

Ultimately, though, there was also a sense of unfulfilled promise about the email project from everyone's perspective. Both the student-teachers and the school students expressed disappointment if they did not hear immediately from their allotted contacts ("I would have enjoyed it more if he'd got back to me!"). Many of the school students also experienced unforeseen difficulties with the practical use of the technology. In some respects this was an access issue as many could not use the computers outside school hours. But others also complained of a lack of technical skill or facility. Comments along these lines included: "being unable to attach files," "[frustrated by] the computer crashing," "not knowing how to change format," "being too slow typing,"and "being too lazy to type it all out, so I stopped."

More important from the teaching perspective, was my own disappointment as tutor that both the student teachers and school students alike seemed to need much more external motivation and intervention from ourselves to activate them than anticipated. There seemed to be a strong sense of out-of-sight-out-of-mind at both ends of the communication loop if the teacher was not there to encourage, galvanize, or remind them. I (Ronnie) was surprised, for example, at how many of my student teachers in the project seemed to give up after only one initial attempt to contact their pupil partner had failed. Nor had I anticipated the technical difficulties that many of them encountered, having made the assumptions that both groups' ease of access to computers also meant familiarity with emailing conventions, and that the participants were as fluent at composing on a word processor as they all initially claimed to be.

I was surprised, too, when both the school students and the student teachers in the email study suggested that they would have found it much easier if computer labs had been booked for them and the email writing and feedback sessions formally timetabled so they could have done the project more synchronously. The school students had ready access to computers during school hours, but not always outside school hours. For their part, many of the pre-service students, all of whom are graduates from whom one might expect a high degree of independence and internal self-motivation, also expressed some preference for the support of formally timetabled sessions. In other words, both groups found the asynchronous nature of the project problematic rather than facilitative, largely because of access difficulties in the case of the school students, or motivational difficulties in the case of the student-teachers. In both cases it reinforced for me the need to actively, and ongoingly, encourage and monitor progress in order to kick-start and sustain online interaction.

Moreover, many student teachers and school students found the mediation of the normal teacher-pupil relationship through the technology daunting. One student teacher was adamant that this way of working was "totally uncomfortable and undesirable," while others highlighted, "It's not enough for me…I need physical contact with the student." Nearly all the student teachers in the interviews said they would have much preferred to have met their school students and got to know them in person first before entering into a virtual tutor-student relationship. The school students felt the same, though perhaps this is less surprising in the light of the assessment nature of the task. Although it was low-stakes formative feedback during the drafting process, with an emphasis on encouragement and clear, transparent criteria, the process of submitting one's writing for feedback is stressful for many students at the best of times. Perhaps for this reason nearly all of the school students said they would have preferred to have met with their student teacher in person prior to, and even during, the project. They too, wanted "more interactions between tutors and students" and "felt uncomfortable not knowing the tutor." In the interviews they talked of wanting "more time in class to share the stories and get suggestions from others," and "meeting the tutors in person or writing an introductory letter from the students to us and back," and so on.

3.2   The Discussion Board Project

In some respects the social dynamics among the participants in the Discussion Board Project were different from those in the email project. For one thing, the students were all practicing teachers with an interest in ICTs. They were technically more competent than the student teachers in the email study and were generally more motivated to incorporate the online component of the course. As was the case in the Email Project, there were several class members who had not physically met the others before the course and who did not physically meet with them during the course. As was also the case in the Email Project, the amount of student-student discussion generated was more disappointing than satisfying. The level of participant interaction was greater than in the Email Project but it varied considerably from individual to individual, with a small core of two or three individuals accounting for most of the interaction and correspondence on the Blackboard site in between timetabled classes.

Some of the clearest evidence of the constant need for teacher educator intervention came from the numerous sociograms we constructed from the six months of Discussion Board interactions. As part of the ongoing data collection, a research assistant and I constructed diagrams of the amount and nature of the interactions among the class members after each formal lesson,

in order to track who responded to whom and on what topics. The analysis of these sociograms indicates that the amount and nature of the online interaction among class members during the course was not especially related to whether or not the students were local or distant or whether or not they joined in the face-to-face sessions. The distant teachers in the class who took part entirely by virtual modes did not contribute more to the discussion board than the local teachers who met physically every fortnight as a class as well as online, nor were their relative contributions qualitatively different. Rather, the extent and nature of the inter-student interaction seemed more

Interactions - before a tutor intervention

Sociogram of Discussion on 'Curriculum Statement' Topic
(Taught Session No. 8/20)

= Threads initiated
= Replies

Types of interaction (Frequency)	Types of interaction (Frequency)
Content	**Replies:**
Method of analysis, data comparisons (7)	Supportive (3)
Trouble finding documents (3)	Approval, agreement (1)
Data, personal thoughts (10)	Comparison, criticism (1)
Very in-depth information (4)	Assistance (1)
Refs to particular areas in Doc. (12)	Unrelated data, (new thread/idea) (1)
Limited findings in Doc. (3)	Suggestions/ideas/thoughts (2)
	Questioning (1)
	Number of non-participants (6)

Interactions - after a tutor intervention

Sociogram of Discussion on 'Action Research' Topic.
(Taught Session No. 9/20)

△ = Prof. Dev.
○ = Planning
= Replies
= Research Replies

Types of interaction (Frequency)	Types of interaction (Frequency)
Content	**Replies**
Personal Development (11)	Assistance, ideas (18)
Policy & Planning (7)	Questions (18)
Questionnaire/Evaluation (8)	Support, encouragement (14)
Time an issue (2)	Disappointment (1)
Sensitivity with ICT (4)	Requesting notes, ideas (7)
PD on trial, workshops (3)	Comparisons/similarities (4)
"Cluster" related (2)	Where people are at present (5)
Students involvement	Number of non-participants (2)

Figure 7-1. [Two Sample Sociograms of Discussion Board Contributions after a Taught Session (Each letter represents a class member)]

directly related to one or a combination of two other factors: 1) the inherent level of motivation of *individual* students around the use of the internet as a communications medium, that is, their personal predisposition to work comfortably online, and 2) the extent of direct intervention by the teacher educator. The latter is perhaps best exemplified by the pair of sociograms in Figure 1, which show the marked increase in all of the frequency, complexity, and quality of inter-student discussion that occurred at one point in the program where I, Vince, as tutor required a contribution to the discussion board as a formal class activity and followed it up with cajoling emails.

4.   IMPLICATIONS FOR OUR TEACHING

Such findings, of course, were neither unexpected nor unparalleled in the experience of other email or internet-based projects (e.g., Bradshaw, Chapman, & Gee, 2002; Bunt, DeWinter, & Ly, 1998; Jones & Jamieson, 1997; Lynch & Leder, 1996). However, it emphasized again for us the difference between teaching online and merely putting resources online; between the use of the Internet as a delivery mechanism and its use as a communications or community-building medium.

Dorman (1998) sums up the apparent advantages of technologies such as email or discussion boards as: the use of text-based features; opportunities for multiple connections; the convenience of using asynchrony or synchrony; the easy storage and manipulation of the text; the speed and ease of transmission; the opportunity to interact in a way in which both teacher and student feel comfortable; and an opportunity for increased contact. (See also Allen & Thompson, 1999; Gifford, 1998; Tao & Reinking, 1996). In the asynchronous and distributed virtual world, it is claimed, you can interact more thoughtfully, with more people, more often. Additionally, other college level studies report the benefits of online communication in extending classroom discussions and improving interaction between student and teacher (Collins, 1998; Land & Greene, 2000), as well as increasing time management ability, self-directive behavior, self-confidence, and self-discipline (McFerrin, 1999).

Both of our projects were essentially designed with this latter independent learning model of distance education in mind. Student teacher tutors in the Email Project were supposed to interact with their school pupil in their own time. The school pupils would share their writing and their student teacher tutors would respond to it with constructively critical feedback. Similarly, the goal in the Discussion Board Project was for the teachers on the course to interact among themselves and discuss issues on the discussion board in between formal classes. However, such improvements in incidental learning in online distance education as those reported by McFerrin (1999) did not occur naturally in either of our studies. Insofar as they did occur, it was largely as the result of proactive and ongoing intervention on our part. Perhaps the biggest lesson we learned, from a self-study perspective, was that, in the absence of other factors strongly motivating participants to prefer online methods of communication, their need to use such facilities tended to increase rather than decrease their dependence on the teacher educator as the organizer and sustainer of the process. As Cunningham (1996) points out:

Teaching in the distance mode is more difficult in some ways, the major challenge being to develop means to compensate for the absence of regular face-to-face contact between teacher and learner. While a desirable (information) gap is created, so is a void where facial expressions and other non-verbal communications are not readily shared. The learning process requires assistance, the student needs additional motivation and involvement as a degree of autonomous learning is inevitable for success.

This was our experience also. The hoped-for benefit of using online media in these classes was to enable teaching-learning to happen outside the static, predetermined confines of a regular classroom space and time. Yet, in the email study especially, some of the apparent benefits of online communication (asynchronicity, so that students can respond at their convenience, easy transmission, the opportunity for increased interaction with a wider range of teachers, and a relative anonymity that could potentially prevent any potential intimidation of talking face-to-face), proved to be obstacles rather than advantages.

However, from the self-study perspective, perhaps the most important findings of the studies had less to do with the pragmatics of how to increase participation levels in online activities as with the discussions that the experiments generated among ourselves and the participants about what such participation *felt* like as an educative experience. If low motivation levels and lower than expected participation was a feature of both projects, what was this saying about the ways in which both we as teacher educators and the participants as course members *conceptualized*, and *felt* about, the act of teaching and learning in virtual contexts?

The participant interviews, as well as our own reflections in journals and discussions, indicated strongly that the origin of an apparent lack of motivation to converse in a virtual world in both groups derived in no small part from our common conception of teaching as an essentially interpersonal, highly socialized, real, and 'real time' activity. Used to sociable, interactive, synchronous, face-to-face contact as the natural form of teaching, many students in the email project, as well as their student teacher tutors, found the expected teacher-pupil relationship (i.e., submitting work for formative feedback on the one hand, and responding to it on the other) daunting in a virtual setting. Discomfort with not having met their pupil or "student teacher buddy" or not having had the opportunity to get to know them in person before entering the tutor-student relationship was expressed by both parties. What is more, our hope that the apparent objectivity and anonymity of the person providing the email feedback would be seen positively by the students was not fully realized. While all the school students were voluntary participants who were keen to take part and

understood what would be involved, after the event they all said they would have preferred to know their formative assessment buddy rather than merely correspond with them.

The participants in the Discussion Board study also tended not to engage in the virtual component without significant external stimulus, and even though they were teachers interested in ICT and competent users of internet technologies, they too tended to regard the online component as useful but still essentially limited as an effective teaching component of the course. As one teacher put it, as if it were explanation enough: "It's just not face-to-face interaction."

In both projects therefore, traditional, face-to-face, highly sociable conceptions of what a teaching-learning situation should look and feel like still tended to be the yardstick by which the value of the virtual teaching-learning experience was judged. For most participants, online pedagogies were valued only in proportion to how well they seemed to reproduce or simulate an equivalent face-to-face experience, rather than as a qualitatively different form in and of itself.

Moreover, this was also the light in which we tended to regard the experience ourselves. Increasingly, our own reflection sessions became dominated by a discussion of how we could explain the participants' and our own sense that the experience had not lived up to expectation. And increasingly, this came down to socio-emotional rather than pragmatic or operational issues for us, just as it did for many of them. Rightly or wrongly, we too still tended to think of "real" or "good" or "virtuous" teaching as necessarily interpersonal and not just interactive. We argued that therefore virtual teaching, being technologically mediated by necessity, could only ever be a second tier alternative or supplement to face-to-face real time group interactions, never an adequate substitute for them. Part of our problem, we realized, was that the experience might have some outward appearance of teaching as we conceptualized it, but it still had not *felt* like teaching as we had to date experienced it. We found ourselves asking: Where was the *adrenaline rush*? Where was the emotional investment and the visceral sense of reward, anxiety, achievement, failure, affection, and symbiosis that so often comes with the classroom experience? Where was the sense of fulfillment that we had so often associated with the classroom dynamic? To paraphrase a celebrated Star Trek aphorism: It was teaching, Jim, but not as we had known or felt it.

5.   CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

We are both experienced teacher educators who at the time had been teaching the two courses concerned at a college of education for a number of years. As critical readers of the literature we were aware of the various political and economic agendas around e-learning, and we were cognizant of the discourse of expectation within our own institution around online teaching. But we were by no means reluctant experimenters in the enterprise. We both have a research interest in the integration of new technologies into teaching and learning in schools, and thus we engaged in the possibility of experimenting with these modes in our own teacher education courses with relish. In researching and reflecting on the experience, we did indeed resolve some of our pragmatic-level concerns about incorporating online elements in our courses, but in doing so we also initiated some fundamental self-questioning about what we value most in the job of teaching generally.

At a pragmatic, practical level the insights we gained as teacher educators included:

1. Teachers and students who have met physically seemed more likely to contribute to online discussions than those who have not. Interactive is not the same as interpersonal, and it was the interpersonal that both we and all of our participating teachers and students seemed to value most in the teaching process. Establishing and maintaining this in an online environment requires rather different use of teacher time and energy than in traditional face-to-face teaching.

2. A clear and explicit scaffolding of the whole process is necessary to ensure structure, support, and involvement. Asynchronous should not be a synonym for unscheduled or unplanned.

3. Building the teaching of any necessary email or discussion board skills into the process is needed and it is important not to assume that participants already have them (e.g., attachments, emailing, checking addresses, logging on, conventions of threaded discussions, netiquette, etc.).

4. Teaching online takes longer than teaching face-to-face (and therefore costs more). Our estimate was about 50% more time. We found the preparation loads to be similar, but there was a much greater amount of time required to moderate and sustain discussion.

5. Group dynamics are qualitatively different online. There seems to be a greater sense of public and permanent exposure of one's thoughts, ideas, or feelings in emails/discussion boards (and the consequent need for more careful crafting of ideas before submitting them) than in the face-to-face, verbal (i.e., ephemeral, more spontaneous), and non-verbal equivalents.

6. Online learning presumes a high level of independence and motivation on the part of the learner, and much of the teacher's energies may need to go into building and maintaining such independence and motivation within the community--even among students who have no other means of participation.

At a more self-reflexive level, however, we find ourselves left at the end of the experience agreeing with Robertson's (2002) characterization of the history of United Kingdom primary school teachers' attempts at ICT integration as a somewhat "ambiguous embrace."

In conducting the self-studies reported in this chapter, we tried hard to focus on the teacher or teacher educator perspective. For us it was a chance to investigate e-teaching above all else, and by looking at "online-ness" from the specifically teacher education perspective, we have been interested to reflect on the specifically androgogical challenges that such modes of delivery present. In this regard the projects stimulated us to reflect on what it is about teaching that we most value and believe in, and what teaching or the teaching of teachers actually means to us in a phenomenological sense. As a result we have confirmed that for us teaching is not merely a set of instructional practices that exists independently, as it were, of either a delivery mode or the need for ongoing interpersonal, even emotional, contact with others. For us indeed, teaching is *primarily* an interpersonal, socio-emotional process with developmental rather than instructional goals.

But if teacher education is to be interpersonal, social, and developmental in orientation, are these not the very things that are hardest to replicate in online environments? How *do* we track and generate such relationships, such emotional engagement, or such development online? What is it that changes as a set of social relationships when Blackboard is the name of the software used for the delivery of a course rather than the name of one of the presentation media used in a face-to-face group encounter? More importantly, how does one as the teacher adapt to those changes without diluting the quality of the teaching experience provided? Is it even possible to generate an engaged community of learning online which matches the engaged community built up through repeated face-to-face contact in tutor groups? The work of Bradshaw, Chapman, and Gee (2002) and others (e.g., Donaghy & McGee, 2003; Land & Greene, 2000) suggests that it is, though we note that the former studied dialogic communities of practice rather than the delivery of higher education courses, and the latter make the point that it was not the technology per se that made the key difference in promoting higher order dialogue but the open-ended project nature of the activities that such technologies were used for. Either way, the challenge for us, and perhaps for higher education generally, is how to reconcile and integrate a

dialogic community approach to teacher education whose primary purpose is to sustain and foster communities of practice, with a course delivery approach whose primary purpose is ostensibly the structuring of individual learning experiences, the provision of resources, and/or the dissemination of knowledge, as was the case with our Blackboard Project.

Moreover, for us, and we suspect for the other participants in our studies too, the yardstick by which we seemed to measure our success or otherwise in the enterprise of teaching online was what we already knew and were comfortable with--that is, the highly sociable interaction and synchronous dynamic of the face-to-face class, with all its social agility, real time complexity, personal sense of reward, and spontaneous atmosphere of immediate human engagement. In this respect perhaps our most interesting response to the virtual experience was as much visceral as it was cognitive: the formalistic process of teaching was present but the gut-level engagement was not. The adrenaline rush of real teaching was somehow missing, and we are still not sure how we could have generated it.

We did not come to a resolution of such issues as a result of the research. But we did raise them to greater prominence in our own professional consciousness, and we did confirm our belief that there is a need for serious discussion of what might constitute an effective pedagogy of e-learning, beyond the current predominantly instrumentalist discussion of how to do online teaching. These questions are important in the light of an apparently growing imperative in tertiary education to engage in online as well as or even instead of face-to-face teaching. But such a discussion must revolve more around issues of value and quality than around issues of technical knowledge or implementation. The discussion needs to focus as much on the experience of e-teachers as it does on the experience of e-learners. It needs to be more about why than about how. And it needs to draw more on rigorous phenomenological case studies of what the experience of online teaching and learning means to participants as an educative process than on correlational studies linking instructional modes with statistically measured student performances. We need studies of what is sacrificed as well as what is gained as a matter of effective socio-emotional dynamic when one adapts teaching and learning activities from a face-to-face to an online context. Indeed, we may also need new criteria for seeing the virtue in virtuality. Or do those criteria that we have developed for the face-to-face classroom still stand? Is the online delivery of teacher education desirable just because it is possible? In short, is 'virtual' teaching, 'real' teaching? And by what criteria would we judge?

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Chapter 8

IN MY OWN HANDWRITING:
Textual Evidence and Self-Study

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Abstract: This chapter provides a narrative account of the use of diaries and journals as memory work texts in self-study. While the idea of using journal writing is not new within the area of reflective practice and self-study (and indeed, is often regarded as 'the' method) what is apparent in this chapter is the way in which these documents, like photographs, serve as textual evidence in studying the interplay of past, present, and future in our work as teachers and teacher educators. In reviewing diaries and journals that were written in my first years of teaching, I consider some of the ways that this work can contribute to work with beginning teachers.

Memory work is one of the many methodologies used by self-study teacher education researchers to probe the ways in which the past can influence our own teaching. Explored elsewhere (see for example Mitchell and Weber, 1999) is the use of a number of approaches to memory prompts ranging from photographs to memoir-writing to specific memory-work prompts such as 'writing in the third person' (Haug and others, 1987; Crawford et al, 1992). In this chapter I embark upon what might be described as an archival dig into my own past by looking at the diaries and journals that I wrote spontaneously during my early years of teaching. In so doing I focus on various constructions of a truth, and the ways in which reading back becomes a form of reading in(to), and its own form of, self-study.

Patricia Hampl (1996) demonstrates the power of going back over a particular memory account several times to uncover particular truths. The fact is that I have only to open up a trunk in my study and I can gain a firsthand account of what I actually thought and said, not what I <u>think</u> I

thought and said. Of course, just because I didn't write something down, or just because I reflected on something that day in a certain way, doesn't mean that this is how it was, or how it came to be. The silences, the gaps, the spaces may be as significant as what is written down, and may be even more significant. If we can contest the idea that 'the camera does not lie' perhaps we can also contest the idea that just because something is written (and in our own handwriting) does not mean that it is true – or that it is the only truth. How many times, for example, have we thought 'this is the end of the world' only to discover that something that looked grim on a Monday has turned out to be quite a good thing by Friday? How regularly has something that looked very promising ended up a disaster? How often has a seemingly inconsequential chance encounter with someone ended up being the biggest moment of your life – in retrospect?

What does it mean to study one's own diaries of a particular period? I have had a practice over the years of asking teachers in my courses to read over a reflective log or class journal at the end of a course to see what new sensibilities might emerge as a result of this 'looking back' process even after only 13 weeks. Often the insights are quite surprising. People will say that they never realized how 'fixed' they were in the their thinking about literacy and learning to read when they came into the course, but that they could see that over the weeks their ideas about reading have changed. Surprisingly, perhaps, given that I have long been interested in autobiography and memory work, I have never really thought to mine these diaries and journals. Oh, I have 'read back' particularly in the context of exploring the tensions around not wanting to be a teacher (see for example Allnutt and Mitchell, 1994), but somehow the idea of actually turning to this trunk full of notebooks and loose-leaf sheets tied together with rope and string as a feature of my teaching had never really occurred to me. What would happen if I treated all of the evidence as some indication of my teaching life?

There are a great number of challenges and pitfalls in embarking upon this kind of project. How do I resist cringing at the sound of my own voice, for it is indeed a little like listening to a tape of one's self? How do I resist explaining it all as 'a long time ago' when I know perfectly well, because I 'snuck' into these journals 10 years ago and even 20 years ago, that I probably had similar desires to 'revision' even then? How do I avoid lapsing into the past? I remember a doctoral student I was working with a few years ago on 'the dark side' of teaching telling me that after a while she had to give herself permission to read other things, simply because the whole process was so depressing. It is not that my past is that depressing, but in the time period I had in mind to highlight I started teaching (arguably depressing in itself given that I never wanted to be a teacher), had two babies (not at all

depressing but anyone who has ever gone through the uncertainties and ambivalences associated with pregnancy and childbirth can attest to the minefield of that time period), separated from my husband (no explanation needed). Any one of these events could fill a book of experiences, regrets, and so on. Do I want to go there? Should I be allowed to go there?

1.   BUT, WHAT IS *THERE* ANYWAY?

There is a large old wooden trunk in my study that contains a cardboard box full of my journals – the data, the raw material. These date back to 30 June 1968 and go into the 1990s although the dailiness is not consistent. And, for some reason, there is no writing between 1977 and the early 1980s. I am not sure if this just means that the writings are missing or whether they never existed. Did I really stop writing during my entire MA and PhD work? From 1968 to 1973 I wrote on loose-leaf sheets of paper, usually with narrow rule. I think this is because I started writing when I was in university and loose leaf is what we used. These sheets, tied up in yearly batches, contain not only my journal entries written for myself, but from 1968 to1969 they also contain journal entries that served as letters to my then fiancé. In some cases, his letters back to me are also included (some also on loose-leaf and others as regular letters still in their envelopes). In 1973 I started using 81/2x11 coil notebooks, interspersed with regular Hilroy type notebooks, and these later gave way to a series of small turquoise coiled notebooks, and then to larger hardcover black notebooks. About the time that I moved to those however, my notebooks started being more work-related "academic" pieces, although they do still contain pieces of personal writing.

Almost all of the writing, as the title of this chapter suggests is in my own handwriting – something that would give most people who have read my handwriting over the last fifteen years cause for concern. Knowing how difficult it is to read my handwriting, they might wonder, can I even read it? As it turns out, the answer is "yes".

Mostly, I wrote every day. Even on days when I did not manage to write, I would often try to include some sort of posthoc account – essentially "catching up" on what was missed, albeit usually in an abbreviated way. The daily accounts might vary from a few lines to several pages but would be on average about a page. Over the years, I have kept this bundle pretty close to me except for the sabbatical year that I spent in Australia in 1987 and another year in South Africa in 1994. Oh, I have been separated for months at a time from the collection, but it has only been those two one-year blocks

when I have not had easy access to these documents. Somehow, no matter what, I am usually attuned to where this box is.

The period that I concentrate on here accounts for a seven year period of teaching as a junior high English teacher in a small fishing village in Nova Scotia. I focus on this period chiefly because it is the time when I most called myself 'teacher'. I started teaching in September 1970, and left teaching in June 1977 to begin a Master's Degree. I never returned, although, at the time that I wrote my last 'teaching entry' I had no sense that I would never go back to school teaching.

2.   METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

2.1   Assembling the raw data

This is perhaps the hardest thing. I know exactly where the box is, but I know the disarray it is in. Some of these papers have been traveling for close to 35 years: from Brandon to Edmonton to Port Maitland, to Woodstock, to Halifax, back to Edmonton, to Charlottetown, to Montreal and then to South Africa. They have been more or less 'bound up' but then in my exuberance to check out a particular detail or event over the years, they have come "undone". And, they never were *that* contained. I might have written in desperation from the staff room - in anticipation of having to work with the grade 8s in the next period-- on a different kind of page altogether. And although I always dated everything (day and month and often time) I did not always add in the year. I should be setting this up in some archival space at the British Museum or the National Archives in Ottawa, and not in my study where it spreads out and leaks over onto my income tax forms, and three unread doctoral dissertations. And, if I get it all out and sorted, then I have to put it all back. If I do not, all this material that I have hung on to for so long will just be lost. Then I worry too, that since I have it all out, this would be as good a time as any to photocopy it all, or scan it on to my computer but that first requires putting it in order so that an assistant could do it. Do I want to drop everything and do that right now? At the same time, I am intrigued, not just with the nature of the assignment I have set for myself, but as well to have what seems like a contained project. I do not have to wade through all 20 years or more of paper. I only have to look at seven years worth.

2.2 Translating Personal Documents into Artefacts for Study

Stephen Riggins (1994) offers a method of social semiotics in his discussion of the translation of personal snapshots into artefacts. In so doing, he outlines a process of denotative and connotative reading that is highly systematic. In an effort to impose some sort of order of the collection of journal entries, I sift and sort most of September 1970 through at least to 1976. If the collection is not completely in the right order, then it is made manageable, at least, when I purchase folders that allow me to separate out and label each year. The choice of folders is part of the process I realize as I deliberate in a stationery shop. There are two types: decorative portfolio cardboard folders and no-nonsense clear plastic folders. I choose the latter, and opt to put in an order for a complete matching set. Having waited this long to do something with the collection, it seems worthwhile to take the time to do it all properly. These folders feel, if not scientific, then at least 'respectful' and scholarly.

2.3 Reading Back: Analytic Procedures

There are no easy ways to try to make sense of seven years' worth of journal entries, especially one's own. I am, at least, used to reading published accounts from 'other people's journals' so that I am prepared for the tedious quality that even Virginia Woolf and Sylvia Plath's journals display at times. But, where theirs have a daily-ness that redeems them, my instances of tedium present me only with a cringe factor, a depressing quality from that period of my life, at least in terms of how I read it now. Although I find myself becoming more matter-of-fact about the reading, writing about it is not so easy. What kind of self-study can I engage in by looking back at these entries? In some ways, it seems like such a privileged experience, to have, as a person interested in self-study, access to this kind of raw data. The sheer volume however is daunting. Having now worked with Joseph Tobin's notion of transcript analysis where 'less is more' (2001), I find myself wanting to work with just one or two entries, but at the same time being intrigued by the vastness. I think of the work of Syd Butler (1981) in analyzing one's own journal: How many words or pages? How many different topics? What topics recur? Which topics are the most interesting to re-read? Are there certain topics that give way to a sustained analysis?

3.   A TEXTUAL READING

As I read through as much as I can bear to read, I come across, to myself, now, alternatively as excited, and as feeling sick and nauseated at the thought of having to go to school, and appalled at the horrors of the eighth grade students (or whichever group I particularly minded at the time) and the principal. In the first year, in particular, I devote a great deal of space to worrying about my inability to "get through" to the students. The language that I use to refer to this "getting through to them" reminds me of Sidney Poitier (*To Sir with Love*), Michele Pfieffer (*Dangerous Minds*) and Glenn Ford (*Blackboard Jungle*), all rolled into one. At the same time, given what I take now to be such a depressing litany of events and emotions, I can only think that perhaps I was already living what Kelly (2005) has described as the "stuff of Maritime grit" as found in the novels of Lynn Coady, David Adams Richards, Alistair Macleod, and Anne-Marie MacDonald.

I look for bookends: "in the beginning" and "in the end". The beginning is not quite as easy as I would have imagined. I want to start with noting what I have written on the first day of teaching. However   there has been almost a full week of meetings leading up to the "first day", and by the time the first day of teaching has arrived, I am already well into the politics of education:

Wednesday September 9, 1970

And so the first teaching day of my life has ended, and amazingly enough, I am still alive to tell it. The day was neither better nor worse than I expected. The children are a bit of a saving factor although the old brute (principal) more than made up for any compensatory factors. Hate and animosity and vengeance are beginning to set in… My grade sevens are wee adorable dears, so young and meek like 16 white mice. How I hope to get rid of that. The grade eights are vivacious hellions with a good deal of spirit. How I wish I could split the class in two …

By Saturday of the first week, I am writing: "Tomorrow we must get up so early and go over to the school to do lessons. God! How I loathe the thought of Monday."

A week later, I am writing:

It seems that teaching has all the disadvantages of university in that there is always something to do, with none of the advantages of freedom wherein you are your own boss. Have been working all morning on the grade 8 English course – playing Simon and Garfunkle to analyze the content. I will try it in my split class tomorrow, and do hope that it works

out half decently. All the gorgeous Sunday morning was devoted to re-arranging the lousy staff room to make room for the Terrible Twelve.

By the October 1, 1970 things have gone from bad to worse:

At present I am very depressed about the school and my role there. In truth, it is all very disturbing – my material is so interesting – particularly English, but it is coming across poorly, dully, mediocre-ly. Tomorrow I should talk to the hellions but I wonder if I will even get their attention long enough to say anything... Stood outside today from 10 until 12 watching soccer games. The grade 8's. What a joyful class! I really wonder about those people. God! I am failing them. It will be interesting to see what comes out of my discussions with them tomorrow.

October 2, 1970

Had my lecture with the grade 8s. I simply sat there for the longest time and said nothing until I had all of their attention. I wonder if I got through to them – a couple, I hope.

However, it interests me that I am in search of theory that speaks to what I am trying to do. On October 16, 1970 I refer to the writings of Paul Goodman (1960):

He writes about how incidental learning is the only real learning and that teachers are only wasting the time of the children. I can't help agreeing with him and in regard to most teachers, myself included. Today was a frustrating one with the grade 8s. They bitch and grumble about everything they have to do and so it gets to the point where I might as well go in and dictate notes for 40 minutes and walk out.

I am interested, too, in the weaving in of personal details. In the middle of all this writing, my husband and I start looking for a farm to buy. We find one but discover that we are bidding against the son-in-law of one of the local politicians, solve that problem, only to discover that we can't get a loan from the bank. Eventually our parents agree to co-sign for a loan. Only then we are told by the woman who is selling the farm that she has decided not to sell. However, by November she agrees to sell. It is a proverbial roller coaster of writing between early October and 11 November. One of our cats gets run over and dies; she is replaced by two new cats, and then by early December (See figure 1) I note that I have been watching television and discover that a new bill has been put forward in parliament regarding the Status of Women who made such demands as free access to abortions, no job discrimination, mandatory maternity leave, tougher to get married and

easier to get divorced legislation, the need for women senators, daycare centers, and a $500 grant to mothers at home for each child. For some reason I conclude this section with 'I hope the grade 8s were paying attention".
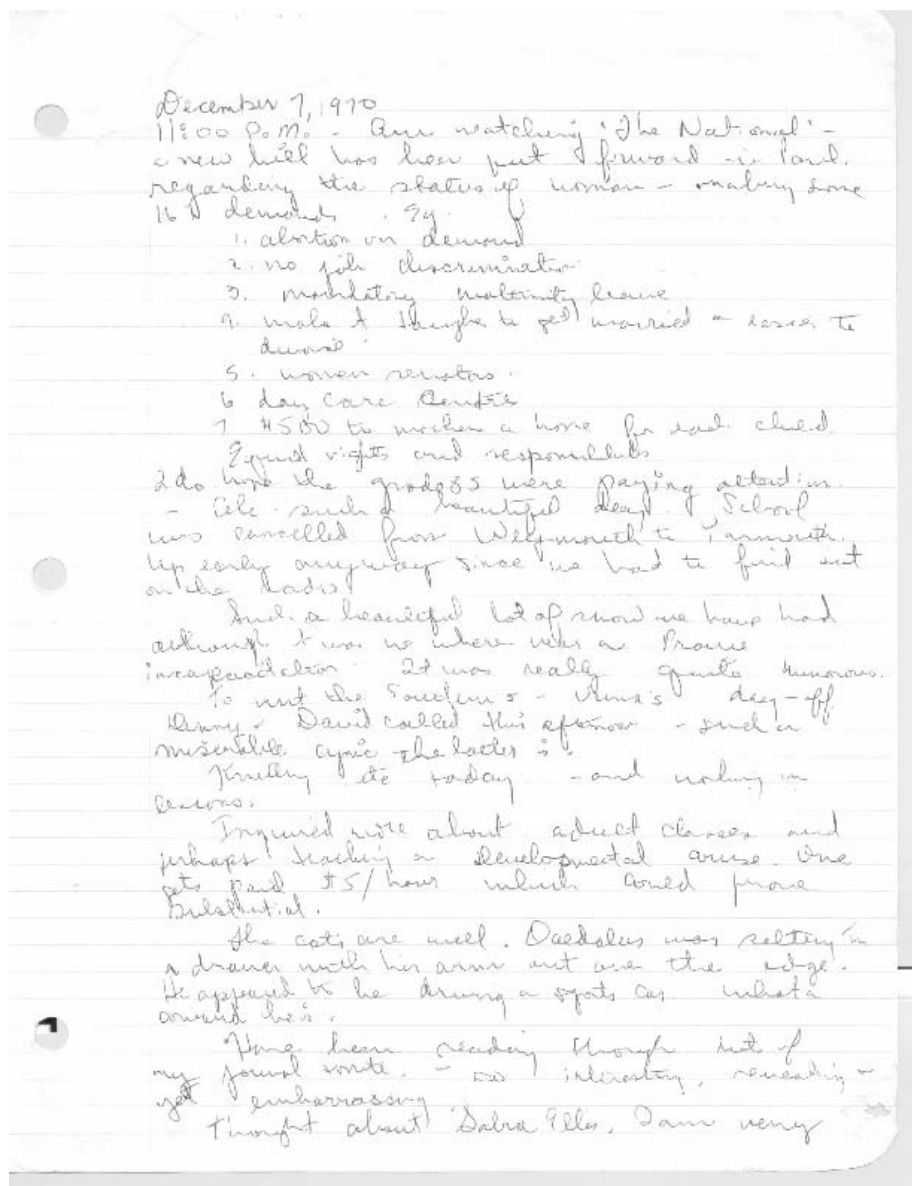

Figure 1. [December 7, 1970]

Skipping ahead to the first day of school of the second year, I see that I wrote:

September 7, 1971

And so, endeth the first day of school. How I wish it was the last – only 194 more of these ridiculous days. There is no way I intend to teach school another year – particularly here. I am completely exhausted by the day's doings – I have no great affinity for the students this year although there are some cool ones. By 3:00 pm I was dead.

By the second week though things are settling in:

Ah – the second week of school. I must confess it is not nearly as bad but I believe the reason I am more tolerant is merely that I am succumbing to the fucking system. No longer do I lie awake dreaming up imaginative things to do. No longer do I even care… I must say that the grade 7s are positively spirited.

By the fall of 1973, the entries are very short. What amazes me is how much more I appear to enjoy teaching, but also how few references there are to teaching overall. However, there are more and more competing demands. It is a time of major 'back to the land' work - cutting down trees, having logs hauled out of the woods and sent to the mill to be made into lumber, raising chickens and so on. I have a small daughter. In between there is weather and "a good day", "a so-so day", On Labour Day 1974 I record, "I am vaguely but pleasantly anticipatory about going back to school tomorrow" By that time, though, I am pregnant with a second child, and this pregnancy, and the building of the house take precedence over writing about teaching.

I wish I could find entries from my last few days of teaching in 1977 but alas, either they have gone missing or they were never written. Did I feel any sort of nostalgia or regret about leaving teaching? Perhaps their absence speaks to the relative insignificance of teaching in the context of everything else that was going on in my life at the time, since I do return to writing about two weeks after the last day of school and indeed, have recorded in painstaking detail 35-40 typewritten pages from 3 weeks of July, 1977. At that point, however, it is clear that my husband and I are going to split up; I am twenty-eight years old and have two little girls aged 5 and 2, and I am about to embark upon studying for a master's degree in a city 400 kilometers away. It is a very frightening time for me but on 7 July I have a flash of confidence, long enough to write: "World, look out. I am going to knock you right off your block …"

4.   WHAT DO I MAKE OF THIS PROCESS?

What is the value of this "reading back" method beyond my own idiosyncratic musings, and what does this method add to the work on self-study? Let me start with exploring what its value is to me, since I am the one who has initiated this exploration. One of the things that jumps out at me is that these are the journals of a very young person – they chronicle my life as a teacher from the age of 21 to the age of 28. What fascinates me now is the fact that all of this writing and reflecting on teaching is produced by someone who is the age of the students that I teach in preservice teacher education programs. I am them, or they are me. This is significant to me for several reasons.

First of all, I am reminded of Eva Hoffman's (1989) beautiful memoir, *Lost in translation,* where she talks about how the type of language one learns – vocabulary, and so on – is filtered through one's age and experience. Hoffman notes that because she left Eastern Europe when she was just on the edge of adolescence, she had no real experience of being a teenager there. Even her vocabulary, she writes, is of a younger age so that she only understands growing-up in English. Similarly, I recall reading an account of someone spending time in Greece as an 18-year-old only to return later realizing that her lens for understanding Greek is as an 18-year-old and not as a mature adult. I find it interesting now to realize that most of my direct teaching experiences are filtered through the lens of someone this age. Perhaps there is something about the sheer enjoyment and pleasure that I have with beginning teachers of this age that goes directly back to those early years. I have not forgotten what it was like to be a beginning teacher because I actually do not have any other direct experiences of teaching.

I am interested as well in the counter-culture that weaves itself into the work. I recall a colleague writing a piece a few years ago about the kind of "radical" shake-up-the-system quality many of us encourage in our students – perhaps, she suggests, because we can't do it ourselves. If I were to extrapolate from my own case, and probably from the experiences of many of my colleagues at university who taught in schools for a few years at most and then went into academia, there is perhaps something about the utopian stance that we continue to hold because of the time-space (our twenties) in which we taught.

Methodologically, it is fascinating to work with writing as textual evidence. Elsewhere I have drawn on other sources of evidence from this same period to engage in self-study. Photographs, for examples have provided the raw materials for an exploration of dress and identity. Alongside this textual evidence is the materiality of journals and diaries. Retrieving, assembling, handling these works as artefacts and objects of

material culture is in itself part of the exploration. Martha Langford (2001) and others write about the storing and handling of family photographs: Who takes the pictures? Where are they housed? How are they housed? Who has access to them? Similarly, working with this box of personal writings evokes questions of their storage and retrieval, and new questions about how personal objects become artefacts.

Working with textual evidence is a strong reminder of the significance of "living historically". In the course of my writings, there are few references to national or world events, something that has been also noted in the journals and diaries of women more generally (Gannett 1992). The inclusion then of the reference to the proceedings of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women speaks to me of the monumental significance of this work. Could I have anticipated that thirty or more years later so much of my work within development contexts would be about gender equity, CEDAW (the Convention on the Eradication of Discrimination Against Women), EFA (Education for All), and within work on gender-based violence and HIV and Aids in South Africa? Or do I hit on these entries as evidence because they allow me to re-position myself within a hero text, something Naomi Norquay (1991) talks about when she looks back at how she positioned herself as an anti-racist hero in the sixth grade?

In returning to the point raised in the introduction about the truth value of these documents that were 'written in my own handwriting', I am struck by their power to evoke a memory that now surprises me: *"World, look out. I am going to knock you right off your block ..."* Sometimes, now when I revisit the period of time in which I wrote that line, I think of myself as in a "me against the world" frame and I am more than a little in awe. It all seems so 'unknown' even as it has, at least for the moment, all worked out. I have no recollection, though, of actually ever having felt that way. This 'take on the world' section, in the writing, actually goes on at length, and I am pleasantly surprised to have participated in its actualization. Perhaps, as noted elsewhere (see Mitchell and Reid-Walsh, 2002) it should be regarded as 'feminist nostalgia' – a future-oriented remembering – a looking back that suggests that there are 'things of value' to be brought along to the present and future. Susannah Radstone (1994), Janet Flax (1987), Mary Jacobus (1987) and others view nostalgia and utopia as significant to the act of working for change. The account that bell hooks (1994) offers of remembering a now lost photograph of herself as a little girl in a cowgirl suit, for example, helps her to recall a time when she felt visibly strong, but also suggests ways of being in the present As Flax writes: "without remembered selves how can we act?" (1987, pp. 106-107)

5. IS THERE ANY FUTURE IN WORKING WITH THE PAST THIS WAY?

How does this process influence my work with beginning teachers and novice researchers? I am interested in the spaces – and the tensions -- between reflective writing (the actual journal entries) that include references to teaching, and systematic self-study of one's own teaching practices (working with the collection of writings over time). The journals that I cite in this chapter could be read just as much as a social history of the 'back to the land' movement since not only did I find and buy a farm, build a house in the middle of the woods, and raise vegetables and animals, but in the middle of it all, I lived for at least six months in a communal setting. As much as that era might read as a utopia of sorts, something to be written up in the *Mother Earth News* or the *Whole Earth Catalogue*, it is also as riddled with conflict as are the teaching scenarios.

These journal entries could also be read as indicative of the fact that teaching is only one part of the everyday, and that too often within the discourses of teacher education we treat teaching as though the teaching self **is** the whole self, a romantic version of "teaching as a calling". When I ask the beginning teachers in my classes to keep a reflective log during their practice teaching, for example, I tend to add "just write about your teaching and not what you did on Saturday night*".* Why do I feel I have to add that last phrase about Saturday night? Do I think that they will otherwise interpret the assignment as writing about "just anything" rather than writing about teaching? I always ask students at the end of the course to engage in "reflection on the reflection". They are required to read back over their entries for the whole semester. Which ones do they find the most interesting to re-read? What are the most common themes that they write about? Are there any thoughts that now surprise them? Did their writing change during the semester? Did their relationship to writing in the journal change? How did writing affect their teaching or teaching affect their writing? Do they now question why they wrote what they wrote? Do they feel that they 'got it right'? The most reluctant writer usually has something positive to say about the process even if it only that they are surprised that they wrote as much as they did. Most though offer comments which suggest that while they wonder if they would ever be able to find time to do this during "real teaching" given what they have seen in the schools, they nonetheless can see that it could be helpful. In a class that I teach at the University of KwaZulu-Natal to a group of practising teachers engaged in fieldwork on how gender and HIV and Aids is being addressed in their own classrooms and in schools more generally, I encourage them to see their field notes as journal reflections, and to engage in a similar "reflecting on the reflecting" process

by reading back over the collection of writing from the semester. For many of them it is a conscious-raising process about the denial of Aids, and as one teacher commented after reading back through her field notes "I can never look at my school the same way".

What is it that propels me year after year to do this – especially knowing what I know about the relationship (or lack thereof) between my early days of teaching and the kind of personal writing I did at the time? Maybe my close scrutiny of my own journals now – a form of self-study - makes me crave just a little bit more of a recognition then of the value of seven years' worth of lessons plans. What was I thinking and why? As with the many approaches to self-study that are highlighted in this volume and in other recent collections (see Loughran et al, 2004, *International Handbook on Self-Study* or Mitchell et al, 2005, *Just Who Do We Think We Are? Methodologies for Autobiography and Self-Study in Education)*, we need to be systematic in thinking about our work.

Yes, it is all there, "in my own handwriting", and it is "my life as a school teacher" that continues to pervade my work -- what my colleagues in the donor world of UNICEF and CIDA refer to 'technical expertise'. Yes, there can be a future in the past.

NOTES

[1] I would like to acknowledge my friend and colleague, Ann Beer, with whom I first discussed the ideas for this chapter and who was greatly supportive of the idea of this kind of' time travel. I would particularly like to thank her for inviting me to her graduate class at McGill University on Gender and Autobiography in May, 2003.

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Chapter 9

THEATER OF THE OPPRESSED AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICE

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Abstract: Preparing pre-service teachers to negotiate the complexities of professional
practice and to provide meaningful educational experiences for PK-12 students
requires teacher educators to assist education students in developing a
multicultural knowledge base. Such knowledge is essential to understanding
the diverse nature of school environments and the educational/social
implications of racial, ethnic and cultural diversity for all students (Cockrell,
Placier, Cockrell & Middleton, 1999). Most pre-service teachers, however,
resist multicultural theory as a vital element of teachers' professional
knowledge (Goodwin, 1997; Greenman, 1995; Jordan & Rice, 1995). This
chapter explores an instructional and curricular collaboration designed to
engage teacher preparation students in critical examination of the social
reconstructionist approach to multicultural education through Theatre of the
Oppressed (ToO). The overarching purpose of this study was to explore a form
of theatre as a pedagogical method for engaging teacher education students in
dialogue about the relationship of education to the nature of a society and of
teaching to the ideals of democracy and social justice. While most teacher
preparation students expressed a preference for traditional instructional
methods, some recognized the power of experiential learning.

The U.S. population continues to undergo substantive demographic
change (Spring, 2001); the implications of this change are profound for
public PK-12 education (Estrada, 1993; Spring, 2002). Each year, there is an
increase in percentage of PK-12 students who differ from the mainstream
U.S. middle-class along the lines of race, class, ethnicity, language, and

culture (Brown, 2004; Gay, 2003). Extensive scholarly evidence indicates that the educational lives and opportunities for ethnically and culturally diverse students are compromised by lack of congruency between their experiences and cultural frames-of-reference and those of public PK-12 schools (Au & Blake, 2003; Gay, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nieto, 2000; Orfield, Losen, Wald, & Swanson, 2004; Sleeter & Grant, 1994).

To provide effective and equitable learning opportunities for all students, multicultural education scholars suggest that classroom teachers must understand and account for the nature and effects of ethnicity and culture on the teaching and learning process (Bennett, 1995; Gay, 2000). Figueroa (1999) argues that to achieve multicultural education we must have quality teachers who graduate from quality preparation programs. Effective multicultural education requires teachers who appreciate the complexities of education, are well prepared to meet the challenges of a diverse society, and are committed to teaching all students (Figueroa, 1999). To achieve these goals student teachers must develop a multicultural knowledge base; one that includes an understanding of the diverse environments in which teachers work and the educational/social implications of diversity (Cockrell, Placier, Cockrell & Middleton, 1999). However, enrollment patterns in teacher preparation programs suggest a further widening of the social and cultural gap between teachers and PK-12 students (Gay, 1993) as ethnic and cultural diversity among student teachers decreases (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and student diversity increases. This teacher-student divide may constrain efforts to create school and classroom cultures that accommodate and empower all school community members (DuFour, R. & Eaker, R., 1998).

Scholarly research on teacher preparation and multicultural practice indicates that student teachers often resist multicultural theory as an essential element of teachers' professional knowledge (Banks, 2001; Goodwin, 1997; Jordan & Rice, 1995; Sleeter, 1995). The nation's teaching force, including preservice teachers - primarily white, middle-class, and female - may feel threatened by a perceived charge to dismantle their long held, mono-cultural views of the world (Goddard, 1997; Sleeter, 1994). Since multicultural education is not a single entity to be implemented the complexity of the approach may confound student teachers' understanding and integration of multicultural theory into their professional knowledge base. While notions of multicultural education typically range from superficial activities associated with "heroes and holidays" to limited curricular or instructional applications (Banks, 1995), multicultural education has also been more broadly defined as any set of processes by which schools work with, rather than against, oppressed groups (Sleeter & Grant, 1994).

1.   CONTEXT FOR THE STUDY

This study explores the use of theater as a pedagogical method to engage student teachers in dialogue about 1) the relationship between education and the nature of a society and 2) the importance of teaching in ways that support the ideals of democracy and social justice. In our teaching at University of Missouri-Columbia, we strive to prepare student teachers to be teachers who have the goal that all students will fully participate in a democratic society. We aim to foster within our student teachers an understanding of human differences by viewing individual difference as an opportunity to enrich our human experience. This more inclusive approach can contribute to increased participation in a democratic society. We endeavor to develop within student teachers the understanding that students' life conditions should not dictate or limit their access to educational resources. When we introduced Theater of the Oppressed (TO) techniques into our program we hoped to raise student teachers' understanding of the costs and privileges of diversity and to foster the development of socially-just education ideals in their emerging professional schema. We also wanted to understand how our experience with Theater of the Oppressed influenced our teaching practices.

1.1   Conceptual Framework

"…(theater is) an important means of communication that, in one way or another, has always been associated with the daily activities of human beings…(and) has served the function of bringing a community together for celebration, entertainment, and dialogue" (Blanco, 2000, p. 8). Theater may be understood as an aesthetic means for communicating to the audience, through drama, significant ideas, and observations about human conditions, events, and experiences. Broadly, theater is perceived to appeal to a wide audience through its attention to universal themes that serve to connect audiences as members of the human family.

Popular theater, created in and for communities, can offer voice to groups or communities regardless of their status, power or resources. Popular theater "exists in a dialectical relationship with the cultural, social, political, and economic conditions in which it is produced. This medium therefore must be viewed as a process as well as a product inextricably linked to such conditions" (Frischman, 1989, 111). Popular theater places issues from the social and cultural context of the audience and offers an opportunity for collective analysis and problem solving.

1.2   Theater of the Oppressed

[Oppression] is that process within a society that destroys life, inhibits life, makes growth, joy, celebration, family life, intellectual and spiritual life, physical life impossible.   Oppression comes from many people, from many established and often trusted organizations: it comes from the churches, from the shopkeepers, from the government, from the courts, from the citizens, from the schools, from the very peoples oppressed. Oppression is in every society, somewhere in its fabric, a malignant power that must be destroyed" (O'Gorman, 1988, p. 98).

According to Augusto Boal (1972), theater is essentially political, as are most human activities. His belief that theater's tradition of monologue, directed from stage to audience, serves to silence and oppress popular audiences led to his experimentation with interactive theater and development of Theater of the Oppressed (TO) (1985). He argued for theatrical forms that would break down the separation between stage and audience to such an extent that the space between actor/stage and spectator ceases to exist. The spectator becomes spect-actor, a label derived from his (1985) theatrical process whereby audience members are invited on stage to demonstrate ideas for resolving problems portrayed by the actors. Boal (1985) believes that eliminating distance between stage and audience stimulates audience members to imagine change, practice change, reflect on action and thus become empowered to generate change in their communities.

Forum Theater and Image Theater are two of the many TO forms Boal developed for exploring oppression on both analytic and sensory levels and for resolving oppressive conditions. Participants in an Image Theater silently arrange themselves into a "sculpture" portraying an oppressive event or relationship and, on a pre-arranged signal, change their sculpture into less oppressive portrayals. After the final image, spectators are invited to join the Image Theater participants in dialogue and analysis of the movement from oppression toward non-oppression. In Forum Theater, actors create and present short scenes that represent problems within a community. Spect-actors interact by calling "stop," replacing an actor, and redirecting the scene toward a different solution. At the conclusion of the scene, actors and spect-actors join in dialogue and debate around the solutions offered as well as outcomes of those solutions.

TO, as a form of popular theater, allows participants to collectively explore and try-out possible solutions to conflicts. Through TO participants can observe connections between individual and community concerns; they can also deepen their understanding that the community can be the genesis for social and political norms. Popular theater can serve as a useful tool for

helping individuals develop alternative actions to resolve social problems and provides a means for developing and testing ideas in an environment of support and safety.

2. METHODOLOGY

According to Hamilton and Pinnegar (1998), "those involved in self-study systematically collect evidence from their practice, allowing them to rethink and potentially open themselves to new interpretations and to create different strategies" (pp. 1-2). Our decision to use self-study methods is closely aligned with the observation that "implicit theories and hidden beliefs" have considerable influence on instructional practice and that "examining…teaching beliefs is essential to both curricular and instructional improvement (Louie, Drevdahl, Purdy and Stackman, 2003, p. 153). Therefore, consistent with the notion that self-study is the "…natural direction for all of us who seek ways to improve…" (Feldman, 2003, p. 27) teaching practices, we used self-study methods to investigate the following questions:

1. What challenges did we encounter as an interdisciplinary team in our efforts to mount TO?
2. What impact did the curricular innovation have on the learning experience for student teachers and instructors?
3. In what ways do student teachers demonstrate their understanding of oppression and the implications of oppression on educational practice?

2.1 Researchers

This study is the work of an interdisciplinary team of five faculty researchers and six graduate students from the departments of theater, religious studies, education policy studies, and education counseling and psychology. Our collaborative effort was stimulated by an invited lecture by Augusto Boal and his subsequent campus seminar on TO techniques. While we brought differing research interests and scholarly perspectives to this endeavor, our work centered upon our collective interest in TO as a pedagogical instrument, our desire to understand its effects upon our students' conceptualization of oppression, and their commitment to education for a socially just society. In acknowledging our keen interest in his work, we were mindful that we had no maps to guide us. Similar to Samaras, we recognized this collaborative work "meant that we, like our students, were crossing discipline boundaries with no markers or certainties" (Samaras, 2002, p. 132).

The faculty team members were homogeneous in terms of gender (all female) and heterogeneous in terms of ethnicity (three Anglo-Americans, one African-American, and one American Indian). The graduate student members were two Anglo-American females, one African (Nigerian) male, one Cuban-American female, one Anglo-American male, and one Mexican-American male. Three of the faculty team members, Sharon, Karen, and Helen, were the traditional scholarly inquirers, while Suzanne and Peggy taught their respective courses in theater and education in addition to researching their own courses

2.2   Setting

After Boal's visit, the Theater Department sponsored a TO workshop open to the campus community in the following semester. Participation in this event stimulated discussions among the members of our nascent research team about pedagogical applications of TO techniques. During the semester, one of our members, Suzanne, was awarded a Carnegie fellowship and proposed that we design a study pairing her theater class on TO with Peggy's upcoming class on school and society for teacher education students. Peggy believed that TO would be a good fit with her course themes of ethical decision-making and diversity. We allocated 4 of Peggy's 16 class periods (75 minutes each) to sessions on TO.   Theater students would demonstrate TO techniques to student teachers and assist with performance aspects of theater.

Peggy's course, *Inquiry into Schools, Community and Society,* is required for all students in the teacher education program. This course has had problems since its inception in the mid-1990s.   The majority of student teachers are almost all Anglo-American and middle-class.   We have observed that these students have great difficulty understanding racial or ethnic identities, and most have limited experience with others different from themselves. We view ourselves as thoughtful and committed teachers, but our teaching evaluations for this one course, in contrast with our other courses, were usually mediocre or even low, despite our best efforts. In the 2000 fall semester, 16 student teachers were enrolled in the course and eleven agreed to participate in our study on the use of TO. Twelve of the fifteen theater students enrolled in Suzanne's class were study participants.

2.3   Data Sources

During the course of the 2000 fall semester, we collected the following data:

1. Demographic Survey – In addition to gathering personal (gender, ethnicity) and academic (program of study, placement) data, students provided information on their background (size of community) and experiential (education, cross-cultural) experiences.
2. Journal Entries – Student teachers were encouraged to reflect on all aspects of the course giving accurate and honest reactions to the varied experiences. They were given assurance that they would not be penalized for their frankness.
3. Image Theater Observations – The Image Theater performances which took place in the classroom were videotaped. Two faculty and one graduate student observed the sessions and recorded field notes.
4. Forum Theater Observations – Four faculty members and one graduate student member of the research team observed each of the performances and recorded their observations in field note form.
5. Researcher Reflections and Communication Notes - Peggy maintained a reflective journal while the research team archived email notes and memoranda exchanged among them.

2.4   Data Analysis

In keeping with the generally held view that meanings and additional questions emerge as the study progresses (Thornton, 1993), ongoing analysis influenced the scope and direction of succeeding data collection efforts. We did not apply a specific theoretical lens to our analysis; rather, we allowed our emergent theoretical constructs to "bubble-up" as the data unfolded through the analytic process. Following Lincoln's and Guba's (1985) advice for trustworthiness of research findings, we 1) used multiple data sources and member checks; 2) used thick description to present our findings; and 3) maintained a detailed research record.

In addition to the primary data sets described above, we examined our secondary data that included the student demographic surveys and research team members' electronic e-mail notes and written memoranda. As we read each data set, we noted conceptual labels on the page margins and wrote memos that captured analytic ideas and questions. We used the constant comparative method (Strauss, 1987) to find connections among the data, to understand the conditions and circumstances of the connected (categorized) data, and to construct meaning from them. As individual members of the research team, we wrote frequent memos; as collaborative researchers, we met weekly to discuss our memos, data collected, analytic processes, and made necessary adjustments to our research procedures. The process of open coding (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) resulted in descriptive themes which guided our analytic procedures.

3.   IMPLEMENTATION

At the first meeting of her course, Peggy chose not to introduce the TO project but indicated to the student teachers that more information about it would be forthcoming. Over the next few class sessions, there were some uncomfortable discussions about the excessive number of assignments for the course and their lack of practical value. Rather than reading about and discussing issues in the ethics, politics and culture of schooling, some said they would rather be learning "how to teach" or "what works" in schools. At this point the students teachers had not been introduced to the TO, a project Peggy knew that was going to be fairly demanding.

In the third week of class, Suzanne and several of her students introduced TO. Rather than delivering a lecture on the topic, they plunged the class into simple games that required movement, spontaneity, and some level of risk-taking in front of peers. For the most part, the student teachers seemed to enjoy it; however, at the subsequent class Peggy was again faced with complaints that TO was a poor use of time and did not provide the practical strategies the student teachers craved.

The groups were required to meet outside of class to design their Image Theater pieces which were then presented in class. Their chosen topics, and their interpretations of them, were fairly good; however, complaints persisted. Peggy urged the class to stay with TO, imploring them that they would find much more value in the up-coming Forum Theater pieces. The first journal entries submitted by the student teachers echoed the comments voiced in class: there was limited value in TO and it should be cancelled. A minority of the student teachers complained vehemently which led to Peggy beginning to recognize that coercion can run both ways in a classroom.

When Suzanne and her group visited the class to introduce Forum Theater, she talked briefly about TO, its history, and her beliefs about its value. The Theater students had prepared a classroom scene in which a teacher was being harassed by a Tayloristic, administrative efficiency expert while at the same time the children were acting out. At first, students from the education class hesitated but they eventually "jumped in" to play the teacher's role. They were obviously frustrated at not being able to control the children. Since the drama piece was very entertaining, Peggy thought the class would be attracted to this form of theater. For the next section of the course the student teachers were required to select a scenario which demonstrated an oppressive practice that raises issues of equity, social justice, and multiculturalism. They worked with a group of fellow students to dramatize it, reflect and discuss implications when teaching a diverse student body, and then presented it to the entire class.

The Forum Theater performances were shown in a little theater in the Theater department, a very dramatic setting that took the student teachers out of their usual building and into someone else's realm. The performances which were terrific astounded Peggy. They selected four very serious school dilemmas to dramatize: standardized testing and its negative effects on students; the teacher's obligations in cases of child abuse; religious and other objections to curriculum decisions; and censorship of *Huckleberry Finn* because of racist language. Thanks to the Theater students, the performances were effectively staged and demonstrated true collaboration between two groups of students and the faculty.

4.   FINDINGS

A majority of the education student teachers shifted their attitudes toward TO activities, from extremely negative to positive. The following section outlines some of the reasons for the change, describes the growing understanding of the use TO as a teaching tool, and its impact on student teachers' understanding of broader issues.

4.1   Resistance to TO

As noted earlier, some students complained that TO was irrelevant to their educational goals. Discomfort with acting was a major issue contributing to students' initial negative response to TO. Even students with previous experience in performance, had extremely negative reactions to TO throughout the semester. Tess wrote, "I felt very uncomfortable in these activities. I have never felt very outgoing and these activities put me out of my skin." Words such as "dreaded," "agonizing," "extreme agitation," "painful," "fear," and "humiliating" were sprinkled throughout the journals. Some students believed they were being forced to participate in a kind of activity they found distasteful and resented having to do so.

The student teachers appeared to place a high value on efficiency, preferring traditional methods of instruction - reading, lecture, discussion - to experiential approaches. They particularly objected to the time required outside of the regularly scheduled class to work on their projects with the theater students. Jan described a rehearsal as "sacrifice(ing) precious time."

Students indicated that lack of clarity about TO assignments contributed to their negative response. They were initially confused about the TO projects and their relevance to course subject matter. While a few students noted the relationship between acting before an audience and

teaching a class, they did not understand the relevance of TO to the course.

4.2   Conceptual Challenges

Some student teachers reacted negatively to the term oppression, finding the concept irrelevant to their studies. Ron noted, "I don't really know why we were doing theater of the oppressed. I don't feel oppressed. I don't really think teachers are oppressed and I don't think most students are oppressed either. I guess this method might be very effective in dealing with severely oppressive situations, but I still don't understand how that would relate to us and why we would be learning about it in our class."

Other students held conceptions of community as locale and culture as "norms of the community" or "what's socially acceptable". Tracey observed, "As long as they (diverse others) value virtue and work ethic without aspiration to loftier goals, they will remain mired in the class they subsist in today." Interestingly, most student teachers viewed diversity in terms of social-economic-class difference. Their limited cross-cultural experience was reflected in rather naïve understandings of culture and community, ambivalence about inclusion of diverse others, and, in some instances, harsh judgment about those who differ from the mainstream

Ron acknowledged his lack of knowledge and subsequent lack of understanding of differing communities and cultures. "I do not understand what the huge difference is with this culture versus all others. There are many groups of people that migrated to the U.S. and they had problems as well." While recognizing inequities among groups in U.S. American society, he expressed ambivalence regarding multiculturalism. "I'm not sure or convinced dominant cultures should be changed by incorporating cultures from other cultures (sic). Why shouldn't English be the official language of the U.S.? "

4.3   Recognizing Applications

Once student teachers made connections between TO and teachers' work they began to value it. Some saw Forum Theater as an effective method for learning problem-solving, suggesting that the scenarios presented realistic depictions of situations teachers face. Josh explained that "being able to look at the situation from the outside" provided helpful objectivity for analyzing the situation critically, considering alternate solutions, and evaluating solutions proposed by others. The process "made me open my mind to other possible solutions," and "gain experience in dealing with" classroom problems related to diversity. During the process of preparing and

presenting their Forum Theater projects the students made connections between TO and teachers' work. Even those students who did not enjoy the Forum Theater project gained an appreciation for the practical value of TO.

Others also recognized the value of TO's experiential nature. Alicia noted that TO promotes empathy, observing that Forum Theater "gives us that sense of being in the situation…I honestly felt the frustration that I know teachers feel on a daily basis!" In comparing Forum Theater to more traditional methods of learning problem-solving, Nancy observed: "I do feel that Forum Theater may be a more effective way to generate solutions than simple discussion. By actually 'trying them out' through Forum Theater, we got a much better idea of how the situation might actually play out."

Student teachers acknowledged the importance of audience participation in Forum Theater. Valerie concluded that "allowing us to 'sub-in' for the protagonist gave us the opportunity to apply what we've learned. In doing this, it also prepared us for the unexpected. This exercise made us question our decisions as well as our values."

A number of student teachers said they would consider using TO in their own teaching. Valerie said, "I can easily see myself using this strategy (Forum Theater) in my classroom. As an English teacher, I could have my students act out a particular story or scene and then have people 'sub-in' and act out the way in which they would have handled the situation. This will develop critical thinking skills." Even some who preferred traditional instructional methods saw potential value in using TO in their future professional practice. Ron said of Image Theater, "I guess this exercise was good in that it caused us to express ourselves in a way that we are not used to. One of our biggest challenges that we face as teachers is to adapt our teaching skills and strategies to the needs of our students and theater may be one way some students can really relate to the material." Even Sarah, who responded to Image Theater with the flat statement, "I hated the theater project and every aspect of it," considered the possibility of using Forum Theater as a teacher, noting, "I think that a forum theater type format could actually be used effectively within my classroom as a means to deal with issues of intolerance and lack of perspective."

The TO projects appeared to stimulate some new insights which varied among individual students. Some discussed specific lessons learned from each Forum Theater scenario, such as transforming a problem into a "teacheable moment." Others talked about more general awareness of oppression or the significance of diversity and power issues in the classroom. Tracey observed, "when we were asked to create a situation that was oppressive culturally, I did not know the results would be so far reaching and prevalent to contemporary education. The forum theater really

opened my eyes to the phenomenon of several types of cultural bias in the classroom."

4.4   Clarifying Beliefs

Through participation in TO the student teachers exhibited a growing awareness of diversity within schools. With that broader perspective was a dawning recognition of the influence of community and culture upon students' academic lives and the need to account for culture in teaching practices.   They began to shift from a naïve to a more complex understanding of culture.   For example, Tracey indicated that course activities "increase(d) my awareness that culture is not just race, but also family structure and disability and several other components."   Student teachers also expanded their thinking about teachers' responsibilities to include the belief that we must teach all students. Like Carlie, a number voiced the belief that teachers "need to understand students, community and culture." According to Jill,

> …a teacher needs to teach how they know, but alter the teaching approaches to meet the needs and beliefs of the community and the culture of the community. I first thought that this was wrong. That no matter what or who is being taught there is a good way to do it that is accepted by everyone. Then I remembered that we do not live in a perfect society where everyone accepts everything and are open-minded. Teachers must adapt teaching methods and reach all students.

Some student teachers began to view "multiculturalism as a positive thing" and to recognize diversity among students as a positive force within the classroom.   As well, they were beginning to perceive the need to introduce all students to diverse ways of thinking.   Tess observed, "By providing our students with a variety of perspectives, we are enriching their learning environment and possibly decreasing the amount of racism and prejudice in our schools."

5.   PEGGY'S REFLECTIONS

This section presents Peggy's reflections on her experience of incorporating TO into her course curriculum using her voice.

> I felt that I was coercing people to participate which was contrary to my educational beliefs. Was I being oppressive? My impulse was to say, and I think my student teachers expected me to relent and admit, "Okay, I hear you, let's just cancel it." I do not believe in forcing student teachers to do

something they so obviously loathe because I care about their preferences and feelings. I felt a tiny urge to back off but I believed that if they would just give TO a chance, something extraordinary could happen. Moreover, I did not want to sabotage my collaboration with Suzanne, especially since her research project was hinging on our joint work.

Through the data analysis I realized that I did not do enough to integrate the curriculum of TO with the curriculum of the course. Oppression was not an important concept in the readings or activities on diverse communities. While many students accept the idea of adapting to individual differences, most white student teachers have difficulty understanding racial or ethnic identities and have limited experience with others different from themselves (Banks, 1999; Goddard, 1997; Sleeter, 1994). Some had an almost immediate negative reaction to the word oppression, for reasons I should have probed more deeply. Perhaps, it was perceived as "politically correct" or "victim language." The idea that schools or teachers could be oppressive made them uncomfortable. Most want to be inspired, to feel good about their choice of profession and the investment they have made in it.

Although TO is designed for non-actors and includes exercises intended to build trust and comfort with performance, I was not sensitive to just how frightening the performance was for students who consider themselves "acting illiterate." However, given all the negativity swirling around the theatrework I had a change of heart after seeing the performances. I had been right to persisting with the project, the findings from their journals also show at least some turn-around in perceptions of TO after this point.

If I was going to use TO in the future I would make significant changes to the process. Below are some lessons learned:

1. I should have made explicit connections between all aspects of the course and the goals of each. TO cannot be seen as a disconnected "add-on," "loony experiment," "waste of time," or an "external intervention" of sorts. I needed to own it and to seek support for the TO projects from class leaders, encouraging them to "buy in" to the idea.

2. I should have used this experience as a "teachable moment" by discarding the planned curriculum, at least in part, in favor of unpacking the dynamics of coercion, resistance, and conflicting curriculum theories that were evident in the situation. Future teachers need to consider what to do if their own students resist something they, as teachers, believe is valuable.

3. I should have connected TO with other courses in the teacher education curriculum such those that deal with Freire's philosophy .

4. I should have recognized that cultures of the two programs, theater and education, were very different. The former are accustomed to working many hours outside of class time, while the latter thought that groupwork

outside of class was unreasonable. More in-class time needs to be allocated to TO. By scheduling both courses, theater and education, in a common timeslot collaboration would have been easier to achieve. Further, the Theater students should have been encouraged to focus on the use TO techniques, not on artistic quality when they were working with their education colleagues.

5. I should have better prepared the student teachers for Suzanne's approach, one that would immediately immerse them into drama. By providing some background information to TO the student teachers might have been more receptive to her innovative methods. I should have had a better balance between the traditional methods education students expect and the experiential methods appropriate to TO.

6.   IMPACT ON THE PROGRAM

TO was a challenge for both student teachers and instructors but this powerful form of learning has contributed to helping all of us deepen and broaden our understanding of the teaching-learning process, a worthy experience for all participants. As instructors, this research brought to our attention the need for more scaffolding of novel approaches that integrate multicultural issues into teacher education courses. Incorporating high-risk pedagogies requires first building trust among the theater and education students and being sensitive of the experiences, talents, and needs of the two differing cultures.

We also recognize that our student teachers' demographic characteristics may have contributed to their initial resistance to TO. Of the eleven participating education students, ten were Anglo-American and one was African-American. Few of the participants had ever experienced life in culturally diverse urban environments since most came from notably conservative suburban and rural communities within a socially and politically conservative state. Therefore, as we study student teachers' preferred learning styles we should be mindful of and account for the effects of demographic factors.

Nonetheless, we did see changes in attitudes and multicultural understandings of teacher education students over time. They began to value and make connections between TO and their teaching and demonstrated an increased awareness of diversity within their classrooms. For example, a thought provoking paradox arose during the Image Theater presentations. Although many of the education students initially stated in their journals a personal preference for traditional pedagogy, as they moved from oppressive situations to more ideal scenes in their theater work, they recognized the

power of experiential learning. This has led us to conclude that our student teachers integrated the ideal of collaborative pedagogy into their approach to education. Once they had had experience with it themselves they came to value it. Simply "talking about" the power of TO would have been insufficient, student teachers needed to experience it first hand.

With the insights gained through this research we will be able to better structure courses to build on and move beyond the traditional transmission approach. This research reminds us that changing old ways of thinking and working with diverse students is difficult yet important and needed work.

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Chapter 10

SPHERES OF LEARNING IN TEACHER COLLABORATION

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Abstract: In this chapter, we report on two studies in a Master's program for practicing teachers that maintains collaborative culture making at its core, for students and faculty alike. We conducted two studies related to this collaborative culture making and concluded that collaboration is essential to programs of study for teachers and teacher educators. In the first study, we investigated the perspectives of our alumni on their collaborative experiences. Findings indicated links between alumni's multi-layered collaborative experiences in the program and their subsequent pursuit of National Board certification. In the second study, we conducted a collective self-study of a faculty teaching team's collaborative experiences and factors that they believe enhanced their continued professional development. Both studies are placed within a description of the Initiatives in Educational Transformation (IET) program, which aligns with sociocultural practices of learning with and through others. To frame our work, we draw from Vygotskian (1978) theory and Samaras' (2004) notion of *learning zones,* adapted from Vygotsky's conception of the zone of proximal development and the social construction of knowledge. The work of Lave and Wenger (1991) in situated learning also informs this work.

Despite calls for collaborative teaching practices, building collaborative cultures, and self-study of those practices (Clandinin, 1993; LaBoskey, Davies-Samway, and Garcia, 1998), many schools of education continue to support practices that preserve the status quo of the isolated teacher and teacher educator. Reformers claim teacher development is hindered by teacher isolation in schools devoid of collegial discourse, critical inquiry, and action research in authentic settings (Darling-Hammond, 1993; Goodlad, 1994). If, as Calderhead and Shorrock (1997) claim, research is needed on the development of collegiality within schools because it has the potential to offer teachers and mentors opportunities to learn from each other, then study of collaborative environments merits our attention. And if, as Sykes and Darling-Hammond (1999) note, teachers' professional development is a key ingredient in improving schools, then how professional development programs are designed and what those programs actually accomplish should be studied. According to Fullan (1991), "Educational reform will never amount to anything until teachers become simultaneously and seamlessly inquiry oriented, skilled, reflective, and collaborative professionals" (p. 326). He further contends that life-long learning of teachers depends on an opportunity to learn with others. Diez and Blackwell (2002) argue that collaboration is integrally connected to professionalism and central to both the National Board and to advanced master's programs.

Our focus in this chapter is two studies linked by the theme of collaboration for professional development and renewal. In the first study, we report on the collaborative learning experiences of eight alumni who pursued further professional development after graduation by applying for National Board certification. The second study reports on a faculty teaching team and their perceptions of collaboration. In each case, we describe the self-study's impact on participants, with a particular focus on the personal and professional relationships that develop.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND PROGRAM DESIGN

At the center of the design and curriculum of the program discussed in this chapter is a commitment to learn with and through others, which aligns with our investigative sociocultural lens and the concept of *learning zones* (i.e., spheres of knowledge construction). This concept was developed by Samaras (2004), with adaptation from Vygotsky's (1978) conception of the zone of proximal development. Learning zones are organic and diverse

communities of expertise where learners co-mediate, negotiate, and socially construct an understanding of a shared task. Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD) is "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 85). Our program provides multiple opportunities or spheres of learning for teachers and faculty to share their differing gifts, multiple intelligences, and multiple perspectives. It also encourages dialogue of their maturing and nascent understandings of who they are as learners and teachers and how that impacts their students' learning. In effect, they assist each other's development and newfound insights through their collaborative problem solving within their ZPDs. Their critical dialogue around diverse ideas provokes and assists them in challenging their own ideas as well as their peers' assumptions about teaching. This research suggests that this peer scaffolding through collaboration is central to their professional development.

Also central to the design and curriculum of our program is the idea that the content and practicality of teachers' study is situated in their classrooms and school practices. Higher mental functions are influenced by social interactions and internalized by an individual within a sociocultural system and in context. Peers assist peers and help make the tasks of teaching seem manageable and doable as they support each other on an emotional and cognitive level. These emotional and cognitive anchors are situated or grounded in their everyday teaching. Lave and Wenger (1991) note that learning, thinking, and knowing take place when people are engaged in communal activities and when they situate themselves in a community of practice in the historical development of the activity.

Earlier research and experience informed our current work. With others (Samaras and Gismondi, 1998; Samaras, Taylor, & Kelly, 1994), Anastasia worked to restructure a largely undergraduate preservice teacher education program to harness the collective expertise of students, cooperating teachers, and professors. Likewise, Elizabeth and her colleagues (Sockett, DeMulder, LePage, & Wood, 2001) critiqued the early years of the current program, describing the vision and the continuing challenges of a program designed to embed teachers in a learning community. Gerow (2001) found that IET teachers became increasingly invested in each other's research through dialogue and writes, "Individuals learned and understood how a colleague's research in practice created connections and related to their own classrooms and to school wide issues of concern" (p. 75). We build on our early work to consider the ways that commitment to a collaborative teaching and learning culture might promote educators' long-term learning and sustain their

transformed understandings and perspectives in their work with students. A description of our current program design will help to situate this research, which began in 2002.

IET is a school-based Master's program for PK-12 practicing teachers within the College of Education and Human Development at George Mason University (GMU), a distributed university. Since 1992, over 1,000 classroom teachers coming from school divisions and districts across Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia have joined cohorts that meet on our two campuses. Currently there are five classes of about 70 teachers each working with five faculty teaching teams. Our non-traditional, teacher and family-friendly schedule attracts teachers, teacher specialists, and administrators to work together in teaching teams in three intensive summer sessions and 16 day-long classes over a two-year period. Within every class, there is great variability in teachers' years of teaching experience and expertise. Teachers conduct classroom action research projects in the first year and team-based school change projects in the second year. The curriculum is designed to support practicing teachers' professional development and practice through the lenses of ethical and moral professionalism, self-study, narrative inquiry, action research, and professional collaboration. IET's program is aligned with the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS).

The program design entails learning zones for teachers' reflection and critical dialogue in whole class groups, cohort groups, Web-based forums, and school teams. Together this interwoven set of processes appears to lead many teachers through personal and professional transformation (DeMulder and Rigsby, 2003). IET's Beliefs and Principles in Practice document notes the following regarding teams: "Working together is complex and difficult and requires considerable energy and dedication. Collaborative communities have mutual perspectives as well as multiple individual perspectives with separate, sometimes competing or conflicting interests. But individual perspectives also frequently have overlapping interests, areas of expertise, and unique strengths and weaknesses" (See www.gmu.edu/iet). IET's emphasis on working in teams is aligned with two NBPTS propositions: 1) Proposition Four (Teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience, particularly as they seek the advice of others and practice perspective-taking), and 2) Proposition Five (Teachers are members of learning communities and work collaboratively with other professionals).

Faculty also work in teams and some are working across teams and experimenting with joint class days. Therefore, knowledge is distributed across teachers in school and/or regional school teams, in advising sessions and school visits, and among faculty teams. Faculty co-plan and co-implement a once-a-month 8-hour teaching day and bring their different

perspectives and understandings to each task. The sharing of those differences and distributed expertise is what fascinates us and calls us to examine this dynamic context. In this chapter, we present our analysis of these participants' collaborative team experiences and the impact of those experiences on their professional development.

2. STUDY ONE: PATHWAY FROM INSERVICE TO NATIONAL BOARD CERTIFICATION

The first study began when faculty noticed that several of our graduates had pursued National Board certification after graduation. We knew that the propositions of the NBPTS were embedded within IET's beliefs and principles, but we were curious to investigate the ways that our program supported and/or hindered our graduates as they pursued further professional development opportunities. We asked ourselves: In what ways does our program design and culture help to counter teacher isolation and nourish critical dialogue among teachers? Does the team culture foster our teachers' continued professional development and altered ways of knowing and thinking about teaching after they graduate and as they pursue National Board certification?

2.1 Methodology

Our research team co-constructed an interview protocol that included questions related to how the structure and experience of the program impacted their professional development and their pursuit of National Board certification. Laura, a doctoral candidate in the Educational Leadership program at GMU, piloted the preliminary interview with two alumni who completed National Board certification after graduation from our program. We met frequently to refine the interview protocol. Laura then conducted semi-structured interviews lasting about one hour each with eight alumni we were able to locate who had graduated in the last three years and who pursued National Board certification after graduation. All except one were female. Seven of the teachers interviewed received NBPTS certification. Their classroom teaching experience ranged from 5-15 years in a variety of subjects, grade levels, and school contexts and with a variety of school populations.

The interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed by Laura. Secondary data included the teachers' action research projects. Each research team member then individually read and re-read the interviews noting patterns and

themes. Afterwards, we met to compare and again refine our collective analyses. Several broad categories were identified using the constant comparison method (Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). We then used a cluster analysis to further refine the categories into domains of teachers' professional development (Kayler, Samaras, DeMulder, Newton, and Rigsby, 2003). One of the themes drew our particular interest as it related to the sociocultural framework, i.e., "structured and mediated collaboration." This challenged us to look more closely at what our alumni had to say about their collaborative experiences in IET and how that impacted their learning experiences during and after graduation. The findings described below focus on this major theme of "structured and mediated collaboration" found in the larger study. Within this theme, we identified four categories of alumni perspectives: 1) learning communities, 2) professional tools for practice, 3) impact on students' learning, and 4) transfer of skills to National Board certification.

2.2 Findings of Study One

2.2.1 Learning communities

Alumni spoke of vehicles of collaboration and the peer support systems in learning communities afforded through the program design. These support systems included: Dialogue and feedback with peers in class, in-school teams, and through on-line peer learning communities, peer feedback on individual and shared tasks, especially research projects, and interactions with professors.

Dialogue helped teachers question their beliefs and the implications of those beliefs for their classroom practices. Alumni reported that they welcomed the time and space to have deep conversations with colleagues and to experiment with new ways of seeing their teaching. One teacher noted the need to be critical of each other's work. She explained the importance of being able to say to her colleague, "Here were the parts that were confusing, here are parts that you could consider improving upon…and to convey the message that you can do this." Teachers also dialogued in distance learning activities and within cohorts. Another commented, "We had little cohorts where we would get on the Internet and exchange ideas about the particular kinds of books that we were reading."

For our alumni, occasions for interaction and support took place in school teams with colleagues who understood each other's classroom realities. Trials and tribulations growing out of their individual action research were situated in the day-to-day life of schools. Alumni noted that the program structure and particularly the school-based team model provided

a venue for collaborative and intellectual opportunities. One graduate commented that "it's how you ask for help if you need it… The IET program definitely lends itself to that because you are working in a team model, so you are constantly talking about the things you do in your classroom."

Another way to look at the effects of working in school teams is to look at evidence from the collaborative research projects--a key element of the IET program and a focus for critical dialogue within the school team. Review of relevant literature in the context of their research topics provided a forum for teachers to dialogue about theory. A two-person team working in a multi-age classroom reported that one of the most powerful aspects of teaming was "just being able to really question why we wanted to do the research and how we wanted to do it and questioning why we thought this program might really work. [If we had not done the research] we would have not discovered ourselves, our philosophies of education." They used the research to develop and modify their understanding of teaching and learning by watching and documenting children's learning. They used the data and deepened understanding to develop the structure of a new program. The research allowed them to explain the program to parents.

Lest we paint teaming as a panacea, we should also point out that teaming and working within each other's ZPD can be a source of conflict. Socially constructing knowledge is important but difficult work. For example, despite the fact that an alumnus reported that he continued to work with his IET teammate for several years after graduation, there was a moment during their second year when they reported irreconcilable differences, which they thought would keep them from finishing their research together. They were able to patch up their differences and finish, but not without some tears and anguish in learning to see each other's perspectives.

The same alumnus spoke about the frustration he felt as he tried to articulate aspects of his classroom practice to one of his IET professors, and then described how this experience led to a more refined, professional approach to communicating with parents. He stated:

> He was saying one day something that at first I was sort of mad about it, "Teachers ought to be able to explain why certain things are…" At first, I thought I could explain it. I was talking to my team member and saying I do not know what he is talking about, I think I was pretty clear in what I said. But as I rethought about it, I looked at some of the things again, he was right. If you are going to go and give this information as a presentation to parents, you ought to be able to say why, what your beliefs are, where did you came up with this. You cannot just say you think it's a good idea. So, I got better at doing that.

2.2.2   Professional tools for practice

1. *Perspective taking*. Alumni noted how the program allowed them to look at their teaching more critically by questioning their assumptions. As peers offered their interpretations of dilemmas, it helped broaden their perspectives of teaching. Additionally, their work in diverse groups with teachers who taught various subjects and grades allowed them to step outside their specialty area and have conversations with other teachers about classroom practice and student learning. These conversations often provided insights across developmental levels and validation or reinterpretation of their observations. They had many conversations where they were offering each other support, suggestions, and affirmation.
2. *Systematic inquiry*. Collaboration helped alumni conduct research more extensively than they might have been able to accomplish alone. For example, an alumna and her teammate collaborated in a study of "teacher talk" to help build a professional learning community in schools. To obtain a view of teacher talk, they asked teachers to journal about their lunch room conversations and used round-table conversations among the participants in their study to get feedback on the journaling. Their study evolved into a study of how to promote collegial conversations about teaching. The IET experience had a very positive impact on their development as professionals and their ability and commitment to work with others.
3. *Professional voice*. Alumni found a sense of agency in presenting their research at their school, claiming that "I started presenting to other Math teachers at different conferences, during staff development…without going through IET, I do not think I would have done these many things." Teachers expressed a sense of agency for making changes in their schools. One stated, "I found the voice I needed to express to people that change needed to be made. I could do it in a way that changes could be made as opposed to just being one of those teachers who are always complaining about things." Several alumni noted that the National Board fine-tuned what the IET program gave them as a foundation in terms of being able to reflect and the confidence to articulate their ideas for changing practice.

2.2.3   Impact on student learning

Alumni reported that they saw the effects of their collaboration on their students' learning. They gained insight about the importance for children to talk to each other after instruction, and of being a facilitator, not deliverer, of

children's learning. They realized that "All the learning is not just going to come from me." Teachers also applied collaborative skills in school projects. They took the IET model and applied it to other groups. They talked about interpretations of pieces, read each other's work, or said "I am really having a difficult time here; what do you think this means?" They held each other accountable. It was "the power of knowing that we needed each other to make it through." Alumni mentioned other ways in which their teaming experience had a long-term impact as they continued to work collaboratively after graduation. For example, teachers who developed a new program of multi-age teaching during the program later continued to work on multi-age classroom projects after graduation.

2.2.4   Transfer of skills to National Board Certification

Alumni described ways that they were able to transfer their notions of collaboration from their IET experience to their National Board experience. The positive attitudes toward collegiality and life-long learning they expressed are consistent with the attitudes of teachers who work in collaborative school settings (Rosenholtz, 1989). Our alumni spoke of the cognitive and collegial support that resulted in this transfer of learning.

One of the other team members and I did it together [worked on applying for National Board certification during the same time period]. We edited each other's papers. Some days, she would say she was going to quit. Other days, I was ready to quit. We were never at the quitting point at the same time. So, we boosted each other through the whole process.

Another alumna explained:

[A teacher also pursuing National Board certification] had a difficult time reflecting. She would summarize everything and I would tell her that it was good, but it was not reflecting. At the end, she approached me and thanked me for helping her see the difference. I am very grateful to have been in that support team. We were able to share our writings and get feedback before we mailed everything in. Having other people review my work with me gave me the confidence in mailing all those entries.

Alumni indicated that the professional tools they developed in IET, especially research, writing, and presentation skills, prepared them for similar work in National Board certification. They gained experience in documenting individual work, observing, collecting data, and assessing their students' learning through action research projects. When an alumna teacher presented her assessment as part of her portfolio for National Board certification, she explained: "I needed to have all the justifications for why I did what I did and the score that the child achieved. It was beneficial for me

to use what I had learned through IET and carry it over into the National Boards."

They acquired new educational language in the IET program that prepared them and gave them the confidence to tackle the National Board. An alumna wrote, "I was never intimidated by reading the standards of the National Boards, or by reading what they wanted, because I knew exactly what they were talking about….IET gave me the theory approach and terminology that I could apply to what I actually do."

2.3   Impact of Study One on the Program

Since collaboration is a key component of the IET curriculum, this research provided a window into seeing how our alumni perceived collaboration as experienced in our program. Alumni confirmed that IET's program structure offered multiple venues for their social construction of knowledge. Teachers worked together, learned new strategies, heard many voices, felt encouraged, and developed professional networks. Teachers' action research projects documented their achievements and new understandings of their students' learning (Kayler, 2004). After graduating from the program, teachers found their collaborative experiences of value in making continued changes in their classrooms and schools. It is our interpretation that learning zones for these practicing teachers were key to their professional development and thus worthy of consideration in the design of a professional development program. They learned collaboratively through (1) peer collaboration in school teams; (2) peer collaboration during class time; (3) peer collaboration in on-line learning communities; and (4) faculty assistance during class and school visits with advisees. Our study also suggests, however, that the value in and reflection about vehicles of collaboration the program affords could be more explicit to teachers during the program.

Alumni reported that they continued to use collaborative models and professional tools they learned in IET in their pursuit of becoming Nationally Board certified, and this gave credence to our work. Providing multi-layered collaborative experiences for teachers during their master's work enabled more teachers to successfully complete that formidable task. This research sheds light on the benefits of investigating local evidence from alumni to inform program impact. For example, alumni offered insights for how both the IET program and the National Board process might be improved through more deliberative attention to the quality of the collaborative structures for a National Board support course. They also noted that IET could offer more scaffolding in analyzing data and videotaping teaching exercises. Alumni indicated that the IET portfolio might be better

aligned with the National Board standards. Do collaborative structures matter for *faculty* teams? We turn to that next.

3. STUDY TWO: CRAFTING OUR COLLABORATION AND FACULTY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Study Two was generated from Anastasia's interest in exploring faculty teaming program-wide. As Director of the program, she visited each team's meetings and teaching days. When she visited the faculty team, called the Prince William Team 2005, she observed that their planning and teaching interactions were very different from hers and others in the program. She had conversations about the synergy of this faculty team and invited them to study their interactions through employing the tool of collective self-study. The study focuses directly on the ways in which the team perceives faculty collaboration fostering their professional development. It is presented through their voices and with a collective analysis by the research team.

3.1 Methodology

Our teaching team, Prince William, consisted of Mary and Karen, assistant professors with doctorates in Curriculum and Instruction; Leo, a former IET director with a doctorate in Sociology who is retired and now participates as an adjunct; and myself. We hold diverse personal perspectives on many issues as well as drawing from vastly different lived experiences and teaching contexts. However, our theoretical perspectives are similar in that we are all committed to fostering successful student learning. Our teaming capacity has developed over a year and a half as we have examined how we individually view teaching and learning and have constructed a blended, common understanding of our curriculum. We met bi-weekly to plan our 8-hour class days. A number of overlapping and complementary but historically distinct pedagogical perspectives contribute to the ideas that have guided our teaching team's work. Our curriculum-making has drawn primarily from Brookfield (1995) and Weimer (2002). We recognized that our individual strengths such as organizational approaches, curriculum design, adult development frameworks, knowledge of learning styles, and cooperative learning were complementary as we collaboratively constructed learning experiences for our 65 practicing K-12 teachers.

The team agreed to one-on-one semi-structured interviews of about one hour each, conducted by Dawn Renee Wilcox, a doctoral candidate Anastasia is in Educational Leadership program. Dawn Renee asked questions within three main domains: (1) our prior experiences in team teaching, (2) our perceptions of working on the team, and (3) our perceptions of self in relation to the team. Additionally, Mary was asked questions about how she understood her role as team leader, particularly as it related to inducting new faculty. Interviews were recorded using a digital voice recorder with audio taping as a back up. The computer transcribed the recording but Dawn Renee worked to clean the transcriptions for accuracy while she listened to the audio recording of each interview.

All research team members read the interviews and met to discuss their first impressions. As a research team, we met frequently to share our analysis of the interviews and to discuss the themes we identified. Dawn Renee created a data display of transcript statements coded in categories that was compared with faculty analysis and served to validate and check our themes. We collapsed and renamed themes that addressed the same findings and revisited transcripts to consider whether there was substantial support for other themes identified.

3.2 Findings of Study Two

The data analysis resulted in two overarching themes: 1) working together, and 2) layers of transparency. We agreed to use Weimer's (2000) conceptualization of learner-centered teaching as the theoretical framework on which to build. Furthermore, we constructed our understandings together and the outcome has been an integrated curriculum of critical pedagogy and learner-centered teaching. We negotiated amongst ourselves to find a workable place to situate our newly emerging sense of learner-centered teaching. We now share a language to theorize our work, even though we come from different disciplines, perspectives, and backgrounds.

3.2.1 Working together

Our team was formed to teach the Class of 2005. Mary had previously worked with two classes. She experienced different styles of collaboration and wanted to make this teaming experience explicit in terms of working styles, individual needs and preferences, and support for individual research interests. Leo had participated in five previous classes where he experienced different styles of collaboration and was committed to making our teaming experience productive and responsive to individual learning preferences so that each member could feel valued. He is appreciated by his teammates for

his role as program historian and mentor of their writing. Prior to Karen's arrival, Leo and Mary discussed the need to create an inviting and supportive team. Karen was hired only two weeks prior to our first summer two-week intensive session. She was committed to participating fully in our team even though she had a fast induction and had to work with an already formulated curriculum.

During this time, Mary and Leo worked to articulate the IET experience to Karen and to welcome her as a newcomer. From the beginning of our work as a team, there appeared to be a community of practice in which each of us was supported, valued, and mentored. Wenger (1998) states: "Newcomers must be granted enough legitimacy to be treated as potential members" (p. 101). Karen spoke of her entry into this academic community, of her need to be the right person and "not to disappoint them" and to "have something valuable to contribute." She remarked that "it's an environment that's easy to make mistakes in and easy to ask questions." We spent a great deal of time talking with each other about what each of us must have in order to feel valued and capable of producing high quality work.

3.2.2 Layers of transparency

This section describes our commitments to be transparent with one another through critical dialogue; learning preference tools; modeling our pedagogy to our students; and applying our new understandings in research and writing. Crafting shared expectations together deepened our respect and trust for one another and allowed us space and freedom to engage in our own professional development.

1. *Critical dialogue*. Critical dialogue was a central feature of our teaming collaborations. Our shared expectation as team members was that we would help each other analyze and formulate our arguments and ideas to deepen individual understandings. A strength of our team was the ability to hear and learn from each other and talk about pedagogy from our diverse perspectives. We valued the processes of critical dialogue. Mary said, "if Leo or Karen or I bring an idea to the table the three of us sit there and we play with it and we mold it and we shape it and we always to connect it back to … purpose." According to Leo, "it makes me feel like a valued member if I know both that I'll be listened to and that I'll be challenged." Karen reported "having looked at it through their eyes and really seeing it differently than I would have ever seen it on my own." Critical dialogue refined and moved our thinking forward, which we believe has made us more effective teachers and colleagues.

2. *Learning preference tools*. We often used learning preference tools to discuss our work and to acknowledge our individual contributions. We

used multiple learning preference tools (Myers-Briggs Type Indicator [MBTI], True Colors, Multiple Intelligences, and adult development), and these helped us understand each other more deeply. These tools allowed us to ask probing questions without offending each other as we grappled with our own and team understandings. For example, we used the MBTI in our teaching; this gave us a way as a team to talk about our preferences. Karen needed to be logical and linear. Leo preferred to write out a justification for an assignment before he talked about it. Mary liked to vary the learning experiences for the students and the organization of details for a class day. Without drawing upon these tools, individual preferences could have resulted in irritations during collaboration. Working within an explicit acknowledgement of our preferences created a safe environment for us to stretch, grow, and question ourselves as a new layer to our professional development.

3. *Modeling our pedagogy with students.* Together we used Weimer's (2000) writing on learner-centered teaching as a framework and language to craft pedagogy. Learner-centered pedagogy addresses the importance of making instructional decisions, processes, and feedback visible to students. We felt that we would be remiss not to share our collaborative processes and outcomes with our students. We are committed to modeling collaboration and action research on our teaching practices. Leo stated: "[W]e very much reflect the process because we will say this is what we're doing and let us tell you the conversations it took to get to this place…this is what we've agreed on and this is where we disagreed and these are the compromises." We overtly model the process for students because we want them to know that we are doing what we are asking them to do.

4. *Research and writing.* Early in our teaming experiences we talked about conducting joint research studies and writing about curriculum development. As a team, we systematically collected data to document our work; we frequently shared individual and collaborative writings with each other and gave each other productive feedback. We held ourselves accountable to the critical inquiry and reflection that we expected of our students. For example, we required our students to participate in writer's workshops on all of their written work; as a team we also supported each other's writing through critical feedback. Karen reported: "Leo challenges me to really take time to write and that's been a huge professional leap for me." Mary stated: "we are all very much aware of what each other is working on and we all also try to figure out how we can support each other." We consider the role of critical friends working in a safe environment essential to our professional goals and development.

3.3   Impact of Study Two on Faculty Professional Development

This study explored how one diverse collaborative faculty teaching team constructed a language of critical dialogue, used learning preferences, strove to model collaborative practices, and documented the impact of them on our professional development. An expectation of being critically reflective colleagues supported individual teaching, research, writing, and professional development. Through the process of creating a learner-centered curriculum to enhance students' professional development, we challenged our own assumptions, teaching methods and theoretical understandings. Through the process of modeling and studying our processes and sharing our thinking and decision-making about our curriculum, an unexpected element to our professional development emerged, namely, a finely crafted integrated curriculum of critical pedagogy and learner-centered teaching that substantially impacted our teaching, learning, and research agendas. This team collaboration has resulted in the development of new energy, direction, and voice in our learner-centered teaching.

4.   CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Collectively, the two studies provided important data to assess working in teams in teaching and teacher education. This beginning work highlights how working on teams encompasses professional renewal and informs program development. Inservice teaching teams practiced knowledge-building through action research, developed perspective-taking skills, and transferred their understandings of collaboration to their further educational endeavors. This research suggests that effective teamwork involves commitment to quality in curriculum development, a dedication to dialogue and critique, and a willingness to listen, value each other, and learn from and with each other. The two studies reveal that these components of effective teamwork pertain to both inservice teachers and university faculty. The fact that the components are articulated in the program's principles of practice and have been found to be useful in the practices of a sample of alumni and faculty draws attention to the need for more research in this area for program evaluation. Since both studies involved a cross-section of alumni and faculty, it is unclear whether these components are context specific or universal. Yet understanding how teams develop these components would be useful to other teams and worthy of further study.

As a constantly transforming program, we often talk about the many things we want for IET. We wonder how we can build upon the expertise of

our faculty both within a team and across teams to promote learning for teachers while we also build each other's teaching repertoire in a non-competitive atmosphere. Several faculty have noted that the program's resilience and sustainability is due to a strong foundational ideology that has withstood the challenges of having a diverse group of faculty. However, it is our contention that long-term resilience and sustainability of a collaborative program such as ours is possible only if we use effective collaborative processes to revisit, re-envision, and reconstruct a core set of beliefs and principles of practice regarding our collaboration and document our work in writings such as this one. The experience of the faculty team involved in Study Two indicates the power of that approach and the importance of continued study and program-wide sharing. We are encouraged by the support we offer each other in this exciting work. As we continue to learn, we have faith that the best *is* yet to come through collaboration.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PROGRAM RENEWAL

Clare Kosnik

The chapters in this section provide examples of large-scale program renewal. Moving beyond small innovations these authors describe programmatic changes they enacted or *attempted* to enact. Working at the more public, institutional level can be daunting and makes the researchers more vulnerable to criticism because they no longer have the privacy or safety of their individual courses. Yet each pursued their goals and efforts in the face of challenges including their own occasional self-doubts. Interestingly, all five of the teacher education programs described in this section were already strong, recognized as exemplary, and well received. None of these teacher educators was content, they wanted to continue to research in on-going cycles of inquiry and renewal. The chapters highlight some common challenges: resistance from colleagues, confusion on the part of students, revisions and motives being mis-interpreted, and unintended consequences that had both positive and negative effects. Each chapter has an honesty which at times is aching, yet the stories are inspiring.

In Helen Friedus's chapter she presents the findings from five years of research on the Reading and Literacy Program at Bank Street College of Education. She discovered that, although the program was highly endorsed by their students ,"given these laurels, we learned, nonetheless, that we were in no position to rest." She describes changes to both the structure and content of the program that she and her colleagues enacted to better suit the needs of the students, including making their goals more transparent.

Judith McVarish and Frances Rust's chapter describes their efforts to completely redesign both the academic and fieldwork components of the teacher education program at New York University. They took the bold

steps of reconceptualizing the program to be cohort-based which allowed them to work as a team of instructors, offering a highly integrated program. The initial response from their colleagues and students was less enthusiastic than they had hoped, but they went on to "unsquare" teacher education, eventually developing a highly innovative and effective program.

In Vicki LaBoskey's chapter she describes her work at Mills College, recognized as a leader in teacher education, with an extremely strong program. Yet LaBoskey chose to include a highly innovative assignment in her course, a modified version of the Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT) process. She describes how both she and her students made significant progress in constructing or re-constructing their identities as educators for social justice through the process of completing the assignment and participating in the accompanying discussions.

The John Loughran, Amanda Berry, and Libby Tudball chapter is a fine example of teacher educators continuing their research on the graduates of a program, in this case at Monash University. They wanted to determine the impact of their innovations, in particular micro-teaching and the accompanying reflective activities, on the practices of their beginning teachers. In their description of the revisions to the course, which required students to work outside their comfort zone, they indicate how the supportive community enabled students to strengthen their knowledge of the teaching-learning process. The follow-up study showed that the beginning teachers felt a high degree of preparedness.

The Kosnik and Beck chapter presents a study of graduates from their OISE/UT elementary teacher education program. They wanted to determine the impact of the program on the graduates' practices as literacy teachers and on their literacy programs. Although the beginning teachers had strong praise for the preservice program there were some troubling findings, in particular, the excessive demands placed on the new teachers and the lack of support from their local school districts. The authors describe some of the changes they implemented in their teacher education program to better meet the needs of beginning teachers, and their difficult decision not to address other concerns.

Chapter 11

THROUGH A MURKY MIRROR
Self Study of a Program in Reading and Literacy

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Abstract: For the past five years we have been examining the Reading and Literacy
         Program at Bank Street College of Education. Motivated by a mandated New
         York State recertification process, NCATE and Middle States certification
         processes, and, most of all, by our own desire to prepare our students to meet
         the needs of children in today's classrooms, we have been looking closely at
         the form and content of our program. The guiding questions have been: Do
         the values and practices that shape a teacher education program grounded in
         progressive theory stand today's students in good stead? What needs to be
         preserved? What needs to be changed? These questions have become ever
         more compelling as our vision of good teaching has been increasingly
         challenged by a climate of increasing standardization.

1.   CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

In October 1930, Lucy Sprague Mitchell instituted a program of teacher
education at the Bureau of Educational Experiments at 69 Bank Street in
New York City. Describing this program that later became the Bank Street
College of Education, Mitchell wrote:

> Our aim is to help students develop a scientific attitude towards their
> work and toward life. To us this means an attitude of eager, alert
> observations, a constant questioning of old procedure in the light of new
> observations, a use of the world as well as of books as source material; an

experimental open-mindedness; and an effort to keep as reliable records as the situation permits in order to base the future upon actual knowledge of the experiences of the past.

Our aim is equally to help students develop and express the attitude of the artist towards their work and towards life. To us this means an attitude of relish, of emotional drive, a genuine participation in some creative phase of work, and a sense that joy and beauty are legitimate possessions of all human beings young and old. We are not interested in perpetuation of any special "school of thought." Rather, we are interested in imbuing teachers with an experimental, critical and ardent approach to their work. If we accomplish this, we are ready to leave the future of education to them. (Antler, p. 309)

These concepts, echoed in the work and writings of faculty and researchers over the years, form the basis of what is known in today's parlance, as the Bank Street "discourse community" (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Putnam and Borko, 2000). Faculty and students share a belief that the process of learning is socially constructed. Professional understandings, habits of mind, practices emerge and are framed and reframed through interaction with others.

The core values of inquiry, connection, collaboration, reflection, and advocacy, articulated during the recent NCATE accreditation process, have been unanimously accepted by faculty as underlying all graduate school programs. However, it is important to note that some faculty approach these terms through the lens of progressive education (Dewey 1929/60, 1933/98, 1938/63; Counts, 1939); others through the lens of psychoanalytic theory (Biber, 1984; Coles, 1988; Nager and Shapiro, 2000); still others through feminist theory (Belenky et.al., 1986; Gilligan, 1982); others through the lens of anthropology (Geertz, 1995), and still others through such lenses as critical theory (Foucault, 1997; Freire, 1984; Rorty, 1982), multiculturalism (Moll and Greenberg, 1990; Nieto, 2004; Sleeter, 1996), and philosophy (Greene, 1978; Noddings, 1992). The list of perspectives could continue infinitely. In short, faculty members may share these core values but they give diverse interpretations to them. As a result the discussions exploring the implications of these values and how they translate into good practice are invariably both rigorous and vigorous.

What is fully shared is the belief that dialogue and reflection are essential components of effective teaching. In the words of one faculty member:

It has always seemed to me that my job as a faculty member -- in all of my roles -- is to get students to think more deeply about their experiences and the not-so-obvious implications of their actions and the actions of

others, and to examine problems and issues from as many perspectives as possible. Graduate study would seem to have these (reflective) activities as its center (Schmerler, interview, 2001).

Program content and even perspectives have changed over the years as dialogue with students, colleagues, and teachers in the field, as well as the findings of current research have become integrated with earlier beliefs and practices. What has remained constant is the belief that direct instruction in specific skills, concepts and attitudes should be a secondary rather than a primary means of instruction.   Transformative teaching (Freire, 1984) continues to trump direct instruction in Bank Street discourse and practice.

1.1   The Bank Street College Reading and Literacy Program

It is within this greater context that the Bank Street College Reading/Literacy Program was started in 1980. From its inception, the program has been shaped by the philosophy of the institution, the requirements of the New York State certification agency, and the needs and interests of its students and their students. In the first year, only three students participated in the program. Today, our number of participating students exceeds to sixty. Originally the program served only pre-service teachers; today the program offers credentials to pre-service and in-service teachers at both the Masters and post Masters level of preparation. Our students range in age from twenty-two to fifty. Some have just completed undergraduate studies; some are career changers; some are veteran teachers seeking a greater depth of understanding about how to help their students become effective and even avid readers and writers.

The discourse of the program, like that of the mother institution, is enriched and shaped by the experiences, interests, and perspectives of diverse populations. Underlying this is a vision of literacy as a holistic process, the integration of reading, writing and language development. Effective practice is "balanced" with a vision of the child as the fulcrum and skills instruction measured out as needed to support the strengths, needs, learning style and experience Consequently instruction needs to be focused on individuals and small groups, as well as the whole class.

As national, state, and local conversations around the nature of effective literacy education have become more complex and the requirements for literacy teachers have become more prescriptive –what teachers need to know, how they should teach, and how they should be taught— members of our program consider it important to return to Mitchell's directive and reconsider what it means to imbue in teachers an "attitude of eager, alert

observations, a constant questioning of old procedure in the light of new observations, a use of the world as well as of books as source material". It has never been enough to believe in a philosophy of practice, be it teacher education or classroom practice. As Mitchell says, one must always gather evidence to document the effectiveness of this belief system.

2.   METHODOLOGY

The goal of this study was to reexamine the story of our teaching and our students' learning. And so we turned to narrative inquiry (Bruner, 1986; Clandinin and Connelly, 1995) in hopes that we would thus be able to capture information that was both complex and nuanced. According to Lyons and LaBoskey (2002), narrative inquiry is socially and contextually situated. As such, it would be consonant with Bank Street beliefs and practices. Neither appropriative nor reductionist, narrative research describes practice in terms that make sense to the insiders whose world is being studied as well as to outsiders who seek to understand this world and its implications. Narrative inquiry requires the investigator to interrogate the experience, to probe beneath the surface of common words and practices to understand the how and why of what transpires. And, essential for our purposes, narrative acknowledges the relevance of those involved, seeing the individuals as directly related to the teaching / learning outcome.

The narrative process would allow us to look closely at ourselves, our students, our practices, and the inter-relations between these. We would be able to examine whether our beliefs were consistent with our practices, and whether they proved effective when our teachers tried to implement them in diverse contexts. Since we were conducting this study primarily to improve our own practice, we shaped it as a self-study in narrative form (Bullough and Pinnegar, 2004; Loughran, 2004).

To this end, a variety of data-generating instruments were used. These included:

- Surveys administered in 1996-97 to 150 alumnae of the Bank Street Reading and Literacy Program
- Mid-year and end-of the year written feedback forms completed by students during their years of supervised fieldwork (1998-2002)
- Field notes from conferences held monthly between students and faculty advisors / supervisors
- Conversations held within the context of weekly conference groups (seminars) held throughout the fieldwork years 1998-2002

In addition, we drew upon reports of classroom visits to students and alumni in which their work had been documented through field notes and videotape (2000 -2001). We talked - formally and informally - with our colleagues, our students, administrators, and community members. We coded data, identified emergent patterns and sought triangulation across the data collection. We compared our findings with literature in the field to extend our categories and place our interpretations in a larger context. Throughout the process, we worked hard to tease out our biases and assumptions, to try to figure out what works, or at least, what words and practices are most effective in supporting students and teachers who work and learn in these very challenging times and places.

3.   FINDINGS

The pivotal question in any self-study inquiry is a response to the question: Has the information acquired from this research had an impact on the researchers' practices as teacher educators that of their programs? In a paper published in _Reflective Practice,_ Clare Kosnik (2001) describes her experience redesigning and implementing an inquiry oriented teacher education program. Considering herself to be a reflective practitioner, she anticipated that her findings would primarily involve relatively minor adjustments to course content. As she began to study her work, she found that the gaps between her own theory and practice were greater than anticipated. And so, she learned that she had work to do. At Bank Street, we, too, have found that we have work to do.

Speaking for myself, I can say without equivocation that conducting the research and the emergent findings have had a significant effect on who I am as a teacher educator, how I think about my work, and how I craft my practice. And like any good inquiry project, both the conduct of the research and the articulation of findings have generated a host of new questions.

3.1   What We Learned: The Strengths We Bring

Self-study research is about identifying existing strengths as well as pinpointing places for improvement. Therefore, let me begin by sharing some of the findings about effective structures that the data suggest are working as intended.

3.1.1   The Advisement Process at Bank Street

Most significant among the findings in this category is the enduring value and importance of the structure of advisement/supervision at Bank Street. Enduring sounds like a corny term. However, when one considers that the basic structure of the advisement process was first shaped in 1916, the term seems quite appropriate. Advisement process refers to the components of the year of supervised fieldwork required in all Bank Street programs. Strongly influenced by Dewey's writing, Bank Street has continued to emphasize the individuality of each learner as well as the building of community. In the advisement process, a dialogical model supplants the traditional "banking" structures of education (Freire, 1984). It was here that researchers were able to find evidence that the core values (inquiry, connection, collaboration, reflection, and advocacy) do shape practice in ways that are described as meaningful by both faculty and students.

Each of the three components of fieldwork works separately and collectively to "operationalize" these values.

1. **Classroom Supervision:** Fieldwork supervisors are called advisors at Bank Street. They observe and coach teachers and student teachers as they work in the classroom. The coaching takes place within the context of a conversation designed to engage the student in a reflective process. The long-range goal of this coaching is to move the locus of critique from advisor to student. Through the conversations that ensue, students are encouraged to articulate their intended goals, reflect on the design and implementation of their lessons, consider the ways in which the lessons they designed and implemented were successful and/or unsuccessful, and -- of course-- how they might do things differently next time.

2. **Individual Conferences**: Advisors also meet with their advisees in regularly scheduled individual conferences in which there is an opportunity to discuss a broader range of topics. Discussions draw upon but are not limited to experiences in the classroom. These conferences provide a safe forum for exploring and linking personal and professional issues and concerns. They provide an opportunity for faculty to help teachers and student teachers to examine the ways in which their personal knowledge and experience can be used to support their professional goals. Most important of all, these conferences provide an opportunity for building relationships between advisor and student and establishing the kind of trust that promotes risk taking and exploration.

3. **Conference Group**: In addition to the dyadic structures of conferences, the advisement process includes conference group. Conference group is a weekly seminar in which each faculty advisor meets together throughout the fieldwork year with his or her five to seven advisees. In these

seminars, students engage in extended conversations about past and present classroom experiences as both teacher and learner. The faculty advisor's role in this process is that of facilitator. Here, the goal is to nurture the formation of a group of critical friends engaged in a collaborative process of reflective practice. In conference group the interconnections of personal and professional issues serve as the grist for professional development. Participants are given an opportunity to engage in a model of "critical" support that can be taken with them to the work site.

In the Reading and Literacy Program, conference groups are composed of both Masters and Post-Masters candidates. We find that these mixed groups enable new teachers to pose important questions, questions that encourage veterans to reflect upon, explain, and often question their own practice. Likewise, veteran teachers tell stories and pose questions that compel new teachers to examine their emerging beliefs and practices. As participants reflect upon and critique their colleagues' work as well as their own, they begin to assume responsibility for their own professional development and resources for that of their peers.

Much of the conversation in conference group focuses on individual children. Motivated by the caring and concern of their colleagues, teachers revisit their instruction and the ways in which children respond to it. At its best, these conversations enable teachers to consider the behavior of children, parents, and even colleagues from new perspectives, to modify their responses, and to develop a sense of advocacy for the children and families with whom they work.

The length of advisement - a full year of supervised fieldwork experience - and the fact that students work with a single advisor/supervisor and a single conference group over the course of that year was identified as a program strength across the data. The year-long relationship provides time for advisors/supervisors to build a safe context in which assessment and instruction can be intrinsically linked… for teachers as well as for children. Seeing their students over time and across settings, advisors are better able to identify the personal and experiential strengths that their advisees bring to the field. And so, advisors are better able to shape their feedback to mesh with the personal styles, knowledge bases and classroom realities. "Her focus and her knowledge were so important. But she always managed to listen to the "whole me" and what "I" was bringing to the work." (Alumni survey, 1997).

Given the gift of time, advisors feel more able to resist the urge to press for a particular set of classroom practices. They are more willing to trust that their advisees will discover practices that are effective for themselves and the students in their classes. The length of advisement enables advisors

to assume the stance of experienced colleagues and mentors, encouraging and supporting students in their professional development rather than engaging in a transmission model of instruction.

> My advisor helped me to navigate, negotiate, and understand the more traditional framework of the third grade in which I was doing my fieldwork. ...Years later I came to understand how valuable this experience was. (Alumnae questionnaire, 2000)

Moreover, the extended time frame of advisement enables teachers and student teachers to develop instructional practices that are theory based and pedagogically sound. They are able to explore their own resources, to compare their instructional ideas with the models espoused or practiced by their advisors and their cooperating teachers, to choose to implement models that make sense to them , and to reflect on the validity of these models in a safe and sheltered setting. Informed by the process, they come to better understand classroom complexity. Over time, they learn to analyze children's needs and match them to curriculum demands. They come to discover that, as Dewey (1933) wrote so many years ago, child-centered, curriculum-centered, and standards-based instruction are not mutually exclusive approaches.

The data also indicated that the roles faculty play as advisors is seen as a program strength. A pervasive theme in both popular and academic literature is the schism between practical knowledge (teachers) and academic knowledge (professors). Academics, it is commonly said, have little knowledge of the real world of classrooms. In contrast, advisors have high credibility among teachers; they are seen as valuable resources both during the fieldwork year and after graduation. Most advisors at Bank Street have been teachers. All are faculty members, teaching courses and/or conducting research. As a result, advisors look at research and theory through a range of lenses that help students to construct bridges between their course work and their field experience. Advisors encourage students not only to reflect after the fact, but help them to engage in reflection - in - action (Schon, 1983), as they become increasingly conscious of the choices they make and the rationale for these choices.

Going into classrooms on an ongoing basis, advisors cannot but see how social, cultural, and economic forces impact on classroom realities. As a result they feel the pressure for their course content to be relevant to the realities that students encounter. The culture of advisement pushes faculty to rethink their courses: the theorists they teach, the pedagogies through which they teach, and the examples they use to make the theory come to life. At its best, the process is dynamic for both students and faculty alike. In the words of one faculty member:

Everything I do in my work at Bank Street influences how I see things and what I believe is important. I don't think I ever teach my course the same way twice. I don't think any of us do. (Faculty member, personal communication, March, 2002)

Going into many classrooms also enables faculty to identify differences in school cultures and to recognize the ways in which these differences can support or compromise teachers' ability to work as professionals and develop curriculum that meets the needs of diverse learners. This knowledge enables them to work with teachers to recognize the complex forces that impact on student learning and to guide teachers as they share their experiences in conference group. The data suggest that supported by both advisors and by conference group members, teachers feel more comfortable in venturing beyond that which is safe, For example, they are more likely to question why some practices that are supported or even required by school policy do not always work. Thus, the data suggest that the advisement supports teachers' ability to work as advocates for the children they teach.

3.2   What We Learned: "And Miles to Go Before We Sleep" (Frost, 1923)

Given these laurels, we learned, nonetheless, that we were in no position to rest. From Bank Street's inception the goals of the advisement process have been to help teachers to understand and engage in: 1) teaching that is well informed by theory and research, 2) teaching that is systematic, reflective, and learner-centered, 3) teaching that makes a contribution toward social change. We found that courses and the advisement process together helped students to be aware of and implement practice that is informed by theory and research. We found that the advisement process also helped students to become more reflective and to consider in ways in which their instructional practice could be both systematic and child-centered. We also confirmed that advisement continues to provide a forum for raising issues related to social change. Nonetheless, we found that we could do more to support teachers in addressing these goals.

3.2.1   Systematic, Reflective Teaching

According to Cambourne (1999), the systematic teacher can explain in confident and coherent ways why he or she chooses specific teaching and learning activities and processes, and how such activities facilitate their students' learning. Systematic teachers have a thorough knowledge of

materials, content, pedagogy, and systematic teaching gives evidence of careful planning that draws on this knowledge base.

However, systematic teachers are not always learner-centered. Teachers can provide articulate rationales for their practice but fail to take into account the strengths, needs, interests, and "funds of knowledge" (Moll and Greenberg, 1990) of the children they teach. Their instruction may be invariant and lacking in context specific nuance. These teachers may not know how to adapt lessons to the needs of children with special needs or – for that matter-special strengths. When this happens, their instructional choices may make sense from a curriculum vantage point. It may be logical and well thought out regarding both the content and the form in which that content is delivered; nonetheless, it is unlikely to be effective with all of the students in their classroom.

Conversely, teachers can be learner-centered without being systematic. They may be sensitive to the strengths and needs of the children with whom they work and bring in materials that support their cultures and experiences. Yet, they may not know how to present these materials in ways that support students' acquisition of the specific strategies and skills that are needed to be independent learners. These t teachers may not know how to analyze students' strengths and needs and select instructional goals and strategies with these needs in mind.

 According to Cambourne and Dewey (1938) before him, teachers must be both systematic and learner-centered if they are going to be effective. It is not a question of whether teachers should focus on the child or the curriculum; both are essential. And, in addition, teachers need to engage in an ongoing process of reflection, interrogating their own practice, considering how students respond and adjusting their instruction as needed. The reflective process is an essential component in making systematic, content informed instruction pedagogically sound.

We thought that Bank Street was doing an excellent job of fostering the reflective process with our students. In many cases, we found this to be true. However, the data suggested there was still room for improvement. Reflective practice has always been a fundamental part of the Bank Street ethos. We assumed that when students chose to come to Bank Street –and most of our population does self-select- that they did so because they understood and valued reflective practice. We could not understand then why the work of some students gave so little evidence of reflection. Were their lives too crowded? Were they unwilling to put forth the time and effort? The data provided one explanation: not all students understood the relevance of reflection to effective teaching. And, some espoused the value but did not know how to engage in the process.

It became clear that not all students were starting at the same point.. The following statement reminds us how careful we need to be about assuming our values are understood and shared by all students.

I tried to strengthen Henry's[1] decoding and comprehension by encouraging his metacognition and self-reflection. In the process, I came to realize that my own self-reflection as a teacher is a crucial part of literacy instruction. I needed to review my instruction and the results, and to double-check strategies and devise new ones as necessary.

I now think that ongoing self-reflection is as important as assessment and instruction. Without analyzing my methods and style concurrently with the child's, I would be unable to gain knowledge about his learning style. The necessity for self-reflection in the field of education is especially fascinating for me because my past experience in business and in business school did not require or even allow for it. (Student Paper, 11/01)

The author of these comments is a woman in her late thirties, a career changer who holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Ivy League institutions. She is articulate, thoughtful, and has been highly successful in her school and career endeavors. However, none of this success had required the kind of metacognitive involvement that we see as an inherent part of reflective teaching.

We realized that career expertise and/or previous academic studies do not always facilitate the reflective process. To the contrary, they may serve as deterrents. Many students come from academic cultures and/or disciplines in which they have been carefully taught to separate their personal and professional voices, to evaluate and critique within a narrow set of guidelines. In many schools success and failure is determined by performance on standardized tests. Hence, there is little incentive for them to be reflective. For these men and women, the challenge is not only to learn a new habit of mind but to unlearn an old one, one that has heretofore given them success and esteem in their own eyes and those of the communities in which they work and live.

The research has helped us to see the ways in which prior experience can pose significant obstacles to the development of reflective practice. Most importantly, it showed us that our assumptions about shared understanding have been hampering our ability to meet our goals and the goals of our students. We came to see that we needed to be more explicit about what we

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[1] *Henry refers to the student with whom she was working in a reading practicum.*

mean by reflection and why we see it as important before we could be successful in our efforts to help teachers to link reflection and instruction on an ongoing basis.

We also found a second factor that contributed to what we had described as more limited reflection by many students. Today's students lead lives that are more complex than those led by students who came to Bank Street in times past. For many years, graduate students at Bank Street were full-time students. Their daily work focused almost solely on their graduate school experience. Today, our students cover a wide range of ages. Many are career changers and/or parents. In addition to their course work and fieldwork, they hold down supplementary jobs and/or shoulder family responsibilities. For those for whom reflection is not a natural bent, the time and energy required to step back and reflect is hard to come by. We realized that when we became more explicit about what we mean by reflective practice and why we see it as so closely related to effective teaching, students were more willing to engage in the process.

When we began to reflect on these findings, we found that the need to be more explicit extended beyond advisement to our course work. There is a great deal of learning by doing at Bank Street; little time is devoted to lecture. "Show, don't tell" is a premise of course instruction. For example, in a reading course designed to extend teachers' knowledge of instructional strategies that promote comprehension, we may give teachers a choice of short readings and ask them to apply the comprehension strategies they are learning about to their own reading process. They compare notes with small groups of colleagues, discuss what worked for each of them , and make connections to literature they have read to explain why these strategies were successful.

Our data suggested that this was not enough. We had assumed that students would recognize the links between their experiences in doing these activities and the experiences their students were having. And many did. Many survey and interview responses spoke positively about the ways in which faculty set up learning situations for graduate students that modeled the practices they were studying. They identified the parallels between their own learning process and the learning of the children in the classes with whom they worked. However, many others did not grasp this connection. And so, here too, we saw that we needed to be more explicit about our own instructional decisions.

We needed to name the elements of good practice and ask our students to reflect on the connections between their learning process, that of their peers, and that of the students with whom they worked. We needed to allow time to deconstruct our lessons, to invite students to identify what kinds of instructional strategies we were using, to hypothesize why we had chosen

these strategies, and to articulate the ways in which similar strategies might promote the understanding of the children with whom they worked. We discovered that implicit modeling does not promote understanding for all students.

3.2.2   Goal Setting

Our data also pointed out a second area in which our practice needed to become more explicit and systematic: teaching students how to identify and implement appropriate goals. Just as we had assumed that graduate students came to Bank Street valuing reflection and knowing how to reflect, we also assumed that they valued and knew how to set goals and work toward the attainment of these goals. We saw our task to be one of teaching students how to apply this process to their work in the classroom. We learned that our assumptions were not always valid. Many students arrived with little or no experience in constructing goals for themselves. One student's words captured a message that recurred across our data.

> You asked what was my greatest surprise in this program. It was when you asked me what were my goals for the next month. In all my academic career, I had never been asked that question. I have always been told what I should accomplish and how. When you said those words, I froze. I thought, " It's her role to tell me. Why isn't she doing her job?" Then I realized this is what I have always said I wanted, and I really panicked. (Student communication, 2/96).

This student, like many others, knew how to comply with the goals set by others, but she did not know how to look at a body of knowledge and set goals for herself. She had no prior experience to draw upon when she was asked to identify goals for her students.

Once again our assumptions were limiting our ability to help students learn what they needed to know. And so, we decided to become more systematic in including the process of setting goals within the advisement process. We began to define points throughout the fieldwork year when we would ask students to set long and short-term goals for their own learning as well as that of their students. We also worked on consistently using the term "goal" in our practice. In a post observation conference, we had always asked: "What did you hope the children would learn?" Now we worked to reiterate this by adding: "What was the goal of this lesson?" The hope was that for some we would help them to name what they were already doing, for others, we would help them to recognize the importance of engaging in the process of focusing their instruction in ways that would identify both curriculum objectives and student needs.

Not so surprisingly, we also found that our own course work could benefit from more clearly articulated goals. We began to talk about how we could construct course sessions in which activities and discussion were clearly focused around goals that were identified and shared. One strategy that has proven to be effective is to state the sessions goal on an overhead that is shown at the beginning of the session. We revisit the overhead as the class is concluding. Students are then invited to discuss whether the goals have been met and what instructional choices contributed to or compromised achievement of these goals. Explicit connections are then made to students' own practice.

When we stopped blaming students for the vagueness of their goals and began working with them to learn how to set goals, we found the change was significant. While specific references to the importance of planning and goal setting were absent in students' discussions of their goals at the beginning of the year, by mid-year over 85% of the respondents made reference to long and/or short-term planning. Logs that documented students' ongoing work with children also demonstrated a growing ability to select activities that supported the their goals. Clear goals and guided instruction appear to support learning in higher education just as they do in the elementary classroom.

3.2.3   Building a Common Discourse

Another area in which we found we could do a better job of making our own practice more systematic was in the clarity of the terms we used to express our beliefs and practices. As a department we have long shared a common philosophy and, to a large extent, believed in the importance of a common set of instructional practices. However, the research indicated that we were not using common terminology to identify those beliefs and practices. And, conversely, it suggested that there were times when we used common terms, particularly the catchwords of the day, e.g., "guided reading" or "balanced approach to literacy", in idiosyncratic ways. These idiosyncrasies and the conceptual vagueness that ensued were confusing our students. It made it difficult for many of them to link experiences from course to course, course to fieldwork, fieldwork to course. Now, the fault was not all ours. The language of literacy is rife with inconsistencies, definitions of terms and practices that vary from author to author, practitioner to practitioner. However understandable though our dialogical practices might be, the outcome was interfering with the learning process of many students.

As a result we have endeavored to clarify our own beliefs, practices, and the language that we use to describe these beliefs and practices. We take

time in program meetings to clarify our terminology. We are more prone to ask each other, "What do you mean by that?" We are working to make language and pedagogy more consistent across courses and fieldwork in order that the instruction our students receive may be more systematic. An interesting outcome of these efforts has been that in seeking to enhance our students' professional development, we have enhanced our own as well.

3.2.4   Teaching for Social Change

Many at Bank Street would say that the measure of our success is the extent to which we and our students make a contribution to social change. And, here on a both a macro and a micro level, the data suggests that we can do a better job. On the micro level, there is the pedagogy that we explicitly teach. If we believe that there is no one right way to meet the literacy needs of all students, then it follows that there is no one right way to meet the needs of all literacy teachers and student teachers. Grounded in the culture of a progressive institution of teacher education, we tend to have a shared vision of appropriate classroom practice. Our interactions shape the questions we ask, how we think and express ideas, and the goals we set for our students. And yet, there are many, many classrooms in which there a different vision of effective practice. And while this vision may conflict with ours, many students in these classrooms become successful readers and writers.

With this in mind, it becomes evident that it is not our role to impose our vision, but to help students understand what we value and why. Then, our charge is to help them become the best teachers they can according to their own vision, teachers who are willing to grapple with hard questions, listen to conflicting opinions, and articulate and implement their own way of being in the classroom. We as well as our students benefit from engaging together in reflective dialogue. The challenge is this: to separate expert from expertise, acknowledging what each participant knows, working together to learn from and with each other, moving beyond the traditional power structures in search of new and better ways to meet the needs of all learners.

On a macro level, across the data our students talk very little about teaching for social change. In part this may be in response to the ways in which the inquiry was framed, but it is also likely that this is at least partially due once again to a lack of explicitness in our professional discourse. Caring, connection, and reflection are essential components of social change, but they do not automatically lead to the necessary outcomes. Consequently if we hope to achieve this goal, we need to bring this discourse to the foreground, to help teachers become aware of their roles in the process of change or in the perpetuation of the status quo.

> (The teacher's) intentions will inevitably be affected by the assumptions she makes regarding human nature and human possibilities. Many of these assumptions are hidden, most have never been articulated. Is she is to achieve clarity and full consciousness, the teacher must attempt to make such assumptions explicit, for only then can they be examined, analyzed and understood (Greene, 1978, p. 69).

We need to help teachers see that it is in the classroom children learn a way of being in the world. In order to work for social change, they and we must be explicit about the ways in which we work and how these ways impact upon our students now and in the future, making decisions that mediate this goal.

4.   CONCLUSION

We began this study with the goal of examining our own practice. Do the values and practices we espouse make sense in today's world? Are we serving our students as best we can? The answers appear to be yes, but a qualified yes. There are specific ways in which we can improve. The most significant of these has to do with examining our assumptions, the very thing we are always cautioning our students to do. The data is very clear that when we stop blaming our students for not learning and begin to teach them what they need to know, we are much more likely to be successful. The second finding centers around the need to be explicit. Discovery teaching is an essential part of our practice. However, all too often discovery learning does not provide the opportunity for naming that which has been discovered. There are aspects of our work that can be improved when they are named and explicitly discussed. These include what we mean by reflective practice, how we use goals to inform our teaching, and most important of all, how we work for social change as a part of our everyday practice.

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Chapter 12

UNSQUARING TEACHER EDUCATION:
RESHAPING TEACHER EDUCATION IN THE CONTEXT OF A RESEARCH I UNIVERSITY

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Abstract: In this chapter, we analyze a new undergraduate teacher education program as an example of an educational innovation in higher education. We use the geometric tangram puzzle – a puzzle of seven pieces that always begins as a perfect square – as a metaphor for the program. In using the tangram metaphor and rearranging the pieces to make the shapes that are part of the puzzle itself: square, parallelogram, and triangle, we argue that teacher education is more than a random array of parts: Construed as a meaningful whole, the parts are open to a variety of arrangements which might be seen as adaptive and essential to the shaping of practice in various contexts. We see in this work implications for reform in teacher education as well as in teaching and, ultimately, in schools.

1.   CONTEXT FOR STUDY

Most teacher education programs at Research I institutions emphasize and are organized around what the university is good at – courses, and what it rewards – research (Barnes, 1989). In teacher education, course work tends to focus on content knowledge and pedagogy with varying amounts of time given to field experience. In many programs, full-time faculty are generally few in number and are engaged in on-campus activities – program administration and/or oversight, teaching, and research. Part-time faculty, usually adjuncts and graduate students, are engaged on campus as course instructors and off campus as student teaching supervisors. The two faculty

groups rarely meet beyond general orientation and information-sharing sessions. Program goals are articulated in handbooks but are not explored in terms of their implications for curriculum and practice. Who students are when they come into the program, how their lived experience figures in their understandings of teaching and learning, how the contexts of the university and school communities affect preservice students and the teacher education faculty – these and similar issues that get at the *tacit knowledge* (Rust, 1999) of teachers are rarely sought after or explicitly addressed as an integral part of teacher education.

A typical teacher education program, looks like a tangram puzzle arranged as a square (see Figure 1). Content and pedagogy occupy half of the program matrix while the other half of the program includes its aims, field experience, students' stories of self, the context of the program, and the ways in which success and progress are evaluated.

FIGURE 1 – DESIGN FOR A TYPICAL TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM
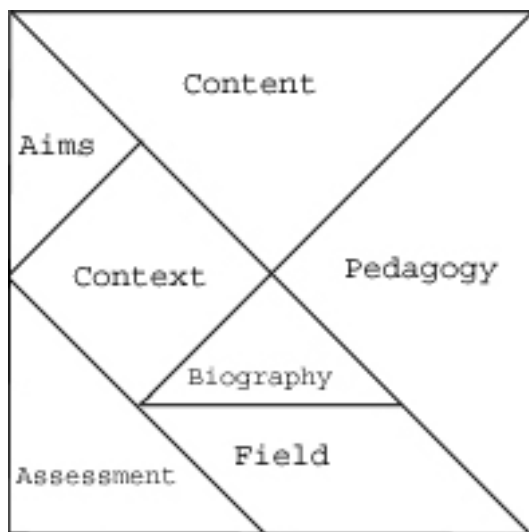
Questions and assessments that emerge from such program constructions rarely focus on the field and on graduates' ability to enact the methods and live into the theories that were postulated and expounded in the teacher education program.

Our experience as teacher educators and our reading of research on the development of expertise (Berliner, 1988) and teacher professional growth (Day, 1999) has led us to consider a radical redesign of teacher education – an un-squaring of the tangram. We can see a variety of ways of doing this. One way would be to look at it through the lens of assessment (see Figure 2) – both self-assessment and programmatic assessment. Thus, as Figure 2 shows, the program would take on the form of an isosceles triangle in which content and pedagogy are aligned on one half of the triangle and the affective, interactive, and reflective aspects of teacher education are aligned on the other half but in a different relationship from that of the square. Here, assessment touches all aspects of the program. The questions that emerge from this arrangement focus on how effectively each facet of the program plays out in the program, whether and how each contributes to the whole, and how well the needs of the various stakeholders in the teacher education enterprise are being met.

FIGURE 2 – DESIGN FOR AN ASSESSMENT-BASED TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM
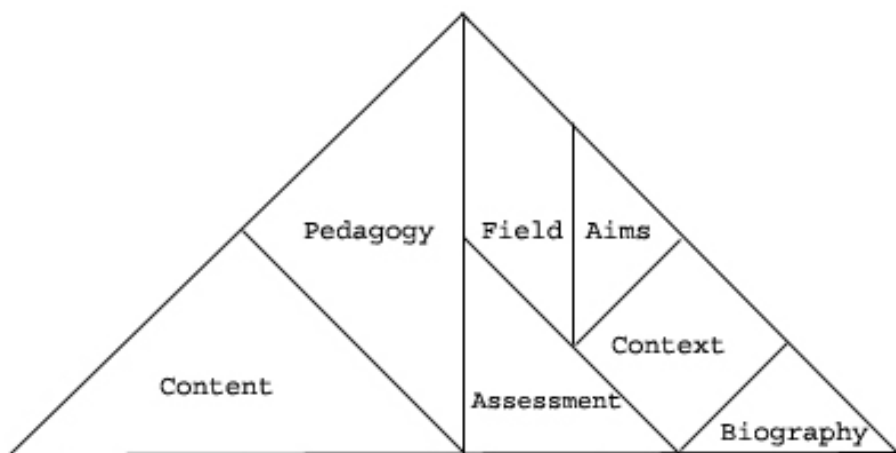
This assessment-based design is consistent with our understanding of constructivist theory, that is, that knowledge is constructed by individuals within social communities. Further, we understand learning as situated

(Rogoff and Lave, 1984), informed by experience (Dewey, 1904), and shaped by the context in which it takes place (Wertsch, 1991). Increasingly, such engagement is understood as critical to teachers' professional development and, ultimately, to the success of educational reform (Thompson and Zeuli, 1999).

When professional development is considered as encompassing the span of a teacher's career, engaging preservice teachers in habits of mind that promote thoughtful interaction and reflection become essential. Lampert (1999) describes this process as "communicating between the inside and the outside of practice" (p. 175). It involves looking deeply at oneself and at what one sees in classrooms and communicating in ways that enable reflection – not as a mirroring but as an exploration of meaning and as a spur to action (Schön, 1987). Student teaching supervisors, cooperating teachers, and teacher education faculty who are meaningfully in touch with student teachers' course- and field-work can play critical roles in helping student teachers to interpret experiences in the field and to discern underlying constants that will enable them to "solve complex problems of practice" (Darling-Hammond, 1999) irrespective of whether they encountered the same problems earlier in their experience.

Rust (1999) suggests that teachers who emerge from such preparation programs make the transition into their own classrooms and into the teaching profession with a degree of equanimity and with an openness to learning that marks them not as new novices or even as advanced beginners but as those whom Berliner (1988) describes as "competent teachers":

> They make conscious choices about what they are going to do. They set priorities and decide on plans. . . . They often feel emotional about success and failure in a way that is different and more intense than that of novices or advanced beginners. And they have more vivid memories of their successes and failures as well. (p. 42)

For teacher educators, creating such programs implies a radical rethinking of the curriculum and practice of teacher education as well as a different stance toward teaching and learning. Additionally, such a re-visioning calls for coherent standards of practice in the academy and for the discipline of reflection to guide instruction as well as program development. It is this latter aspect of teacher education that we focus on in this chapter.

2.1 Designing Teacher Education around the Discipline of Reflection

Following from our commitment to social constructivist pedagogy, we took advantage of changes in the New York State certification requirements

in 2000 to develop a new undergraduate elementary teacher education program at New York University. This integrated program is organized as a community of inquiry in which the learner is the focus. In this setting, learners and faculty come together to change the shape of the learning model for teachers from one-size-fits-all to an organic and ecological model of growth and development.

The new program differs from the old program in a number of important ways:

1. The new program requires 100 hours of field experience prior to the junior year.
2. This field experience is concurrent with and part of courses in educational foundations and human development.
3. Student progress is assessed holistically each semester with a portfolio that is designed to bring course work and field work together and to support self-assessment
4. Beginning in the junior year, students choose their education focus and form into a cohort who begins and finishes the program together
5. All but four of the students' teacher education courses in the junior and senior years make up an integrated curriculum that is taught in an all-day-Friday seminar
6. The program leads ultimately to teaching certifications in both elementary education (grades 1-6) and special education (grades 1-6).

This new program is taught by a handful of Department tenure-line faculty and adjuncts who meet together weekly to plan for the Friday seminar. We stay together with the students throughout the day on Friday, and several of us supervise the students in their student teaching sites. Simultaneous with the Friday seminar, students are in the field 3 half days per week during their junior year and 6 half days per week during the senior year. We hoped that this arrangement of field experience and course work would enable students to develop understandings of learning and teaching that would draw from their reservoirs of experience as students, their classroom observations as preservice students, and the theories, research, and practices promulgated in their teacher education courses. Further, we hoped that the experience would lead our students to become engaged in the professional discourse of teaching. We also saw the assignments that we would develop and the assessments that students would complete over time as critical to their taking greater ownership of the learning process and as a means for making connections between theory and practice.

3.2 The Discipline of Reflection in Curriculum Development

A year before the first cohort were to begin their junior year, a group of faculty from across our department and the school of education came together for a week-long retreat that Frances convened. These faculty included members of the elementary education, reading/literacy education, and special education programs, secondary programs in English as a second language, mathematics, and social studies, as well as theater education and music education. We also drew in cooperating teachers and recent graduates of our former early childhood/elementary education program.

We planned to model the integration of health and learning by beginning each Friday session with a healthy breakfast. We wanted the arts to play a key role in the experience as a way of integrating various aspects of the curriculum, a medium for developing community, and a means for helping our preservice students recognize and begin to work with Gardner's (1999) theory of multiple intelligences as it pertains to schooling and instruction. We also considered the various content areas of the elementary curriculum and decided that we should work through a cycle beginning with a strong focus on literacy and followed by math, science, and social studies using the pedagogical lenses of best practice from both general and special education. We planned, too, for a substantive component of reflection which we articulated as self-assessment on the part of the students and ourselves.

4. THE DISCIPLINE OF REFLECTION AS METHOD

Our intent here is to assess whether and how close we have come to reshaping our students' as well as our own understandings of teaching and learning and, thus, both their and our practice as teachers and learners. We follow Smith and Keith's (1971) technique of "event analysis" – a process that enabled them to follow a major innovation in a school district through focus on three main time periods looking carefully at the types and level of involvement of all of the participants as they pertained to the key events of those time periods. Here, we focus our inquiry on the four major assessments that occur in the program treating these as key events in the life of the program – the moments when both student and faculty goals and progress toward those goals were most clear.

Drawing on our own logs, student work for class, observations of student teaching, minutes of faculty planning meetings and of class meetings over

two years, informal interviews with faculty and students, and student self-evaluations, we focus on the ways in which both faculty and students have arranged and re-arranged the pieces of the tangram over time. In doing so, we are following in the footsteps of numerous researchers examining curriculum and curricular innovations (e.g., Walker, 1992) who point to synchrony between programmatic goals, implementation activities, and assessment as critical to the success of new curricula.

5.   PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

As we developed the new program, we had four major goals. The first was to create a constructivist program that would support a genuine learning community in which pedagogical thinking and thoughtful analysis of classroom dilemmas was the norm. Our second goal was to effect a marriage of theory and practice such that our students would see the connections between their courses, our pedagogical modeling, and what they saw and experienced as preservice teachers in local schools. Our third was to provide a model of curricular integration that our students could live into and understand so well that they, too, would strive to integrate curriculum. The fourth was to merge the curricula of the elementary education and special education programs so that students would have experience in and eligibility for both areas of certification.

From the beginning, we determined that each semester, the students would maintain logs, engage in classroom and child study, develop a resource file, and develop a portfolio that represented their thinking over the course of the semester. Each week, there would be in-class activities and homework assignments that would be designed to help students to make connections between their class work and experience in the field as well as their lived experience as students. Fitting all of this into each Friday's meeting – just as we expect teachers to do each day of the week – became our task.

5.1   Shaping Environments for Diverse Learners

The first cohort of juniors began with a faculty of eight: three clinical faculty and Frances who had participated in the original planning; two theater educators, and Judith who is a math educator. All had worked together in the Spring before the launch of the junior year program. A literacy educator, new to the cohort approach, joined the team as an adjunct in September. The theme for the first semester was "Contexts & Learning Environments of Diverse Learners."

Over the course of the semester, the cohort faculty ostensibly worked to develop a smooth schedule for the day, one that would engage our 36 students in individual, small-, and whole-group activities designed to incorporate the integrative learning day that we have described above; but our history, as shown in the minutes of our weekly planning meetings, shows that we were in fact actually negotiating for "equal" time for each content area. As a result, the days were chunky –15 minutes for breakfast and general greetings followed by 30 minutes of math warm-ups followed by a theater ed activity which varied in length from 30 minutes to 2 hours. Literacy instruction took up the rest of the morning or part of the morning and part of the afternoon. There was always an hour break for lunch. Afternoons were devoted to special education with some time for advisory group meetings or a town meeting and some workshop time focusing on observation techniques. Advisory groups were formed as groups of 6; the three clinical faculty, the literacy educator, Judith, and Frances each convened a group.

With the exception of the educational theater component of the program where current events and classroom observations figured strongly, there was little real time for reflection and almost no integration of curricular areas. In addition to the jockeying for instructional time that is apparent in the minutes of our planning meetings, there was considerable discussion about assignments and who among the eight Friday faculty should read and respond to them. There was also concern about whether the students (juniors) were doing as well as students in our old program had.

5.1.1 Developing learner-centered assessment

This state of affairs colored our development of the first end-of-term assessment. We were unable to agree on the format of the assessment until early December. This meant that the students had only two weeks to assemble their portfolios which included a child case study, lesson plans, a resource packet, and evidence of adaptations made for children with special needs. We reasoned that this was possible since the required parts were integral to the work that students had been doing over the course of the semester. In our in-class discussion of the assessment with the students, we stressed brevity, making careful choices about what they included in their portfolios, and providing evidence for each piece.

We arranged for portfolio presentations in the six advisory groups on the morning of the final Friday of the semester. Each group of students followed the same protocol:
1. Describe a teaching event that was memorable for you.
2. What did you learn about the child?

3. What did you learn about yourself?
4. What did you learn about teaching?

The faculty committed to read the portfolios of their advisory group members and to trade their group's portfolios with another faculty member so that every portfolio would have two readers. In our review of the portfolios, we noted that for the most part, the presentations had highlighted the strong and weak students. Strong students provided fluid, coherent, evidence-based narratives; weak students moved through the sections of their portfolios showing their contents as if this was an exercise of "show and tell."

Our grading of the portfolios focused on quality and content. We were specifically interested in the coherence of the students' presentations and in the evidence that they developed to demonstrate their use of the various readings and instructional methods that they had encountered over the semester. Most students received grades ranging from B to A; there were some grades of C and D. In this first and the three subsequent semesters, the portfolio carried the most weight in the grading – about 80% --with class participation and homework accounting for the remaining 20%. Students got the same grade for all of the courses that make up the Friday session.

5.1.2   Learning from assessment

We planned a January retreat to solidify plans for the next semester; however, our day together devolved to an evaluation of the first semester which included the way we had graded the end-of-term assessments and the students' grades for each course of the Friday session. While we had talked about the end-of-term assessment as a means of bringing the activities and learning of the entire semester together, most of the faculty had held to thinking that they would be grading for their course. We discussed whether we should have developed a rubric that the students could use to shape their portfolio presentations and whether we should have provided examples of high quality work.

As we moved through the discussion of the portfolio and grades, Judy began to surface a perspective that she had alluded to during our planning meetings but never laid out completely. She urged an evidence-based approach in which students take ownership of their own learning:

We have to decide on our ultimate goal. If we want them to do ABC, we need to have them do that. What we're really saying then is, "This is essential for a grade of . . ." Or we can say, "Take ownership over your own learning. Provide evidence of what was meaningful for you, and say what you need to do differently next semester."

Ultimately, she moved the group toward the idea of giving responsibility for grading over to the students. Frances, as coordinator of the program, was delegated to explain our proposal to the students during our first session of the second semester whose theme, appropriately enough, is assessment. Additionally, students were going to be allowed to renegotiate their grades for the first semester by arranging a meeting with the faculty and providing the evidence for a change of grade. We also renewed our commitment to using the INTASC standards as guides for ourselves and the students.

5.2   Using Assessment to Shape Instruction

Throughout the semester, we focused on assessment in general and self-assessment in particular. A child case-study was central. In it, students were asked to 1) note a behavior or skill that they wanted to support or develop, 2) describe their intervention, and 3) provide research support for their position and outline other sources such as colleagues or specialists whom they called on to shape their intervention. Using the "tuning protocol" (McDonald, Mohr, Dichter, and McDonald, 2003), we engaged our students in studying their students' work and representing their findings.

One student a week joined us in our planning meetings to represent the voice of students in planning. The second semester curriculum emphasized literacy and special education but moved more fully into science and health. Social studies was introduced and theater education gave way to graphic arts. Although there was greater integration of content, the jockeying for time continued until mid-March when Frances insisted that the faculty begin to model assessment across the curriculum which meant developing a more fluid and integrated schedule to make interactive teaching possible.

We anticipated that the end-of-term assessments would be substantially better, more full, more carefully thought through than they had been in the Fall semester. We had developed rubrics to help students understand each aspect of the portfolio, and we consistently drew on the INTASC standards which they were also using in their field placements. Thus, we were surprised and dismayed by many of the portfolios. Where we sought brevity, there was dense text. Where we sought thoughtful, evidence-based self-assessment, we found light, shallow pieces that were little more than claims for having worked hard. We insisted that several students revise their portfolios. Once again, we were confronted with confusion on the part of both students and faculty about whether the end-of-term assessment was to count for the whole of each student's grade and whether students were to get the same grade for each course in the Friday program.

5.2.1   Assessing to shape the future

When seven of us (unfortunately the full instructional team could not be present) met in June for a two day retreat, we looked back over the year in an effort to evaluate our own progress as well as the program design. Additionally, we needed to set an agenda for the senior year and plan for the second cohort of students who would begin as juniors in September. We spent the first day in very frank discussions and moved towards articulating principles that we felt had implicitly guided our work over the year and should guide our work in the future as well as help our students to realize the program goals in their professional lives. These are as follows:

1. Teaching is facilitating discovery, inquiry and meaning-making for a lifetime.
2. Teaching is tapping into children's curiosity.
3. Learning is questioning.
4. Knowledge and understanding are socially and experientially constructed.
5. Revision is an integral part of learning.
6. Assessment informs teaching.

The development of these principles provided us with a path for the ensuing two semesters (and for subsequent cohorts), and they helped us to refine the student self-assessment process.

5.3   Using Assessment to Guide Curriculum Design

With the addition of a new junior cohort there was a redeployment of the faculty. Some, led by Frances, worked with the seniors while others joined Judith in working with the new juniors. There were new faculty and clinical instructors on both teams, though the senior team had several members who continued to question both the logistics and goals of the program..

The focus of the third semester is "Curricular Design and Instruction for Diverse Learners." Frances and her team began the semester by engaging the students in a simulation designed to focus their attention on an important issue in special education with its implications for instruction and assessment of learning. It was our hope that in the process of engaging in the simulation, students would learn how to do lesson and unit planning using "backward planning" (Wiggins and McTighe, 1998), and begin to negotiate the complex web of relationships that make up any school. The focus for the simulation was "Attention Deficit / Hyperactivity Disorder" (ADHD) and the question that guided the students' work was whether to medicate using the drug "Ritalin."   Students chose from among 6 roles and formed into 6 discussion groups around these roles. Over a period of six weeks, each group engaged in discussions in class and on *Blackboard* with

the goal of developing a power-point presentation from which they would compile a handbook for new teachers on ADHD. In our debriefing on the experience, we saw that engaging in this simulation had a profound effect on the student teachers' assessments of student learning. We saw references to it come up again and again in their writing about their planning and in their discussions of professional relationships. For the faculty, however, the completion of the simulation marked the emergence of a long-simmering division with the clinical faculty insisting that the students follow rubrics and forms from Wiggins and McTighe's (1998) book for the various lesson and unit planning activities that were part of the next focal activities.

5.3.1   Talking to performance assessment

The end-of-term assessment was based on a version of the Performance Assessment for California Teachers (PACT) [1] which we had piloted during the mid-term. The preservice teachers were asked to describe a student, pick three samples of the child's work in math and literacy, discuss adaptations that they made for the child, and assess the impact of their instruction. We met as a faculty with groups of seven students for two hours each over a period of two days. They discussed their learning about teaching, learning, and themselves over the semester drawing upon their portfolios for evidence.

Our assessment of the conversations and the portfolios suggested that the students had made substantive strides over the semester. They were now drawing on their work from the first year as well as the work that they had done over the semester. They were talking knowledgeably about student learning by referring to their reading, course activities and discussions, and conversations with their supervisors and cooperating teachers. They were anxious about finding jobs and/or getting into graduate school. They claimed to feel ready to go!

5.3.2   Learning from performance assessment

As a faculty, we learned a lot about what worked. We were pleased with the references to the ADHD simulation. We discerned that the literacy work of the previous year seemed to have become an essential part of the preservice teachers' interactions with their students and helped them to shape instruction in math, science, and social studies to reach the diverse learners in their classes. Their assessments of children's learning were sensitive and nuanced showing evidence of their attending both to the general parameters of child development and the particular paths followed by individual students. Most exciting to us was the evidence that they presented to demonstrate their student's progress and to justify their own

grades. The only cloud on the horizon was confusion about lesson and unit planning where they seemed to feel hamstrung by the tightness of the formats introduced by the clinical faculty. In general, we felt that they (and we) had turned a corner: they were now behaving as professionals.

5.4   Focusing on Professional Development

By the fourth term, we had developed a schedule for the Friday sessions that flowed well. Half of the day was devoted to math activities, the other half to literacy and social studies. Special education issues were infused throughout as per our weekly planning. By mid-February, the tensions around lesson planning began to dissipate as the students embarked on a new unit developed around the mathematical concept of "tessellations" in which mathematics, art, social studies, and literacy were brought together. On the whole, a calmer, more professional atmosphere among the students began to emerge.

The end-of-term assessment was also the final program assessment so it was very comprehensive. We asked that each portfolio contain a resume, educational philosophy statement, map of an ideal classroom, a resource packet, samples of lessons from a unit of study that students had completed along with a scope and sequence showing which standards and program principles each part of the unit addressed, and a child study which was designed to help the students take a comprehensive look at a child: We asked them to write a letter either to next year's teacher or to the child's parent that would provide a clear picture of the child's strengths and would suggest ways to support the child's learning in all areas of the curriculum. The letter was to be annotated, using research findings and the child's work to support their suggestions.

Our final Friday with the students was spent in hour long mock job interviews. As with the conversations in December, we were deeply impressed by the students' ability to "walk the talk." They referred to their portfolios but time did not allow for their going through them. The depth and breadth of most portfolios was remarkable and even the ones that the students and we considered as B work were far ahead of most of those that we had received over the years from students in our "old" program.

6.   FINDINGS

Un-squaring a teacher education program in a setting in which research is paramount and education in general and teacher education in particular occupy low status is similar in many ways to what researchers have learned

about change and restructuring of schools (Sarason, 2001) where the *sine qua non* of effective change is institutionalization. That is, there is substantive permanent change in the ways in which individuals relate to one another, shape their programs, assess progress, and reward achievement.

6.1 Un-squaring Perceived from the Inside

As we reflect on our experience with our first cohort and watch the launch of the third cohort, we feel both elation and concern – elation because we can see that our conception of an integrated curriculum as a model for preservice education on the undergraduate level has become a reality; concern because the program's status and future are fragile. The data of our experience and particularly the success of the second year assessment processes suggest that we met our goal of creating a constructivist teacher education program at a Research I university that would support a genuine learning community in which pedagogical thinking and thoughtful analysis of classroom dilemmas are the norm.

Our effort to effect a marriage of theory and practice such that our students would see the connections between their courses, our pedagogical modeling, and what they saw and experienced as preservice teachers in local schools is one that we can only partially measure at this point. Among the seniors in the first cohort of students, it was clear from their curriculum designs that many of the students provided evidence that they knew how to act on their words. Their units of study drew on content knowledge as well as a broad theoretical base in which special education, literacy development, brain research, and pedagogical content knowledge were critical features.

The data is still incomplete on all of the students. While their units of instruction were generally good, many had not implemented them, so we do not know, except anecdotally from student teaching supervisors, that they made the connection between theory and practice. Most of our students went immediately into master's programs as New York State requires the master's within 3 years of graduation, so it will be some time before we see whether and how well our graduates have lived into this second goal.

We will also have to wait to see our graduates at work in their first years of teaching to see the extent to which our goal of providing a model of curricular integration that they could live into and act on is realized. The data of the various assessments and particularly the curricular units that they developed suggest that most understood, but it is difficult to make such integration happen in a classroom that is not one's own.

We have great confidence about having met our goal of merging the curricula of the elementary education and special education programs so that students would have experience in and eligibility for both areas of

certification. The assessments that we developed for the students and all four of their field experiences required that they draw on both areas. Those who have begun teaching have found positions in both areas; one is currently working as the special education member of an immersion team in a New York City public school.

6.2   Un-squaring Perceived from the Outside

With regard to the institutionalization of the program, our experience has taught us that no one, ourselves included, anticipated the impact that our experiment might have beyond the students of the undergraduate program. We saw our major dilemmas as overcoming the individual course structure inherent in the department's teacher education programs and developing a faculty who would teach with us on Fridays. We had no difficulty developing a new curriculum as curriculum revision was happening across the department in anticipation of the changes in New York State certification regulations and the issue of curriculum integration was seen essentially a matter of shaping a schedule that was acceptable to the registrar's office. We did not fully anticipate how saliently issues involving time, the organization of courses, and the deployment of faculty would become in the department and the school of education.

In a Research I institution, there is great pressure on untenured, full-time faculty to avoid commitments to time-consuming endeavors that may not yield high level published research to earn them promotion and tenure. Spending the entire day with an undergraduate program and meeting for planning in addition to teaching other courses made the program unattractive to junior faculty who are pressed for time outside of teaching to conduct research. Further, we have learned from this experience that it is important to have a strong team leader who is tenured, to have a critical number of faculty who are knowledgeable about and share a commitment to the innovation itself, and to ensure that the program has administrative and departmental support. Without the enthusiastic leadership of deans, department chairs, and senior faculty, teacher education at a Research I university may be doomed to third-class status and fail to realize its exciting promise.

7.   CONCLUSION

We think that on the whole, our self-study presents a hopeful story. It suggests that despite the difficulties we encountered, re-shaping teacher education in a research-oriented university can be done. We have

considered a number of ways to overcome the obstacles. For example, we have already figured out how to do the program with three faculty who are dedicated to the program. At least one should be tenured. Additionally, one or two faculty, either adjunct or from another department, might participate on a semester by semester basis.   Untenured and junior faculty could teach in the program if team planning time and the entire Friday session were considered their entire teaching load. This would free them to do research, writing, and program oversight on the other 4 days of the week and could provide an attractive draw to participating in teaching undergraduates. Graduate students could also participate in the program as researchers and teaching assistants. This should be especially attractive to graduate students who aspire to become teacher educators themselves.

This experience has provided us with valuable and typically rare opportunities for collaboration, argument, and reflection.   We see the disagreements among the faculty and even the initial resistance from the students as important, even critical, to facilitating an open-minded and careful examination of central issues in teacher education: what teachers need to know, when, and how; and how to develop learning communities that shift the traditional power dynamic of teaching and learning and foster more ownership on the part of the learner. It has shown us the potential of undergraduate teacher education as a medium for innovation and as a rich resource for research.

We are committed to finding ways to enable the program's continuation for a number of reasons -- chief among them being our desire to know whether our curricular innovation has an immediate and long term impact on the practice of our graduates and on their commitment to the profession. We are designing a research study using qualitative interviews, observations, and focus group discussions to gather data on the teaching practices of our graduates, but already the response from the field has been such that we are confident that by developing a program that is informed by the field and reflexive in design, we have gone some distance toward reshaping the practice of teacher education and ultimately the ways in which teachers teach and schools are organized.

NOTES

[1]   The PACT project is the work of a consortium of twelve colleges of teacher education. The twelve colleges and schools of education participating in PACT are Mills College, San Jose State University, Stanford University, the University of California at Santa Barbara, the University of California at Berkeley, the University of California at Davis, the

University of California at Irvine, the University of California at Los Angeles, the University of California at Merced, the University of California at Riverside, the University of California at San Diego, and the University of California at Santa Cruz.

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Chapter 13

LEARNING ABOUT TEACHING

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Abstract: Over the past three years we have been working together to develop and teach a third year subject (Curriculum and Pedagogy) in which intensive micro-teaching experiences are used to help student-teachers begin to learn about their own teaching. This has meant that, for us, some of the assumptions that have underpinned our approach to teaching about teaching have been challenged as we have been confronted by new and different learning outcomes because of the nature of this subject.

The subject is purposefully constructed so that through 'critiquing' teaching, student-teachers might learn how to 'unpack' teaching and begin to recognize more about their own teaching as well as coming to understand the problematic nature of practice.

The self-study that comprises this chapter is designed to highlight how our approach to teaching about teaching influences our learning about teacher education and also to begin to find helpful ways of communicating our "developing knowledge of practice" with others. Therefore, the purpose of the self-study is to begin to articulate how the intended outcomes for student-teachers' learning about teaching actually impacts on the manner in which we approach (and conceptualize) our pedagogy.

This chapter therefore examines how we have come to see our practice differently and how framing and reframing is central to articulating a developing pedagogy of teacher education.

In recent times there has been a growing interest in the nature of teaching about teaching as well as that of learning about teaching as a concentration on the nature of teacher education that has become increasingly important in the research literature. This interest has been spurred by those involved in self-study of teacher education practices whereby the actual work of teacher educators and their student teachers has come under closer scrutiny. In so doing, much of the complexity of teaching and learning about teaching has become more explicit for teacher educators resulting in a more complete picture of the expertise and skills necessary in the work of teacher education. This chapter builds on such work as it examines the role of three teacher educators working together in a third year course in a Double Degree program.

The course (*Curriculum & Pedagogy*) is based around intensive micro-teaching experiences whereby the teacher educators and student-teachers learn about practice through taking risks as they purposefully 'experiment' with their teaching and learning. The self-study described in this chapter is concerned with developing an understanding about how such risk-taking can be personally rewarding while at the same time challenging and confronting for student teachers and teacher educators and how this might further build on the notion of developing a pedagogy of teacher education.

As the course described and researched in this chapter primarily focuses on teaching and learning about teaching, we are of the view that course development, beyond the structural and organizational, hinges on enhancing the relationship between our teaching and our students' learning. This is important to us because much of that which comprises a fair critique of teacher education is that, far too often, teaching is portrayed as telling and learning as listening. Therefore, central to refining (and improving) the course *Curriculum & Pedagogy* is the development of our teaching about teaching and our students' learning about teaching so that together they continually challenge "traditional" teaching and learning views and practices (e.g., Barnes' (1976) transmission model; Freire's (1970) banking model).

1.   CONTEXT

In the Faculty of Education at Monash University, one of the teacher preparation pathways is a 4 year Double Degree program (e.g., B.Sc./B.Ed.; B.A./B.Ed.). Since the inception of the Double Degree program there has been an ongoing recognition for the need to address the theory-practice gap

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[1] An earlier version of this paper was presented at the S-STEP biennial CASTLE conference, Hersmonceux, U.K., 2002.

(Elliott, 1991; Pekarek, Krockover, and Shepardson, 1996) – or at least, not to exacerbate it - which was one of the original levers for the introduction of the third year "micro-teaching" course (*Curriculum & Pedagogy*). The course has developed and changed in name and practice since it was first taught in 1998, however, the focus on intensive micro-teaching experiences as one way to help student-teachers begin to learn about their own teaching has always been at the heart of the course.

In developing and teaching the course, we (authors) have collaborated for a considerable period of time and through our collaboration we have come to see how some of the assumptions that underpin our approach to teaching about teaching have been challenged as we have been confronted by some of the difficulties of implementing risk-taking approaches in our own and our students' teaching (see for example, Berry and Loughran, 2002).

The course (*Curriculum & Pedagogy*) is designed to model particular aspects of teaching for the student-teachers and also to "unpack" these aspects of teaching through honest and professional critique. A clear difficulty in this course is helping student-teachers learn to critique teaching actions rather than to personally criticize individuals. Therefore, there is an emphasis on creating situations through which "professional critiquing" can be modeled.

In each of the first two sessions we (teacher educators) teach the students some specific content (i.e., subject matter – science, social studies, history content) then de-brief the experience to highlight particular aspects of teaching and to model critiquing (an example of this process is described later in the chapter). This is followed by a 2:2 teaching experience whereby pairs of student-teachers teach a pair of Year 7 (first year of high school) students. The student-teacher pairs collaborate in planning the teaching then one student-teacher teaches, while the other observes. After the teaching is complete, the observer interviews each of the students in an attempt to assess their perceptions of the experience. The student-teachers then prepare a Reflective Assignment together about the 2:2 experience.

The next block of the course is organized around video-taped micro-teaching where groups of student-teachers teach their peers. An important focus of this section is on student teachers selecting an appropriate teaching approach for the content they intend to teach so that the experience of a diverse range of teaching procedures is encouraged. Student teachers are organized into small groups (usually between 2 – 4; depending on enrolments in any given year) to prepare their one hour teaching session. Similar to the 2:2 teaching, each group is also responsible for de-briefing the class about their perceptions of the peer-group teaching. The teaching group also collaborates in 'writing-up' the peer teaching experience which includes their response to viewing the video-tape as well as analysis of written

feedback provided by the class (and lecturers). This approach is intended to help the student teachers learn from the experience using a variety of different 'lenses' and to begin to seriously consider how the chosen teaching approach influenced (or not) student learning.

Student teachers then complete a short practicum – during which they teach some lessons and attempt to push the boundaries of their learning about teaching through collecting feedback about the effects of their teaching on their students' learning. The practicum experience is designed to build on similar activities and processes from their classes at university so that in this context also, their post class de-briefing focuses on their teaching actions, not on them as individuals to be criticized or judged.

Following the practicum experience, the course concludes with an emphasis on revisiting the 'learning about teaching' that has occurred for each of them individually and for the group.

2.   METHODOLOGY

The self-study reported in this chapter focuses on the manner in which we (teacher educators) have begun to better understand our approach to teaching about teaching and how, in so doing, we may begin to communicate our learning in ways that might be helpful to others. Thus, we aim to become more explicit about that which comprises our pedagogy of teacher education. The purpose of the chapter then is to begin to articulate how the intended outcomes for student-teachers' learning about teaching influences the manner in which we as teacher educators approach (and conceptualize) our teaching about teaching. We do so with a view to further develop the course as the results of our research directly influences our teaching and the way in which we conceptualize and refine the course itself.

The features of student teacher interactions, the manner in which they approach their teaching, and their responses to our teaching all offer insights into the nature of the program and help to inform us about the way our teaching influences (or not) our students' learning about teaching. As part of our approach, the three of us met weekly to discuss our experiences and to consider further that which transpired in our classes and how these experiences influence our understanding of our practice.

In an attempt to make the data on which we base our study accessible and clear, we offer vignettes of specific classroom episodes that stood out for us in our analysis of our experiences in order to illustrate how the learning from these situations influenced our understanding of our pedagogical approach in this course. These episodes are drawn from the video-taped microteaching experiences and our collaborative reflections upon these experiences.

The use of vignettes is designed to appropriately integrate data collection and analysis in such a way as to make clear not only the nature of particular episodes but also to highlight some of the salient features and insights implicit in these episodes that were (or on reflection have become) crucial to the learning. Vignettes are therefore both a method and a form of analysis as they attempt to bring to life specific situations in readily identifiable ways.

We conceive of our role as teacher educators in this course as trying to help participants 'see into' their experiences in ways that encourage them to learn from experience rather than being told what they should have learnt. Therefore, for us there is always the immediate pedagogical dilemma of knowing when or how we might intervene in a session in order to make explicit for our students what we 'see' in that situation that they might also learn to see. How we help our students see into and learn from experience is an important aspect of our pedagogy. In a similar vein, our learning about teaching about teaching is developed through our ongoing collaboration, questioning, and reflection on experiences; the dialogue and subsequent reframing (Schön, 1983) fundamental to our learning - which is cumulative, not linear, in nature.

In a more traditional approach to researching practice, we have also conducted follow-up questionnaires and focus group interviews in order to attempt to better understand participants' views of their experiences one year after being involved in the course. This work was conducted by a research assistant in order to remove us (participants' teachers) from direct involvement in data collection in an effort to decrease any possible halo effect. An overview of this research is briefly reported following the vignettes to offer a global response to the specific practices we have been developing in our teaching about teaching.

3.   FINDINGS

The first few microteaching sessions can create the most anxiety for all of us (teacher educators and student teachers). Naturally, student teachers approach the task trying to do a good job in their teaching and wanting to be seen as able and capable teachers. Accompanying this is participants' understandable stance of being supportive; not wanting to make the microteaching experience more difficult or uncomfortable than it is already. Our concern, as teacher educators, is that we actually want substantive issues to be raised in ways that cause all of us to confront particular situations as they are occurring so that we can all "feel" what it is like and learn together through the experiences. And that is why when we begin the course, we do so by putting our own teaching up for scrutiny. In holding our own teaching

up for professional critique by our students, we model not only teaching, but perhaps more importantly, the same vulnerability and risking-taking that we hope our students will take when they are teaching the rest of the class. We demonstrate this through the following vignette in which Mandi introduces the course (all students' names are pseudonyms):

4. TEACHER EDUCATOR'S TEACHING

4.1 The first session: Using Question Dice to learn about teaching

The aim of the first session was for me (Mandi) to model an approach to teaching particular content (how digestion occurs in the stomach) using a teaching procedure designed to support learning about that content (question dice). The idea was to encourage participants to consider their experiences as learners of content (science of digestion) and as learners of teaching (the teaching approach used i.e., the teaching procedure called "question dice"). I told the class that I was going to teach them about something and that they needed to be aware of their responses throughout (working at a meta-level, as well as participating in the experience). I explained that after the teaching episode they would 'unpack' my teaching and their responses to it: what happened; how it felt; how they reacted as learners and why, etc.

Then, I asked for a small group of volunteers who would not actually participate in the experience but who would act as observers of the teaching and learning. Following the teaching they would then lead a discussion with the class about the teaching and students' responses to it. Fortunately, it was not difficult to get volunteers and a group of four quickly emerged.

Next, I asked the class to read a short story about digestion. I gave very little direction and let the story to speak for itself. The story was highly unusual, gruesome, true, and well written. It involved a graphic description of a gunshot wound to the stomach and some events that followed. Scanning their faces as they read, there was nothing evident to me that suggested that they were particularly engaged with the story in the way I had anticipated. Rather, they looked like they were simply doing a task. After what seemed like enough reading time, I asked, "So do you have any questions about what you have read? Is there anything that you want to clarify?" There was no response.

"Fine! So what I'm going to do now is introduce you to a procedure called question dice." I brought out the dice and explained to the group how the procedure worked. I asked a couple of volunteers to read out the

"question stem" words on each of the die then continued with, "The idea is to use the dice to learn more about the information in this article. Any volunteers to roll the dice?" A brief pause then, "I'll do it" said Gary. I invited him to come out to the front of the room.

He came out and rolled the dice.

"Read out the question stem," I said.

"What might …?"

There was a long pause before I broke the silence.

"Okay Gary, there's a couple of things we could do here. You could make up a question that begins 'what might…', or you could ask someone from the group to make up a question about the article using this stem. What would you like to do?"

"Yeah, I'll ask someone. Does anyone have a question?" he said with sense of relief in his voice.

Fran responded quickly with, "What might happen if the wound doesn't heal?"

Gary looked blank. "I don't know".

"Maybe someone else does", I suggested.

"The wound could get infected and the guy could die" came back from someone.

"Did this really happen?" was a question that was called out from the back of the room.

"Yes" I replied. "It's a true story."

"Let's go for another question using the dice," I said as we went through various incarnations of volunteer, dice roller choosing the next person, dice roller taking time to select a person to respond rather than accepting the first person who volunteered an idea. All through this I was conscious of being encouraging, affirming and enthusiastic about their participation. But, it was clear to me that the students were struggling to ask questions using the question dice about the science of digestion. It didn't seem to be working in the way I had anticipated. Prior to the session, I had tried myself to make up some questions and it didn't seem too hard; perhaps my science background made a difference?

After four or five questions, the dice was rolled again and someone asked, "Does the question have to be about how digestion works? I've got an arts background and I'm interested in this as a historical story." This student hit on something that I had sensed. The dice approach was not helping students develop their understanding in the way I had intended.

"Let's open it up a bit then. What would you like to ask about?" I offered.

One or two new questions were asked, questions that didn't rely on the science. This spurred some further questioning that didn't use the question

dice at all. Listening to these questions (without the dice) I felt that they were genuine issues that the students really wanted to know about.

Then Allie asked, "Why did you choose this particular story for us to read?"

It was a good time to draw the question dice to a close and begin the debrief. "Thanks for the question Allie! When I read this story, I thought it was great. To me it was interesting, unusual and gripping. I thought that there would be lots of questions about the stomach and digestion that you would be prompted to ask from it. In fact, I was really surprised when I looked around the room while you were reading that you weren't responding in the way I anticipated."

My comments immediately triggered a volley of responses.

"It's hard to read under pressure of time and make sense of what you are reading."

"I was worried that I didn't know the science."

"I didn't know why we were supposed to be reading this."

Others nodded in agreement and shared similar concerns.

I invited the debriefing group to comment on what they had seen and heard, or to ask any questions about the approach I had used. They had lots to ask and they were very straightforward in their approach.

"What was it like for you to know that we were observing your teaching in this way?"

"Did this go the way you planned?"

"How did people feel when they could use the question dice only?"

"How did you decide how much time to give us to read the article?'

"What did it feel like when you (students) were chosen to ask or answer a question?"

"What did you (teacher) think when they (students) started to ask questions without using the dice?

The students were confident and capable of asking questions. They were insightful and straightforward in their responses and there was a feeling of excitement in the room as we discussed the teaching and learning experience of the question dice. The issues they raised drew attention to both learning and teaching and, I would argue, such issues would not so easily and honestly be raised in a 'normal' class. At the end of the session, the students were invited to respond to three 'prompts' designed to encourage reflection on the learning from the session. These responses [see appendix] illustrate what these students recognized about their learning and their teacher's teaching and they began to develop insights that could be beneficial in shaping their thinking about teaching and learning.

Important to the learning that occurred in this episode is the notion of critique. These students were learning about teaching by critiquing their

teacher's teaching. They were not criticizing the teacher as a person, they were learning to recognize important aspects of the nature of their own experience and how this influenced their learning about teaching. Integral to this process is the teacher educator's ability to see into and articulate her own learning from experience so that it is available (and accessible) for her students. Interestingly, in this particular episode, one of the students publicly reflected on his experiences of rolling the dice in front of his peers and his feelings about trying to manage the question asking. As a consequence of focusing on his own feelings of self consciousness during the episode he realised how such feelings can "get in the way" of empathizing with the learner. He came to see how important it was to recognize that this was happening: "I learnt to identify with the learners as I'm teaching. It's often easy to be overly self conscious about how I'm going to be perceived as a teacher and the student may be feeling just as inadequate about being a learner. Empathizing with the students is important both in planning and in delivering the teaching." This is a strong example of the type of insights we would hope to be encouraged by learning through experience based on our approach to peer teaching, critiquing and de-briefing so central to the pedagogy of this course.

Hopefully, this vignette and the explanation preceding it, helps to make clear our intentions for the use of vignettes as a procedure for method, analysis, and portrayal so that the conclusions we draw from our self-study illustrate our desire to be better informed about our teaching and learning about teaching, and ultimately, the nature of a pedagogy of teacher education.

5. LEARNING FROM STUDENT TEACHERS' PEER TEACHING

In this section we offer insights into the way in which we have examined the complexity of teaching and learning about teaching and how we are beginning to articulate our developing of knowledge of practice. The two vignettes that follow are designed to illustrate particular instances of teaching and learning about teaching. We offer each vignette, followed by a brief discussion of the issues. The first vignette was constructed from the post-teaching discussion following a session that Mandi and Libby experienced together.

5.1 The Vietnam War

In their video taped micro-teaching, Jane and Simon had decided to focus on the Vietnam War. They had chosen a variety of "warm up" activities to give the class a feel for the times and the various motivations of different groups involved. The lesson was organized around a role play activity in which students in groups had been allocated the role of an individual likely to be associated with the war e.g., South Vietnamese farmer, U.S. parent of conscripted child, etc. Each group was to decide how that individual might feel about the war and his/her motivations for feeling that way in order to make some personal connection with that which is often presented in an impersonal manner.

The activity seemed to go well. The students got on with the task and the teachers circulated around the tables joining in the conversations to encourage each group to develop their response.

At the conclusion of the activity, there was some discussion. A few points of view were raised, (most carrying a pro American sentiment) and Jane and Simon, in their teacher role, acknowledged and commented on each contribution.

Then Ben put his hand up.

"My father is North Vietnamese. He fought against the Americans. You don't understand what was happening at the time, he was defending his country."

The situation had suddenly taken on a very different dimension. Jane and Simon had been striving to create a real experience for the learners in the class through the activities they had chosen and now they were being confronted with a reality they had never expected – Ben was personally connected with the war in a way that they had clearly not anticipated - and they did not know how to respond. So they did nothing.

When Ben finished speaking, neither Jane nor Simon acknowledged Ben's comment. They simply moved on to the next person.

I [Mandi] felt very uncomfortable for Ben. What he had said, I thought, needed to be acknowledged and discussed. I was puzzled by the behaviour of the teachers at the time – had they not heard him? After another student had put forward her point of view, which was unconnected to Ben's, I spoke up.

"Ben, I'd like to hear some more about your father's involvement in the war."

Ben then spoke further about the situation from his perspective.

Following the class, in a private conversation with the teachers (Jane and Simon), they said they had been completely taken aback by Ben's comment, so much so that they had been unable to act on what they had heard. So, in order to cope with their (lack of) response at the time, they quickly retreated

to a more comfortable place, taking a comment from someone who was responding to the task, not drawing from real life.

This caused me to go through my own reality check. This was a very vulnerable moment for Jane and Simon as well as Ben and so the question for me was, "What do I do in situations like this to help my student teachers recognise that they need to deal with the situation yet at the same time be sensitive to the vulnerable situation they are in?"

At the time, it was clear that Ben's decision to put his ideas forward made him very vulnerable as a learner, while Jane and Simon recognized that they were in a difficult situation as teachers and their response was *not to act*. As a teacher educator involved in this episode I (Mandi) was not sufficiently sensitive to the possible reasons why Jane and Simon were unable to respond. I simply wondered, "Why don't they acknowledge Ben's response?" I was more concerned with Ben's feelings and experiences because he was obviously more vulnerable. My intervention, asking Ben to share his experiences, was directed towards supporting Ben and perhaps less consciously towards showing Jane and Simon how a teacher might act in such a situation. In hindsight, I see now that what I chose to do offered a possibility for Jane and Simon to see something that at the time they could not see (or do), so I was modeling for them one way of acting. However, now, I am much more aware of the "frozen moment" that Jane and Simon experienced, why it was a problem for them, and what I might choose to highlight in a similar situation in the future; not just for the learner (in this case, Ben) but for the teacher too.

Hence, my understanding of my teaching about teaching has developed by reflecting on an episode (writing the vignette) and helping me come to see the importance of the teacher educator's role as being more than just being responsive to the moment. What now stands as important knowledge of practice is learning to abstract from the situation to other situations so that as a feature of learning about teaching I am now more sensitive and responsive to such situations more generally in my teaching about teaching.

In the next vignette, constructed from one group of student teachers' reflective report on their micro-teaching experience with their peers, the student teachers were attempting to teach their peers (the rest of the student teacher cohort in the course) some psychology. They introduced their ideas by involving the class in an experiment. The vignette is written from the perspective of the student-teachers who taught the session and is based on their written report of the episode.

5.2   We're too busy teaching to pay attention to students' learning

We approached the lesson with two main things in mind. First, we wanted to ensure that the students participating in the lesson would come away having learnt something (as should be the aim of all lessons). Second, we wanted to ensure that students enjoyed the class. It was for this reason that we attempted to combine an experiment (the effect of chocolate on memory) and the teaching of some fundamental psychological ideas.

Up until the point where we wanted to move into the more formal teaching about the psychology content of the experiment, the class had progressed exactly as planned - with the exception of the time. The students were responding well to the experiment, were all participating in the class discussion and seemed to be enjoying the activity. Each of us was quietly confident that all was well. However, there came a turning point.

Disharmony was created in the class based on the use of scientific descriptions and definitions that we introduced. We were quickly pushed to the back foot as we tried to explain and re-explain concepts that were very difficult to understand, let alone teach …

[Note: The disharmony described here was created by our (teacher educators') persistent requests for explanation and clarification of the scientific jargon being used. We could sense that the class did not understand what the teachers were trying to explain and we thought that as the class was made up of their peers, they were therefore simply being polite in not asking questions or admitting that they did not follow what was being taught. Our interventions eventually encouraged others to speak up and admit they were confused and uncertain about the subject content being taught. Thus we created the disharmony that caused the teachers to have to confront the situation].

Trying to explain a concept to the students that we, as the teachers, did not have a complete understanding of was difficult. We were left lost not knowing which direction to take. The students were focusing on all the "wrong things" making it all the more difficult.

We rushed through the statistical explanation of the results of the experiment because we did not want to start another session of questions that we were unable to answer … developing expectations and ensuring that students can understand, we learnt as teachers, is hindered by the use of jargon. This proved to be particularly troublesome for, in science, words we take for granted at our level of understanding baffle those less developed in our methods … one significant aspect which we neglected to consider in the preparation of the lesson was that of students' prior knowledge.

Students suffered mental overload and were left behind in the theory. It is not as simple as to say, "This is not important so do not worry about it." – which we did! Each and every point and diagram that you present to the class must be important, if not, why include it?

In the lesson, students chose to focus on certain points that were (to us) unimportant and so we all became side-tracked. This lesson showed us that a teacher's agenda and time constraints are potentially the biggest cause of difficulty in each lesson when they are in competition with the development of students' understanding.

We cut the discussion when students did not grasp certain concepts in order to move on with the curriculum and conserve time … [but] we really needed to check with students that they understood, yet this clarification, although it must be a priority is difficult to achieve. The problem of how to determine whether students are comprehending the material also presents a problem. Not all students will ask if they don't understand, and some struggling students will pretend that everything is fine even when asked … classroom management does not only involve disciplining the students … there is a fine line between controlling, directing, and letting class discussion flow without being involved … often dominant people ran the discussion with little guidance from us. And what became of the quiet students?

Overall, this session allowed us to learn a lot in a short time about practical issues to do with teaching rather than theoretical aspects of course work. By the end of the lesson we were left feeling a little more stressed out than others, but none of us were left permanently disheartened.

This vignette is an example of how we, teacher educators, hope to make learning about teaching real for our student teachers. The approach we adopt (intervening in their teaching; attempting to grasp teachable moments) is integral to our attempts to embed learning in experience for our student teachers but similarly impacts on our learning about teaching.

Let us consider the learning from the students' perspective. This situation highlights a number of important issues about teaching that these students came to understand more deeply as a result of the nature of their experience. First, they came to better understand how the use of jargon can be alienating for learners, and linked to this, how the same jargon can create a false sense of understanding of the underlying concepts for the teacher. Second, they recognized what Baird & Mitchell (1992) described as cognitive overload and how easy it can be for a teacher can create it for students, thus decreasing the likelihood that students will persist with learning as confusion sets in. Third, they experienced what it feels like to be 'side-tracked' by students and how difficult it can be to get 'back on track'. Finally, they were confronted by the unwillingness of students to speak up when they do not understand that which is being taught.

All of these issues could be very easily 'told' to student teachers and no doubt they would comprehend what each means: they have more than likely experienced these very situations themselves as learners. However, there is a major difference between that which influences actual practice and

talking/thinking about practice. In this case, the vignette captures well what Korthagen et al (2001) describe as: "… an unbridgeable gap between our words and the student's experiences" (p. 22). In teacher education it is too easy to tell student teachers what we (as their teachers) see that they need to know. It is another matter for that information to be real, useable, and meaningful in their practice. We would contend that it is more likely that that which we might like to be 'our words' might be better grasped by student teachers if it is embedded in learning about practice in an experience. We argue this because "embedding learning in experience" creates the likelihood of deeper meaning about the situation as a result of the active interplay between the affective and cognitive domains because the learner personally experiences the thoughts and feelings in the situation; as opposed to being 'told' about the learning. As teacher educators, an element of our practice in *Curriculum & Pedagogy* is to be sensitive to such situations (teachable moments) and try to heighten students' awareness of them in their experiences.

In terms of our teaching about teaching, this vignette illustrates our intervention as serious and persistent as we 'forced' the teaching group to attend to the issue of their/our lack of understanding of the scientific language being used. However, intervening in such a way is not an easy task. As teacher educators, our learning about what to confront and how in challenging teaching and learning situations is demanding and idiosyncratic. We have come to recognise that our interventions need to be explicit if genuine progress in learning about teaching is to occur. Such interventions must also involve more than just helping student teachers feel what it is like to be in a particular position, it must also help them see the problem that confronts them and begin to consider (or even have an opportunity to practice then and there) how to try to respond differently to it. Sometimes, highlighting situations in which student teachers do not know how to respond can be as 'risky' for the teacher educator as the student teacher.

The extent to which we practice risk-taking as teacher educators in our teaching about teaching is different for each of us. The degree of risk must vary from individual to individual as finding optimum value through risk taking is itself risky business. We interact with students whose varied personal characteristics, cultural backgrounds and behaviors, all impact on the classroom dynamics and the learning of others in the group. It is important for us and for our students to realize that these factors can be a powerful influence on the classroom environment.

6.   FURTHER RESEARCH ON OUR PROGRAM

As an extension of our work in *Curriculum & Pedagogy* we have initiated a more structured research program designed to follow-up participants one year after being enrolled in the course, to find out how they viewed their learning and any perceived 'carry over' influence on their teaching. (At the time of the follow-up, 4th (final) year students were involved in an extended teaching practicum). The research involved a questionnaire and focus group interviews. Questionnaire results are reported as follows: N = 41: 5 point Likert scale; Strongly Disagree (1) – Strongly Agree (5); result displayed is the average score and indicative open ended responses are included. There is not sufficient space in this chapter to examine the findings from the focus groups in detail (4 focus groups: n = 9) but we draw on some of this data now to illustrate possible influences of the course on students' thinking over time. (Note: EDF3002 is the course number for *Curriculum & Pedagogy*).

1. When I was enrolled in EDF 3002, I thought that the approach to this course helped me to develop my ideas about my teaching.

Average = 4.5

No response: (12)

Why/Why not?

ID Number 14: The course made me challenge the assumptions I held about the way in which I taught. Particularly valuable was the way in which others also challenged my assumptions. The pass or fail grade encouraged me to take risks.

ID Number 21: I don't think I thought at the time that the approach taken in the course would help in developing my teaching ideas/philosophy, but in retrospect, it did equip me with different ways of looking at teaching. The course created a safe environment for trying/experimenting with teaching for the first time.

2. From my teaching experience this year, I believe that the ideas I developed about my teaching in EDF 3002 have been reinforced.

Average = 3.96

No response: (12)

Why/Why not?

ID Number 2: I found it really easy to discuss and debrief afterwards. My supervisor [school practicum supervisor] was impressed with the way I did this. I guess it is a skill. Other student teachers I was placed with felt sorry for me! I guess admitting your mistakes and requesting feedback isn't comfortable for some but I am really glad I could do it.

ID Number 12: In EDF 3002 I was able to identify a number of areas in my teaching practice in which I needed to improve. Knowing my areas of

weakness before I commenced by first teaching round [practicum] was useful as it gave me the opportunity to develop some strategies to deal with these weaknesses before the actual round.

3. The strategies provided to develop my teaching (2:2 visit, peer teaching, practicum) in EDF3002 were worthwhile.

Average = 4.68

No response: (9)

Why/Why not?

ID Number 4: More than the 2:2, the peer teaching exercise – especially the group collaboration element in putting it all together and unpacking the experience together – this was fantastic. A real professional dialogue grew out of our discussions – I learnt heaps – or feel like I did.

ID Number 27: Good experience. Peer teaching didn't feel like a real scenario but taught me to take criticism constructively.

4. EDF3002 was important in preparing me to teach this year.

Average = 4.17

No response: (13)

Why/Why not?

ID Number 14: Without EDF 3002 I doubt whether I would have purposely critically reflected and looked for evidence that my teaching practices were achieving what I thought they were. I also did this with more understanding.

ID Number 40: It taught me more about myself.

5. EDF3002 influenced the way I taught this year.

Average = 3.75

No response: (15)

How?

ID Number 4: Finding that bridge between theory learning/peer teaching/school teaching can be really difficult – often we reach for the 'engaging' strategy with little thought if it will actually benefit learning – I feel like this will change as I settle in more to regular teaching – I hope desperately that it does!

ID Number 6: I think I taught with far more confidence, as I was comfortable with making mistakes. Prior to 3002 I was very nervous about my teaching ability.

6. My teaching this year has changed (and/or developed) in ways that would have happened regardless of involvement in EDF3002.

Average = 3.42

No response: (13)

Why/Why not?

ID Number 2: I believe EDF 3002 has really helped and I agree that I have developed because of this, but I naturally question who I am and what I do. Maybe this is why I loved the course?

ID Number 12: This is very difficult to answer! No matter how good a course is, in the end it is only approximately 13 weeks of my year. The main reason my teaching is developing this year is because it has to, otherwise I'm going to be facing some major problems in finding employment. However, EDF 3002 gave me confidence and that has definitely made it easier to develop as a student teacher.

7. I was satisfied with the way the course was taught last year.

Average = 4.75

No response: (9)

Why/Why not?

ID Number 14: Tutors were great. The way in which they created a safe risk-taking environment really promoted our learning. What we did was not the main importance, but what we learnt about what we had done was.

ID Number 20: As mentioned the atmosphere of the class was extremely positive, which has a lot to do with its teaching/teacher. Feedback and interactions were helpful.

8. The approach to de-briefing in EDF3002 was important in helping me reflect on my teaching this year.

Average = 4.08

No response: (13)

Why/Why not?

ID Number 25: [This course] Enabled me to produce really good self-reflection of my teaching. It also allows me to develop positive self-development goals.

ID Number 40: It set up the right behaviours and attitudes to have towards teaching.

9. I am more confident in my teaching this year as a result of being involved in EDF3002.

Average = 4

No response: (17)

Why/Why not?

ID Number 6: Much more confident. Considering I had very little before, I was even questioning whether teaching was right for me. 3002 was really significant for me in helping me to lose the fear I had. Much of this was due to the help from my tutors.

ID Number 14: Yes, but every unit I have done has also. It is not until you start to learn how to teach that you realise what a complex profession it is.

10. I have noticed a difference in the way I think about teaching compared to colleagues who were not involved in EDF3002.

Average = 3.54

No response: (12)

Why/Why not?

ID Number 21: particularly noticed this on my rounds when I would try and debrief with Dip.Ed [one year end-on post-graduate teacher preparation program] students. This was a notion foreign to them.

ID Number 6: Very hard question. I have noticed huge differences in the way some Dip.Ed students think about teaching compared to B.Ed students, but I don't know if that's directly attributed to 3002. Certainly those who did 3002 have a broader, perhaps more lateral approach to teaching.

ID Number 32: The course bought the focus back on to us, why did we want to be teachers, what do we value? To have already thought about this and made some decisions, puts us so far ahead of other students/teachers who are still thinking only about their teaching.

6.1 Our Analysis of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire data demonstrates that these student teachers understood the purpose of the course and appreciated the opportunity to develop their confidence in their teaching and to begin to consider in more detail their ability to learn from experience. In so doing, there appears to be a strong sense of the value of reflecting on practice and coming to see one's own strengths and weaknesses in ways that are deemed to be triggers for growth rather than personal criticisms. This accords strongly with how we frame the purpose of this approach to learning about teaching. There also seems to be an understanding from these participants that seeing their own practice from different perspectives is an important springboard for learning and developing one's teaching.

This follow-up research was, in part, an attempt to determine whether or not it could be claimed that involvement in *Curriculum & Pedagogy* positively influenced participants' development as teachers. It may well be that it is asking too much of any teacher preparation program (or course alone) to be able to demonstrate significant influence on beginning teachers when there is so much to learn, and do and so many experiences linked to learning to teach. However, this data demonstrates that positive attitudes toward learning about teaching through *Curriculum & Pedagogy* exist and that participants valued the manner in which learning about teaching through the course was encouraged. We would hope that this attitude to learning about teaching would then become a foundation for their view of development within the profession and, as such, the approach and intent

would carry ongoing meaning and significance even if (as to be expected) the specific events of the course faded with time.

7.   CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Our teaching together in *Curriculum & Pedagogy* has highlighted for us the value of collaboration. By embarking on self-study projects together we have come to see that our learning about teaching has taken us beyond the individual and specific features of teaching about teaching into broader views of the need for, and value of, the development of a pedagogy of teacher education. In the focus group interviews, David suggested that the importance of the course for him was that:

> David: I think the most important [thing] for me and the most challenging was reflection. Just reflection in general because I felt that developing [it] was something. I had never really looked in depth at myself, especially with teaching. Just getting reflection from both my peers as well as then looking back [to] what [your tutor] said in the video [of our teaching], it was a good way of seeing things from other people's eyes. And, [through that you] see things that you don't usually see about yourself and that you don't notice about yourself until it is pointed out to you. I think also understanding limitations and working through perceived difficulties was important.

Just like David, we have come to see our teaching about teaching from different perspectives. We have become more sensitive to how our students learn about teaching from the nature of the program itself as well as from the manner in which we approach our teaching. And, that has impacted how we refine and develop the course because we are continually paying careful attention to our teaching in order to explicitly ensure that our practices and beliefs are more closely aligned. The course is about helping our student-teachers to more closely align their teaching practices and beliefs so that their teaching *does* knowingly influence their students' learning. Therefore, we see development of the course partly in terms of the need for our practice to be clearly linked to our students' learning.

Refining and developing the course then is not so much about structure (we do believe the structure works well) but is more about the teaching and learning environment and experiences we create. Therefore, for our students, the course is about enhancing their learning about teaching so that it is purposeful, explicit and meaningful. In that way, we see the course as helping them to develop an understanding of the complexity of teaching and

learning. Thus, the responses of Brenda and Angie in their focus group interview are interesting:

Brenda: I think [the course] it has a lot to do with [the tutors] … they make it feel very comfortable and it is an open forum and you can say what you think. You can feel comfortable trying new things. They also are very big on the reflection part of it. If we had lecturers or tutors that weren't very focused on the reflection and their self-reflection then it wouldn't be as useful.

Angie: Yes, I agree. I think one of the most important things in all of that is all the debriefing sessions and discussions that weren't cut sort. We were allowed to toss ideas around with tutors] and with ourselves. They were the places where we learnt the most. So yes you have to find staff who are open to that style I guess.

Brenda: I was going to say I don't know how you could do it [teach the course] any other way because you couldn't have somebody, you couldn't stand up and say that is wrong, you shouldn't do it like that … the lecturer couldn't do that because there is no one-way to teach … I mean that if we had a lecturer telling us there was only one way to do something then it wouldn't work. There are so many different ways of doing something in a classroom that course wouldn't work if there was a lecturer dead-set on there is only one way to go about things. Do you know what I mean?

Angie: [the tutors] did step back a lot and let us have our discussions and let us do a lot of stuff. When I look back I don't remember [them] overpowering the course in any way. I just see [them] on par with us. I didn't see that we were "oh we have to be like them". I just saw as [it as they] want[ed] to help you find your own way. … Yes, [they] would say why did you do this, and why did you do that. And you would think, Why did I do that?

This is indeed what we would hope our student teachers would learn about teaching: to question, reflect and develop their pedagogy in ways that help them to understand that teaching is problematic and that being better informed about practice is an important aspect of being a professional. As teachers of teachers, aiding this sort of development is important. But, in beginning to articulate that which might comprise a pedagogy of teacher education, finding ways of enacting such practice is crucial for it is through the ability to articulate and enact a pedagogy of teacher education that course development is enhanced. In so doing, we might then begin to address

Myers' (2002) concern that teacher education has for too long been dominated by the "teaching as telling, showing, guided practice approach."

We trust this chapter has begun to demonstrate one way of viewing the development of teacher education courses so that there is a genuine focus on teaching about teaching rather than telling about teaching. If that is the case, then perhaps this chapter helps to show that student-teachers can learn about teaching in ways that do not ignore aspects of the knowledge of teaching so crucial to underpinning and valuing professional practice.

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APPENDIX

Summary of student responses from session one.
What did I learn from this session?
As a learner I often like to sit back and absorb what goes on, whereas as a teacher I like to take control and put in my knowledge.

It's <u>impossible</u> to be in a lesson and not bring in prior knowledge, biases or expectations. This can aid or hinder learning.

I learnt a different technique for questioning in the classroom.

Question dice can help and limit learning.

Different people see things differently. What aspects are important or focused on depends on the person.

The atmosphere you set as a teacher can greatly affect the students' learning. The teacher plays a BIG role in the students' learning.

Getting the class involved through positive reinforcement and offering options is most useful.

The story was fantastic, I learnt something new.

I enjoyed being able to ask you about your teaching and have my questions and your answers shared with the class.

Teaching requires judgement and awareness of each student's learning and answering style.

How do you get students to ask questions and stay within the course boundaries?

I learnt to identify with the learners as I'm teaching.

Be honest to students. If you don't know something, admit it.

As a teacher, it is okay to be nervous and admit it to your students. I realized that a student doesn't think any less of a teacher when this is admitted.

Affirming students' attempts is very important.

What helped or hindered my learning?

The question dice severely hampered what <u>I</u> wanted to learn about this topic. It forced me to ask/phrase questions in a particular way, often irrelevant to what I wanted to know.

Reading in a specific time limit affects me. I became more conscious of this and I became aware that others feel the same, which was really important to me.

My lack of confidence to participate in a conversation where I think I don't know enough to come up with a question.

I felt much more comfortable when there was someone at the front who could answer our questions.

Learning is improved when you can include the whole group and everyone has a chance to participate.

Late in the day makes it hard to concentrate!!!

Not knowing what was the purpose of reading and discussing the article.

I hate being asked questions and singled out. It causes me to momentarily freeze up.

I was able to acknowledge the emotional response of fear when I realized the content of the article was unfamiliar to me. This hindered the way I read the article.

What might I have done differently if I had done the teaching?

I probably would have guided the questions on the way I wanted them to go.

Step in more often and answer some of the questions.

Probably not much.

I probably would have taken the question dice away. I think people felt restricted by having to use particular words. I liked the lesson once questions began to flow not directly linked to the reading.

I would have divided the class into 2 groups, 1 group with question dice, the other with 'answer dice' with words to include in the answers, they could swap around.

Non threatening techniques, use question dice at the table, more time to read.

Faciliated a discussion regarding encouraging positive or constructive students' responses.

Used the dice to begin with, then let people follow their tangents.

Remove the die after the students are more comfortable with offering their ideas.

Chapter 14

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS FOR SELF AND PROGRAM RENEWAL:
LEARNING TO LESSON PLAN

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Abstract: In this chapter I explore how course assignments might serve as a vehicle for facilitating and evaluating both self and program renewal efforts. Teacher educators have to comply with a multitude of external state and national credentialing requirements. In addition, they have institutional, departmental, and programmatic expectations and commitments to consider. More often than not, inconsistencies exist among those demands and between them and a teacher educator's personal beliefs, values, and educational goals. Finding practical resolutions that can simultaneously satisfy these various renewal agendas can be enormously challenging. I suggest that well-designed course assignments can be an important part of the resolution. I share an exemplar of a new task I developed to help elementary student teachers learn how to lesson plan and the research I did on the outcomes. It was an assignment designed to meet both state evaluation requirements and a personal/departmental equity agenda. The results indicate that it was helpful in achieving my own development goals, while also contributing to our externally and internally motivated program renewal endeavors.

In the year following my sabbatical a confluence of three significant internal and external factors resulted in self-study research designed for both personal and programmatic renewal. First, having recently experienced a catastrophic loss that had transformed my way of being in the world, I felt the need to reinvent myself as teacher educator. I aimed to study, therefore, my process of teacher educator identity re-development, as I concurrently supported my students in the construction of their initial teacher identities. Second, the credential program of which I was a part had just received a

one-year grant to engage in research designed to enhance our effectiveness in social justice education, with a particular focus on preparing our students to achieve equitable and excellent outcomes for their African American students. Third, California had been involved in changing both the structure and evaluation of teacher education. As a part of that effort, our college had joined a consortium of several institutions of higher education in the state interested in developing an alternative portfolio assessment system. We had volunteered to pilot that instrument during this same academic year.

One of my primary responsibilities in the credential program is to teach a yearlong core course for our elementary credential candidates. I decided to create a new assignment in that class that would help to accomplish and investigate all three of the agendas identified above. The "lesson plan" assignment took place over the course of the first semester and was a modified simplification of the performance assessment program we would be piloting in the second and final semester (goal three). I adapted it to include a greater focus on my students' identity development as teachers for social justice (goals one and two). The final product was a portfolio that documented their efforts to plan, teach, and assess a lesson that would help all learners in very diverse classrooms meet appropriate objectives. The aim of my self-study was to document both the outcomes of this assignment and the ways in which I and my students experienced it to determine whether and how such assignments might contribute to my goals for self and program renewal.

1.   SITUATING THE STUDY

1.1   In the literature

My belief that the three educational goals cited above are compatible, and therefore mutually achievable, can be justified by the literature concerned with teaching and learning to teach. Britzman's (1991) characterization emphasizes the connection between identity development and the practice of teaching:

Those learning to teach feel a rupture between the ethic and the experience, because learning to teach constitutes a time of biographical crisis as it simultaneously involves one's autobiography. That is, learning to teach is not a mere matter of applying decontextualized skills or mirroring predetermined images; it is a time when one's past, present, and future are set in dynamic tension. Learning to teach—like teaching itself—is always a process of becoming: a time of formation and transformation, of scrutiny into what one is doing, and who one can become. (p. 8)

A commitment to social justice is necessarily part of this process for Kumashiro (2002) and others, like me, interested in anti-oppressive education, because such self-examination must include a search for and elimination of "harmful repetitions" in our thoughts and actions (p. 69). These are ideas about educational practices derived from our experiences in racist institutions.

Believing in the social construction of knowledge, I agree with many in the field that teacher knowledge develops through collaborative critical reflection on specific problems of practice informed by evidence of student learning (e.g., Dewey, 1938; Guilfoyle, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1999). The result of such a deliberative, on-going process of knowledge construction can be transformational for teachers and their students. In examining and reconsidering deeply held beliefs, student teachers construct new identities for themselves (Dalmau and Gudjónsdóttir, 2002; Loughran and Northfield, 1998; Wilson and Berne, 1999). If done in the context of diverse settings, where multiple perspectives are brought to bear on the moral and epistemological dilemmas of practice, both the process and the results may be more consistent with the aims of social justice education (Griffiths, 2002; Hamilton and Pinnegar, 1998). So, the integration of my multiple educational goals seemed to be not only possible, but also well justified by the educational literature. But where might this particular effort for both personal and programmatic renewal best be situated?

I decided that a course assignment for my elementary curriculum and instruction class would be the best option in this case. As sole instructor, I would have complete responsibility for the nature, design, and orchestration of the activity and therefore gain more insight on the role of "self" in the process. Furthermore, since that course is inclusive of the multiple aspects of curricular design and implementation, an assignment modeled after the program's new assessment system, which scaffolds and represents a holistic teaching event, seemed well suited. A course assignment packaged to include a reflective cycle of teaching (Rodgers, 2002) where theory and practice are closely integrated around a task accomplished in a classroom setting seemed especially desirable because such structures have been found to promote the transfer of student teacher learning into future practice (Korthagen and Kessels, 1999). Since this is the ultimate intent of any teacher education activity, an assignment like this could also contribute to our broader program renewal agendas. But because cognition is situated (Bruner, 1985; Putman and Borko, 2000) the design and analysis of the assignment would have to take into account the context in which it was embedded.

1.2   In the context

The Mills College Credential Program, Teachers for Tomorrow's Schools, is a two-year graduate program that results in a multiple subject or single subject teaching credential and a master's degree in education. The credential and half of the master's degree are completed in one academic year. In that year credential candidates student teach in the mornings, beginning the first day of school and ending the last. Additionally, they take courses at the college in the afternoons; thus candidates work on the integration of theory and practice on a daily basis. Each year the program includes approximately sixty students, half of whom are seeking an elementary teaching credential.

Guided by the overarching goals of equity and social justice, the program is organized around a set of principles that we strive to have reflected in the coursework, fieldwork, assignments, and general culture of the Mills Education community (see Kroll et al., 2005 for elaboration). Because we are attempting to accomplish so much in one academic year, courses are designed to serve multiple purposes, as are the assignments within them. This is particularly true of the course I teach called, *Curriculum and Instruction in Elementary Schools,* a two-semester, yearlong course. It meets once a week for two hours and forty minutes. However, the interactions I have with students are so much more than that--I have regular communications in person, in the halls, in the office, in other classes, in student teaching observations, in retreats, in social gatherings, over the phone, and via e-mail. In addition, the course and its new assignment spilled over into student teaching, student teaching seminars, and other courses. This course has among its explicit goals the general pedagogical practices of lesson and unit planning, classroom management, assessment, working with parents, and health and mainstreaming, as well as the specific content areas of social studies, science, the arts, and physical education. Consequently, an assignment aimed at supporting and assessing a student teacher's ability to engage in the activity of curricular design, implementation, and assessment seemed quite appropriate. But how would I approach the task? What would be my methodology for investigating this work?

2.   SELF-STUDY METHODOLOGY

Because I was aiming for both self and program renewal, for personal, professional development as well as an enhanced understanding of teacher education practices and processes, self-study seemed to be the appropriate methodology. Many self-study researchers have identified it as a means for

meeting these dual aims (e.g., Bullough and Pinnegar, 2001; Cole & Knowles, 1998). As I have noted else where (LaBoskey, 2004), the methodology of self-study has five essential characteristics, which therefore served as guidelines for my study design.

2.1   Self-initiated and self-focused

Though some of the sought after changes were a response to external incentives, most notably the state-mandated assessment system, both the new course assignment and the investigation of it were self-initiated. Since I was interested in my own teacher educator identity transformation, as manifest in this programmatic activity, the research was also self-focused. I was asking and studying the essential, according to Loughran (2002), self-study questions: "How can I better help my students to learn [in this case the process of planning, implementing, and assessing a lesson plan]?" and "How do I live my values more fully in my practice [in this case my values regarding equity education]?" (p. 240).

2.2   Improvement-aimed

The intent of those research questions is improvement. I wanted to enhance my ability to help student teachers understand the teaching/learning process and apply it in ways consistent with social justice goals. I drew upon the empirical and theoretical literature on learning to teach to design the lesson plan assignment so that it would maximize that possibility. The project spanned the semester and was facilitated by several mini-assignments; the first four of which were shared and discussed with a group of peers in a class session:

1. Get to know the community and the school in which you are student teaching;
2. Identify five students in your classroom who represent a range on as many dimensions as possible, e.g., race, gender, language, special needs, participation, skill, etc. and gather as much personal and academic information about each that you can;
3. In consultation with your cooperating teacher identify a state standard or standards that would be important and appropriate to teach to these five learners;
4. Identify several potential means for teaching these standards to these students;
5. On the basis of all previous information, construct a lesson plan you think will help all five students learn the selected standard;
6. Teach the lesson; and

7. Collect and assess the student work produced by your five students during the lesson to determine what they learned.

Finally, the student teachers had to produce a portfolio, which documented and analyzed the entire endeavor. In addition to describing and explaining each of the stages, they had to critically reflect upon the whole and discuss what they had learned about the lesson planning process in general. At the final session for the course, they continued this sharing and examination in small groups and whole class debriefings, at the end of which all wrote about what they learned from this additional collaborative reflection.

Every detail of the process was included for particular research-based reasons, only a sampling of which can be explained here. For example, according to Putnam and Borko (2000), "the notion of distributed cognition suggests that when diverse groups of teachers with different types of knowledge and expertise come together in discourse communities, community members can draw upon and incorporate each other's expertise to create rich conversations and new insights into teaching and learning" (p. 8). Therefore, I included requirements for interactions with their cooperating teachers and supervisors and multiple opportunities for them to converse with one another. A second example involves the inclusion of student work and its careful analysis; indeed the entire final reflection, both written and oral, was centered on that. There is an ever-growing body of research suggesting that careful analysis of student work is key to the on-going development of teacher knowledge and practice (e.g., Little, Gearhart, Curry, and Kafka, 2003; Rodgers, 2002). The overall "lesson plan assignment" was meant to not only facilitate growth in hoped for directions, but also make those learning processes and outcomes transparent so that I could determine what had happened and why.

2.3   Employs multiple, mainly qualitative methods

The primary data source was, therefore, all the portfolios produced by the student teachers. In addition, the written and oral reflections offered at the end of the final sharing session gave me further insight into their understandings of both self and colleague learning—the individual and collective knowledge that had been constructed by these students. Since I was also investigating my own development, I documented my process for assignment construction and implementation and kept copies of the feedback I provided to the students on their work. I analyzed this qualitative, primarily narrative, data by looking for patterns of student understanding and misunderstanding in relationship to the personal and programmatic goals I had for the assignment.

2.4   Interactive at one or more stages of the process

This feedback loop where the students could give me both direct and indirect input about the value of the assignment and the validity of my conclusions about it represented one way in which the research was interactive. In addition, I presented the study in progress to teacher educators attending a session at the 2004 meeting of the American Educational Research Association where they provided me with their interpretations of the research findings. This chapter, a documentation and publication of the work, is yet another interactive phase of the self-study, an action consistent with developing notions of validation in the field.

2.5   Validation achieved through the construction, testing, sharing, and re-testing of exemplars of teaching practice

The lesson plan assignment described in this chapter and the associated self-study with regard to it is an exemplar of teacher education practice and research that I have constructed and tested, and am now sharing. I share it in a way that reveals my pedagogical and research strategies so that others, should they so desire, can re-test both the process and the outcomes in their own self-studies in contextually appropriate ways. If they do so and then in turn share their efforts and interpretations with the teacher education community, they will contribute to a body of work focused on this exemplar that in the conglomerate will help to validate it…or not. I too will participate in this on-going process by continuing to re-test and share this exemplar. The basis on which any of us would decide that this is indeed a self-study exemplar meriting further trial and exploration is the "trustworthiness" (Mishler, 1990) of both my pedagogical and research approaches and my interpretations of their results.

3.   FINDINGS AND IMPACT

All 27 student teachers in the class completed the portfolio lesson plan assignment. Twenty-five of those met the goals of the project by completing an appropriate cycle of lesson planning, implementation, assessment, and reflection. Indeed, 23 of them far exceeded the expectations I had for the work; that is, they were more thorough in their investigations and explanations and more insightful in their analyses than I imagined they would be. Suzie's project is representative.

Suzie did thorough research on the school community and on her five targeted first grade learners, two of whom were Latino, two African American, and one European American—three boys and two girls. They varied from one another on a number of additional variables including for instance, language, participation style, hobbies, and home circumstances. Suzie also did specific assessment of each child's number sense through 20 in both September and November, since this state standard was the subject matter focus for her lesson. In her assessments she made the astute observation that though the children ranged between four and eleven in how high their number sense went, they all had trouble with "mid-level" addends, e.g. 5+3 was harder than 7+1. Therefore, she designed a lesson where all could work on those mid-level combinations, but on different numbers, e.g. Yakeem worked on combinations for 11, while Natasha worked on combinations for 4. The pedagogy for the lesson, a small group bean tossing and recording game, was as well justified by her knowledge of these five learners as was the content.

After teaching the lesson, Suzie collected and analyzed the work produced by her students. Her analysis was very detailed and well supported by the evidence. Her assessment of their learning as well as her conclusions about the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson seemed justified and honest. She began her summary this way: "In general, I think that the objectives of my lesson were met by all five students. Their work demonstrates that they were able to write representative number sentences, and did so correctly for their target sum. Chelsea did not have the same trouble with arbitrary doubles that she had the previous time, and Yakeem and Rodrigo were able to complete the activity." Suzie then noted two main points that came from her analysis. One was that there was some confusion about zero, which she went on to explain with specific examples. A second was that the extension she had provided for students who finished early was new and difficult and therefore frustrating.

In her final reflection Suzie identified the main lessons she was taking away from this assignment, one of which represented the primary purpose I had for the project:

> The other big idea I have come to understand is the value of using assessment to guide instruction. I know that it's something we talk about in practically every class, and I totally get it on a theoretical level, but it's not always easy to implement some of the things we discuss. This assignment has made me a believer in purposeful assessment. I chose my targeted learners because they represent the range in my class. I chose this particular lesson because I felt it was what my targeted learners needed. When the kids were in their groups working and thinking and

computing and counting, it was totally calm. The students were on task, they were learning, and they were grappling with ideas. My cooperating teacher came over afterwards and said, "You must have hit the nail right on the head for their needs, because everyone was engaged." I know that this is because I took the time to really think about what they already knew, and what they didn't quite get but were close to. The assessment was key in the success of this lesson.

The critical role of assessment—on-going, built-in, lesson-based assessment that would reveal what students were learning—in lesson plan design and implementation was one of the six primary understandings Suzie and her colleagues took away from this assignment. The others were:

- Understanding that despite its importance, determining what a student actually knows and understands is very difficult to do.
- Recognizing that lesson planning is not about a single lesson; it is a process that takes place over time.
- Understanding that though no objective can be met in a single lesson and that flexibility and responsivity to unanticipated activity and outcome are critical in a socially just classroom, clarity of intentions can facilitate learning.
- Embracing the need to find out about the students—who they are, what their community is, what they know. And that finding out about a few who represent a range can help teachers meet the needs of all.
- Recognizing the value of collegiality, of consulting with one another and multiple resources, to the endeavor.

One student framed the whole process of lesson planning in a way that captures well the shift I was hoping they would make: "The question isn't what do I want to teach and how do I teach it, but what do my students need to learn and how might they best learn it?"

In sharing what they had learned the student teachers gave me cues as to what in the lesson plan assignment structure had helped them to do so. These constitute some of the lessons I learned about how and why this course assignment helped me to achieve both personal and programmatic goals:

Looking at five learners who represented a range and getting to know about their backgrounds, interests and knowledge base.

Having to closely analyze student work.

Having to share and deliberate with colleagues and multiple resources throughout the process.

Reflecting critically during and after the experience.

But my analysis of their lessons also revealed some limitations, some weaknesses in my assignment that would need future remediation if I wanted to move still closer to my personal and program goals:

When making efforts to get to know our learners, specifics are more informative than generalities, e.g., it is not only not helpful, it can also be distracting to say someone is "good at math." Though it is somewhat useful to know that a student is one of the more capable in the class in a particular area or that he/she is stronger in that subject than in other subjects, it is really the details that matter; what specifically does each child know and not know? I discovered that many of the student teachers were more detailed about the pre-existing knowledge when they were talking about students classified as "lower" or "more needy". I realized that it was best to avoid that way of thinking, that way of speaking and that it was an equity issue. All kids have learning needs—that is why they are in school—so in that sense all are "needy" but since that term tends to be pejorative, better to avoid it altogether; that way we don't demean some (those we label needy) and ignore others (those we don't label as needy), a detrimental situation for all.

The student teachers were stronger/more thorough in their pedagogical justifications than in their content justifications, which is too often the case with elementary credential candidates.

Issues of equity and social justice, including working with African American students, were more implied than specific in their reflections. Similarly, very few made explicit reference to program readings in their analyses.

Finally, and most worrisome, the four student teachers who were less successful with this assignment were all students of color with much individual variation in the degree and nature of the insufficiency.

The identified strengths and weaknesses of this course assignment, when shared with and analyzed by my colleagues in our grant-related meetings, have contributed to both self and program renewal. In the main, we have been reassured that we can design and implement course assignments capable of meeting both personal and professional, internally motivated and externally mandated goals and agendas. As a result, I have decided to continue employing this assignment in my course and the program will again utilize the related consortium developed assessment tool to meet the state-mandated evaluation requirement with additional adaptations for our context that may better support our equity and social justice goals.

Some of the changes I have made based upon the knowledge I gained from this analysis are first to provide more scaffolding for all students both in general and individually. To that end I am now providing the class with examples of successful work from last year—examples that represent a variety of appropriate responses to the task. In addition, I am giving written feedback on the mini-assignments turned in along the way. Last year I looked at them just to be sure they were proceeding with the work in a

timely fashion; this year I am making sure they are on the right track, and if not, letting them know what adjustments they should make. In the process of doing this, I am trying to track which students need help, what kind and why, so that I can both provide individually crafted support and make assignment adjustments to better respond to the strengths and needs of all my students.

Second, I am inserting explicit requirements for them to speak to issues of equity and social justice in their reflective analyses and to draw upon program readings and experiences in their explanations and deliberations. I will ask them to justify their curricular and pedagogical choices in social justice terms and to consider student outcomes in relation to equity goals. Along those lines, I have related to them what happened last year with regard to the term "needy." We have had many focused discussions on why we should rethink not only the label but also the assumptions behind it. We have added a reading by Moll, Amanti, Neff, and Gonzalez (1992) on "funds of knowledge" that we refer to with frequency in discussing this assignment. We emphasize repeatedly the importance of seeing all children as having knowledge strengths as well as learning needs, and though necessarily different, do not represent rank orderings.

In addition to these specific changes, I am continuing to examine and transform my own biases and "harmful repetitions" with my colleagues. The one-year grant we received last year for enhancing our programmatic efforts around equity and social justice has been extended. Together we are exploring the question, "What does it mean to teach each child/student well in a racist nation?" The "lesson plan" assignment is one of the foci for my personal study of this question. And so, the self-study of this teacher education exemplar continues.

4.   CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

In the previous section I iterated and discussed specific lessons learned about one particular course assignment in my distinct context. As Loughran (2004) has noted, it behooves us in the field to begin to make explicit "assertions" that move beyond the specific exemplar and into the general knowledge base of teacher education. The main assertions I could make from this self-study of personal and program renewal are these:

Course assignments can help to meet both personal and program goals, but only if they are designed to be consistent with self and context, with a teacher educator's and her program's particular guiding principles and only if those aims and the rationale behind them are made explicit to the students and individually scaffolded.

As Holt-Reynolds and Johnson (2002) point out, "assignments or tasks seem to lie at the core of a teaching/learning exchange" (p. 14). They represent what we "value enough to insist that students address" (p. 16). This study supports that position, but also makes clear that careful and consistent designs are only necessary, not sufficient. What may be obvious to us will not necessarily be apparent to our students. If we are to more fully realize the potential of these key tasks, they need to be adaptable to individual needs. In addition, we must help our students make the knowledge they are acquiring from these assignments more explicit and thus more influential in their subsequent decision-making. In Fenstermacher's (1994) words, we need to ensure that student teachers not only know, but also "know that they know" (p. 51).

A course assignment that simulates the authentic, complex teaching task of lesson planning carried out in an actual classroom and focused on student work, if guided and processed by critical reflection and program principles, can be a constructive learning experience.

Barnes (1998) has suggested, "For beginning teachers, book learning is almost useless," because they will simply reinterpret what they read "in the light of their preconceptions" (p. xiii). But since "reframing by the student teachers themselves is crucial," we must find a way to have them do so. He claims, "New ideas are more likely to shape their behavior" if they are working in schools and required to critically reflect on the experiences they are having there. Similarly, Ladson-Billings (1999) argues for "an approach to teacher preparation that relies less on received knowledge than on knowledge in the making" (p. 229). Assignments that engage student teachers in planning, teaching, and assessing lessons for a diverse group of learners can, if the process is carefully scaffolded and critically analyzed, help student teachers to reframe their thinking and generate new and more viable knowledge for themselves. The effectiveness of course assignments in meeting program renewal goals can be enhanced if they include an opportunity for the teacher educator to model the processes the assignment is intended to each and support.

Over the course of the semester I was engaged in a process very similar to the one in which they were engaged: I was designing, implementing, and assessing an instructional activity intended to enhance the learning of a particular group of students. Lomax, Evans, and Parker (1998) "believe that we should model the learning that we expect in our students and that we should account for ourselves in the same way that they must account for themselves" (p. 16). In part, we do this to provide our students with a tangible image of the desired activity. More importantly, if we share authentically in ways that make visible our vulnerability, we will help to create a safer, and thus more likely, learning space for them. In making

explicit to my students the decision making process in which I was engaged in designing this new assignment for and with them, as well as the outcomes, both positive and negative, I was not only assisting them with their immediate efforts, I was also making apparent the idea and value of lifelong learning.

The self-study questions that guided this research were first "How can I better help my students to learn [in this case the process of planning, implementing, and assessing a lesson plan]?" The results indicated that the lesson plan assignment I constructed and implemented contributed to this personal and programmatic learning goal. Since the assignment was focused upon ensuring that all learners in diverse classrooms met appropriate standards, the progress documented in the children's work and the insights gained by the student teachers about this process also helped to answer the second research question, "How do I live my values more fully in my practice [in this case my values regarding equity education]?" My definition of social justice education, like Hamilton's (2002), includes the notion, "In a socially just world, people are committed to the nurturing of all children" (p. 182). Furthermore, as Griffiths (2002) emphasizes, "[Social justice] is never achieved once and for all, but requires us to exercise constant vigilance as we hold to the vision" (p. 161). Therefore, the understanding my students gained, including the notion that lesson planning is a process that takes place over time, and the lessons I learned with regard to the assignment strengths and weaknesses suggest to me that continuing to incorporate and adapt this assignment into my curriculum will help me to live my and my program's values regarding equity education more fully in my practice.

Both my students and I made significant progress in constructing or re-constructing our identities as educators for social justice. The implications are that assignments like these can be constructed to simultaneously focus on personal and programmatic goals, whether they be internally initiated or externally mandated. Self-study research, in this instance, helped to support and illuminate targeted aspects of the credential program's renewal process, as well as my particular and evolving role in that effort.

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Chapter 15

THE IMPACT OF A PRESERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM ON LANGUAGE ARTS TEACHING PRACTICES:
A STUDY OF SECOND-YEAR TEACHERS

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Abstract: Research on teacher education must extend into the graduates' first few years of teaching; a longitudinal approach will help teacher educators appreciate the demands beginning teachers face while assessing the effectiveness of the teacher education program. For this study, we studied 12 graduates of the Mid-Town program at OISE/UT in the last month of their second year of teaching to find out how they viewed their preservice program after some time in the field. We focused on language arts. In general, the teachers had praise for the preservice program but all had specific suggestions on how to improve it, specifically making it more practical and tied to expectations from the local school districts.

Research on teacher education programs can be helpful for adjusting pedagogy, revising topic selection, and modifying assignments; however, research on the actual program has limited value. Research must extend into the graduates' first few years of teaching; a longitudinal approach will help teacher educators appreciate the demands beginning teachers face while assessing the effectiveness of the teacher education program. Research before, during, and after the program will make for a continuous cycle of self-study, leading to understanding and improvement

1. CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

Literacy education is a major initiative in most English-speaking countries. In England, the *Literacy Hour* was the backbone of their recent school reform. In Canada, an emphasis on literacy pervades curriculum goals and development. In recent years, each school district in Ontario has developed or adopted specific literacy programs, expecting teachers to adhere to the prescribed curriculum and student achievement to increase dramatically as a result. In the United States, the debate on the "best" way to teach and evaluate reading and writing continues at a feverish pace. Australia/New Zealand maintains its leadership in literacy education, with *Reading Recovery* having a significant impact on early literacy programs throughout the world.

Schools of education have been equally attentive to literacy instruction, increasing the number of mandatory or optional courses on literacy and literacy-related issues. Interestingly, teacher educators struggle with many of the concerns faced by classroom teachers. What should be the emphasis in the literacy courses? To what extent should there be a focus on skills and the school district curriculum? What is the correct balance between teacher-directed lessons and student initiative? What materials should be incorporated into the program? To what extent should literacy and literacy-related topics be integrated into other courses? Teacher educators have the additional task of connecting theory with practice and teaching in light of the research on pedagogical content knowledge. We are painfully aware that for beginning teachers implementing an entire literacy curriculum is a daunting task and this in turn increases the pressure on us.

Despite the surge of interest, however, constraints of time and institutional structure often make it impossible to prepare student teachers adequately to be effective literacy educators. This problem has been addressed in some highly relevant research studies, with suggestions for improvement ranging from the fairly simple (increase course hours) to the controversial (rethink our entire approach to literacy education). It has been said that teacher education provides a "vision of writing instruction toward which beginning teachers can work" (Evans et al., 2000, p. 658). Among the specific recommendations that have been made are the following.

1. Rather than trying to cover the whole language arts curriculum, a limited number of topics and principles should be explored *in depth* so student teachers acquire a vision and approach which will sustain them during the early years of teaching and serve as a basis for continued professional growth (Ducharme and Ducharme, 1999; Evans et al., 2000; Fosnot, 1996; Sosniak, 1999).

2. Effective strategies for teaching language arts should not simply be talked about in methods courses, they should be *modelled* by the faculty and so experienced first-hand by the student teachers (Barr et al., 2000; Burke and Short, 1989; Evans et al., 2000; Franklin, 1992).

3. Language arts *content* should be explored along with teaching methods, so student teachers can grow in their personal language arts knowledge and appreciation and also become more aware of the socially constructed and changing nature of language arts (Fosnot, 1989; Tom, 1997).

4. The *political* nature of language arts should be explored so student teachers become more aware of the ideological origins and biases of various literacy forms and practices (Dillard, 1997; Guzzetti et al., 1999).

The one-year, post-baccalaureate preservice program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto (OISE/UT) is cohort-based. There are approximately six hundred student teachers in the elementary stream, preparing to teach either primary/junior (K-Grade 6) or junior/intermediate (Grades 4-8). These students are divided into cohorts of about 65 each, usually with a mixture of primary/junior and junior/intermediate candidates. Each cohort program has its own faculty team with 2 full-time and 3 or 4 part-time instructors. Our cohort program is called "Mid-Town," because of the location of our practicum schools close to the multiracial, multiethnic urban core of the city.

The Mid-Town program and the language arts course in particular emphasize:

- an inquiry approach to teaching and learning
- teachers as researchers
- a close teacher-student relationship
- an interactive, dialogical pedagogy
- a strong class community

As far as possible, we model this approach to teaching and learning in the program. The language course addresses major topics such as reading, writing, poetry, spelling, drama, and developmental stages. Although each topic is the focus of a particular session(s) there is an emphasis on integration and student engagement. Assignments include an All About Me Book, action research in a particular area of language arts, and reflection papers. We have done numerous formal studies on/with students during the preservice program: one focused specifically on the language arts course and another on the action research projects completed in the area of literacy.

2. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

    In the present study we wished to extend our inquiry into our preservice literacy instruction to include *graduates* of our program. We wanted to find out how they viewed their preservice program after some time in the field. This was in line with the suggestion of Evans *et al.* (2000) who, noting that "most research stops with student teaching," stress the need to "follow teachers into the first year of teaching (and beyond)" (p. 632). The specific goals for the study were:

1. Determine to what extent our current preservice program prepared teachers to develop a language arts curriculum
2. Determine to what extent our graduates were applying the approaches to language arts teaching we advocated and modelled during the preservice year
3. Identify the goals and practices for our language arts course that need to be revised

    For this study, we interviewed 12 graduates of the Mid-Town program in the last month of their second year of teaching. The graduates were selected randomly, except that (a) they had to be geographically accessible to us, that is, teaching mainly in the urban area; and (b) there had to be a balance of primary/junior and junior/intermediate teachers, as in the program itself. Of the interviewees 11 were female and 1 male, which is close to the proportion of females and males typically in the program. We asked the same questions in all the interviews, but also asked probe questions and encouraged additional comment. The questions included:

• Tell me about your language arts program. How did your program change between the first and second year?
• What is the strength of your program? Tell me about the support you have received as a beginning teacher.
• What curriculum materials are you using?
• To what extent were you able to model your language arts program on the preservice language arts course?

Whenever possible we also observed the teachers in their schools.

    In analyzing the transcripts, we began by reading them several times to identify themes related to the central questions of the study. For each theme we developed terms/phrases or "codes" which seemed to capture the teaching approach, impact, or problem the new teachers talked about, for example: "teaching skills in context," "language across the curriculum," "flexibility," "collegiality," "faculty modeling," "lack of detail on curriculum." Our initial list of themes were tentative and changed as we began writing the report, going back to the transcripts to gain more detail on the themes and collect representative quotations. As we continued the writing and checking process, we found we had to adjust some themes

further and modify our selection of quotations to represent more accurately the content of the transcripts.

Our research approach was qualitative, as defined by Punch (1998). For example, our methodology had the following characteristics cited by Punch as typical of, though not exclusive to, qualitative research: we used participant-observers; we had a relatively small sample, which we studied in depth; our data were not usually expressed in numbers; our interview and observation sessions were largely open-ended; and our categories or codes emerged as the study progressed. However, following Hammersley (1992), Merriam (1998), and Punch (1998), there was a quantitative component to our reporting: we often indicated the number or proportion of interviewees who held a particular view or responded in a particular way. We believe such information is relevant even in a qualitative study; it can help readers understand why we reached certain conclusions, and also enable them as far as possible to arrive at their own interpretations.

While adhering to the general canons of qualitative research, this was a "self-study" of our teacher education practices. The two authors were the architects of the Mid-Town program, were heavily involved in community-building activities within the program, and were active in all aspects of the program including practicum supervision. Clare was the language arts instructor while Clive taught a foundations course. Because of this extensive involvement, we were in fact studying our own work and its impact. It was a study not just of the literacy practices of beginning teachers, but primarily of the connection between practices in this area and our teacher education program.

3.   FINDINGS

We begin with a short section outlining some of the difficulties encountered by the new teachers during their first two years which is helpful in understanding their approach to language arts teaching and their views on preservice preparation.

3.1   Many Challenges were Faced by the New Teachers, Especially During Their First Year

All the new teachers interviewed had a difficult time, at least in their first year, and 8 had especially tough experiences. Of the latter group, 3 said they almost left the profession during or at the end of their first year. Anita for example, who had a Grade 6 class, reported: "After my first year of teaching

I was pretty fearful of my second year. I spent a summer having nightmares over it."

One of the main problems was the nature of the classes assigned to them. Of the 12 beginning teachers, 6 were assigned either Grade 3 or Grade 6, that is, the grades tested extensively by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). Most teachers prefer not to teach these grades because of the strong steering effect of the EQAO tests and because of the pressure on them to ensure their students obtain good scores.

In addition, 4 of the new teachers were assigned combined-grade classes, which can be difficult for new teachers, especially in a climate of detailed curriculum expectations and external testing. One of the teachers had a Grade 3-4 combination in her first year, which meant she had to think about both EQAO testing and teaching two grade levels at once. Another taught Senior Kindergarten in the morning at one school and then "zipped" by taxi to another school where she had a Grade 4-6 special education class. Furthermore, some of the new teachers felt they were given classes with a higher proportion of students at risk or with serious behavioural problems than was typical in their school. One had an autistic child in her class with no educational assistant. Another, for a 2-month period, had a class of 40 Grade 1 students, including one with a coclear implant, which required the teacher to speak through a microphone.

Half the new teachers reported receiving minimal support from their school administration. One school board had a mandatory language arts initiative at the primary level, which meant teaching materials related to the program were available; but most of the board workshops on the new program had been offered *before* the new teachers assumed their positions.

Just over half the teachers said there was a serious shortage of teaching resources in their school. This presented a special problem for them as new teachers, because they had not yet had the opportunity to build up a store of resources and a repertoire of activities. Several reported spending a significant amount of their own money on materials, which they could ill afford to do while still paying off student loans and establishing their households.

3.2 By the Second Year, the Language Arts Teaching Practices of the New Teachers Were in Many Ways Consistent With Those Taught and Modelled in the Preservice Program

The interviewees felt their second year of teaching was more successful than their first year. Beyond improved practice they had fewer doubts about

themselves as teachers. Our focus in this section we will be on aspects of the interviewees' practice that were positive from the perspective of our goals in the preservice program.

3.2.1   A good sense of a balanced literacy program

In general, we were impressed with the teachers language arts program. Most were on their way to developing an effective balanced literacy program with all elements addressed, to varying degrees. Each described at least one area of strength and an area of weakness. Anita felt her read-aloud was a strength "because you can do so much with it, you can do a whole grammar lesson based on the read-aloud, you can talk about how a narrative is set up, you can talk about character, setting, everything." Lisa proudly described her program as follows:

> They have to write every single day, because if they write once a week that's not going to help them. And they have to read every day, as well as writing, in order to develop the skills. Because by reading and writing they develop the grammar and the spelling, it all comes.

All had plans for improving their programs. Tina wants to work on having a book centre and finding more time for independent reading, Anita wants to teach students about different forms of writing (e.g. narrative, exposition), and Erika wants students to have their portfolios on CD Roms. Many planned to take courses, attend workshops or school district summer institutes, and read professional texts. Angela is planning to take the Reading Additional Qualification course (160 hour inservice course) to improve the reading program in her primary class.

3.2.2   Literacy instruction central to their program

The teachers were very aware of the importance of literacy recognizing that poor reading and writing skills severely limit students' ability to succeed in other subjects. Regardless of grade level, they believed language arts was central to the program. Each spent a minimum of 1 hour a day on language arts while some spent up to 3 hours a day. Many furthered their emphasis by making cross-curricular connections. Linda remarked:

> I integrate (language arts) with science ... they wrote a story where the heroine is a butterfly...the writing is all part of the science...and I don't try to separate the two, because otherwise there would just not be enough time to cover all the things I need to cover.

All the new teachers appeared concerned to make language learning enjoyable to their students and avoid experiences that might result in negative attitudes toward literacy. To this end, they exposed the students to a diversity of genres and media; they avoided giving too much negative feedback on student work; they often read to their students, even in higher grade levels; and rather than simply following a program or textbook, they went to considerable lengths to devise engaging activities.

3.2.3 Attention to skills and school district programs

In the interviews all the teachers expressed concern about teaching skills and stressed the need for students to acquire these skills. They used a variety of approaches, including direct instruction with drill activities, to teach skills such as phonics, spelling, grammar, and sentence and paragraph structure. To some extent they embedded skills instruction in the context of genuine language experiences. Teachers in Grade 3 and Grade 6 were highly concerned with teaching skills because of the pressure of the EQAO test (school scores are published in the local newspaper).

The new teachers were familiar with the formal school district language arts curriculum with its prescribed resource materials and felt pressure to use these materials. Erika relied heavily on leveled texts and formal guidelines for shared reading and Linda followed the school district program closely. In addition, all were acutely aware of the Ministry of Education curriculum with its lengthy lists of skills to be taught. With the provincial report card tied to the official curriculum it was necessary for the teachers to adhere to it.

3.2.4 Focus on students

Most of the interviewees described how they got to know their students, observed them carefully, assessed them in a variety of ways, and modified their language arts program in light of particular needs and abilities. Erika noted:

> Last year I was very much whole-group, using the teachers guides and activities specifically laid out... But this year my lessons are much more focused. I can actually look at the student and say that child has trouble with quotations, and then working specifically with the child on that.

In addition the teachers felt they needed to know their students personally. Tina observed:

> You have to know what their interests are, you really have to get a feel for your children. You are teaching children and these are people...you have to relate to them and have some sort of connection with them.

She gave an example of the importance of being aware of each student's life situation:

> The kids bring so much baggage with them into the classroom that you have to deal with other issues... I have one child who has been through what most people won't see by the end of their lifetime. And the other day she heard her brother's name being called over the PA and I was in the middle of my math lesson teaching fractions, and she all of a sudden got up in a panic and said, I've got to find my brother. The last thing on this child's mind was the math lesson.

3.2.5 Use of a range of instructional and assessment strategies

All the interviewees spoke at length about the variety of teaching strategies used. Anita incorporated the "relate, retell, reflect strategies" in reading/writing; Linda used buddy reading (read with a friend); Tina combined art and poetry. Erika said:

> Most days I read something to them, but it may not be a story: it could be science, or social studies, because I try to integrate as much as possible.

Angela provided the following example:

> This weekend I was listening to a Celine Dion song "The Power of the Dream" and I thought, Oh, I'm going to take this in. And just from that I had a lesson yesterday, and we did our own writing on that song and how you can set your goals and your dreams and just work toward them.

They used the full range of strategies: individual conferencing, small-group work, mini-lessons, and formal whole-class instruction. Erika said her program included "small groups in guided reading where I work on a specific skill" and on Fridays they have "centres, where they take some of the skills they've learned during the week and apply them, and that's independent from me."

Beyond their own teaching strategies, the teachers showed commitment to student engagement and ownership. They did this, for example, by themselves modeling interest in reading and writing; involving students in the choice of works and projects; providing them with opportunities for independent reading; and helping them relate literacy to their own lives. Lisa commented:

I think the high point (of my language arts teaching) has been relating what they read to their own experience, what is going on now, how they are feeling as a Grade 6 student. It makes them think, "You know what? The teacher cares about my own experience".

3.2.6   Emphasis on class community

The new teachers valued the social dimension of the classroom. Several mentioned having appreciated the experience of community in the preservice program and trying to reproduce this in their classroom. A number spoke of the need to have an inclusive classroom, where students of different backgrounds, temperaments, and abilities feel at home. Margaret noted:

I like the environment to be very inclusive and respectful so ideas can be shared more easily and people aren't afraid to share their ideas.

Sarah commented:

I usually bring the kids onto the carpet and have multiple copies of a specific book...and everyone gets a chance to read a page if they can; or they can read in pairs. And they love it; even the kids who can't read anything want to come and sit with me and have the book in front of them.

3.3   A Majority of the New Teachers Thought the Preservice Program had a Significant Impact on Their Language Arts Teaching

Nine of the interviewees made positive *general* comments about the preservice language arts course and attributed many aspects of their practice to its influence. Lisa said:

I wouldn't (change anything in the preservice course). Everything was great. I knew how to write a lesson plan, how to do long-range planning, how to integrate language into the classroom, how to integrate it with other subjects... I had lots of resources because of the resource kits... I was more worried, frankly, about math, science, and social studies; but with language I felt fully equipped.

Erika remarked:

In the language arts course I learned the nuts and bolts, for sure. And I learned about balanced literacy...how the language arts program has to have everything, it can't be just a reading program or a writing program,

and it can't be just you at the front of the class, it needs to come from the children too.

The element of the interviewees' practice most often attributed to the preservice program was creating a *diverse* literate environment where skills instruction was balanced with fostering a love of literacy. Specifically, the teachers recalled favourably the classes/readings on poetry, novel study, word study, reading to the class, use of non-fiction as well as fiction, and program integration. Introducing students to a process approach to writing was found to be particularly helpful. Margaret noted:

I learned a lot about the writing process that I took with me, and I do a lot of that...(teaching) how to start a piece of writing and take it from start to finish, and all the steps in between, how to develop an idea.

Another recurring theme was the value of the resources acquired during the course: 5 of the interviewees mentioned this aspect. For example, Tina said:

The resources you provided were amazing, so keep providing them...because we're always looking for resources.

Four of the new teachers linked their emphasis on class community and group processes to their experience in the language arts course and the preservice program as a whole. Erika reported:

I use a lot of the cooperative activities you taught me at the university. ... And I knew by watching you...I need to read to them sometimes, I need to let them work in small groups, I need to let them work in a big group, I need to let them work on their own. So it was very much modeled on what you did.

Four of the interviewees said the action research had prepared them well to observe their students and modify their program. Sarah said:

I thought the action research was a great tool because it taught you to look for a problem, recognize the problem, try to come up with solutions, then revisit it and say, "Okay, has it gotten better, has it gotten worse? What am I doing already?"

Tina commented:

The action research...is something I'll use for the rest of my life...it's not just for school, it's not just for the classroom, you can use it in your life: if something's not working, okay, how do I need to change it?

3.4 A Majority of the New Teachers Felt the Preservice Language Arts Course Should Have Been More Practical and Detailed

While most of the interviewees thought the preservice program had a significant impact on their language arts teaching, 3 by contrast could not recall much about the language arts course and had little to say about its effects on their teaching. These 3 felt rather strongly that a language arts course should primarily provide detail on curriculum requirements, resource materials, teaching methods, and children's stages of language learning.

Several of the interviewees said a preservice language arts course should be very *practical*, providing intensive instruction on the "nitty gritty" of language teaching. Michelle said:

> [In a language arts course] I would try to get as practical as possible, keeping the theory to a minimum.

Margaret suggested an approach where student teachers would map out teaching strategies to meet curriculum expectations for every grade and subject. She felt the course should cover "writing report cards...day to day organizational things...your first day...special education...very practical, hands-on kinds of experiences you might face in your day to day life as a language arts teacher."

Another theme was the need for more *direct* teaching on language arts, "answers" on each aspect, a total package. Andrew commented:

> Even though we were given a vast quantity (in the course), it would have been beneficial to spend a period of time with some direct teaching on each aspect; for example, a balanced literacy program should look like this...just to be able to pick up a package and go through it.

And Anita said:

> At the beginning you just want answers. You don't want someone to say "What are we going to do?" because you don't know what to do. At the beginning it's better if somebody tells you how to do it, and then once you get comfortable with that you can modify it on your own.

Many of the interviewees felt more instruction should be given in *how to set up a language program*. Anita said:

> When you're becoming a teacher you're scared, you're scared to be in that classroom by yourself, you're scared to start, and you don't know what to do. And it would be good if someone (gave) different models of what

language programs can look like. This is a language program that hits oral, writing, reading, and so on.

Andrew spoke of the need to focus "on how to create your language arts program...the resources available, such as reading programs, spelling programs... We did that, but we need *simpler* things."

4.   IMPACT OF THE RESEARCH ON OUR PROGRAM

The research provided us with information on the strengths and weaknesses of our program and also gave us an opportunity to see the challenges faced by new teachers. We used the data to make some changes to our language arts course and the program in general.

4.1   Closer Connections With the School District

We became much more aware of the initiatives in the local school districts, the pressure on teachers to address the formal curriculum, and the expectation for them to use prescribed curriculum resources. As Director of the elementary preservice program at OISE/UT, Clare contacted the Supervisory Officers for the Districts to find ways to link the teacher education program more fully with the school districts. One of the strategies we developed to make the transition to beginning teacher less dramatic and traumatic was to have copies of the school district curriculum materials available for all language arts instructors to use in their classes. (Instructors are welcome to critique the material and are not pressured to use it.) We also arranged for the local school Literacy Coordinators to do workshops for our student teachers on the school district initiative Early Years Literacy Program and the Diagnostic Reading Assessment (a program mandated by the school district). Further, in their practice teaching schools, students are now required to seek out the Literacy Coordinator and shadow him/her for half a day to learn about school district initiatives and become familiar with the curriculum materials they will be expected to use.

Since Reading Recovery is a major initiative in the school districts, we arranged for Reading Recovery teachers to do inservices, including modeling a lesson for our student teachers. We are also capitalizing on the openness of our internship by strongly encouraging our students to do their internship in one of the Early Years Literacy Program schools. When they do this, we arrange for the internship to be supervised by the Literacy

Coordinator with one of the projects focusing on ways to start your language arts program.

Finally, in the Mid-Town cohort we began a tutoring program for struggling readers in two of our practice teaching schools. We felt this would help student teachers learn to plan for the needs of individual children, become more familiar with resources, and develop assessment skills. Because they are working in a one-on-one situation they have fewer classroom management issues with which to contend, thus allowing them to acquire and refine their skills.

4.2   Increased Attention to Practical Issues

The research showed us that setting up the classroom and the language arts program were far more difficult tasks for beginning teachers than we realized. Although we felt we had given information on these topics, the study helped us see that the material we provided was unsuitable. We are now much more specific and direct in our information; have students work in groups to design activities for each grade (which are then posted on the Mid-Town email conference line); and offer optional workshops on getting started in September. One of our outstanding associate (cooperating) teachers, Judi, had developed a package of activities for new teachers focusing on the September start up. We invited her to do a presentation to our students and share her material. Informal feedback from the students has shown that the session is extremely helpful. We also compiled packages of activities that could be used in September (e.g. poetry activities, 100 activities to do with a novel study, and so on). We felt these highly practical activities, which can be easily adapted to any grade, would provide a measure of security.

4.3   Ongoing research

We have shared our research with the language arts instructors at OISE/UT and have encouraged them to meet on a regular basis to discuss the findings and related issues. This had led to increased consistency between the instructors and provided a forum for them to inquire systematically into their programs. They are now looking at ways to incorporate critical literacy into their programs, strategies to provide students with the practical tips without sacrificing theory, and a process for revising their courses in light of research findings.

Although this research was very helpful in self-study of our specific Mid-Town program, we wanted to extend the initiative beyond our cohort. We have been funded for a large-scale research project to study the language arts

courses in four very different teacher education programs in Canada, including two at OISE/UT. The research includes following the graduates into the first two years of teaching. We want to see to what extent there is a difference in practices of the graduates from the four programs. We also have been funded to do research in a high needs middle school (grade 6-8) to understand more fully the challenges of working in an inner city middle school. We anticipate funneling the findings from these studies into our OISE/UT language arts programs. Since our activities have now expanded to the larger OISE/UT setting, this research is also self-study in an important sense

5.   CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

Based on the interviewees' responses and our site visits, we believe our preservice program had a significant impact on the language arts teaching practices of these new teachers. On the whole, their teaching exhibited features we had advocated, such as teaching language skills in context, making language learning engaging and enjoyable, observing students closely, remaining flexible, emphasizing class community and group processes, and interacting and collaborating with fellow teachers. The research also made us more aware of the parts of the program that are especially helpful to beginning teachers: action research, modeling an approach to literacy instruction, developing a resource kit, and community-building activities. We have shared our research findings with our current students in an effort to model a self-study approach to teaching.

The research helped us better understand some of the challenges faced by beginning teachers – setting up the program, learning about school-district initiatives, teaching specific skills – and we have become more focused on addressing these needs. The research was especially useful to us because some of the topics the new teachers suggested we should incorporate into the program we thought we *had* addressed. In some areas we will need to be more specific and direct in our teaching, because our previous approach was either too vague or too sophisticated for student teachers. We have also become more aware of the limitations of a preservice program: students can only absorb a certain amount; learning to be a teacher is highly complex; and once certified, teachers need individual support for their specific context. To this end, we have shared our findings with the induction Coordinators and Supervisory Officers in our partner school districts.

In addition to their positive comments, most of the new teachers had criticisms of the preservice program and suggestions on how to improve it.

However, the range of responses perplexed us: "it was exactly what I needed" and "I do not recall anything". It so happened that all the beginning teachers we interviewed had been strong students, yet their learning differed dramatically. This disparity needs to be researched more fully; for example, it would be interesting to find out to what extent it was due to differences in awareness of what they learned from the program.

Regarding the suggestions for improvements, these were largely in the direction of increased practicality and more detailed coverage of curriculum expectations, resource materials, teaching techniques, and stages of language learning. While we found the new teachers' proposals helpful, we feel their suggestions should only be followed to a degree. We think they arose in part from the difficult experiences they had, especially in their first year, and from the pressures of the current educational climate. However, we realize that our reluctance to focus on skills instruction, formal curriculum, and prescribed expectations had perhaps hampered our teachers. We must attend to these topics while including our reservations about district-prescribed programs and encouraging students to look at them critically.

The continuous cycle of self-study helped us, as instructors, to improve our program. The effects though may be even more far-reaching. The participants in the study appreciated our efforts and many felt they too want to do self-study research on their teaching practices.

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